U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Office of Construction & Facilities Management
425 I Street, NW, Ste. 2E.250
Washington DC 20420
www.cfm.va.gov

In Reply Refer To:
Reno VAMC PEIS-029-15-VHA-1737045243

June 24, 2025

SUBJECT: Scoping Notice for Preparation of a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act and Section 106 Consultation under the National Historic Preservation Act for the Proposed Relocation of the Ioannis A. Lougaris VA Medical Center (Reno VAMC) Services and Facilities in Reno, Nevada (PEIS-029-15-VHA-1737045243)

Dear Valued Stakeholder,

The U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is issuing this scoping notice to solicit comment and advise the public, agencies, and stakeholders of the proposed relocation of the VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System (VASNHCS) Ioannis A. Lougaris VA Medical Center (Reno VAMC) services and facilities in Reno, Nevada (the Proposed Action). The purpose of this Proposed Action is to provide exceptional health care planning, facilities and services to the current and future Veteran population in the Northern Nevada (Reno) region. The region is undergoing substantial growth in the health care needs of the Veteran population, which is placing additional demands on the already stressed health care infrastructure.

The Proposed Action is needed to address critical space, functional, and infrastructure limitations of existing facilities at the current Reno VAMC. Originally built in the 1930's, the existing Reno VAMC campus has aging, seismically deficient facilities and infrastructure, and site space limitations, which impact its ability to meet modern health care requirements. The current VAMC campus buildings are situated on approximately 13 acres of land within a fully developed residential area of Reno. VA estimates that over 300,000 square feet of additional building space and over 500 additional parking spaces are needed to meet the projected health care service requirements. In addition, a seismic study of the Reno VAMC campus found that five of the campus buildings, or nearly 75 percent of the campus square footage, do not meet current seismic building code standards and are at risk of significant damage or failure from a major seismic event.

In November 2023, VA conducted a Market Survey to identify sites, 50 to 80-acres in size, within a 10-mile radius of the existing Reno VAMC for the potential relocation of the existing Reno VAMC facilities and health care services. While three potentially viable sites were identified, VA received only a single expression of interest for the site located on the northern portion of the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) campus. In March 2025, VA initiated a second Market Survey for 30 to 50-acre sites within a 10-mile radius of the existing Reno VAMC for potential relocation of existing Reno VAMC facilities and services. The second Market Survey evaluation is on-going. Figure 1 illustrates the location of the existing Reno VAMC campus located at 975 Kirman Avenue, the offered

UNR Site, and the 10-mile Market Survey search radius. Figure 2 depicts the current Reno VAMC campus. Figure 3 illustrates the offered UNR Site.

VA is preparing a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts and effects to historic properties for the proposed relocation of Reno VAMC services and facilities in Reno in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S. Code §4321-4370H). To formally initiate the NEPA process, VA published a Notice of Intent to prepare a PEIS in the *Federal Register* on June 20, 2025: https://www.federalregister.gov/public-inspection/2025-11349/environmental-impact-statements-availability-etc-proposed-relocation-of-the-ioannis-a-lougaris-va. This letter is part of the PEIS scoping process; VA invites you to identify potential environmental issues, concerns, or reasonable alternatives that should be considered in the PEIS.

VA will incorporate National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) consultation as outlined in 36 CFR §§ 800.3 – 800.6 and 54 U.S.C. 306108 (generally referred to as "Section 106,") into the NEPA analysis. The incorporation of NHPA into the NEPA analysis will follow the substitution process outlined in 36 CFR § 800.8(c). Additional information about this process is available online at: https://www.achp.gov/integrating_nepa_106.

As part of this effort, VA intends to identify historic properties and cultural resources inside the proposed project's area of potential effects (APE) and assess any potential adverse effects from this proposed action to those historic properties and cultural resources. VA requests your input and assistance with delineation of the APE and with identification of any historic, religious, cultural, or archaeological resources that may be affected by the proposed project.

The PEIS will evaluate the potential impacts and effects of the Proposed Action (relocation), the Action Alternative (renovation of the existing VAMC), and the No Action Alternative.

