



SIERRA CLUB VENTANA CHAPTER

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Fort Ord Reuse Authority
SUBJECT: Reassessment of the Base Reuse Plan
DATE: June 1, 2012

VIA: plan@fora.org

The Ventana Chapter of the Sierra Club, FORA subcommittee, submits the following five recommendations for the reassessment, review and consideration of the Fort Ord Base Reuse Plan (BRP):

1. Develop a vigorous marketing plan based on the recommendations in BRP Volume 3, pages III-3 to III-6;
2. To the extent possible given the entitlements that have been granted as of June 1, 2012 ensure that no new entitlements are granted outside the Army urbanized footprint until that footprint is built out.
3. Do a rigorous analysis and implementation of the jobs/housing ratio required by the BRP and Chapter 8;
4. Promptly implement several mandated policies in the BRP;
5. Develop a consistent monitoring and evaluation process for measuring FORA's progress toward meeting the long-term goals of the base reuse plan.

1. A Vigorous Marketing Plan

According to Volume 3 of the BRP, FORA, "...should create a comprehensive marketing strategy and plan for all Fort Ord sites and the surrounding environs, reflecting an overall vision and identity for the area."¹ It appears that this has never been done. Volume 3 of the BRP further states, "FORA should take a proactive approach to joint marketing with both CSUMB and UCMBEST."² We urge FORA to take both these actions and to also study the recommendation concerning the establishment of a nonprofit development corporation for marketing as described in Volume 3, page III-5 of the BRP.

At the very least, the non-profit development corporation should have the following goals:

¹ Base Reuse Plan, Volume 3, page III-4.

² Ibid

- To attract businesses that serve recreational tourists coming to the former Ft. Ord and the Monterey Peninsula;
- To attract recreational tourists to the Monterey Peninsula; and
- To provide supplemental funding for the environmental conservation and maintenance activities that will be required as a result of the influx of tourists that the marketing campaign will attract.

The marketing program's accomplishments and budget should be evaluated annually at the same time that the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is evaluated.

With the right marketing program, the former Fort Ord could become the "Recreational Capital of California." In the sport of bicycling, for example, the Sea Otter Classic is already an established event. In 2012, this event hosted nearly 10,000 athletes and 50,000 race fans. However, the Sea Otter Classic should not be the primary emphasis of the marketing program, but rather one of a host of year-round recreational events, programs and opportunities for people of all ages. The marketing program should attract grandparents, parents and children for family bicycle outings, senior citizens to rent recumbent, tandem, surrey style, and electric bicycles to use on bicycle lanes throughout the National Monument, State Beach and University Campus. There should be off-road bicycles for riding on the designated mountain bike paths throughout the Fort Ord National Monument. The Bureau of Land Management should establish and enforce a mountain bike policy such as Sierra Club's mountain bike policy at <http://sierraclub.org/policy/conservation/mtnbike.aspx>. We believe that this vision of bicycle-oriented, pedestrian-centered communities with an interconnected network of bicycle trails adjoining a college town will attract business owners who want their employees to work in an area that fosters healthy families and has affordable housing.

The creation of the new Fort Ord National Monument under the Bureau of Land Management ought to be one of the centerpieces of the marketing plan. Additionally, the impending Habitat Conservation Plan should be amended to require supplemental funding for environmental conservation within the National Monument's borders, which will be necessitated by the additional tourists who will be attracted to the area by the marketing program.

The BRP makes frequent references to equestrian trails and horse parks, in addition to a bicycle network. We note that Fort Ord was one of the last active cavalry posts in the U.S. Army; and is well suited for equestrian uses. This fact should be stressed in the marketing, along with a mention of the museum or museums to be established at in the Fort Ord area.

2. No New Entitlements Outside of the Army Urbanized Footprint

We strongly urge the FORA board to adopt a policy that will postpone any developments outside of the Army Urbanized Footprint (except the Veteran's Cemetery) until the Footprint is built out or 20 years pass, whichever is sooner.

