3.1 AESTHETICS

This section describes the aesthetics setting and regulatory framework and discusses the potential effects of the EIS Alternatives on views and visual character and in relation to light and glare.

3.1.1 Affected Environment

Views and Visual Character

Existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus

The existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus is located in San Francisco's outer Richmond District, fronting Clement Street between 42nd and 46th Avenue. The Campus is located adjacent to the Point Lobos bluff overlooking the northwestern edge of the city and has views to the Pacific Ocean. The National Park Service–managed Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) borders the Campus to the north, east, and west; the western edge of the Richmond District is adjacent to the south. This portion of the GGNRA was previously known as the Fort Miley Military Reservation. The Campus sits at an elevation of 300–350 feet relative to mean sea level (msl), and is higher than the areas in its immediate vicinity: the land to the north and west of the site drops sharply downward toward the Pacific Ocean, while the terrain to the east slopes more gently through the Lincoln Park Golf Course. Views of the Golden Gate Bridge and the Marin Headlands are available from northern areas of the Campus. The Richmond District is located beyond a moderate downward slope to the south of the Campus. The Campus is not located adjacent to any designated State scenic highways, but it is located near the route of San Francisco's 49-Mile Scenic Drive. Point Lobos Avenue and Geary Boulevard pass to the south of the Campus (although the Campus does not front these streets), and the route also comes close to the northeastern tip of the Campus as it passes the Legion of Honor.

The SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus is characterized by the facility's visually prominent buildings, which range in height from one to seven stories above slope, and the natural features that surround them—mainly mature trees—located both within and adjacent to the developed areas of the Campus. Monterey pine and Monterey cypress trees are the most visible vegetation in the area, and are found in landscaped areas within the Campus as well as in the adjacent, natural GGNRA areas. These trees and other vegetation partially screen views to and from areas within the southern and southwestern portions of the Campus. However, in views from points outside of the Campus, especially from the south, the trees and vegetation do not always completely obscure the site's mostly developed areas, as evidenced by the buildings, paved roadways, gravel lots, and outdoor storage areas that are visible to passersby.

The SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus's built environment is composed of a combination of architectural styles and building sizes, resulting in an overall visually eclectic physical campus layout. However, a series of 14 buildings built in 1934 do provide a measure of visual continuity, especially in the northeastern quadrant of the Campus. Stylistically, some of the buildings have Art Deco motifs used for emphases at doorways, spandrel panels, and as horizontal stringcourses at cornices near the rooflines (VA, 2010). Some of the designs have an overall Mayan/Aztec/Mesoamerican-stylistic influence, which was a part of the Art Deco movement, with designs varying by building and location, but typically adhering to generally consistent motifs. Other areas of the Campus contain buildings constructed since the 1934 structures were established. Often, these newer buildings were built

in styles and at scales that are inconsistent with that of the original structures, resulting in the variety of structures that are seen today.

Field visits to the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus were conducted in March 2011 and July 2012 to observe and document the existing visual quality and character of the Campus. Also, field visits to the Marin Headlands, San Francisco Presidio, and Golden Gate Park were conducted in July 2011 to observe the Campus from more distant locations to determine whether the Campus was visible. Table 3.1-1, aerial images (Figure 3.1-1a and 3.1-1b),[1] written text, and photographs (Figures 3.1-2a through 3.1-7b) identify and describe specific locations near the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus that provide a representative cross section of visual images that provide information about the existing aesthetic of the Campus and its immediate surroundings. These locations represent views that may be seen by a variety of observers in the area, ranging from motorists traveling in automobiles to pedestrians walking along urban sidewalks and hikers walking along park trails.

Other nearby popular public recreational locations, Ocean Beach and Golden Gate Park, were also visited to determine whether the Campus could be seen from certain locations within these recreation spots. In both cases, the Campus was difficult to distinguish at this distance. At Ocean Beach, one can see the general shapes and form of some buildings, but the Campus blends into the City's urban fabric. From nearly all vantage points in Golden Gate Park, the Campus is not visible because of distance, varied topography, and intervening vegetation. Only a portion of the Campus can be seen when standing at the outside edge of Golden Gate Park, if an observer focuses his or her view up one of the streets that leads to the Campus.

Table 3.1-1: Existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus View Locations

View No.	View Description
View 1	Northwestward View of SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from 42nd Street and Clement Street
View 2	Northward View of SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from 43rd Street and Clement Street
View 3	Northward View of SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from 44th Street and Clement Street
View 4	Northeastward View of SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from 45th Street and Clement Street
View 5	Southeastward View of SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from El Camino del Mar toward Helipad
View 6	Southward View of SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from El Camino del Mar and Lands End Trail Connection
View 7	Southward View of SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from El Camino del Mar, South of Putting Green
View 8	Southwestward View of SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from El Camino del Mar, near Palace of Legion of Honor
View 9	Eastward View of SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from GGNRA East Fort Miley, near Building 10
View 10	Northwestward View of SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from GGNRA East Fort Miley, near National Park Service Building
View 11	Southward View of SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from Hawk Hill Parking Lot at Marin Headlands
View 12	Southwestward View of SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from San Francisco Presidio

[1] Figure 3.1-1 illustrates locations near the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus. View 11 is located at the Hawk Hill lookout point parking area off of Conzelman Road in the Marin Headlands area of the GGNRA, while View 12 is located in the San Francisco Presidio, at the intersection of the Batteries & Bluffs Trail and the Coastal Trail, which are located east of Marshall Beach and west of Lincoln Boulevard.

Source: Google Earth, 2011; compiled by AECOM in 2012

Figure 3.1-1a: **Photograph Viewpoints**

Source: San Francisco County, 2009; compiled by AECOM in 2012

Figure 3.1-1b: Photograph Viewpoints

View 1

The photo location at 42nd Street and Clement Street, shown in Figure 3.1-2a, offers a view of the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus main entrance as experienced by pedestrians and motorists traveling north along 42nd Street toward the entrance looking northwest. Distant views are not available from this location because existing Campus buildings, hilly topography, and vegetation block views of distant features.

View 2

The photo location at 43rd Street and Clement Street, shown in Figure 3.1-2b, provides a view of the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from farther west along Clement Street than the view shown in the Figure 3.1-1a photo. This is also a view experienced by pedestrians and motorists traveling north along 43rd Street at its intersection with Clement Street. This is a view of a relatively open area of the Campus. Because of the densely developed nature of the existing Campus, it is not common to have an unimpeded view through the Campus from other locations around the site. Although distant, this view offers glimpses of some of the Campus's historic structures.

View 3

The view location photographed from 44th Street and Clement Street, as shown in Figure 3.1-3a, provides a close-range view of Building 203, the main hospital building on the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus. This viewpoint illustrates the hilly nature of the Campus, as well as the mature vegetation that exists there.

View 4

The existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus's southwestern corner is visible from the intersection of 45th Street and Clement Street, as shown in Figure 3.1-3b. From this location, pedestrians and motorists can see the western portion of Building 203, as well as the rooftops of Buildings 15, 29, 30, and 208. Existing mature vegetation obscures some but not all of the facades of these buildings.

