

Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans and Community Oversight and Engagement Board (VCOEB)
Federal Advisory Committee Meeting (Virtual)
June 29, 2021

Committee Members Present:

Lieutenant General (R) John D. Hopper Jr., Chair
Philip Mangano, Vice Chair
Anthony Allman
Joshua Bamberger
Robert Begland
Julian Manalo
Jennifer Marshall
Jim Perley
Dan Rosenfeld
Joseph Sapien
Sarah Serrano
Kristine Stanley
Dennis Tucker
Hamilton B. Underwood
Dr. Mark Wellisch
Jim Zenner

Committee Members Absent:

Department of Veterans Affairs Staff Present:

Ms. Tanya Bradsher, Chief of Staff, Department of Veterans Affairs
Eugene W. Skinner Jr., Designated Federal Officer
Chihung Szeto, Alternate Designated Federal Officer
Mr. John Boerstler, Chief, Veterans Experience Office
Dr. Steven E. Braverman, M.D. Medical Center Director
Robert McKenrick, Deputy Medical Center Director
Jelessa Burney, Advisory Committee Management Office
Toni Bush Neal
Cynthia Cordova
Janet Elder
Carmen Gamble
Regina Griffin
Darryl Joseph
Matthew McGahran, Director, Community Engagement and Reintegration Service (CERS)
Jeffrey Moragne, Advisory Committee Management Office
Dr. Barbara Morton
Dr. Betty Moseley Brown
Carrie Pham, Office of Asset Enterprise Management
Jim Wartski, Executive Director, Veteran, Family and Community Engagement

Public Present: (Please note that the meeting was virtual and open to the public, full attendance could not be taken or confirmed.)

Lori Allgood
Tess Banko
Ricky Chen
Chelsea Childress
Jeanette Christian
Roberto Clemente
Stephanie Cohen
Ken Craft
Tony DeFrancesco
Angelique DSilva-Williams
Marnie Gale
Kristin Grotecloss
Daryl Hairston
Jodi Harman
Francisco Juarez
Caroline Kelly
Edward Ledford
Roberto Marshall
Peter Muller
Kyle Orlemann
Stephen Peck
Joseph Proffitt
Colin Purmal
Bruce Rankin
Robert Reynolds
Janet Rice
Nicolas Rodriquez
Tom Ruck
Anna Scott
Tiffany Tellett
Anastasia Travers
Janet Turner
Jonathan Varat
Larry Vasquez
Terry Warren
Theresa Wrzesinski

June 29, 2021

Call to Order, Attendance, Welcome, Pledge of Allegiance, Opening Remarks	LTG (R) John D. Hopper, Chair, Eugene W. Skinner Jr, Designated Federal Officer Mr. Skinner introduced himself as Designated Federal Officer and Mr. Chi Szeto as Alternative DFO. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mentioned technical support staff available if members have trouble with WebEx platform.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explained public comment portion of meeting and public comment period. ○ Made disclosure that meeting was recorded for staff taking minutes. ○ Went over rules, teleconferencing platform etiquette, remaining muted until called on, identify yourself prior to speaking, etc. ○ Comments can be submitted via email at veofaca@va.gov. ● A roll call vote will be used for all proposed recommendations and minimize background noise while speaking. ● Mr. Skinner then introduced the Chairman, LTG John Hopper. <p>General Hopper welcomed to committee to the 13th meeting of the Veterans and Community Oversight and Engagement Board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Led Pledge of Allegiance. ○ General Hopper introduced Mr. John Boerstler, Chief Veterans Experience Office.
Veterans Experience Office Update	<p>Mr. John Boerstler, Chief Veterans Experience Office</p> <p>Mr. Boerstler welcomed the committee and thanked the advisory council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Excited about mapping Veteran experience through VSignals and other listening tools. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ creating a culture of trust between Veteran and VA. ● VA website, va.gov/trust, has demographic information and breaks down Veteran surveys in real-time. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Able to measure ease, effectiveness, and access to VA services and benefits enterprise-wide. ○ Will be updated and published on quarterly basis-critically important. ● Excited to have Tanya Bradsher, VA's Chief of Staff, at the meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ She is senior advisor to both the Secretary and Deputy Secretary to VA. ○ 20-year Army Veteran of combat tours of duty and Operation Iraqi Freedom. ○ Served on the White House National Security Council during both Obama and Biden's administration. ○ Worked on Capitol Hill as Chief of Staff for Congressman Don Beyer's office. ○ Chief of Communications at American Psychiatric Association. ○ Defense Health Agency Chief of Plans for Public Affairs. ● Thanked Ms. Bradsher for being on the line.
VA Leadership Update	<p>Ms. Tanya Bradsher, Chief of Staff, Department of Veterans Affairs</p> <p>Ms. Bradsher thanked Mr. Boerstler and General Hopper for his 35+ years of service in the Air Force and continued service on this committee since it was established in 2017.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recognized Vice Chair Philip Mangano for his dedication to community collaborations and grassroots coordination to prevent Veteran homelessness.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciates and values the different perspectives and experiences on the board and thanked them all for their dedication to ending Veteran homelessness. • President Biden’s priority is taking care of Veterans, especially the most vulnerable, as they return home. • Ms. Bradsher shared a story of a homeless Veteran outside of VA who had no shoes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ clinicians were able to get him the vaccine. ○ worked with the store downstairs to get him shoes. ○ heartwarming story because of other’s compassion and generosity. ○ heartbreaking as well (should have shoes, necessities, etc.). ○ Not having that is a failure and it’s our “sacred obligation” to make sure this doesn’t happen to our Veteran populations. • Ms. Bradsher stated it was a privilege to represent Secretary to the board and this is one of the Secretary’s most urgent priorities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Secretary is clear on importance of development of the West LA campus is to VA. ○ supportive of any resources that the committee may need to make this happen. ○ committed to driving progress on the master plan. ○ committed to signing that plan before the year ends. ○ focusing on any delays or problems that have prevented this from happening. ○ model for the future across the country. • She has received and reviewed the nine recommendations the committee submitted in March. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ under review, will be submitted to the Secretary soon. • Important to engage with stakeholders and the GLA community to get this completed— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Also engage Veterans, their families, caregiver, community, and this board for recommendations. • VA is committed to transparency and clear communication in this work. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ transparent in the flow of information and sharing information. • improving trust among the greater Los Angeles stakeholders. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ through effective strategic communications. ○ including any changes in the successor plan. • Asked the committee to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the rapid growth of women Veteran population, ○ unique needs of Gulf War, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom Veterans. ○ Impact of evolving healthcare trends- telehealth, tele-mental health. • Planning to visit West LA in July, including an IPT (Integrated Project Team) to establish the direct line of communication to the board and its stakeholders.
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Ms. Bradsher opened the floor for questions.

- General Hopper said the committee has seen the video with the Secretary's comments regarding his plans for VA. His question: "How does the VA's vision coincide with what the Draft Master Plan is now?"
- Ms. Bradsher answered saying the West LA campus is to serve as the model for the nation to address Veteran homelessness.
 - will set the standard for superior care, support, and convenience for customer service for Veterans, members of the armed forces and families.
 - VA is committed to the West LA campus being a model emulated across the nation.
 - Outsized impact on veteran homelessness and broader LA, will bring momentum across the United States to house Veterans.
- General Hopper stated the board has been working on this for 5 years. Momentum has been stagnant and lost.
 - Board has learned from those working on homeless issue in LA and other parts of the country.
 - have added urgency to the recommendations from the last meeting.
 - A single manager endorsed by the Secretary is a critical part of moving this project forward.
 - General Hopper also mentioned the importance of communication and the flow of information as caused hindsight actions instead of oversight from the board.
- How do we get the information in a manner that allows oversight as well as VA exercising prerogatives to establish this new/revised housing for Veterans?
- Ms. Bradsher said that the Secretary is making sure he has all the information available, regular updates and meetings, and open communication between the VEO and Secretary's office.

General Hopper called on Anthony Allman.

