



Perris News

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"March LifeCare" Project Breaks Ground

Perris City officials joined with representatives of the March Joint Powers Authority this week to break ground on what they called a one-of-a-kind medical campus that will provide Inland Empire residents with healthcare from cradle to grave.

The 236-acre, 6 million-square-foot "March LifeCare Campus" will provide neonatal care, ambulatory care facilities, medical office buildings, skilled nursing centers, assisted living quarters and hospice care. The complex, to be constructed on property once belonging to March Air Force Base, is expected to provide up to 7,500 jobs and pump up to \$3 billion into the Inland Area's economy.

Just as importantly, speakers who addressed a crowd of supporters at the recent groundbreaking emphasized, the complex will raise the profile of Riverside County throughout all of Southern California and lure high-tech companies like pharmaceutical and medical-device makers to the region.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch and City Council members Mark Yarbrough and Joanne Evans represented the City at the ground-breaking.

Mayor Busch and Councilman Yarbrough serve on the March Joint Powers Commission, the agency working with its sister organization, the March Joint Powers Authority, to convert the former military site to a civilian jobs hub. Councilwoman Evans served on a citizens group known as the March Life Care Advisory Board.

They joined with U.S. Rep Ken Calvert, Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley and other regional representatives in the ceremonial ground-breaking. Construction on the campus is expected to begin this summer with the demolition of a former military hospital.

"The old gives way to the new," Calvert said. "This hospital will be a real asset to aging baby boomers. The City of Perris has played a key role over the years in bringing many important improvements to March in recent years, all of which have helped the common good. This new hospital will be a gem to this region. It is one of the few hospitals that meet seismic requirements. A lot of hard work has gone into the campus. It will mean thousands of jobs for this area. That is the issue of the day."

Evans said the hospital will make use of graduates from a new UCR medical school and from the Ben Clark Training Center, home of a paramedic and emergency medical technician training center. She said the March Health Care Campus also will keep Inland patients from having to drive to Los Angeles for medical treatment, which will reduce greenhouse gas pollution.

"There is something for everybody," Evans said.

Busch called the ground-breaking ceremony "a great day for the JPA."

"This is huge for healthcare, for the economy, for Perris," Busch said. "Perris will benefit from this campus."

Yarbrough said the health-care campus grew out of the JPA's ability—much like that of the City of Perris—to partner with like-minded organizations. Catholic Healthcare West and San Bernadine Medical Center have joined the team committed to making the March LifeCare Campus a reality.

Supervisor Ashley, a Perris native, said Riverside County is an exceptional county, but one until now is lacking in medical infrastructure. March LifeCare changes all that.

"This will be the center of gravity for quality health care in Riverside County, if not the entire Inland Empire," he said.

"This is a turning point in the history of our county."



Perris City Councilwoman Joanne Evans chats with U.S. Rep. Ken Calvert at the ground-breaking for the March LifeCare Campus.



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch, U.S. Rep. Ken Calvert and Lori Stone, executive director of the March Joint Powers Authority, discuss the impact of the new medical complex at the former March Air Force Base.



Schematic of the proposed medical campus.



Perris City Councilwoman Joanne Evans, Moreno Valley City Councilman Bill Batey, U.S. Rep. Ken Calvert and Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley at the ceremony.