

# A

## Executive Summary

Executive Summary **A**

Existing Conditions **B**

Stakeholder Engagement **C**

Master Plan Development **D**

Supporting Documentation **E**

Implementation Documents **F**

Appendix **G**

**A** Executive Summary

**B** Existing Conditions

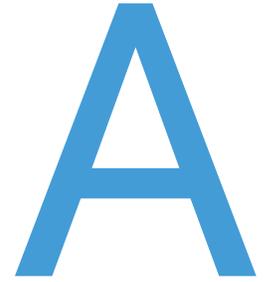
**C** Stakeholder Engagement

**D** Master Plan Development

**E** Supporting Documents

**F** Implementation Documents

**G** Appendix



# Executive Summary

## Contents

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Draft Final Master Plan Summary</b>   | <b>4</b> |
| VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System | 4        |
| West Los Angeles Medical Center Campus   | 5        |
| Master Plan Introduction                 | 6        |
| Stakeholder Outreach                     | 7        |
| Master Plan Framework                    | 10       |
| Revised Process for Land Use Decisions   | 17       |
| Next Steps                               | 18       |

# Executive Summary

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## Draft Final Master Plan Summary VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System

### Introduction

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) West Los Angeles Medical Center (WLA) is part of the larger VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System (GLA) that serves over 90,000 unique Veterans in Kern, Los Angeles, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties. It is also part of and serves Veterans from the Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 22 - VA Desert Pacific Healthcare Network. GLA is one of the largest integrated healthcare systems in VA, with 964 operating and authorized beds, over 5,000 employees, and an annual operating budget of approximately \$900 million. GLA provides comprehensive acute, emergency, ambulatory, and tertiary care to Veterans, while also maintaining a strong medical education and research focus. The GLA Healthcare system directs VA's largest educational enterprise. GLA serves as a major training site for medical residencies, in partnership with the David Geffen School of Medicine University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA); the University of Southern California (USC) School of Medicine; and approximately 45 colleges, universities and vocational schools, involving 17 different medical, nursing, and other healthcare and administrative programs.

In January 2015, a settlement agreement was reached in the lawsuit against VA (*Valentini v. McDonald*) between several Veterans, the Vietnam Veterans of America, and Carolina Winston Barrie (a descendant of family members that deeded the WLA Campus to the United States), in which the plaintiffs were represented by a number of lawyers, including the ACLU Foundation of Southern California. The lawsuit alleged that VA was violating the covenant of an 1888 deed whereby the United States acquired title to the WLA Campus, by misusing parts of it for commercial purposes, in lieu of caring for and serving Veterans – namely chronically homeless Veterans with significant disabilities, and other underrepresented Veterans that are severely disabled, aging, or female Veterans.

The settlement agreement reached in *Valentini v. McDonald* was memorialized in a "Principles Agreement" executed between Secretary Bob McDonald and Ron Olson, Esq. of Munger, Tolles, and Olson, LLP law firm. The settlement agreement memorialized VA's intent to conduct a new Master Plan for the campus to help in VA's goal to revitalize it to be Veteran focused. This goal includes making permanent supportive housing and other services available on campus, so Veterans

will have a choice to live on or off campus, and have access to a more welcoming and healing environment, in which to live and receive care, services, and benefits to which they are entitled. The Principles Agreement also reflects the intent of VA and the former plaintiffs to work collaboratively in coordination with key Federal, State, local, and community stakeholders, Veterans, Veteran Service Organizations, and charitable and philanthropic entities, to end Veteran homelessness in greater Los Angeles in 2015 and beyond. A key element of the Principles Agreement was for VA to solicit input and feedback from those stakeholders for this Draft Final Master Plan (Master Plan).

The new master plan for the WLA Campus will help VA determine and implement the most effective use of the campus for Veterans, particularly for homeless Veterans, including underserved populations such as female Veterans, aging Veterans, and those who are severely physically or mentally disabled. Key considerations will include:

- a. the provision of appropriate levels of bridge, transitional, and permanent supportive housing on the campus in renovated existing buildings and/or newly constructed facilities, while taking into account the availability of housing units in the greater Los Angeles community;
- b. respect for individual Veteran choices on whether to seek housing at the WLA Campus or in the local community;
- c. complimentary services focusing directly on Veterans and their families to complement the housing choices that will be available, and help VA achieve the vision of the campus being a more welcoming, engaging, and healing environment;
- d. ways to restore, protect, and maintain the sacred historic structures on campus, notably the Wadsworth Chapel, the Trolley Depot, the Original Barracks, Building 33, and the Governor's mansion;
- e. a columbarium expansion for the WLA cemetery; and
- f. compliance with applicable laws, including those relating to the areas of fair housing, environmental, and historic preservation.

