

BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE

Community Profile

November 2009

Fort Gillem, Georgia

Community Contact:

Fred E. Bryant
Executive Director
Forest Park/Fort Gillem Local
Redevelopment Authority
745 Forest Parkway
Forest Park GA 30297
404-366-4720 Ext 119
fbryant@forestparkga.org

Web Address:

www.forestparkga.org

Installation Contact:

Herbert J. Wolverton
Base Transition Coordinator
Fort Gillem
1386 Troop Row SW
Fort McPherson, GA 30330
404-464-2277
herbert.wolverton@us.army.mil

State Contact:

Phil Browning
Executive Director
Georgia Military Affairs
Coordinating Committee
(GMACC)
#7 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive
Atlanta, GA 30334
404-656-9755
pbrowning@gov.state.ga.us

Closure at a Glance

Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA):

Forest Park/Fort Gillem Local Redevelopment Authority

Geographic area affected by closing:

Forest Park, Clayton, Georgia, Metro Atlanta, Southeast

Population of affected area (before closure): 21,806

Total Acres to be Disposed: 1,190 acres

Estimated Job Loss Impact:

	Jobs Lost
Military Personnel	511
Civilian Personnel	570
Contractors	Unknown

Source: 2005 BRAC Report

Economic Adjustment Challenges

- Clayton County has the lowest median household income in the ten-county metro Atlanta region
- Forest Park has the lowest per capita income and highest unemployment rate in the area
- Fort Gillem has 397 acres that require environmental remediation at an estimated cost between \$51 and \$160 million
- Fort Gillem's infrastructure is old and generally not reusable. Rehabilitation/capital improvement costs are estimated at over \$100 million
- The Fort Gillem mixed-use redevelopment project has a 20-25 year build out

Key Reuse Planning & Property Disposal Milestones

11/09/05	Federal Surplus Determination
9/25/06	LRA Homeless Outreach Completed
7/22/07	Reuse Plan Received by Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)/Army
9/12/08	HUD Determination on Submission
6/09	National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) Disposal Decision
Pending	Base Closure

Organization

The Forest Park/Fort Gillem LRA has an 11-member Board of Directors and an Executive Director. The Board of Directors is comprised of the Mayor and City Council of Forest Park, the City Manager, two Clayton County Commissioners, and the Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs. All of these individuals serve in their official capacities. The Executive Director is a local banker who is appointed to a two-year term. Local business leaders and private citizens from Forest Park and Clayton County serve on committees that assist the LRA in its planning efforts.

The Mayor, City Council, and City Manager of the City of Forest Park are recognized as a Redevelopment Authority under Georgia law. This Authority has all the powers necessary to serve as the Implementation Local Redevelopment Authority for Fort Gillem and will seek OEA recognition to serve in that capacity in October 2009.

Reuse Plan/Other Studies

Fort Gillem is 1,427-acre supply depot established in 1941. It consists of 94 buildings, 11 of which are suitable for adaptive reuse by the LRA. The Army will retain a 237-acre enclave in the southwestern portion of the base.

The LRA's Strategic Reuse Plan, submitted to HUD and the Army in 2007, called for a mixed-use redevelopment. Approximately 70 percent of the available property was planned for job-generating uses such as manufacturing, light industrial, warehousing, and commercial office space. Residential, retail, institutional, and recreational uses were planned for the southern portions of the base. The Fort Gillem redevelopment will: spur economic growth; produce a viable and sustainable community; facilitate improvements in educational opportunities for all citizens; enhance the quality of life; enhance stakeholder relations; and create one community. The plan is consistent with the goals and objectives of the City's Comprehensive Plan, the Livable Centers Initiative for Main Street, and the Farmers Market Master Plan.

The LRA has continued to refine its plan based on environmental constraints and market/economic conditions. The Fort Gillem Operating Plan was completed in 2008 and formed the basis for the rehabilitation/capital improvement program. The Fort Gillem Business Plan was completed in September 2009. The Operating and Business Plans have been used to finalize the Economic Development Conveyance proposal that will be submitted to the Army in late 2009. The LRA is also developing an Overlay Zoning District that will include Fort Gillem, and intends to pursue other projects, such as site survey and plan refinement work that will assist in preparing its Developments of Regional Impact application for submission to the Atlanta Regional Commission and Georgia Regional Transportation Authority in 2010.

Homeless Submission

In 2007, the LRA submitted a Homeless Assistance Application that called for the construction of an emergency shelter for women with male children ages 12-17 in response to a notice of interest from the Clayton County Community Services Authority and Calvary Refuge, two providers who have served the homeless in Clayton County for 20-25 years. While the providers had identified suitable property on Fort Gillem, their preference was to construct the new shelter on property owned by the providers and adjacent to an existing emergency shelter and transitional housing operated by Calvary Refuge. The LRA's Application was completed in accordance with the HUD checklist. Along with the Legally Binding Agreement, the LRA provided: an aerial photo and schematic of the on-post site; a real property diagram of the off-base site; a schematic of the floor plan for the proposed new facility; an unexecuted form of the Deed to Secure Debt and Assignment and Security Agreement; and a legal opinion by the City Attorney. On September 12, 2008, HUD issued a final determination on the accommodation and reuse plan.

