

INSTALLATION MISSION GROWTH

Community Profile

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Fort Lewis, Washington

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Community at a Glance

Growth Management Organization (GMO):

City of Lakewood

Geographic area affected by military installation growth:

The primary area affected by growth at Fort Lewis is Thurston and Pierce counties and the communities of Lakewood, Tacoma, DuPont, Steilacoom, Yelm, Roy, and Lacey.

Regional Population of affected area: 1,063,400 (2009 estimated)

Top growth challenges:

- Traffic congestion on Interstate 5
- School forecasting uncertainties
- Condition and capacity of on-base schools
- Housing affordability
- Adequacy of public infrastructure

Outstanding requirements in support of mission growth:

Project Category	# of Projects	Sum of Project Cost	Sum of Funding Gap
Education	9	\$184 million	\$184 million
Transport	1	\$115 million	\$115 million
Totals:	10	\$299 million	\$299 million

Mission Growth at a Glance

Growth Action:

Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), Grow the Army (GTA), Army Modular Force (AMF), Global Defense Posture Review (GDPR)

Personnel Baseline and Growth Projection:

	Baseline (January 2005)	Build-out Projection (FY 2015)
Military Personnel	23,050	32,283
Dependents	35,036	49,070
Civilian Personnel	5,327	5,581
Contractors	3,415	4,229

Source: April 9, 2009, presentation by Tom Knight, Ft. Lewis Deputy Garrison Commander using multiple sources

Growth Factors affecting community planning: Frequent large scale deployments create planning challenges, particularly for estimating school enrollment.

Background

Fort Lewis is located in both Pierce and Thurston Counties and covers 136 square miles of the south Puget Sound region of Washington State. The installation is adjacent to the cities of Lakewood and DuPont and Town of Steilacoom and has significant impacts on neighboring jurisdictions, including the cities of Tacoma, Lacey, Yelm, Roy, Nisqually Tribe Reservation, and unincorporated areas of Pierce and Thurston Counties.

Fort Lewis is contiguous to McChord AFB, home of the C-17 transport fleet and Combat Airlift (Team McChord). Team McChord has flown continuous combat airlift every day since October 2001, providing airlift and aeromedical evacuation in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom and other contingencies around the world.

