

(\$ in thousands)

Project Title	Priority Ranking	Funding Source	Project Requests for State Funds		
			2024	2026	2028
Asset Preservation	1	GO	\$ 31,335	\$ 31,335	\$ 31,335
Minneapolis Veterans Home - Building 16 Remodel	2	GO	\$ 14,800	\$ 0	\$ 0
Minneapolis Veterans Home - Bldgs 1,2,10 HVAC Upgrades	3	GO	\$ 14,200	\$ 0	\$ 0
State Veterans Cemeteries Site Improvements	4	GO	\$ 6,170	\$ 0	\$ 0
Veterans Homes and Cemetery Security Upgrades	5	GO	\$ 6,600	\$ 0	\$ 0
Fergus Falls Building 2 Demolition and Replacement	6	GO	\$ 2,900	\$ 0	\$ 0
Minneapolis Veterans Home - Building 6 Remodel	7	GO	\$ 21,041	\$ 0	\$ 0
State Veterans Cemeteries - Land Acquisition	8	GO	\$ 2,000	\$ 0	\$ 0
<b>Total Project Requests</b>			<b>\$ 99,046</b>	<b>\$ 31,335</b>	<b>\$ 31,335</b>
<b>General Obligation Bonds (GO) Total</b>			<b>\$ 99,046</b>	<b>\$ 31,335</b>	<b>\$ 31,335</b>

## Asset Preservation

**AT A GLANCE****2024 Request Amount:** \$31,335**Priority Ranking:** 1**Project Summary:** This request is for \$31.335 million to renovate and upgrade the 64 buildings maintained by this agency. This request will address building repair items that go beyond the day-to-day maintenance needs of each facility and will ensure facilities used to care for over 700 residents and the State Veterans Cemeteries are in good condition.**Project Description**

The Minnesota Veterans Homes and the State Veterans Cemeteries occupy 1.2 million square feet in 64 buildings with a replacement value of \$349.7 million dollars. Nine of these buildings have 24/7 occupancy. This request will address building repair items that go beyond the day-to-day maintenance needs of each facility. This request will also ensure facilities used to care for over 700 residents and the State Veterans Cemeteries are in good condition.

This request would update a variety of resident and cemetery building components. These projects serve to maintain a safe, efficient, and manageable environment for the residents, staff and the general public. Examples of projects in this request include: roofs, chillers, tuck-pointing, elevators repairs, window and door replacement, mechanical and electrical replacements and repairs, water damage repair, and repairs to high pressure boilers.

The amount identified in this asset preservation request reflects a backlog of asset preservation needs.

**Project Rationale**

- Provides funding for upgrades to 64 buildings statewide.
- Continues to ensure buildings meet state and federal building codes, life/safety codes, Department of Health and other licensing code agencies.
- Enables MDVA to provide a safe environment to care for vulnerable adults.
- Ensures continued, full use of all physical assets.
- Timely repair/replacement of building components eliminates future high costs.
- Projects are located at the Minnesota Veterans Homes (Minneapolis, Hastings, Luverne, Fergus Falls, Silver Bay) and Cemeteries (Little Falls, Preston, Duluth).
- Veteran Home projects over \$400,000 qualify for 65 percent federal VA reimbursement-although

timely corrective action may be impeded.

- Ensures compliance with M.S.16A.11 requiring capital investment of one percent of the replacement cost of buildings for maintenance & repair of state buildings.

### **Project Timeline**

Project timeline will be spread out over 36 months, depending on funding levels, due to project management availability at the state level. MDVA will prioritize projects based on level of need, and we will work with other state agencies and local partners as required to complete all projects within this time frame.

### **Other Considerations**

Without necessary Asset Preservation funding, the agency's facilities will continue to deteriorate, increasing repair costs. In the absence of appropriate maintenance funding, failures can occur, forcing the agency to spend operational funds. This can potentially erode the quality of care for our residents, requiring the agency to request additional general fund appropriations for operations.

