



MENTAL HEALTH CENTER

VETERANS AFFAIRS PALO ALTO HEALTH CARE SYSTEM - VAPAHCS
THE DESIGN PARTNERSHIP & MCCARTHY BUILDERS



“The psychological wounds of war affect every generation of Veterans. We must aggressively diagnose and treat these unseen wounds to address other portions of the downward spiral that often result in severe personal isolation; dysfunctional behaviors; loss of identity, confidence, and personal direction; shattered relationships; depression; and substance abuse. We know this cycle; we’ve watched it for years. We are not going to let this happen to this generation.” - Secretary Eric K. Shinseki



BUILDING OVERVIEW

The need to provide better care for Veterans with mental health disorders has never been greater. This new Mental Health Center at the VA Palo Alto campus begins a new journey by creating a patient centered facility with residential qualities that supports a focus on recovery, patient safety, and engagement. Design elements engendering a sense of healing are landscaped gardens, recreation, social spaces, and natural light throughout the interior spaces. The center is the new standard for VA facilities and was the basis for VA's new "Design Guide for Mental Health Facilities."

- 91,000 gross square feet
- 80 Beds, Four Bed Units, 20 Beds Per Unit
- Outpatient Mental Health Services
- 30% One-Bed Rooms, 70% Two-Bed Rooms
- Patient Centered Design
- Design Allows Unit to Flex in Size Between 18-22 Beds
- Consolidates Four Units Located in Multiple Buildings on Two Campuses
- Replaces Seismically and Functionally Deficient Building 2 Built in 1960
- Direct Line of Sight to Patient Areas from Nursing Core
- Two Gardens in Each Bed Unit
- 11 Outdoor Spaces (Gardens and Courtyards)
- Natural Light Fills 95% of Interior Spaces
- Integrated Art Program
- Safe Patient Environments
- Universal Design (Accessibility Throughout)
- Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) equivalency rating of Silver

MILESTONES

Patients move from 16 Bed Rooms in Buildings 4 and 5 to two and four bed rooms in Building 2



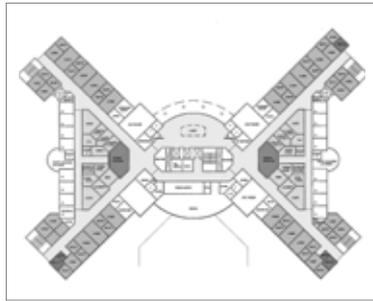
1999

New single story concept with one and two bed rooms focusing on patient centered health care



2005

2003



Original Two-story building replacement concept developed

Topping Out Ceremony
(Senator Barbra Boxer)



2010

2009



Ground Breaking Ceremony
(Representative Anna Eshoo)

2012



Dedication - June 2012



PROJECT TEAM

CLIENT:

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS/VAPAHCS

3801 Miranda Ave., Palo Alto, CA
www.paloalto.va.gov
605.493.5000

ARCHITECTS:

THE DESIGN PARTNERSHIP

1412 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco, CA 94109
www.DPSF.com

MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS:

GAYNER ENGINEERS, SAN FRANCISCO

1133 Post St., San Francisco, CA 94109
www.GaynerEngineers.com

CIVIL ENGINEERS:

SANDIS

1721 Broadway, Suite 201 Oakland, CA
www.Sandis.net

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS:

DEGENKOLB ENGINEERS

235 Montgomery Street, Suite 500
San Francisco, CA 94104
www.Degenkolb.com

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:

KELLER MITCHELL & CO.

302 Fourth Street Oakland, CA 94607
www.kellermitchell.com

FIRE PROTECTION:

HUGHES ASSOCIATES

2551 San Ramon Valley Blvd., Suite 209
San Ramon, CA 94583
www.haifire.com

TEL-DATA:

GUIDEPOST SOLUTIONS

388 17th St., Suite 320 Oakland, CA 94612
www.guidepostsolutions.com

GENERAL CONTRACTORS:

MCCARTHY BUILDING COMPANIES, INC.

