

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

**SAN FRANCISCO VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER
LONG RANGE DEVELOPMENT PLAN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

RECORD OF DECISION

AUGUST 28, 2015

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) assessed the potential environmental impacts that may result from construction and operation of the San Francisco Veterans Affairs Medical Center (SFVAMC) Long Range Development Plan (LRDP). An environmental impact statement (EIS) was prepared in accordance with the regulations set forth by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1500-1508) for implementing the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as well as VA regulations for implementing NEPA (Environmental Effects of VA Actions [38 CFR Part 26]). The Final EIS Notice of Availability (NOA) was published in the Federal Register on June 26, 2015. The Final EIS is summarized herein and incorporated by reference into this Record of Decision (ROD). If no new information leading to a contrary finding is identified by VA during the 30-day period following publication of the Final EIS Notice of Availability (NOA) in the Federal Register on July 9, 2015, this ROD will be signed and become final.

Background

SFVAMC development alternatives were presented to the public during a 2010 NEPA Scoping Period. The purpose of the scoping period was to provide an opportunity for agencies and members of the public to comment on potential environmental issues and the scope of the EIS. Public comments received during the scoping period, including concerns about additional Campus development as well as traffic and parking, were taken into consideration as preparation of the EIS was initiated.

A feasibility analysis of alternatives was then conducted by VA that considered location, functional arrangements, and development costs in the LRDP. VA determined that it was infeasible to completely move to a new location due to extraordinary high costs and length of time it would take to relocate the entire SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus to another location within San Francisco. The Campus at Fort Miley was determined to have the greatest potential for reuse and development given VA's ownership of the federal land where it is currently located. The existing Campus already meets the necessary requirement to have an arrangement of medical center facilities that contain interrelated functions between clinical, research, and education uses at one location. In consideration of public comments received during EIS scoping, VA reduced the originally proposed development square footage size and further refined the alternatives. This resulted in two EIS action alternatives that were then presented during a second NEPA Scoping Period in 2011. These alternatives were analyzed along with scoping comments and presented in the August 2012 Draft EIS.

Comments received following publication of the 2012 Draft EIS, coupled with refinements to individual project designs and the overall master plan, resulted in revised proposed development plans, resulting in three proposed action alternatives. These were presented in a June 2014 community meeting for yet additional comments. Based upon the extended time and revisions to the proposed actions, VA elected to implement and intermediate NEPA step, by executing a Supplemental Draft EIS analyses, results of which were presented in the March 2015 Supplemental Draft EIS.

VA reviewed and considered comments received during the 2015 Supplemental Draft EIS Comment Period, making edits as appropriate. None of these resulted in significant changes to the proposed action alternatives or conclusions of the respective resources area analyses. The Final EIS was published in June 2015.

VA's Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1), identified and analyzed in both the Supplemental Draft EIS and Final EIS, is similar to, however with an accelerated construction phasing scenario, as that presented on Alternative 2 for the same uses at the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus.

Purpose and Need

The principal purpose for the Proposed Action is to meet VHA's mission of providing comprehensive, high-quality health care services that improve the health and well-being of Veterans and other eligible persons in the San Francisco Bay Area and Northern California. The need for the Proposed Action is to address the area's current and future capacity issues brought about by the growing Veteran population, to better serve the ever-changing health care needs of the growing Veteran population, and to provide safe and appropriate facilities for health care services as well as for conducting research.

The mission of SFVAMC is to continue to be a major primary and tertiary care medical center and to provide high-quality care to eligible Veterans in the San Francisco Bay Area and on the North Coast. SFVAMC strives to deliver needed care to Veterans while contributing to health care knowledge through research and education. SFVAMC is also a ready resource for Department of Defense backup, serving as a Federal Coordinating Center in the event of a national emergency. SFVAMC, the only VA Medical Center in San Francisco, has major space deficiencies at its existing Fort Miley Campus. The construction initiatives would transform the Campus over the next 15 years, providing seismic improvements and additional facility space. By implementing the Preferred Alternative, VA can continue to meet its mission and more effectively integrate clinical care, education, and research functions within the existing Campus, which will result in more efficient and progressive care for Veterans.

The rationale for choosing the Preferred Alternative from among the range of alternatives considered and evaluated was based on the degree to which each alternative satisfied multiple objectives as stated in the purpose and need. These principal objectives include geographic location, adequate site size, and land use compatibility; land use availability and cost; engineering feasibility; accessibility to existing utility infrastructure and transportation networks; consistency with local and regional planning efforts considering economic and commercial needs; and minimization of seismic safety impacts.