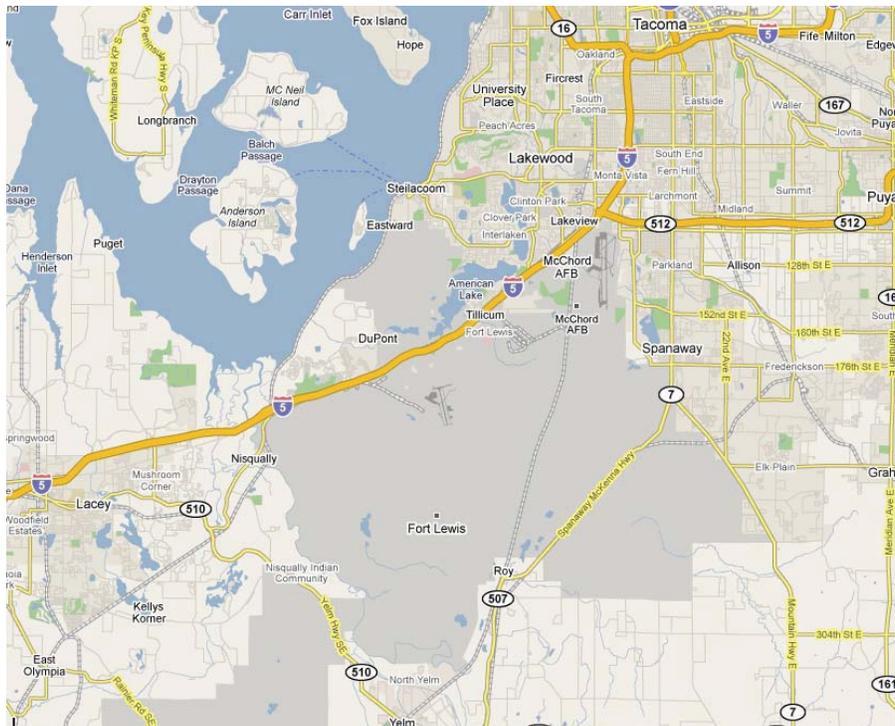


Figure 1: Fort Lewis and McChord AFB

Soldiers receive medical care in Fort Lewis' Madigan Army Medical Center (MAMC), which occupies more than 120 acres and serves approximately 160,000 soldiers, family members, and military retirees, making it one of the busiest hospitals in the Pacific Northwest. MAMC's four-building structure is one of the Army's most state-of-the-art and technically advanced medical centers.

Interstate 5, adjacent to Fort Lewis, divides the installation into North Fort and Main Post. The Seattle-Tacoma International Airport is approximately one hour north of the installation, and the military uses the ports of Tacoma (National Strategic Port) and Olympia for logistical operations.

Fort Lewis and County Growth

In 2005, the Department of the Army announced that troops stationed in Fort Lewis would expand significantly due to three Department of Defense initiatives: the transformation of units in the AMF, the implementation of 2005 BRAC decisions, and station changes based on GDPR.

<i>Fort Lewis</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>Net Change</i>	<i>% Change</i>
Military	19,089	30,800	11,711	61.3 %
Dependents	29,015	46,816	17,801	61.3 %
Totals	48,104	77,616	29,512	61.3 %
<i>Counties (including cities)</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>Net Change</i>	<i>% Change</i>
Pierce County	700,820	813,600	112,780	16.1 %
Thurston County	207,355	249,800	42,445	20.5 %
Totals	908,175	1,063,400	155,225	17.1 %

Table 1: Fort Lewis and County Growth

Source: Adapted from April 9, 2009 presentation by Tom Knight, Ft. Lewis Deputy Garrison Commander using multiple sources

The Department of the Army issued a Draft Environmental Impact Study in September 2009 for options that could further increase the active-duty population by approximately 5,500 soldiers and 110 helicopters. If approved, the total installation size would be 40,200 soldiers and 11,800 civilians; more than double the size from the previous decade. This growth presents opportunities and challenges to Fort Lewis, McChord AFB, and surrounding communities

When combined into Joint Base Lewis-McChord on January 31, 2010, the base will be the largest military installation on the West Coast, comprised of more than 415,000 acres, including Yakima Training Center in central Washington. It will support an on-base population and in neighboring communities of more than 100,000 people, including military personnel, families, civilian and contract employees, and retirees and their families.

Population Growth

Population in the Puget Sound region has experienced steady growth over the last 10 years. As of April 1, 2009, the population in Pierce and Thurston counties was estimated to have reached 1,063,400, an increase of 12,700 persons, or a 1.2 percent increase, from the previous year.

Municipal Growth in Study Area

	<i>2000</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>Net Change</i>	<i>% Change</i>
City of Tacoma	193,556	203,400	9,844	4.7 %
City of Lakewood	58,293	58,840	547	.8 %
City of Lacey	31,226	39,250	8,024	21.8 %
City of DuPont	2,452	7,650	5,198	201.4 %
Town of Steilacoom	6,049	6,285	236	3.4 %
Town of Roy	260	870	610	235.0 %
City of Yelm	3,289	5,625	2,336	56.6 %
Totals	295,125	319,190	26,795	8.15 %

Table 2: Municipal Growth in Study Area

Source: 2009 Washington State Population Trends Report and 2012 population figures based on estimates found in various Comprehensive Land Use Plans.

