

PUBLIC MEETING – November 15, 2016

Draft Environmental Impact Statement: Proposed Replacement VA Medical Center Campus, Louisville, Kentucky

Executive Summary of Draft Environmental Impact Statement

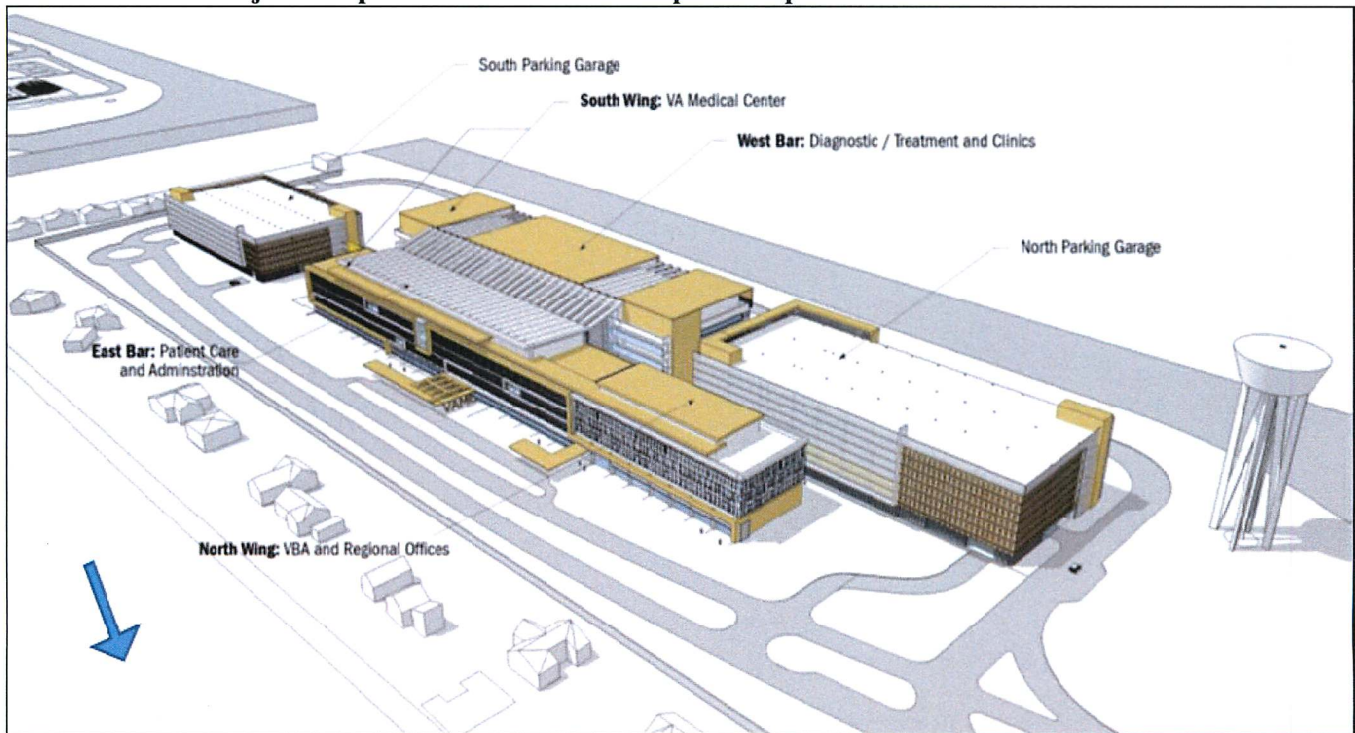
In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that analyzes the potential physical, environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic impacts of three alternatives for a replacement VAMC in Louisville, Kentucky - to construct and operate a proposed new Robley Rex VA Medical Center (VAMC) campus, which would include a regional Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) office.

- VA's **Proposed Action** (Alternative A) 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.
- Alternative B is to construct and operate a replacement campus identical to Alternative A but located at the St. Joseph Site on a parcel located east of I-265 and south of Factory Lane, Louisville.
- Alternative C, the **No Action Alternative**, is to continue operations at the existing Louisville VAMC on Zorn Avenue, the existing community-based outpatient clinics, and the existing VBA regional office.

VA's preferred alternative is Alternative A, the proposed construction and operation of a replacement VAMC campus at the Brownsboro Site at 4906 Brownsboro Road, Louisville.

Public comments on the Draft EIS will be considered and addressed in the Final EIS.

Major Components of Atrium Concept for Replacement Louisville VAMC



The Draft EIS is available for review at:

- Robley Rex VAMC
Replacement VAMC Activation Team Office
800 Zorn Avenue
Louisville, KY 40206
- Louisville Free Public Library branches located at:
 - 301 York Street Louisville, Kentucky 40203 (Main Library)
 - 8100 Westport Road, Louisville, KY 40222 (Westport Branch)
 - 3940 Grandview Avenue, Louisville, KY 40207 (St. Matthew Eline Branch)
- 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 December 12, 2016.

