



Capital Development Committee

Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado’s Legislature

FISCAL YEAR 2025-26 CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION REQUEST

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
Field Artillery Readiness Center

2022-012

Project Status

This is a continuation project, although the scope has changed significantly from the original request. The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) first requested and received funding for Phase I in FY 2021-22. The department originally planned to request Phase II in FY 2023-24 and Phase III in FY 2025-26. This year’s request is for Phase II and the project is now a four-phase project with Phase III projected to be requested in FY 2028-29 and Phase IV in FY 2029-2030.

After receiving the Phase I funding, DMVA encountered difficulty finding a suitable parcel for the project and could not begin Phase I, the design phase, before a parcel was acquired. In August 2023, DMVA acquired 32 acres of non-aeronautical land at the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport. The CDC approved the purchase of the land during its January 12, 2023, meeting as part of the regular supplemental request process. The supplemental request was for \$5,592,930 CCF and \$5,700,000 CF.

In January of 2024, DMVA’s contracted architect and engineer began design services for the planned 75,332-GSF readiness center, designed to accommodate the 236-soldier 157th Field Artillery Unit and a headquarters battery. In May of 2024, Colorado and Virginia signed an agreement to reallocate \$15.5 million in federal funds set aside for the readiness center project in 2026 to an at-risk Virginia army-aviation support facility project, in exchange for an additional \$15.5 million in federal funds (for a total of \$31.0 million) going to Colorado for the readiness center project in 2029. DMVA terminated the original design contract in late May 2024. \$256,342 in CCF had already been spent and the remaining \$358,407 will be returned to the state.

Table 1
Prioritization

Prioritized By	Priority	Notes
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs	1 of 1	
Office of State Planning and Budgeting	3 of 6	Recommended for funding.

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Table 2
Prior Appropriation and Request Information

Fund Source	Prior Appropriation	Budget Year FY 2025-26	Out Year FY 2026-27	Future Requests	Total Costs
CCF	\$614,750	\$0	\$0	\$10,333,000	\$10,947,750
CF	\$0	\$937,500	\$0	\$0	\$937,500
FF	\$1,844,250	\$2,812,500	\$0	\$32,477,000	\$37,133,750
Total	\$2,459,000	\$3,750,000	\$0	\$42,810,000	\$49,019,000

Table 3
Itemized Cost Information

Category	Prior Appropriation	Budget Year FY 2025-26	Out Year FY 2026-27	Future Requests	Total Costs
Land Acquisition	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Professional Services	\$2,459,000	\$3,750,000	\$0	\$1,442,000	\$7,651,000
Construction	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$37,991,000	\$37,991,000
Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,477,000	\$1,477,000
Miscellaneous	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Contingency	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,900,000	\$1,900,000
Total	\$2,459,000	\$3,750,000	\$0	\$42,810,000	\$49,019,000

Program Plan Status

Approved Program Plan: No

FCI: N/A

Project Description/Scope of Work

The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) is requesting a combination of cash funds and federal funds spending authority for the second phase of a four-phase project to construct a 42,541-GSF readiness center (armory) at the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport in Broomfield. The facility will accommodate two field artillery line units.

Phase I of the project performed planning work for the previously planned 75,332-GSF readiness center. Some of the architectural and engineering planning work on site investigation and schematic design may be usable for the new project scope.

This year's request for Phase II will cover the revised design work for the new scope. Phase III will be requested for FY 2028-29 and will cover additional professional services and construction;

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this phase will be an approximately 3:1 match of federal funds to state funds. Phase IV will be requested for FY 2029-2030 using solely federal funds and will cover equipment and furnishings.

DMVA explains that the additional federal funding will allow the readiness center to accommodate two field artillery line units: the A Battery and B Battery, 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery Regiment. A Battery is currently located in Longmont and B Battery is currently located in Aurora. DMVA also plans to eventually relocate the Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery Regiment, currently located in Colorado Springs, to the new building as well. DMVA says that combining all three batteries onto one site will improve readiness, increase operational efficiency, improve energy performance, and aid in recruiting and retention.

