

# BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE

## Community Profile

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### Fort Monmouth, New Jersey

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#### Closure at a Glance

##### Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA):

Fort Monmouth Economic Redevelopment Planning Authority  
(FMERPA)

##### Geographic area affected by closing:

Boroughs of Eatontown, Oceanport and Tinton Falls; and  
County of Monmouth, New Jersey

**Population of affected area (before closure):** 2,991

**Total Acres to be Disposed:** 1,126 acres

##### Estimated Job Loss Impact:

Jobs Lost	
Military Personnel	500
Civilian Personnel	5,500
Contractors	15,000

Sources: Fort Monmouth Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel  
(DCSPER) (Military Personnel); Report by EDAW/AECOM Inc.  
(Contractors)

#### Economic Adjustment Challenges

- Workforce transition training
- Business retention and attraction efforts
- Loss of property tax revenue due to job loss and employee relocation
- Doubling of unemployment currently at 8.7% in Monmouth County
- Additional affordable housing is state unfunded mandate
- Impact on additional municipal and county services required
- Fort Monmouth mixed-use redevelopment project has 20-year build-out
- Extensive replacement and upgrade of all major infrastructure elements

#### Key Reuse Planning & Property Disposal Milestones

5/09/06	Federal Surplus Determination
3/08/07	LRA Homeless Outreach Completed
9/09/08	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

### Planning Authority Formation and Mission

FMERPA (or the Authority) was created under state statute in April 2006. The Authority was charged with developing a comprehensive conversion and revitalization plan for the territory encompassed by Fort Monmouth in a manner which will “promote, develop, encourage, and maintain employment, commerce, economic development, and the public welfare; conserve the natural resources of the State; and advance the general prosperity and economic welfare of the people in the affected communities and the entire state by cooperating and acting in conjunction with other organizations, public and private, to promote and advance the economic use of the facilities located at Fort Monmouth.”

Under the statute, the Authority was originally comprised of ten members appointed and qualified as follows:

- Four members appointed by the Governor for terms of four years, two of whom shall be representatives of the private sector with relevant business experience or background; one of whom is knowledgeable in environmental protection, conservation and land-use issues and one of whom is a labor representative with appropriate experience in workforce development and job training.
- The Chief Executive Officer and Secretary of the New Jersey Commerce, Economic Growth, and Tourism Commission, *ex officio* and voting.
- One member, who shall be a resident of Monmouth County, to be appointed by the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders for a term of four years.
- The mayors of Eatontown, Oceanport, and Tinton Falls, *ex officio* and voting.
- A representative of Fort Monmouth, to be appointed by the Secretary of the United States Department of Defense as a non-voting member. (Currently and historically the Fort Monmouth Garrison Commander.)

### Stakeholder Participation

The Authority has a robust and active outreach program and has solicited stakeholder participation in a variety of ways (Table 1). From one-on-one personal efforts, to large audience presentations, to group meetings with organizations as diverse as educational, civic, and professional organizations to groups as diverse as the Monmouth County Human Services Advisory Council and American Military Engineers, the Authority has made public information a priority.

Forum	Frequency	Forum	Frequency
Special Public Meetings	6	Press Conferences	2
Municipal Public	3	Advisory Committee	98
Public and Community Stakeholder	36	Requested Presentations	38
Homeless Assistance Outreach	1	Prospective Tenant Meeting	17
Master Planning Public Input/Charette	7	On-site tours	83