Proposed Action (Relocation)

Under the Proposed Action, VA would acquire, design, and conduct initial site work on an offered site of up to approximately 50 acres of contiguous land for the relocation of some or all of Reno VAMC health care services and facilities as authorized by Public Law 118-124 - Fiscal Year 2024 Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Authorization Act. Potential supplemental leasing and use of off-site facilities and potential renovation and partial reuse of the existing Reno VAMC will also be considered as part of the Proposed Action. Additionally, other new VA facilities could be developed on the new site to facilitate future health care service needs of Northern Nevada Veterans.

Relocation decisions, design, phasing, construction and operations of the facilities at the new site as well as transfer of operations would occur in a phased approach over a multi-year effort as VA receives future congressional authorization for design and execution of the suite of projects needed for relocation of the existing Reno VAMC health care services and facilities.

VA is considering three options under the Proposed Action:

- Full Relocation: Full relocation of existing Reno VAMC services and facilities to the proposed property over a multi-year phased approach, the closure of the existing Reno VAMC, and the future disposal of the existing Reno VAMC site.
- Hybrid Option I: Partial relocation of existing Reno VAMC services and facilities to the new site and continued use of the existing Reno VAMC site.
- Hybrid Option II: Partial relocation of existing Reno VAMC services and facilities to the new site, partial relocation to off-site leased location(s), closure of the existing Reno VAMC, and the future disposal of the existing Reno VAMC site.

All Proposed Action options will include some off-site services and facility lease agreements; however, no specific off-site lease agreement locations have been identified nor will site-specific analysis of those be included in the PEIS. The UNR Site and other additional, validated offered sites identified through the ongoing 2025 Market Survey will be included in the Proposed Action analysis.

Action Alternative (Renovation of Existing VAMC)

Under the Action Alternative, VA would perform the necessary seismic upgrades and renovations at the existing Reno VAMC campus and would design, construct, and operate a new clinical services addition at the site. No new land acquisition for the relocation of health care services would occur. Under this alternative, modifications of Reno VAMC operations and services would primarily remain at the existing campus with partial expansion and relocation accomplished via off-site lease agreement location(s). Seismic upgrades, renovation, and new construction activities would occur in stages over a period of many years to maintain medical center operations on the small, landlocked campus.

VA has determined that a programmatic NEPA analysis is appropriate for this proposed large, multi-phased project because it allows VA to make informed decisions timed with meaningful points in agency planning and decision making. The PEIS will evaluate the potential impacts and effects of the Proposed Action, Action Alternative, and the No Action Alternative for the relocation, planning, design, and future development of replacement facilities under the various options to meet the purpose and need. The PEIS will not evaluate site-specific project components or design details, not ripe for analysis at this time due to the phased execution approach. As necessary, VA will evaluate and if required would conduct subsequent, tiered NEPA analyses for project specific impacts and effects of the future phased construction projects and operation of health care services and facilities, as well as closure and disposal of the existing Reno VAMC (as applicable).

VA seeks input on the proposed action and alternatives, environmental impacts that should be evaluated, and possible mitigation measures to be considered. VA will consider agency and public comments received during the PEIS scoping period. Thus, these alternatives are subject to change.

VA invites you to share your comments at either of the two in-person public scoping meetings or via www.regulations.gov. VA will hold the public scoping meetings on Tuesday, July 15, 2025 at 6:00

pm and on Wednesday, July 16, 2025 at 9:00 am. Both meetings will be held the City of Reno McKinley Arts & Cultural Center, located at 925 Riverside Drive in Reno.

The scoping meetings will provide an opportunity to learn about the project and provide input on the environmental analysis process. Both meetings will cover the same material. During the scoping meetings, VA will provide an overview of the project and the PEIS and NEPA process. VA will post project information on VA's publicly accessible website https://www.cfm.va.gov/environmental/.

To submit your comments electronically, go to www.regulations.gov. Type "Reno VAMC PEIS" in the search bar then click on the "comment" button underneath the first search result, which will be the *Federal Register* scoping notice for this project. Then follow the prompts to submit your comment. Comments must be received on or before August 5, 2025.