View 5

The photo presented in Figure 3.1-4a provides a view from the El Camino del Mar Trail, located near the helipad at the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus's northwestern corner. From this location, very few Campus features are visible because of the considerable elevation difference between the Campus and the hiking trail. The Campus is currently not a visibly prominent feature for hikers walking along the trail.

View 6

The El Camino del Mar Trail and Lands End Trail parallel each other and are connected by a short trail located between them. A view from the intersection of the short trail and El Camino del Mar Trail is shown in Figure 3.1-4b. From this location, views toward the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus are largely obscured toward the Campus. The photo in this figure indicates that Building 6 would be mostly obscured from this vantage point by visually dominant thick vegetation.

A: View 1—Northwestward View of Existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from 42nd Street and Clement Street

B: View 2—Northward View of Existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from 43rd Street and Clement Street

Source: AECOM, 2012

Figure 3.1-2: Representative Photographs

A: View 3—Northward View of Existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from 44th Street and Clement Street

B: View 4—Northeastward View of Existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from 45th Street and Clement Street

Source: AECOM, 2012

Figure 3.1-3: Representative Photographs

A: View 5—Southeastward View of Existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from El Camino del Mar toward Helipad

B: View 6—Southward View of Existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from El Camino del Mar and Lands End Trail Connection

Source: AECOM, 2012

Figure 3.1-4: Representative Photographs

View 7

The photo presented in Figure 3.1-5a provides a view from the El Camino del Mar Trail, south of the putting green on the Lincoln Park Golf Course. The trail is heavily vegetated, which limits views of the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus. From this location, only a partially obscured view of Buildings 2 and 3 is available because of existing thick vegetation.

View 8

The existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus's northeastern corner is visible as indicated in Figure 3.1-5b, from the El Camino del Mar Trail near the Legion of Honor. From this location, the Campus is not a visibly prominent feature and passersby have only a partial view of Building 11.

View 9

The viewpoint for the photo presented in Figure 3.1-6a is located along a trail directly east of Building 10 on the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus. From this location, Building 10 is barely visible because of the presence of a considerable amount of vegetation that obscures it. This northern area of the Campus is a pathway for hikers making their way to Lincoln Park and connecting into surrounding trails.

View 10

The photo presented in Figure 3.1-6b shows a view from GGNRA East Fort Miley, near the National Park Service Building. This location can be accessed by hikers who visit the trails around the adjacent GGNRA lands. The existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus is moderately visible from this location, but is partially obscured by a grassy berm and mature vegetation that exists in the foreground.

View 11

The viewpoint for the photo presented in Figure 3.1-7a is located at the Hawk Hill lookout point parking area off of Conzelman Road in the Marin Headlands area of the GGNRA, north of the Golden Gate Bridge. The viewpoint is roughly equidistant from Rodeo Beach to the west and Fort Baker to the east, and is about 3 miles north of the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus across San Francisco Bay. This is a stop for visitors to the area, many of whom park their cars to enjoy views of San Francisco's northern shoreline, points south, and the East Bay as well. Some of the largest structures on the Campus are visible from this location, but they are not dominant features of the view individually or collectively, because (1) the structures are at a relatively long distance from the viewer, (2) much of the Campus is obstructed by vegetation, and (3) the surrounding features of the view such as San Francisco's rocky shoreline and the bay waters attract more of the viewer's attention.

View 12

The viewpoint for the photo presented in Figure 3.1-7b is located in the San Francisco Presidio, at the intersection of the Batteries to Bluffs Trail and the Coastal Trail, which are located east of Marshall Beach and west of Lincoln Boulevard. This viewpoint is located about 2 miles northeast of the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus and is representative of views toward the Campus from various points on the above-mentioned trails. Similarly, but to a lesser extent than in the case of View 11, some of the largest structures on the Campus are

A: View 7—Southward View of Existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from El Camino del Mar, South of Putting Green

B: View 8—Southwestward View of Existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from El Camino del Mar, near the Legion of Honor

Source: AECOM, 2012

Figure 3.1-5: Representative Photographs

A: View 9—Eastward View of Existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from GGNRA East Fort Miley, near Building 10

B: View 10—Northwestward View of Existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from GGNRA East Fort Miley, near National Park Service Building

Source: AECOM, 2012

Figure 3.1-6: Representative Photographs

A: View 11—Southward View of Existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from Hawk Hill Parking Lot at Marin Headlands

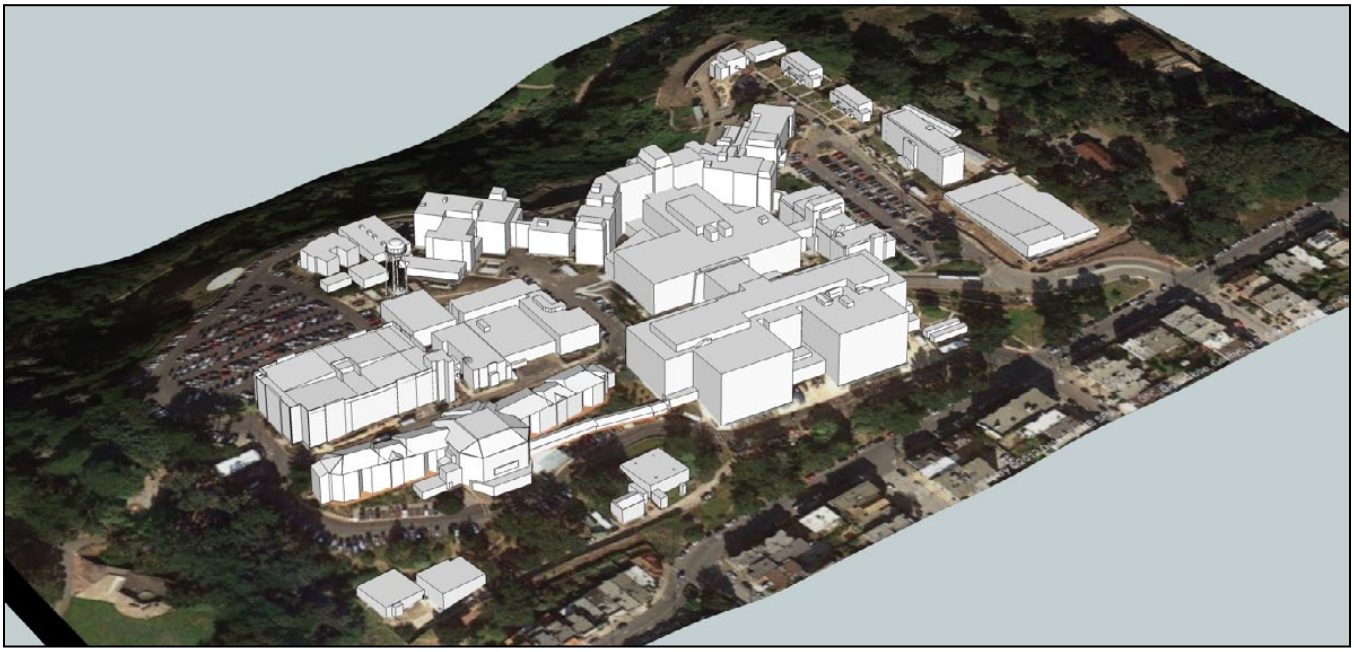
B: View 12—Southwestward View of Existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from San Francisco Presidio

Source: AECOM, 2012

Figure 3.1-7: Representative Photographs

visible from this location, but they are not dominant features of the view individually or collectively because (1) these structures are at a relatively long distance from the viewer and (2) much of the Campus is obstructed by vegetation.

