

# INSTALLATION MISSION GROWTH

## Community Profile

November 2009

### Fort Hood, Texas

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#### Community at a Glance:

##### Growth Management Organization (GMO):

Heart of Texas Defense Alliance (HOTDA)

##### Geographic area affected by military installation growth:

Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)

Regional Population of affected area: 378,935 (2008 U.S. Census Bureau)

##### Top growth challenges:

- Transportation infrastructure
- Impact of future military reductions
- Workforce (medical/defense)
- Local funding challenges
- Census 2010 and deployments

##### Outstanding requirements in support of mission growth:

Project Category	# of Projects	Sum of Project Cost	Sum of Funding Gap
Transportation	11	\$388,400,000	\$308,000,000
Totals:	11	\$388,400,000	\$308,000,000

#### Mission Growth at a Glance

##### Growth Action:

Army Modular Force (AMF), Grow the Army (GTA), Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)

##### Personnel Baseline and Growth Projection:

	Baseline (January 2005)	Build-out Projection (2009)
Military Personnel	44,214	62,020
Dependents	66,681	100,998
Civilian Personnel	7,311	5,208
Contractors	7,613	12,089

Source: Army Stationing and Installation Plan, as of October 31, 2008; III Corps & Fort Hood Facts Book, March 2005

**Growth Factors affecting community planning:** The timing and impacts of BRAC 2005 and Army Transformation on Fort Hood's strength have complicated planning. Fort Hood grew from 41,000 in FY 2003 to a peak of more than 53,000 in FY 2008 (30 percent increase) – almost 4,000 more than predicted. Temporary stationing of units, delays in BRAC moves, etc., created demand for community infrastructure. There is concern that a planned drop in the current end strength number to a lower steady troop strength will adversely impact the local housing market as well as some public services.

# Background

## Context

The Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA is located in one of the fastest-growing economic corridors in the nation. It is the 14th fastest growing MSA (U.S. Census Bureau), comprising 2,859 square miles with a 2008 population of 378,935. The MSA is centered 60 miles north of Austin and 50 miles south of Waco. Fort Hood is the major economic driver in the region (\$7.1 billion annual economic impact, \$10.85 billion annual statewide economic impact<sup>1</sup>) followed by a growing medical/bioscience cluster in east Bell County centered on the Scott & White Healthcare system that employs more than 7,000 people. Fort Hood, established in 1942, occupies 335 square miles in Bell and Coryell Counties, and is the largest active armored installation in the U.S. with five Heavy Brigade Combat Teams, two Combat Aviation Brigades, a Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), six separate brigades supporting the III Corps, and the U.S. Army Operational Test Command.

## Department of Defense Action

Due to AMF initiatives, Fort Hood was projected to grow to a peak of 49,000 soldiers in FY 2006. BRAC 2005 relocated a Division Headquarters and Heavy Brigade Combat Team to Fort Carson, CO, and maneuver, aviation, and support units to Fort Bliss, TX. In 2006, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment was transferred to Fort Hood from Fort Carson, and in 2007, the Army temporarily activated 3,500 soldiers of 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division at Fort Hood. New AMF units added to Fort Hood during this period included a Chemical Brigade, Engineer Brigade, and Air Defense Brigade. In FY 2008, Fort Hood peaked at an authorized strength of over 53,000. In September 2009, the Army restationed 1st Army Division-West at Fort Hood (with three Training Support Brigades) to support the post-mobilization training of all Army Reserve and National Guard units west of the Mississippi.

## Community Response

The Heart of Texas Defense Alliance, a municipally-funded, non-profit regional organization representing the seven major cities and three counties of the MSA, was created in 2003 to promote the importance and sustainability of Fort Hood and defense-related industries, organizations, and institutions in the region.

In 2004, the region utilized an Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) Advanced Planning Grant focused on economic diversification. In 2006, an Interagency Group (consisting of city managers, workforce, education (pre-kindergarten through college), and economic development) was created to increase communication, regional collaboration, and trust and act on issues of mutual interest to the region. Since 2008, OEA has been working with the Fort Hood Community to assess and determine challenges from military growth.