343 Sansome Street, 14th Floor,
San Francisco, CA 94104
www.mccarthy.com

MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS:

CONTROL AIR NORTH

30655 San Clemente Street,
Hayward, CA 94544
www.canorth.com

ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS:

BERG ELECTRIC

11333 Sunrise Park Drive,
Rancho Cordova, CA 95742
www.bergelectric.com

PLUMBING CONTRACTORS:

ROEBERS PLUMBING

2516 San Carlos Avenue,
Castro Valley, CA 94546
www.roebers.com

STRUCTURAL:

BECK STEEL

401 N Loop 289, Lubbock, Tx 79403
www.becksteel.com

LANDSCAPING:

ELITE LANDSCAPING, INC.

2972 Larkin Avenue, Clovis, CA 93612
www.elitelandscaping.com

FRIE PROTECTION:

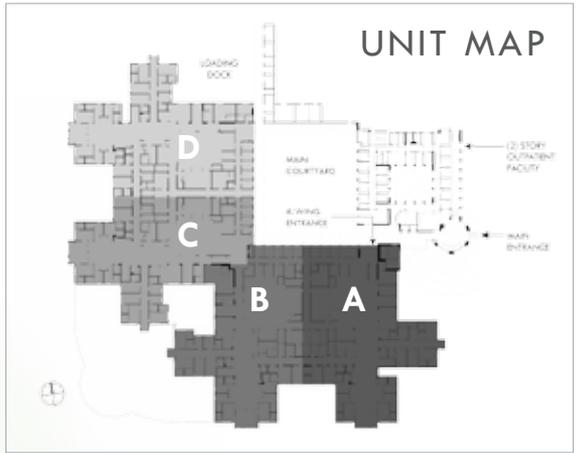
ALLAN AUTOMATIC SPRINKLERS

20303 Mack Street, Hayward, CA 94545
www.allanautomatic.com

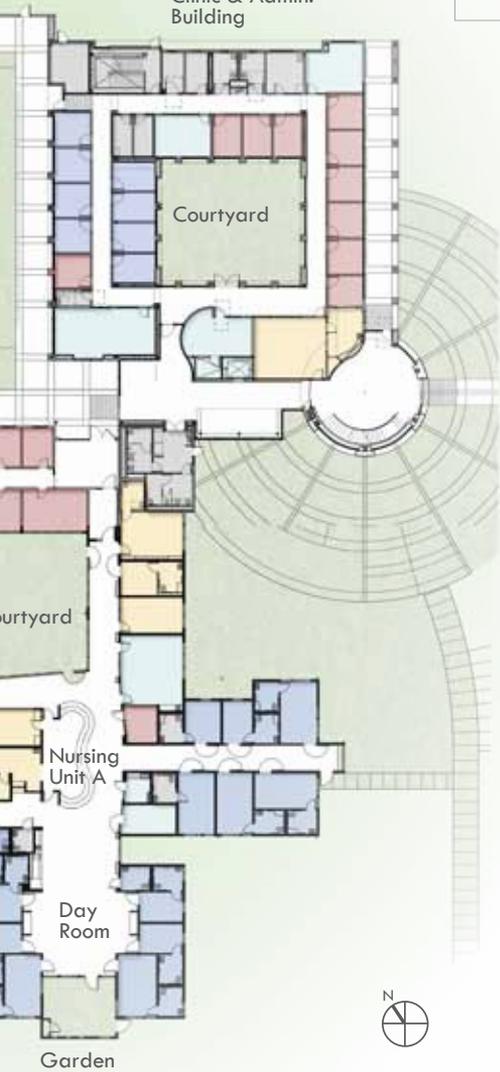
MENTAL HEALTH CENTER FLOOR PLAN



UNIT MAP



Clinic & Admin. Building



- Office
- Support
- Meeting/Dining Rooms
- Patient Bed Rooms
- Courtyard
- Maintenance