Since 2000, Pierce County has grown by an annual rate of 1.61 percent and Thurston County by 2.05 percent. The annual population growth for municipalities adjacent to these installations varies, including the City of Tacoma at 0.5 percent, the Town of Steilacoom at 0.37 percent, and City of Lacey, at 2.42 percent. Also since 2000, the City of Lakewood's population has increased by a total of less than one tenth of one percent, from 58,293 to 58,840. The rate of population growth in the south Puget Sound region has been fairly steady since the 2000 Census, but shows discernible population spikes after 2005 that correspond with the defense-related growth at Fort Lewis. Of the 5,150 people living in Yelm, 2,211 (41 percent) are Fort Lewis soldiers, family members or civilians employed on post. Of the 7,390 citizens of DuPont, 2,985 (40 percent) are Fort Lewis soldiers, family members or federally employed civilians.

Economic Impacts

More than 25 percent of all Federal military and civilian personnel stationed in the state of Washington live in Pierce and Thurston Counties. The Washington State Office of Financial Management has defined the Economic Impact Region for Fort Lewis and McChord AFB as the area within a 50-mile radius of the base. This area is subject to significant base-generated economic impacts, and includes the communities of Pierce and Thurston counties, the cities of Tacoma, Lakewood, DuPont, Lacey, Yelm; and the towns of Steilacoom and Roy.

The current military presence creates a stable source of employment and tax revenue for the local economies. In a 2004 report, the Washington State Office of Financial Management found that Fort Lewis and McChord AFB directly and indirectly account for over 74,000 jobs in Pierce County and over 87,000 statewide. The total impacts in terms of labor earnings sum to nearly \$2.9 billion within Pierce County (about 30 percent of the county total wage disbursements) and nearly \$3.4 billion statewide.

Direct Impacts of Major Military Bases in Pierce County, 2003

Employment, uniformed and civilian	34,624
Payroll	\$1.876 Billion
Military retiree pensions	\$524.9 million
TriCare payments to private providers	\$31.1 million

Contracts for goods and services

Pierce County vendors	\$25.2 million
Statewide	\$52.1 million
On-base retail spending	\$200.9 million
Net direct impact*	\$2.2312 Billion

* Reduced by on-base retail spending

Table 3: Major Military Bases in Pierce County Impacts, 2003

Source: Economic Impacts of the Military Bases in Washington, WA OFM, July 2004

All of this growth will have significant impacts to quality of life for the communities within the region. As new residents relocate to the region, they will affect the economy, housing markets, employment, retail businesses, social services, and governmental institutions.

The Department of Defense's recommendations for increased presence of the military in the south Puget Sound region combined with the region's steady natural population migration will lead to increased real estate development, growing populations, and increased traffic. There is a high level of community support for Fort Lewis and McChord AFB. There is also an acknowledgment from the stakeholders that these military facilities are essential to the local economy and that the community must assist them in maintaining their readiness status. The cities and counties surrounding the installations are eager to assist them in maintaining their force and supporting their families. However, with regional growth coordination planning only recently underway, data has yet to be analyzed and tools yet to be developed to evaluate military growth across the region.

Implementation and Partnering Strategies

At a May 2008 Growth Forum and again at an April 2009 workshop, business representatives from local chambers of commerce joined together with officials from the state and federal government, installation staff, as well as hundreds of representatives from cities, counties, school districts, fire departments, and utility providers to hear briefings on military growth and to identify sectors that needed to be analyzed in order to best accommodate military growth. Following these meetings, the City of Lakewood, on behalf of the stakeholder communities in the Fort Lewis and McChord AFB area, prepared two applications to OEA requesting planning assistance. In January 2009, OEA awarded Lakewood a grant to study congestion on Interstate 5 through Ft. Lewis (Figure 2). The City has partnered with the Washington State Department of Transportation and a consultant team for this effort. In August 2009, Lakewood was awarded a second grant to create a Growth Coordination Plan for the region, which will identify and analyze community gaps that exist in the region in order to properly handle the growth at Fort Lewis and McChord AFB. The

subject areas to be examined include school capacity and location, housing affordability and availability, transportation congestion, community and social needs, and other emerging issues. A summary of the two studies follows.



