

The following document reports the findings of an intensive-level survey of historic resources within the Veterans Affairs Department facility in White City, Oregon, now known as the Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center and Clinics (VASORCC). The 145 acre campus comprised of multiple brick and wood-framed structures was originally developed as the Station Hospital at Camp White, a WWII-era US Army Cantonment facility built in 1942. The Station Hospital's original purpose was to train military hospital personnel for service in both the Pacific and European fronts while providing care to returning veterans, Camp White soldiers, their families and staff. The Camp White Station Hospital was operated for its original purpose from its completed in September 1942 until mid-1946.

At the end World War II, most of Camp White was decommissioned, sold, or returned to pre-war public and private ownership. The vast majority of its buildings, including mess halls, dormitories, service and training facilities were sold for scrap, relocated for other uses, or razed. The Station Hospital, the only portion of Camp White to rely upon masonry construction, was the focus of various proposals including a relocated Oregon State Hospital. After prolonged debate, the Camp White Station Hospital was transferred to the Department of Veterans Affairs. The facility was reopened as the Veterans Affairs Domiciliary in February 1949.

Today the historic structures of the Camp White Station Hospital modified and upgraded to meet modern needs, continue under the operation of the Department of Veterans Affairs and provide in- and out-patient medical services, housing, recreation and support for US military veterans. This survey, the first detailed study of the surviving structures at the site, augments earlier documentation on Camp White's history and the 1996 Section 106 Determination of Eligibility request on the project, approved in connection with the widening of the Highway 62.

This survey of the Camp White Station Hospital was funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center and Clinics as Project No. 692-06-17. Its primary goal is to provide information to guide future planning and development that respects Camp White's historic character and features to the degree possible.

#### SURVEY PROCESS & DESIGN:

Prior to any site work on on-site physical tour, existing documentation on Camp White and the Veterans Affairs Domiciliary provided an understanding of the development context and an historical basis for evaluation of the site. The VA plan vault, located in Camp White Building No. 226 contains original 1941-42 drawings for most of the facility's structures along with considerable documentation on subsequent renovation, alteration and additions. Organized by building number, this source allowed for an understanding of original WWII-era standardized designs and the historic functions for each of the remaining buildings. Building drawers also contained number plan sets that allowed tracking the pattern of serial renovation and modification that is characteristic of most interiors. Perhaps more importantly, historic master plans and site maps of the Camp White Station Hospital campus provided a strong basis for

assessing the overall campus layout, helping to better understand the historic relationships between the various project zones.

Following archival review, the site was field surveyed and photo documented to reflect existing conditions. SHPO-supplied Intensive level survey forms were filled out for each numbered structure, including those built during and after the original period of use. VA maintenance data was reviewed to document and date major changes to the extent possible prior to form finalization.

As found in this report, a total of fifty-six (56) resources were identified at the VASORCC campus and each has been documented on standard SHPO intensive-level format.

### HISTORIC OVERVIEW:

The Camp White Station Hospital was constructed in 1942 as a component of the US Army's training facility, Camp George A. White. Camp White was built by a collective of large western US construction firms working under an umbrella framework as Cantonment Medford Contractors, or CMC. As completed, Camp White was a sprawling facility of more than 1300 individual structures located within one mile by four mile central building core flanked by two huge training "ranges" covering some 75 square miles of northeast of Medford, Oregon, in a portion of Jackson County previously known as the Agate Desert.

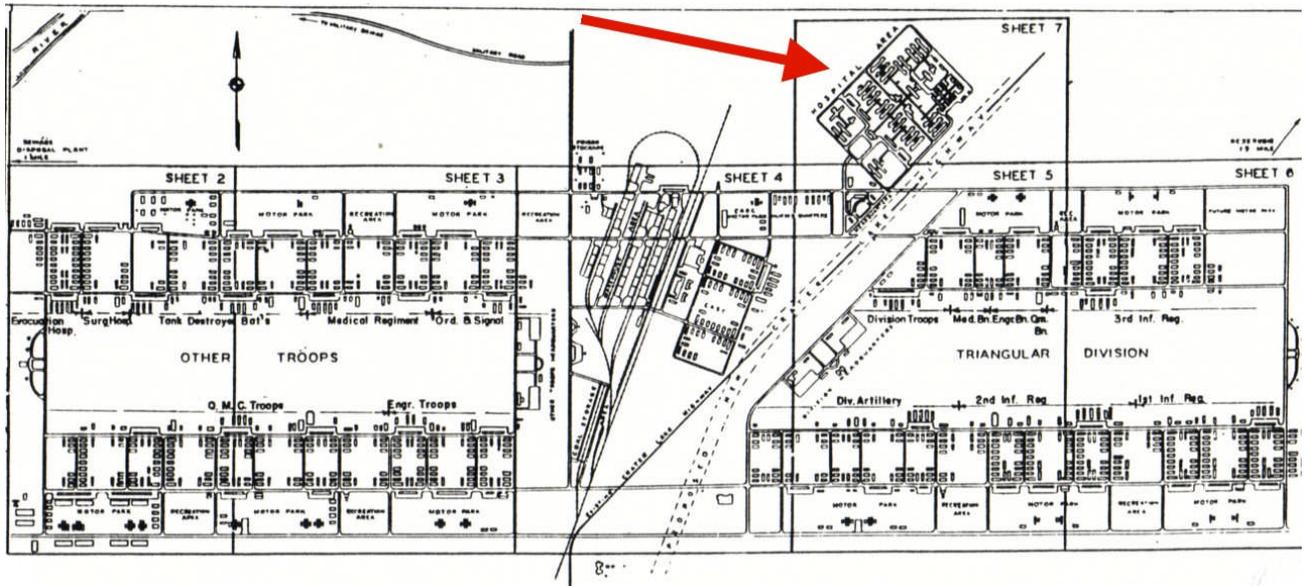
Camp White, like many WWII-era facilities, relied upon basic building types designed developed by the U.S. Military for rapid construction in the event of war. Built from largely standardized plans developed by the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps, Camp White's structures fall within what are known as the 800 Series Cantonment type, an evolution of standardized military construction that began in 1928 and was revised and expanded as WWII approached. "In preparing mobilization construction plans [the Quartermaster's Corps] was guided by five principles: speed, simplicity, conservation of materials, flexibility and safety" (Wasch, Bush, et al, 1992:25).

Most of the structures at Camp White, built to house and support the camp's own staff, called Post Troops, and the structures that housed the troops in training, called Division troops) were of wood-frame construction. The Station Hospital, which was apparently added to the original construction program after the fact, included the only "permanent construction" at the site.

Camp White will soon possess one of the largest and best-equipped military hospitals in the state....the new two-story bricks structure[s] will house a general hospital complete staffed by competent professional and administrative personnel" (*Medford Mail Tribune*, 28-July-1942).