BUILDING FEATURES





REMOVING BARRIERS

Transforming institutionalized care settings to patient centered healing environments has been the VA's goal when designing new care facilities for Veterans. This new center is achieving that goal by removing barriers to interaction between patients and staff with larger day rooms, more open space, dining rooms that open onto courtyards, views to nature at virtually every turn, natural day light illuminating over 95% of the building, art work that is reflective and contemplative, and equally important, breaking the traditional barrier of an enclosed nursing station. The "heart and soul" of each unit is the large semi-open, organically shaped nursing station. It is designed to foster human interaction in a safe and nurturing environment. Another important design change is the size of the patient bed rooms – moving from the outdated 16-bed dormitory style rooms to the recent four bed rooms to the current private and semi-private rooms. This mix offers much flexibility. The design is as much about psychological and social needs as it is about respect and dignity.



HEALING / PATIENT CENTERED SPACES

Healing spaces by definition are patient centered and have been thoughtfully integrated throughout the facility's eleven outdoor courtyards and beautiful interior spaces. Connecting Veterans with nature while indoors is accomplished with art, natural lighting, and views to the outside.

The color palette of the finishes and paint colors are drawn from nature. Having access to the outdoors and nature balances circadian rhythms, lowers blood pressure, reduces stress, elevates mood, and increases absorption of Vitamin D.

The large recreation courtyard contains a variety of therapeutic spaces. There are active and passive spaces to meet the physical, social, and spiritual needs of Veterans. Active spaces include a basketball court, a small par course, raised planters for horticultural therapy activities and paved walking pathways. A unique and meaningful element is the labyrinth which is a flat surface containing an intricately designed pathway. A labyrinth is not a maze – there is no need to figure out where you're going; you just walk and the pathway will lead you. "Solviture ambulando. It is solved by walking." Tranquility is another hallmark of patient centered design.



SUPPORTING RECOVERY

The gateway to this new center is a beautiful two-story rotunda. This building supports an outpatient clinic, medical staff offices, research spaces and a large conference center. The consolidation of services, including the bed building and the clinic, into one facility will provide ease of access, support more responsive patient centered management, and continue the goal for more effective recovery strategies and tactics.

ARTWORK

BLUE ECLISPE - by Cliff Garten

The many works I have done for the Veteran Affairs Health Care System all share one thing: they provide necessary respite from the clinical quality of institutional care.

Suspended in the building's entry rotunda, the Blue Eclipse sculpture is a cylindrical form that is eight feet high and six feet wide. The sculpture is made of hundreds of elliptical shapes that are comprised of brushed aluminum plates, with a filigree of elliptical cutouts. The sculpture reads as a floating cloud that responds to the circular form of the rotunda. The three concentric circles of these shapes, which I call elliptoids, create an inner cylindrical void that harnesses natural light from the four large skylights above creating a sense of transparency for the entire floating mass. The medical staff and psychiatrists advised that the color blue would be soothing to patients upon entry to the facility. So, I activated the sculpture with full spectrum LED lights that will be set to slowly change through the blue-green range.

The two sculptures can be perceived in unison, particularly at night. I hope that together they create a beautiful and valuable metaphor for healing in the Health Care Facility and set a precedent for the value of art and the important role it has to play in future projects at the VAPAHCS.



