

BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE

Community Profile

November 2009

Fort Lawton Army Reserve Complex, Washington

Community Contact:

Linda Cannon
Deputy Director
Intergovernmental Relations
Office
City of Seattle
600 4th Avenue, 5th Floor
Seattle, WA 98124-4746
206-684-8263
linda.cannon@seattle.gov

Mark Ellerbrook
Home Ownership Program
Manager
Office of Housing
City of Seattle
700 5th Avenue, 57th Floor
Seattle, WA 98124-4725
206-684-3340
mark.ellerbrook@seattle.gov

Web Address:

[www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/
fortlawton/brac/](http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/fortlawton/brac/)

Installation Contact:

Scott McKean
Base Transition Coordinator
Regional Readiness Command 70
Fort Lawton Leisy Center
4570 Texas Way West
Seattle, WA 98199
206-883-7640
scott.mckean@usarmy.mil

State Contact:

Not Applicable

Closure at a Glance

Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA):

City of Seattle, Washington

Geographic area affected by closing:

Seattle, Washington

Population of affected area (before closure):

592,800

Total Acres to be Disposed:

38 acres

Estimated Job Loss Impact:

Jobs Lost	
Military Personnel	53
Civilian Personnel	54
Contractors	0

Source: Appendix O BRAC Report to the President

Economic Adjustment Challenges

- Develop hybrid transfer mechanism with the Army for the Fort Lawton property
- Blend the public benefit conveyances (requirements & timing) plan component into overall implementation process
- Develop community involvement component of implementation process
- Develop financing package for entire implementation plan along with environmental requirements and actual construction work

Key Reuse Planning & Property Disposal Milestones

5/09/06	Federal Surplus Determination
1/10/07	LRA Homeless Outreach Completed
10/14/08	Reuse Plan Received by Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)/Military Service
Pending	HUD Determination on Submission
Pending	National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) Disposal Decision
Pending	Base Closure

Organization

The LRA for the Fort Lawton U.S. Army Reserve Complex (FLARC) redevelopment plan is the City of Seattle. In June 2006, Mayor Greg Nickels submitted a resolution to the Seattle City Council, which was approved, requesting that the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) recognize the City as the LRA. Along with an extensive public process and direct ongoing involvement with the Seattle-King County Committee to End Homelessness, as well as individual homeless housing/services providers, the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) was an LRA stakeholder, later determined to be the City-preferred master developer for the site. City of Seattle staff from multiple departments provided staff expertise and direction.

Reuse Plan/Other Studies

The Fort Lawton Army Reserve Complex includes three contiguous Army Reserve Centers (ARC), including 2LT Robert R. Leisy USARC, CPT James R. Harvey USARC, and FLARC. The Fort Lawton property is in the Magnolia neighborhood of Seattle. It abuts the nearly 550 acre Discovery Park on the west and south, and a primarily residential neighborhood of single-family homes to the north and east (Figure 1). The Fort Lawton property consists of approximately 45 acres, including 11 buildings and a military cemetery. The Federal government plans to retain approximately 16 acres of the site that contains the existing FLARC building, supporting parking, and the military cemetery. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) plans to use the FLARC building for clinical and administrative uses. Texas Way West runs through the remaining approximately 29 acres of the site, from West Government Way in the southeast to 40th Avenue West in the northwest, and provides access to the remaining ten existing structures.

Fort Lawton Redevelopment Plan

The LRA-adopted Redevelopment Plan (Figure 2) establishes a new mixed-income neighborhood laid out on a north-south street grid following the pattern of the adjacent Kiwanis Ravine neighborhood. There will be between 108 and 125 market-rate units; a 55-unit building for homeless seniors; 30 units for homeless families; and six self-help homeownership units to be developed by Habitat for Humanity.

The current artificially plateaued and mostly paved site will be regraded to slope gently from south to north to blend in with the surrounding neighborhood and natural areas in a more seamless manner. All existing forested areas and most interior trees will be retained and enhanced, with the addition of a diverse mixture of new street trees.