The rendering shown in Figure 3.1-8 provides an aerial perspective, looking to the northeast that illustrates the massing that existed in 2012 at the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus.



Source: VA, 2014

Figure 3.1-8: Aerial Perspective of 2012 SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus

Mission Bay Area

The Mission Bay area is a relatively flat area characterized primarily by human-made visual landmarks. Mission Bay is bordered by the area north of China Basin Channel, which is characterized by an array of new development that includes mid- and high-rise (80–160 feet) residential buildings with ground-floor commercial spaces, offices in new and converted warehouse buildings along King and Berry Streets, as well as the 45,000-seat AT&T Park sports stadium at King and Third Streets. The area supports a mix of uses with a mix of architectural styles in which contemporary residential buildings coexist with older structures.

The terminus of the Caltrain commuter rail system is located at Fourth and King Streets. The Muni Metro's T rail line also serves this area along with other bus lines. Transportation infrastructure visually dominates the area between Fourth and Seventh Streets along Townsend Street. Caltrain and Muni tracks, the railyard, trains, platforms, utility sheds, light posts, and power lines characterize the visible features. In addition, various highways traverse the Mission Bay area. Interstates 80 and 280 and U.S. Highway 101 have a visual presence, especially in locations where the highways are elevated above grade.

The University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) Mission Bay Campus is located between Third Street and Interstate 280 and between Nelson Rising Lane and 16th Street. The UCSF Mission Bay Campus consists of a

variety of medical research and education facilities, some of which require interior nighttime lights for building users and exterior nighttime lighting for safety and security reasons.

The area immediately north or east of the UCSF Mission Bay Campus consists of various mixed-use buildings up to 10 stories high. Some of the buildings are occupied by biotechnology companies, while others are residential structures. The area immediately south of the UCSF Mission Bay Campus consists of low-rise warehouse and industrial buildings, and vacant or undeveloped land. The proposed Mission Bay South site is largely underutilized, consisting of vacant land and old warehouse or industrial buildings ranging from one to three stories tall. These buildings are generally unadorned and utilitarian in character.

Other visual features in the area include power lines and light posts, as well as signage for commercial establishments. Natural features in the vicinity include Potrero Hill, located to the southwest and elevated above Mission Bay, and San Francisco Bay, which serves as the major visual boundary to the east. However, because of the density of urban development in these areas, such as tall buildings, these natural features are seldom viewable from within the Mission Bay area except when seen from close range.

To the south of the Mission Bay area is the Potrero Hill neighborhood, which consists of a mix of multifamily units, commercial buildings, and industrial facilities. The area south of 16th Street east of U.S. Highway 101, west of Interstate 280, and north of Cesar Chavez Street is characterized mostly by single-family residential structures, while the area east of Interstate 280 to the waterfront is characterized by a collection of large industrial and warehouse facilities, and large expansive surface parking lots.

A few scattered areas of public open space can be found in the Mission Bay area. The largest of these are Mission Bay Commons Park and Bay Front Park, which, along with a few other smaller parks, provide a visual contrast to the many other densely urbanized locations found in the area.

Light and Glare[2]

Existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus

The existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus is located in the northwestern corner of San Francisco, surrounded to the north, west, and east by GGNRA-managed lands, and by the outer Richmond District residential neighborhood to the south. The undeveloped GGNRA lands do not contain substantial sources of nighttime light, and are in fact among the most minimally lit areas of the city. GGNRA lands are not a source of glare, given that the area is mostly undeveloped. The street lights and residential lights in the outer Richmond District produce a moderate amount of nighttime light, but the neighborhood is not a substantial source of light or glare.

The existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus is substantially developed with medical buildings, research buildings, parking structures, and surface parking lots, all of which are equipped with exterior lighting fixtures. Some medical facilities have nighttime lighting that is required for safety and security. However, because the majority of activity on the Campus takes place during daytime hours, nighttime lighting consists primarily of low-level security lights used around Campus buildings and parking facilities, as well as limited hospital lights. In addition,

[2] In this NEPA context, light is nighttime illumination that stimulates sight and makes things visible, and glare is difficulty seeing in the presence of bright light such as direct or reflected sunlight.

field observations revealed that because Campus facilities are generally set back from the property boundaries, existing low-level lighting is not substantially noticeable to viewers in the surrounding area.

The existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus is not a substantial source of glare. The windows of the existing buildings on the Campus may at times reflect the sun's rays, but these occurrences are minor and intermittent. In addition, building fenestration is intermixed with nonreflective building materials, minimizing the amount of glare caused by the buildings.

Mission Bay Area

The Mission Bay area contains a diversity of land uses, each contributing to the urban fabric of San Francisco. The northern portion of the Mission Bay area is visually dominated by groups of high-rise office and residential buildings that are internally lit and also have associated outdoor entry and security lighting. The northeastern portion of the Mission Bay area is anchored by AT&T Park, which is a substantial source of nighttime lighting on the occasions when it hosts sporting or other events. In addition to these light sources, other commercial, residential, and industrial buildings create sources of light. The area is also extensively lit by streetlights, motor vehicles, and transit vehicles traveling through the area on city streets and highways.

The majority of the Mission Bay area (south of AT&T Park) is also heavily urbanized and contains a large number of lighting sources, including city streets and highways, as well as internally lit commercial, industrial, and research buildings (e.g., UCSF) and their associated entry and exterior security lighting. The primarily residential Potrero Hill neighborhood is a relatively minor source of nighttime lighting.

Tall high- and mid-rise buildings in the Mission Bay area are occasional sources of glare, during periods when their windows reflect the sun's rays. However, these occurrences are relatively minor and intermittent.

3.1.2 Regulatory Framework

There are no applicable federal standards relating to visual resources or aesthetics.

3.1.3 Environmental Consequences

Significance Criteria

A NEPA evaluation must consider the context and intensity of the environmental effects that would be caused by, or result from, the EIS Alternatives.

Thus, an Alternative analyzed in this EIS is considered to result in an adverse impact related to aesthetics if it would:

- have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
- substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway;
- substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; or

- create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

In this case, “substantial” refers to a noticeable physical effect that causes the visual setting and viewer experience to change in a negative way.

Assessment Methods

This section provides a discussion of the visual impacts associated with the EIS Alternatives and the area surrounding the project sites.

Several variables affect the degree of visibility, visual contrast, and ultimately project impacts: (1) scale and size of facilities, (2) viewer types and activities, (3) distance and viewing angle, and (4) influences of adjacent scenery or land uses. Viewer response and sensitivity vary depending on viewer attitudes and expectations. Viewer sensitivity is distinguished among project viewers in identified scenic corridors, and recreational, residential, office, and industrial areas. Recreational areas and scenic corridors are considered to have relatively high sensitivity, residential areas have moderate sensitivity, and office and industrial areas have low sensitivity.