Description of Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1)

The VA Preferred Alternative consists of LRDP construction, retrofitting, and operation on the 29-acre Fort Miley Campus to meet current seismic safety requirements and provide an additional 589,000 square feet of medical facility space, so that SFVAMC can continue offering combined clinical, research, and educational programs to satisfy the needs of all San Francisco Bay Area and North Coast Veterans over the next 15 years. Under the Preferred Alternative, VA would construct the LRDP in phases. The first phase would include 384,000 gross square feet (gsf) of net new development as well as seismic retrofits scheduled for completion by 2020. The second phase would include an additional 170,000 gsf of net new development scheduled for completion by 2026.

Description of Other Alternatives

In addition to the chosen Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1) described above, the following alternatives were included in the EIS and received a detailed analysis; their differences are summarized below.

Alternative Construction Phasing (Alternative 2)

Under Alternative 2, construction and operation of the LRDP would also occur on the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus. However, the construction phasing would be stretched out with seismic retrofit of Buildings 1, 6, and 8 not occurring until Phase 2.

SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus Plus Mission Bay Campus (Alternative 3)

Under Alternative 3, construction and operation of LRDP Phase 1 uses would also occur on the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus. However, the construction and operation of LRDP Phase 2 uses would be located offsite at a potential new SFVAMC Mission Bay Campus.

No Action (Alternative 4)

Under the No Action alternative, no VA facilities would be constructed or retrofitted on the site. On-site activities would be limited to maintenance, cleanup, and other actions associated with VA's ownership of the site. No seismic improvements would be made, limiting the reuse of existing buildings.

Summary of Environmental Consequences

The Final EIS evaluates the potential direct, indirect, short-term, and long-term impacts on the human and natural environment resulting from the Proposed Action for the No-Action Alternative, Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative), Alternative 2, and Alternative 3. Resource areas examined in the Final EIS include aesthetics; air quality; community services; cultural resources; floodplains, wetlands, and coastal management; geology, soils and paleontological resources; greenhouse gas emission and climate change; hydrology and water quality; land use; noise and vibration; socioeconomic and environmental justice; solid and hazardous materials and hazards; transportation, traffic, and parking; utilities and service systems; and wildlife and habitat. The Final EIS also addresses potential cumulative impacts that may result from other reasonably foreseeable projects in the project area.

Minor Impacts

Resource areas for which impacts were concluded to be minor were Aesthetics; Community Services; Land Use; Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice; and Solid and Hazardous Materials and Hazards. The Preferred Alternative would not substantially contribute, in conjunction with effects from other projects or activities in the project area, to cumulative impacts related to these resource areas on the affected environment.

Minor Impacts with Management Measures

Resource areas for which potential adverse impacts were concluded to be minor with commonly designed and implemented management measures were Floodplains, Wetlands, and Coastal Management; Geology, Soils, and Paleontological Resources; Hydrology and Water Quality; Transportation, Traffic, and Parking; and Utilities. The Preferred Alternative would not substantially contribute, in conjunction with effects from other projects or activities in the project area, to cumulative impacts related to these resource areas on the affected environment. Management measures included in the EIS for the following minor impacted resource areas include:

Floodplains, Wetlands, and Coastal Management

Management Measure Hydrology (HYD)-1: Prepare and Submit Final Drainage Plans and Implement Requirements Contained in Those Plans

Before the approval of grading plans and building permits, SFVAMC will submit final drainage plans to SFPUC for all projects demonstrating that off-site up-gradient runoff would be appropriately conveyed

through the project site, and that project-related on-site runoff would be appropriately contained to reduce flooding impacts. The plans will include but will not be limited to the following items:

1. SFVAMC will conduct a utility investigation before and during project design to ensure that combined sewer infrastructure is properly sized to handle stormwater and wastewater flows. An accurate calculation of preproject and postproject runoff scenarios will be obtained using appropriate engineering methods that accurately evaluate potential changes to runoff, including increased surface runoff. This investigation will estimate stormwater and sanitary sewer peak flows and identify potential conflicts between proposed new buildings and existing sanitary sewer and storm drain pipes.
2. The system capacity of the separate storm drain system that drains areas to the north of the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus will be determined as part of a hydrologic and hydraulic analysis of stormwater flows during project design.