- Mr. Allman stated the draft Master Plan was adopted in January 2016 and targets three demographics of Veterans for use of the property—severely injured Veterans, aging Veterans, and female Veterans—has VA committed to the use of the property for those three demographics?
- Ms. Bradsher responded that -Gulf War, Iraqi Freedom, Afghanistan, and women Veterans- trying to ensure outreach is for all Veterans, they can access the services and be taken care of regardless of ability. She is committed to a welcoming environment for women and all vulnerable Veteran populations.
- Mr. Allman asked about the broader scope of the Draft Master plan, it has been focused on the housing portion, a significant element, but not the entirety of the plan. We have not heard a comprehensive broader vision for other aspects of the plan- the Veterans Education and Enterprise Center, for vocational training—a portion of the campus should be dedicated to ensuring Veterans have the skills to obtain jobs that pay market wages. This is part of the model that West LA VA can bring to the portfolio, training Veterans for job in their specific community.
- Ms. Bradsher agreed and said using the existing resources VA has plus training programs for homeless Vets should be the standard. Homeless Veterans are also

	<p>able to apply for the V Rapid program, a job training program for Veterans who lost their jobs during COVID. Ms. Bradsher.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Allman also mentioned Veterans should never fall into homeless to begin with. Focus on homeless Veterans is critical but West LA Campus must focus on setting Veterans up for success moving forward. • Ms. Bradsher is looking forward to getting the community's, stakeholders, and Veteran feedback when she is in LA in July. <p>LTG Hopper thanked Chief Bradsher and looks forward to her visit to LA in July.</p>
<p>Opening Remarks</p> <p>Revised timeline based upon Engineering challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include potential choke points and strategy to overcome. • Include target date to house next compliment of Veterans as a result of executing the DMP. <p>Housing homeless Veterans now.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan to work with State/County/City considering recent rebalance of State Budget (\$7 -\$8 Billion) to support housing the homeless <p>Strategy regarding encampment of Veterans located outside campus gates.</p> <p>Drone flyover video excerpts</p>	<p>Dr. Steven E. Braverman, M.D., Medical Center Director/ Mr. Robert McKenrick, Deputy Medical Center Director</p> <p>Dr. Braverman thanked the Chairman and Chief Bradsher for the introduction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status on COVID-19. • Low case rate, increase the opportunities for Veterans, volunteers, and visitors in-person on campus. • Masks required in public areas or Veteran-facing areas. • Continue to have two in-patients with COVID- not admitted because of COVID. • Delta variant is serious, and vaccination is critical. • 67% of Veteran population has been vaccinated. • More older Veterans vaccinated, younger Veterans resistant to vaccination, continuing to work with those populations. • Lead region, network VISN in telehealth visits, about ¾ more telehealth visits. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ will continue to provide telehealth options even as face-to-face visits increase. ○ convenient for Veterans-LA traffic. • Receiving feedback from Veterans-VSignals- survey outpatient and inpatient Veterans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For last six quarters Trust scores have been increasing since 2018, equivalent to national average- approximately 85%. ○ SHEP scores for inpatient also increasing, exceed national average over 90% for all indicators which have increased over the pandemic. ○ Showing improvement but work continues. • Dr. Braverman said he had a good meeting with Chief of Staff Tanya Bradsher last week. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Quick briefing on committee, GLA Veteran healthcare system. ○ Expects her to be primary executive sponsor. ○ committee gets Master Plan finalized- intra-agency pieces: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ budget requirements, engineer staff and contractor support. ▪ identifying all requirements for UL parcels ready for transfer. • Identified \$18 million in 2021 funding requirements that can be obligated this year to start on the projects-some a couple years in the future. • Asbestos and ecological corrections must be made before turning over the parcels to the principal developer. • Passage of the West LA Improvement Act gives approximately \$10 million that can be used to get started on these opportunities for VA funding shortfalls and continue CTRS initiative beyond pandemic. • working with OGC to understand authorities this may give us to spend the funds

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ supports our work with the community, city, county, and state governments to continue to move the project forward. <p>Holding questions until Mr. McKenrick finishes his briefing.</p>
	<p>Mr. Robert McKenrick, Deputy Medical Center Director</p> <p>Robert McKenrick presented the GLA responses to VCOEB requests from the last meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The agenda included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Timeline of upcoming Enhanced Use Leases (EUL) ○ Due diligence to prepare parcels as “turnover ready” ○ State budget initiative ○ San Vincente strategy ○ Campus drone flyover • Working with Enhanced Use Leases (EULs) on a turnover schedule on a Master EUL Lease document. • 28 parcels of land to be turned over. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ some buildings to be rehabbed, parking lots, McArthur Field, some open fields. • Combination of new construction and rehabilitation of existing buildings • Turnover in phases-working with OAEM on drafting the phasing • Financing drives the speed of turnover for a parcel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ can be moved forward or backwards in the phasing process ○ Holding back some parcels because they have more complex needs • Meeting with principal developer to determine which parcels are in next phase • Phase I is agreed on which parcels will move first • GLA has responsibility to liaison for specific parcels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Building 209, the existing EUL on West LA campus. ○ two EULs on Sepulveda campus, Buildings 4 and 5 ○ OAEM is responsible for Lease interaction and accountability ○ OAEM is the lease sign or Lessor for VA • Building 208/209 expected availability mid-late next year • Significant movement on North Campus Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fire Inspector came to North Campus ○ Water pressure issue is fixed- full use of both water tanks on North Campus ○ There will be some upgrades ○ Water pressure is a trunk line effort ○ trunk lines for three dry utilities (gas, telecommunications, and power)—on schedule ○ Had to repave and redirect traffic around the North Campus for trunk line effort ○ Units expected to be online soon ○ kitchen, delivery, and trash at North Campus that must go around trunk lines • McArthur field has construction date of Q4 2020, timeline dependent on finance • Phase 0 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Building 205/208/207 ○ 209 was already constructed before it was turned over, so not included on slide graphic ○ Significant turnover issues that were GLA’s responsibility vs. the principal developer

- Working with OAEM and CFM –helping fund these issues
- Each property must be metered for power, water, etc.
- When the buildings are turned over to Phase I, VA hopes to have all pre-construction survey work completed
- Phase 1 Turnover Work.
 - Dr. Braverman mentioned the \$18 million granted for fixing older underground pipes.
 - Many utilities must be remediated.
 - Secured engineering support through VISN Contract Office engineer was onsite today.
 - Seven more resumes in review for engineering team to survey and preparing for turning over- will work with Office of Strategic Facility and Master Planning in GLA and our engineering team.
- Turnover is prioritization and steps are being defined for “turnover ready” status.
- Troubleshooting will begin after the survey is conducted.
- Some tasks start now.
 - clearing hazardous materials.
 - asbestos removal.
- South Campus kitchen construction is 25% complete
 - Building 300 will remain kitchen until South kitchen is complete
- Building 300 proposed as:
 - 50% EUL housing-upper floor
 - lower floor for services
 - still in discussions
 - Consulting General Counsel for appropriate structure
- Parking Lot 49
 - Principal developer proposing buildings on top of parking lots
 - Trunk lines are taking over parking
 - Need alternative, supplemental adequate parking options
 - VA staff, contractors, and visitors
 - Veterans ease of access
 - Workgroup exploring coordination, challenges, and solutions for parking
- South Campus Status
 - No movement with GLA level
 - Office of Construction and Facility Management (CFM) revising timeline
 - Will begin engaging South Campus construction for utilities
 - Moving forward with funds and utility work (trunk line) on North Campus
 - Separate construction on South Campus to upgrade utilities infrastructure

Mr. McKenrick turned the presentation to Matt McGahran to discuss state/county/city budget rebalance.

- Coordinated effort with government agencies remains and will continue
 - State ability to donate trailers
 - City ability to partner on Tiny Homes
 - Local agencies (Public Housing, LAHSA, Councilmembers) on solutions for homeless Veterans.
 - Community members and non-profits on supporting homeless Veteran initiatives -meals, donations, volunteer opportunities.
 - Affect on EUL strategy for redevelopment of West LA Campus-relies on local financing in budget proposals.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A Bridge Home (ABH) and local agencies within the City of Los Angeles. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Easement agreement- city owns ABH facility on VA campus, VA provides support services. ● West Los Angeles VA Campus Improvement Acts, enacted June 23, 2021. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Broadens VA's authority in West LA Campus. ○ Support construction, maintenance, and services at the campus related to temporary or permanent supportive housing for homeless or at-risk Veterans and their families. ○ Renovating and maintaining the land and facilities at the campus. ○ Minor construction projects. ○ Community operations on campus that support development of emergency shelter or supportive housing for homeless or at-risk Veterans and their families. <p>Mr. McGahran showed a color-coded graphic of project-based partnerships in LA County (green are operational, red operational in the next year).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Heat map- number of homeless Veterans at the point-in-time. ● Most resources and housing in SPA 4 and 6. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ higher number of Veterans in those areas. ● San Vicente strategy- working with Veterans on "Veterans Row." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ encampment started in May 2020-community activists. ○ about 30 Veterans now reside. ○ All have been offered services both within VA and outside services- depending on eligibility. ○ Currently have resources to house all the Veterans of Veteran's Row ○ 9 out of 10 Veterans have used VA services ○ Good relationship Veterans Row advocates ○ Well-organized, open communication and attention outreach ○ Hosted a successful town hall on June 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purpose for Veterans to learn about on-campus development and resources. ▪ open dialogue between VA and the Veterans. ○ Another townhall planned Friday, July 9. ○ VA teams provide frequent outreach to Veterans Row. ● CTRS initiative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On campus. ○ Low barrier entry for Veterans. ○ programs with supportive services. ○ three meals a day, 24-hour security. ○ available to homeless Veterans. ○ Over 460 Veterans have gone through CTRS. ○ 86% continue engagement with VA services. ○ Exploring opportunities for program to evolve. ● Bed and Unit Capacity-May 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ less than ¾ occupied in bridge/transitional housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ VA domiciliary 212 beds available, 110 beds occupied (52%) ○ Grant Per Diem/Healthcare for Homeless <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 540 out of 1,019 units occupied (52%) ○ VASH allocations 71% utilized <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 5,113 of 7,214 units occupied (71%)
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- Currently matching non-eligible Veterans to VASH housing
 - 812 of 1,083 beds occupied (75%)

West LA Campus Drone Flyover-view video at link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=p6V3wwwhgU4>

- 12-minute flyover from West LA Campus, linked on YouTube
- Adding narration (describing buildings, etc.)