As part of this analysis, various areas in San Francisco and within GGNRA lands were screened as potential view locations, based on whether the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus is visible from these locations and the degree to which viewers at those locations would be sensitive to proposed physical changes at the Campus during the proposed construction and operational periods. A set of locations that constitute a representative cross section of views experienced by a representative cross section of observers was chosen for the analysis. Views from these locations were photographed and are included in this EIS to illustrate existing conditions. Consequently, visual simulations were conducted for these same views to facilitate project impact determinations. Project design drawings and information about height and massing were also relied upon, in conjunction with the visual simulations, to identify whether or when the proposed structures would result in visual impacts.

Alternative 1: SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus Buildout Alternative

Short-Term Projects

Construction

Visual Character

Alternative 1 short-term projects would involve construction or retrofitting of patient care buildings, research buildings, business occupancy buildings, residential buildings, and parking structures. Construction activities would require establishing construction staging areas throughout the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus and would include the presence of large construction vehicles. However, conventional best management practices (BMPs) related to screening of construction staging areas would be implemented to limit the frequency and prominence of views of construction equipment and materials. Therefore, this would result in a temporary minor visual impact.

Temporary modular swing space totaling approximately 60,000 gross square feet (gsf) would be spread over four locations on Campus to accommodate displaced employees during the seismic retrofitting of Buildings 1, 6, and 8. The general locations of the swing space would be west of Building 10 (one story), south of Building 200 (one story), east of Building 6 (one story), and within Parking Area B (two stories). The swing space would be in place from April 2016 to March 2019. Three of the four swing space locations would be visible in some public views of the Campus,[3] including from the main entrance of the Campus, given the presence of the proposed two-story modular space within Parking Area B. However, the visual change associated with the modular structures would primarily affect the on-site population of personnel, patients, and visitors. In addition, because these would be temporary structures on Campus, there would be a minor construction-related visual impact.

Light

Construction activity for Alternative 1 short-term projects would take place during daytime hours; therefore, no impact from the use of construction equipment lights would occur. Some low-level security lighting would be required for construction staging areas, which would have a minor impact relative to the area's ambient light levels. However, in accordance with BMPs, lighting equipment would be shielded and directed downward to minimize light spillover to neighboring residential areas or adjacent GGNRA lands. Therefore, this impact would be minor.

Operation

Views and Visual Character

Alternative 1 short-term projects would include the operation of four new research, administrative, hoptel, and emergency operations/parking buildings and one expanded medical building on the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus. The proposed structures would range in size from approximately 8,700 to 155,000 square feet, with heights ranging from one to four stories above grade. None of the proposed structures would exceed the height of Building 2, which is the tallest existing building on the Campus.

Some of the structures proposed as part of Alternative 1 short-term projects would be located in relatively central areas of the Campus, which are not as visible from outside the Campus boundaries as areas along the perimeter. By and large, buildings proposed in central portions of the Campus would not be visually dominant relative to existing buildings in that part of the Campus, because several of the existing structures are larger than the proposed structures. In addition, views of these new buildings from outside the Campus would be mostly screened from view by existing buildings, and/or would be set back sufficiently from the Campus boundaries to render them visually subordinate to other visible features. Therefore, buildings proposed for the central Campus would have a minor visual impact on views and would minimally affect the visual character of the Campus.

Buildings proposed for the eastern portion of the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus during Alternative 1 short-term projects would be intermittently visible from GGNRA East Fort Miley. East Fort Miley contains trails that allow access by hikers visiting GGNRA lands. Visitors can travel along a trail that parallels the Campus boundary, from which Campus buildings are intermittently visible through existing vegetation. From areas where views are unobstructed, hikers can clearly observe existing buildings located on the eastern edge of the Campus.

[3] Except for temporary modular space located south of Building 200, given its location in the center of Campus.

Although they would be noticeable from GGNRA lands, the proposed new buildings would not be inconsistent with the character or scale of existing buildings in this area of the Campus, and would be visible only intermittently through the heavy vegetation along the East Fort Miley and Campus boundary.

New buildings proposed for the western portion of the Campus would be visible from some publicly accessible locations on GGNRA lands north and west of the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus, resulting in alteration of the physical surroundings experienced by visitors to that area. This change would be noticeable where proposed multistory buildings would be visible to regular hikers who are used to taking the trail along El Camino del Mar and looking up toward the buildings. These observers are considered sensitive to changes in the area's visual character because they pass through the area for recreational purposes and are familiar with the scenery as part of their regular trail experience.

However, implementing Alternative 1 long-term projects would result in only a minor impact related to views and visual character. These locations are not focal or prime destinations for hikers, and the changes would be noticeable only when looking up toward the building rather than along the trail or out toward San Francisco Bay. Instead, these are generally areas that people pass through on their way to more scenic GGNRA locations with more expansive views of San Francisco Bay, including views of the Golden Gate Bridge and Marin Headlands. The proposed new buildings would also be built with materials, colors, and massing that would be designed to fit within the context of the existing buildings on the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus, thereby minimizing their visual effect. With implementation of Alternative 1 long-term projects, trees would be planted along the perimeter of the Campus, which would further screen views of the proposed new buildings from the trail along El Camino del Mar and from more distant views such as those from the Marin Headlands and the Presidio. Furthermore, the proposed Patient Welcome Center drop-off area roundabout, though visible from the adjacent residential streets, would be in the same location as the current on-Campus bus drop-off area.

For a specific analysis based on visual simulations showing views with implementation of Alternative 1 short-term projects, see the discussion below. Trees would be removed for construction associated with Buildings 24 and 203, and such tree removal was taken into account in the visual simulations. These proposed development changes to the Campus would result in a minor impact.

View 1a

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-9a offers a publicly accessible view of the proposed main entrance of the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus, as experienced by pedestrians and motorists traveling north along 42nd Street, looking northwest. As depicted, a part of proposed new Building 24 would be visible in the far right side of this view. However, it would not be dominant in the view. In addition, the removal of one tree would not adversely affect this view. This would represent a minor visual impact.

View 2a

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-9b offers a publicly accessible view of the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus, as seen from farther west along Clement Street than the visual simulation discussed above under View 1a. This visual simulation shows the view as experienced by pedestrians and motorists traveling north along 43rd Street at its intersection with Clement Street. As depicted, a part of proposed new Building 24 would be visible in the far right side of this view. This would represent a minor visual impact.

A: View 1a—Northwestward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from 42nd Street and Clement Street

B: View 2a—Northward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from 43rd Street and Clement Street

Source: Square One Productions, 2014

Figure 3.1-9: Visual Simulations for Short-Term Projects under Alternatives 1 and 2

View 3a

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-10a offers a publicly accessible view of the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus, particularly depicting a close-range view of Building 203, the main hospital building on the Campus. As depicted, the Building 203 expansion would not be visible in the middle of this view, because mature vegetation would obscure the view. Building 203 would be slightly more visible as a result of the planned removal of some of the vegetation in the foreground on the left. However, this change would not be dominant in the view. In addition, the reduction in trees would not adversely affect this view. This would represent a minor visual impact.