The Station Hospital occupied a rectangular shaped "campus" that was appended to the large rectangular building core of Camp White, an indication of its separate construction history. Most of the facilities were built of brick, probably a reflection of the use and a desire for ease

of operation,<sup>1</sup> though support structures and some housing were wood framed, otherwise indistinguishable from the structures of the main portion of the base.



**CAMP WHITE BUILDING CORE, 1942**  
**Hospital Area**

As WWII drew to a close, the primary training mission of the 1400-bed Camp White Station Hospital eased and staff was slowly reduced. The military increasingly utilized the facilities for recuperating soldiers, returning from the battle front and in need of medical care. The Jackson County Chamber of Commerce, which had played an important role in encouraging the construction of Camp White in the first place, began an intensive lobbying campaign to secure a new use of the hospital. In June 1945 the War Department announced plans to transfer management of Camp White, including the hospital was transferred from the Army to the Navy and the camp was re-designated as the “Western Redeployment Center,” tasked with retraining returned European veterans for duty in the invasion of the Japanese mainland. Of course, with the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the subsequent Japanese surrender, those troops were no longer needed (Kramer, 1991:93).

Though operated by the Navy for a short period in 1945-46, by May 1946 the Station Hospital was closed. Efforts at converting the facility to a Veterans Hospital initially stalled, largely due to the opposition of the Veterans Administration. Local boosters sought conversion of the hospital into a state facility, a plan that received a positive vote in the Oregon Legislature in 1947 and, in May 1948, a statewide ballot initiative to allow the State Home for the Feeble-

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<sup>1</sup> Previous reports indicated that the Station Hospital was built of brick due to wartime shortages of wood framing and the availability of brick from nearby Klamath Falls Brick & Tile Company. This does not appear accurate, as the majority of the original plans specific “Brick Construction,” including drawings for hospital support structures such as buildings 225 through 227, which were actually constructed of wood

Minded to occupy a facility outside of Marion County. At one point in June 1947 the War Assets Administration actually offered the Camp White Hospital for sale, though it does not appear this generated much interest.

# U. S. ARMY HOSPITAL FOR SALE!

AT CAMP WHITE  
NEAR MEDFORD, ORE.

## 59 ACRES OF LAND ON WHICH ARE:

29 brick buildings, 32x262-ft.

9 brick buildings, ranging from 25x83-ft.  
to 46x226-ft.

7 buildings with asbestos shingle siding,  
51x261-ft.

4 buildings with asbestos shingle siding,  
ranging from 21x32-ft. to 32x88-ft.

Utilities.

**THIS PROPERTY SUITABLE FOR:** (1) Hospital or convalescent home. (2) Educational institution. (3) Commercial enterprise such as manufacturing, processing, or warehousing.

**HOW TO BID:** Instructions for making bids may be obtained from War Assets Administration at the address below.

**PRIORITIES:** The offering is subject to the following priorities to purchase in the order listed for ten (10) days beginning July 1, 1947 and ending July 10, 1947.

(1) Federal Government Agencies. (2) Reconstruction Finance Corporation—for resale to qualified small business. (3) State and local governments. (4) Non-Profit Institutions.

**NON-PRIORITY HOLDERS:** The period during which bids will be received from non-priority holders runs from July 1, 1947 to July 30, 1947, subject to claims of priority holders.

Proposals from priority holders will be opened as received. Bids from the general public will be publicly opened and read on August 4, 1947 at 9 A.M. at the Office of Real Property Disposal, War Assets Administration, Swan Island, Portland 8, Oregon, and no bids received after that time will be considered. War Assets Administration reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

Address All Specific Inquiries and Proposals To:

PD 265



WAA "Hospital For Sale" Ad Copy, 1947  
Oregon State Archives-Board of Control Files

“When all options appeared over, Oregon’s two United States Senators, Wayne Morse and Guy Cordon, suddenly introduced legislation in Congress that would *require* the Veterans Administration to take over the Camp White Hospital” (Kramer, 1991:97, emphasis as in the original). After a certain amount of renovation, the Camp White Station Hospital was formally rededicated as the Veteran Administration Domiciliary at Camp White on February 20 1949 (*Medford Mail Tribune*, 21-February-1949, 1:2). Camp White Station, as the community surrounding the Dom was known, was renamed “White City” in April 1960 and remains an unincorporated community dominated by the Veterans facilities, industrial uses and an ever-growing residential community (McArthur, 2003:1030).

**QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS:**

As noted above, in 1947 there were forty-nine buildings at the Camp White Station Hospital; thirty-eight of brick construction and eleven that were wood-frame. Fieldwork in early March 2007 documented forty six (46) structures built during the original Camp White construction period plus another ten (10) built subsequently.<sup>2</sup> All 1945 era resources retained sufficient integrity in design, association, setting, workmanship and materials to effectively and accurately convey their associations to be considered Eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, as previously determined. Remaining resources, built between 1956 and 2000, gain some potentially significant association through their relationship with the VA Domiciliary itself but are here all considered Not Eligible/Out of Period. Detail breakdown within the surveyed area is as follows;

<b>TOTAL Resources</b>	<b>56 Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Eligible Contributing	46	82%
Not Eligible/Out of Period	10	18%
 Construction, <i>Eligible</i> Resources	<b>46 Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Masonry [Brick]	35	63%
Wood Frame	11	20%
 Year Built, <i>Eligible</i> Resources	<b>46 Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Year Built 1942	46	100%

The 46-surviving structures at the Camp White Station Hospital, all dating from the original WWII-era construction period, continue to reflect the standardized 800 Series Cantonment standards of their original design. Certain aspects of the campus, the result of a mixture of use materials, design, and basic layout, serve as “Character Defining Features” that were noted in

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<sup>2</sup> Two brick domiciliary bed bend structures (Bldgs No. 215 and 216) were razed in 2006 to allow for new construction, currently underway. Removal of these structures, in consultation with Oregon SHPO, was the impetus for the Department of Veteran’s Administration to undertake this inventory of the project area (See attached SHPO Letter, dated December 29, 2005). Two of the later structures, Buildings 266 (Original Gazebo) and 267 (Stadium) were built 1956-57. All other structures were built after 1960.

the building-by-building survey. Where those features were present, buildings were evaluated has retaining sufficient integrity to relate their significant associations with the development of Camp White.

CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES:

Materials: Exposed red brick exterior walls with concrete lintels and horizontal wood-siding windows panels.  
Asbestos or horizontal wood siding (painted white)  
Asphalt shingle roofing

Design: Standardized gable roofs, 5/12 pitch, uniform asphalt roofing (green)  
Eave returns on the gable ends  
Multi-pane double-hung windows  
Uniform scale and volume  
Inter-connected volumes via enclosed hallways



**Typical Two- Story Brick Buildings, showing materials & design  
Author Photo, 2007**

Site Issues: Military layout in orderly “groups” of common (near-identical) structures arrayed at 90-degree angles to road systems, creates uniform building clusters connected by enclosed hallways. Buildings are of matched width, height and length and placed in orderly fashion with common setback to surrounding structures and transportation features.