VA anticipates releasing the Draft PEIS for a 45-day public review and comment period in late Summer 2026. VA will notify stakeholders via email and publish a notice of availability of the Draft PEIS in the *Federal Register* and the *Reno Gazette-Journal*. The Draft PEIS will be available for review via the VA website: https://www.cfm.va.gov/environmental/ and at local libraries.

For further information, contact vacoenvironment@va.gov. Include "***Reno VAMC PEIS***" as the subject in your correspondence.

Respectfully,

GLENN ELLIOTT

Digitally signed by GLENN ELLIOTT
Date: 2025.06.24 08:53:35 -04'00'

Glenn Elliott
Director, Project Development Services Division
Office of Facilities Planning

Attachments:

Figure 1 – Regional Location of the Proposed Action
Figure 2 – Existing Reno VAMC Campus
Figure 3 – UNR Site

Figure 1. Regional Location of the Proposed Action

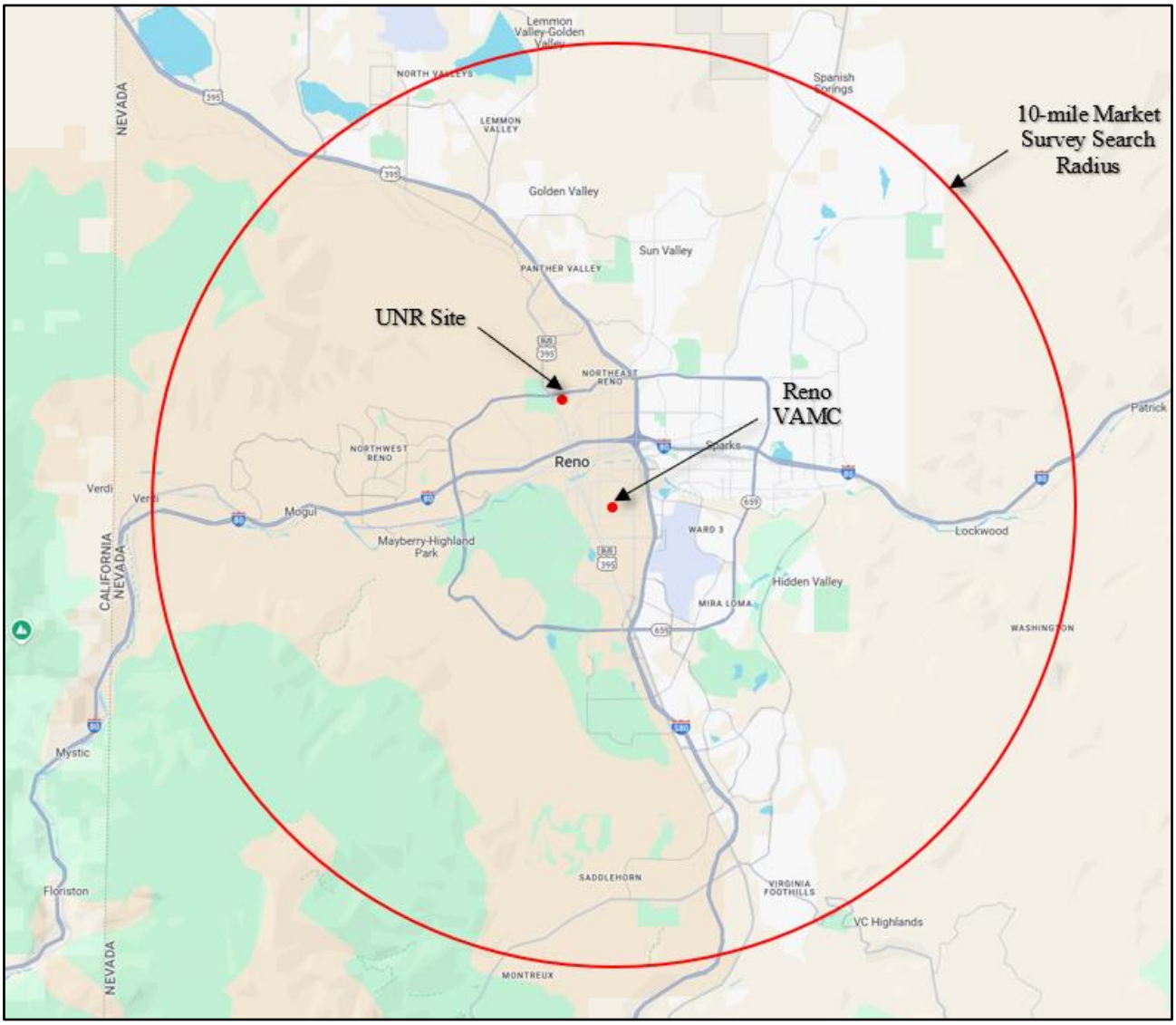

Figure 2. Existing Reno VAMC Campus (Approx 13 acres)