Draft Environmental Impact Statement: Replacement Robley Rex VA Medical Center Louisville, Kentucky



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Louisville VA Medical Center**



October 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS ONLY

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADT	average daily traffic
APCD	Louisville Metro Air Pollution Control District
APE	area of potential effect
AST	aboveground storage tank
BMP	best management practice
BTU	British thermal unit
CARES	Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services
CBOC	community-based outpatient clinic
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations

dB	decibel
dBA	A-weighted decibel
EA	environmental assessment
EIS	environmental impact statement
EMS	emergency medical services
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIRM	flood insurance rate map
FONSI	finding of no significant impact
FTEE	full-time employee equivalent
FWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
FY	fiscal year
GHG	greenhouse gas
GPP	groundwater protection plan
HAP	hazardous air pollutant
hp	horsepower
I	interstate
IGSHPA	International Ground Source Heat Pump Association
JCPS	Jefferson County Public Schools
KDEP	Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection
kW	kilowatt
KYTC	Kentucky Transportation Cabinet
L _{dn}	day-night sound level
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
L _{eq}	equivalent continuous sound level
LG&E	Louisville Gas & Electric
LiDAR	light detection and ranging
L _{max}	maximum sound level
L _{min}	minimum sound level
LOS	level of service
Louisville Metro	Louisville-Jefferson County Metro Government
Louisville MSA	Louisville-Jefferson County, Kentucky-Indiana Metropolitan Statistical Area
LWC	Louisville Water Company
MSA	metropolitan statistical area
MSD	Louisville and Jefferson County Metropolitan Sewer District
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standard
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NOA	notice of availability
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places

NSR	new source review
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory
PCBs	polychlorinated biphenyls
PM	particulate matter
PM _{2.5}	particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter
PM ₁₀	particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
ROD	record of decision
SARA	Superfund Amendment and Reauthorization Act
SHPO	state historic preservation officer
SPUI	single-point urban interchange
SSPP	strategic sustainability performance plan
TARC	Transportation Authority of River City
t CO _{2 eq}	metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents
U.S.	United States
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USC	U.S. Code
UST	underground storage tank
VA	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
VAMC	VA medical center
VBA	Veterans Benefits Administration

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) identifies, analyzes, and documents the potential physical, environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic impacts associated with a replacement VA Medical Center (VAMC) in Louisville, Kentucky.

The **purpose** of VA's proposal is to construct and operate a 104-bed hospital, diagnostic and treatment facilities, VBA regional office, and required site amenities and improvements on a new campus. This proposed project would replace the existing Robley Rex VAMC, three community-based outpatient clinics, and the existing VBA regional office with new facilities of sufficient capacity to meet the current and projected future healthcare needs of Veterans in the Louisville service area.

The proposed project is **needed** because the existing Louisville VAMC facilities at 800 Zorn Avenue in Louisville have reached the end of their serviceable lives. The building conditions and site configuration at the existing 63-year old VAMC are inadequate to effectively and efficiently meet the expanding needs of VA's healthcare mission and VBA services in the region. Within the Louisville service area, 60,943 Veterans were enrolled to receive care in fiscal year 2014. Enrollment is expected to increase to more than 68,000 by fiscal year 2024. During this same time period, outpatient clinic stops are expected to increase from 762,104 to over 963,000. Given the increase in the number of patients as well as the need for improvements to the physical plant, the existing Louisville VAMC facility is insufficient to meet either the current or the increasing future needs of VA's healthcare mission in the region.

VA has identified three alternatives that are analyzed in detail in this EIS:

- Alternative A: construction and operation of a replacement VAMC campus at the Brownsboro Site at 4906 Brownsboro Road, Louisville, Kentucky. VA would relocate medical facility operations to the Brownsboro Site from Zorn Avenue. Leases would not be renewed for three community-based outpatient clinics and the existing VBA regional office.
- Alternative B: construction and operation of a replacement VAMC campus at the St. Joseph site on a parcel located east of I-265 and south of Factory Lane in Louisville. VA would relocate medical facility operations to the St. Joseph site from Zorn Avenue. Leases would not be renewed for three community-based outpatient clinics and the existing VBA regional office.
- Alternative C: No Action – continued operation of the existing Robley Rex VAMC at the Zorn Avenue location.

Under alternatives A and B, a later process would evaluate the future use or disposition of the Zorn Avenue property, regardless of where the replacement facility is located.

Alternative A is VA's preferred alternative. Alternative C is the environmentally preferable alternative.