The LRA contacted the Regional HUD office in Atlanta to receive a copy of the Consolidated Plan and to identify Homeless Providers in the Clayton Continuum of Care. In addition to publishing the legal notice requesting notices of interest (NOI), the LRA sent a letter to each provider informing them of the request and inviting them to the workshop

and tour of Fort Gillem. HUD officials participated in that workshop and were consulted from time to time throughout the outreach and application process. On a monthly-basis, the LRA met with the Clayton Task Force to End Homelessness and worked closely with potential providers to ensure they had information necessary to complete and submit a complete NOI. The LRA also advised each provider on the status of their request. After completing the application, the LRA informed each provider of the proposed accommodation and the rationale for the decision.

Implementation and Partnering Strategies

The LRA reuse plan will generate over 4,600 new jobs, with 2,300 coming in the first phase of redevelopment (2012-2017). Most of these jobs will be high-skill/wage with the potential to increase the per capita income of families within Forest Park as well as the median household income for Clayton County. The 4,600 new jobs will more than make up for those lost as a result of base closure and will offer new employment opportunities for citizens of Forest Park. The State Work Ready Initiative, partially funded by U.S. Department of Labor grants, will enable federal workers not moving to new locations to transition into supply chain and logistics jobs at Fort Gillem. Fort Gillem is also included in the Supply Chain Management Work Ready Region for Georgia.

The Army is responsible for the environmental contamination on Fort Gillem and for developing a remediation plan acceptable to the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD). The LRA continues to monitor ongoing and proposed remediation actions and maintains continuous contact with Army officials and EPD. The LRA and its Master Developer, Forest Park Development Partners, LLC, will plan for the possible privatization of the cleanup efforts, should that be in the best interests of the community's reuse plan. At this time, the Army retains liability and responsibility.

The LRA has developed a phased approach to the rehabilitation/capital improvement plan. The Business Plan identifies when certain infrastructure improvements will be required and identified potential sources of revenue, both public and private. The LRA has identified to OEA seven infrastructure-related projects that may qualify for federal funding (50 percent) should future federal funds become available. The City of Forest Park has included Fort Gillem in a tax allocation district that will produce almost \$80 million, much of which will be reinvested in infrastructure and other redevelopment costs.

The 2020-2025 buildout is the result of phasing in planned uses to take advantage of current and future market conditions. While industrial, warehousing, and commercial office opportunities are forecasted to rebound early in the development, residential and retail opportunities will lag. The LRA will use a three-phase approach and will not begin the next phase until the market demonstrates the ability to support it. The LRA has letters of interest from existing companies and organizations that desire to locate on Fort Gillem. The LRA also is considering alternative opportunities that will bring tenants to properties currently designated for residential, retail, and recreational uses.

Since early 2006, the LRA has pursued extensive community engagement on environmental and other matters pertaining to Fort Gillem. The LRA has hosted Army meetings to determine the desire for a Restoration Advisory Board. Along with its Economic Development Conveyance application, the LRA intends to propose a transfer and property disposal strategy that will cover the entire 1,190 acres. At this time, the LRA has neither received nor identified any public benefit conveyance requests.

The LRA continues to work closely with the Base Transition Coordinator, the BRAC Environmental Coordinator, and Army Secretariat and Staff. At the state level, the LRA interfaces with the Governor's Military Affairs Coordinating Committee, the Department of Economic Development, the Department of Community Affairs, and the Georgia EPD. The LRA also coordinates with the Atlanta Regional Commission, the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, the Clayton County Office of Economic Development and Development Authority, the Clayton County Chamber of Commerce, the Clayton County Board of Commissioners, the Clayton County School Board, and the City of Lake City.

Successes/Lessons Learned

The LRA engaged a Master Developer early in its planning process. This facilitated a realistic and cost-effective approach, and the development of a reuse plan with refinements to be executed by the developer upon transfer. This enables the LRA to realistically assess letters of interest from potential tenants and other vertical developers.

The composition of the LRA Board of Directors has expedited the planning and decision-making process. Many LRA actions require city governing body (Mayor and City Council) approval in the form of an ordinance or resolution to implement. Once the governing body has approved an action of the LRA, it is a simple process to draft the ordinance or resolution it will consider and approve at the next regular Council meeting. Similarly, having two Clayton County Commissioners on the Board of Directors facilitated the process whereby the County Board of Commissioners approved participation in the tax allocation district. The LRA receives a Regional Business Assistance grant from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs whose Commissioner represents Georgia on all LRAs.

The LRA Executive Director works very closely with the Base Transition Coordinator, the BRAC Environmental Coordinator, and the OEA Project Manager. This relationship has ensured prompt and thorough coordination of all matters pertaining to base closure and transfer. Potential issues are anticipated and handled before they create an impediment to the overall redevelopment planning effort.

The LRA refers to applicable federal and state law, the Code of Federal Regulations, the Base Redevelopment and Realignment Manual, and the HUD Guidebook on Military Base Reuse and Homeless Assistance to ensure its actions are substantively and procedurally correct.