



**Department of
Veterans Affairs**

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News Release

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Secretary Shinseki Announces \$1 Million for Houston Cemetery

WASHINGTON -- Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki has announced a \$1 million contract from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to prepare construction documents for gravesite development and cemetery improvements at the Houston National Cemetery in Texas.

“By awarding this design contract, we begin the process of expanding and improving this historic national shrine,” said Secretary Shinseki. “Texas Veterans have come to expect high standard from Houston National Cemetery, and we are certain this project will be in keeping with that tradition.”

The design contract valued at \$1,120,559 was awarded to RVI Planning, a small business from Austin, Texas. This design project is scheduled for completion in spring 2010. Funding for construction of this project has been submitted in the Fiscal Year 2010 budget.

This fourth phase of development for the 44-year-old cemetery, when completed, will develop approximately 20 acres into new burial sections, including approximately 14,000 pre-placed double depth crypt gravesites, 5,750 columbarium niches and installation of 3,500 pre-placed crypts in existing burial sections.

The project also calls for construction of a new public information center and restrooms, a committal shelter, access roads and parking, water distribution and irrigation systems, utilities, fencing, signs and landscaping. Other improvements will include repairs to existing roads and storm sewers, upgrades to the existing electrical distribution system and improvements to the existing maintenance facility.

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Houston National Cemetery 2/2/2/2

Veterans with a discharge issued under conditions other than dishonorable, their spouses and eligible dependent children can be buried in a VA national cemetery. Other burial benefits available for all eligible Veterans, regardless of whether they are buried in a national cemetery or a private cemetery, include a burial flag, a Presidential Memorial Certificate and a government headstone or marker. Families of eligible decedents may also order a memorial headstone or marker when remains are not available for interment.

In the midst of the largest expansion since the Civil War, VA operates 130 national cemeteries in 39 states and Puerto Rico and 33 soldiers' lots and monument sites. More than 3 million Americans, including Veterans of every war and conflict, are buried in VA's national cemeteries on more than 18,000 acres of land.

For information on the Houston National Cemetery, call the cemetery office at (281) 447-8686.

Information on VA burial benefits can be obtained from national cemetery offices, from the Internet at www.cem.va.gov or by calling VA regional offices toll-free at (800) 827-1000.

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