Figure 2: Interstate 5 through Fort Lewis

Interstate 5 Transportation Alternatives Analysis and Operational Traffic Model

The grant funds efforts to refine computer traffic models and determine which transportation alternatives would best address the challenges in the Interstate 5 corridor adjacent to Fort Lewis and McChord AFB. The 18 month study, closely coordinated with the Washington State Department of Transportation, Fort Lewis, McChord AFB, and other regional stakeholders, considers which strategies hold the most promise for reducing the congestion drivers experience on Interstate 5 as a result of the increased base population.

The work effort will focus on the development of a detailed operational traffic model of Interstate 5 mainline freeway ramps and the adjacent arterial network, as well as appropriate and necessary traffic forecasts needed to support that model.

The project will provide an assessment of current traffic conditions; determine future transportation needs of the expected population increase; develop and analyze alternatives within the study area to accommodate the rapid influx of people; identify resource needs and potential sources; provide a coordinated action plan; and assure informed decision making.

Fort Lewis and McChord AFB Growth Coordination Plan

The Fort Lewis and McChord AFB Growth Coordination Plan, currently in the request for proposal phase, will assess a variety of subject matter, including education, housing, infrastructure, emergency services' and economic development and will provide guidance to local communities about managing future growth and demands for services. The project will enable local communities and service providers to coordinate the foundational steps necessary to absorb significant population and economic impacts of Fort Lewis and McChord AFB growth.

This effort will establish the regional context for more detailed actions by protecting critical natural environments, managing resources, directing growth, and providing a coordination plan for providing regional services in an efficient and effective manner.

Topics expected to be covered in the Growth Coordination Plan include:

Education

An important consideration for communities is preparing for increased enrollment and funding deficiencies at local public schools. Growth impacts on the postsecondary and vocational education services in the region will also be assessed.

Transportation

The growth of the south Puget Sound region and Fort Lewis and McChord AFB will result in a growing demand for additional regional transportation infrastructure. It is an important responsibility of local government to plan, fund, and construct transportation infrastructure so that it is in place when the impacts of growth develop (known in the Washington Growth Management Act as concurrency).

Housing

One of the most pressing issues for defense communities is where to house the new influx of residents. Some of the personnel will live in on-base housing, but the majority will not. A major challenge is to determine how to provide sufficient off-base housing at affordable prices in the surrounding communities to meet the increased demand.

Utilities & Emergency Services

Future growth at these installations may impact existing and future utility plans and emergency service demands. There are several different sources of the various utilities including both public and private utilities providing water, sewer, solid waste, telephone, electric, gas, cable, and internet access services, as well as a number of different special districts providing emergency services.

Quality of Life / Support Network

Community and social needs for the arriving troops and their families, will be evaluated. Issues and services may include: libraries, cultural resources and facilities in arts and entertainment, parks and recreation facilities, public access open space and trails, and teen centers.

Economic Opportunities

Growth at Fort Lewis and McChord AFB could result in increased opportunities for additional prime contracts, partnerships, subcontracts, suppliers, and defense related companies, as well as increased demand for office and warehouse space.

Successes/Lessons Learned

An effective Fort Lewis and McChord AFB is fundamental to the well being of the south Puget Sound communities and the military installations. The impacts of Department of Defense-related growth at Fort Lewis and the associated population growth throughout the region will increase demands on a multitude of areas, including housing, education, public utilities, transportation, urban and regional planning, public safety-emergency services, health and social services, and other quality of life issues.

The stakeholders surrounding Fort Lewis and McChord AFB know that the success of the upcoming Growth Coordination Plan process hinges on the ability to bring the affected parties to the table and begin to assess the related growth impacts and opportunities. This planning effort will provide the region with technical information concerning existing capacity and future demands. It will provide Fort Lewis, McChord AFB, and the region with information to support funding requests to address impacts due to implementation of the planned growth. And it will establish a framework for coordinating military growth issues into the future, but the document and data itself won't lead to a better community. The stakeholders remain committed to ensuring that this planning effort is sustained and that the recommendations are implemented.