View 4a

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-10b offers a publicly accessible view of the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus as experienced by pedestrians and motorists. This simulation shows the western portion of Building 203, the rooftop of Building 208, and a very small portion of the rooftop of Buildings 29 and 30. As depicted, Building 203 would be slightly more visible as a result of the planned removal of some of the vegetation in the foreground. However, this change would not be dominant in the view. In addition, the removal of trees would not adversely affect this view. This would represent a minor visual impact.

View 5a

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-11a offers a publicly accessible view of the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus, as experienced by pedestrians along a GGNRA trail northwest of the Campus if they were to look up at the Campus buildings. As depicted, the proposed new Buildings 40 and 211 would be visible, introducing building elements to the middle-ground aspect of this view. However, this change would not be dominant in the view given the extent of natural foliage in the foreground and middle ground, including some vegetation that would slightly obscure the proposed new buildings. This would represent a minor visual impact.

View 6a

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-11b offers a publicly accessible view of the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus, as experienced by pedestrians along a GGNRA trail north of the Campus if they were to look up at the Campus buildings. As depicted, there would be no change in the view from the existing view of heavy foliage and trail. This would represent no visual impact.

View 7a

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-12a offers a publicly accessible view of the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus, as experienced by pedestrians along the El Camino del Mar Trail north of the Campus if they were to look up at the Campus buildings. As depicted, a part of proposed new Building 43 would be barely visible in the far middle of this view. However, existing heavy foliage would continue to dominate this view. This would represent a minor visual impact.

View 8a

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-12b offers a publicly accessible view of the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus, as experienced by pedestrians along the El Camino del Mar Trail near the Legion of Honor northeast of

A: View 3a—Northward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from 44th Street and Clement Street

B: View 4a—Northeastward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from 45th Street and Clement Street

Source: Square One Productions, 2014

Figure 3.1-10: Visual Simulations for Short-Term Projects under Alternatives 1 and 2

A: View 5a—Southeastward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from El Camino del Mar toward Helipad

B: View 6a—Southward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from El Camino del Mar and Lands End Trail Connection

Source: Square One Productions, 2014

Figure 3.1-11: Visual Simulations for Short-Term Projects under Alternatives 1 and 2

A: View 7a—Southward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from El Camino del Mar, South of Putting Green

B: View 8a—Southwestward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from El Camino del Mar, near the Legion of Honor

Source: Square One Productions, 2014

Figure 3.1-12: Visual Simulations for Short-Term Projects under Alternatives 1 and 2

the Campus if they were to look up at the Campus buildings. As depicted, a part of proposed new Building 43 would be visible in the far middle of this view. However, existing heavy foliage and the surface parking lot in the foreground would continue to dominate this view. This would represent a minor visual impact.

View 9a

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-13a offers a publicly accessible view of the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus, as experienced by pedestrians along a GGNRA trail east of Building 10. As depicted, a part of proposed new Buildings 40 and 211 would be visible and proposed new Buildings 22 and 43 would be barely visible through the trees in the far middle of this view. However, existing heavy foliage in the foreground would continue to dominate this view. This would represent a minor visual impact.

View 10a

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-13b offers a publicly accessible view of the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus as experienced by pedestrians along a GGNRA trail east of Building 212. As depicted, there would be no change in the view from the existing view of a berm, Building 212, and foliage. This would represent no visual impact.

View 11a

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-14a offers a publicly accessible view of the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus as experienced by pedestrians and motorists at the Hawk Hill lookout point parking area off Conzelman Road in the Marin Headlands area of the GGNRA, north of the Golden Gate Bridge. As depicted, a part of proposed new Buildings 40, 43, and 211 would be visible across San Francisco Bay in the far middle of this view. However, the bay in the foreground and the overall San Francisco skyline against the Pacific Ocean in the background would continue to dominate this view. This would represent a minor visual impact.

View 12a

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-14b offers a publicly accessible view of the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus as experienced by pedestrians in the San Francisco Presidio, at the intersection of the Batteries to Bluffs Trail and the Coastal Trail, located east of Marshall Beach and west of Lincoln Boulevard. As depicted, a part of proposed new Building 40 would be visible across San Francisco Bay in the far middle of this view. However, the bay in the foreground and the northwestern San Francisco topography and the Pacific Ocean in the background would continue to dominate this view. This would represent a minor visual impact.

The rendering shown in Figure 3.1-15 provides an aerial perspective that illustrates the proposed overall facility massing for buildout under short-term projects for Alternative 1 by mid-2020, combined with existing massing at the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus.

A: View 9a—Eastward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from GGNRA East Fort Miley, near Building 10

B: View 10a—Northwestward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from GGNRA East Fort Miley, near National Park Service Building

Source: Square One Productions, 2014

Figure 3.1-13: Visual Simulations for Short-Term Projects under Alternatives 1 and 2

A: View 11a—Southward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from Hawk Hill Parking Lot at Marin Headlands

B: View 12a—Southwestward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from San Francisco Presidio

Source: Square One Productions, 2014

Figure 3.1-14: Visual Simulations for Short-Term Projects under Alternatives 1 and 2

Source: VA, 2014

Figure 3.1-15: Aerial Perspective of SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus Buildout at the End of Alternative 1 Short-Term Projects in Mid-2020

Light and Glare

Because most operations on the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus take place during daytime hours, nighttime lighting related to operations would consist primarily of shielded and downward-directed low-level security lights used around Campus buildings and parking facilities. Because Campus facilities are generally set back from the Campus boundaries, low-level lighting would not be substantially noticeable to users of the surrounding area**.** Furthermore, most buildings proposed at locations near the Campus perimeter would not generally be occupied on a 24-hour continual basis as occurs in the Campus's existing medical care buildings, from which interior lighting is emitted during nighttime hours. Some of the medical buildings may keep their interior lights on during nighttime hours, and those buildings would emit lighting from within. However, because of the setback from Campus boundaries and existing lighting sources, interior lighting would not be substantially noticeable. The ambient light level would not change substantially, as long as security lighting is shielded and directed downward. No substantial increase in glare would result from Alternative 1 short-term projects on the Campus. The windows of the buildings on the Campus may at times reflect the sun's rays, but these occurrences would be minor and intermittent. Therefore, this impact would be minor.

Long-Term Projects

Construction

Visual Character

The Alternative 1 long-term project would be similar to the short-term projects for this alternative in terms of construction equipment and staging areas and their respective visual shielding. However, temporary modular swing space would not be included and construction would occur in the center of the Campus under the Alternative 1 long-term project. Therefore, the impact of the Alternative 1 long-term project related to visual character would be temporary and less than the temporary impact identified for Alternative 1 short-term projects.

Light

As for Alternative 1 short-term projects, construction activity associated with the Alternative 1 long-term project would take place during daytime hours; therefore, no impact would result from the use of construction equipment lights. Shielded, downward-directed, low-level security lighting would be used for construction staging areas, which would have a minor impact relative to the area's ambient light levels during the construction period. Therefore, this would be a temporary minor impact.

Operation

Views and Visual Character

The Alternative 1 long-term project would involve operation of a new medical building on the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus. The proposed structure would be 170,000 square feet and five stories tall. The proposed structure would not exceed the height of Building 2, which is the tallest existing building on the Campus.