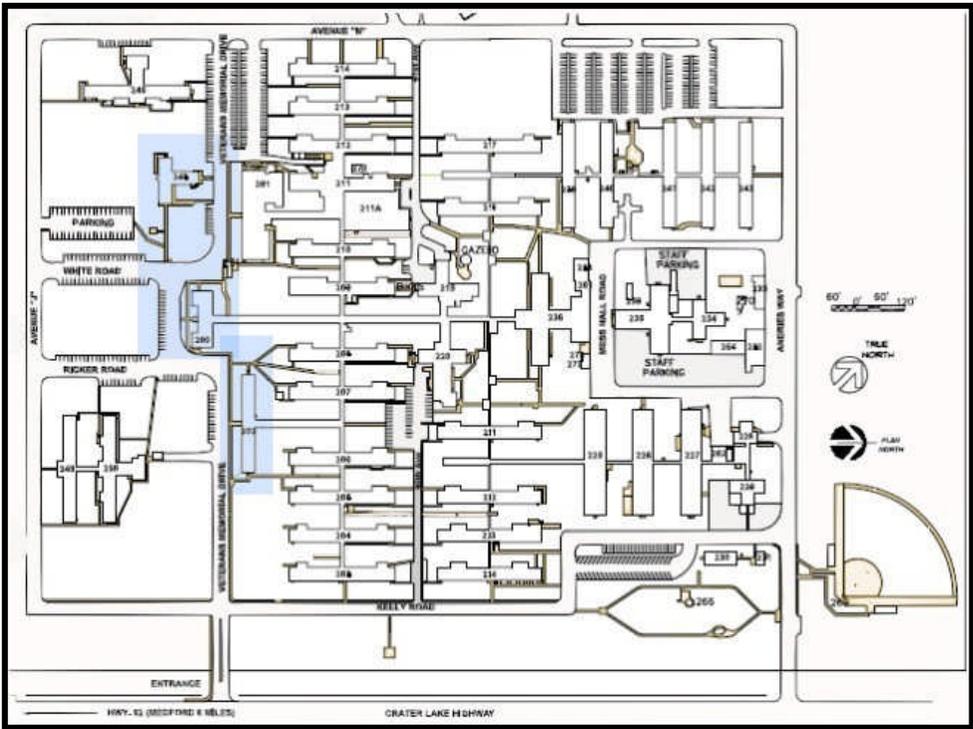
Building placement and siting provides what is considered the single most important element in relating the original military-based use of the facility. Repetitive use of uniform structures, neatly arranged on a strict grid pattern, help convey the massive scale of both the Camp White Station Hospital and, by implication, Camp White as a whole. External vistas from Crater Lake Highway, where long uniform facades face the public way, create a sense of mammoth scale that is reinforced by repetitive gable ends, standard materials, width, and cross-section.



**General View, Showing Regular Building Site Character  
Author Photo, 2007**

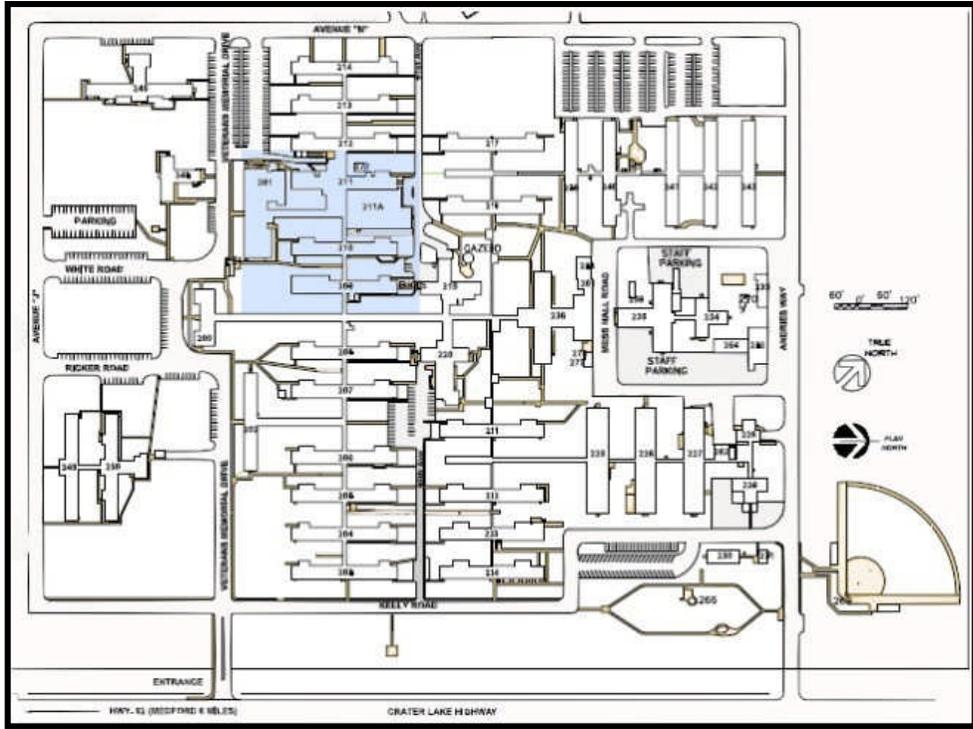
Buildings within the Camp White Station Hospital have been segregated into design/functional groups that reflect their character. These groups should be considered a basis for future planning actions, including any proposed demolition or new construction, with a goal of maintaining uniform character 1) within a grouping, and 2) the relationship in spacing, siting, and scale between groups.

The following *Building Group* maps have been generated to document the identified commonalities between existing facilities at the former Camp White Station Hospital. Building Groups are not offered as specifically defined areas but rather should be considered as generally cohesive, interconnected, portions of the larger campus for planning purposes. Building Groups, by definition, include both Eligible (i.e. WWII era) and Not Eligible (Post-WWII) construction.



