

**Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Responses to Veterans and Community Oversight
and Engagement Board (VCOEB)**

June 2022 Recommendations

Recommendation 17-01: The Secretary of Veterans Affairs instruct the leadership of the Greater LA VA to treat each negative move-out from Department of Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing Program (HUD-VASH) permanent supportive housing as a critical incident that should be reviewed by root cause analysis, in detail, monthly by the VAGLA leadership to better understand the circumstances around HUD-VASH discharges with the goal to improve quality of care and reduce the rate of discharges.

VA Response: Concur-in-Principle.

VA agrees with and appreciates the VCOEB's recommendation to refine the analysis for the HUD-VASH permanent supportive housing metrics and provides the following information for the VCOEB's awareness:

- Each negative exit from HUD-VASH or negative move-out from housing, and from any VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System (VAGLAHS) Community Engagement and Reintegration Service (CERS) program, does need to be reviewed for accuracy, fairness and appropriate discharge planning. HUD-VASH, and the other CERS program managers review the negative discharges as they occur. Questionable discharges are reviewed with staff and reevaluated as needed. VA continues to strive to improve our oversight and review of the negative discharge processes.
- Greater Los Angeles (GLA) CERS is working with the local housing authorities to track negative move-outs, review the causes and track trends to identify any root cause of the negative move-outs.

Recommendation 17-02-A: The Secretary of Veterans Affairs identify which VA office is most appropriate to lead transformation of the North Campus, consistent with the Master Plan 2022, and empower that office with the authority to request, prioritize and implement projects through VA's regular budget process.

VA Response: Concur.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs (SECVA) will work with VA's Office of General Counsel (OGC), VA's Office of Asset Enterprise Management (OAEM) and VAGLAHS to determine and empower the most appropriate office, or offices, within VA to lead the transformation of the North Campus and satisfy the objectives of Master Plan 2022.

Recommendation 17-02-B: The Secretary of Veterans Affairs instruct the appropriate office that all budget requests necessary for turnover of VA parcels to lessees appear in the Strategic Capital Improvement Plan (SCIP) by parcel number/descriptor moving forward.

VA Response: Concur.

SECVA will work with VA's Office of Budget and OAEM to instruct Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 22 that all budget requests necessary for turnover of VA parcels to lessees on the VA West LA Campus appear in VISN 22's SCIP by parcel number/descriptor moving forward. VA will update SCIP guidance to ensure the parcel number/descriptor is included for each applicable project.

Recommendation 17-02-C: The Secretary of Veterans Affairs instruct the appropriate VA office that all budget requests necessary for installation of required infrastructure projects on the VA West LA Campus appear in the Strategic Capital Improvement Plan (SCIP) moving forward.

VA Response: Concur.

SECVA will work with VA's Office of Budget and OAEM to continue to instruct VISN 22 that all budget requests necessary for installation of required infrastructure projects on the VA West LA Campus appear in VISN 22's SCIP moving forward. While it is already a SCIP requirement to include all above threshold capital requirements, specific guidance to include all enhanced-use lease (EUL)-related capital investments will be implemented going forward.

Recommendation 17-02-D: The Secretary of Veterans Affairs create a similar budget forecasting mechanism to VA's Five-Year Development Plan for the purpose of advising Congress what future budget requirements are necessary, and when, to execute Master Plan 2022 and successor Master Plans.

VA Response: Concur-in-Principle.

SECVA will work with VA's Office of Budget and OAEM to include the known budget requirements related to implementation of the Master Plan in the budget submittal. Not all funding related to the Master Plan originates in VA, and therefore cannot be included. In addition, requirements for specific years beyond the budget year can only be depicted hypothetically as they will not have gone through the budget process. VISN 22 is currently using available forecasting tools and resources to appropriately plan the funding outlays, project requirements and timing to ensure continued Veteran care operations while facilitating additional housing and infrastructure upgrades.

Recommendation 17-03-A: The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, empowered by precedent established by the 50th and subsequent Congresses, provide a declaration that the existing property within the VA West Los Angeles Medical Center campus

located north of Wilshire Boulevard revert to its historical name "Pacific Branch" in honor of its exceptional founding and legacy.

VA Response: Non-Concur.

VA understands the benefit of distinguishing between VA health care operations on the South Campus and the Veteran community envisioned on the North Campus. SECVA continues to work with OGC to provide guidance on naming conventions based on existing law and will ensure such guidance evaluates the extent to which VA may revert to historical names to rename portions of the West LA Campus.