### **Impact on Agency Operating Budgets**

Agency repair and betterment funds, which are operating dollars, have been used in recent years to address portions of asset preservation projects. This funding will allow future repair and betterment funds to be spent on more routine maintenance and repair projects.

### **Description of Previous Appropriations**

The Department of Veterans Affairs received \$4 million in 2008, \$4 million in 2010, \$3 million in 2012, \$2 million in 2014, \$5 million in FY17, \$9 million in 2018 and \$6.3 million in FY20 for Asset Preservation.

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**Minneapolis Veterans Home - Building 16 Remodel****AT A GLANCE****2024 Request Amount:** \$14,800**Priority Ranking:** 2**Project Summary:** This request is for \$14.8 million to remodel an existing facility with new Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems, Building Automation Systems (BAS), LED lighting, Windows and flooring.**Project Description**

Minneapolis Building 16 is a resident building that is occupied 24/7. The Pre-Design is in process and the Architect & Engineers have brought forward the following items that were determined through site investigations and conversations with agency staff as the major issues and needs regarding extending the useful life of B16. The A/E team has assembled narratives to assess and recommend solutions to these issues.

**Project Rationale**

Continues to ensure building meets State and Federal building codes, life/safety codes, Department of Health and other licensing code agencies.

Enables MDVA to provide a safe environment to care for vulnerable adults.

Ensures continued, full use of all physical assets.

Veteran Home projects over \$400,000 qualify for 65 percent federal VA reimbursement although timely completion may be necessary.

**Project Timeline**

Schematic Design complete 8/15/2023, Construction Drawings complete 10/12/2023 go out to bid 11/12/2023 with anticipated Spring 2024 construction start date

**Other Considerations****Impact on Agency Operating Budgets****Description of Previous Appropriations**

\$65,000 2015 Asset Preservation funds to repair fence.

\$4.8 million 2010 Bond funds to renovate to accommodate 52 residents.

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Minneapolis Veterans Home - Bldgs 1,2,10 HVAC Upgrades

**AT A GLANCE**

**2024 Request Amount:** \$14,200

**Priority Ranking:** 3

**Project Summary:** This request is for \$14.2 million to upgrade Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems and install a new Building Automation System (BAS) with integration to other campus BAS systems.

**Project Description**

Historic office buildings on the Minneapolis campus need to upgrade heat and cooling along with their controls.

**Project Rationale**

New HVAC units with upgraded controls will reduce energy, enhance the office environment, and preserve the integrity of historic buildings.

**Project Timeline**

Estimated to be an 18-month process once funds are received – start 7/1/2024, complete 12/31/2025

**Other Considerations**

**Impact on Agency Operating Budgets**

**Description of Previous Appropriations**

Asset preservation funds have been used in the past to address minor issues.

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## State Veterans Cemeteries – Site Improvements

**AT A GLANCE****2024 Request Amount:** \$6,170**Priority Ranking:** 4

**Project Summary:** This request is for \$6.17 million to design, construct, and equip a new outdoor committal shelter and outside access point connecting to the future Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum in Little Falls, and to analyze, design, and construct irrigation system improvements and green design power infrastructure/backup improvements at the Duluth, Little Falls and Preston sites. None of these locations currently have backup power capability.

**Project Description**

The request for state funds will allow MDVA to accomplish four improvements within our State Veterans Cemetery network:

- 1) Little Falls: Design, construct, and equip a new outdoor committal shelter
- 2) Little Falls: Design and construct a new outside access point connecting the future Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum
- 3) Little Falls: Analyze, design, and construct improvements to the existing irrigation system
- 4) Preston: Analyze, design, and construct improvements to the existing irrigation system

Little Falls: Design, construct, and equip a new outdoor committal shelter

The new outdoor committal shelter at the State Veterans Cemetery-Little Falls will be approximately 1,100 sqft and open on three sides. The shelter will include a small stone veneer storage space on the non-open side which will house electronics and mechanical systems to provide for live-streaming of committal services and an in-floor ice and snow melt system. The project will also incorporate adjacent sidewalks, Memorial Rifle Squad pad, and improvements to the roadway and curbing infrastructure to allow for parking via a multi-lane paved area to accommodate up to 30 vehicles.