**ADMIN GROUP**  
Central office and support core.

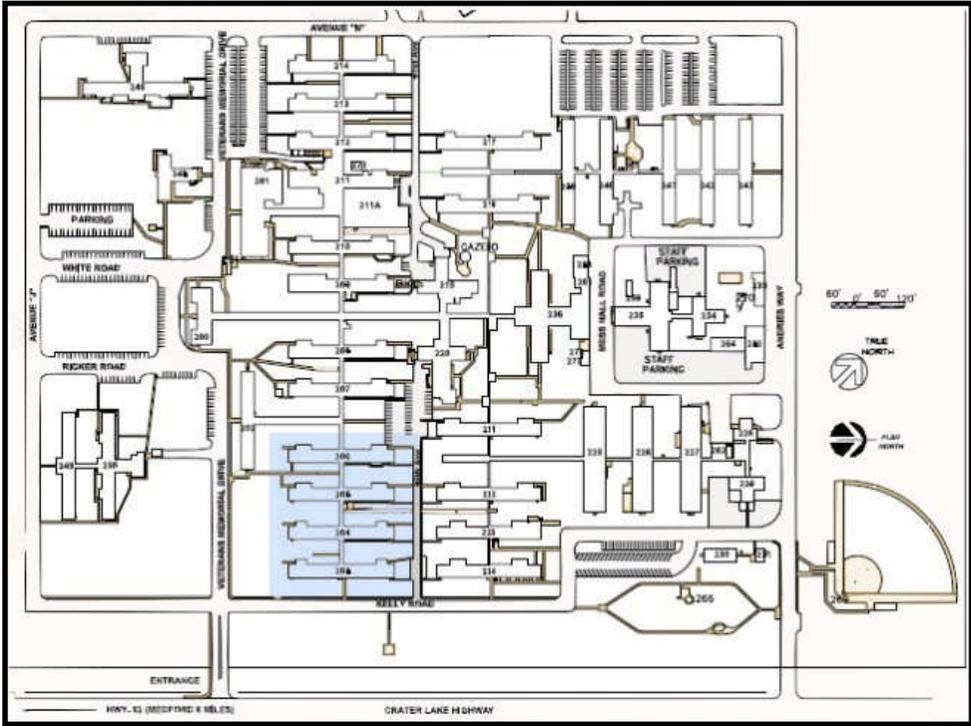
- Includes:  
Building 200  
Building 202  
Building 248



**HOSPITAL GROUP**

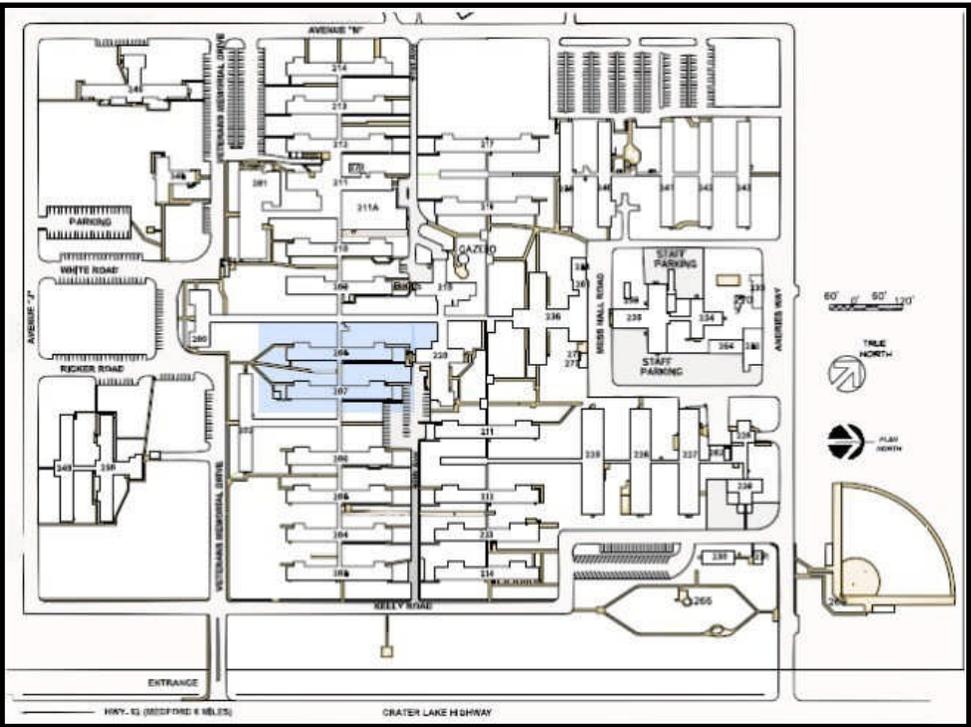
Medical & Patient care areas

- Includes:  
Building 201  
Building 209  
Building 210  
Building 211  
Building 211A  
Building 272



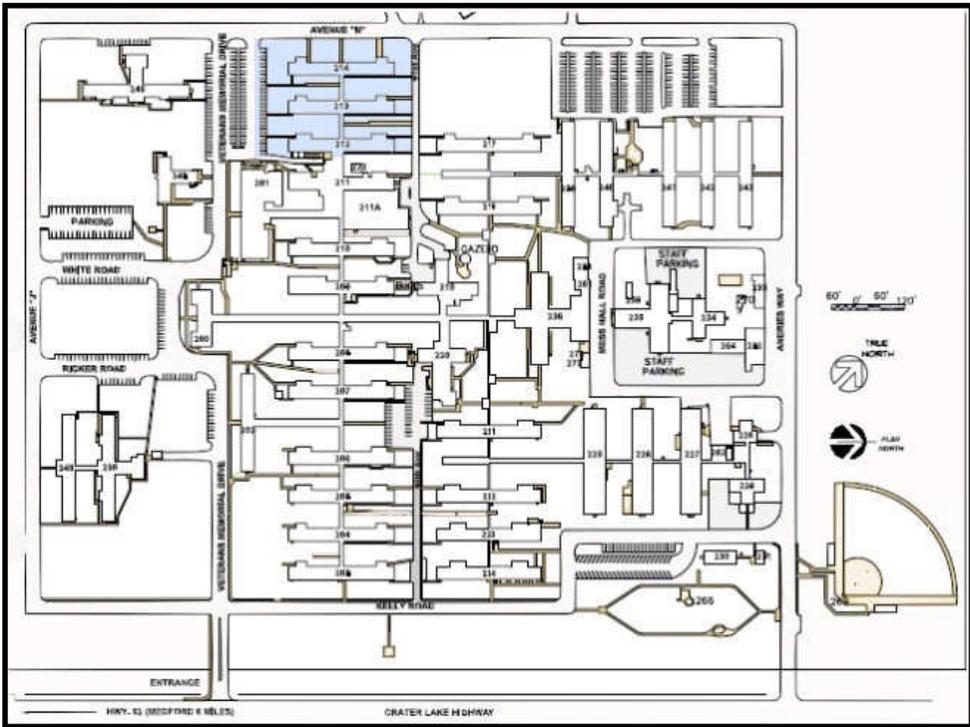
**BED GROUP 1**  
Domiciliary quarters  
facing Crater Lake  
Highway.