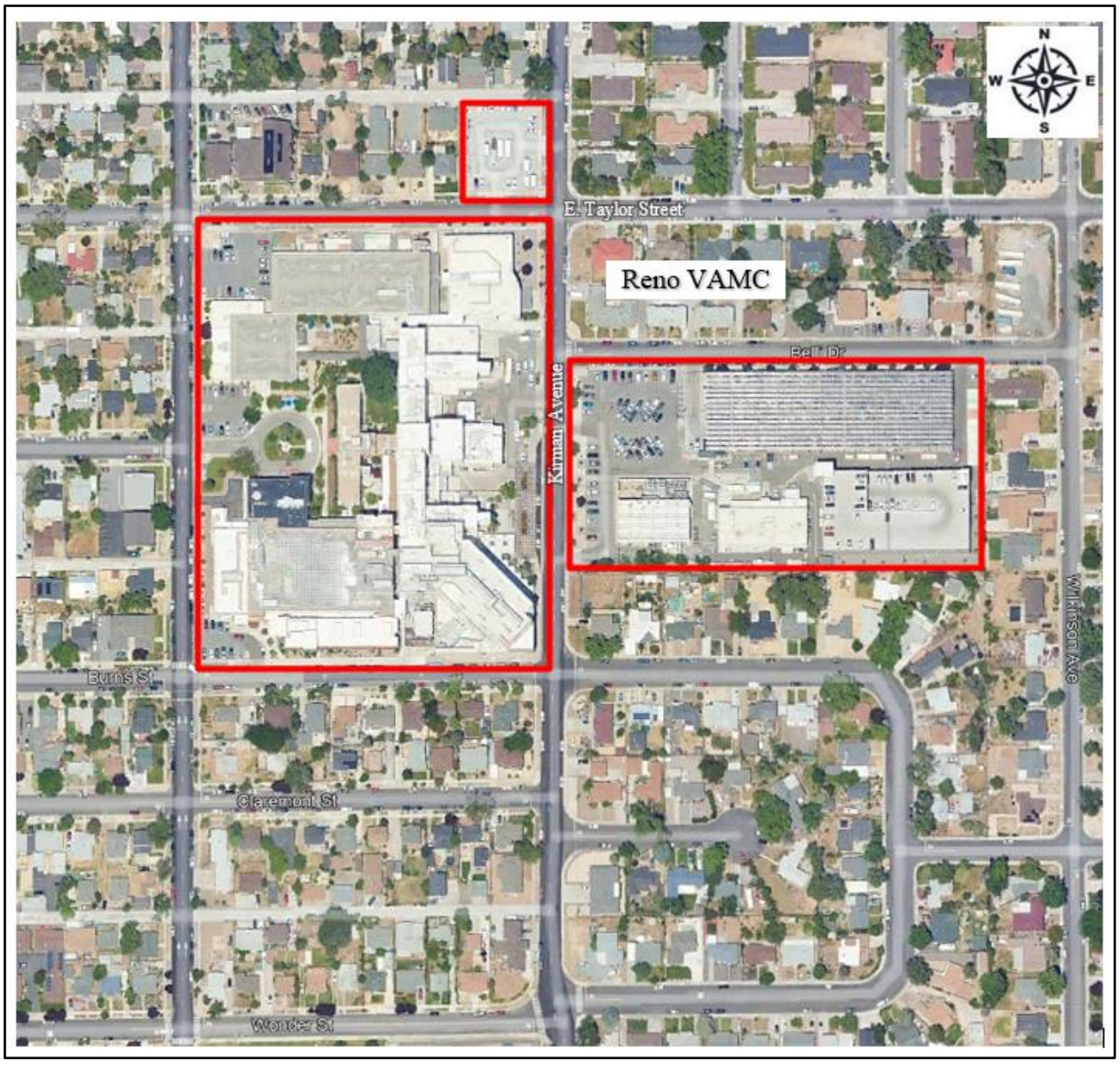
