

A Journey to Healing

Department of Veterans Affairs
Palo Alto Mental Health Center







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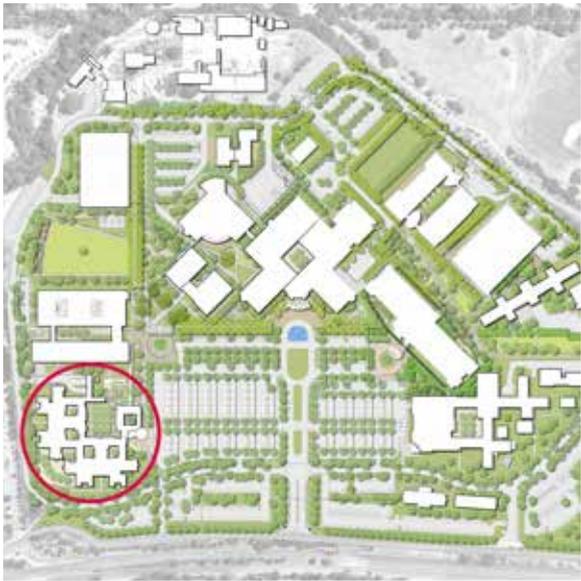
Eleven Minute Line by Maya Lin

VA Palo Alto Mental Health Center is a supportive and healing environment, designed to provide soldiers and veterans with the best opportunity to regain their mental health. The design is as much about psychological and social needs as it is about respect and dignity. Serving as a prototype for military and civilian facilities worldwide, the center is focused on advancing treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, and other complex psychological health issues. The design creates a home-like setting which brings a sense of comfort and protection to patients. Courtyards and gardens are integrated throughout the facility to communicate healing and hope, and to encourage patient recovery.

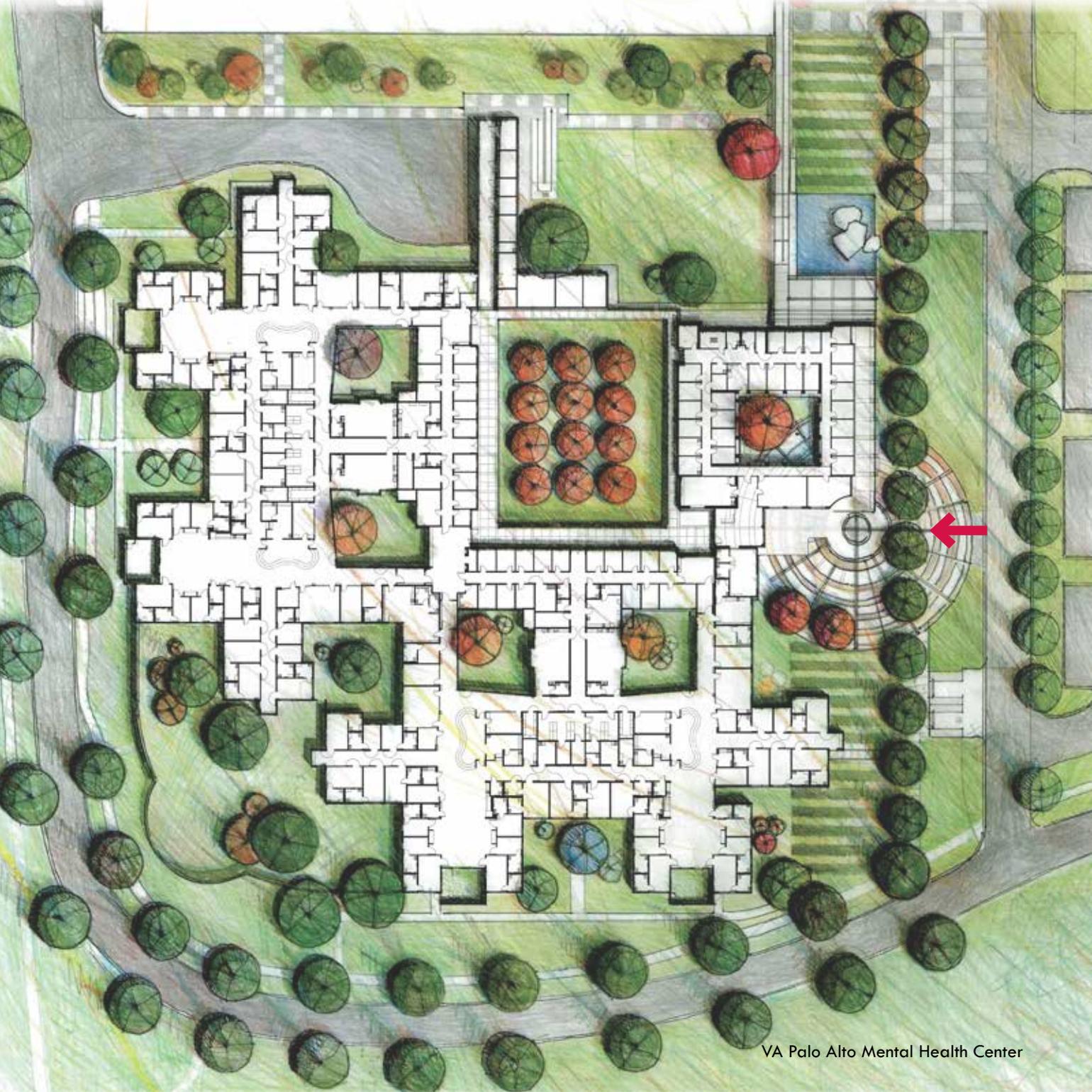




VA Mental Health Center ●
Palo Alto, California



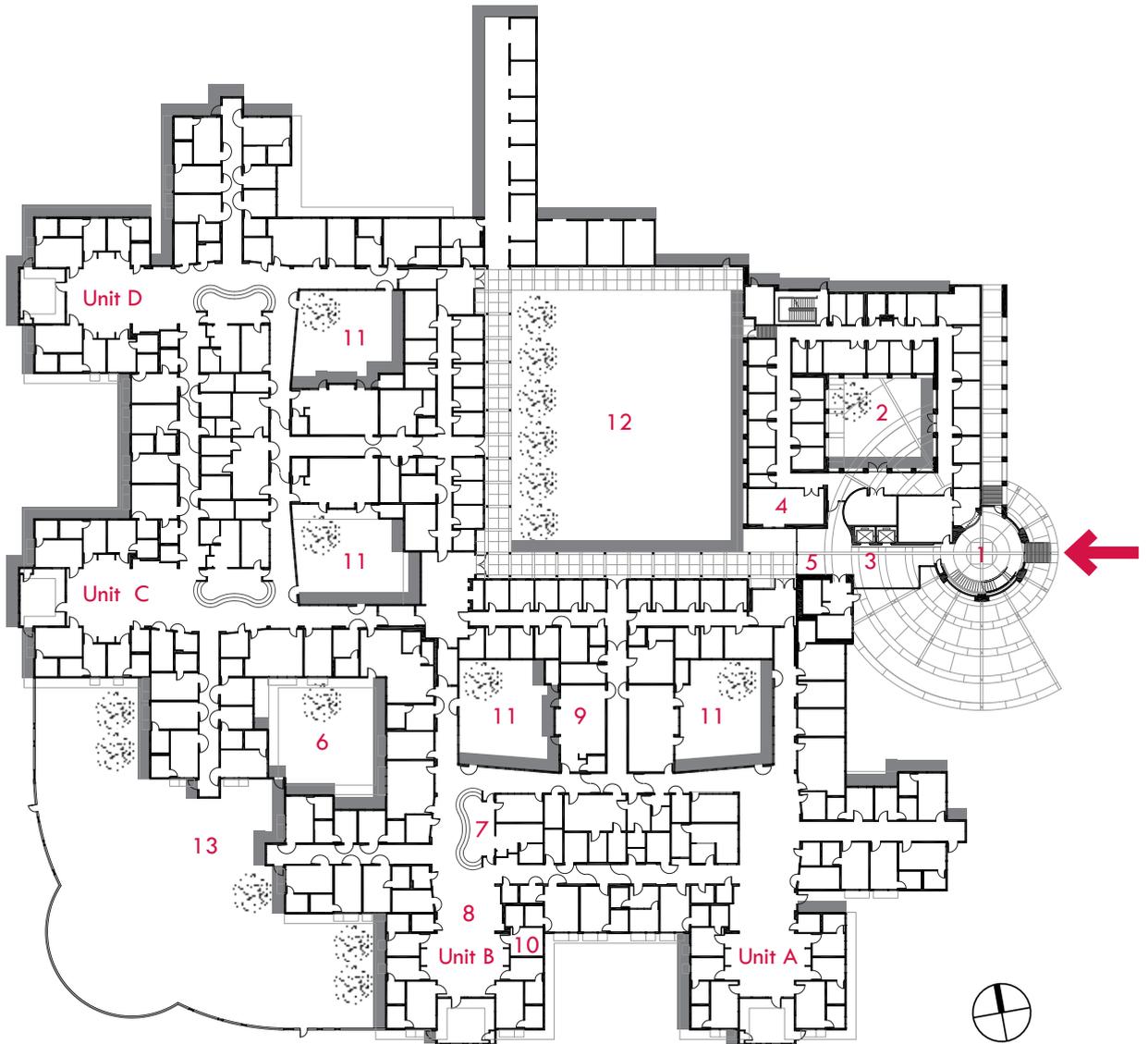
VA Palo Alto Campus



VA Palo Alto Mental Health Center

LEGEND

- 1 Entry Rotunda
- 2 Administration/Outpatient
- 3 Elevator Lobby
- 4 Conference Room
- 5 Promenade
- 6 Meditation Courtyard
- 7 Nurse Station
- 8 Day Room
- 9 Dining Room
- 10 Patient Room
- 11 Dining Courtyard
- 12 Main Courtyard
- 13 Recreation Yard



The patient journey begins at the two-story rotunda, the gateway to the Mental Health Center. The rotunda forms the entry to the Administration/Outpatient Building and provides access to the inpatient facility. It is also a way finding element and symbol of strength for the inpatient community. The Administration/Outpatient Building supports an outpatient clinic, medical staff offices, research spaces and a large conference center. Connecting to nature is integral to the design and is reflected throughout the entire facility. Courtyards provide respite and contribute to the healing atmosphere of the center while promoting the well-being of patients, guests and visitors.



Entry Rotunda





Entry Rotunda



Entry Rotunda



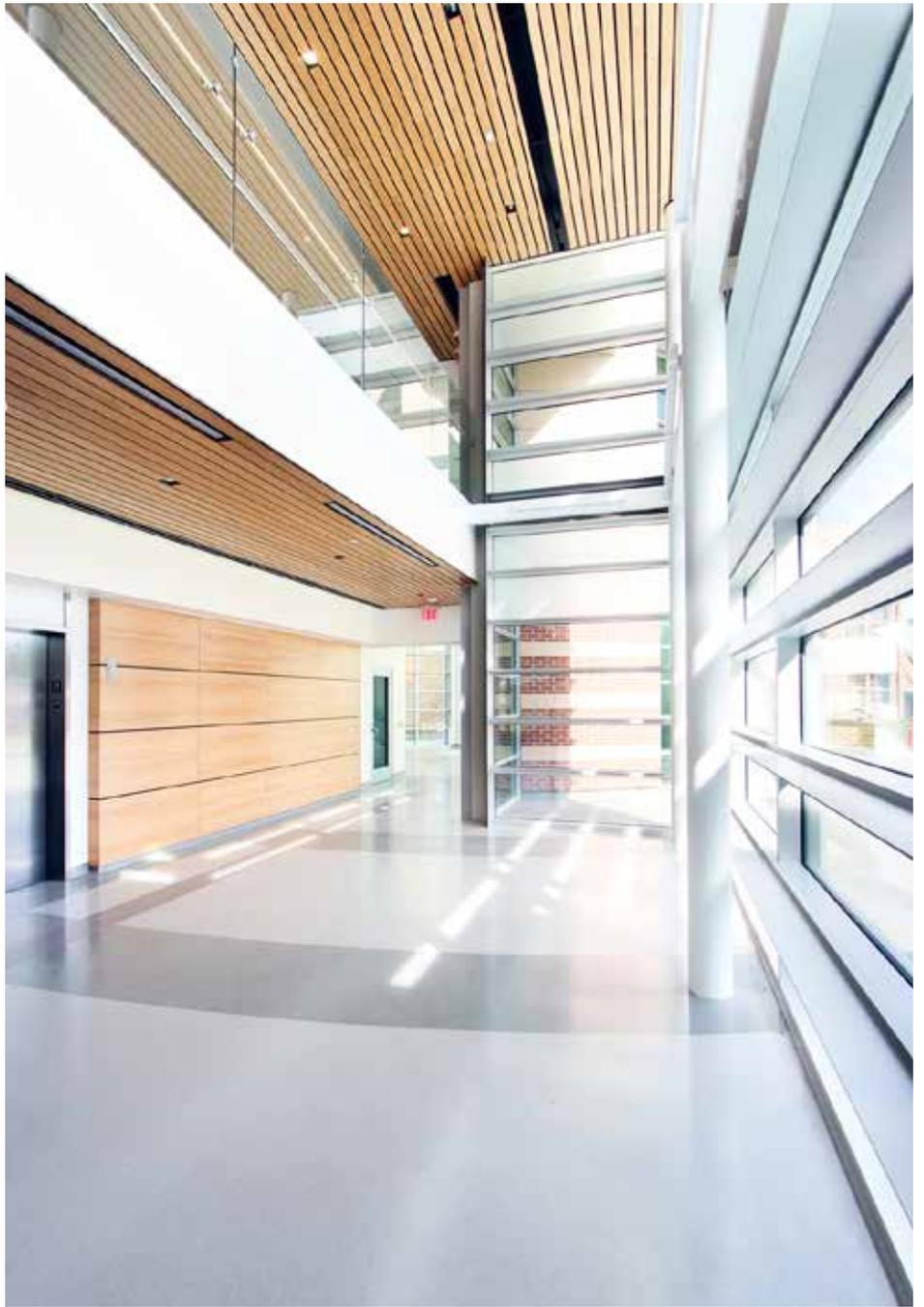
Outpatient Clinic at Courtyard



Elevator Lobby



Conference Room



Promenade

The inpatient facility is composed of four 20-bed, secure, acute care nursing units connected with enclosed outdoor spaces that are accessible to patients. A strong emphasis is placed on the creation of a non-institutional and patient-centered environment that imbues healing, familiarity, and a sense of being valued. The inpatient facility achieves a healing environment by encouraging interaction between patients and staff with larger day rooms, more open space, dining rooms that open onto courtyards, artwork, views to nature at virtually every turn and natural day light illuminating more than 95% of the building.



Meditation Courtyard



Nurse Station



Day Room



Dining Room



Patient Room



Dining Courtyard

Healing spaces are by definition patient centered and have been thoughtfully integrated throughout the facility's courtyards and interior spaces. In the main courtyard visitors will experience a layered translation of the surrounding hillsides. Along the walkways, native grasses create a rustling and calming perimeter. Inclined, raised planter boxes filled with native wildflowers define a central contemplative space shaded by a Ginkgo grove. The textured sculpture, "Aggregate," captures shadow and welcomes touch. Ipe wood benches, designed to mimic the curvature and structure of leaves, provide an intimate space for reflection and pause.



Proposed Main Courtyard



Proposed Main Courtyard



Proposed Main Courtyard

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