3. A Rigorously-analyzed and Implemented Jobs/Housing Ratio

The jobs/housing ratio described on page 92 of Volume 1 of the BRP establishes a ratio of 2.06 jobs/household including CSUMB dwelling units or 2.67 jobs/household excluding CSUMB. Volume 1, Page 120 of the BRP explains the rationale underlying this requirement and Section 8.02.020(t) of the Master Resolution requires each land use agency to include policies and programs in their general plan to ensure compliance with the 1997 adopted ratio. We strongly recommend that the reassessment include an analysis to determine if there is an appropriate balance between the number of jobs in various salary/wage ranges and the number of dwelling units in various housing affordability categories.

For example, Seaside Highlands contains 380 homes that sold in the near-million dollar range, whereas the Dunes Regional Shopping Center contains mostly retail jobs whose wages appear to be \$20 per hour or less. One of the reasons for putting the jobs/housing ratio requirement in the BRP was to reduce travel demands on key roadways by reducing the length of commutes to work and/or shifting vehicle trips to alternate transportation modes. The jobs/housing ratio analysis should be rigorous enough to ensure that the jobs to be created will match the cost of the housing to be built.

We note that the Main Gate (shopping center) Project will be a 100% non-residential project with projected employment of 775 to 830 new service and professional positions. This should help achieve the jobs/housing ratio base-wide. However, we are unable to find the breakdown of projected lower-paid service jobs in the Main Gate Project compared to projected higher-paid professional positions. It is this lack of rigorous jobs/housing analysis that we recommend be corrected.

Probably the greatest disappointment of base reuse process occurred when the University of California Monterey Bay Education, Education and Technology Center (MBEST) failed to attract the projected 925,000 square feet of office and R&D space from Silicon Valley firms described in BRP Volume 3, page II-10. Instead of the thousands of high-paying R&D/office/business and industrial park jobs projected in Volume 1, page 45 of the BRP, MBEST in November 2011 acknowledged failure and greatly downsized its expectations (see the November 17, 2011 UC Monterey Bay Education, Science, and Technology Center Visioning Process prepared by Urban Design Associates). Perhaps a vigorous marketing plan created by FORA could have avoided this failure.

At this time when FORA is reassessing, reviewing, and considering the BRP, our subcommittee requests FORA to adopt and implement much more stringent standards for analysis and implementation of the jobs/housing ratio and to make the attraction of more plentiful and higher-paying jobs one of its most important priorities.

4. Failure to Implement Certain BRP Policies

For travelers on State Highway 1 who view the former Fort Ord from the highway, the ugliest view is the westward facing back side of the Dunes Regional Shopping Center

at the Imjin Parkway interchange. There are many attractive design features of the Dunes project, but the fenced-in area of loading docks and dumpster enclosures above which tasteless big box store signs accost the traveler's eyes is antithetical to the aesthetic values long associated with the Monterey area. It is a visual blight that will repel visitors who arrive in expectation of an environmentally-sensitive community.

The visual blight could be mitigated by implementation of the mandated policy found on page 71 of Volume 1 of the BRP. This policy calls for establishment of an open space corridor which is a minimum of 100 feet wide along the entire eastern edge of State Highway 1. The policy further calls for this corridor to be landscaped via a master landscape plan to reinforce the regional landscape setting along the northern entryway to the Monterey Peninsula area. Apparently, such a master landscape plan was either never developed or not enforced because the area we refer is nearly devoid of trees. A series of tall trees growing close together in the corridor area just south of the Imjin Parkway interchange would help mitigate the visual pollution.

Another important policy that needs to be implemented is the requirement for FORA to develop regional urban design guidelines. This policy is described and referenced in Volume 1 of the BRP on pages 235, 240, 247, 251, 260, 261, 275, 276, 277 and 279. Although Highway 1 Design Guidelines were developed in 2005, they only apply to the Highway 1 corridor, not the remainder of the areas of the base for which development is planned. Furthermore, the Highway 1 Design Guidelines failed to prevent the visually ugly area in the vicinity of the Imjin Parkway interchange. In their response to our public record request for the regional urban design guidelines, FORA staff acknowledged that such guidelines do not exist. They should be developed promptly and implemented in such a way as to provide visual continuity when traveling between areas as diverse as CSUMB, the Dunes project, Seaside Highlands, etc. Finally, the creation of the Fort Ord National Monument has also made the creation of the FORA urban design guidelines imperative.