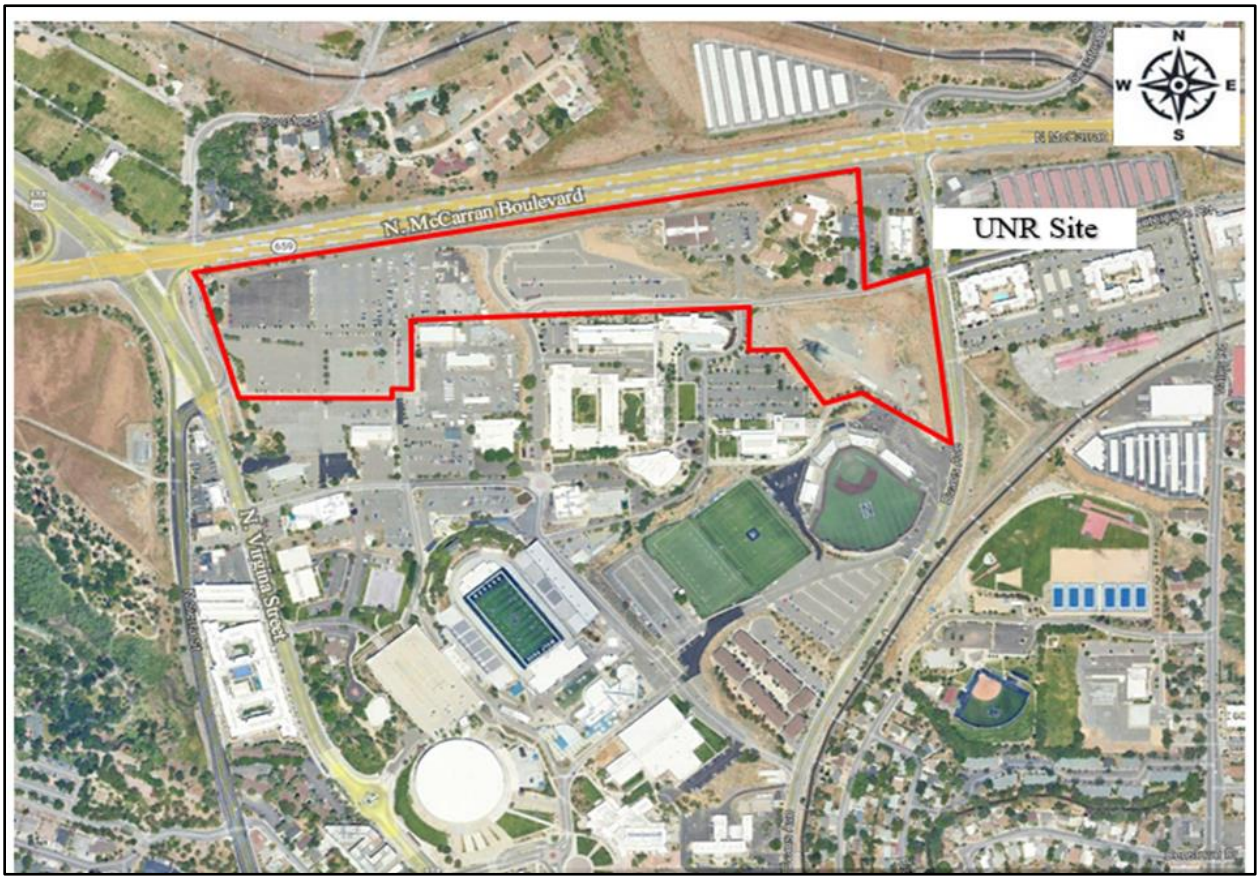
Figure 3. UNR Site