The massing of this building would be visible from various publicly accessible locations on GGNRA lands north and east of the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus, resulting in an alteration of the physical surroundings experienced by visitors to that area. This change would be most noticeable in locations such as those shown in Figure 3.1-4 (View 5) and Figure 3.1-5 (View 8), where proposed multistory buildings would be visible to hikers from the trail along El Camino del Mar. These observers are considered sensitive to changes in the area's visual character because they pass through the area for recreational purposes and enjoy the existing scenery of the area as part of the recreational experience. However, implementation of the Alternative 1 long-term project would result in a minor impact, because this location is not the focal or prime destination for hikers. Instead, this is generally an area that people pass through on their way to more scenic GGNRA locations with more expansive views that include views of the Golden Gate Bridge and Marin Headlands. The proposed new building would be built with materials, colors, and massing that would be designed to fit with the context of the existing buildings on the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus, thereby minimizing the visual effect. In addition, vegetation currently screens portions of these views. With implementation of the Alternative 1 long-term project, trees would be planted along the perimeter of the Campus, which would further screen views of the proposed new building from the trail along El Camino del Mar and from more distant views such as those from the Marin Headlands and the Presidio. For a specific analysis based on visual simulations showing views with implementation of the Alternative 1 long-term

project, see the discussion below. The impact of this proposed development change to the Campus would be considered minor.

View 1b

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-16a is the same as the visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-9a, because the buildout of the long-term project in 2027 would look the same in this view as the buildout of short-term projects in mid-2020. This would represent a minor visual impact.

View 2b

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-16b is the same view as the visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-9b, because the buildout of the long-term project in 2027 would look the same in this view as the buildout of short-term projects in mid-2020. This would represent no visual impact.

View 3b

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-17a is the same as the visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-10a, because the buildout of the long-term project in 2027 would look the same in this view as the buildout of short-term projects in mid-2020. This would represent a minor visual impact.

View 4b

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-17b differs from the visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-10b, because the buildout of the long-term project in 2027 would look different in this view than the buildout of short-term projects in mid-2020. Specifically, the top portion of the proposed new Building 213 (five stories in height) would be visible in the center of this view upon buildout of the long-term project. However, Building 213 would not be taller than the other buildings seen in the view, nor would it be taller than the tallest existing building on the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus. This would represent a minor visual impact.

View 5b

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-18a is the same as the visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-11a, because the buildout of the long-term project in 2027 would look the same in this view as the buildout of short-term projects in mid-2020. This would represent a minor visual impact.

View 6b

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-18b is the same as the visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-11b, because the buildout of the long-term project in 2027 would look the same in this view as the buildout of short-term projects in mid-2020. This would represent no visual impact.

A: View 1b—Northwestward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from 42nd Street and Clement Street

B: View 2b—Northward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from 43rd Street and Clement Street

Source: Square One Productions, 2014

Figure 3.1-16: Visual Simulations for Long-Term Projects under Alternatives 1 and 2

A: View 3b—Northward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from 44th Street and Clement Street

B: View 4b—Northeastward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from 45th Street and Clement Street

Source: Square One Productions, 2014

Figure 3.1-17: Visual Simulations for Long-Term Projects under Alternatives 1 and 2

A: View 5b—Southeastward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from El Camino del Mar toward Helipad

B: View 6b—Southward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from El Camino del Mar and Lands End Trail Connection

Source: Square One Productions, 2014

Figure 3.1-18: Visual Simulations for Long-Term Projects under Alternatives 1 and 2

View 7b

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-19a is almost the same as the visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-12a, with proposed new Building 213 barely visible in this view upon buildout of the long-term project. However, Building 213 would be mostly obscured by foliage. This would represent a minor visual impact.

View 8b

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-19b is almost the same as the visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-12b, with proposed new Building 213 barely visible in this view upon buildout of the long-term project. However, Building 213 would be mostly obscured by foliage. This would represent a minor visual impact.

View 9b

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-20a is the same as the visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-13a, because the buildout of the long-term project in 2027 would look the same in this view as the buildout of short-term projects in mid-2020. This would represent a minor visual impact.

View 10b

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-20b is almost the same as the visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-13b, with proposed new Building 213 barely visible in this view upon buildout. However, Building 213 would be mostly obscured by foliage. This would represent a minor visual impact.

View 11b

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-21a is almost the same as the visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-14a, with proposed new Building 213 barely visible in this view upon buildout. However, Building 213 would not be dominant in this view, which focuses on San Francisco Bay in the foreground and the overall San Francisco skyline against the Pacific Ocean backdrop in the background. This would represent a minor visual impact.

View 12b

The visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-21b is almost the same as the visual simulation shown in Figure 3.1-14b, with proposed new Building 213 barely visible in this view upon buildout. However, Building 213 would not be dominant in this view, which focuses on San Francisco Bay in the foreground and the northwestern San Francisco topography and the Pacific Ocean in the background. This would represent a minor visual impact.

The rendering shown in Figure 3.1-22 provides an aerial perspective that illustrates the proposed overall facility massing for buildout of long-term projects under Alternative 1 or Alternative 2 in 2027, combined with existing massing at the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus and development of short-term projects under Alternative 1 or Alternative 2, which is assumed to already be in place by mid-2020.

A: View 7b—Southward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from El Camino del Mar, South of Putting Green

B: View 8b—Southwestward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from El Camino del Mar, near the Legion of Honor

Source: Square One Productions, 2014

Figure 3.1-19: Visual Simulations for Long-Term Projects under Alternatives 1 and 2

A: View 9b—Eastward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from GGNRA East Fort Miley, near Building 10

B: View 10b—Northwestward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from GGNRA East Fort Miley, near National Park Service Building