LTG Hopper opened the floor for questions for all the speakers, inviting Mr. Mangano to offer comments or questions.

Due to technical difficulties, LTG Hopper asked the question for Mr. Mangano. His question for Mr. McGahran referenced the Board's previous information exchange about Mr. McGahran reaching out to the Governor's office and wonders if contact has been made by West LA.

Mr. McGahran responded that Mr. McKenrick spoke with the Governor's office regarding trailer donations.

- Mr. McKenrick said they were offered a donation of trailers and are working with General Counsel to explore exactly what they can receive—a tiny home or trailer.
- Discussing with city donation of trailers and with the community about tiny homes and which is best for GLA.
- General Counsel- new legislation, West LA Improvement Act, regarding acceptable donations to VA and how to receive them.
- Funding permits wraparound services, construction, activities required for sustainability.
- Gift vs. Land use agreement (ABH) questioning.

Mr. Allman asked why the timelines for Buildings 205 & 208 were being pushed back from Q1 to Q4 2022, building 207 from Q2 to Q4 2022, and MacArthur Field from Q3 to Q4?

Mr. McKenrick said the information comes from OAEM who is working with the principal developer and individual construction companies.

- COVID and its' residual effects slowed construction projects and financing.
- State now has money being put toward these projects.

Mr. Allman thought that financing had to be secured prior to EUL execution. He asked, based on the presentation, if the wet utility (water pressure) was no longer an issue? On the previous Master Plan subcommittee call, the water pressure was not acceptable. Has that changed?

Mr. McKenrick said that Buildings 205, 207 & 208 will not have a water issue. Water pressure was higher that had been assessed previously. North campus will need water, system upgrades and trunk line efforts but water pressure is not an issue and will not be an obstacle in these three buildings opening.

Mr. Mangano offered the following comments.

- He arranged the call between Governor's office and VA.
- Governor has released a budget of \$12 billion targeted to homelessness and asked what was needed.
- VA promise to investigate the offer of trailers and others and respond to the Governor's office.
- VA has not responded in last two months.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Mangano is concerned that a motivated public official has made an offer that has not be responded to. • What does this mean for other matters being discussed in this meeting? • Mr. Mangano wants tangible actions, follow through with Governor. <p>Mr. McKenrick said VA is seeking guidance from OGC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as to how they can accept these offers through a municipality and maintenance. • New legislation allows \$10 million for wraparound services <p>Mr. Mangano said that it is urgent, and he encourages VA to respond to Governor's office. If during the COVID crisis, Mr. McKenrick has the "authority" to muster whatever means necessary, why have several months gone by with no response to the Governor?</p> <p>Dr. Bamberger asked why Veterans encamped on San Vicente are reluctant to move to housing options or use other VA services which offer more services, safety and legitimacy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. McGahran said he does not want to simplify the rationale as it is complex. • Each Veteran has their own individual reasons they do not come in to CTRS and VA's job is to be supportive of them when they do. • There are a variety of reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Housing isn't set up the way they want, ○ Congregant living arrangements, ○ They like living outside the gate in that community ○ CTRS has code of conduct, ○ Permanent housing plan, ○ not what Veterans want to do at this time, ○ most Veterans are using services. <p>LTG Hopper recommended that it might be helpful for Mr. McGahran to compile a summary list of reasons that answer this question as it is one that is asked very often by the committee and outside these meetings. If you investigate to find the common thread it may help find solutions to help the Veterans and remove the barriers.</p> <p>Mr. Begland asked about San Vicente encampment. Is the total number 40 occupants or is it 40 Veterans in a larger group?</p> <p>Mr. McGahran said that at the height it was 48 and almost all were Veterans.</p> <p>Mr. Begland followed up asking about the location of the CTRS encampment near the San Vicente entrance was the rationale to provide as low a barrier to entry as possible?</p> <p>Mr. McGahran replied that it was where there was available space.</p> <p>Mr. Begland stated that comparatively CTRS does not offer much in aesthetics except to put someone on VA terms and rules. What we are offering may not differ enough from what they have on the street- to induce them to come inside the gate. The West LA Leadership must address the optics of this issue as the encampment is very visible in the larger community.</p>
Colma Veterans Village	<p>Dr. Anne R. Fabiny</p> <p>Colma Veteran Village (CVV) was started through the San Francisco HUD-VASH and VA healthcare system and community partners. Land donated by the Archdiocese of San Francisco.</p> <p>Adriana Der, HUD-VASH Supervisor over Colma</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify components of Colma model that can be applied to HUD-VASH site.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of on-site interprofessional team- wraparound care- socially and medically complex Veterans and adults. • Characteristics of HUD-VASH Veterans appropriate for enrollment in a Colma VV model. • Team Approach- program in place for 2 years: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 65-unit permanent supportive housing site. ○ collaboration of community partners and San Francisco VA and VACO Homeless Office. ○ Serve critically “at-risk” Veterans, require more support, team approach, on-site “PACT” team. • Voucher applicants were Veterans who were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ older, ○ chronically homeless, ○ medically and psychologically complex. ○ Require more than standard HUD-VASH support. • Strong community partners- Mercy Housing, Public Housing Authority of San Mateo County, Brilliant Corners, San Mateo County Aging and Adult Services. • Most staffing came from HUD-VASH and San Francisco VA- RNs, OT, Social workers, recreational and activity staff. • Interprofessional Team- on-site: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Geriatrician- Dr. Fabiny- Team Leader: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comprehensive primary care to all Veterans on site. ○ RNs, social workers, psych nurse practitioner, recreational therapist, peer support specialist, occupational therapist, ○ Two researchers evaluating the program. • HUD-VASH Nurse- Paul Rosales RN at Colma. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Primary care, home health and mental health support. ○ Establish PACT Team, care coordinator, triage health, and health education. ○ Offers ADL (Activity of Daily Living) and IADL (Instrumental Activity of Daily Life) support and end-of-life care. ○ Labs and vital signs. ○ Mental healthcare, assessments, psychosocial support. ○ Relationship building. ○ Collaborate with CVV team. • HUD-VASH Social Worker- Adriana Der: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clinical case management, ○ Team Model, ○ intensive psychotherapy, ○ palliative/hospice care coordination. ○ Care coordination with community resources and VA. ○ Liaison between San Mateo PHA and Mercy Housing management.
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- HUD-VASH Peer Support Specialist:
 - Collaborative relationship.
 - Provides reassurance and support.
 - Facilitate groups:
 - Kevin's Café- free coffee, tea at office- welcoming atmosphere.
 - Gardening.
- Recreational Therapist- new addition:
 - Promotes physical, social, and emotional wellbeing.
 - Facilitates Groups:
 - Sit and Stretch
 - Arts and Crafts
 - Bingo/Board Games
 - AA & NA
 - One on one Whole Health home visits
 - Veteran and caregiver engagement

Team Benefits:

- Constant collaboration daily- text via encrypted phones, Teams chat, video calls
- Weekly VA Team meeting
- Geriatrician psych or Nurse Practitioner can meet with a Veteran immediately to provide appropriate care and referrals.
- Appointments and transportation established by either peer support group or the community agency.