# Executive Summary

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## Draft Final Master Plan Summary West Los Angeles Medical Center Campus

This Master Plan reflects VA's goal to revive the campus in a Veteran-focused manner, including permanent supportive housing, particularly for chronically homeless, severely disabled, female, and aging Veterans. The vision also includes planning for significant and adequate levels of permanent supportive housing, time-limited "bridge", and transitional housing along with short-term treatment services that can provide state-of-the-art primary care, mental health, and addiction services to Veterans, particularly chronically homeless Veterans.

### Background:

The WLA Campus is located at the major intersection of Sepulveda Boulevard, Interstate 405 (also known as the San Diego Freeway) and Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles, California. Located in the densely urbanized Brentwood neighborhood, the campus encompasses approximately 388 acres and retains a strong sense of time and place from 1923 to 1952, when it was used as a Second Generation Veterans Hospital.

WLA is one of the largest medical center campuses in the VA system. It provides a full continuum of medical services to eligible Veterans, including state-of-the-art hospital and outpatient care, rehabilitation, residential care, and long-term care services. It also serves as a center for medical research and education. The facilities provide state-of-the-art healthcare services for Veterans, including acute inpatient, outpatient, rehabilitation, residential, and long-term care. Comprehensive healthcare is provided to Veterans through a Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) models, specialty care areas of medicine, surgery, psychiatry, physical medicine, rehabilitation, neurology, oncology, dentistry, geriatrics, and transitional and long-term residential care.

### Homelessness Among Veterans

California has the nation's most severe and highest rate of homelessness including chronic and Veteran homelessness. According to a recent report by The Center of Budget and Policy Priorities, California accounts for 24% of the nation's homeless Veteran population. VA and HUD data indicate that approximately 10% of the Veteran homeless population is concentrated in the greater Los Angeles area. The GLA community also accounts for the highest numbers of Veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, female Veterans, and chronically homeless Veterans in the nation (Homeless Registry data, 2014). Within GLA's service area, the average age of homeless and/or at-risk Veterans is 52 years, and approximately 56% of the Veterans are 55 years of age or older. Many within that Veteran population have significant medical, mental health, and addiction comorbidities, including diabetes, prolonged, and complicated hyper tension, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, arthritis, and other cardiac conditions. These types of health conditions can contribute to premature placement into nursing homes or other institutional care settings, and decreased life expectancies.

Ending Veteran homelessness, in coordination with Federal and community partners, is a top priority of the Obama administration and VA. GLA has committed to working collaboratively with a wide range of community and government partners, to expand permanent housing solutions and additional services, to include healthcare, employment assistance, and access to benefits, in an effort to permanently end Veteran homelessness. It has also adopted Housing First, an evidence-based, supportive housing model, that emphasizes supportive housing as the first step to end homelessness. The Housing First model provides individuals who are homeless—particularly those who have experienced prolonged periods of homelessness and disabling conditions such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, recurrent major depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and addictive disorders—with community based permanent housing as quickly as possible, and supportive services as needed. Housing First provides housing without prerequisites for abstinence, psychiatric stability, or completion of treatment programs. Instead, this approach delivers permanent housing as the initial service, along with healthcare and other supports based on the individual's needs and preferences. Since the announcement of the

A  
B  
C  
D  
E  
F  
G

# Executive Summary

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## Draft Final Master Plan Summary

### *Master Plan Introduction*

goal to end Veteran homelessness by the end of 2015, GLA has increased its engagement and partnership with Federal and community partners to better address the needs of homeless and at-risk for homelessness Veterans. GLA recognizes that it cannot solve Veteran homelessness alone. It takes the combined and coordinated efforts of the entire Los Angeles community to solve this problem. Repurposing and revitalizing the WLA Campus into a 21st century state-of-the-art facility to account for these health risks and conditions will be a key component to achieving and sustaining success.

#### **What is a Master Plan?**

A master plan is a high-level planning process that uses community and stakeholder input to define what is important about a place and how its character, usage, and operations can be improved in the future. The WLA Master Plan will describe how the physical elements of the campus can be improved, notably for housing, related Veteran services, recreational, therapeutic, healthcare, benefits, and memorial services for Veterans in the future. It will identify necessary reuse, development, and infrastructure improvements needed; steps to improve functionality of the campus amongst the designated zones, including through improved signage and pathways; and opportunities to enhance open space, all while preserving the historic nature and character of key assets already on the campus.

The Master Plan describes how the physical elements of the campus can be developed for housing, therapeutic, recreational, healthcare benefits, and memorial services for Veterans in the future. The plan also identifies opportunities to enhance open space, confirms the goal to renovate and protect the historic nature of the campus, targets infrastructure improvements needed for the campus, and allows for continuous environmental and historic preservation moving forward. Additionally, the Master Plan an element which allows VA to receive public comment and feedback on the Master Plan proposals, prior to decisions being made.