Source: Square One Productions, 2014

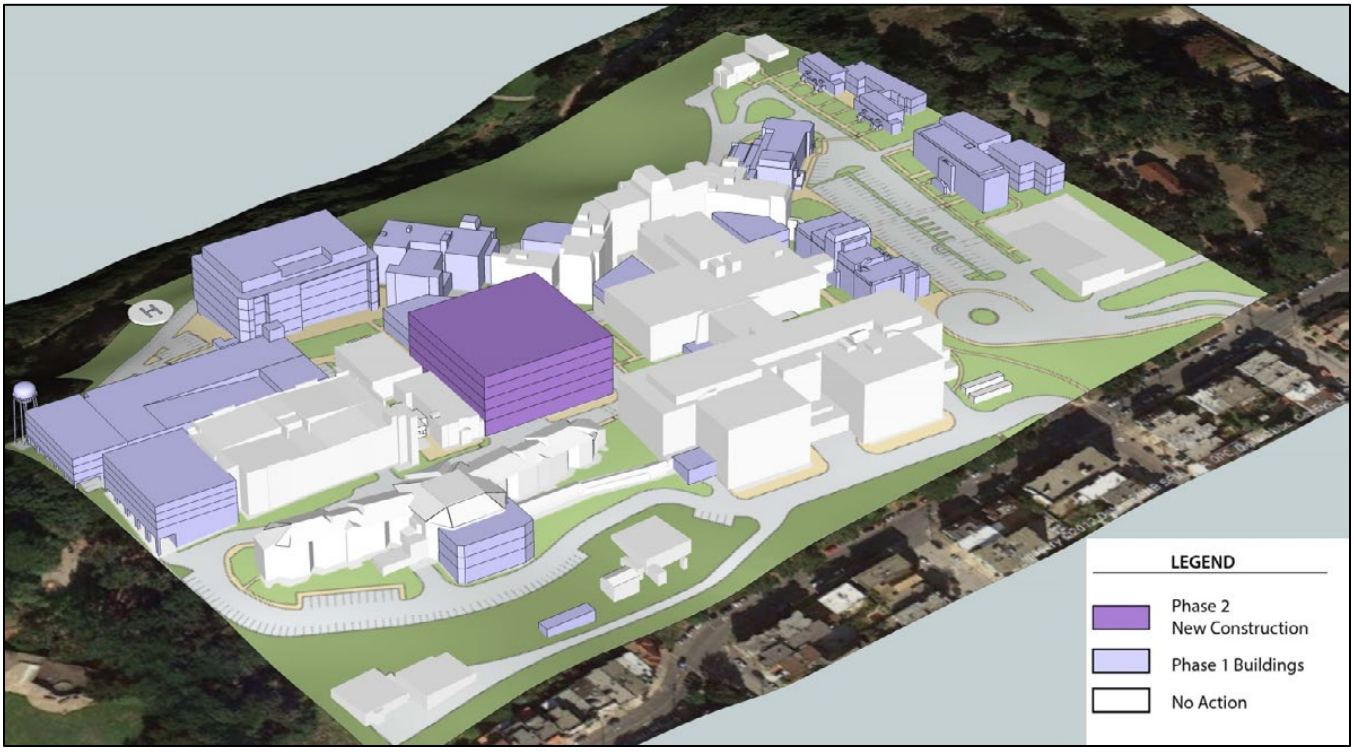
Figure 3.1-20: Visual Simulations for Long-Term Projects under Alternatives 1 and 2

A: View 11b—Southward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from Hawk Hill Parking Lot at Marin Headlands

B: View 12b—Southwestward View of Proposed SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus from San Francisco Presidio

Source: Square One Productions, 2014

Figure 3.1-21: Visual Simulations for Long-Term Projects under Alternatives 1 and 2



Source: VA, 2014

Figure 3.1-22: Aerial Perspective of SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus Buildout at the End of Long-Term Projects under Alternative 1 or Alternative 2 in 2027

Light and Glare

Because most of the activity on the existing SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus takes place during daytime hours, most exterior lighting related to operations consists primarily of low-level security lights used around Campus buildings and parking facilities. Because Campus buildings would continue to generally be set back from the Campus boundaries, low-level lighting would not be substantially noticeable to users of the surrounding area. Furthermore, most buildings proposed at locations near the Campus perimeter would not generally be occupied on a 24-hour continual basis as occurs in the Campus's existing medical care buildings, from which interior lighting is emitted during nighttime hours. Some of the medical buildings may keep their interior lights on during nighttime hours, and those buildings would emit lighting from within. However, because of the setback from Campus boundaries and existing lighting sources, interior lighting would not be substantially noticeable. The Campus would not cause a substantial source of glare. The windows of the proposed buildings on the Campus may at times reflect the sun's rays, but these occurrences would be minor and intermittent. Therefore, this impact would be minor.

Alternative 2: SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus Buildout Alternative

Short-Term Projects

Construction

Visual Character

Alternative 2 short-term projects would be similar to short-term projects for Alternative 1 in terms of construction equipment and staging areas and their respective visual shielding. However, temporary modular swing space would not be included in Alternative 2 short-term projects. Therefore, the impact of Alternative 2 long-term projects related to visual character would be temporary and less than the temporary visual impact identified for Alternative 1 short-term projects.

Light

As for Alternative 1 short-term projects, construction activity associated with Alternative 2 short-term projects would take place during daytime hours; therefore, no impact would result from the use of construction equipment lights. Shielded, downward-directed, low-level security lighting would be used for construction staging areas, which would have a minor impact relative to the area's ambient light levels during the construction period. Therefore, this would be a temporary minor impact.

Operation

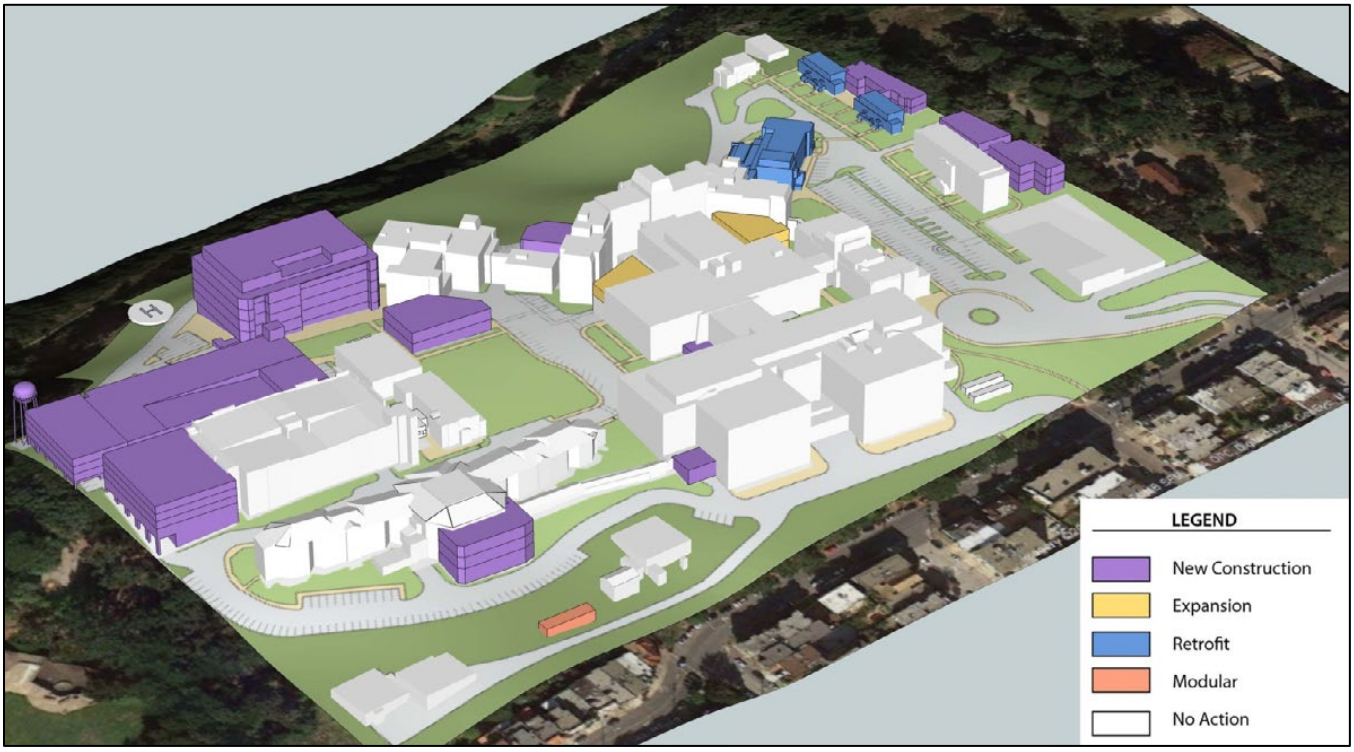
Views and Visual Character

Because buildout operations would be similar under Alternatives 1 and 2, views associated with operation of Alternative 2 short-term projects would be similar as the view impacts of operation of short-term projects for Alternative 1. Although the completion of retrofitting of Buildings 1, 6, and 8 would occur in a different time frame than under Alternative 1, retrofitting activities would be internal to these buildings; therefore, external public views would be unaffected by these retrofitting projects. See the visual simulations and associated discussion under Alternative 1 short-term projects discussed above related to LRDP operations. This impact would be minor.