Little Falls: Design and construct a new outside access point connecting the future Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum

The outside access point component will include sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, and an ornamental fence with piers and entry gate connecting the Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum to our eastern perimeter. This access point will connect to a sidewalk and crosswalk leading to the future museum.

The separate museum project scope includes the adjacent crosswalk and sidewalk which is not part of our project.

### Little Falls & Preston: Analyze, design, and construct improvements to the existing irrigation system

The analysis, design, and construction of irrigation system improvements will ensure that we can accomplish the following in Little Falls and Preston:

- 1) Optimize our water supply sources (retention ponds, river, wells, natural springs, and surrounding regional storm water shed systems) to ensure redundant water supply sources can provide adequate irrigation. This may include:
  - a. the drilling of a new well for irrigation purposes.
  - b. Expanding existing retention ponds to ensure 100% of water runoff from our road systems is retained.
- 2) Mitigate water quality issues from all water supply sources properly to prevent headstone staining. This may include the inclusion of advanced water filtration systems and changes to surrounding regional storm water flow and retention strategies.
- 3) Assess water throughput of our water supply sources to ensure adequate supply to support sustained irrigation during drought conditions.
- 4) Optimize and implement automation wherever possible to reduce the amount of staff hours to manage irrigation systems.
- 5) Inclusion of all relevant stakeholders (i.e. DNR, BWSR, Watershed Districts, etc.) in the analysis and design process to ensure a wholistic approach is taken and all relevant policies and permitting requirements are adhered to.

### **Project Rationale**

#### Little Falls: Design, construct, and equip a new outdoor committal shelter

Currently the only committal shelter Little Falls has is an indoor committal shelter. Adding an outdoor committal shelter will align us with our other facilities, which also have an outdoor committal shelter, and provide us with the necessary facilities to continue at not only our current pace but also as burials increase into the future. The following reasons support our request:

- 1) An outdoor committal shelter provides for a safer environment for staff and attendees and can prevent the spread of communicable diseases (such as COVID-19) by providing an open air venue to conduct the committal service. Currently the State Veterans Cemetery – Little Falls is using a temporary outdoor structure with a tent covering for their outdoor committal shelter and has become the primary committal shelter space used.
- 2) To support the growing demand of interments at the State Veterans Cemetery (SVC)- Little Falls. In FY20 SVC-Little Falls conducted 457 interments while our other State Veterans Cemeteries completed 112 (Preston) and 157 (Duluth). In FY21 Little Falls interred 590 individuals, a 29% increase over the previous fiscal year. An outdoor committal shelter would allow us the ability to conduct simultaneous interments and also provide a backup location if for some reason our indoor committal shelter was unavailable for any reason.
- 3) An outdoor committal shelter provides families the option to increase the number of attendees at a service. Currently the indoor committal shelter can only safely accommodate 45 attendees, or 15 attendees with social distancing.
- 4) An outdoor committal shelter provides us an opportunity to have an outdoor focal point for large events such as Memorial Day and other special events where a space is provided with power and live



streaming capability to further reach the public.

5) An outdoor committal shelter aligns our facility with the standard operating practice of utilizing outdoor committal shelters throughout the National Cemetery Administration's individual and state operated veterans' cemeteries.

#### Little Falls: Design and construct a new outside access point connecting the future Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum

The outside access point component of this project will provide key integration with the adjacent future Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum. The State Veterans Cemetery-Little Falls will enhance the public's experience at the Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum by affording visitors the chance to visit and pay respects to those who have served and paid the ultimate sacrifice. The Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum will enhance the State Veterans Cemetery- Little Falls by allowing the public who are visiting their loved one's final resting place with an opportunity to learn about their sacrifices and experiences in the military. It will also act as a support facility for our large public events, such as Memorial Day, by providing increased parking and ancillary event space as we further develop our annual Memorial Day program.

