

BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE

Community Profile

November 2009

Walter Reed Army Medical Center, District of Columbia

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State Contact:

Not Applicable

Closure at a Glance

Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA):

Government of the District of Columbia

Geographic area affected by closing:

Washington, DC

Population of affected area (before closure): 591,833

Total Acres to be Disposed: 61 Acres

Estimated Job Loss Impact:

	Jobs Lost
Military Personnel	3,580
Civilian Personnel	3,649
Contractors	750

Sources: Cost of Base Realignment and Closure Actions (Military Personnel)
Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (Civilian Personnel)

Economic Adjustment Challenges

- Unknown environmental remediation requirements
- Unknown demolition costs
- Potential parcel carve-outs for Enhanced Use Lease (EUL) and Residential Communities Initiative deals

Key Reuse Planning & Property Disposal Milestones

8/07/09	Federal Surplus Determination
Pending	LRA Homeless Outreach Completed
Pending	Reuse Plan Received by Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)/Army
Pending	HUD Determination on Submission
Pending	National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) Disposal Decision
Pending	Base Closure

Organization

By Mayoral Order, the Government of the District of Columbia is designated as the Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) responsible for managing the redevelopment of WRAMC.

Within the Government of the District of Columbia, the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (ODMPED) will lead the redevelopment efforts, including the drafting of the comprehensive Redevelopment Plan. Other key departments within the Government of the District of Columbia that will support the effort include: Office of Planning (OP), Department of Real Estate Services (DRES), Department of Human Services (DHS), Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD), Department of the Environment (DDOE), Department of Transportation (DDOT), Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), and the Office of Attorney General (OAG).

Reuse Plan/Other Studies

Walter Reed General Hospital has been serving patients since May 1909. The medical center, named in Major Walter Reed's honor, was founded on principles that would integrate patient care, teaching, and research. Over the last 100 years, the hospital has grown to a vast medical complex, treating hundreds of thousands of patients. World War I saw the hospital's capacity grow from 80 patient beds to 2,500 in a matter of months. Through World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, the facility treated hundreds of thousands of soldiers. Through the years, Walter Reed has added tenant institutions and facilities to its roster: Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, Army Physical Disability Agency, and several smaller units. WRAMC will continue to serve the military community until a complete transition to other military medical facilities can occur.

After the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) decision to complete downsizing of WRAMC, the General Services Administration (GSA) and the Department of State requested land at WRAMC through the Federal screening process. However, in March 2009, the Department of State notified the Army of its intent to reduce acreage previously requested through a Fed-to-Fed transfer. Subsequently, in August 2009, the Federal government declared 61 acres on the main post as surplus property, thereby making it available to the LRA for redevelopment.



Figure 1: Aerial photograph of the Walter Reed AMC illustrating 61 acres determined to be surplus to the Federal government and acreage requested for Fed-to-Fed transfer by GSA and the Department of State.

Since that time, the ODMPED has been actively engaged in planning the redevelopment of WRAMC. The ODMPED will develop a plan that will promote community development within the surrounding area of WRAMC, create jobs, and respect the heritage of WRAMC.

The Redevelopment Plan for WRAMC that ODMPED will lead will use the Office of Planning (OP) Upper Georgia Avenue Great Streets Redevelopment Plan as a starting point. It should be noted that OP's plan was developed after the 2005 BRAC announcement, but completed more than a year ago—well before the notification that the Department of State was amending its request for acreage. Thus, the Plan does not consider the full development potential of the area, and it is more of a suggestion rather than a definitive road map. The goal of the Plan was to create a strategic framework to guide growth and development along Georgia Avenue, which is one of the major arteries in the District connecting the greater core downtown area to the Interstate 495 beltway. WRAMC is situated in the upper half of Georgia Avenue. Below are some excerpts from the plan specific to addressing WRAMC:

The Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) is an important institution that shapes much of the zone's physical character. Aside from the campus itself, there are very limited opportunities for new development within the zone. The planning for the reuse of the base is a separate planning process; however, the District will have the opportunity to participate in the planning process and consider how to better weave the campus into the surrounding community. To this end, the recommendations in this plan are intended to provide design guidance for the potential reuse of the physical edge of the base fronting along Georgia Avenue.