# Executive Summary

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## Draft Final Master Plan Summary Stakeholder Outreach

### *Vision and Objectives of the Master Plan*

The Master Plan recognizes and takes into account VA's unequivocal priority to prospectively operate the Campus as a vibrant, welcoming, and sustainable community where all Veterans – including homeless, severely disabled, female Veterans, and elderly Veterans will feel comfortable accessing, living, interacting, recreating, and socializing with one another, their families, VA personnel, and visitors. VA's intent is to transform the Campus into a vibrant community where all Veterans can receive healthcare, benefits, employment, and other supportive services, which they deserve and to which they are entitled. A key purpose of the Master Plan is to help VA determine (based on input from pertinent stakeholders including other Federal agencies, state and local authorities including the City of Los Angeles, and surrounding counties; legislators; Veterans and Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs); the Plaintiffs' Representatives in the Valentini v. McDonald litigation (Plaintiffs' Representatives); and the local community) how best to utilize the Campus in a Veteran-focused manner. That vision includes efficient and dedicated functionality whereby Veterans visiting the campus would be able to experience a "gold standard" of care, support, convenience, and customer service, from VA's health, benefits, and cemetery administrations.

The vision also includes significant and adequate levels of permanent supportive housing, "bridge" and transitional housing, with short term treatment services that can provide state-of-the-art primary care, mental health, and addiction services to Veterans, particularly chronically homeless Veterans of the Los Angeles region, severely disabled, female Veterans, and aging Veterans. Such housing shall be structured based on state-of-the-art homelessness prevention and urban planning sciences, consistent with best practices and evidence-based approaches under the Housing First model. VA's objective under that model is for Veterans to have an attractive choice to decide whether to pursue housing on or off the Campus, while noting permanent housing on the Campus is intended for the most needy, most vulnerable Veterans. The housing will be carefully planned to help ensure a safe, dignified, community environment, which will function effectively in its own right, and in coordination with the other care and services provided on the Campus the greater Los Angeles area and the surrounding community.

### *Master Plan Methodology*

A community-based planning process served as a key driver for this Master Plan. Eight components or ideologies that help inform VA on optimally revitalizing the campus, included:

1. Providing coordinated care integrating housing, healthcare, treatment and support services that puts the Veterans first
2. Ensuring a safe environment for all Veterans
3. Providing services that support and honor Veterans
4. Soliciting Veteran feedback and input during the master plan process
5. Recognizing the need for specialty services for Veterans and their families
6. Effectuating the optimal combination of reusing existing structures and facilities relative to building new ones
7. Providing space for Veterans to learn, seek employment, legal services, and benefits, socialize, heal, pursue spiritual reflection and development, and engage in recreational and therapeutic activities
8. Incorporation of environmentally sustainable and responsible concepts into the campus uses and operations

An overview of the step-by-step process that was followed to develop this Master Plan is shown below:

1. Confirm general vision of revitalized Veteran focused campus
2. Solicit and gather stakeholder input and feedback
3. Analyze the input and feedback received
4. Develop initial framework, refine, and finalize this version of the Master Plan
5. Establish next steps for gaining further input and feedback for this Master Plan via upcoming 45-day comment period
6. Begin framework for upcoming environmental and historic preservation due diligence
7. Submit this version of the Master Plan to VA leadership, and proceed towards doing Steps 5 above

A  
B  
C  
D  
E  
F  
G

# Executive Summary

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## Draft Final Master Plan Summary

### *Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement*

A comprehensive outreach plan was developed to engage and solicit feedback, comments, and input from Veterans, Veteran Service Organizations, congressional delegates, and City, County, non-profit and community stakeholders. The team provided multiple avenues for stakeholder participation, including an interactive website, monthly town hall meetings, weekly design open house workshops, user group meetings with VA programs, online and print questionnaires, presentations at neighborhood community council meetings, social media engagement, “pop-up” booths at community events, and focus group meetings with government stakeholders, housing providers and Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs). HOK, VA, VSOs, and Vets Advocacy Inc. also collaborated with Veteran and community stakeholder groups to assist with “peer-to-peer” engagement by reaching out and collecting survey data from populations with limited access to provide feedback. By hosting and participating in events not just on the WLA Campus, but across the greater Los Angeles area, the team was able to collect a wide range of comments and feedback for the Master Plan.

Over a four month outreach period, the team built a stakeholder database of 2,165 email and mailing addresses. To date, the Master Plan website has received 12,085 page views and generated 145,827 unique activities including posts, like ads, mentions, and check-ins. By coordinating with Veteran and community partners, the team accumulated over 1,200 survey responses. VA and its partners also hosted and/or participated in over 40 community events to generate Master Plan input.