#### Little Falls & Preston: Analyze, design, and construct improvements to the existing irrigation system

The MDVA will contract with an engineering firm to analyze and design irrigation system improvements to ensure that our facilities can continue to establish and maintain pristine turf areas that meet the high standards of excellence expected of our facilities that honor the memory and sacrifices of those who have served while mitigating known issues that continue to hinder our operations.

Without the proper irrigation improvements which will result in an increased number of quality water supply sources, we will continue to experience dormant and dying turf during drought conditions, the promotion of various drought resistant weed species, and the staining of our headstones, which requires increased staff time and resources to mitigate. It can take multiple years to recover from dead and dormant turf sections depending on when proper irrigation can be restored and the seasonal optimal germination cycles. Our pristine turf sections provide our families of loved ones their first impression of how we honor and take care of their loved one's final resting place and can establish a lasting impression that they will remember for years. It's important to us that we are always able to demonstrate, through our high standards of excellence, the honor and dignity we bestow on our Veteran's final resting place.

Preston and Little Falls both have known issues with water quality that have a secondary effect of staining our granite headstones. Upright headstones aligned with precision in perfectly symmetrical columns and rows is a pillar of Veterans cemeteries. It is a visualization that resonates in everyone's minds as an example of the honor and dignity afforded to our Veterans in their final resting place. In Preston, we have battled water quality issues for years resulting in visually obvious headstone staining. We have found labor intensive ways to clean the headstones and some irrigation system improvements that have allowed us to more accurately diagnose the problem, but we are at the juncture where a broad wholistic analysis and improvement design process needs to be undertaken

so that we can finally resolve the broader issue which is the reduction of particulates through sand filtration, iron through increased aeration and large-scale filtration, and vegetation through mechanical skimming processes and potentially through biological means.

In Preston we continue to have issues mitigating runoff from area watersheds and naturally occurring springs and believe we need to augment our current mitigation processes by creating additional holding ponds in drainage areas, increasing the height of pond edges and increasing depth of irrigation ponds. This will assist us with increasing the water quality and preventing the staining of our granite headstones.

Little Falls has for years utilized the adjacent Mississippi River as its primary water supply source for its irrigation system. However, this has presented itself with many challenges. We continually must adapt to differing water levels and changes to our pump sled system to respond to variable river water levels. During prolonged drought conditions, the river as a water source is unreliable and our watering permit can be suspended at any time when low water levels are observed for extended periods of time.

Presently, irrigation wells are used in all our State Veterans Cemeteries, except Little Falls. Adding an irrigation well as an additional water supply source to our irrigation system will ensure we will always be able to maintain a water supply to continue to establish and maintain our turf areas. While adding a well we also need to mitigate the known water quality issues we have with wells in Little Falls to prevent the staining of our headstones.

We continue to capture 100% of the water runoff from our roadways in Little Falls, however, our existing retention pond is insufficient to retain 100% of that runoff and some of it flows into the Mississippi River through our overflow outlet structure. Enlarging our retention pond will allow us to better manage our water source with the least environmental impact.

Lastly, tying these new improvement measures together will be automation where it can be applied to streamline our irrigation system and reduce the need for staff intervention and human error.

### **Project Timeline**

These projects are expected to take approximately one year and could be delayed depending on when the projects break ground, as frost levels are a considering factor, in addition to construction schedules of other projects. Additionally, SVC-Little Falls is coordinating with the National Cemetery Administration on expanding the site's burial infrastructure and with the Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum, adjacent to our property, on new sidewalks and access points. As those projects move forward construction could be delayed/extended up to ten (10) months depending on the level of coordination required. These projects have not undergone any design or engineering phase, although previous designs of outdoor committal shelters at the other MN State Veterans Cemeteries as well as benchmarking irrigation and solar array planning conducted in previous phases of development at various SVC System sites could be used to shorten this phase.