AGGREGATE - by Phillip K. Smith

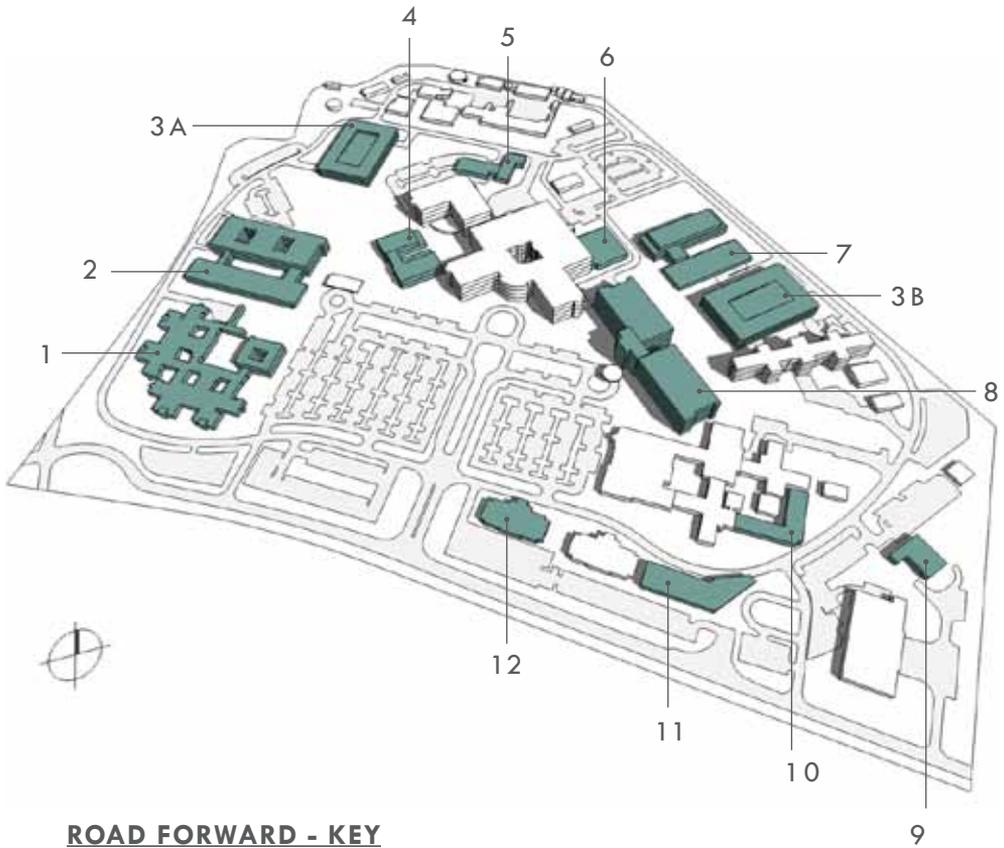
www.PSK3.com

“Aggregate” is an iconic stone sculpture set within a courtyard inspired by the Palo Alto hills. The sculpture is a monolith constructed from 50 separate limestone blocks that have been digitally cut to precise contours. Select stones are pushed or pulled relative to the original stone surface, evoking a sense of transformation, rebuilding, and self-investigation.

Upon entering the outdoor courtyard, visitors will experience a layered translation of the surrounding hillsides. Along the walkways one will first encounter a buffer of native grasses that creates a rustling and calming edge. After that one goes past inclined, raised planter boxes filled with native wildflowers that define a central contemplative space shaded by a Ginkgo grove. Wrapping this central space are sheets of perforated weathered steel, whose hole patterns reinforce the dappling of light through the tree canopy. And finally, upon clearing the grove one encounters “Aggregate,” whose textured surface captures shadow and welcomes touch. Nearby, a series of ipe wood benches, designed to capture the curvature and structure of leaves, provides an intimate space for reflection and pause within the courtyard.



PALO ALTO DIVISION CAMPUS MAP



ROAD FORWARD - KEY

1. Mental Health Center (2012)
2. Rehabilitation Center (2015)
3. Parking Structure (A-2013 + B-2015)
4. Wellness Center (2015)
5. Learning Center (2015)
6. Radiology Consolidation (2015)
7. Research Center (2016)
8. Ambulatory Care Center (2018)
9. Bone and Joint Center (2014)
10. Spinal Cord Injury Addition (2013)
11. Defenders Lodge (2013)
12. Fisher House 2

(Anticipated Opening Dates, Dependent upon Funding)