The following table summarizes the potential environmental impacts of the alternatives.

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Table: Summary of Impact Analysis

Resource / Issue	A – Replacement VAMC at Brownsboro Site	B – Replacement VAMC at St. Joseph Site	C – No Action
Meets purpose of and need for action	Yes	Yes	No
Aesthetics	During early stages of construction, presence of heavy equipment and unfinished stages of site preparation and building construction would temporarily impact visual quality. Over the long term, the VAMC would create a noticeable contrast to the existing landscape, obstruct or detract from what some observers would consider a scenic view, or introduce visual elements that some observers would consider out of scale or character with the surrounding area. The extent of these adverse effects would range from negligible to major, depending on the observer.	Impacts similar to Alternative A.	No impacts at Zorn Avenue location. Development of Brownsboro and St. Joseph sites by others would result in impacts similar to Alternatives A and B.
Air Quality	Construction and operation emissions would comply with all permit requirements and regulations. Particulate emissions during construction are below the <i>de minimis</i> threshold level. Air quality impacts would be negligible.	Impacts similar to Alternative A.	No construction impacts at Zorn Avenue site. Operation impacts similar to Alternatives A and B.

Resource / Issue	A – Replacement VAMC at Brownsboro Site	B – Replacement VAMC at St. Joseph Site	C – No Action
Cultural Resources	No adverse effects to archaeological features or historic properties.	No adverse effects to archaeological features or historic properties.	No adverse effects to archaeological features or historic properties.
Geology and Soils	Construction-related impacts to geology and soils would be minor and short-term. Adherence to vibration standards and requirements of the Kentucky Revised Statute 350.430 for blasting operations (if any) would avoid damage to nearby buildings and houses. Loss of prime farmland soil would not be significant. Erosion and sedimentation impacts would be minimized through implementing construction best management practices and conforming with permit requirements. No operation-related impacts would occur.	Impacts similar to Alternative A.	No impacts at Zorn Avenue location. Development of Brownsboro and St. Joseph sites by others would result in impacts similar to Alternatives A and B.

Resource / Issue	A – Replacement VAMC at Brownsboro Site	B – Replacement VAMC at St. Joseph Site	C – No Action
Hydrology and Water Quality	Potential construction impacts to surface water quality and groundwater are predicted to be localized and negligible with implementation of the required control and protection plans. Site wide stormwater management would meet predevelopment discharge rates for the 2-, 10-, 25-, and 100-year storm events in accordance with the Metropolitan Sewer District Design Manual and should therefore have minimal adverse effects on the hydrology of the project site and adjacent properties, surface water quality, and the rate of groundwater recharge.	Impacts similar to Alternative A.	No impacts at Zorn Avenue location. Development of Brownsboro and St. Joseph sites by others would result in impacts similar to Alternatives A and B.

Resource / Issue	A – Replacement VAMC at Brownsboro Site	B – Replacement VAMC at St. Joseph Site	C – No Action
Wildlife and Habitat	Negligible impact to common wildlife species (displacement of individuals). Nesting bird survey would identify migratory birds to be protected if construction begins between April and July. To avoid impacts to roosting northern long-eared bats, VA would ensure that any unavoidable tree removal would only occur between October 1 and March 31, or that tree removal during roosting season was preceded by a mist net survey to confirm the absence of any northern long-eared bats from the site. No other listed species or critical habitat onsite.	Negligible impact to common wildlife species (displacement of individuals). Nesting bird survey would identify migratory birds to be protected if construction begins between April and July. To avoid impacts to roosting Indiana or northern long-eared bats, VA would ensure that any unavoidable tree removal would only occur between October 1 and March 31, or that tree removal during roosting season was preceded by a mist net survey to confirm the absence of any northern long-eared bats from the site. Land disturbance for construction would be preceded by a site survey for running buffalo clover and any appropriate mitigation in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, including a management plan to avoid impact during operations. No other listed species or critical habitat onsite.	No impacts at Zorn Avenue location. Development of Brownsboro and St. Joseph sites by others would result in impacts similar to Alternatives A and B.