The Readiness Center will be made up of a 42,541-GSF main building along with a 4,182-GSF general purpose training bay, a 300-GSF controlled waste facility, and a 110-GSF flammable materials facility. The center will include a backup/emergency generator, organizational vehicle parking, electric power, photovoltaic panels, and a geothermal heating plant.

The new Readiness Center will have an authorized personnel strength of 150 soldiers across the Battery A and Battery B Field Artillery units. Eight to ten soldiers will utilize the Readiness Center on a full-time basis. Nine-eight military vehicles are authorized for the facility.

Cost assumption. The cost assumption was determined using federal cost estimating software, priced to mid-2030 for inflation purposes. The project's cost per GSF, including support buildings, is \$1,040. The project meets High Performance Certification program requirements. The project does not meet the Art in Public Places program requirements.

Table 4
Project Schedule

Project Component	Start Date	Completion Date
Design	October 2025	September 2027

Project Justification

The department explains that the field artillery units to be housed in the new facility currently operate out of the Longmont and Aurora readiness centers, which are two of the oldest facilities in DMVA's property inventory at 60 years old and are past their useful lives. The Longmont Readiness Center has a number of life, health, and safety issues, including non-code compliant electric systems and non-potable water flowing out of potable water faucets in bathrooms. Both current facilities lack sufficient office space, storage, and parking. Kitchen facilities and maintenance bays at these locations are also insufficient, and the readiness centers cannot be

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expanded since they are land-locked. The Longmont facility is not compliant with anti-terrorism force protection requirements, further impacting soldier safety. Both facilities are not compliant with current Army or Department of Defense criteria. According to the department, the overall condition of the current facilities degrades the soldiers' quality of life, thus reducing unit retention.

If the project is not funded, DMVA says that the older Longmont and Aurora facilities will continue to negatively impact the units' ability to train efficiently and subsequently their readiness. The department says the life safety issues at the Longmont facility will continue to put soldiers' safety at risk and negatively impacts unit retention.

Program Information

DMVA assists and protects the citizens of Colorado in the event of natural and man-made emergencies and disasters, and assists the state's veterans in obtaining earned benefits. According to the department, nearly all equipment, all maintenance, and all personnel costs are provided by the federal government for the National Guard's primary mission of augmenting the active-duty military. If the Governor directs the National Guard to perform a state mission, the state must rent the equipment and pay the soldiers and airmen.

The department says one of its major functions is to maintain and operate state-owned facilities for National Guard use and training. Unit training occurs one weekend each month, and an extended annual training lasts about two weeks.

The field artillery units that will occupy the new readiness center are known as the King of the Battle, and are the oldest units in the Colorado Army National Guard. Their mission is to defeat or disrupt the enemy with integrated firing to enable maneuver commanders to dominate in unified land operations. These units also provide support to the community during state active-duty missions.

Source of Cash Funds

The source of cash funds for this project is the DMVA Real Estate Proceeds Cash Fund.

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Operating Budget

The department expects utility costs for the new facility to be approximately \$53,000 per year. The disposition of the Longmont Readiness Center is estimated to result in a utility and maintenance cost decrease of \$11,000 per year. The state's share for utility costs is 50 percent. DMVA technicians and National Guard personnel are tasked with readiness center maintenance and cleaning, respectively, with occasional contracting required.

Staff Questions and Issues

1. The original ask was for a 75,332 square foot facility for a total cost of \$31M and the new request is for a 42,541 square foot facility for a total cost of \$49M. Is the higher price for a building a little over half the size of the original building due primarily to inflation? Or are there other aspects of the updated request that are driving the cost up despite the smaller square footage?
2. The narrative mentions that additional operational and maintenance funding will be needed in Fall 2031, can you expand on that more?

At the time of printing CDC staff have not yet received responses to these questions.