- Includes:  
Building 203  
Building 204  
Building 205  
Building 206



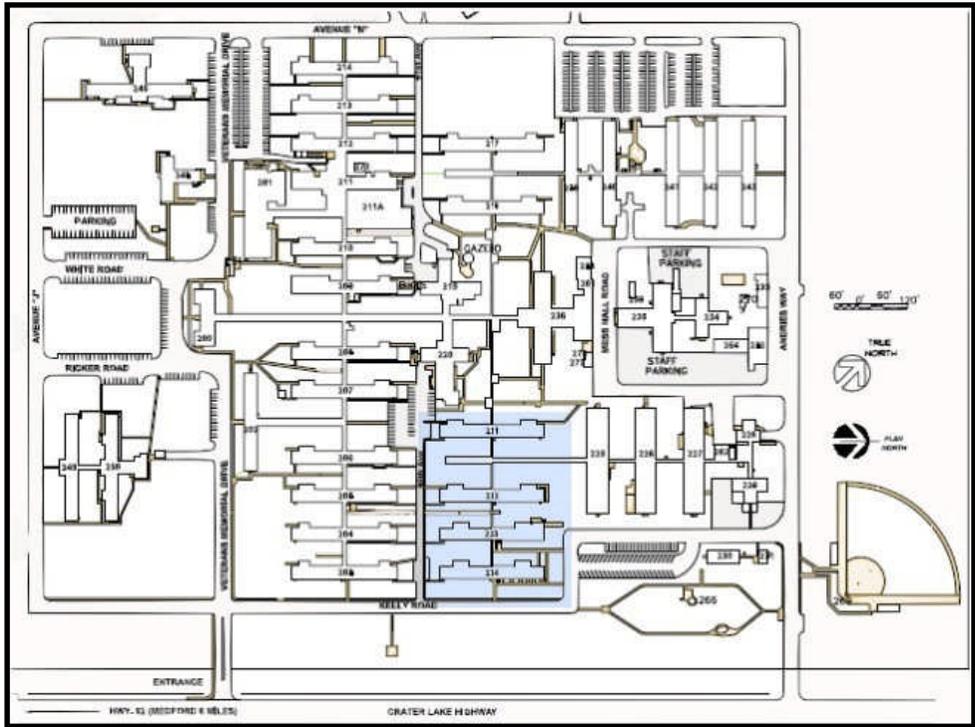
**BED GROUP 2**  
Domiciliary quarters,  
internal element.

- Includes:  
Building 207  
Building 208



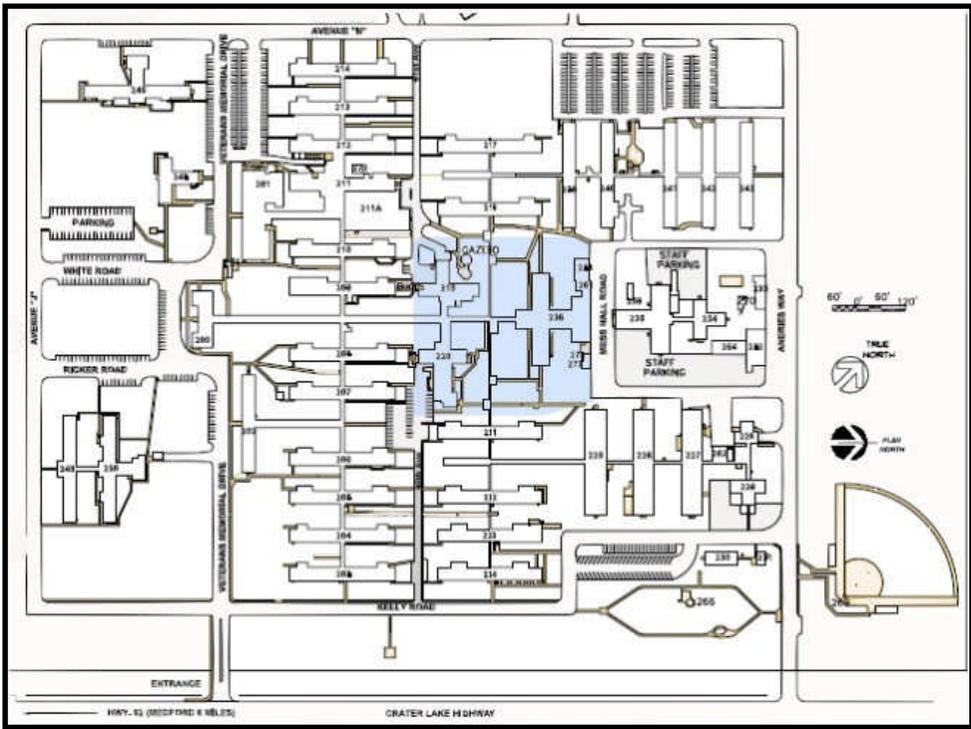
**BED GROUP 3**  
Domiciliary quarters  
located to rear of  
campus.

Includes:  
Building 212  
Building 213  
Building 214



**BED GROUP 4**  
Domiciliary quarters  
facing Crater Lake  
Highway.

Includes:  
Building 221  
Building 222  
Building 223  
Building 224

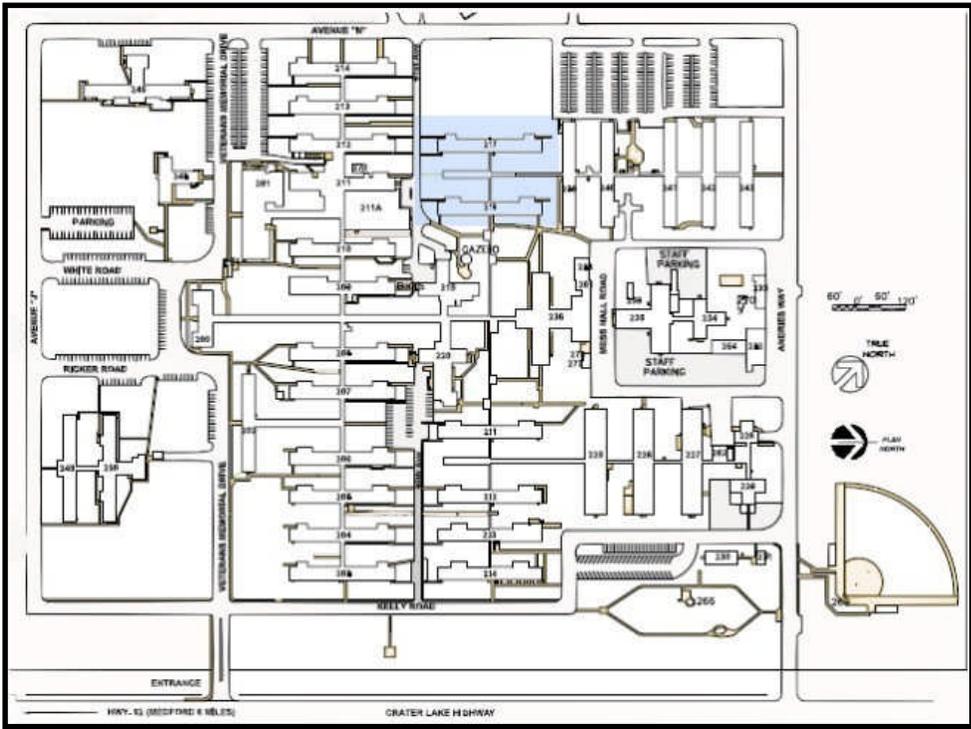


**CENTRAL SERVICE**

Canteen, Theater and food service.