Feedback from the stakeholders meetings, surveys, and Town Halls consistently included the need to rebuild, restructure, realign, and reform the campus. During the 120 day data gathering aspect of the Master Planning process period, Stakeholders frequently requested VA to provide more individualized care and timely access to healthcare and benefits in more modern, dignified buildings. They also requested that services be reorganized in a manner where Veterans could receive like care in close proximity, and that the campus have better signs and directions to help navigate where facilities and services are located. They also consistently commented that VA should end any third party commercial leases and land use contracts that are not focused on directly benefiting Veterans and

their families. They requested greater transparency and accountability regarding the budget for the campus, revenues generated through commercial leases on campus, and oversight of non-profit entities that provide housing and services to Veterans. They also expressed support for the planned columbarium expansion on campus. Lastly, the stakeholders requested the continued focus on cultural and management changes to promote the Veteran's voice in decision making regarding the campus, through more regular meetings with Veterans, Veteran Service Organizations, congressional staff, and other stakeholders. Veterans were clear that they want to actively participate in the decision making process relating to the campus, and services provided on the campus. Feedback from WLA staff noted the need for VA to continue transforming the work culture, into an environment where expressing ideas, concerns, and ways to improve the operations, care, and services on campus, is truly encouraged.

# Executive Summary

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## *Housing Target Population*

This Master Plan recognizes and takes into account VA's unequivocal priority to operate the campus as a vibrant, welcoming, and sustainable community where all Veterans will feel comfortable accessing, living, interacting, and socializing with one another, their families, VA personnel, and visitors. The housing components are structured based on state-of-the-art homelessness prevention and urban planning sciences, consistent with best practices and evidence-based approaches under the Housing First model. VA's objective is for Veterans to have an attractive choice between affordable housing on or off the campus. The housing to be located on the campus will be carefully planned to help ensure a safe, dignified community environment, which will function effectively and in coordination with the other care and services provided on the campus, and in the greater Los Angeles area.

Permanent housing located on the campus is intended to house the most needy, most vulnerable Veterans. The target populations for campus housing are chronically homeless Veterans, Veterans with mental health issues, Veterans with medical issues, female Veterans, elderly and frail Veterans, and Veteran families with children under 18-years old. The housing components incorporated in the Master Plan for these target populations include the following

- **Permanent Supportive Housing:** Attractive, safe, and affordable housing with on-site supportive services. Residents will have the rights of tenancy and the services will be voluntary, flexible, and available to all residents.
- **Transitional Housing:** Designed to provide homeless individuals and families with the short-term housing and appropriate supportive services to facilitate movement to independent living.
- **Bridge Housing:** Time-limited, low-barrier housing designed to rapidly move Veterans from the streets into a safe environment, with the primary focus on expediting the connection to long-term permanent supportive housing.
- **VA Domiciliary Housing:** Clinical rehabilitation and treatment programs operated by VA. They provide shelter, food, and necessary medical care to restore patients to their highest level of functioning. Veterans served under this program are not in need of hospitalization or nursing care services.

- **VA Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) and Transitional Residence (CWT/TR) Programs:** VA's CWT/TR programs are designed to help Veterans transition to successful independent community living. Disadvantaged, at-risk, and homeless Veterans live in CWT/TR community-based supervised group homes, while working for pay in VA's CWT Program.

To address the many needs of the Veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, it is imperative to provide stable, safe, and supportive housing. The housing on the WLA Campus is based on VA's Housing First strategy, and implements an integrated system of coordinated care. The housing is designed to provide Veterans with a comprehensive array of healthcare and supportive services to prevent and end homelessness, which includes the following:

- Outreach, intake and assessment
- Emergency housing
- Transitional supportive housing
- Permanent and permanent supportive housing
- Ongoing healthcare and supportive services
- Ongoing employment services
- Ongoing access to benefits

A  
B  
C  
D  
E  
F  
G

# Executive Summary

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## Draft Final Master Plan Summary Master Plan Framework

### Draft Final Master Plan

#### Design Concepts

To advance the vision and objectives to transform the campus into a Veteran-focused, safe and welcoming community where Veterans can access housing and supportive services as needed, this Draft Final Master Plan incorporates the following three overarching design concepts:

- 1. Residential Neighborhoods:** The WLA Master Plan proposes the development of compact, walkable neighborhoods to organize the campus into manageable zones while supporting future growth. The plan proposes that the functions of daily living (sleeping, eating, socializing, and recreating) be located within a five-minute walk of each neighborhood, with vehicular parking and traffic directed to the edges of each neighborhood.
- 2. Connected Community Centers:** Connected Community Centers will establish coordinated care, programs, and services in a safe and supportive environment. The plan defines a simple and clear connective path that links each existing neighborhood. This landscaped, multimodal greenway will support efficient cross campus transportation – from the recreational areas to the north, through the neighborhoods and center site, to the historical neighborhoods to the south.
- 3. The Greenway:** The Greenway will enhance connectivity and community among Veterans, both on campus and within the broader community. All neighborhoods would center on a residential-scaled landscaped plaza or green space and include drop-off areas and accessible surface parking.

