

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

JUN - 5 1986

DATE ENTERED

SEP 29 1986

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Veterans Administration Medical Center

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

VA Medical Center

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Alexandria

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

8

STATE

Louisiana

— VICINITY OF

CODE

22

COUNTY

Rapides

CODE

079

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

Veterans Administration

STREET & NUMBER

810 Vermont Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Washington

— VICINITY OF

STATE

D.C.

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Land Management Service - VA Office of Construction

STREET & NUMBER

810 Vermont Avenue, N.W.

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

VA Historic Sites Survey

DATE

Continuing

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

VA Historic Preservation Office

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Alexandria VA Medical Center District is an irregularly shaped parcel separated into what appears to be two lots by U.S. Highway 71 and 167. The larger lot contains the hospital complex proper; the smaller contains personnel quarters and a number of utility structures.

From the main entrance on the east of the hospital complex is a long tree-lined drive which forms the main NE-SW axis. The hospital buildings are arranged at the top of a rise which has been graded to provide a gently contoured site for the campus. The front of the lot, facing the highway contains many trees. To the south, facing the entrance is the main General Medical Hospital (Building 7) with a number of service buildings to the west and southwest. To the north of the drive is a quadrangle formed by seven buildings (numbers 1 thru 6 and 8). Building 9, to the north of the quadrangle, facing the quadrangle, marks the extent of the building complex.

Across the highway, a small, nearly rectangular lot contains 5 quarters buildings facing the highway on a gently curving drive.

Most of the main buildings were constructed in 1929, the major exception being Building 7 which was constructed in 1950 following the basic design of the older campus. A number of exterior modifications have taken place over the years, most notably porches have been enclosed to provide additional patient care space. Overall, however, the Medical Center appears much as it did when these buildings were first opened for patients in the early 1930's.

The historic district, comprised of several, similar large hospital buildings and auxiliary support buildings, has a rustic French Colonial architectural character. Sixteen buildings in the hospital complex were built in 1929, (minor construction of several more buildings followed in the 1930's) by the Veterans Bureau from a proto-type design. They included the main medical facilities, a dining hall, recreation building, director's and staff duplex quarters, assorted engineering, storage, laundry, and maintenance shops. The set of buildings resembles many other V.A. Hospital campuses in construction, functional layout, plan and general approach to medical care design. The architectural styles differ according to the surrounding communities.

The French Colonial buildings, primarily two, three and four stories in height are finished in stucco, topped with slate tile medium hip roofs. The quarters buildings, as well as the larger medical patient and support buildings share common architectural

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features. They include: rusticated quoins (that sometimes continue between windows), semi-circular arcaded entrance porticos topped with decorated pediments, and hooded dormer windows. The varied windows are primarily large single pane triple sash windows surrounded by thick molding and crowned with terra cotta keystones. Several centrally located windows are topped with elliptical pediments. A majority of the windows are underscored with terra cotta panels carved with garlands. The more important door entries are decorated with ornate pilasters and entablatures. Later additional buildings have been built in compatible architectural styles, keeping the French Colonial flavor, but varying in details.

ALEXANDRIA, LOUISIANA

<u>BLDG.</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>USE</u>
1	1929	Administration Bldg.
2	1929	General Medical & Surgical
3	1929	Medical Admin. & Mental Hygiene Clinic
4	1929	Dining Hall & Kitchen
5	1929	Admin. & Engineering & Building Management Service
6	1929	Nursing Home Care
7	1950	General Medical
8	1940	Recreation Bldg. & Canteen
9	1929	Vacant
13	1929	Maintenance Shops
14	1929	Boiler house
15	1931	Fire Station
16	1942	Intrusion Laundry
18	1929	Managers Quarters
19	1929	Staff Quarters - Duplex
20	1929	Staff Quarters - Duplex
21	1929	Staff Quarters - Duplex
22	1929	Personnel Quarters

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CONTINUATION SHEET

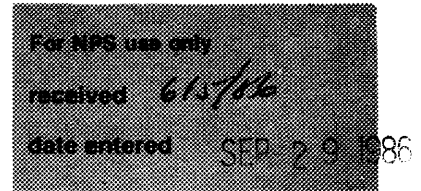
ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 3

<u>BLDG.</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>USE</u>	
24	1978	Intrusion	Switchgear
36	1977	Intrusion	Electrical Equipment
37	1977	Intrusion	Antenna Tower
82	1939	Intrusion	Booster Pump House
83	1929	Intrusion	Concrete Reservoir
84	1921	Intrusion	Steel Water Tank & Tower
86	1929		Flag Pole
91	1929	Intrusion	Bar-B-Q Grill and Cover
95	1929	Intrusion	3 Car Garage
101	1929	Intrusion	3 Car Garage
102	1929	Intrusion	6 Car Garage
103	1939	Intrusion	Well No. 12
105	1958	Not in district	Gas Meter House
109	1941	Not in district	Sewer Screen
110	1939	Intrusion	Well No. 13
T-111	1950	Not in district	Well No. 14
T-115	1966	Intrusion	Grass Cutting Equipment Garage
T-117	1946	Intrusion	Paint Shop
T-120	1946	Intrusion	Paint Storage
136	1950	Intrusion	Warehouse
137	1950	Intrusion	Incinerator
T-140		Intrusion	Bus Loading Shelter
T-141	1958	Not in district	Gas Meter House
144	1929	Intrusion	Chlorinating House
147	1964	Intrusion	Air Conditioning Plant
148	1964	Intrusion	Air Conditioning Tower
149	1964	Intrusion	Air Conditioning Transformer
155	1972	Intrusion	Emergency Electric Generator
156	1972	Intrusion	Radio Antenna Mast (S.W.)
157	1975	Intrusion	Emergency Generator
T-47	1919	Intrusion	Storage

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Veterans Adm. Hospital Item number 7 Page
Rapides Parish, LA

FEDERAL NOMINATION - LA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE COMMENTS ON ITEM 7

The Veterans Administration Hospital Historic District's architectural significance rests upon buildings 1-6 and building 9 (see inventory in nomination form). These seven buildings comprise the original quadrangle which is the heart of the hospital complex. The stuccoed masonry buildings range from two to four-and-a-half stories. All but one have upper half stories lit by dormers. Most are symmetrical and linear with a central entrance foyer and corridors running to either end of the building. On the whole, the interiors are plain, somewhat altered, and not architecturally significant. If there is any interior ornamentation (for example, cornices or pilasters), it is generally confined to the foyer.

Although the exterior treatment of the principal buildings is often termed "French Colonial," it does not resemble the French Colonial style in its best known form--i.e., the Creole plantation house. However, it does resemble a small number of official structures built by the French in early Louisiana. The only one of these which survives is the Ursuline Convent (NHL). Buildings of this ilk should be viewed within the tradition of eighteenth century French high style architecture, in short "French French" as opposed to Louisiana French.

Specific features which place the hospital buildings in this tradition include:

- (1) Overall delicacy in detail and proportion.
- (2) The use of garrets with round head dormers.
- (3) The low key tasteful mixture of classical and Baroque details.
- (4) The copious use of quoins to frame windows and separate various portions of the facade.
- (5) The use of delicately rusticated basements.
- (6) The use of casement windows.
- (7) The use of paneled effects in combination with delicately framed windows.
- (8) The use of small wrought iron balconies to accent the facades.
- (9) The use of five part articulation with a central pavilion and end pavilions.

In addition, building #2 has a mansard roof over the central pavilion, which, of course, is a seventeenth century French feature.

CONTINUED

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Continuation sheet Veterans Adm. Hospital
Rapides Parish, LA

Item number 7

Page

LA SHPO COMMENTS (CONTD)

The complex also contains numerous contemporaneous support structures, which, of course, are listed as contributing elements. For the most part, these are small secondary buildings such as sheds, workshops, garages, and storage facilities. They also include a row of quarters buildings set across Route 71 from the main complex (inventory #s 18-22). Unlike the other support structures, the quarters houses are styled, albeit slightly, to resemble the main complex. Specific features include quoins, tile roofs, cornices, and dormers.

Contributing Elements:

For the record, structures built prior to 1937 should be considered contributing elements. Some, of course, are part of the hospital's architectural character. Others help establish the hospital's identity as an early twentieth century medical complex.

Intrusions:

With two exceptions the district's intrusions are small support structures with little visual presence (i.e., sheds, an incinerator, a gas meter house, covered walkways, etc.). The exceptions (#s 7 & 8) are large buildings, but both are over thirty-five years old. In addition, both are styled to be in keeping with the older buildings and hence support their architectural character. In fact, if one did not know that they were not a part of the original complex, one would never suspect it.

Integrity:

As has been previously mentioned, the complex's architectural significance rests upon the exterior character of its principal buildings. Alterations to these elements have been minor--i.e., glazing in side porches, enclosing a few windows (leaving frames in place), installing wheelchair ramps, etc.

NB: There are forty-five elements within the nominated acreage. Four of the forty-nine listed in the inventory are noted as being outside the district boundaries.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) medical care
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1929, BUILDER/ARCHITECT Veterans Bureau/Administration

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Veterans Administration Medical Center in Alexandria, Louisiana is significant in architectural history at the national level and meets National Register criterion under Section A and C. The hospital complex forms a part of the thematic group of 50 Veterans hospitals developed by the Veterans Bureau (later the Veterans Administration) between 1920 and 1946, to provide acute and long-term medical treatment to American veterans. This hospital network constituted one of the most ambitious and one of the most advanced health care delivery systems in the world. The Veterans Administration Medical Center in Alexandria reflects the rigorous planning methodology and design policies which underlie the system.

The construction of the Alexandria Veterans Administration Medical Center was contracted on July 26, 1928, and completed on December 2, 1929, at a cost of \$1,407,176. The original 419 bed general medical facility opened on January 1, 1930. The Veterans Bureau/ Administration selected Alexandria as the site for this hospital in response to the initiatives of local politicians, as the land was donated by the State of Louisiana. The 400 acres of land also provided a scenic setting which permitted the integration of a campus-like landscaping, outdoor recreational facilities, hospital buildings and roadways. The specific boundaries *within* of the ^{171.12}remaining 147.35 acres are based on the local topography, the existing ¹property lines and the distribution of these original hospital features which retain sufficient integrity to convey the complex's original significance; excluded or identified as intrusions are more recent buildings of noncompatible design.

The plan of the Medical Center in Alexandria is based on the standard set plan developed by the Veterans Administration in Washington, D.C., for all such facilities in the Nation. The plan emphasized the overall integration of functions while isolating health care, administrative, residential, recreational, and maintenance activities. The key elements of the hospital facilities at Alexandria which convey this centralized methodology are the open courtyard or quadrangle, the exterior and

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Hospital Planning by the Construction Service of the Veterans' (sic) Administration," The Federal Architect, October, 1944, Washington, D.C., pp 11 ff.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY @ 100 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 5	55, 33, 2, 0	3, 46, 93, 20	B	1, 5	55, 45, 80	3, 46, 89, 40
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1, 5	55, 34, 20	3, 46, 83, 20	D	1, 5	55, 31, 00	3, 46, 91, 00
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See attached sketch map.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	N/A	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE		CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE: G. W. PARSONS Medical Center Director
Coy Creel, Chief, Engineering Service

ORGANIZATION: Veterans Administration DATE: January 8, 1986

STREET & NUMBER: Shreveport Highway TELEPHONE: 497-0488

CITY OR TOWN: Alexandria STATE: LA

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES NO NONE

[Signature]
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE: *[Signature]* H. P. O. DATE: 5/30/86

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

[Signature] DATE: 9/29/86

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET BUILDER/ARCHITECT ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

interior circulation patterns and the continuity of the French Colonial design in subsequent additions and alterations.

In this case, the set has been modified to meet the requirements of local terrain and patient loads. For example, the prominent patient buildings have been sited on the highest terrain, while the maintenance buildings are almost hidden in the rear, and the roadway loops around the central complex to facilitate traffic flow.

The exterior designs for each hospital were approved at the highest level of the VA in Washington, but reflected a growing sensitivity to local tradition on the part of the planning bureaucracy. Thus, the style of French Colonial selected for Alexandria's hospital is unique among the VA system as a conscious attempt to apply a historically derived period revival style and motifs to functional public buildings, and the result is a highly humane visual environment conducive to the rehabilitative role and local image of the VA. In selecting French Colonial as the style, the federal architect drew on the cultural heritage of the region which the hospital would serve. Some of the distinguishing design features of this Medical Center are described in Part 7 of this form.

Over the years, the layout and design of the complex have been slightly modified by the introduction of new buildings or expansion of original facilities. The impact is felt most severely in the necessary technical additions such as electric generators. These additions are categorized as intrusions. Nevertheless, the original design intent as both a VA set hospital and a local design expression is still intact.

While better than 50 years of age, the Medical Center at Alexandria possesses exceptional significance as part of the thematic grouping.

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Continuation sheet Veterans Adm. Hospital Item number 8 Page
Rapides Parish, LA

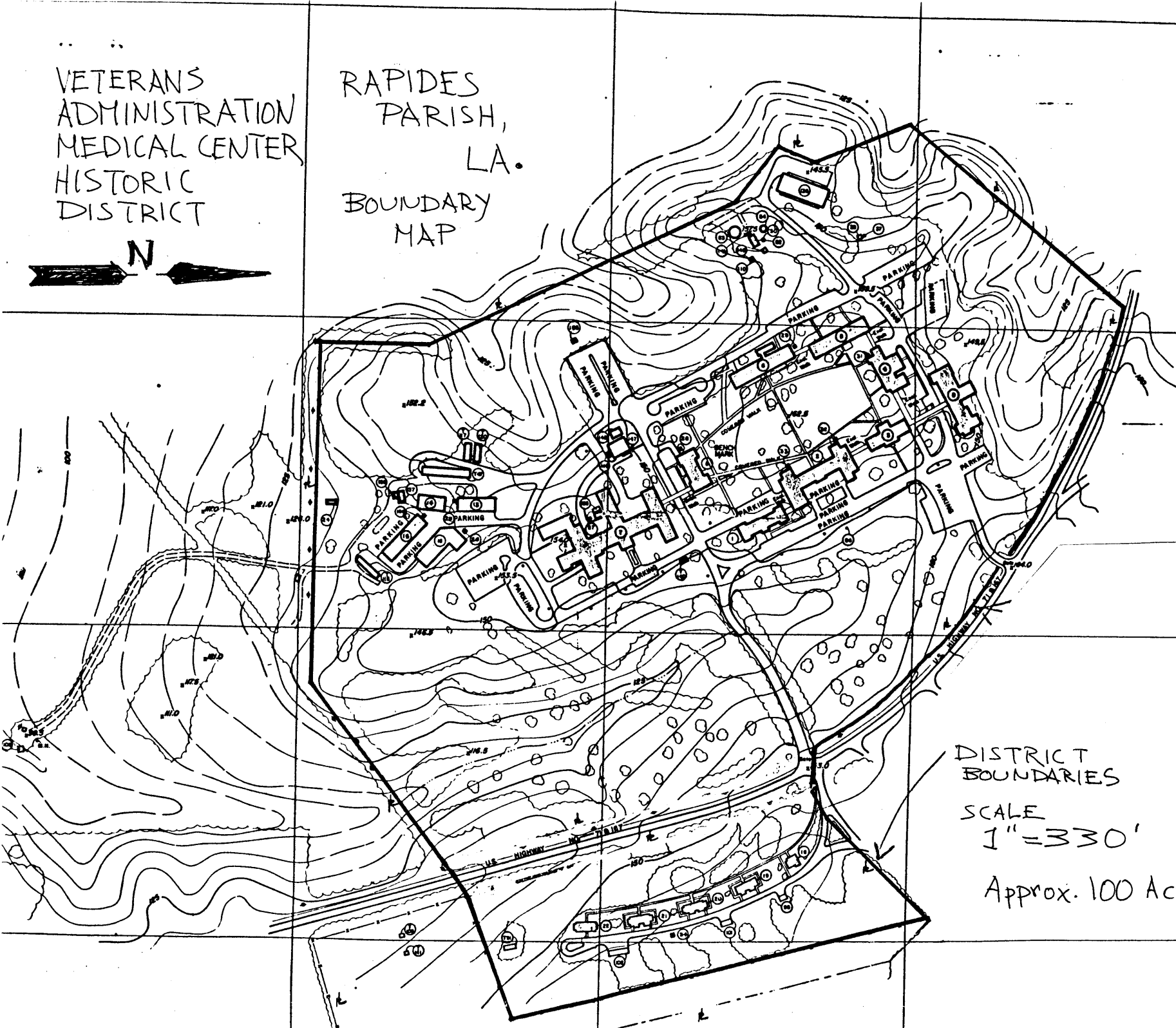
FEDERAL NOMINATION - LA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE COMMENTS ON ITEM 8

The Veterans Administration Hospital is of state significance in the area of architecture as an important example of early twentieth century eclectic architecture. The eighteenth century French flavor previously described reflected a conscious design policy on the part of the Veterans Administration in which stylistic variations were used so that hospital complexes would "fit in" with the local community. Hence a French style was employed at the hospital complex in Alexandria because it was considered appropriate to the French traditions of Louisiana. Taken in this light, the Veterans Hospital embodies an important trend in twentieth century eclecticism--i.e., the use of a historical style for a symbolic purpose. It is thought to be the only example in Louisiana of an institutional complex built in the eighteenth century French manner.

NB: This property has already been declared eligible for the Register through the 106 process.

VETERANS
ADMINISTRATION
MEDICAL CENTER
HISTORIC
DISTRICT

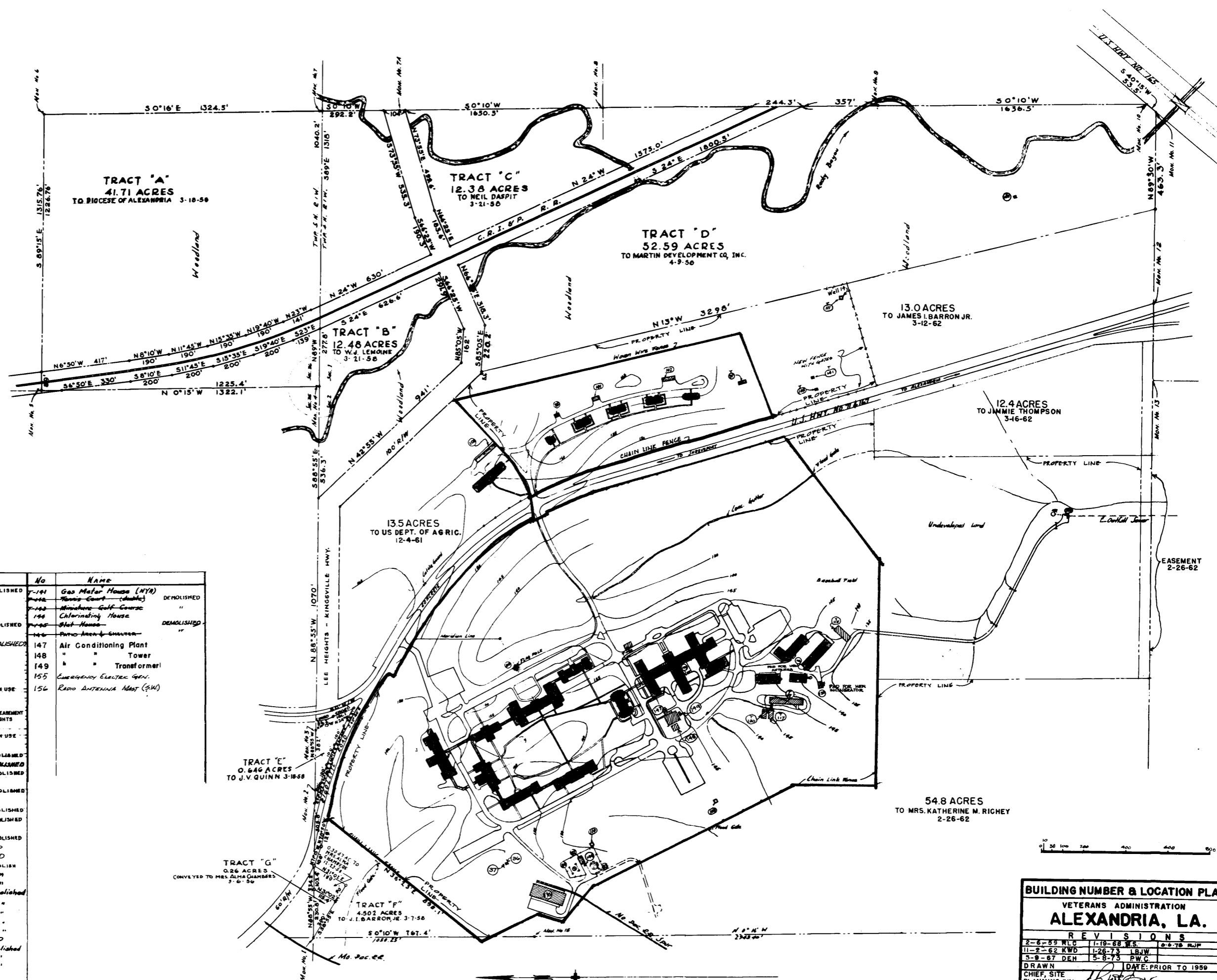
RAPIDES
PARISH,
LA.
BOUNDARY
MAP



DISTRICT
BOUNDARIES

SCALE
1" = 330'

Approx. 100 Acres



BUILDING SCHEDULE

NO	NAME	NO	NAME	NO	NAME
1	Administration Building	101	Gas Meter House	141	Gas Meter House (N.Y.R.)
2	Infirmary General Medical Surgical	102	16-car Garage	142	Thomas Court (double)
3	Medical Admin & Mental Hygiene Clinic	103	Concrete Reservoir (surface water)	143	Miniature Golf Course
4	Dining Hall & Kitchen B.	104	Janitor Shop	144	Chlorinating House
5	Admin. Engr. & Bldg. Maint. Services	105	Hall No. 13	145	Shed House
6	Nursing Home Care Bldg.	106	Hall No. 14	146	Paint Area & Shelter
7	Bldg. General Medical	107	Hall No. 15	147	Air Conditioning Plant
8	Recreation Building & Cafeteria	108	Hall No. 16	148	" " Tower
9	VACANT	109	Hall No. 17	149	" " Transformer
10	Maintenance Shop Bldg.	110	Hall No. 18	150	Emergency Electric Gen.
11	Boiler House	111	Hall No. 19	151	Radio Antenna Mast (3W)
12	Station Garage Bldg.	112	Hall No. 20	152	
13	Laundry Building	113	Hall No. 21		
14	Nurses Quarters	114	Hall No. 22		
15	Nurses Quarters	115	Hall No. 23		
16	Shell Oil duplex	116	Hall No. 24		
17	" " "	117	Hall No. 25		
18	" " "	118	Hall No. 26		
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY NAME: Veterans Administration Medical Center

MULTIPLE NAME: United States Second Generation Veterans Hospitals MPS

STATE & COUNTY: LOUISIANA, Rapides

DATE RECEIVED: 10/12/12 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/28/12
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 86003116

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 11-28-12 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Additional Documentation Approved

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept

REVIEWER Edson Beall

DISCIPLINE History

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 11-28-12

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

AD Tracked ✓

ACTION: NATIONAL REGISTER INFORMATION SYSTEM
Id 86003116 LI 09/29/1986 LA Rapides Veterans Administration Medic>
01 More

Name Veterans Administration Medical Center
Address US 167/71
City Alexandria Vicinity Restrict
State LOUISIANA County Rapides
Status LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER Date 09/29/1986
Day45 Resource Type BUILDING Acreage 100.0
Multiple
Contributing bldg 15 Site 0 Strc 1 Obj 0 Total 16
Noncontributing bldg 16 Site 0 Strc 13 Obj 0 Total 29
Park

Add MPS

Image ✓

1/2K ✓

AD Now part
of MPS