Includes:

- Building 219
- Building 220
- Building 236
- Building 238
- Building 261
- Building 266 (new)
- Building 273
- Building 274



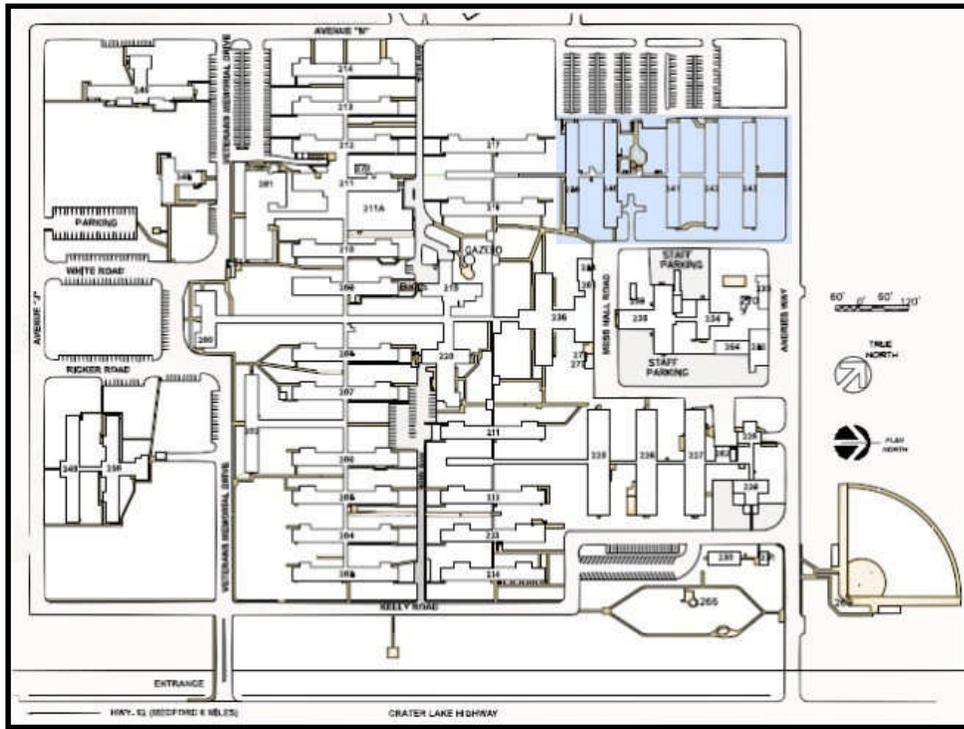
**BED GROUP 5**

Domiciliary quarters located to rear of campus.

Includes:

- Building 217
- Building 218

**NOTE:** Bldgs 216-215, formerly a part of this were razed and are being replaced with new structures that will retain those numbers. (Included forms are *not* part of resource count.)

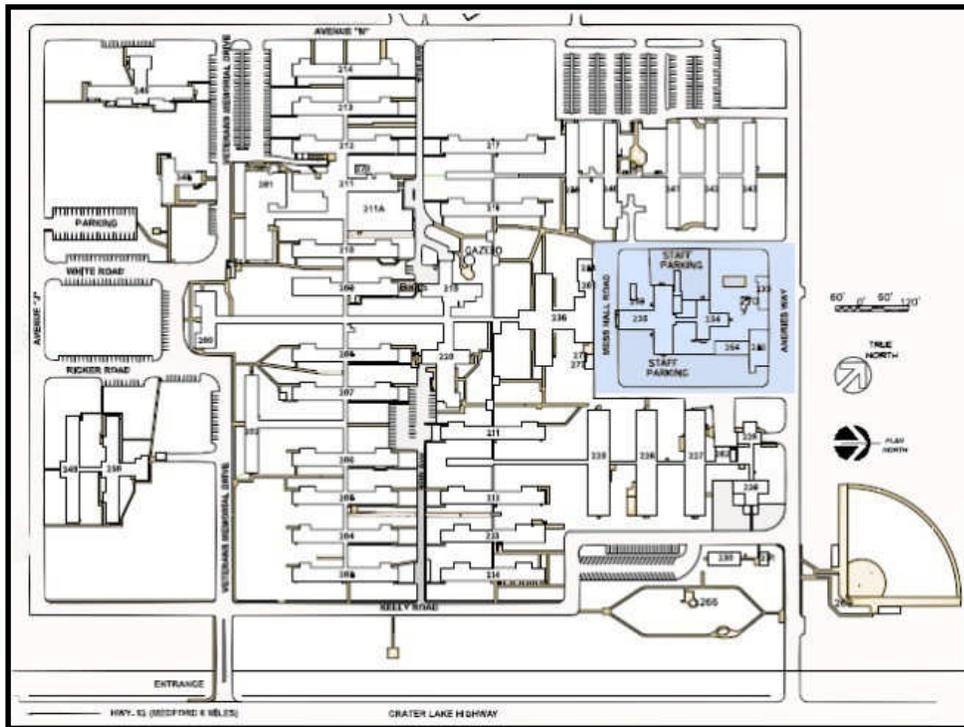


**BED GROUP 6**

Located at rear of campus, this group of building are largely under-utilized or vacant at the present time.

Includes:

- Building 239
- Building 240
- Building 241
- Building 242
- Building 243



**WEST MAINTENANCE GROUP**

Service area, including Boiler and support services.