### Framework

The Master Plan applies the Design Concepts described above to create four new 'Zones.' The zones are in order of higher density (Zone 1) to lower density (Zone 4). See "Figure A.1 WLA Campus Map" on page 12

#### Zone 1 - Healthcare Excellence:

This zone includes the main hospital building, acute care, ambulatory care and research. Zone One will be the Medical Science foci of the campus, and will include a New Bed Care Tower tentatively scheduled for completion in 2020. In support of a commitment to excellent healthcare, VA has completed a pre-design study for a New Bed Care Tower (Replacement Hospital) and parking structure, currently anticipated for construction completion in 2022. The pre-design of the Replacement Hospital consists of approximately 450,000 Gross Square Feet that will contain 200 inpatient beds, diagnostic and treatment, clinical support and services in modern state-of-the-art healing environment. Additional building improvements to the south campus will also focus on providing a collaborative integration of healthcare, food service, comprehensive translational research in support of Veterans, and meeting all VA and California seismic mandates for medical center operations.

Zone 1, the medical science portion of the campus will also include greenspace and alcoves for healing and reflection, and possibly reuse of the former Executive homes to provide dignified waiting space and meal options for Veterans and their families (e.g., through VA's Veteran Canteen Service and/or other providers).

#### Zone 2 - Coordinated Care:

This zone includes ambulatory healthcare support services, short and long term treatment services, and transitional housing. A consistent request during the master planning process was for the coordinated care and services zone to have enhanced services that included a Veteran and Family Resource Center where Veterans especially female veterans and families could access one stop specialized medical, public health, case management, peer services, legal, employment, educational and family resilience programs. Also of particular interest were programs and services that were trauma informed and trauma responsive assisting Veterans and families adapt to life after having experienced trauma. A second request was for more

# Executive Summary

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specialized services for homeless and disadvantaged Veteran populations focused again on trauma, mental health, traumatic brain injury, and the full array of addiction services. There were also strong requests for the development of technical training with the development of a 21st century vocational training center. There was also interest expressed in developing supportive services that include promotion of the arts in helping with healing and creating an atmosphere of recovery for Veterans living on the campus and others receiving healthcare or other supportive services. Zone 2 also includes the portion of the campus known as the “Grand Lawn.” That area is being targeted for quiet, memorial space, where monuments can be built to honor Veterans of all services eras, and to memorialize the deep and rich traditions of this campus.

### **Zone 3 - Veteran Housing:**

This zone includes primarily permanent supportive housing consistent with VA’s Housing and Veteran First strategy. An important deliverable for the draft Master Plan is to estimate the short and long term need for permanent supportive housing (PSH) on the WLA Campus, in the context of the availability of PSH in the community and the principle of enabling Veteran choice. To accomplish this task data was analyzed from several valid and reliable sources: the most recent point-in-time counts (PIT) and demographic surveys conducted by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, pursuant to HUD requirements, data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), and administrative data from VA-GLA homeless programs. It is important to note that housing on the WLA Campus is being prioritized for female Veterans, aging Veterans, and those who are severely physically or mentally disabled, including chronically homeless Veterans who are aging and female parent Veterans who have experienced trauma. The housing is being prioritized for those who need the closer proximity to the medical and other supportive services to successfully maintain the highest level of functioning along with improved quality of life. The analysis also accounted for the aging homeless Veteran population with a decreased life expectancy as the result of time spent on the streets. Both available data and the best estimates of well-informed individuals were used, and it was concluded that the immediate need (over the next 10 years) is for approximately between 700-900 units of PSH at WLA. A range is provided because the estimate includes Veteran’s preference for a resource that has not been

provided for in the past. VA and its community partners will continue to refine the projections based on reliable data as it becomes available. But this number currently represents a reasonable and actionable projection. . Although the projected need is for between 700-900 housing units the plan does also contain projections related to capacity for housing, anticipating the changing healthcare and housing needs of the veteran population as it continues to age.