Jul 2024: RFP Design Contracts  
Aug-Dec 2024: Design and Engineering  
Jan 2025: Go out for Bid  
Mar 2025: Award Contracts  
April 2025: Notice to Proceed on Projects  
Jun 2026: Complete construction Other Considerations

**Other Considerations**

N/A

**Impact on Agency Operating Budgets**

There is no significant impact on our agency’s overall operating budget with this project at this time. There could be a slight increase in utility costs associated with the in-floor snow, ice removal system in addition to the live streaming system, and lighting.

**Description of Previous Appropriations**

N/A

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**Veterans Homes and Cemetery Security Upgrades**

**AT A GLANCE**

**2024 Request Amount:** \$6,600

**Priority Ranking:** 5

**Project Summary:** This request is for \$6.6 million to upgrade and enhance physical and electronic security devices at the State Veterans Homes and the State Veterans Cemeteries.

**Project Description**

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs occupies 1.2 million square feet in 64 buildings with a replacement value of \$349.7 million dollars. In 2018/2019, MDVA requested a security assessment from the Department of Homeland Security for the Minneapolis, Hastings, and Silver Bay Veterans Homes and campuses. As a result, this request is for \$6.6 million to address identified security concerns at these locations which includes: improving exterior lighting, installing security desks/physical barriers entering each location, hardening exterior windows, restricting access to campuses by installing gate arms and other physical barriers, as well as installing a standardized and centralized security system that will enable local and remote access to security cameras and footage, and ensure secure door locking and limited access for each home and cemetery. In addition to those campuses reviewed by the Department of Homeland Security, this project also includes similar security updates for the three MDVA Veterans Cemeteries in Little Falls, Preston and Duluth – which have limited or no security.

**Project Rationale**

Currently, MDVA Veterans Homes have a variety of systems and several vendors that provide inconsistent support throughout the homes, and various levels of security apparatus, some of which lack the recommended level for securing these facilities. Nine of these buildings have 24/7 occupancy and house vulnerable adults. This request will also ensure facilities used to care for the 824 licensed care beds are safe. There has been an increase in the number of incidents at our facilities that have required various levels of staff and local authority intervention, which has raised the alertness of MDVA Senior Management as it relates to the care of our vulnerable adults and safety of our over 1,400 employees. This project will provide funding for upgrades and security enhancements at our five Veterans Homes and three Cemeteries, and enable MDVA to provide a safe environment to care for vulnerable adults, employees, and guests.

**Project Timeline**

Approximately 14 months per project. Items have been identified by Department of Homeland Security reports, and a consultant has designed many of the items. Engaging contractors/bidding is the next step in this process.

**Other Considerations**

None

**Impact on Agency Operating Budgets**

Agency repair and betterment funds, which are operating dollars, have been used in recent years to address portions of current security systems. This funding will allow future repair and betterment funds to be spent on more routine maintenance and repair projects.

**Description of Previous Appropriations**

In 2020 Session Law Chapter 3 - \$1.9M was funded for campus security from unused funds from the Minneapolis Veterans Home Truss Bridge project.

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**Fergus Falls Building 2 Demolition and Replacement**

**AT A GLANCE**

**2024 Request Amount:** \$2,900

**Priority Ranking:** 6

**Project Summary:** This request is for \$2.9 million to demolish building 2 on the Fergus Falls Veterans Homes campus because it presents safety concerns with the current state of the building, as well as not having any current functional use. The area will be replaced with a modern utility building that is designed to provide maintenance storage and indoor vehicle maintenance.

**Project Description**

MN Veterans Home - Fergus Falls (Building 2) needs to be demolished because it presents safety concerns with the current state of the building, as well as not having any current functional use. The area will be replaced with a modern utility building that is designed to provide maintenance storage and indoor vehicle maintenance.

