U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Office of Construction & Facilities Management
Washington DC 20420

November 21, 2023

SUBJECT: Scoping Notice for a Programmatic Environmental Assessment for U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Real Property Build-To-Suit Lease Program

Dear Valued Stakeholder,

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) proposes to construct, renovate, or repair leased medical and medically related facilities to care for our nation's Veterans in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, and Tribal Lands. The VA Office of Real Property supports VA's mission by acquiring land and leasing space for the construction of medical and medically related facilities to care for our nation's Veterans.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide eligible Veterans common medical services, assisted living care, and related services. The Proposed Action is needed to address current and future projected health care gaps and operational inefficiencies, especially in rural areas where access to common medical services offered by VAMCs is not an easily accessible option.

VA is preparing a programmatic environmental assessment (PEA) to assess the potential environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Action. The PEA aims to provide a streamlined National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance process for those recurring, predictable, and low-impact construction, renovation, or repair projects that would result in less than significant impacts.

Use of the PEA would decrease the time and cost associated with having to prepare stand-alone NEPA documentation for those future build-to-suit lease projects that would meet the conditions of the PEA. VA would complete additional NEPA compliance as required on projects outside the parameters of the PEA.

VA is preparing the PEA in accordance with the regulations implementing the procedural provisions of the NEPA of 1969 (42 U.S. Code 4321-4370h), as implemented by the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500-1508), and VA's NEPA Implementing Regulations (38 CFR Part 26). The PEA will evaluate the potential direct and indirect impacts on the human environment from the Proposed Action and alternatives.

If you have comments on the scope of issues for analysis, input on potential alternatives, or information/analyses relevant to the Proposed Action, please submit your comments/input via www.regulations.gov. Type "Build-to-Suit Lease Program" in the search bar then click on the "comment" button underneath the first search result, which will be the scoping notice for this project. Then follow the prompts to submit your comment. Comments must be received on or before December 18, 2023.

VA anticipates releasing the Draft PEA for a 30-day public review and comment period in spring 2024. VA will notify stakeholders via email/mail, publish a notice of availability of the Draft PEA in the *Federal Register* and solicit comments at that time. The Draft PEA will be available for review via the VA website: https://www.cfm.va.gov/environmental/.

For further information, contact Mr. Jason Sturm, Environmental Engineer, Office of Construction & Facilities Management (003C2), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue NW, Washington DC 20420, (224) 628–1946 (this is not a toll-free number), Jason.Sturm@va.gov. Reference ‘‘Build-to-Suit Lease PEA’’ in your correspondence.

Respectfully,

KATHRYN DOMM Digitally signed by KATHRYN DOMM
Date: 2023.11.28 10:38:54 -06'00'

Kathryn Domm
Director, Environmental Program Office
Office of Construction & Facilities Management