Team Challenges:

- Property management onsite has rigid rules and boundaries-
 - lacking Veteran mental health and substance use education,
 - sometimes boundaries are blurred,
 - inexperienced with Homeless Veteran population.
 - enforcing tough love,
 - team provides redirection education and continues to set realistic expectation.
 - want knowledge of all details of Veterans health.
 - "withholding information"- outside HIPAA guidelines.
- Accessibility with mobility impaired Veterans
 - encouraged to use public transit.
 - suburban location limits access.
- Colma Veterans population is medically complex:
 - has acute mental health issues,
 - substance abuse,
 - declined cognition,
 - lack of family support.
 - high care needs.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition to San Mateo from another county delays in benefits and services. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Must reside for at least 30 days to establish residency ○ Process of applying for medical and health services can take up to three to six months. • Lack of In-Home Support Services (IHSS) during the pandemic. • VA Shuttle bus transportation solution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Began May 2021 ○ Call ahead 24-hours for reservation, ○ Stops at Colma 8 times per day, ○ brings Veterans to the San Bruno CBOC or SFVA. • Veteran Case study—71-year old Vietnam era combat Veteran <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ history of myocardial infraction, hip fracture, type II diabetes, ○ both feet amputated for hypertension, ○ vision loss, impaired mobility ○ using wheelchair, cane, walker, ○ falling once or twice a week, ○ smoking and substance abuse, ○ nightmares due to PTSD. ○ minimal engagement with VA ○ Reported to Colma <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ six months of intensive case management, ▪ identified barriers to care, ▪ proper medications ▪ control blood sugar under control ▪ started feeling better, wounds healed, ▪ clearer thoughts, ▪ physical improvements through therapy ○ Dedicated case management supports Veteran success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ less likely to fall through the cracks • Evaluation methods and tools-Anna Oh, researcher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SMART AIM- evaluation to ensure that 90% of current Colma residents renew their lease one year after move-in ○ Veteran successfully transitioned from homelessness to being housed • Process and Outcome Measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Decreased number of lease violations ○ Abide by property management rules ○ Identify and match their physical, mental health, and functional needs to the appropriate services and supports. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Results in ability to identify gaps and make improvements • Use a Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle- establish baseline Colma Veteran profile <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plan: Initiated interprofessional team November 2019.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do: chart review of Veterans, staff interviews/observations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ determine needs, functional impairment, and gaps in services available to meet those needs. ▪ challenges- inability to interview or complete interviews with Veterans due to impairment and lack of present family member or caregiver. ○ Study: Compared to HUD-VASH supported Veterans the Colma Veterans are older, no service connection, low income, almost half on Medicaid. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ After six months, almost a third of Veterans receiving IHSS support. ▪ Common medical/mental health problems include PTSD. ● CVV Veterans' Needs chart -tool for quality improvement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Medical needs most common. ○ activities of daily living (cooking, housekeeping, issues with transportation, shopping). ● Process map describe and evaluate workflow- quality improvement tool. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What worked well and challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On-site team-RN, social workers- works well, Veterans know them and seek out their care, drop-ins, etc. ▪ IHSS Services are critical- long delays in receiving services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Barriers include supply issues and inability to qualify for HIS due to high costs of shares. ● Veteran perception of need for services vs. the team's assessment of needs to maintain housing within property management standards. ● ACT: at one year all leases renewed. ● PDSA Cycle #2: Analyses on primary and specialty care utilization. <p>Future Direction for Evaluation: Colin Purmal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Opportunities for collaboration with VA sites. ● Compare care delivery at Colma with its on-site care model versus clinical based primary care. ● size of PACT team at Colma precluded a large-scale analysis- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ not enough patients for quantitative data, ● West LA should implement similar programs, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Larger population size will allow for quantitative analysis ● Use CDW tools to compare health services outcomes- include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ primary care utilization, ○ outpatient specialty care utilization, ○ inpatient services within VA through and the Office of Community Care, ○ Preventive Services: vaccination data, cancer screening, etc. <p>Summary: Colma is very complex model, mostly older Veterans with multiple comorbidities that translate to many medical and social needs.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answering the challenging question of how to provide high-quality care to a complex population. • Emphasizes teamwork and cohesion creating a high job satisfaction rating within the team. • Effective communication and interdisciplinary collaboration, flexibility, supportive leadership, commitment to quality Veteran care. <p>Questions</p> <p>Dr. Bamberger pointed out that not all Veterans need the same kind of care to be stably housed in permanent supportive housing. If we develop different opportunities at the West LA Campus, a diversity of housing and service intensity and housing types so that all Veterans can have a place to live and at the end of life, die at home with dignity. He looks forward to further conversations with VCOEB and West LA to develop a similar program.</p>
Hope of the Valley (1:25)	<p>Rowan Vansleve Chief Finance & Administration Officer Hope of the Valley Rescue Mission</p> <p>LTG Hopper introduced Mr. Vansleve and reminded him that he has 20 minutes for his presentation.</p> <p>Mr Vansleve began by thanking everyone o the call for their service. He mentioned that he is Australian by birth and became an American citizen last year. His father served Australia and he thankful for the service of the committee members and as the continue to serve Veterans as they age.</p> <p>The Hope of the Valley mission Statement is to prevent, reduce and eliminate poverty, hunger, and homelessness by offering assistance and long-term solutions. They are a faith-based independent non-profit organization. Their philosophy is everyone who is experiencing homelessness, needs to be treated with dignity and respect When people are treated with dignity and respect, they will step up and start to believe that for themselves.</p> <p>Hope of the Valley has over 19 sites across the San Fernando Valley, Antelope Valley and Highland Park.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently serving about 1.2 million hot meals a year. • Approximately 430,000 showers provided each year • Current mode of rapid deployment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Started this year providing about 507 beds per night ○ Year will finish with about 1500 beds per night <p>Struggling with how we move someone from tents in San Vicente and around VA to the next step before permanent supportive housing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no simple answer. • We need a kaleidoscope of all the incomplete and imperfect solutions • One solution that has been successful and is seeing rapid expansion is tiny homes <p>Two sites to explore- Alexandria and Chandler</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chandler <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ first tiny home community in LA County. ○ Within 90 days of opening one individual transitioned to permanent supportive housing. ○ Emphasize tiny homes are complete temporary housing communities ○ Not designed to be permanent supportive housing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ include mental health services, addiction services, housing and employment navigation, unique community resources from local churches, synagogues, mosques, intensive case management, etc. ○ Goal is to bring someone from the streets who has declined going into a congregant shelter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ due to trauma, PTSD, mental health issues ▪ large numbers of people shared space ▪ lack of privacy ▪ barrier to receiving services. ▪ tiny homes offer unique solution. ● The locking door on a tiny home gives guests a sense of privacy, control and independence not offered at a congregant shelters. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ An actual home- sense of dignity. ○ not on the street-San Vicente Blvd. ○ not a tent or sanctioned encampment-CTRS ○ “like a gated community for homeless people.” ○ 24- hour security. ○ 24-hour advisor/monitors (ex. College dorm resident advisors). ○ wellness checks 3x/day. ○ ensure residents are accessing services of their case management plan- mental health, drug, and alcohol, etc. ○ developing soft skills, building relationships. ● Alexandria, currently the largest tiny home community in the country. ● Soon to open larger community in Arroyo-Seiko off the 110. ● Rapid deployment- approximately 90 days from breaking ground to fully operational. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alexandria- 93 days- breaking ground to first guest on site. ● Each cost about \$10,000/unit. ● City of Los Angeles has 6 sites. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ each unit is approximately \$6,500. ○ Copper, electric, heater, and air conditioner unit, ○ 6-inch mattress important- extra cushioning, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physically important-older veterans sleeping on the sidewalk. ▪ Emotionally important- feel valued and worthy. ○ infrastructure costs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ showers, rest rooms, ▪ case management offices, ▪ colorful paint- intentional to remove any institutionalized appearance, ▪ laundry units, ▪ restroom access for both handicapped and able-bodied, ▪ a privacy fence, security cameras. ○ Best cost for City of Los Angeles about \$22,000 per bed. ○ Two years ago, the cheapest homeless bed in Los Angeles was \$70,000. ○ Tiny home- cost effective and scalable. ○ Provides stability as individuals progress towards permanent supportive housing. ○ The goal for every Veteran to have decent quality housing, and die with dignity.
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- powerful statement.
- Often these are people in crisis, subjugated from society.
- do not have ability to access services.
- Within VA or the government system.
- Tiny homes bring them inside and gives them 90-180 days.
- Transformation when people leave these sites.
 - connected with local resources, local drug and alcohol, medical and religious services.
- Tiny homes can be deployed several ways.
 - open field, on pavers and it is probably the least desirable because if there is rain you will have a lot more mud.
 - Pavement or asphalt is cheapest and most cost.
 - Tarzana- newest site- ribbon cutting on Friday.
 - built directly on top of asphalt/pavement.
 - Stood up in 87 days, so it's pretty remarkable thing.
- To verify quality city council members Bob Bloomingfield and Kevin de Leon, and Mr. Vansleve spent the night in the tiny homes.
 - Duplicated processes- security, meals.
 - Temperature in the valley, was up to about 102.
 - With air conditioning in the units- temp was very low 70s and into 60s over night
 - Six-inch mattress was comfortable for every night.
- The PowerPoint can only show so much. Mr. Vansleve invited the committee to visit one of the sites- step inside a tiny home, view the set-up.
- Every person on site is treated with dignity and respect.
- Amnesty lockers outside the site-
 - permitted to leave drugs, alcohol, or weapons in locker.
 - handled only by security guards, only accessible to that guest.
 - enter site and receive services.
 - services may be for the very reason they have those drugs, alcohol, and weapons.