The rendering shown in Figure 3.1-23 provides an aerial perspective that illustrates the proposed overall facility massing for buildout under long-term projects for Alternative 2 in 2027, combined with existing massing at the SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus.

Light and Glare

Because buildout operations would be the same under Alternatives 1 and 2, light and glare associated with operation of Alternative 2 short-term projects would be the same as the light and glare impacts of operation of Alternative 1 short-term projects. This impact would be minor.



Source: VA, 2014

Figure 3.1-23: Aerial Perspective of SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus Buildout at the End of Alternative 2 Long-Term Projects in 2027

Long-Term Projects

Construction

Visual Character

Alternative 2 long-term projects would be similar to the Alternative 1 long-term project in terms of construction equipment and respective visual shielding that would be employed. However, seismic retrofitting of Buildings 1, 6, and 8 would occur and temporary modular swing space would be included under Alternative 2 short-term projects. Seismic retrofitting of Buildings 1, 6, and 8 would result in no changes to exterior massing, height, or style. Temporary modular swing space totaling approximately 60,000 gsf would be present in one location on Campus (within the future demolition footprint of existing Building 12) to accommodate displaced employees during the seismic retrofitting of Buildings 1, 6, and 8. The general location of this swing space, which would be three stories tall, would be south of Building 41. The swing space would be in place from September 2020 to February 2024. The swing space location would not be dominant in public views of the Campus, given its location in the center of Campus. Therefore, this would be a temporary visual impact, but greater than the temporary visual impact identified for the Alternative 1 long-term project.

Light

As with the Alternative 1 long-term project, construction activity associated with Alternative 2 long-term projects would take place during daytime hours; therefore, no impact would result from the use of construction equipment

lights. Shielded, downward-directed, low-level security lighting would be used for construction staging areas, which would have a minor impact relative to the area's ambient light levels during the construction period. Therefore, this would be a temporary minor impact.

Operation

Views and Visual Character

Because buildout operations would be the same under Alternatives 1 and 2, views associated with operation of Alternative 2 long-term projects would be the same as the view impacts of operation of the Alternative 1 long-term project (see Figure 3.1-22). Although the retrofitting of Buildings 1, 6, and 8 would occur in a different time frame than under Alternative 1, retrofitting activities would be internal to these buildings and would result in no changes to exterior massing, height, or style; therefore, external public views would be unaffected by these retrofitting projects. See the visual simulations and associated discussion of operational impacts of Alternative 1 short-term projects discussed above. This impact would be minor.

Light and Glare

Because buildout operations would be the same under Alternatives 1 and 2, light and glare associated with operation of Alternative 2 long-term projects would be similar to the light and glare anticipated with operation of the Alternative 1 long-term project. This impact would be minor.

Alternative 3: SFVAMC Fort Miley Campus Plus Mission Bay Campus Alternative

Short-Term Projects

Construction and Operation

Alternative 3 short-term projects (during both construction and operation) would be the same as short-term projects for Alternative 1 (Table 2-1 and Figure 2-1). Therefore, the construction-related and operational impacts of Alternative 3 short-term projects would be the same as the impacts of Alternative 1 short-term projects. These impacts would be minor.

Long-Term Projects

Alternative 3 long-term projects would be similar to long-term projects for Alternative 1, except that the ambulatory care center and a new associated parking structure would be located at the potential new SFVAMC Mission Bay Campus (Table 2-5 and Figure 2-5).

Construction

Visual Character

Alternative 3 long-term projects would involve construction of a medical building as well as a parking structure in the Mission Bay area. This would necessitate construction activity, requiring the establishment of construction

staging areas and the presence of large construction vehicles on the site of the potential new SFVAMC Mission Bay Campus.

Conventional BMPs related to screening of construction staging areas would be implemented to limit the frequency and prominence of views of construction equipment and materials. Therefore, this would be a temporary minor impact.

Light

Alternative 3 long-term projects would involve construction activity during daytime hours at the potential new Mission Bay Campus; therefore, no impact would result from the use of construction equipment lights. Some low-level security lighting would be required for construction staging areas, which would have a minor impact relative to the area's ambient light levels. However, in accordance with BMPs, lighting equipment would be shielded and directed downward as part of Alternative 3 to minimize light spillover to neighboring areas. Therefore, this would be a temporary minor impact.

Operation

Views and Visual Character

Changes to views of the Mission Bay area and alterations to the existing visual character resulting from implementation of Alternative 3 long-term projects would occur. The ambulatory care center and parking structure would not be located at the existing Campus under Alternative 3.

It is unknown specifically where in the Mission Bay area the proposed new 170,000 gsf of medical, research, and parking space under Alternative 3 would be located. A project-level environmental review would be conducted in the future when more specific project details are available. It is anticipated that project elements would be designed to fit within the visual context of the Mission Bay area while complying with local codes and regulations. Therefore, visual impacts related to the potential new SFVAMC Mission Bay Campus would be minor.

Light and Glare

Alternative 3 long-term projects that would be located at the potential new SFVAMC Mission Bay Campus (ambulatory care center and parking structure) have potential to affect light and glare levels, depending on the design. Some medical buildings also keep their interior lights on and emit nighttime lighting from within. Any new medical development would require exterior shielded, downward-directed, low-level security lighting. The Mission Bay area is urbanized and contains a large number of lighting sources, including city streets and highways, as well as internally lit commercial, industrial, and research buildings and their associated outdoor entry and security lighting. Buildings in the Mission Bay area are occasional sources of glare during periods when their windows reflect the sun's rays. However, these occurrences are relatively minor and intermittent. In addition, many commercial buildings in Mission Bay have interior light that is emitted during the nighttime. The new ambulatory care center and parking structure would be required to follow codes to limit light and glare conditions. Therefore, this would be a minor light and glare impact.

Alternative 4: No Action Alternative

Short-Term and Long-Term Projects

Construction

Under Alternative 4, there would be no new construction or retrofitting of existing buildings. Therefore, no construction-related impacts related to visual character or light and glare would occur.

Operation

Under Alternative 4, the LRDP would not be implemented. Therefore, no operational impacts related to visual character or light and glare would occur.

3.1.4 References

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). 2010 (January). *San Francisco Veterans Affairs Medical Center Seismic Upgrade of Buildings 9, 10 & 13 and Building 22 Construction Environmental Assessment*.

———. 2014. *San Francisco Veterans Affairs Medical Center Fort Miley Campus Long Range Development Plan*. San Francisco, CA.

Square One Productions. 2014. SFVAMC LRDP at Fort Miley Campus Visual Simulations.

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