Table 1: Outreach Programs

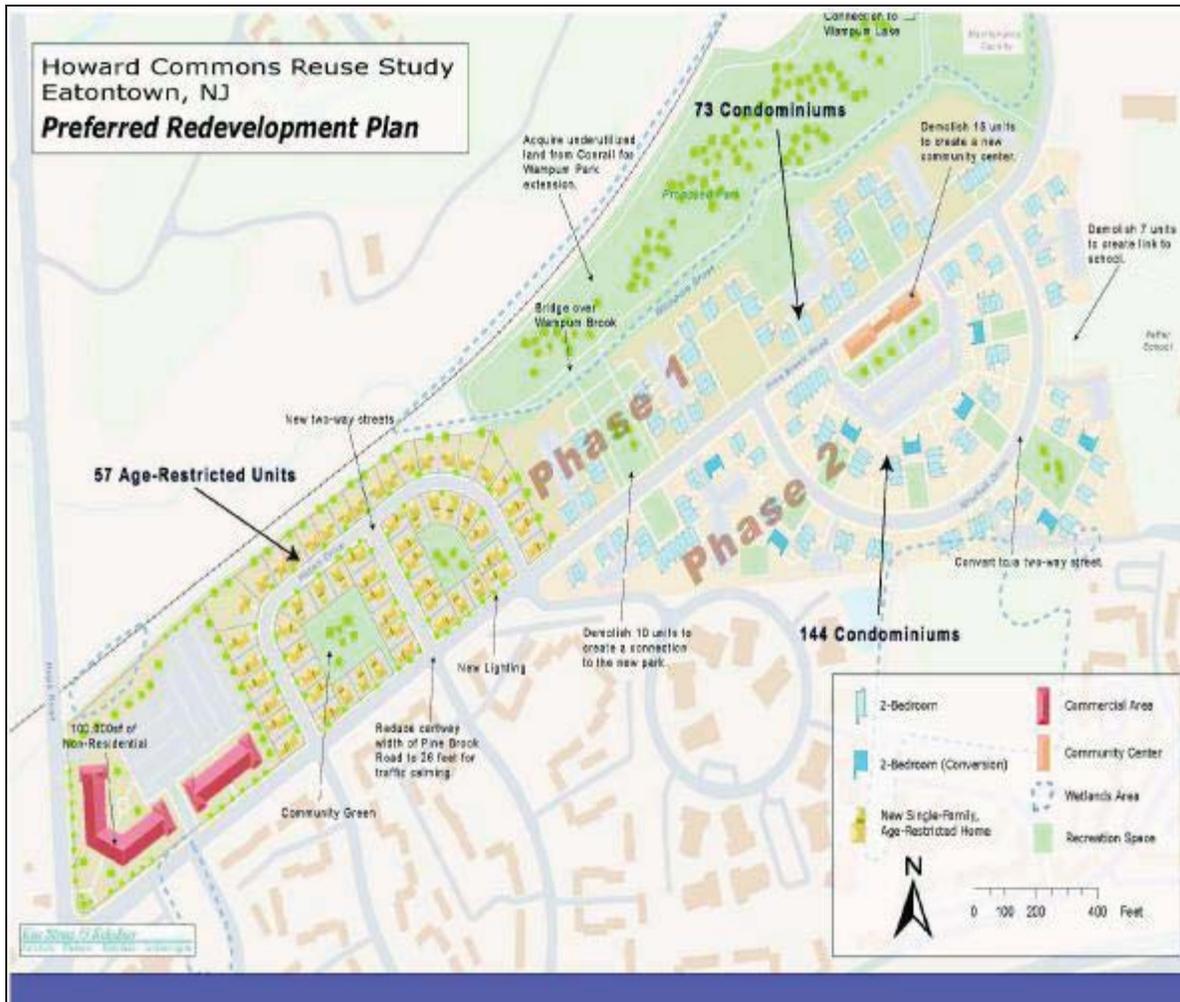
In addition to public outreach, the Authority has conducted numerous meetings at all levels of government to ensure a thorough and integrated approach to the issues raised by the closure of Fort Monmouth.