Drainage and storm sewer systems will be designed in accordance with VA's Site Utility Design Manual, which requires that a hydrologic assessment be conducted for the 2-, 5-, 10-, 50- and 100-year storm events, and that the system be sized for a minimum 10-year, 1-hour storm event.

3. Sustainable stormwater design Best Management Practices (MBP), which may include but will not be limited to LID techniques to eliminate stormwater runoff at the point of origination, will be implemented to infiltrate, evaporate, and detain stormwater and achieve predevelopment stormwater runoff conditions at the site after construction. These BMPs may include but will not be limited to the following:

- Bioretention and rain gardens
- Rooftop green roof gardens
- Sidewalk storage
- Vegetated swales, buffers, and strips
- Rain barrels and cisterns
- Permeable pavement
- Soil amendments

Geology, Soils, and Paleontological Resources

Management Measure GEO-1: Implement Properly Designed Shoring Systems or Temporary Slopes during Construction to Avoid Unstable Excavations

The proper shoring design or temporary excavation sides (slopes) will depend on the soil type, extent of groundwater seepage, the height or depth of the excavation, the inclination of the excavation, and the amount of time that the excavation will remain open. These factors will be taken into consideration by structural engineers responsible for the design and will reference the geotechnical recommendations made in Treadwell & Rollo (2010) and ENGEO (2008). When excavations are made adjacent to sensitive structures (i.e., buildings of historic significance, equipment with little tolerance to settlement, or critical facilities and utilities), monitoring of ground surface and structures shall occur so that the amount of settlement or movement does not exceed acceptable levels.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Management Measure HYD-1: Prepare and Submit Final Drainage Plans and Implement Requirements Contained in Those Plans (see Floodplains, Wetlands, and Coastal Management above for full text)

Transportation, Traffic, and Parking

Management Measure TRANS-1: Implement Protective Measures for Traffic, Transit, and Pedestrians if Pedestrian Facilities or Travel Lanes Require Closure during Construction

Should construction activities require the closure of sidewalks or other pedestrian facilities within or outside of the Campus, SFVAMC will implement protective measures and erect equipment to ensure pedestrian safety. In high-conflict areas (either vehicle/pedestrian or vehicle/vehicle) such as access gates into construction sites, flag workers will be deployed to minimize traffic and pedestrian disruption and ensure the safety of Campus users.

Should it be determined that any travel lanes would require closure during construction, SFVAMC will coordinate the lane closures with the City to minimize impacts on local traffic. In general, temporary traffic and transportation changes must be coordinated through SFMTA's Interdepartmental Staff Committee on Traffic and Transportation and require a public meeting. As part of this process, the construction management plan may be reviewed by SFMTA's Transportation Advisory Committee to resolve internal differences between different transportation modes. SFVAMC will follow the Regulations for Working in San Francisco Streets ("The Blue Book") and will reimburse SFMTA for the costs of installation and removal of temporary striping and signage changes required during construction.

SFVAMC and its construction contractors will meet with SFMTA, the San Francisco Fire Department, the San Francisco Planning Department, and other City agencies to determine feasible measures to reduce any construction-related effects, including any potential transit disruption and pedestrian circulation impacts that would occur off-site during LRDP construction. To this effect, SFVAMC and its construction contractor(s) will implement the following measures:

- *Schedule most construction-related travel (i.e., deliveries, hauling, and worker trips) to occur during off-peak hours.*
- *Develop on-site detour routes to facilitate traffic movement through construction zones.*
- *Where feasible, temporarily restripe roadways—such as turn lanes, through lanes, and parking lanes—at affected locations to minimize driver confusion and optimize traffic flow.*
- *Where feasible, temporarily remove on-street parking to secure adequate traffic flow at those locations affected by construction closures.*
- *Post signage to encourage drivers to proceed at slower, safer travel speeds through construction zones.*
- *Develop and implement an outreach program to inform the general public about the construction process and planned roadway closures.*

Management Measure TRANS-2: Implement Protective Measures for Traffic, Transit, and Pedestrians during the Presence of Temporary Modular Structures on Campus

During the presence of temporary modular structures on the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus as construction proceeds, SFVAMC will implement protective measures to ensure pedestrian safety and minimize impacts on local traffic. Potential measures could include the following:

- *Enhance signage and striping to reinforce the current one-way circulation pattern around Lot B.*
- *Discourage illegal parking, whether curbside along the east side of Veterans Drive adjacent to Building 8 (Mental Health) and Building 9 (Hoptel) or elsewhere in and around Lot B.*

- Temporarily relocate curbside parking along the east side of Veterans Drive to other parts of the Campus.
- Temporarily convert any remaining parking spaces in Lot B from perpendicular parking to parallel parking.