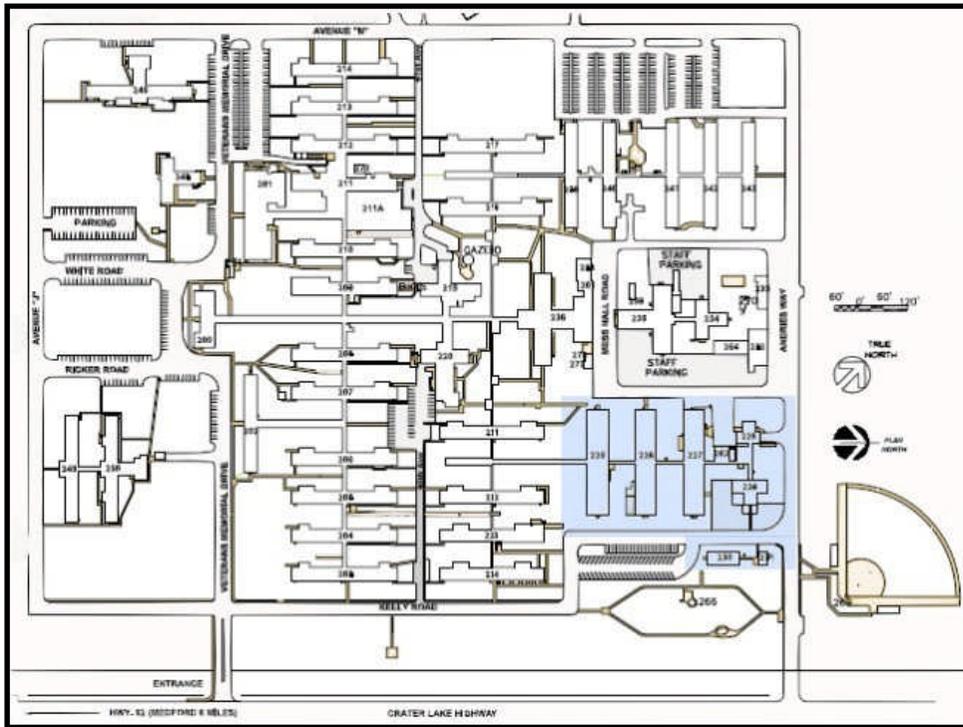
Includes:

- Building 232
- Building 233
- Building 234
- Building 235
- Building 259
- Building 264
- Building 270

**EAST  
 MAINTENANCE  
 GROUP**

Support services and  
 Engineering offices.

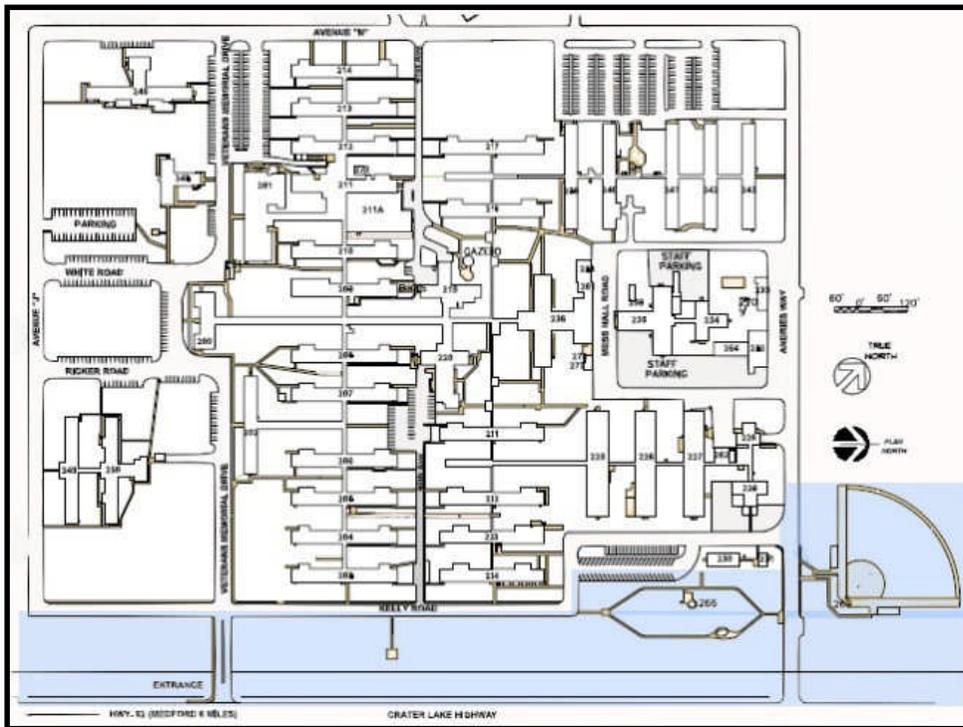
- Includes:
- Building 225
  - Building 226
  - Building 227
  - Building 228
  - Building 229
  - Building 262

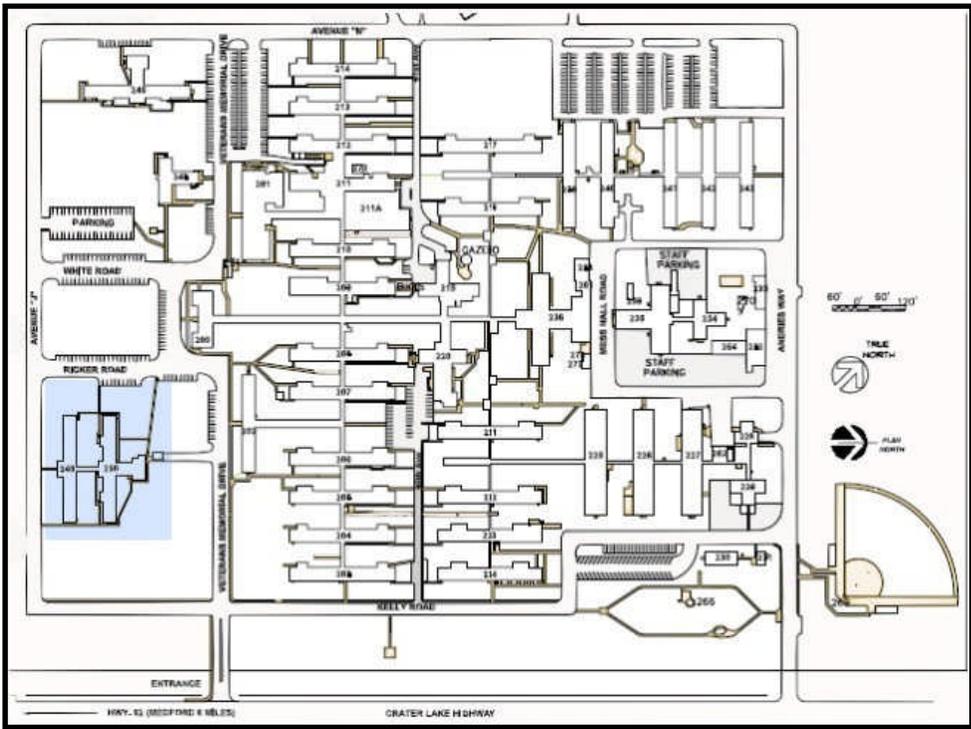


**SETBACK AREA**

Open, landscaped  
 entry area, separates  
 project from public  
 highway, portions  
 used for recreation,  
 entryway.