- **Federal**
  - New Jersey Congressional Delegation
  - State Legislative
  - New Jersey State Legislators
  - State Executive
  - Office of the Attorney General (Law & Public Safety)
  - Community Affairs
  - Education, Environmental Protection
  - Human Services
  - Labor & Workforce Development
  - Military & Veterans Affairs
  - Transportation
- **State Agencies and Authorities**
  - Commission on Higher Education
  - Economic Development Authority
  - Office of Economic Growth
  - Emergency Management
  - Office of the Governor
  - Historic Preservation Office
  - Homeland Security
  - Local Unit Alignment
  - Reorganization and Consolidation Commission
  - New Jersey Network Transit
  - New Jersey Turnpike Authority
- **County Government/Departments**
  - Board of Chosen Freeholders
  - Eastern Monmouth Area Chamber of Commerce
  - Economic Development
  - Emergency Services
  - Engineering, Geographic Information Systems,
  - Human Services
  - Park System
  - Planning Board
  - Public Works
  - Sherriff's Office
- **Municipal Government/ Departments**
  - Administration
  - Board of Education
  - Borough Council
  - Emergency Services
  - Fire Department
  - Office of the Mayor
  - Municipal Court
  - Planning Board
  - Police Department
  - Public Works
  - Two Rivers Council of Mayors
  - Zoning Board

## Reuse Plan

Fort Monmouth is located near the eastern shore of New Jersey, within the Coastal Region of Monmouth County. With its location between New York City, NY (to the north) and Philadelphia, PA (to the southwest), Fort Monmouth has easy access to two major metropolitan areas as well as the State's capital, Trenton, NJ (to the west). The installation occupies approximately 1,127 acres of land and is contained within three municipalities: the Boroughs of Tinton Falls, Eatontown, and Oceanport, and is located adjacent to the Boroughs of Shrewsbury and Little Silver. The Fort Monmouth Reuse Plan encompasses three separate reuse visions and/or plans, one for each Borough.

## The Borough of Eatontown



**Figure 1: Eatontown Preferred Redevelopment Plan**

As part of the reuse and redevelopment of Fort Monmouth for civilian activity, the Borough Master Plan recommends the following:

- Relocate the Borough municipal complex onto Fort Monmouth to reoccupy the Fort Monmouth Life Cycle Management Building as the new Borough municipal complex.
- Adopt the recommendations of the Howard Commons Reuse Study prepared under contract for the Borough in February 2003. The Howard Commons study is appended to the Borough Master Plan and adopted by reference as the Borough plan for the reuse of the Howard Commons area of Fort Monmouth.
- Endorse the public benefit conveyance of surplus property at Fort Monmouth for park and recreation purposes as recommended by Monmouth County in a notice of intent in February 2007. The Land Use Plan identified Federal government lands at Fort Monmouth as the "Fort Monmouth Reuse Planning Area" on the Master Plan map. These lands are included in the zone plan as part of the P-1 zone for public use.

The Land Use Plan recommends the Howard Commons Area of Fort Monmouth be redeveloped and reused in accordance with the recommendations of the Howard Commons Reuse Study. The plan also recommends the Fort Monmouth reuse plan provides for the relocation of the Borough municipal complex into the Fort Monmouth Life Cycle Management Building.

Eatontown's study advances the concept that the Fort Monmouth reuse plan should provide for reuse of land within the base as park and recreation land. Three recreation parcels are located within the Eatontown portion of Fort

Monmouth, including Husky Brook Lake and the football complex; Lefetra Creek, Parkers Creek and Mill Creek; the baseball/ softball fields and bowling center; and the base golf course.

## The Borough of Oceanport



**Figure 2: Oceanport's Proposed Mixed-Use "Village" Concept**

*From Fort to Village: A Vision for Oceanport's Fort Monmouth* is a plan for redevelopment of the portion of Fort Monmouth property in located Oceanport. Intended as a demonstration of the principles of smart growth set forth in the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan, new development here would be compact, walkable, and bikeable. Natural features of the site including wetlands and waterfronts would be preserved and upgraded, and new development would conserve energy by being designed in accordance with the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design standards for neighborhood development.

Two of the goals of the Oceanport Plan that relate to Fort Monmouth include: Creating employment opportunities and commercial "ratables." The existing McAfee Center on Fort Monmouth is one of the most modern office space structures on the base and would lend itself to the conversion to commercial office space. The creation of a series of public spaces which integrate these elements together in order to produce a community framework would then embody sustainable principles of community development.