Pedestrian crossings at blind spots or locations with limited visibility for drivers (such as between modular structures) will also be discouraged, or will be properly designed with high-visibility markings and signage that force drivers to slow or stop. Adequate access for ambulances transporting patients to the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus and emergency vehicles responding to Campus emergencies will be preserved at all times. Specific details of temporary measures to address any potential effects on Campus circulation will be discussed between SFVAMC and the general contractors during the construction planning process, at which time the magnitude of such effects can be more readily ascertained.

Management Measure TRANS-3: Implement Protective Measures for Traffic, Transit, and Pedestrians during Overlapping Construction Projects Located Close to Each Other on Campus

SFVAMC will serve as a liaison between the various general contractors for each construction project for coordination of construction-related activities to minimize potential secondary effects on SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus circulation. SFVAMC will collaborate with contractors to secure adequate haul truck access and minimize disruption of Campus user access, considering a variety of potential solutions such as limiting haul truck access to specific Campus access points or Campus roadways. In the case of Building 40 and the Building 209 and Building 211 extensions, for example, haul trucks could be restricted to the Campus's 43rd Avenue entrance, minimizing impacts on circulation in the patient/visitor zone of the Campus.

Utilities

Management Measure HYD-1: Prepare and Submit Final Drainage Plans and Implement Requirements Contained in Those Plans (see Floodplains, Wetlands, and Coastal Management above for full text)

Minor Impacts with Mitigation Measures

The resource areas for which potential adverse impacts were determined to be more substantial were Air Quality; Cultural Resources; Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change; Noise and Vibration, Transportation, Traffic, and Parking; and Wildlife and Habitat. The impacts associated with these resource areas and the mitigation measures reducing these impacts to a minor level are discussed below. The Preferred Alternative would not substantially contribute, in conjunction with effects from other projects or activities in the project area, to cumulative impacts related to these resource areas on the affected environment.

Air Quality

The Proposed Action (Alternative 1) would result in a potentially adverse impact related to air quality, specifically related to exposure to toxic air contaminants during construction of certain LRDP sub-phases. To reduce the potential adverse impact of the Preferred Alternative to a minor level, VA will implement the following mitigation measure:

Mitigation Measure AIR-1: Employ Tier 4 Engines in Construction Equipment for Alternative 1 for Specific Short-Term Projects

VA will employ Tier 4 engines in construction equipment or the equivalent retrofitted construction equipment to achieve Tier 4 engine emission standards during Phases 1.7, 1.8, 1.10, and 1.13.

Cultural Resources

The Proposed Action (Alternative 1) would result in a potentially adverse impact related to cultural resources, specifically related to effects on archeological deposits during construction and effects on historic properties from demolition or new construction within the SFVAMC Historic District. To reduce the potential adverse impact of the Preferred Alternative to a minor level, VA will implement the following mitigation measures:

Mitigation Measure CR-1: Implement Stipulation V of the PA, “Inadvertent Discoveries”

If archaeological deposits are discovered during implementation of the LRDP, all ground disturbance will immediately stop within 50 feet (15 meters) of the discovery, and the location of the discovery will be marked for avoidance. A qualified archaeologist will recommend to SFVAMC whether the discovery is NRHP eligible by evaluating it in accordance with 36 CFR 60.4. SFVAMC will submit its finding to the SHPO for review and concurrence via e-mail. If SFVAMC finds that the archaeological resource is not eligible for the NRHP, and if the SHPO concurs or does not comment within 7 days, construction may proceed at the discretion of SFVAMC. If SFVAMC finds that the archaeological resource is eligible for the NRHP, and if the SHPO concurs or does not comment within 7 days, SFVAMC will seek to avoid the historic property. If it cannot avoid the resource, SFVAMC will prepare and implement a data recovery plan. The SHPO will be afforded the opportunity to review reports describing the evaluation, finding of effect, and proposed treatment of inadvertent discoveries. However, these reports will not be posted to the LRDP Web site because of the protected and sensitive nature of archaeological information.

Mitigation Measure CR-2: Remove the Temporary Modular Swing Space Following Completion of Short-Term Projects

To mitigate impacts on the SFVAMC Historic District, SFVAMC will remove the temporary modular swing space following completion of the short-term project phase or after approximately 35 months.