PSH on the WLA Campus is contingent on VA obtaining legislative authority (e.g., S. 2013 and H.R. 3484 (known as the “Los Angeles Homeless Veterans Leasing Act of 2015”)to enable the private sector to not only renovate existing buildings but also to construct new housing under VA’s Enhanced-Use Lease Program (38 U.S.C. §§ 8161-8169). Such housing conceptually will consist of studios, one, and two bedroom apartments for Veterans. The neighborhoods will also include “main street” amenities that promote a sense of community, and provide Veterans with the opportunities to socialize and engage with one another and the community.

### **Zone 4 - Recreational:**

This zone consists primarily of green space and also includes therapeutic leisure activities and recreational facilities for Veteran use. Veterans requested services focused on fitness, recreational and therapeutic activities, and beatification of the existing grounds, so the campus will feel more welcoming.

A goal will be to ensure that the four Zones are situated in a safe, secure, and Veteran friendly way, so they will have convenient access between them (via all modes of travel including vehicle, walking, biking, and wheelchair), and to their intended destinations and localities. The concept for the entire WLA Campus can be seen on “Figure A.1 WLA Campus Map” on page 12, and the four zones are further illustrated in the pages that follow

A  
B  
C  
D  
E  
F  
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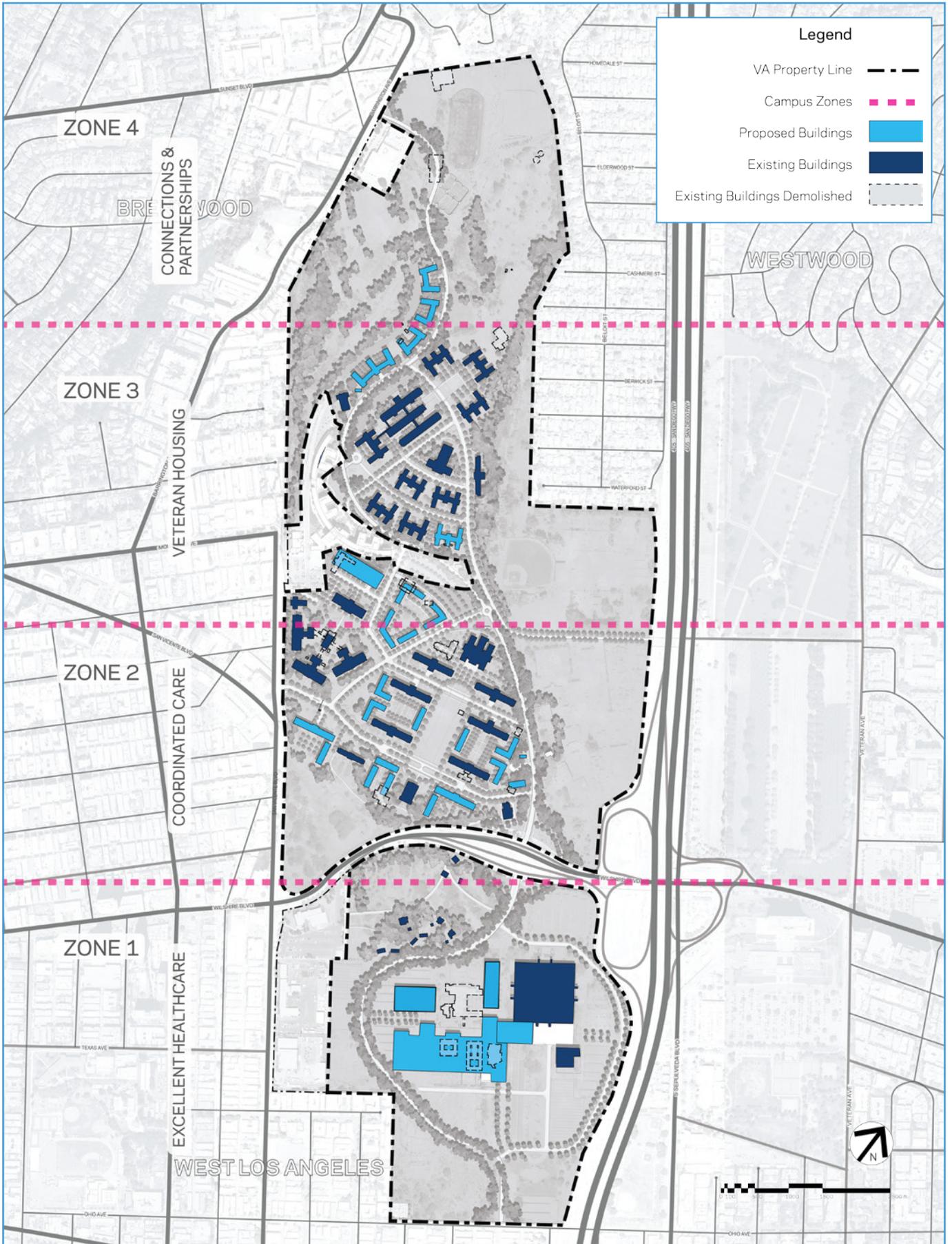


