



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

Grow Smart Louisville Inc. formally requests VA to complete a full Environmental Impact Statement

LOUISVILLE, KY (November 13th, 2012)--Grow Smart Louisville, a non-profit organization promoting smart growth in Louisville, has filed a formal request to the Department of Veteran Affairs for a complete and FULL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT on the property at 4906 Brownsboro Road, Louisville, KY 40222. The property was recently purchased by the VA to build the region's replacement VA Medical Center.

The National Environmental Policy Act requires federal agencies to prepare Environmental Impact Statements for major federal actions that significantly affect the quality of the human or natural environment. An EIS is a full disclosure document that encourages an agency to consider the effects, risks and costs of a project and introduce new information into the decision-making process. This might include full consideration of a range of reasonable alternatives, analyzing the potential impacts resulting from the alternatives, identifying and addressing social and economic impacts of the VA Medical Center, and demonstrating compliance with applicable environmental laws.

The VA chose a tiered analysis, at this stage, that allows the VA to make an irretrievable commitment of resources; thereby, foreclosing the use of alternative locations before taking a "hard look" at the impact of the Brownsboro Road Site for the VAMC. The VA cannot select the Brownsboro Road Site, go forward with the project, and then analyze and presumably approve the site specific consequences of the site later in the process. Tiering of the analysis for the different stages of the project deprives the public of important and relevant information about the effects of the project before decisions are made and actions taken. The VA failed to consider cumulative and indirect impacts.

The VA improperly relied upon mitigation measures to conclude that traffic concerns will not rise to a significant level even though the VA stated that the Brownsboro Road Site could result in significant impacts to transportation and traffic. The VA provides no factual support for the conclusion that mitigation measures will reduce the impacts of the project to a less than significant level.

"The VA's failure to prepare an EIS is unreasonable, arbitrary and capricious," said Rick Greenberg, partner with the law firm Smith, Greenberg & Perkins, PLLC and counsel for Grow Smart Louisville. "It's in clear error of judgment, an abuse of its discretion and is not in accordance with the law." Grow Smart Louisville requested the VA and General Shinseki to thoroughly review the site selection in accordance with the law and pursuant to the guidance of the National Environmental Policy Act.

Grow Smart Louisville supports a new VA hospital for the Veterans of Kentucky, Southern Indiana and Illinois. However, Grow Smart Louisville contends that a downtown hospital would allow the Veterans in care of the VAMC to benefit from the synergies of Louisville's pre-existing progressive medical campus.

The Louisville VAMC will hold an open meeting on Wednesday, November 14 at 6 p.m. at the Clifton Center to address the current plans for the proposed VAMC. Grow Smart Louisville will be in attendance.

For further information, contact Eric Gunderson, President, Grow Smart Louisville, at 502-627-0115 or by email at Eric@GrowSmartLouisville.org.