

PUBLIC MEETING – January 15, 2015

Draft Site-Specific Environmental Assessment: Proposed Replacement VA Medical Center Campus, Louisville, Kentucky

Executive Summary of Draft Environmental Assessment

In this site-specific environmental assessment (EA), the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) identifies, analyzes, and documents the potential physical, environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with constructing and operating the proposed new Robley Rex VA Medical Center (VAMC) campus, which would include a regional Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) office. The new campus would be located at 4906 Brownsboro Road in Louisville, Jefferson County, Kentucky, southeast of the intersection of the Watterson Expressway (I-264) and Brownsboro Road. A Programmatic EA completed in June 2012 concluded there would be no significant impacts from selecting the Brownsboro Road site for the location of this Proposed Action.

The purpose of this Proposed Action is to replace the existing Louisville VAMC, community-based outpatient clinics, and VBA facilities that have reached the end of their serviceable lives with new facilities at 4906 Brownsboro Road of sufficient capacity to meet the current and projected future healthcare needs of Veterans in the Louisville service area.

The Proposed Action is needed because the existing Louisville VAMC facilities have reached the end of their serviceable lives. The conditions and configuration at the existing VAMC are inadequate to effectively and efficiently meet the expanding needs of VA's healthcare mission and VBA services in the region.

Two alternatives are analyzed in this site-specific EA:

- VA's **Proposed Action** is to construct and operate a replacement campus at 4906 Brownsboro Road, with a 104-bed full service VA hospital, diagnostic and treatment facilities, VBA regional office, laundry facility, central utility plant, parking garages for 3,000 vehicles, above-ground potable water storage (water tower), subsurface utility distribution systems, roads, sidewalks, access (entrance/exit) points, stormwater management, landscaping, site lighting, and other required site amenities and improvements.



- The *No Action Alternative* is not constructing and operating a replacement VAMC at the Brownsboro Road site, but continuing operations at the existing Louisville VAMC on Zorn Avenue, the existing community-based outpatient clinics, and the existing VBA regional office.

Table: Summary of Impact Analysis

Resource / Issue	Proposed Action	No Action
Meets Purpose of and Need for Action	Yes	No
Aesthetics	Appearance of the project site would change from undeveloped to developed, permanently affecting the view and visual character of the area. Landscaping, building setbacks, exterior lighting, and aesthetic quality of the building materials would be generally consistent with development codes and thereby considered acceptable changes to the view and visual character of the area. Presence of heavy equipment and unfinished stages of site preparation and building construction would temporarily impact the visual quality of the area.	No impacts
Air Quality	Construction and operation emissions would comply with all permit requirements and regulations. Particulate emissions during construction are below the de minimis threshold level. No significant impact.	No impacts at project site; continued operational emissions at existing VAMC at Zorn Avenue in compliance with minor source permit.
Cultural Resources	No adverse effects to archaeological features or historic properties.	No impacts
Geology and Soils	Adherence to vibration standards and requirements of the Kentucky Revised Statute 350.430 for blasting operations would avoid damage to nearby buildings and houses. Loss of prime farmland soil would not be significant. Risk of development is not any greater than other similar areas of Jefferson County so the presence of karst features would not adversely affect the project nor would features be adversely affected by project construction.	No impacts
Hydrology and Water Quality	Stormwater runoff during construction would be localized and negligible with implementation of erosion control plans. Predevelopment discharge rates would be maintained through stormwater management detention structures to control impacts on site hydrology, adjacent properties, surface water quality, and groundwater recharge. Adherence to state standards and VA specifications would ensure negligible impacts to groundwater from drilling and operating groundwater wells and geothermal system.	No impacts

Resource / Issue	Proposed Action	No Action
Wildlife and Habitat	Negligible impact to common wildlife species (displacement of individuals). No listed species or critical habitat onsite. Nesting bird survey would identify migratory birds to be protected if construction begins between April and July.	No impacts
Noise	Impacts from construction noise would be adverse but temporary and within acceptable levels. Sources of operational noise would be inside buildings or shielded from receptors to avoid impacts.	No impacts – no change from current noise levels due to operation of existing VAMC at Zorn Avenue.
Land Use	The VAMC campus, as a conditional land use, is generally consistent with existing zoning. Landscaping plans, building setbacks, and building heights are generally consistent with the Louisville and Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan and existing zoning, and therefore would not adversely impact land use.	No impacts
Floodplains, Wetlands, and Coastal Management	No impacts	No impacts
Socioeconomics	Short-term and long-term beneficial effects to local economy; possible short-term adverse effects to property values from visual and noise disturbances during construction, but possible increased value from a hospital as a desirable land use.	No impacts
Community Services	No impacts	No impacts
Solid and Hazardous Materials	Short-term negligible impact due to increased presence and use of petroleum and hazardous substances during construction, minimized through best management practices and regulatory compliance. No significant adverse long-term impacts during operation as solid waste and hazardous materials would be managed in accordance with VA policies and federal, state, and local regulations.	Negligible impacts. Solid waste generation and use of hazardous materials at existing VAMC at Zorn Avenue would increase over time commensurate with projected future increases in number of patients.
Transportation and Parking	Construction contractors would provide offsite parking and shuttle service to and from the project site to minimize adverse effects from temporary increases in construction traffic. The Proposed Action would not significantly contribute to the degradation of levels of service at the intersection of US 42 at KY 22 (Brownsboro Road at Northfield Drive). With interchange improvements at Watterson Expressway (I-264) and US 42, the levels of service would be acceptable at the entrance to and exit from the VAMC campus (Old Brownsboro Road at Northfield Drive intersection).	Negligible impacts. Traffic at existing VAMC at Zorn Avenue location would increase over time commensurate with projected future increases in number of patients.
Utilities	Sufficient capacity exists and connections can be developed without significant environmental impacts for utility services to be provided to the site.	No impacts

Resource / Issue	Proposed Action	No Action
Environmental Justice	No impacts.	No impacts
Cumulative Impacts	Given the nature of the Proposed Action and the mostly developed area surrounding the site, no significant cumulative impacts are expected. Nearby undeveloped areas would likely be developed, as zoned and allowed for this area. Along with current congestion and the projected growth and development rate in the area, the Proposed Action would not be a significant contributor to cumulative traffic volumes or to degradation of levels of service at any intersection.	No impacts
Potential for Generating Substantial Controversy	Some residents in the immediate vicinity of the project site remain opposed to the location of the replacement VAMC at Brownsboro Road. However, the siting decision was made during the Programmatic EA process, and is not a decision within the scope of this site-specific NEPA analysis for construction and operation of the campus.	No impacts

Public comments on the Draft Site-Specific EA will be considered in the Final Site-Specific EA.



The Draft Site-Specific EA is available for review at:

- Robley Rex VAMC
Replacement VAMC Activation Team Office
800 Zorn Avenue
Louisville, KY 40206
- Louisville Free Public Library–Westport Branch
8100 Westport Road
Louisville, KY 40222
- www.louisville.va.gov/newmedicalcenter/

Comments may be submitted to:

- LouisvilleReplacementHospitalComments@va.gov
- Robley Rex VAMC
Attn: Replacement VAMC Activation Team Office
800 Zorn Avenue
Louisville, KY 40206

Comments are due by February 1, 2015.