Figure A.1 WLA Campus Map



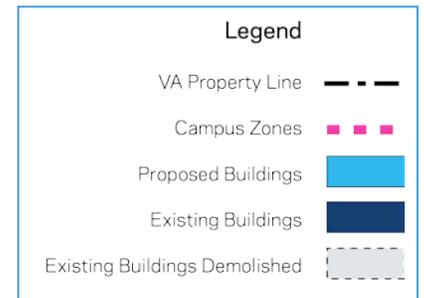
# Executive Summary



Figure A.3 Zone 2 - Coordinated Care

Zone 2 - Coordinated Care includes the following features:

- Approximately 700 transitional or short-term residential treatment beds
- Community Centers
- Well-being and family resilience, short-term treatment facilities that address trauma, traumatic brain injury, mental health and addiction
- Technical training centers
- Legal assistance
- Benefit assistance
- Housing assistance
- Employment Assistance
- DOD to VA transition assistance services



# Executive Summary



Figure A.4 Zone 3 - Veteran Housing

Zone 3 - Veteran Housing includes the following features:

- Up to 900 Units of Permanent Supportive Housing (to be in constructed and/or renovated facilities)
- Other amenities (e.g., small eateries, coffee shops, focused on Veterans and their families)

| Legend                        |     |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| VA Property Line              | --- |
| Campus Zones                  | --- |
| Proposed Buildings            | ■   |
| Existing Buildings            | ■   |
| Existing Buildings Demolished | --- |

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B  
C  
D  
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F  
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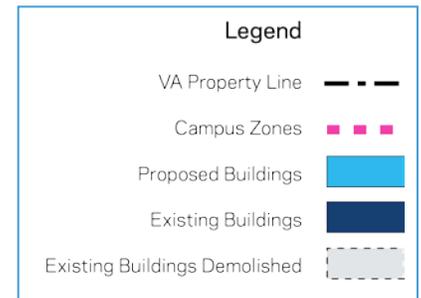
# Executive Summary



Figure A.5 Zone 4 - Recreational / Connections & Partnerships

Zone 4 - Recreational includes the following facilities for Veterans:

- A Veteran Recreation Center and Park
- Japanese Garden
- Hero's Golf Course
- Use of a swimming pool, walking trails, gardens, basketball courts, a track field, tennis courts, and baseball fields



# Executive Summary

## Draft Final Master Plan Summary *Revised Process for Land Use Decisions*

### **Veteran Focus for Future Land Use Activities**

Going forward, VA's efforts to revitalize the campus will not include any third party use of space agreements that do not directly benefit Veterans and their families, and monetary proceeds to VA alone will not suffice. This concept will be a key consideration in terms of how existing and any future land use agreements are evaluated for approval, rejection, or termination.

All such reviews will be done with Veterans and their families in mind, along with applicable law. This means agreements will be assessed to determine whether they are "Veteran focused." The term "Veteran focused" means does or would the agreement result in additional healthcare, benefits, services, or resources being provided directly to Veterans and/or their families on the WLA Campus, other than solely the generation of revenue for VA.

Under this "Veteran focused" definition, monetary proceeds paid to VA alone will not constitute an acceptable agreement to be permitted on the WLA Campus. Neither will agreements that benefit the public at large, versus Veterans and their families. Land use activities at the WLA Campus will be about the Veterans and their families. And VA's review of proposed third party land use agreements will entail a linear, multi-layered process, to ensure adequate due diligence occurs. At a minimum, each agreement will be receive input from the following VA personnel:

- (1) West LA Chief of Outreach → (2) VAMC Director → (3) VISN 22 Director → (4) SAO West Land Use Contracting Officer → (5) the San Francisco Regional Counsel Office (now known as the Pacific District (North)) → and (6) OGC's Real Property Deputy Chief Counsel in VA Headquarters.

Additionally, the WLA Chief of Outreach and Fiscal Office, and VISN 22 Capital Asset Manager, will be required to monitor the executed land use agreements at West LA, to ensure that the third party entities are complying with the negotiated terms and conditions. And as necessary but at least quarterly, they will provide a written analysis to the SAO West Land Use Contracting Officer, regarding any contract-related issues requiring his/her review, input and/or action.

VA will continue implementing corrective actions to address the recommendations of the General Accountability Office for land use activities at the WLA

Campus, notably GAO Report 15-501 dated August 2014. VISN 22 will also conduct audits of the land use contracts at West LA, to confirm compliance with terms and conditions, notably the levels of revenues and accounts receivables collected and owed to VA, and to ensure such funds are directed as appropriate, to their proper VA accounts, or to the U.S. Treasury as miscellaneous receipts.