**Project Rationale**

- Funding of this request will enable MDVA and its facilities to continue efforts to address deferred maintenance and renewal/replacement needs at MDVA’s state-owned facilities used for Veterans healthcare. The buildings are in such a state that they are not able to provide needed operational use.
- Provides funding for necessary demolition and rebuilding in Fergus Falls.
- Continues to ensure buildings meet State and Federal building codes, life safety codes, Department of Health and other licensing code agencies, as well as adequate facilities that assist in maintaining MDVA campuses.
- Enables MDVA to provide a safe environment to care for vulnerable adults.
- Ensures continued full use of all physical assets.
- Timely repair/replacement of building components eliminates future high costs.

**Project Timeline**

Approximately 18 months after funding - 7/15/2024 project start, 12/31/2025 project completion.

**Other Considerations**

Limited repair/replacement operating funds are not sufficient to address critical and expensive asset preservation projects, like those proposed. Expending operating funds for deferred maintenance projects limits MDVA's ability to address routine preventative, predictive and corrective facility maintenance – ensuring good stewardship of existing facilities.

**Impact on Agency Operating Budgets**

This will have little to no impact on MDVA's operating budget.

**Description of Previous Appropriations**

N/A

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**Minneapolis Veterans Home - Building 6 Remodel**

**AT A GLANCE**

<b>2024 Request Amount:</b>	\$21,041
<b>Priority Ranking:</b>	7
<b>Project Summary:</b>	This request is for \$21.041 million to remodel historic building 6 to accommodate 36 additional skilled nursing beds at the Minneapolis Veterans Home.

**Project Description**

Historical building 6 on the Minneapolis campus is currently sitting vacant. This \$21.041 million request would completely upgrade this building to meet current senior living practices, codes, rules, and business practices to accommodate 36 new skilled nursing beds. This \$21.041 million reflects the 35% state share of the overall project which is projected to have mid-point of construction in 2026.

**Project Rationale**

MDVA has a total of 1,058 federal authorized beds in the state of MN. The current breakdown of those beds are:

- Minneapolis Veterans Home – 300 Skilled Nursing Beds
- Minneapolis Veterans Home – 50 Domiciliary Nursing Beds
- Hastings Veterans Home – 145 Domiciliary Nursing Beds; Federal VA currently recognize 200 domiciliary beds which can be adjusted to 145
- Silver Bay Veterans Home – 83 Skilled Nursing Beds
- Fergus Falls Veterans Home – 106 Skilled Nursing Beds
- Luverne Veterans Home – 85 Skilled Nursing Beds
- Proposed Bemidji Veterans Home – 72 Skilled Nursing Beds
- Proposed Montevideo Veterans Home – 72 Skilled Nursing Beds
- Proposed Preston Veterans Home – 54 Skilled Nursing Beds

MDVA has 36 beds left of the 1,058 federal authorized beds for Minnesota. By funding this project, MDVA would be able to maximize federal beds authorized as well as utilize a historic building on the Minneapolis campus in the same capacity as intended but upgrading the interior to meet current skilled nursing standards.

**Project Timeline**

- Schedule** (Escalation 12.30%)
- Predesign 11/01/2019 – 02/28/2020
- Schematic Design 08/03/2024 – 10/28/2024
- Design Development 11/02/2024 – 1/15/2025
- Construction Documents 1/18/2025 – 7/9/2025



Bidding & Award 07/16/2025 – 10/13/2025  
Construction 11/01/2025 – 11/25/2026  
Occupancy 11/25/2026 – 02/24/2027

**Other Considerations**

Building 6 was vacated in March of 2017 and all 91 residents receiving skilled care were moved to the new 100 bed building (building #22) on the Minneapolis Veterans Home Campus. Building 6 is over 120 years old and is on the state historic registry as part of the historic Minneapolis Veterans Home Campus. Building 6 continues to deteriorate both inside and out, and the agency continues to incur significant costs to heat, cool, and provide regular maintenance on the building and its systems, while receiving little benefit or use of the building. This proposal to completely renovate historic building 6 supports MDVA’s Strategic Goal to “Ensure a seamless continuum of support through collaborative relationships at the federal, state and community level that addresses the evolving needs of Veterans and their families.” This facility will assist in reducing the current eight month backlog of Veterans on the waiting list for placement at the Minneapolis State Veterans Home.

**Impact on Agency Operating Budgets**

Additional operating funds will be needed to support these new skilled nursing beds.

**Description of Previous Appropriations**

\$186,000 in asset preservation funds were used in 2008 on this building.

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State Veterans Cemeteries - Land Acquisition

**AT A GLANCE**

**2024 Request Amount:** \$2,000

**Priority Ranking:** 8

**Project Summary:** This request is for \$2.0 million in state funds for the State Veterans Cemeteries to conduct an initial site search, suitability assessment, predesign and land acquisition for a projected SVC-Bemidji as well as acquire additional real estate to expand the site footprint at SVC-Little Falls to accommodate additional burial capacity as well as relieve the constricted operating environment of the original maintenance facility.

**Project Description**

The request for \$2 million in state funds will allow the MN State Veterans Cemetery network to accomplish the following improvements to the State Veterans Cemetery System:

- 1) SVC-Bemidji (Projected): conduct an initial site search, suitability assessment, predesign and land acquisition for SVC-Bemidji (Projected), which will enable the state to compete for federal funds to construct the new cemetery.
- 2) SVC-Little Falls: Acquire additional “set-aside” real estate south of TH 115 to provide future capacity beyond the current development as established within the master plan.
- 3) SVC-Little Falls: Acquire additional “set-aside” real estate north of the current maintenance facility to provide expansion capacity to the maintenance building and associated outdoor storage yard.

**SVC-Bemidji (Projected): Acquire real estate for future development**

Initiate a formal search process for site selection of a future 60-120 acre fifth SVC in-line with the currently established SVCs and US Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) National Cemetery Administration (NCA) guidelines. This project will include the initial site search, suitability assessments, predesign, and land acquisition costs, but does not include any funding for design, state construction cost share or equipping.

**SVC-Little Falls: Acquire additional “set-aside” real estate south of TH 115**

The approximately 50 acres of requested real estate will provide additional burial capacity for future site development in-line with the currently established SVC-Little Falls Master Plan and US Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) National Cemetery Administration (NCA) guidelines. This project will include the appraisal fees, land surveys, land easements, environmental impact, predesign and land acquisition, but does not include any funding for future development of the site (design, construction, and equipping).

**SVC-Little Falls: Acquire additional “set-aside” real estate north of the Maintenance Facility**

The approximately 2.2 acres of requested real estate will provide expansion capacity for the maintenance building and associated vehicle storage yard, provide additional direct access to County Road 76 for maintenance equipment, and prevent encroachment of the maintenance facility on future site development as currently established by the SVC-Little Falls Master Plan and US Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) National Cemetery Administration (NCA) guidelines. This project will include the appraisal fees, land surveys, land easements, environmental impact, predesign and land acquisition, but does not include any funding for future development of the site (design, construction, and equipping).

**Project Rationale**

**Projected SVC-Bemidji: Acquire real estate for future development**

The National Cemetery Administration (NCA) has a strategic goal to provide 95% of veterans with a burial option within 75 miles of their home. The State of Minnesota currently operates three State Veterans Cemeteries (SVC) in Little Falls, Preston and Duluth. A fourth SVC is under construction in Redwood Falls with an anticipated dedication date later this calendar year. Even with the recent investment in our newest veterans cemetery in Southwestern MN, there still remains an area that is unserved in Northwestern MN. The requested real estate will provide additional burial capacity for an estimated 10,000 Veterans and their families who reside within 75 miles of the Bemidji area.

Funding the acquisition of between 60-120 acres of real estate for the projected SVC-Bemidji will allow MDVA to prepare and submit a pre-application to the NCA Veterans Cemetery Grant Program (VCGP) to initiate the process for federal funding for site development.