LTG Hopper opened the floor for questions.

Mr. Allman mentioned that he and Mr. Underwood visited one of the Hope of the Valley communities. It was a very impressive operation. Hope of the Valley has developed expertise as they are on their fourth or fifth project in the city of LA. Is Hope of the Valley the only service provider for tiny homes?

Mr. Vansleve replied that Urban Alchemy started their first tiny home project- a 30 bed facility- the previous week with support from Hope of the Valley.

Mr. Allman mention that Hope of the Valley has had some repetition and knows the pitfalls. We are always concerned about infrastructure issues on the campus. He asked what are the traps (water? power?) that must be addressed to be able to deploy a tiny home community in 80 days.

Mr. Vansleve mentioned that sewer lines are the single biggest struggle in deployment. Whether it's 100 bed or a 200-bed shelter, a large sewer line is needed to accommodate the showers and lavatories running at peak. The tiny homes are modular. If one is

	<p>damaged the pieces can be replaced individually. For example, a hinge broke on a door and a new door was FedExed and replaced the next day. If an entire home was destroyed it unclips from the bottom and could be replaced at \$10,000 per unit. Each piece can be stood up in about 90 minutes. Shower units take a longer but have two options: trailers delivered and attached to the sewer line, or alternatively Pallet Shelter (Washington state company manufactures the units) has modular shower units which take week to construct.</p> <p>Mr. Allman commented thanked him for his insight as the committee explores the idea of implementing the homes on campus. He asked Mr. Vansleve to explain the relationship between Councilmembers de Leon and Bloomingfield and the local city council.</p> <p>Mr. Vansleve offered that each city council member has a mandate to bring their unhoused residents in their district inside. Councilmembers Kevin de Leon, Bob Bloomingfield, John Lee, and Paul Kerkorian, four out of the 15 or so on the city council have selected Hope of the Valley as one of the lead providers to do this and as the lead provider of tiny homes. We work in partnership with the City of Los Angeles to construct these communities. They have bond measure money to construct the facilities. The constant issue for all is finding land. They have used recreation and parkland, LADWP land, to find appropriate land. This might be an exciting collaboration between VA and the city council to support construction and the expense of creating the site, because the VA seems to have the land.</p> <p>MR. Allman thanked Mr. Vansleve for taking time to be here.</p> <p>LTG Hopper asked if there were any more questions for Mr. Vansleve. He thanked him and congratulated him on the one-year anniversary of his American citizenship.</p> <p>Mr. Vansleve thanked the committee for their time and their service.</p>
<p>Services and Outcomes Subcommittee recommendation brief discussion and vote</p>	<p>Services and Outcomes Subcommittee Chair (Dr. Joshua Bamberger)</p> <p>Dr. Bamberger gave an explanation of the purpose of this meeting for the attendees who may not be familiar with the goal of the VCOEB. The goal of the VCOEB is to influence the behavior, programs, or policies of the West LA VA through our recommendations. The VCOEB provides direct recommendations to the Secretary of the VA and the secretary can either concur or not with our recommendations. The board tries to bring innovative ideas like the Veterans Village or tiny homes through these recommendations. They are extensive in their preamble, but target specific issues for West LA VA.</p> <p>Dr. Bamberger asked permission to read only the recommendation component and omit reading the preamble aloud.</p> <p>DFO Skinner reminded Dr. Bamberger that public attendees did not have the opportunity to read the recommendation so they should be read for the public and federal register.</p> <p>LTG Hopper instructed Dr. Bamberger to read the written recommendation aloud for the public.</p> <p>Recommendation 13-01 Read by Dr. Bamberger</p> <p>WHEREAS, according to the latest VA Trust Survey, female veterans are 6% less likely to trust the VA compared to male veterans;¹ VA</p> <p>WHEREAS, this trust discrepancy is an opportunity to build new initiatives and programs designed to improve VA's relationship with female veterans;</p>

WHEREAS, in September 2018 and January 2019, VAGLAHS committed to creating 50 beds for female veterans as part of the A Bridge Home program in partnership with the City and County of Los Angeles;^{2 3}

WHEREAS, as of April 2021, there were approximately 189 female homeless veterans on Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority's (LAHSA) "By-Name List";⁴

WHEREAS, as of June 15, 2021, A Bridge Home on campus has served 396 male veterans and 0 female veterans;⁵

WHEREAS, as of June 15, 2021, the Care, Treatment and Rehabilitative Service (CTRS) program at VA West Los Angeles has served 455 male veterans and 13 female veterans;⁵

WHEREAS, Building 257 had 46 Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) contract beds for male veterans; and

WHEREAS, VAGLAHS informed VCOEB that the contract at Building 257 for male veterans has ended and is in the process of designing a new service contract for 20 beds dedicated to female veterans, a reduction of 26 beds from the previous capacity for male veterans.⁶

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE:

RECOMMENDED, that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs instruct VAGLAHS leadership to develop at least 50 shelter beds for female veterans, with or without dependents. These 50 beds can be made up of a combination of traditional HCHV beds and/or innovative options such as tiny homes as determined by VAGLAHS, in consultation with the City of Los Angeles, LAHSA, VCOEB and community input.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Veterans and Community Oversight and Engagement Board adopts this recommendation as June 29, 2021.

Discussion and Questions

Mr. Allman pointed out a typo or mistake, the quantity of female veterans served for this CTRs program is 13, not 15, in the data summary. This will need to be edited.

LTG Hopper asked for a motion to vote.

Ms. Serrano motioned to vote.

Mr. Wellisch seconded the motion.

LTG Hopper asked for further discussion and hearing none, took vote

Recommendation 13-01 passed unanimously.

Recommendation 13-02 Read by Dr. Bamberger

Dr. Bamberger suggested a two-minute break for the public to read the recommendation document as opposed to him reading it out loud.

DFO Skinner reminded Dr. Bamberger that some of the public have called in on telephones and do not have access to screens to view the visual document.

WHEREAS, according to the latest VA Trust Survey, female veterans are 6% less likely to trust the VA compared to male veterans;¹

WHEREAS, this trust discrepancy is an opportunity to build new initiatives and programs designed to improve VA's relationship with female veterans;

WHEREAS, in September 2018 and January 2019, VAGLAHS committed to creating 50 beds for female veterans as part of the A Bridge Home program in partnership with the City and County of Los Angeles;^{2 3}

	<p>WHEREAS, as of April 2021, there were approximately 189 female homeless veterans on Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority’s (LAHSA) “By-Name List”;⁴</p> <p>WHEREAS, as of June 15, 2021, A Bridge Home on campus has served 396 male veterans and 0 female veterans;⁵</p> <p>WHEREAS, as of June 15, 2021, the Care, Treatment and Rehabilitative Service (CTRS) program at VA West Los Angeles has served 455 male veterans and 13 female veterans;⁵</p> <p>WHEREAS, Building 257 had 46 Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) contract beds for male veterans; and</p> <p>WHEREAS, VAGLAHS informed VCOEB that the contract at Building 257 for male veterans has ended and is in the process of designing a new service contract for 20 beds dedicated to female veterans, a reduction of 26 beds from the previous capacity for male veterans.⁶</p> <p>NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE:</p> <p>RECOMMENDED, that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs instruct VAGLAHS leadership to develop at least 50 shelter beds for female veterans, with or without dependents. These 50 beds can be made up of a combination of traditional HCHV beds and/or innovative options such as tiny homes as determined by VAGLAHS, in consultation with the City of Los Angeles, LAHSA, VCOEB and community input.</p> <p>IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Veterans and Community Oversight and Engagement Board adopts this recommendation as June 29, 2021.</p> <p>Discussion and Questions</p> <p>Dr. Bamberger commented on data regarding homelessness, stating overall the number of homeless Veterans who've died due to direct effect of COVID is significantly less than those who have died from either overdose or suicide this past year. He emphasized the timeliness of this important intervention to keep all of our Veterans alive long enough so that they can become housed.</p> <p>DFO Skinner invited Mr. Mangano to speak but there was technical interference.</p> <p>Mr. Allman recalled Detective John Gannon provided public comment on the VMAT team in one of the earliest VCOEB meetings.as our fourth or fifth meeting. He is glad the Services Subcommittee developed this recommendation. He believes that VA Long Beach has implemented this partnership with the sheriff's department does not see a reason it should not be brought to VA West LA. It is a great opportunity to join forces, not only for the community that will develop at VA West LA but also in surrounding communities in the catchment area.</p> <p>Mr. Allman motioned to vote.</p> <p>Mr. Zenner second the motion.</p> <p>LTG Hopper asked for more discussion or questions. Hearing none he called for a vote.</p> <p>Recommendation 13-02 passed unanimously.</p>
Master Plan Subcommittee recommendation brief discussion and vote	<p>Master Plan Subcommittee Chair (Mr. Anthony Allman)</p> <p>Recommendation 13-03 Read by Mr. Allman</p> <p>WHEREAS, history has proven that the Greater Los Angeles area is subject to major seismic events, which pose a significant risk to life, property, and the delivery of medical services during emergencies.</p> <p>WHEREAS, the VA’s Sylmar Campus suffered a catastrophic loss of lives during the 1971 Sylmar earthquake, “causing 49 of the 64 deaths attributed to the disaster.”¹</p> <p>WHEREAS, beginning with a FY 2012 budget request, the VA took the position</p>

with Congress that it needed to obtain funding for the seismic retrofitting of twelve buildings on the West LA Campus as a “Major Construction Project”:

- Project included Buildings 114, 115, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 212, 222, 257, 258 and 300²;
- VA took the position that this work is necessary to “elevate these 12 buildings to the required standards, reducing the risk of building collapse and potential loss of life in the event of a major seismic occurrence.”³;
- The total estimated project cost to complete the FY 2012 Seismic Retrofit was \$346,900,000.00⁴;

WHEREAS, in a FY 2015 budget request the VA slightly modified Major Construction project by replacing Buildings 114 and 115 (marked for demolition) with Buildings 156 and 157 and increasing the total estimated cost for the project to \$370,800,000⁵.

WHEREAS, in FY 2018 VA significantly modified the Major Construction Project and altered its prior position about the scope, necessity, and urgency of seismic retrofitting:

- VA removed six buildings from the project (205, 206, 208, 209, 156 and 157), stating that it was purportedly necessary to do so in “[i]n order to operationalize the West Los Angeles Master Plan”⁶;
- VA claimed that “[t]he seismic deficiencies identified in those buildings will be addressed through EUL supportive housing program.”⁷

VA defined the remaining scope of as “working on a way forward for the other six buildings (207, 212, 222, 257, 258, and 300), using the previously-appropriated funding totaling approximately \$70 million.”⁸;

WHEREAS, in recent budget submissions VA has again significantly altered its position about the need for seismic retrofitting:

- In a FY 2020 budget submission VA removed two additional buildings (207 and 257) from the Major Construction Project on the purported grounds that “they had been proposed for the EUL program...”
- In a FY 2020 budget submission VA removed two additional buildings (222 and 258) on the purported grounds that “upgrades were no longer necessary.”
- As a result of these actions by the VA, that left only two buildings in the Major Construction Program (212 and 300).⁹

WHEREAS, the eight buildings removed from the scope of work in the FY 2018 and FY 2020 Budget Submissions, citing their use in the Enhanced Use Lease program, account for approximately 420 units of permanent supportive housing for homeless veterans at VA West Los Angeles; and

WHEREAS, shifting the burden of seismic corrections to the Principal Developer through the Enhanced Use Lease program is not a winning strategy to operationalize the West Los Angeles Master Plan as it may cause significant delays in obtaining additional sources of public and private financing jeopardizing housing construction and timely occupancy for homeless veterans on campus.

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE:

RECOMMENDED, that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs reopen the “West Los Angeles, CA - Seismic Corrections to 12 Buildings” Major Construction program and include seismic corrections to all buildings slated for permanent supportive housing in the FY 2023 VA Budget Submission and ensure that costs associated with doing so are reflected in the total estimated project cost. Furthermore, VCOEB recommends that VA explore utilizing the capital contribution mechanism in order to expedite

coordination and implementation of seismic retrofitting for permanent supportive housing on campus.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Veterans and Community Oversight and Engagement Board adopts this recommendation as June 29, 2021.

Questions and Discussion

Mr. Allman summarized the extensive text of the recommendation. The project started with a major construction program of 12 buildings and over time it was reduced to two or three possible buildings. Budget submissions had removed Building 209 from the scope of work which may not be accurate but for the sake of argument will say that it is accurate. Many buildings that are slated for permanent supportive housing require seismic retrofitting. The Principal Developer must obtain financing for the design and construction of these buildings to make them habitable. As we saw in Miami (resort collapse- June 2021), seismic retrofitting is important in Los Angeles and earthquakes. VA deferred maintenance on these properties for decades, and to now shift the cost to the principal developer is a gamble. Will the Principal Developer be able to raise the funds for seismic retrofitting? In the case of Buildings 207, 205 and 208, it appears that they have. But that does not guarantee they will be to moving forward. If VA wants to guarantee that these units will be built, then VA should pay for the seismic retrofitting. It is difficult to determine how they should do it. The capital contribution mechanism may be a way to do that or they may be another method we are not aware of. For the purposes of the Federal Advisory Committee, we need to recognize that seismic retrofit is a real issue since we are in Los Angeles and earthquakes happen and VA should figure out how to implement it.

LTG Gen Hopper referenced the earlier update from GLA and making buildings “turnover ready.” He then asked how the seismic retrofitting will factor into making a building turnover ready.

Mr. Allman responded that this question of turnover readiness ties into the next recommendation.

That’s a great question. I think that ties into our, our next recommendation. The budget breakdown has \$67 million for turnover costs but the matrix did not include seismic corrections because VA is deferring those costs to the Principal Developer and those costs are not included VA estimates.

Mr. Begland agreed with Mr. Allman’s review that the VA turnover definition does not include seismic costs. He also reviewed the original RFQ of VA requesting solicitations from developers which states that seismic retrofitting would be a developer responsibility, specifically stating Building 207 would need seismic retrofitting. VA has fairly taken the position that this is a burden delegated to developers. Our recommendation is pragmatic that says, whether you can fairly take it as a contractual matter is a separate issue from urgent delivery of housing and what do we want to do to facilitate it?

Mr. Allman added that his understanding is that VA did perform seismic retrofitting of Building 209, but it is not the case with these budget submissions. So, it is unclear if VA had done seismic retrofitting for permanent supportive housing in the past.

Dr. Braverman stated that seismic retrofitting is not considered in the budgetary requirements for turnover. Building 209 was seismic retrofitted because it was originally intended for healthcare purposes. After the retrofitting was complete the building was redesignated to jumpstart this program.

LTG Hopper asked for other questions or comment and a motion to vote.

Ms. Serrano moved to vote.

Dr. Bamberger seconded the motion.

	<p>LTG took the vote. Recommendation 13-03 passed unanimously.</p> <p>LTG Hopper addressed the DFO and it was decided to allow the public comments at this time to stay on time for the public. After public comments are stated the committee would return to the remaining recommendations.</p>
Public Comments Session	<p>Eugene Skinner (DFO)</p> <p>Seven individuals registered to provide public comments, and each is given five minutes to make comments. Stephanie Cohen and Peter Muller declined today's public comment.</p> <p>Janet Turner</p> <p>I put this in as a placeholder. My public comment will be our office greatly appreciates all your hard work and all of the recommendations that you make. We are very grateful for all the time and effort that you put into this and we support you in any way we can. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if we can be of assistance. That's all I have to say. Thanks so much for a very good presentation today.</p> <p>Robert Reynolds</p> <p>Thank you.</p> <p>First, I would like to address the homeless Veterans out on the sidewalks. As Matt said earlier there are constantly Veterans moving inside to housing opportunities. Just in the last couple weeks we had nine new Veterans show up. Essentially what's happening is there is some organizational issues and logistical issues that create barriers for the homeless Veterans when they go to get processed into places like CTRS or different opportunities on the property.</p> <p>For instance, this is something we've recommended a while back, is that the hours of admission for CTRS be extended. Currently right now they are still stopping taking admissions at 2:30pm and also the process can be rather lengthy.</p> <p>First, the Veteran has to go to Building 500 in order to get a COVID test. They have to wait to get those negative results back. Then they have to go to Building 402 to get a referral. A lot of times Building 402 will tell them to come back the following day. Then they end up out in the sidewalk and we put them in a tent.</p> <p>So, this is what's consistently happening is, you have people that show up at different times throughout the day. They are not able to get processed into a program or into CTRs within that day. Then they have to leave the property, so we end up placing them out in San Vicente Boulevard.</p> <p>We also have I believe it's eight Veterans that are waiting for the Step Up on Second western building to be opening. You know this has been delayed for quite a few months. It's been with the Housing Authority mostly. The Veterans have all completed their paperwork. It's going to be good for them to move-in in a group and stay in their community together. Because I know that there is a lot of concerns with them. They don't want to be placed by themselves. So. I'm hoping that someone can get some urgency with the housing authority to get these move-in dates for them so we can get more of them off the street.</p>

A lot of this, San Vicente Boulevard, has consistently been a problem for years. COVID-19 exacerbated a lot of the situations especially when there was the reduced occupancy in a lot of the programs. That's when the population really increased out on the sidewalk. Big things that need to start happening is getting more communication together and a lot more of the services offered in one location. For instance, you have Building 220, which sits right next to CTRS, that can easily be utilized to do referrals, COVID tests, everything. As it stands now, a lot of Veterans that go into hotel vouchers or go to different programs, they end up getting kicked out or an issue happens. They always return to the sidewalk to get help. We bring in just about every resource imaginable for these guys. We have events for everything. Every Thursday there's outreach there. Veterans Peer Access Network has been very helpful with that. Pretty much all the county agencies have.