The WLA Chief of Outreach and Fiscal Office, and VISN 22 Capital Asset Manager shall ensure that all executed third party land use contracts and any subsequent amendments or modifications, are uploaded into VA's Capital Asset Inventory (or successor program), within 30 days of execution, or such other time as national VA policy guidance dictates.

VHA West LA shall adhere to national VA policy guidance regarding VA real property contracts and land use issues, and will consult the VA's Office of General Counsel as necessary.

Lastly, VA will continue ongoing coordination and cooperation with congressional members and their staffs, and stay apprised of existing and future congressional legislation pertinent to issues at the WLA Campus, such as S. 2013 and H.R. 3484 (known as the "Los Angeles Homeless Veterans Leasing Act of 2015") and California Proposition 41 (the "Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Bond Act of 2014); and S. 833 and H.R. 1543 (known as the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Facility Earthquake Protection and Improvement Act).

### **Columbarium Expansion Project**

Efforts are now underway, for VA's Veteran Health Administration to transfer approximately 13 acres of land (located North of Constitution Avenue and West of Interstate 405), to VA's National Cemetery Administration (NCA), for the planned columbarium expansion project. The transfer is currently targeted for November 2015. Once completed, VA will procure a contractor to construct the project. That contract is currently set for award in late 2016/early 2017, with a 24 month construction timeline. The first phase is expected to comprise approximately 10,000 columbarium niches for eligible Veterans and their families, at the only VA National Cemetery in Los Angeles, California.

A  
B  
C  
D  
E  
F  
G

# Executive Summary

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## Draft Final Master Plan Summary

### Next Steps

#### *Looking Ahead Beyond this Draft Final Master Plan*

While this current iteration of the Master Plan is a significant milestone, it is neither the final product nor last stage of the ongoing master planning process. In the coming days, VA will be posting this draft Master Plan to the Federal Register along with a Notice of Availability. Hard copies will also be available in multiple public libraries in the greater Los Angeles area, to solicit and receive public comments and feedback from stakeholders and the local community, for a 45-day period. Additionally, during this 45-day period, VA will conduct a series of community meetings and focus groups, to facilitate additional input. The comments and feedback that VA receives will be reviewed and indexed, and VA will provide summary responses through a second notice to be posted into the Federal Register. VA will continue to develop and refine a cost analysis of the plan. These measures will ensure that the plan undergoes a disciplined and constructive review before VA adopts the plan, which will then undergo and factor in, appropriate environmental and historic preservation due diligence. This feedback process will be continued as VA selects the new leadership for the WLA Campus (i.e., three senior executives – specifically the new Medical Center Director; the Director of Land Use Agreement & Community Engagement and Reintegration Services; and Director of Community Based Care, including the Sepulveda campus and Community Based Outpatient Clinics). VA advertised these positions during the fourth quarter of FY 2015, and is now at the interview/selection stage. The need for new leadership was a concern raised during stakeholder engagement, and VA plans to remedy that situation, so that the new leadership at WLA can carry the visions of the new Master Plan forward, while continuing to engage the Veteran voice in the decision making process.

#### *The next steps and process is as follows:*

- 1. Week of 10/19/2015** - VA posts the preliminary draft of the Master Plan into the Federal Register.
- 2. Starting the week of 10/26/2015** - VA will conduct community meetings and focus groups.
- 3. Saturday, 12/5/2015** - 45 day Federal Register public comment period ends.
- 4. Week of 12/7/2015 - Week of 1/11/2016** - VA will review the public comments and feedback received, with the goal of posting responses via a Second Notice into the Federal Register at the end of that process.
- 5. Week of 1/25/2016** - VA finalizes the Draft Final Master Plan. Week of 2/8/2016 - VA begins environmental and historic preservation due diligence for the Draft Final Master Plan – with ultimate goal of achieving a Final Master Plan for the WLA Campus.
- 6. To be determined** – VA undertakes the environmental and historic preservation due diligence (e.g., the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321, et seq.; and the National Historic Preservation Act, 16 U.S.C. §§ 470, et seq. and all other requirements), and adopts a Final Master Plan. Once adopted, the Final Master Plan will serve as the blue print for VA to implement steps necessary to revitalize the WLA Campus via resources including congressional appropriations; gifts and donations (including an “1887 fund” being established for restoring historic properties on campus; and public-private partnerships (e.g., supportive housing Enhanced-Use Leases), subject to enactment of pertinent congressional legislation, the availability of various other funding sources such as tax credits, and State and local funding (e.g., California Proposition 41 funding under the California Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Bond Act).

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