In addition, the edge of the campus also provides an opportunity to meet a critical public safety facility need. For several years, there has been a documented need to relocate the current Engine Company #22 station located at 5760

Georgia Avenue NW to improve response times to northern portions of Ward 4 including Shepherd Park, North Portal Estates, and Colonial Village. The station was originally constructed in 1897 and is staffed by 11 firefighters and paramedics. This station is the first responder to calls for service from District neighborhoods such as Petworth, Brightwood, Brightwood Park, Shepherd Park, Takoma, North Portal, and Colonial Village answering over 7,000 calls between January and August 2006.

Proposed development should address the following key factors:

- Reconnect WRAMC site to the existing community
- Lack of attractive retail opportunities
- Redeveloping within the measures stipulated by State and Federal stakeholders
- Provision of municipal parking options
- Relocating Engine Co. #22
- Provision of green space
- Development Concept Plan:

The overall development concept is intended to reconnect the campus' eastern edge along Georgia Avenue to the neighborhoods to the north, east, and south by providing a mix of public open spaces, public facilities, and small scale retail.

The site selection review for relocating Engine Co. #22, was initiated by the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department and the Office of Property Management. There are critical issues to consider in locating a new Engine Co. #22 station.

The conceptual plan includes the following elements:

- Neighborhood park at the northeast corner of Fern Street and Georgia Avenue: Providing approximately 4 acres of active amenities consisting of children's play areas, adult fitness stations, a dog park, and a winding pedestrian trail.
- Municipal parking facility with a retail plaza fronting along Georgia Avenue: a potential opportunity to address parking challenges in zone one, this 2-3 story municipal parking facility accommodates almost 900 parking spaces that will serve both the public and the Walter Reed Campus. The parking garage is wrapped with approximately 24,000 sf of street-activated retail frontage that also provides visual relief from the façade of the garage.
- Civic building with adjacent open air marketplace plaza: The 1-2 story community building, open-air marketplace, and plaza provides opportunities for year round programming, farmers market, and entertainment, such as small theatrical performances, musical concerts, and art festivals.
- Pocket park at Metro bus stop: To further enhance multi-modal alternatives along the corridor, the existing bus stop is spruced up with landscaping.
- SE corner retail building: The corner of Aspen and Georgia Avenue is anchored by a small neighborhood serving retail structure that provides a buffer between the adjacent residences on Aspen Street and the new fire station.
- DCFD Engine Co. #22 Fire & EMS Station: The fire station includes a pull through entrance on Georgia Avenue and on Aspen Street to facilitate the maneuverability of the fire trucks for both northbound and southbound runs.

Homeless Submission

The ODMPED has already begun its homeless assistance outreach by publishing its request for Notices of Interest (NOIs) from homeless assistance providers. ODMPED will work closely with D.C. Department of Human Services and other relevant agencies to aide in the homeless assistance outreach process.

The request for NOIs was published in the *Washington Post* in September 2009. There will be a workshop and tour for interested parties at WRAMC in November. Responses will be due in January 2010. The *Washington Post* advertisement, workshop, and installation tour are also designed to provide public and eligible private entities an

opportunity to learn more about Walter Reed to determine if they are interested in acquiring Walter Reed properties under Public Benefit Conveyance mechanisms.

Implementation and Partnering Strategies

WRAMC staff provided an initial tour of WRAMC for ODMPED officials and the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) in September 2009. The LRA will continue to work collaboratively with the Army to conduct briefings, workshops, and installation tours for parties interested in the redevelopment of the WRAMC. The LRA will also gain a complete understanding and agreement with the Headquarters Department of the Army (HQDA) and WRAMC staff on environmental conditions and remediation obligations by January 2010 as well as understand the Army's priorities on historic designation for any buildings.

Similarly, the LRA will gain a complete understanding and agreement with HQDA and WRAMC legal teams on potential parcel carve-outs by January 2010. Currently, the area of WRAMC that the LRA is planning for is encumbered with two separate privatization deals involving long-term ground leases on WRAMC. One is an EUL and the other is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI). ODMPED will work with HQDA and the developers to resolve these encumbrances.

Successes/Lessons Learned

With its unique position situated in the capital of the United States, the Government of the District of Columbia has extensive experience interacting with the Federal government on real estate transactions, land swaps, and partnerships. Several members of ODMPED's staff have spent many years in the private sector working on public-private partnerships with the Office of the Secretary of Defense including landmark MHPI projects, EULs, and specifically, the EUL at WRAMC. Thus, there is a great understanding of Federal processes and the requirements needed to be successful.