Resource / Issue	A – Replacement VAMC at Brownsboro Site	B – Replacement VAMC at St. Joseph Site	C – No Action
Noise	Construction-related noise and vibration impacts would be adverse, short-term, and potentially moderate in magnitude (approaching EPA threshold levels), depending on the receptor type and proximity to the project location. Operation-related noise impacts would be minor.	Impacts similar to Alternative A.	No impacts at Zorn Avenue location. Development of Brownsboro and St. Joseph sites by others would result in construction-related impacts similar to Alternatives A and B, while operation-related impacts would depend on the specific type of development.
Land Use	Temporary disturbances to access to adjacent land uses could occur during construction. The conceptual design for building setbacks, perimeter fence, and landscape buffer would be compatible with the existing zoning. The design heights of the VAMC buildings and parking decks would not be compatible with the height limitations in existing zoning, and would therefore be an adverse impact to adjacent land use.	Temporary disturbances to access to adjacent land uses could occur during construction. The conceptual design for building setbacks, perimeter fence, and landscape buffer would be compatible with the existing zoning. The design heights of the VAMC buildings and parking decks would not be compatible with the height limitations of the zoning of the northeastern part of the site, and would therefore be considered an adverse impact to the adjacent residential land use.	No impacts at Zorn Avenue location. Development of Brownsboro and St. Joseph sites by others would result in impacts similar to Alternatives A and B within existing or similar zoning requirements.
Floodplains and Wetlands	No impacts	No impacts to floodplains. Small onsite wetland areas would require coordination with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to ensure no impacts or mitigate impacts.	No impacts at Zorn Avenue location. Development of Brownsboro and St. Joseph sites by others would result in impacts similar to Alternatives A and B.

Resource / Issue	A – Replacement VAMC at Brownsboro Site	B – Replacement VAMC at St. Joseph Site	C – No Action
Socioeconomics	Short-term beneficial effects to local economy during construction and operation. No long-term adverse effects to property values or local crime rates are expected.	Impacts similar to Alternative A.	No impacts.
Community Services	Negligible impacts during construction, no impacts from operation.	Impacts similar to Alternative A.	No impacts at Zorn Avenue location. Development of Brownsboro and St. Joseph sites by others would result in impacts similar to Alternatives A and B.
Solid Waste 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. Negligible 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.	Impacts similar to Alternative A.	No impacts at Zorn Avenue location. Impacts from development of Brownsboro and St. Joseph sites by others would depend on the specific type of development.

Resource / Issue	A – Replacement VAMC at Brownsboro Site	B – Replacement VAMC at St. Joseph Site	C – No Action
Transportation and Traffic	<p>Construction contractors would provide a plan to manage site use, including limited onsite parking during construction; the approved plan may also mitigate impacts to local traffic to the extent it decreases the number of construction worker vehicles commuting to the site.</p> <p>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), which will operate at LOS E with the VAMC and LOS F without the VAMC at this location.</p> <p>With interchange improvements at Watterson Expressway (I-264) and US 42, the levels of service would be acceptable (LOS C) at the entrance to and exit from the VAMC campus (KY 22 at I-264 eastbound ramp split).</p> <p>Travel times and intersection delays would be significantly improved by the planned construction of the single-point urban interchange.</p> <p>Travel times and intersection delays would be comparable for either Alternative A or a similar mixed use development that would be anticipated to locate at the Brownsboro Site.</p>	<p>The start of construction would create the possible need for the addition of a signalized intersection where one does not currently exist (at the proposed VAMC entrance on Factory Lane).</p> <p>There are overall major travel time impacts under Alternative B compared to future conditions without the VAMC, particularly for VAMC traffic exiting the site and going to the I-265 interchange at LaGrange Road.</p>	<p>Negligible impacts. Traffic at the existing VAMC at the Zorn Avenue location would increase over time commensurate with projected future background traffic growth on Zorn Avenue.</p>

Resource / Issue	A – Replacement VAMC at Brownsboro Site	B – Replacement VAMC at St. Joseph Site	C – No Action
Utilities	Sufficient capacity exists and connections can be developed without significant environmental impacts for utility services to be provided to the site.	Sufficient capacity exists and connections can be developed without significant environmental impacts for utility services to be provided to the site.	No impacts.
Environmental Justice	No impacts.	No impacts.	No impacts.

Cumulative impacts from the incremental impact of the action alternatives when added to other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions in the Louisville service area are expected to be non-existent, negligible or minor for aesthetics, air quality, cultural resources, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, wildlife and habitat, noise, floodplains and wetlands, socioeconomics, community services, solid waste and hazardous materials, utilities, and environmental justice. Any impacts to these resources would be similar to those from current VA operations or to other new private and commercial developments that may occur within the service area, and would include mitigation measures to minimize impacts. There are potential cumulative effects related to land use and traffic.

VA published a Notice of Availability (NOA) of this Draft EIS in the Federal Register, inviting public comments on the content of the document. VA announced a 45-day comment period that officially started when the NOA for the Draft EIS was published by the Environmental Protection Agency in the Federal Register. VA will host afternoon and evening public comment meetings in Louisville during the 45-day comment period. Responses to comments received during the comment period will be addressed in the Final EIS. After a 30-day review period for the Final EIS, VA will publish a record of decision that states the alternative selected for implementation and identifies associated mitigation commitments.

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