# Implementation and Partnering Strategies

## Discussion

At the onset of Fort Hood's growth beginning in 2004, the Department of the Army forecasted it would be a temporary, two-year situation – peaking in FY 2006 and returning to pre-BRAC 2005 levels well before FY 2011. As a result, the communities around Fort Hood agreed to provide the community support infrastructure (e.g., housing, schools, and services) to absorb the temporary surge. No additional Family or Unaccompanied Personnel Housing, schools, or services were programmed on the installation. Seventy-five percent of Fort Hood soldiers reside off the installation, with 98 percent of those living within 10 miles. Since March 2003, Fort Hood continuously deployed one division and supporting units in support of the Overseas Contingency Operation (OCO) resulting in the facility/training capacity to temporarily assign additional units on the installation and adjust modular force stationing. Over 30,000 reserve component soldiers have mobilized, trained, deployed, redeployed, and demobilized at Fort Hood. Rather than the authorized strength peaking at 49,000 in FY 2006, Fort Hood continued to grow, reaching an assigned strength of 53,443

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<sup>1</sup>Texas State Comptroller, 2008

soldiers in FY 2008. Fifty-four percent of Fort Hood soldiers are married (five percent to another soldier) and 52 percent of sergeants and below have family members. The communities continued to sustain their support to the assignment surge: 8,700 new homes, seven new elementary schools, and three new middle schools were constructed in Killeen and Harker Heights from 2003 to 2008.

## Transportation

U.S. Highway (US) 190 is the principal east-west mobility artery for the movement of Fort Hood-connected personnel as well as for connectivity between Killeen and Interstate (I) 35. During certain hours of the day, congestion on the roadway presents serious mobility and safety concerns. \$20.5 million in State transportation funds were awarded in 2004 to alleviate installation ingress/egress at the Fort Hood main gate off of US 190 as well as congestion. Recorded traffic counts in the vicinity of Fort Hood exceed (by nearly a factor of three) those on I 35 between Austin and Dallas. While the Texas Department of Transportation has identified the need to widen US 190 (from four lanes to six), only one of four (totaling 13 miles) phases has been funded to date. The transportation projects listed (Table 1) represent short-term projects. If funds were made available, construction on these projects could begin immediately.

#	Project	Category	Total Projected Cost	Funding Committed	Funding Gap
1	US 190 - Phase I	transport	40,000,000	40,000,000	-
2	US 190 - Phase II	transport	54,800,000	2,300,000	52,500,000
3	US 190 - Phase III	transport	51,500,000	-	51,500,000
4	SH 195 Extension	transport	8,500,000	8,500,000	-
5	Railhead Rd @ US 190	transport	3,300,000	3,300,000	-
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>158,100,000</b>	<b>54,100,000</b>	<b>\$ 104,000,000</b>

Table 1: Transportation Costs

## Schools

The Killeen Independent School District responded to the growth by constructing seven new elementary and three new middle schools (\$136 million) between FY 2003 and 2008. Enrollments grew by 6,000 students during that period with 2,500 students documented as connected to Fort Hood. Analysis of attendance trends indicates that families are remaining in central Texas during these periods of repeated deployments – some Fort Hood units have deployed five times.

## Housing

Killeen and Harker Heights have seen the construction of 8,700 new homes from 2003 to 2008, with an average cost of \$110,540. Home sales prices have increased nearly three percent, relative to the national average. However, the recent move of 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division units to Fort Carson, CO in accordance with BRAC has resulted in a surge in inventory and an increase in the local Days On Market real estate metric. Credit tightening, coupled with departing soldiers not being backfilled, is creating a buyers' market imbalance. Anecdotally, soldiers departing Fort Hood are experiencing challenges in selling their houses due to market conditions, and many soldiers are not eligible for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Homeowners Assistance Program (HAP), as they purchased their home after July 2006.

## 2010 Census

An additional concern to local municipalities is the potential impact of Fort Hood deployments on Census 2010. The U.S. Census Bureau has determined that deployed soldiers will be counted against their Home of Record as opposed to the installation/community where they are currently assigned. This may result in a population "undercount" which could negatively impact formula funding distribution for federal and state programs of assistance and Congressional seat allocations.

## Successes/Lessons Learned

Strong relationships were established between Fort Hood and the surrounding communities years ago, and those have served to foster more effective and efficient communications during this period of growth and uncertainty. The Fort Hood leadership has committed to recurring Regional Leaders Information Forums in which information, ideas, and initiatives can be shared between military and community leaders.

The Executive and Legislative branches of the State of Texas have repeatedly demonstrated a commitment to assist not only the defense communities of central Texas, but the Fort Hood installation as well. During the biennial legislative session, members of the Texas House of Representatives spend time, known as legislators' day, at Fort Hood receiving updates on key initiatives and directly interacting with the soldiers assigned to Fort Hood. This provides a first-hand experience for state policymakers and has been instrumental in the support of the legislature for initiatives that are important to soldiers, their families, and Fort Hood.

Regional collaboration, such as the creation of the regional defense alliance (HOTDA), has been instrumental in the success of the communities and the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA on a wide range of issues. Regional collaboration has facilitated enhancements to the Joint Use Army Airfield and Regional Airport, and the creation of Texas A&M University – Central Texas as a stand-alone public education institution providing state-supported post-secondary educational opportunities for Fort Hood soldiers and their families and the population of the central Texas region.