These components would be comprised of existing natural areas as well as built areas. *From Fort to Village* finds the open spaces within Fort Monmouth are largely based on the existing unique natural attributes. These include the coastal fringes, freshwater wetlands, and stream corridors associated with Parker's and Oceanport Creeks, and branches of the Shrewsbury River. Areas identified as bald eagle habitat and the existing marina are integral to this network, which also includes the existing ponds and recreational lands, as well as those open lands identified for public benefit conveyance by Monmouth County Parks. Oceanport's plan envisions the integration of existing contaminated lands within the open space network, where they may be contained while contributing to the framework of open spaces. The following is a summary of the specific recommendations of *From Fort to Village*:

- The open space requested by the Monmouth County Parks Department, including the historic parade ground and the environmentally-sensitive land along Oceanport Creek and Parker's Creek, would become dedicated public property. This land would serve as open space for both the Fort development and surrounding neighborhoods.
- The Fort Monmouth Historic District would be preserved and structures within the district would be restored and reused in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards.
- Acreage between Oceanport Avenue and the NJ Transit tracks would be developed as a mixed-use, small scale, walkable village. Oceanport Avenue would be developed as a boulevard and provide the major north-south traffic route for Oceanport development.
- The Patterson Medical Center would be maintained as a veterans' health facility and the land close to the Center would be developed with a mix of health care providers and professional offices. This area would also provide sites for an elementary and a middle school located next to County open space.
- The Oceanport Board of Education (B.O.E.) has requested the conveyance of the McAfee Center. If it is not used by the B.O.E., then McAfee Center and the surrounding property are seen as well suited to be developed as an office campus.
- The 28 acres along Parker's Creek is a prime waterfront development site that calls for the highest design quality with a unique resort hotel, spa, and/or conference facility.
- Redevelopment of Fort Monmouth would require the creation of an east-west arterial street in order to connect the proposed development areas with Route 35 and the regional highway system. The new east-west street should be designed to be compatible with the historic district and connect with Oceanport Avenue, facilitating establishment of a jitney or small bus system connecting the various development centers at the Fort with the Little Silver train station. Since jitneys are generally small-capacity vehicles that follow a service route, but can divert to pick up and drop off passengers, the jitney would serve as an important link to the NJ Transit rail system. Such a system would also allow commuters from outside the area to access jobs located within the redevelopment area.

## The Borough of Tinton Falls

Tinton Falls land use policies regarding Fort Monmouth are summarized below.

Fort Monmouth would become private land under statutory provisions that give the Borough limited ability to regulate the land use of the parcel. However, Tinton Falls sees this property as the last and best opportunity to create something special for the Borough, and seeks to advance its vision for the ultimate development of the site. This vision assumes a variety of uses, some public, some of which may be private. For example, the County may have an interest in the Fire Academy and other public uses on the site. The remainder of the site should be carefully developed, if it becomes available.

Sensitivity to the development of Tinton Avenue West is a principal concern. The properties to the north of Tinton Avenue adjacent to Fort Monmouth are within the Borough's RA Residential Agricultural designation, the lowest intensity zone within the Borough. The roadway is also designated as a scenic corridor by the County. The uses of Fort Monmouth lands along the Tinton Avenue frontage should be restricted to either very low intensity uses or buffering along the road. New curb cuts and significant traffic generators should not be located adjacent to Tinton Avenue. The central core of the Fort Monmouth site has great potential to serve as Tinton Falls' Town Center and the Borough hopes to create a new "Main Street" development running westward from Hope Road and terminating at the municipal complex adjacent to the Parkway. Along this Main Street and on the balance of the tract, a compact mixed-use, walking scale community could be developed. The Town Center should include a substantial commercial component as well as residential development, entertainment uses, and well defined public spaces including a possible new Library. Linkages to the neighborhoods of Tinton Falls should be carefully considered. The Town Center should also accommodate affordable housing. