

(d) The space criteria and area requirements referred to in these standards shall be used as a guide in planning. Additional area and facilities beyond those specified as basic may be included if found to be necessary to meet the functional requirements of the project but are subject to approval by VA. Substantial deviation from the space or area standards shall be carefully considered and justified. Failing to meet the standards or exceeding them by more than 10 percent in the completed plan would be regarded as evidence of inferior design or as exceeding the boundaries of professional requirements. In those projects that unjustifiably exceed maximum space or area criteria, VA funding may be subject to proportionate reduction in proportion to the amount by which the space or area of the cemetery exceeds the maximum specified in these standards.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 501, 2408.)

§ 39.20 Site planning standards.

(a) *Site selection*—(1) *Location*. The land should be located as close as possible to the densest veteran population in the area under consideration.

(2) *Size*. Sufficient acreage shall be available to provide gravesites for estimated needs for at least 20 years. More acreage should be provided where feasible. Acreage could vary depending on the State veteran population and national cemetery availability.

(3) *Accessibility*. The site should be readily accessible by highway. Offsite improvements shall not be funded by the grant.

(4) *Topography*. The land should range from comparatively level to rolling and moderately hilly terrain. Natural rugged contours are suitable only if development and maintenance costs would not be excessive and burial areas would be accessible to elderly or infirm visitors. The land shall not be subject to flooding.

(5) *Water table*. The water table should be lower than the maximum proposed depth of burial.

(6) *Soil requirements*. The soil should be free from rock, muck, unstable composition, and other materials that would hamper the economical excavation of graves by normal methods. In

general, the soil should meet the standards of good agricultural land that is capable of supporting turf and trees, with normal care and without the addition of topsoil.

(7) *Utilities*. Electricity and gas, if required, should be available. Offsite improvements shall not be funded by the grant.

(8) *Water supply*. An adequate supply of water should be available. Offsite improvements shall not be funded by the grant.

(9) *Sewerage*. An approved means to dispose of storm flow and sewage from the facility should be available. Offsite improvements shall not be funded by the grant.

(b) *Site development requirements*—(1) *General*. The development plan shall provide for adequate hard surfaced roads, walks, parking areas, public rest rooms, flag circle, and a main gate.

(2) *Parking*. All parking facilities shall include provisions to accommodate the physically handicapped. A minimum of one space shall be set aside and identified with signage in each parking area with additional spaces provided in the ratio of 1 handicapped space to every 20 regular spaces. Handicapped spaces shall not be placed between two conventional diagonal or head-on parking spaces. Each of the handicapped parking spaces shall not be less than 9 feet wide; in addition, a clear space 4 feet wide shall be provided between the adjacent conventional parking spaces and also on the outside of the end spaces. Parking is not provided for large numbers of people attending ceremonial events such as Memorial Day services.

(3) *Roads*. Roads should generally follow the topography of the cemetery, and allow pedestrian access to burial sections on both sides. Roads should generally not be used as “boundaries” outlining burial sections. Extensive bridging should be avoided. The grant program funding cannot be used to build access roads on property that is not part of the cemetery. Road widths shall be compatible with proposed traffic flows and volumes. Primary roads are generally 24 feet wide.

(4) *Pavement design*. The pavement section of all roads, service areas and parking areas shall be designed for the

maximum anticipated traffic loads and existing soil conditions and in accordance with local and State design criteria.

(5) *Curbs.* Bituminous roads may be provided with integral curbs and gutters constructed of portland cement concrete. Freestanding curbs may be substituted when the advantage of using them is clearly indicated. All curbs shall have a "roll-type" cross section for vehicle and equipment access to lawn areas except as may be necessary for traffic control. The radii of curbs at road intersections shall not be less than 20 feet-0 inches. Curb ramps shall be provided to accommodate the physically handicapped and maintenance equipment. Curb ramps shall be provided at all intersections of roads and walks. The curb ramps shall not be less than 4 feet wide; they shall not have a slope greater than 8 percent, and preferably not greater than 5 percent. The vertical angle between the surface of a curb ramp and the surface of a road or gutter shall not be less than 176 degrees; the transition between the two surfaces shall be smooth. Curb ramps shall have nonskid surfaces.

(6) *Walks.* Walks shall be designed with consideration for the physically handicapped and elderly. Walks and ramps designed on an incline shall have periodic level platforms. All walks, ramps and platforms shall have nonskid surfaces. Any walk shall be ramped if the slope exceeds 3 percent. Walks that have gradients from 2 to 3 percent shall be provided with level platforms at 200-foot intervals and at intersections with other walks. Ramps shall not have a slope greater than 8 percent, and preferably not greater than 5 percent. The ramps shall have handrails on both sides unless other protective devices are provided; every handrail shall have clearance of not less than 1½ inches between the back of the handrail and the wall or any other vertical surface behind it. Ramps shall not be less than 4 feet wide between curbs; curbs shall be provided on both sides. The curbs shall not be less than 4 inches high and 4 inches wide. A level platform in a ramp shall not be less than the full width of the ramp and not less than 5 feet long. Entrance

platforms and ramps shall be provided with protective weather barriers to shield them against hazardous conditions resulting from inclement weather.

(7) *Steps.* Exterior steps may be included in the site development as long as provisions are also provided for use by physically handicapped persons.

(8) *Grading.* Minimum lawn slopes shall be 2 percent; critical spot grade elevations shall be shown on the contract drawings. Insofar as practicable, lawn areas shall be designed without steep slopes.

(9) *Landscaping.* The landscaping plan should provide for a park-like setting of harmonious open spaces balanced with groves of indigenous and cultivated deciduous and evergreen trees. Shrubbery should be kept to a minimum. Steep slopes that are unsuitable for interment areas should be kept in their natural state.

(10) *Surface drainage.* Surface grades shall be determined in coordination with the architectural, structural and mechanical design of buildings and facilities so as to provide proper surface drainage.

(11) *Burial areas.* A site plan of the cemetery shall include a burial layout. If appropriate, the burial layout should reflect the phases of development in the various sections. The first phase of construction should contain sufficient burial sites to meet the foreseeable demand for at least 10 years. All applicable dimensions to roadways, fences, utilities or other structures shall be indicated on the layout.

(12) *Gravesites.* Gravesites shall be laid out in uniform pattern. There shall be a minimum of 10 feet from the edge of roads and drives and a minimum of 20 feet from the boundaries or fence lines. Maximum distance from the edge of a permanent road to any gravesite shall not be over 275 feet. Temporary roads may be provided to serve areas in phase developments.

(13) *Monumentation.* Each grave shall be marked with an appropriate marker and each cemetery shall maintain a register of burials setting forth the name of each person buried and the designation of the grave in which he/she is buried. Permanent gravesite control markers shall be installed based on

Department of Veterans Affairs

§ 39.21

a grid system throughout the burial area unless otherwise specified. This will facilitate the gravesite layout, placement of utility lines, and alignment of headstones.

(14) *Entrance*. The entrance should be an architectural or landscape feature that creates a sense of arrival.

(15) *Memorial walkway*. Each cemetery should have an area for the display of memorials donated by veterans groups and others. Such areas may take the form of a path or walkway and should provide a contemplative setting for visitors.

(16) *Donation items*. Family members and others often wish to donate items such as benches and trees. Acceptable items of donation should be specified in the cemetery plan. The plan should also designate appropriate locations for such items.

(17) *Flag/assembly area*. There shall be one primary flagpole for the United States flag. This flag shall be lighted. A turf assembly area should be developed for major gatherings such as Memorial Day. The assembly area may be focused on the flag. The area may also incorporate an architectural or a landscape feature that functions as a platform or backdrop for speakers.

(18) *Site furnishings*. Site furnishings include signage, trash receptacles, benches, and flower containers. These items should be coordinated and complement each other, the architectural design and the cemetery as a whole. They should be simple, durable, standardized and properly scaled.

(19) *Carillons*. The cemetery development plan should include a location for a carillon tower. Carillons are normally donated. They are not provided for in the grant.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 501, 2408)

§ 39.21 Space criteria for support facilities.

These criteria are based on a projected average burial rate of one to six per day, staffing by position, and a defined complement of maintenance and service equipment. For cemeteries with less than one or more than six burials per day, support facilities are considered on an individual basis in accordance with § 39.19(d). In converting Net Square Feet (NSF) to Gross Square

Feet (GSF), a conversion factor of 1.5 is the maximum allowed. The applicant shall, in support of the design, include the following as an attachment to the application: a list of all grounds maintenance supplies and equipment and the number of Full Time Employees (FTE) by job assignment for the next 10 years.

(a) *Administrative building*. The administrative building should be approximately 1,600 NSF in total, providing space, as needed, for the following functions:

- (1) Cemetery director's office;
- (2) Other offices (as needed);
- (3) Administrative staff (lobby/office area);
- (4) Operations (file/office/equipment/work area);
- (5) Family/conference room;
- (6) Military honors team;
- (7) Refreshment unit;
- (8) Housekeeping aide's closet; and
- (9) Restroom facilities.

(b) *Maintenance/service building*. The maintenance/service building may be combined with the administrative building. The maintenance/service building should be approximately 2,200 NSF in total, providing heated and air conditioned space, as needed, for the following functions:

- (1) Foreman's office;
- (2) Lunch room;
- (3) Kitchen unit;
- (4) Toilet and locker room facilities;
- (5) Housekeeping aide's closet; and
- (6) Vehicle and equipment maintenance and storage.

(c) *Vehicle and equipment storage*. Approximately 275 NSF/Bay as needed. Not all types of vehicles and equipment require storage in heated space. Based on climatic conditions, it may be justified to rely completely on open structures rather than heated structures to protect the following types of vehicles and equipment: Dump Trucks, Pickup Trucks, Cemetery Automobiles, Gang and Circular Mowers.

(d) *Interment/committal service shelter*. One permanent shelter is authorized for every five interments per day. The shelter may include a covered area to provide seating for approximately 20 people and an uncovered paved area to provide space for approximately 50 additional people. The shelter may also