Recommendation 17-03-B: The Secretary of Veterans Affairs instruct the VA Office of Budget to identify the location of future budget requests necessary for execution of Master Plan 2022, and future Master Plans, as "Pacific Branch" instead of Los Angeles or West Los Angeles.

VA Response: Non-Concur.

SECVA will work with VA's Office of Budget, OGC, OAEM and VAGLAHS to determine the feasibility of this recommendation.

Recommendation 17-03-C: The Secretary of Veterans Affairs work in partnership with the United States Postal Service to create "90073-1887" as the official Zip+4 code for "Pacific Branch, California" in reference to the current VA West Los Angeles Medical Center's North Campus.

VA Response: Non-Concur.

SECVA will work with the United States Postal Service, OGC, OAEM and VAGLAHS to determine the feasibility of this recommendation.

Recommendation 17-03-D: The Secretary of Veterans Affairs request that the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority refer to the planned Metro Station on campus as the "Pacific Branch / VA Hospital" station.

VA Response: Non-Concur.

SECVA will work with the LA County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, OGC, OAEM and VAGLAHS to determine the feasibility of this recommendation.

Recommendation 17-03-E: The Secretary of Veterans Affairs develop procedures and opportunities for Veteran input to naming of neighborhoods, communities and buildings on the residential campus.

VA Response: Non-Concur.

SECVA will work with OGC, OAEM and VAGLAHS to determine the feasibility of this recommendation and identify opportunities for Veteran input to personalize the North Campus and develop a community with a renewed sense of place and belonging.

Recommendation 17-04-A: The Secretary of Veterans Affairs task the appropriate VA office to complete further study of VA support services required for sustainment and land availability in the Auxiliary Services area. Again, VCOEB encourages the Department to evaluate the feasibility of constructing new VA support facilities in the South Campus Opportunity Area (Recommendation 15-01-E).

VA Response: Concur.

SECVA will task the VAGLAHS Office of Strategic, Facility, & Master Planning for further study of the Auxiliary Services Area identified in Master Plan 2022. By way of reference, Master Plan 2022 contemplates the modernization and suggested phasing for Medical Center and Research functions in the South Campus. Since constructing new VA support facilities in the South Campus is not compatible with the objectives of Master Plan 2022, VAGLAHS is reluctant to recommend any deviation from the planning guidance articulated in the recently finalized Master Plan 2022.

Recommendation 17-04-B: The Secretary of Veterans Affairs task the appropriate VA office to begin environmental analysis studies required for development of Conceptual Project Area D identified in Master Plan 2022.

VA Response: Concur.

SECVA will task the VA Office of Construction & Facilities Management Environmental Program Office to evaluate the environmental analysis studies required for development of Conceptual Project Area D identified in Master Plan 2022 and commence appropriate actions.

Recommendation 17-05-A: The Secretary of Veterans Affairs direct the Office of General Counsel to determine whether the operation of the Town Center by the Principal Developer is something that was contemplated by the VA-Principal Developer MOU.

VA Response: Concur-in-Principle.

The OGC continues to work with OAEM and SECVA to provide legal guidance on implementing Master Plan 2022.

The VA-Principal Developer Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was executed in March 2019. The document memorialized the intent of the parties as VA and Principal Developer worked to negotiate and execute an EUL for the site. The MOU has since been superseded by the Principal Developer EUL executed on June 29, 2022.

Pursuant to the terms of the Principal Developer EUL, the Principal Developer “may use the Property during the Term only for the Project” which is defined as the financing, design, development, construction, operation and maintenance of supportive housing for homeless and at-risk Veterans and their families thereon consisting of not less than 900 tenant units. The Town Center must be consistent with the terms of the EUL statute and West LA Leasing Act of 2016. “Supportive housing” is defined by statute as “housing that engages tenants in on-site and community-based support services for veterans or their families that are at risk of homelessness or are homeless.” The West LA Leasing Act of 2016 also provides authority to lease land and buildings for the provision of services that principally benefit Veterans and their families.

Recommendation 17-05-B: The Secretary of Veterans Affairs obtain technical assistance from an objective third-party for the purpose of appropriately defining the parameters of a vibrant Town Center on campus (including audience, purpose, and program). The product of this engagement may assist the Department in assessing the feasibility of a Request for Qualifications solicitation, per the Secretary’s response to Recommendation 15-01-B.

VA Response: Concur.

SECVA will work with OGC, OAEM and VAGLAHS to obtain objective third-party technical assistance with respect to the parameters of the proposed Town Center.