The addition of two new parks, two pocket parks, and a new north-south 37th Avenue West greenway with swales and natural landscaping will further enhance the community. Careful treatment of the 36th Avenue West streetscape will blend the new community into the existing neighborhood while aesthetically enhancing the existing landscaped buffer and providing avian habitat.



Figure 1: Fort Lawton USARC



Figure 2: Redevelopment Plan for Fort Lawton

Project Challenge and Vision

The vision for the redevelopment of the Fort Lawton site is intended to accomplish the following: meet the requirements of HUD and the Department of Defense; reflect community involvement, City needs, and financial viability; and at the same time result in a plan for a model community that is livable, diverse, green, and that fits into the surrounding neighborhood. The uses envisioned for the site include:

- Wildlife habitat and open space
- Market-rate for-sale housing
- Self-help housing for first-time homeowners
- Housing and supportive services for homeless families and seniors, including veterans and Native American seniors

At the same time, the City expects the resulting plan to be sensitive to wildlife, blend with Discovery Park, and be reflective of Native American values. The vision for Fort Lawton is to create a mixed-income, environmentally-sensitive community that affords families of varying income levels the opportunity to live in a diverse and sustainable neighborhood. This vision capitalizes on a number of the unique attributes of the Fort Lawton site, including its location adjacent to both Discovery Park and the city's largest blue heron rookery in Kiwanis Ravine. In addition, the Redevelopment Plan for Fort Lawton will respond to Seattle's commitment to the Ten-Year Plan to end homelessness while simultaneously reconnecting the site to the existing Magnolia community.

From this overarching vision, the City of Seattle, together with SHA and the local community, developed a set of topical vision principles to direct the redevelopment of the site.

Neighborhood Integrity and Community Connectedness

- Blend with the existing neighborhood and Discovery Park
- Enhance the quality of the existing neighborhood
- Reflect Native American values

Social Responsibility

- Create a mixed-income community and respond to Seattle's needs for housing for homeless
- Provide diverse housing types
- Build a livable community designed to meet the needs of its residents and neighbors

Environmental Stewardship

- Create a community that respects the adjacent natural areas and is developed in an environmentally sustainable manner
- Protect and improve wildlife habitat on the site

Goals and Principles

There are three sets of aspiration statements for the Fort Lawton project in the redevelopment plan. The first is the vision for the project, described above, which motivated the City to launch the project and guided City decision-making throughout. The second is a set of goals identified by participants in community workshops. The third is a set of guiding principles, which were identified by the planning team (the City, SHA, consultants, and the community) to shape the site planning phase of the project. The guiding principles attempt to respond to the City's vision, the community's goals, and financial feasibility.

The Redevelopment Plan included an assessment of the existing conditions of the Fort Lawton property, with key components including environmental resources, land use, existing facilities, open space, transportation, and the

housing market. The existing conditions assessment resulted in the following studies, which became appendices to the Redevelopment plan: Topography and Soils; Existing Facilities Study; Infrastructure Study; Transportation Study; Market Demand Study; and Financial Model. The various studies informed the overall reuse planning process.

Public Involvement Process

Bounded by Discovery Park, the city's largest natural park, surrounding neighborhoods and vistas of Salmon Bay and the Ship Canal, Fort Lawton's future redevelopment matters to the entire city of Seattle. LRA's public involvement component was designed to engage the public throughout process of developing the plan for Fort Lawton's future uses.

Under the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process the LRA's public involvement responsibilities were:

- Provide an overview of the citizen participation process
- Make the draft application available for public review and comment periodically as the LRA developed the homeless assistance submission and the redevelopment plan
- Conduct at least one public hearing on the redevelopment plan and homeless assistance submission before submitting these documents to HUD and the Department of the Army
- Include summary of public comments on the redevelopment plan in the submittal to HUD and the Department of the Army.

Overview of Citizen Participation Process

The Fort Lawton Army Reserve Center BRAC public involvement process began in September 2006 with a workshop and tour of the Reserve Center for those organizations interested in the Notices of Interest (NOIs) process for surplus property. The meeting was advertised in the *Seattle Times* with the required notice of availability of property for homeless uses. It also included public benefit conveyance purposes and contact information. The general public was welcome and was represented among the 33 people who attended the workshop.