Mitigation Measure CR-3: Implement Stipulations III and IV of the PA to Reduce Impacts on the SFVAMC Historic District. This includes implementation of the following PA Mitigation Measures that are contained within Stipulation IV.

SFVAMC will mitigate for the LRDP’s adverse effects on historic properties, including the effects of demolition of Buildings 18 and 20, new construction within the SFVAMC Historic District, and the cumulative effects of the LRDP as a whole, by creating the following:

- a. Historic District Design Guidelines (HDDG): SFVAMC will prepare design guidelines for the SFVAMC Historic District, interpreting the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (SOISTHP) and applicable guidelines in the context of the significance, integrity, and character-defining features of the SFVAMC Historic District and, as applicable to Category C projects, the Fort Miley Military Reservation Historic District. SFVAMC will ensure that all exterior projects occurring within the SFVAMC Historic District apply the design guidelines beginning with project planning and design development. The HDDG will cover both the architectural and landscape qualities of the SFVAMC Historic District, as well as provide advice for designing projects in the context of the Fort*

Miley Military Reservation Historic District. The HDDG will also consider vegetative screening along the boundaries, and determine whether such screening would improve the historical integrity of the SFVAMC Historic District and/or the Fort Miley Military Reservation Historic District.

- i. SFVAMC will provide a draft of the HDDG to Consulting Parties by September 8, 2014.*
 - ii. SFVAMC will post the draft HDDG to its LRDP website and will notify Consulting Parties of this posting and their 30-day comment period.*
 - iii. SFVAMC will consider comments received during this period as it finalizes the HDDG.*
 - iv. SFVAMC will post the final HDDG to its LRDP website by April 3, 2015, and will notify Consulting Parties of this posting.*
- b. Historic Landscape Study (HLS): SFVAMC will prepare a Historic Landscape Study for the SFVAMC Historic District to document its landscape qualities, including the original design concept, the historical evolution of landscape characteristics, the significance of the landscape design, and the way in which the current landscape contributes to the eligibility of the SFVAMC Historic District.*
- i. By or about April 30, 2015, SFVAMC will prepare a draft work plan for development of an HLS; specifying the content, methods and standards for preparation process for review by Consulting Parties, timeline for completion, and estimated cost.*
 - ii. SFVAMC will post the draft HLS work plan to its LRDP website and will notify Consulting Parties of this posting and their 30-day comment period.*
 - iii. SFVAMC will consider comments received during this period as it finalizes the HLS work plan.*
 - iv. SFVAMC will post the final HLS work plan to its LRDP website by October 1, 2015, and will notify Consulting Parties of this posting. SFVAMC will prepare the HLS in accordance with the final HLS work plan.*
- c. Public Interpretation Program (PIP): SFVAMC will design and implement a public interpretation program related to its history. The PIP shall include, but not be limited to, a permanent display in a publicly accessible space at the Medical Center.*
- i. By or about March 1, 2015, SFVAMC will prepare a draft work plan for the PIP defining the objectives of the PIP, specifying the media with which the program will be developed (with consideration of typical media such as displays in publically accessible places, oral history recordation, traveling exhibits, popular publications, and/or websites), and defining themes that will be conveyed by the program. In addition, the PIP work plan will specify the timeline and milestones for implementation of the program and preparation of the individual media and will provide an estimate of associated costs. The PIP work plan will specify how individual interpretive media will be funded and prepared in tandem with LRDP sub-phases that contribute to the adverse effect on historic properties.*
 - ii. SFVAMC will post the draft PIP work plan to its LRDP website and will notify Consulting Parties of this posting and their 30-day comment period.*
 - iii. SFVAMC will consider comments received during this period as it finalizes the PIP work plan.*

- iv. SFVAMC will post the final PIP work plan to its LRDP website by October 1, 2015, or before demolishing Buildings 18 and 20 – whichever is earlier, and will notify the Consulting Parties of this posting. SFVAMC will implement the PIP in accordance with the final work plan.
- d. *Historic Preservation Treatment and Maintenance Plan (HPTMP): SFVAMC will prepare a historic preservation treatment and maintenance plan applicable to the resources that contribute to the SFVAMC Historic District. The HPTMP will include procedures for cyclical, routine, and emergency treatment and maintenance activities to ensure that such activities are performed in accordance with federal guidelines and current best practices in the historic preservation industry.*
- i. *By or about March 1, 2015, SFVAMC will prepare a draft work plan for the HPTMP to define the objectives, milestones, and timeline for the HPTMP.*
 - ii. *SFVAMC will post the draft HPTMP work plan to its LRDP website and will notify Consulting Parties of this posting and their 30-day comment period.*
 - iii. *SFVAMC will consider comments received during this period as it finalizes the HPTMP work plan.*
 - iv. *SFVAMC will post the final HPTMP work plan to its LRDP website by October 1, 2015, and will notify the Consulting Parties of this posting. SFVAMC will prepare and implement the HPTMP in accordance with the final work plan.*
- e. *As Mitigation Measures a, b, c, and d are being developed, SFVAMC may continue to consult on individual LRDP sub-phases, in accordance with Stipulation III above.*

Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change

The Proposed Action (Alternative 1) would result in a potentially adverse impact related to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, specifically related to potential wildfire risk exacerbated by climate change effects such as drought. To reduce the potential adverse impact of the Preferred Alternative to a minor level, VA will implement the following mitigation measure:

Mitigation Measure GHG-1: Maintain Foliage on Campus and Coordinate with Other Jurisdictions to Maintain Foliage Adjacent to Campus

SFVAMC will maintain its foliage on the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus by conducting an annual foliage survey and then conducting appropriate pruning and/or removal actions. In addition, SFVAMC will coordinate with GGNRA and the City and County of San Francisco to ensure those agencies maintain foliage on their adjacent properties to minimize fuel load for potential wildfires that could affect the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus.

Noise and Vibration

The Proposed Action (Alternative 1) would result in potentially adverse impact related to noise and vibration, specifically related to exterior noise levels at on-site receptors and vibration levels at buildings near construction areas and within buildings containing sensitive medical equipment. To reduce the potential adverse impact of the Preferred Alternative to a minor level, VA will implement the following mitigation measures:

Mitigation Measure NOI-1: Monitor Construction Noise Levels and Implement Additional Noise-Attenuating Features

VA will monitor exterior noise levels at on-site receptors located closest to a particular construction site for a 24-hour period at the onset of each major phase of construction (e.g., demolition, trenching, structure erection). If noise levels are found to exceed 55 dBA Ldn, VA will implement additional measures to reduce noise levels at affected on-site receptors as a result of construction noise. These additional measures may include but are not limited to relocating occupied patient beds to other areas of the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus, installing temporary acoustic attenuating features/barriers, preventing the line of sight between the receptor in question and noise source, and providing in-room sound-masking equipment (e.g., white noise).

Mitigation Measure NOI-2: Conduct a Preconstruction Survey of Buildings in the Vicinity of Proposed Construction

The preexisting condition of all buildings within a 50-foot radius of construction areas (where large construction equipment would be utilized) will be recorded in the form of a preconstruction survey. The preconstruction survey will determine conditions that exist before construction begins and will be used to evaluate damage caused by construction activities. Fixtures and finishes within a 50-foot radius of construction activities susceptible to damage will be documented photographically and in writing before construction. All buildings damaged will be repaired to their preexisting condition.

Mitigation Measure NOI-3: Monitor Vibration-Sensitive Equipment during Construction

Vibration levels will be monitored at the nearest interior location of adjacent medical structures containing vibration-sensitive equipment to monitor potential impacts from construction related to this alternative. In the event that measured vibration levels exceed 65 VdB and would disturb the operation of sensitive medical equipment, additional measures will be implemented to the extent necessary and feasible. These measures include providing notice to equipment operators to coordinate regarding the timing of construction activities showing vibration levels above 65 VdB, possibly temporarily relocating the sensitive equipment, and/or installing isolation equipment (i.e., vibration-dampening mounts).

Transportation, Traffic, and Parking

The Proposed Action (Alternative 1) would result in potentially adverse impact related to transportation, traffic, and parking, specifically related to construction-related traffic, parking spillover off the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus, and ADA parking and accessibility. To reduce the potential adverse impact of the Preferred Alternative to a minor level, VA will implement the following mitigation measures:

Mitigation Measure TRANS-1: Use Identified Truck Haul Routes and Implement Queue Abatement Program

SFVAMC will use only a combination of the three haul truck routes identified below for LRDP construction-related activities:

- From points north of the Campus: U.S. 101 → SR 1 (Veterans Boulevard/Park Presidio Boulevard) → Geary Boulevard → Point Lobos Avenue → 42nd Avenue or 43rd Avenue*
- From points south of the Campus: I-280 → SR 1 (Junipero Serra Boulevard/19th Avenue/Crossover Drive/Park Presidio Boulevard) → Geary Boulevard → Point Lobos Avenue → 42nd Avenue or 43rd Avenue; or, alternatively, U.S. 101 (Bayshore Freeway/Central Freeway) → Mission Street → U.S. 101 (Van Ness Avenue) → Geary Boulevard → Point Lobos Avenue → 42nd Avenue or 43rd Avenue*
- From points east of the Campus: I-80 → U.S. 101 (Central Freeway) → Mission Street → U.S. 101 (Van Ness Avenue) → Geary Boulevard → Point Lobos Avenue → 42nd Avenue or 43rd Avenue*

Use of alternative routes, particularly through the surrounding neighborhoods, is actively discouraged. SFVAMC and its construction contractors will monitor truck arrivals and, if necessary, implement a queue abatement program to ensure that haul trucks do not queue up and idle on the Campus or on adjacent or nearby streets.

Mitigation Measure TRANS-2: Conduct Supplemental Surveys of Parking Occupancy and Implement Programs to Prevent Parking Spillover

SFVAMC will conduct supplemental surveys of parking occupancy several weeks after completion of Building 211 to determine the utilization of the new parking structure and overall occupancy of on-site facilities throughout the day. The survey will also consider on-street parking in the surrounding area to estimate how much spillover demand has been “recaptured” on the site as a result of the increased parking supply. As construction plans for specific LRDP projects are developed, construction contractors will work with SFVAMC to compare their own estimates of construction-related traffic and parking demand to the estimated parking capacity and surveyed occupancy levels, to determine whether additional temporary measures are required to mitigate expected parking constraints.

Should these coordination efforts indicate that construction activities could result in a major parking deficit on the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus, SFVAMC will implement measures to ensure that construction-related parking demand, as well as any associated parking loss in on-site parking capacity required to accommodate construction-related activities, does not result in additional spillover into the surrounding neighborhood beyond current conditions.

Potential programs (or other measures deemed necessary and adequate to ensure that spillover parking demand into the surrounding neighborhood does not increase beyond current conditions) could include the following:

- Expand the Campus’s valet parking program. Upon completion of Building 211, the valet parking program could be made permanent and expanded to include the new parking structure. Based on the estimates provided in the LRDP, Building 211 would provide a total of 461 marked spaces, but a valet parking program for this structure could provide approximately 140 additional spaces, based on the 30 percent increase in parking efficiency documented in field surveys of parking occupancy in Building 209.*
- Require general contractors to establish carpool/vanpool programs and encourage transit use. Because some construction workers reside outside of San Francisco, a vanpool service could be tailored to meet worker needs by operating as a “commuter shuttle” to major transit facilities, such as the BART station at Civic Center or 16th Street/Mission. To encourage transit use among construction workers, the contractor could provide free or discounted transit passes. A vanpool service could also be implemented in conjunction with a remote (i.e., off-site) “park-and-ride” facility, affording construction workers some of the convenience of a private vehicle and reducing some of the construction-related traffic effects in the immediate vicinity of the Campus. SFVAMC could work with its contractor to negotiate with the relevant property owners and parking operators in the area to lease spaces in an off-site surface lot or parking structure for a fixed period of time. The vanpool service could be contracted out to a third-party service provider.*
- Require general contractors to optimize staging-area needs and coordinate vendor arrival schedules. In the development of construction plans, contractors should be required to optimize site utilization and*

schedule arrivals to minimize the associated traffic and vehicle parking impacts on the Campus community and surrounding neighborhoods.

Mitigation Measure TRANS-3: Implement Temporary ADA Parking Strategies during Presence of Temporary Modular Structures on Campus

SFVAMC will implement temporary strategies to ensure ADA compliance while Lot B is in use for modular swing space. Potential strategies could include temporarily striping ADA spaces in other parking facilities on the Campus, such as Building 212, or implementing valet parking at the traffic circle outside the Patient Welcome Center for patients and visitors requiring ADA accommodations.