I'd also like to see more engagement from Congressman Ted Lieu's office. We meet with the County Supervisors office, LAPD, the Sheriff's Department, Councilman Bonin, Councilman Mathia Ramond about the situation repeatedly. The one that has not been there since the beginning of these tents going up in the last fifteen months has been Congressman Ted Lieu's office. There's been no engagement. They have monthly meetings that don't include any of the Veteran advocates and nothing's really getting worked out. It's a little frustrating.

There are a lot of different issues that the Veterans are facing. I think that it's warranted to have someone from Vets Advocacy or someone from the VCOEB board coming down and actually spending time seeing what's going on in the day-to-day processes out in the sidewalks so they can start documenting some realistic recommendations that will actually work to get people off the street because consistency has been an issue.

With COVID there has been lockdowns and programs shutting down. It hasn't been a consistent operation going on and there has been out on the street. So that's something we want to see get changed. On the property create more consistent help and more organized help. And also everything in more of a centralized location where you can send the Veteran to one place that they can get everything done. Because it can be challenging for people with disabilities to navigate the entire campus. 402 is a long way away from where CTRS is. The hospital is as well. The Welcome Center is way back up in the north side of the campus. So those are things that have that have been challenging for a lot of Veterans.

I will say that I am thankful for the presentation that Chief McGahran put on today about the encampment. And actually, seeing more acknowledgement about the current situation facing our homeless Veterans on the sidewalk. I just hope that it continues, and we continue to work in the correct direction to get these guys taken care of and just put some common sense solutions in place. Thank you.

Tony DeFrancesco

Good afternoon everyone and thank you for this opportunity to address the committee and for me to take a moment to introduce myself.

I recently joined UCLA few months ago, as the new Chief Liaison and Executive Director for Veterans Affairs Relations and Programs.

Before joining UCLA, I spent the majority of my career with the Veterans Health Administration, 25 years or so. My last duty station was with Long Beach VA Health Care System just down the road a bit. The last few years after that, I spent five years at the University of Arizona Health Sciences.

In these last few months, getting to know my position and working in a virtual environment I've been trying to get out and introduce myself and get to know members

	<p>of the community at UCLA and West Los Angeles. I'm thankful for the few folks I've been able to connect with over email and also over ZOOM, and I look forward to the opportunity to meet many more members of the community and committee. I am reachable by email. Right now, though I'm working remotely, I believe the Chair has my email address, along with Mr. Allman. I appreciate the recommendation to take this opportunity to introduce myself. So, thank you, that's all I had for today.</p> <p>Angelique DeSilva Williams and Miss Caroline Kelly were listed but were not in attendance.</p> <p>LTG Gen Hopper thanked everyone for their comments and reminded the public that the comments would be taken into account.</p> <p>DFO Skinner added that those who were not registered to provide comments could submit comments via email: veofaca@va.gov to be included in the official meeting minutes.</p>
<p>Master Plan Subcommittee recommendation brief discussion and vote (continued)</p>	<p>VCOEB Recommendation 13-04- read by Anthony Allman</p> <p>WHEREAS, on May 4, 2021, VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System (VAGLAHS) provided a total estimated budget of \$67 million for pre-development costs to “hand off” buildings that have been identified as future permanent supportive housing at VA West Los Angeles;¹</p> <p>WHEREAS, on May 20, 2021, the West LA Veterans Collective (Principal Developer) expressed concern to the Master Plan Subcommittee that timely completion of wet utility improvements is required in order to avoid occupancy delays and increased project costs;</p> <p>WHEREAS, on June 1, 2021, VAGLAHS provided a line-item estimated cost summary for pre-development infrastructure improvements including wet utility upgrades for each phase of development;²</p> <p>WHEREAS, wet utility infrastructure upgrades, such as sewer and storm drain, for Phase 0 are estimated at \$3.2 million, for Phase 1 estimated at \$5.4 million, for Phase 2 estimated at \$5.4 million and for Phase 3 estimated at \$2.65 million;</p> <p>WHEREAS, transportation related projects, such as road and sidewalk improvements, across all phases of development are estimated at \$15 million;</p> <p>WHEREAS, environmental compliance projects, such as lead and asbestos abatement, across all phases of development are estimated at \$35 million;</p> <p>WHEREAS, the current cost summary reflects six distinct, separate projects required to bring campus infrastructure into compliance with requirements to sustain 1,691 units of permanent supportive housing on campus;</p> <p>WHEREAS, installation of wet utility components typically require significant disruption to existing roads, sidewalks and hardscaping;</p> <p>WHEREAS, incorporating transportation upgrades during the installation of new wet utilities would minimize the need for redundant construction projects saving time and taxpayer resources;</p> <p>WHEREAS, an alternative approach to campus infrastructure implementation would be to divide North Campus into two comprehensive spheres of planning and execution; and</p> <p>WHEREAS, VA’s execution of the “Bonsall Utility Backbone” for dry utilities established a precedent for a holistic approach to investment and construction implementation addressing the needs of permanent supportive housing at VA West Los Angeles.</p>

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE:

RECOMMENDED, that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs reassess the current “hand off” strategy for addressing infrastructure deficiencies on North Campus and implement a rapid two-phased comprehensive approach which will address both wet utility and transportation upgrades for each phase concurrently.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Veterans and Community Oversight and Engagement Board adopts this recommendation as June 29, 2021.

Questions and Discussion

Mr. Allman offered a summary of this recommendation as looking at the North Campus and assessing its infrastructure needs for both utility and transportation environmental compliance and suggests breaking it up into two projects, to be more efficient by addressing each half at the same time, with the hope that roads will not have to be redone in 3-4 years to install wet utility pipes.

LTG Hopper asked for more comments and then asked for a motion on the floor.

Mr. Wellisch motioned to vote.

Sarah Serrano seconded the motion.

Recommendation 13-04 passes unanimously.

Recommendation 13-05 read by Anthony Allman

WHEREAS, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs issued a statement on May 28, 2021 regarding the President’s Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Budget;

WHEREAS, the Secretary identified “\$18 billion as part of the American Jobs Plan to address VA health care infrastructure needs” in the FY22 Budget;¹

WHEREAS, FY22 Budget represents a “26.8% increase in funding for major and minor construction projects at VA...”;²

WHEREAS, the Secretary also highlighted President Biden’s commitment to eliminating veterans homelessness in the FY22 Budget citing \$2.2 billion in proposed discretionary spending for VA homeless programs;³

WHEREAS, this reflects “a 14.5% increase in the department’s homelessness program.”;⁴

WHEREAS, according to a March 21, 2021 Fact Sheet on the American Jobs Plan issued by The White House, there is “a severe shortage of affordable housing options in America...”;⁵

WHEREAS, the American Jobs Plan fact sheet also states that “President Biden believes we must invest in building and upgrading modern, resilient, and energy-efficient homes and buildings, including our nation’s schools, early learning facilities, veterans’ hospitals and other federal buildings...”;⁶

WHEREAS, in addition to \$18 billion for VA health care infrastructure needs, the American Jobs Plan “also invests \$10 billion in the modernization, sustainability, and resilience of federal buildings, including through a bipartisan Federal Capital Revolving Fund to support investment in a major purchase, construction or renovation of Federal facilities.”;⁷

WHEREAS, the Master Plan at VA West Los Angeles is the most ambitious project within the federal government to address veterans homelessness through the creation of 1,691 affordable housing options for veterans and their families; and

WHEREAS, execution of the Master Plan at VA West Los Angeles is at-risk of faltering without additional investment by the federal government.

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE:

RECOMMENDED, that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs prioritize the Master Plan at VA West Los Angeles as a target for potential gains in both major and minor construction appropriations, including American Jobs Plan spending, which will fully fund seismic corrections, infrastructure improvements and environmental remediation to federally owned facilities required for the development of affordable housing on campus.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Veterans and Community Oversight and Engagement Board adopts this recommendation as June 29, 2021.