To ensure the general public had opportunities to understand the BRAC process and what would be happening at Fort Lawton, two meetings were held following the September NOI workshop. The first meeting was held in October and the second in December. Due to the significance of both Discovery Park and homelessness services to the broader Seattle community, one of these meetings was held in a central city location outside the Fort Lawton neighborhood of Magnolia. The LRA created a Web page on the City's Web site for all the LRA information on Fort Lawton including meeting notices, BRAC information, meeting notes, etc. An e-mail address for Fort Lawton comments was also provided to the community. Additionally the Seattle City Council Web site contained a link to the Fort Lawton Web page and notice of the City Council's Fort Lawton deliberations, dates, and times.

In 2006, Mayor Nickels created a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to advise him. The TAG membership was composed of individuals with expertise and representative of the following: homeless, Magnolia neighborhood, finance, urban design, community at large, parks, environment, faith community, and city council staff. TAG reviewed the NOIs, and from their areas of expertise, provided valuable guidance on the NOIs.

Two meetings were held in early 2007, one in the Magnolia neighborhood and one in a central city location, to discuss the BRAC process and the NOIs the LRA received in January 2007. In April, a meeting was held by the Magnolia Community Club with the LRA staff discussing the NOIs received and taking further public input on future uses at Fort Lawton. LRA announced at this meeting that the Army was talking with LRA about receiving value from their Fort Lawton property. In order to better understand the Army's direction, LRA informed the community that moving to the plan development phase would occur after conversations with the Army.

In 2008, a meeting was held to announce the LRA's decisions on NOIs received for Fort Lawton property. SHA was introduced as the lead developer and SHA described the community involvement process, based on their "HOPE VI" projects, they would begin in partnership with the LRA. While conversations with the Army were not completed, there was agreement that LRA would move forward with planning for the redevelopment of Fort Lawton.

LRA determined the community needed to be involved in developing the redevelopment plan rather than responding to a draft plan developed solely by the LRA. Working from the three principles of Neighborhood Integrity and Community Connectedness, Social Responsibility, and Environmental Stewardship, LRA and SHA began the next phase of the community involvement process. When the LRA consultant team was hired they joined the public process.

To start the planning process, SHA and LRA held a community organizational meeting in March 2008. The community indicated it preferred five Saturday workshops, of four hours duration each, beginning in late March. The workshops first focused on completing the work on the vision for the redevelopment of Fort Lawton and then understanding the plan components through informational exchanges with the various consultants from the LRA's redevelopment plan consultant team.

While the workshops were going on, the LRA held a separate informational meeting in April on homelessness in Seattle and King County and the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness. The three selected homeless providers explained their programs and clientele. As a result of this meeting, the LRA agreed to an additional series of three community meetings on more detailed aspects of the homeless providers' programs that could later be incorporated into a Community Relations Plan. The purpose of the Community Relations Plan was for the housing provider, their supportive services partners and the Magnolia community to work together and commit to ensuring that the housing for homeless individuals and families at Fort Lawton would be successful. The Archdiocesan Housing Authority, United Indians of All Tribes (United Indians), and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) expressed their commitment to the provisions of the Community Relations Plan and working with the community in the future to finalize the plan. If unforeseen circumstances require significant changes to the provisions of the Plan, the Archdiocesan Housing Authority, United Indians, and YWCA will work with the community on revisions to the plan. The City of Seattle Office of Housing, through its asset management team, will oversee and monitor the implementation and ongoing commitments contained in the Community Relations Plan.

With the completion of the redevelopment plan process, Mayor Greg Nickel's approved plan was sent to the Seattle City Council for their consideration and action. The City Council process included four committee meetings and two public hearings on the plan and homeless assistance submittal before the City Council's final vote on the redevelopment plan. Excluding the City Council meetings and hearings, LRA had eighteen public meetings on the Fort Lawton BRAC closure process and development of the redevelopment plan for the property.