Our subcommittee believes that the commercial success of areas like Carmel, Pacific Grove and Monterey, where tasteful signage guidelines are encouraged, will serve as evidence to FORA, Marina, Seaside, Del Rey Oaks, Monterey and the County that tasteful regional urban design guidelines and implementation of a master landscaping plan would be more effective ways of increasing business profits than allowing the types of strip mall signage that currently blights the Imjin Parkway entranceway. Well-executed marketing materials might showcase some of the good design that is already included in the specific plans for the Dunes, East Garrison, and Marina Heights projects. Our Sierra Club FORA subcommittee believes that the ultimate economic benefits that will result from integrating the entire base into one aesthetically pleasing continuum will foster long-term financial success.

5. Consistent Monitoring of the Performance and Effectiveness of the BRP

In 1996, the FORA board defined its missions in Volume 3 of the BRP. Among them was to, "Develop a process for monitoring conformance with the CIP and the Reuse

Plan (emphasis added) that maintains the integrity of the plan...”³ The 1998 BRP contains six design principles,⁴ eight goals,⁵ 70 objectives,⁶ 363 policies⁷ and 582 programs.⁸ For each of these there is at least one metric (and in some cases multiple metrics) that can help FORA board members and the public judge overall progress in achieving the principles, goals, objectives, policies and programs contained in the BRP. No comprehensive assessment of these principles, goals, objectives, policies and programs has ever been done. An evaluation of all of these items is an essential component of a complete reassessment of the BRP. However, given the short amount of time available for the reassessment process, it’s unlikely that all of these items can be evaluated prior to December 2012. Therefore FORA and EMC should determine which principles, goals, objectives, policies and programs are the most important and therefore should be given the highest priority for evaluation.

The purpose of this evaluation is to give the FORA board and the public a more accurate picture of:

- How much progress has been made in achieving the goals and objectives of the BRP.
- How well the design principles and policies of the BRP have been followed.
- The extent to which the programs have succeeded.

We further suggest that for some of the goals and objectives, it would be useful to do a retrospective analysis of progress over time towards these goals and objectives. The following broad measures of performance are of particular interest to us:

- The amount of progress toward the completion of the Habitat Conservation Plan.
- A graph and table showing the number of new, non-construction related jobs added to businesses on the former Fort Ord for each year from 1998 to the present, broken down by full time versus part-time/seasonal; and broken down by category of salary/wages.⁹
- A graph and table of the amount of development fees collected for each year from 1998 to the present.
- A graph and table of total land sales amounts collected for each year from 1998 to the present.

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Our subcommittee of the Ventana Chapter of the Sierra Club believes that it is not too late for the former Fort Ord to become a place of aesthetic beauty, environmental

³ Base Reuse Plan, Volume 3, page I-4.

⁴ Base Reuse Plan, Volume 1, page 9.

⁵ Base Reuse Plan, Volume 1, page 17.

⁶ Base Reuse Plan, Volume 2, multiple pages.

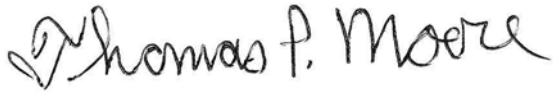
⁷ Base Reuse Plan, Volume 2, multiple pages.

⁸ Base Reuse Plan, Volume 2, multiple pages.

⁹ i.e., minimum wage to \$50K; \$50K to \$100k and more than \$100K or a similar set of categories.

protection, with an abundance of new and well-paying jobs. We respectfully request your attention to our above-described recommendations for assessment, review, and consideration of the Base Reuse Plan.

Sincerely yours,



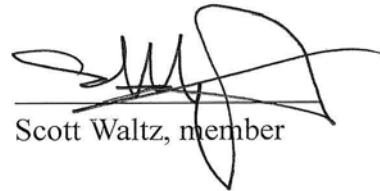
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