Wildlife and Habitat

The Proposed Action (Alternative 1) would result in potentially adverse impact related to wildlife and habitat, specifically related to potential construction effects on nesting birds and bats. To reduce the potential adverse impact of the Preferred Alternative to a minor level, VA will implement the following mitigation measure:

Mitigation Measure WH-1: Conduct Wildlife Surveys and Avoid Vegetation Removal During the Breeding Season for Nesting Birds and Bats

SFVAMC will implement the following measures to avoid potential effects on nesting birds and bats, should potential nesting or roosting habitat be identified within 150 feet of the proposed development area:

- *Removal of shrubs, trees, or any vegetative cover will be conducted outside of the breeding season, roughly from September to January 31 (breeding season is typically February through August).*
- *Should vegetation removal be required during the breeding season (approximately March through August), a qualified biologist will conduct a survey for native nesting birds and bats no earlier than 14 days before the removal of trees, shrubs, or buildings. The biologist will determine the time period that the results will remain valid, based on the seasonal timing. The area surveyed will include all locations of vegetation or building removal, as well as areas within 150 feet.*
- *If no active nests or roosts are found, no further action is required. If an active nest or roost is discovered in the areas to be cleared, or in other habitats within 150 feet of construction boundaries, clearing and construction will be postponed for at least 2 weeks or until a wildlife biologist has determined that the young have left the nest or roost, the nest or roost is vacated, and there is no evidence of second nesting attempts.*

With implementation of appropriate aforementioned mitigation measures, there would be no significant adverse impacts related to Air Quality; Cultural Resources; Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change; Noise and Vibration, Transportation, Traffic, and Parking; and Wildlife and Habitat.

Significant Adverse Impacts with Mitigation Measures

The resource area for which significant adverse impacts were determined to be more substantial was Cultural Resources. The impacts associated with this resource area and mitigation measures, which would not reduce impacts to a minor level, are discussed below.

Cultural Resources

The Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1) would result in adverse impacts related to historic resources due to demolition of SFVAMC Historic District contributor – Building 18. To reduce this adverse impact VA will implement the following mitigation measure:

Mitigation Measure CR-3: Implement Stipulations III and IV of the PA to Reduce Impacts on the SFVAMC Historic District. This includes implementation of the following PA Mitigation Measures that are contained within Stipulation IV. (see Cultural Resources above for full text)

Public Involvement

An initial EIS scoping period was open from October 12, 2010 until December 12, 2010 and VA held a public scoping meeting during this period on October 26, 2010 at the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus Auditorium (4150 Clement Street, San Francisco, CA). VA initiated another 30-day scoping period to coincide with publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS in the Federal Register on March 30, 2011. An additional, a public information meeting was held on April 26, 2011, at the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus Auditorium.

The Draft EIS was released for public comment on August 17, 2012 for a 60-day comment period. During this time period, a public meeting was held at the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus Auditorium on September 20, 2012. In addition, the Draft EIS public comment period was extended to October 31, 2012 for a total comment period of 75 days. The Supplemental Draft EIS was released for public comment on March 9, 2015 for a 60-day review and comment period. During this time period, a public meeting was held at the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus Auditorium on April 14, 2015.

The Final EIS NOA was published in the Federal Register on July 9, 2015. Providing no information leading to a contrary finding is brought to VA attention during the 30-day period following publication of the Final EIS, this ROD will be signed and become final.

VA received two letters, one from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and one from the U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service (NPS), during the 30-day period following publication of the Final EIS. EPA confirmed they had no questions or comments with regard to the Final EIS. NPS requested ongoing coordination with them during implementation of the LRDP as well as commitment to the design solutions discussed in the Response to Comments within Final EIS Appendix A. It is VA's intent to continue to coordinate with NPS during implementation of LRDP projects near the VA/NPS boundaries and to implement and monitor the aforementioned mitigation measures as well as the design solutions discussed in the Response to Comments within Final EIS Appendix A.

Conclusion

As a result of public input and analysis found in the Final EIS, and with the implementation of identified management and mitigation measures to minimize impacts VA has determined to implement Alternative 1, the Preferred Alternative. Alternative 1 best meets current and future needs of the growing Veteran population, better serves the ever-changing health care needs of the growing Veteran population, and to provide safe and appropriate facilities for health care services as well as for conducting research and education.

The Final EIS and this Record of Decision was completed in accordance with the regulations set forth by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1500-1508) for implementing the provisions of NEPA, as well as VA regulations for implementing NEPA (Environmental Effects of VA Actions [38 CFR Part 26]).

Douglas Roaldson

Douglas Roaldson
VA Sierra Pacific Network (VISN 21) Environmental Manager
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

1 SEPT 2015

Date

Thomas W. Moran

Thomas W. Moran, P.E.
VA National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementation Officer
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

1 SEP 15

Date

Bonnie S. Graham

Bonnie S. Graham, MBA
San Francisco Healthcare System Medical Center Director
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

9/1/15

Date

Sheila M. Cullen

Sheila M. Cullen
VA Sierra Pacific Network (VISN 21) Director
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

9/2/15

Date