Periodic Public Review and Comment

Once the LRA conducted the 2006 and 2007 initial meetings on the BRAC process and the homeless provisions in BRAC, the LRA determined that ongoing community involvement in developing the redevelopment plan was desirable. Working from the three principles of Neighborhood Integrity and Community Connectedness, Social Responsibility, and Environmental Stewardship, the LRA and its lead developer SHA began the 2008 phase of the community involvement process and when the LRA consultant team was hired, they joined the process. This process addressed both issues in the Redevelopment Plan and the Homeless Assistance Submission.

The community requested additional meetings which focused on the vision for the redevelopment – open space, heron/wildlife habitat, market-rate housing, and housing for homeless individuals and families. At the meeting, the consultant and SHA team began discussing with the community how the vision balance could be developed. Building off of the work of the previous workshop, the consultants work on the residential housing analysis and the traffic circulation were presented at the June workshop along with options on site alternatives. Portions of the draft Redevelopment Plan were presented at the July community meeting and a refined draft version was presented at a meeting several days later. The three community meetings on a Community Relations Plan addressed many of the topics in the Homeless Assistance Submission. These sessions were held for the housing provider, their supportive services partners, and the Magnolia community to work together and commit to ensuring that the housing for homeless individuals and families at Fort Lawton is successful in the community.

Homeless Submission

The Fort Lawton Redevelopment Plan and Homeless Assistance Application were submitted to the Army and the HUD in October 2008. The Application is currently pending review by HUD.

The LRA selected AHA to construct 55 units of permanent housing for homeless seniors in partnership with United Indians. AHA was also selected to construct 30 units of permanent housing for homeless families, with YWCA providing case management to the residents. The homeless housing program was developed in consultation with the homeless providers through a series of meetings and working sessions. Through this consultation process, the LRA and homeless providers determined the homeless housing program to be both financially feasible and sustainable. In addition, it was decided both the housing for homeless seniors and homeless families will be new construction. Conversion of two existing office buildings (Harvey and Leisy Halls) into homeless housing was not economically viable. New construction was more cost-effective and allowed for a better use of the site. However, AHA requested the fixtures from the commercial kitchen in Leisy Hall so that they can be relocated to the newly-constructed building for single adults. As part of its program for serving homeless seniors at Fort Lawton, AHA intends to provide a meal program for residents in the proposed facility's community room. AHA also requested office furniture.

Description of Housing and Supportive Services Programs for Selected NOIs

Both AHA/United Indians and the AHA/YWCA buildings will provide on-site services. AHA and its partner United Indians will provide housing with culturally appropriate supportive services, primarily to homeless Native American Elders and other seniors from the Seattle and King County region. Special outreach and marketing will be made to Native American Elders and Native American veterans to take advantage of cultural opportunities presented at the site including the proximity of Daybreak Star Indian Cultural Center, located within another section of the historic military base that was returned to the community years ago. Most residents will be over 55 and most will have disabilities ranging from persistent health problems, alcoholism, mental illness, or a combination of disorders.

Connecting with cultural services, programs, and events through United Indians is another tool in this model to establish community relationships promoting an enhanced quality of life. Limited transportation services will be available to residents for the purpose of accessing off-site service providers, cultural events, and related resources. Where alcohol and other drug treatment services are needed residents will receive onsite and offsite services from partner agencies including United Indians and Seattle Indian Health Board. Service providers will work closely with case managers to support treatment plans.

AHA, in partnership with the YWCA, will provide housing and supportive services to families with at least one parent and one minor child that are deemed homeless using the HUD definition. YWCA will partner with United Indians to do specific outreach to Native American families; a large number of residents at Fort Lawton are expected to be from the Native American community. AHA will serve as the developer and property manager for the family housing. The YWCA will enter into an agreement with AHA to provide outreach, screening, intake, needs assessment and case management for the families.