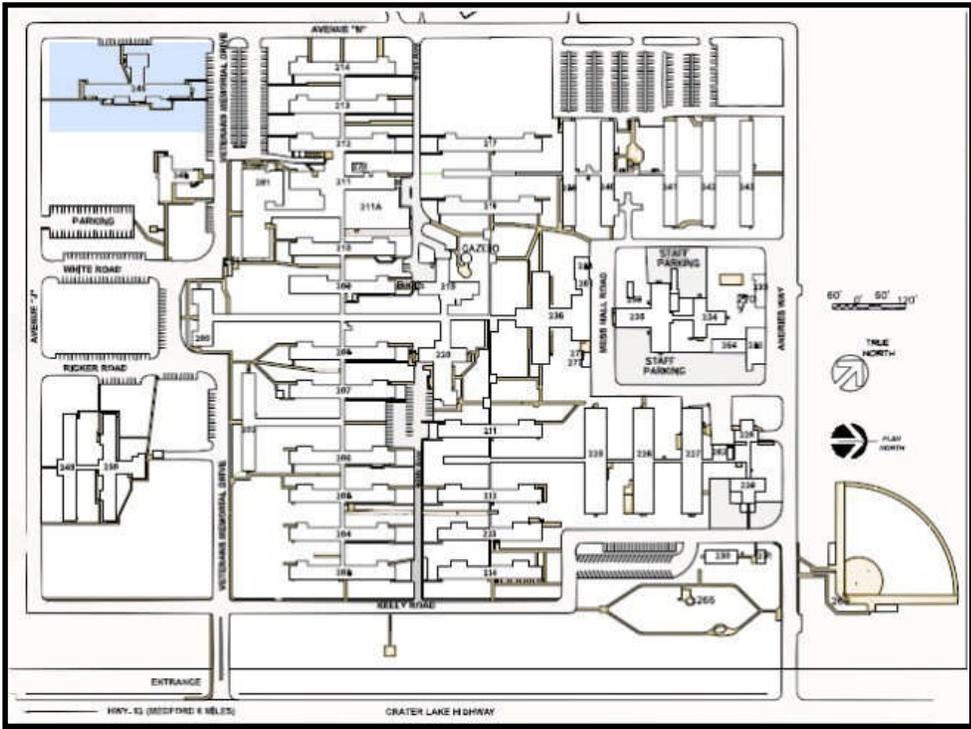
- Building 266  
 (Original)
- Building  
 Building 269





**WOOD QTRS 1**  
Two Story wood  
structures at corner of  
site (former Nurses  
Qtrs)

Building 249  
Building 250



**WOOD QTRS 2**  
Two Story wood  
structures at corner of  
site (former Nurses  
Qtrs)

Includes:  
Building 245

SUMMARY:

The Camp White Station Hospital, the most intact element of the WWII U.S. Army Cantonment that was built in Jackson in 1942, has been previously Determined Eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. As shown in the following survey forms, forty-six (46) structures still standing on the site, representing 82% of the total, were not only constructed as part of the WWII development period but retain sufficient integrity to reflect their original design and historic associations. These structures include both brick and wood-frame construction, providing housing, administration, medical and support services for the Department of Veterans Affairs Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center and Clinics.

The remaining ten (10) structures on the site varying in age from 1956 to 2005 are generally compatible with the original construction and, while not considered contributing under the existing Determination of Eligibility do not detract from the character of the site.

Historic buildings in the project area, in general, gain significant character through their placement within a strict grid program that creates building "groups" of similarly designed structures. Current construction, and any future replacement projects, should to the greatest degree feasible, continue that internal "grouped" arrangement and be located so as to respect the existing relationships between other building groups.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- Kramer, George. Camp White: City in the Agate Desert. White City, OR: Camp White 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee, 1992.
- Kramer, George. *Camp White Station Hospital [V.A. Domiciliary] Request for Determination of Eligibility Report*. Prepared by Heritage Research Associates, Eugene, under contract for the Oregon Department of Transportation), November 1995. (SHPO Concurrence, 1996)
- McArthur, Lewis A. Oregon Geographic Names, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed., Revised and Enlarged by Lewis L. McArthur. Portland, OR: Oregon Historical Society Press, 2003.
- Medford Mail Tribune*, misc. issues, as cited in text.
- Wasch, Diane Shaw, Perry Busch, Keith Landreth, James Glass, Ed. by Arlene R. Kriv. World War II and the U.S. Army Mobilization Program- A History of 700 and 800 Series Cantonment Construction. Legacy Resources Management Program-US Department of Defense, HABS/HAER Cultural Resource, US Department of the Interior, July 1992.

**APPENDIX**

A: Request for Determination, 1996

B. SHPO Letter, 29-December-2005

C. Jackson County Assessors Plat36-1W-17 TL800





# Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

## Parks and Recreation Department

State Historic Preservation Office

725 Summer St. NE, Suite C

Salem, OR 97301-1271

(503) 986-0707

FAX (503) 986-0793

[www.hcd.state.or.us](http://www.hcd.state.or.us)

December 29, 2005

Ronald W. Duncan  
Cultural Resource Management Officer  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center and Clinics  
White City, Oregon 97503-3011

Re: Demolition of Camp White Buildings 215 and 216  
White City, Jackson County, OR  
SHPO # 05-0874

Dear Mr. Duncan,

As per our recent conversations, the proposed action, the demolition of Buildings 215 and 216, will have an adverse effect upon two buildings that eligible for the National Register of Historic Places for their association with the World War II-era training facility known as Camp White. Under most circumstances under 36 CFR 800, an Memorandum of Agreement would be prepared for this action, but our meeting a number of weeks ago seemed to indicate that more buildings would be demolished as a part of a larger master planning strategy of facilities improvement and replacement. In order to avoid the prospect of developing several MOAs, we agreed to develop a single MOA to cover this and several other future projects that will result in similar adverse effects upon the old Camp White facility. The Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center agreed to mitigate the first two building demolitions by photo-documenting the two buildings that will be demolished according to the Oregon SHPO *Standards and Guidelines for Recording Historic Resources in Oregon*.

In the meantime, it is our understanding that SORC, in consultation with the Department of Veterans Affairs will prepare an MOA that stipulates documentation standards for future demolition projects, an outline of consultation with the Oregon SHPO, as well as a requirement for the preparation of a cultural resources survey and historic preservation plan for the former Camp White facility. Due to time constraints, the building demolitions may proceed only after they have been adequately documented and with the understanding that an MOA will be forthcoming from SORC and the VA within the next three to six months.

Thank you very much for your patience and we look forward to working with you in the near future as you modernize your facility.

Regards,

Kirk E. Ranzetta  
Review and Compliance Coordinator  
Oregon State Historic Preservation Office



**OREGON**  
**HISTORIC**  
**SITE FORMS**

(ARRANGED BY BUILDING NUMBER