



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Board Moves to Address Blight in Koreatown with Innovative Public/Private Development Partnership

New retail outlets, housing units and business space are in the offing for a currently-blighted section of Vermont Avenue in Koreatown.

For 20 years, several county buildings near the intersection of Vermont and 6th streets have been eyesores in the neighborhood. They are even worse, however, inside, plagued with a host of unsafe and unsanitary conditions including, undulating floors, leaking bathrooms and ceilings, ficus tree roots erupting up through the floors, asbestos in walls and floors and ceilings, malfunctioning elevators and even a colony of feral cats that for a time nested inside a corner office area.

With more than \$1 billion invested in the Vermont Avenue section of Koreatown, the outdated and decaying buildings housing the Departments of Parks and Recreation, Community and Senior Services and Mental Health have long been an incongruent presence in a neighborhood, which boasts several gleaming new retail outlets.

On Tuesday, the board voted to create a redevelopment plan in partnership with the Community Development Commission within the next 90 days. The report also will include a plan to build a new mental health headquarters and a means to secure private investment to develop the remaining properties.

“With the Community Development Commission in the lead, we now have an opportunity for real progress,” said Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, who authored the motion. “With new retail centers and transit oriented development, the County’s property on Vermont poses a tremendous opportunity to support the neighborhood’s revitalization. Too much time has passed and this work needs to proceed with immediacy and urgency.”

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