YWCA plans to provide core case management and other related services onsite. Case management will be intensive, home-based, and focused on clients' goals and barriers. Families will complete a lengthy needs assessment and create an action plan suited for their circumstances. Action plans are focused on education, training, employment, wage progression, mental health, family stability and resource procurement, as well as addressing children's schooling and childcare.

YWCA services provided in downtown Seattle for Fort Lawton families will include: employment assessment and training, job placement and retention services, health care access, and Dress for Success. Case management staff also will connect Fort Lawton residents with other providers for services such as legal assistance. The holistic, coordinated development proposed for this site will be critical to the success of the homeless families the YWCA intends to serve. The YWCA's experience with transition-in-place supportive housing for homeless families makes it clear that socially integrated neighborhoods that offer a continuum of housing options help families maintain housing stability and move

forward with their lives. Children in particular benefit from stability in school and the social support network they and their parents are able to build when they maintain their housing in a single community.

Implementation and Partnering Strategies

In conjunction with the Army, develop a hybrid transfer mechanism for the Fort Lawton property

The City of Seattle and the Army have had initial conversations on a transfer mechanism that addresses both the City's desire to partner with SHA as the master developer for Fort Lawton and the Army's intent to receive value for the Fort Lawton property. The hybrid mechanism will allow the master developer to acquire the site and complete the development based on the plan created with the community at a price that meets the Army's financial expectations.

The key to the hybrid model is creating a detailed redevelopment plan that responds to both public benefit requests and neighborhood concerns while simultaneously providing enough financial analysis to derive a sale price for the Army. The final redevelopment plan achieved this by setting a range of housing units and the accompanying transportation grid along with needed open space/recreation/park. A detailed financial analysis is also included and can respond to various market conditions to derive a residual land value for the Army.

Blend the public benefit conveyances (requirements and timing) plan component into overall implementation process

While the Fort Lawton acreage is small in comparison to many other BRAC locations, the LRA plan incorporates three public benefit conveyances: homeless housing, parks/open space/recreation, and self help housing. These conveyance requests must be timed with Army disposal discussions so exact benefit property descriptions are known. LRA, working with SHA and the self-help agency, will work with the appropriate federal conveyance programs to finalize these requests once Army disposal decisions are completed.

Develop community involvement component of implementation process

As discussed above, LRA, together with a number of non-profit and community partners, completed an extensive outreach process that resulted in the redevelopment plan. However, once the transfer is complete, a detailed planning process will need to be executed. The LRA's development partner, SHA, will develop the community involvement process for the plan's implementation. This implementation plan will be done in conjunction with the community and LRA and will incorporate community involvement in the LRA's environmental review work, based on the Army's NEPA/environmental review. One of the reasons the LRA desired SHA as its partner in this BRAC transaction is SHA's extensive community work on its other recent mixed-income housing projects.

Develop financing package for entire plan implementation along with environmental requirements and actual construction

As noted above, the LRA plan includes a financing model that focuses on the site infrastructure development and construction of the mixed-income housing and park/recreation/open space. The actual financing mechanisms utilized will be determined during property discussions with the Army.

LRA submitted the Fort Lawton Redevelopment Plan in October 2008 to the Department of the Army and HUD for review and action. In the meantime, LRA maintains ongoing communication with the Army as appropriate. At this stage of the BRAC process, LRA is waiting for HUD approval of the Homeless Assistance Application, and as such there is little necessity for partnering efforts with SHA and our homeless agencies at this time.

Successes/Lessons Learned

Two factors can be identified as key to LRA's work to date: the OEA grant and resulting consultant work, and extensive community meetings. LRA believes these two factors in the completion of the Fort Lawton Redevelopment Plan could prove beneficial to other BRAC communities in developing their BRAC redevelopment plan.

- Obtaining an OEA planning grant and hiring a consultant team to work on the LRA redevelopment plan resulted in a plan that addressed the critical implementation components. This provided LRA, community and partners with a comprehensive overview and initial work on the next stage in the BRAC process.
- LRA, its planning consultants, and SHA held numerous meetings beginning in 2006. These meetings provided opportunities for community input and guided numerous decisions in the plan.