Discussion & Questions:

Mr. Allman stated that this recommendation piggybacks on initial Master Plan recommendations. The need for a seismic correction and the need for infrastructure upgrades has been identified and this recommendation identifies considerable resources in the 2022 fiscal year budget to accomplish these objectives. This recommendation asks the Secretary to prioritize those funds for consideration for VA West LA.

Mr. Underwood commented that this is a timely request.

Mr. Allman added that the Secretary's statement that VA may not get \$18 billion but ends up with \$9 billion through negotiations with elected leaders. This recommendation is asking the Secretary to make West LA a priority. The core is an infrastructure project that addresses the depresses the affordable housing crisis in America, particularly for Veterans on VA land. It's a great fit for those funds.

LTG Hopper asked for other comments or questions and requested a motion to vote.

Mr. Zenner motioned.

Mr. Underwood second the motion.

No further discussion.

Recommendation 13-05 passes unanimously.

Recommendation 13-06

WHEREAS, on May 21, 2020, VCOEB adopted a recommendation to name the Grand Lawn entrance at the corner of Wilshire Boulevard and San Vicente Boulevard in honor of Carolina Winston Barrie;¹

WHEREAS, on October 7, 2020, VA responded to VCOEB's May 21st recommendation with a non-concur explaining:

"Only Congress may name Federal buildings, including VA facilities. While this statutory requirement, found in 38 United States Code (U.S.C.) 531, arguably may not apply to the Grand Law[n] gates on the West LA campus, it is instructive as to the weight with which the Federal government approaches such decisions and with significant public interest in them... For that reason, VA prefers to defer to Congress in affixing names and memorials to its structures, and when doing so prefers to honor Veterans."²

WHEREAS, 38 U.S.C. § 531, Requirement relating to naming of Department property, states: "Except as expressly provided by law, a facility, structure, or real property of the Department, and a major portion (such as a wing or floor) of any such facility, structure, or real property, may be named only for the geographic area in which the facility, structure, or real property is located."³

WHEREAS, 38 C.F.R. §38.602, subsection (a) Responsibility, states:

"The Secretary is responsible for naming national cemeteries. The Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, is responsible for naming activities and features therein such as drives, walks or special structures."⁴

	<p>WHEREAS, 38 C.F.R. §38.602, subsection (b) Basis for names, states: “The names of national cemetery activities may be based on physical and area characteristics, the nearest important city (town), or a historical characteristic related to the area. Newly constructed interior thoroughfares for vehicular traffic in national cemetery activities will be known as <i>drives</i>. To facilitate location of graves by visitors, drives will be named after cities, counties or States or after historically notable persons, places or events.”;5</p> <p>WHEREAS, on November 17, 2017, Los Angeles National Cemetery hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for the Urban Initiative Expansion effort which celebrated commencement of construction activities to build 10,000 columbarium niches at VA West Los Angeles;</p> <p>WHEREAS, at that event, Colonel Richard “Dick” Littlestone (USA, Ret) received special recognition for his advocacy efforts which led to the columbarium expansion at VA West Los Angeles;</p> <p>WHEREAS, Tom Howard, Chief of Staff for National Cemetery Administration, recited a VA Certificate of Appreciation during the event which stated: “Colonel Dick Littlestone, USA Retired. For your unwavering belief in America and the Veterans of Los Angeles and especially your perseverance, determination and your continual pursuit of over the last two decades in making the columbarium project a reality, we salute you.”; 6 and</p> <p>WHEREAS, Colonel Dick Littlestone passed away “peacefully and fittingly on Armed Forces Day” May 15, 2021.⁷</p> <p>NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE: RECOMMENDED, that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs request that the Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs name the interior thoroughfare entering the Los Angeles National Cemetery Columbarium “Littlestone Drive” in memory of Colonel Dick Littlestone (USA, Ret).</p> <p>IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Veterans and Community Oversight and Engagement Board adopts this recommendation as June 29, 2021.</p> <p>Discussion and Questions</p> <p>Mr. Allman summarized the recommendation as an example where VA has the authority to name fixtures or a thoroughfare in memory of a Veteran who spent 20 years advocating for the Columbarium. Given that VA has this authority as a community, we should honor that effort, and name the street into the Columbarium after Colonel Dick Littlestone.</p> <p>LTG Hopper commented that it was a worthy recommendation.</p> <p>Any questions or comments, Hearing none, is there a motion on the floor.</p> <p>Ms. Serrano moved to pass the recommendation.</p> <p>Mr. Sapien seconded the motion.</p> <p>Hearing no further discussion, the committee voted.</p> <p>Recommendation 13-06 passed unanimously.</p>
Wrap up & Adjourn	<p>LTG. Gen. (R) John D. Hopper Jr., Chair</p> <p>LTG Hopper thanked Mr. Boerstler and Chief Bradsher for joining the meeting and offered Mr. Boerstler an opportunity to offer closing comments.</p>

	<p>DFO Skinner reported that Mr. Boerstler was no longer in the meeting but passed along his regards. Mr. Skinner also commended the board member participation.</p> <p>LTG agreed and said the meeting was productive and great discussion. He offered Dr. Braverman an opportunity to make closing comments.</p> <p>Mr. McKenrick commented that Dr. Braverman had stepped out of the meeting.</p> <p>Dr. Bamberger asked if there was any information on the next meeting.</p> <p>Hopper stated that the next meeting is planned for the first or second week in October hoping to be in-person. He wanted to get in another meeting for this fiscal year but that would not work. This will give everyone some time to do some work, as opposed to answering our questions. It may be a mixed media event with some attending in-person and for those that cannot, we will provide provisions. It may be modified depending on conditions on the ground, how many people GLA can take into their facility. There are a lot of moving parts, the schedule, any remaining restrictions, how many we can have in West LA.</p> <p>He asked board members for any questions or comments regarding today's discussions or the upcoming meeting.</p> <p>Mr. Perley commented that the two presentations that were made really highlighted the difficulty of renting to homeless Veterans. They talked about assessing Veteran's needs. The VASH voucher program where Veterans are given VASH vouchers to try to obtain a unit. We were told by the VA that it's against fair housing to assess the residents. The property owner is at the mercy of the issues a Veteran might have. This is one of the reasons that people aren't accepting these VASH vouchers. Both presentations were excellent. We've had personal experience with trying to do this ourselves and we ran into all kinds of issues. We didn't have that support these programs have and depending on the Veteran this support may be necessary to be successful. I just want to throw that out and say that those programs are excellent. They take a lot of money, but they work. I think those programs would work on our site, but it also highlights the difficulty outside of the VA or a system that provided the kind of support that those projects have. Assuming that that you can do more of that then it becomes an issue of funding. Not only do you need the VASH vouchers, but you need the assurance that the services will continue to be funded. It's kind of throwing a negative comment on the system but I think it's an accurate assessment of what is needed overall to house Veterans. I think if, to the degree that we can face that and make a difference in the overall program, it would be a nice way to go and it, but it really did highlight the difficulties.</p> <p>LTG Hopper commented that Mr. Perley made a great point and provides valuable input based upon the depth of his experience and knowledge of the entire issue. It will be a challenge for the committee to structure a good idea, but it is something that we ought to treat very seriously and see if we can get put together something that will work on our side.</p> <p>Dr. Bamberger suggested that housing Veterans in these kind of service-enriched environments within the single payer system of the VA is a reduction in the overall budgetary expenditure that the VA would have to do. Moving these high costs, high-using Veterans into tiny homes or into enriched supportive housing would actually reduce the amount of money that the VA would have to pay overtime. They are spending so much money on unnecessary emergency department and inpatient days. It's a great opportunity to integrate housing into a health care system where the treatment is decent housing, and the cost is reduced. There is lots of opportunity going forward and lots of</p>
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	<p>models around the country to prove the model. So far, we haven't seen a lot of that at the LA VA and I really look forward to seeing more of that soon.</p> <p>LTG Hopper said Dr. Braverman makes a great point. The other side of that is the naysayers will say “where's the evidence?” So, any recommendation that we structure needs actual numbers. What is VA paying for providing those services to population that's spread all over and not convenient to be served. It's an absolutely worthwhile idea. We had great examples today of how it can work. And so, as Jim said, it's on us to look at how to put something like that together within the confines of the West LA campus.</p> <p>LTG Hopper thanked the committee for their attendance and attention to detail. He gave special thanks to the subcommittee work. He particularly appreciated the socializing of the recommendations as they were detailed and required some documentation. The package including the backup material is an impressive piece of work. He recognized the subcommittee’s time and effort, and passion. He looks forward to getting feedback from the Secretary on the way forward.</p> <p>LTG Hopper adjourned the meeting at 6:12PM EDT</p>
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Eugene W. Skinner JR, DFO

/s/ John D. Hopper, Jr.

Approved

Lt. Gen. (R) John D. Hopper, Chair