



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 17, 2019

Contact: Christina Villacorte, (213) 447-1277

Email: cvillacorte@bos.lacounty.gov

Contact: Jethro Rothe-Kushel, (213) 479-6970

Email: jrothe-kushel@bos.lacounty.gov

MEDIA ADVISORY

FAST-TRACKING HOUSING AND SERVICES FOR THE HOMELESS Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas Breaks Ground on Safe Landing-West Athens First-of-its-Kind Service-Enriched Interim Housing Will Open in Fall 2020



WHEN:

Thursday, December 19, 2019

- 9:30 a.m. – media availability
- 10:00 a.m. – event program
- 10:45 a.m. – groundbreaking ceremony
- 11:00 a.m. – community prepares gift bags for people experiencing homelessness

WHERE:

- 1328 W. Imperial Hwy, Los Angeles, CA 90044
- Media can park along Normandie Ave. – [click here for map](#)
- Construction site is at the intersection of Normandie and Laurel Ave.

WHO:

- Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
- LA County Health Services Director Dr. Christina Ghaly
- Exodus Recovery President and CEO Luana Murphy
- West Athens Taskforce member Bruce McCall
- Careers for a Cause graduate Algenia K. Harding
- St. Frances Cabrini Church Pastor Fr. Juan Bosco Jimenez (Spanish)

WHAT:

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas will lead the groundbreaking ceremony for Safe Landing-West Athens, a first-of-its-kind service-enriched interim housing site for people transitioning out of homelessness. It will be built in less than a year using prefab construction materials on a site where more than 700 unsheltered individuals live within a two-mile radius, based on the most recent Homeless Count.

Safe Landing will rise from what is currently a 3.1-acre dirt lot next to the West Athens Sheriff's station and Probation office. Once completed in Fall 2020, Safe Landing will be open and accessible 24/7, providing as many as 188 clients on any given day with food and a place to sleep, as well as comprehensive health, mental health and substance abuse treatments and intensive case management services to put them on a path to stable and supportive housing.

The Los Angeles County Department of Health Services' Housing for Health Division will oversee Safe Landing in partnership with Exodus Recovery, a highly qualified and experienced clinical service provider. The service delivery model will prioritize clients from the surrounding community and remove some of the barriers traditionally imposed by temporary homeless shelters. This means clients at Safe Landing will be allowed to bring their pets, continue living with their partners, and have access to a secure location in which to store their belongings.

"When an individual living on the streets is ready to come indoors, it is critical that we

have the ability to take them in right away – whether it’s 3:00 in the afternoon or 3:00 in the morning,” said Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, who spearheaded the project. “Safe Landing will be open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and individuals can come as they are. We will not only welcome them with open arms, but make sure Safe Landing is equipped with both the physical and professional know-how to best address their individualized needs.”

Safe Landing has been embraced by the surrounding community, including the leaders and members of the West Athens Task Force and St. Francis Cabrini Church, the latter located across the street. In the spirit of the holiday season, Exodus Recovery and community members will make handwritten notes to include in holiday gift bags for the homeless, each with a hygiene kit, bottled water, and snack pack.



###