Without funding an additional location in the Bemidji area, Minnesota will have a gap for Veterans in northwestern Minnesota that doesn't exist in other regions of the State. Additionally, a delay in funding this project will drive project costs higher and push out the timeline for project development and construction. Current inflation trends are expected to continue for the foreseeable future. The State of Minnesota Real Estate and Construction group is recommending an 8% annual inflation factor due to the current construction climate for all projects. The project development timeline for new State Veterans Cemeteries has ranged from two to five years. Due diligence for site selection, site acquisition and project design take time. Without funding at this time, the project will not be able to begin these critical project tasks.

**Little Falls: Acquire additional “set-aside” real estate south of TH 115**

The requested real estate will provide additional burial capacity for future site development beyond the projected 40-50 years of remaining capacity of the current Master Plan. Established in 1994, SVC-Little Falls was the inaugural MN State Veterans Cemetery with an initial projected 100+ year capacity to support/honor Veterans and their spouses/dependents. As updated in 2012, the development master plan projected a gravesite capacity of 21,180 and SVC-Little Falls currently has approximately 7,500 gravesites occupied. At the current rate of interment operations, averaging 500-600 burials a year, SVC-Little Falls will reach maximum capacity in approximately 40-50 years. This is well short of the originally projected 100-year development plan. To continue to honor those who have served and allow family members an appropriate venue to visit their loved one's final resting place well into

the future therefore requires expansion of the SVC-Little Falls site beyond the current boundaries. However, limitations do present themselves, as expansion to the west and northwest are not possible due to the presence of the Mississippi River and associated flood plain areas. Expansion eastward is not an option due to the planned development of the Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum. There is one small available property to the north, but this is the topic of the third project within this proposal. Which leaves the undeveloped farmland directly south of SVC-Little Falls, across TH 115 from the site.

This proposal recommends securing approximately 40+ acres of real estate south of TH 115 to both allow continuation of the SVC-Little Falls mission as well as preventing future encroachment of private dwellings/businesses into the adjoining land of the hallowed ground of SVC-Little Falls.

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**Little Falls: Acquire additional “set-aside” real estate north of the Maintenance Facility**

The requested real estate will provide future maintenance facility expansion capacity. As established in 1994, the maintenance building and vehicle storage yard was developed in accordance with projected types and numbers of equipment required to support an operational interment & maintenance schedule amortized across the planned 100+ year capacity of the site. However, the combination of an increased rate of interments, the commensurate requirement for duplicate sets of equipment, and changes in maintenance/interment procedures over the past 30 years has demonstrated a need for a larger maintenance facility, internal heated vehicle storage and secure/fenced outdoor storage yard. Although originally sited in the northeast corner of the SVC-Little Falls site to minimize visual & auditory impact on ceremonial operations while providing remote access to County Road 76, there is no ability to expand the maintenance facility on the current site without impacting the developed SVC-Little Falls Burial Master Plan.

Given the inability to expand within the current boundaries and that fact that the eastern perimeter of the site is bounded by County Road 76, the only potential option is the approximately 2.2-acre parcel of real estate to the north. This parcel would provide adequate space to expand the current maintenance building and storage yard to meet the increased demands of the increased interment rate as well as provide a small on-site sod farm that meets the internal need of SVC-Little Falls

This proposal recommends securing the approximately 2.2 acres of real estate north of the current maintenance facility to allow continuation of the SVC-Little Falls mission.

## **Project Timeline**

### **Projected SVC-Bemidji: Acquire real estate for future development**

The search for potential sites for the projected SVC-Bemidji could take upwards of a year or more to properly identify a parcel(s) that will have (1) sufficient acreage for continued operations well into the future, (2) is representative of the geographical region in which it serves, and (3) provides easy access to those it serves. Beyond that, it is expected to take much less than a year to execute acquisition once funding is secured. However, delays may arise due to the necessary negotiations with the current owners of the real estate over price and timing of availability for sale.

### **Little Falls: Acquire additional “set-aside” real estate (North/South parcels)**

It is expected to take less than a year to execute acquisition once funding is secured. However, delays may arise due to the necessary negotiations with the current owners of the real estate over price and

timing of availability for sale.

**Other Considerations**

**Impact on Agency Operating Budgets**

**Description of Previous Appropriations**

N/A

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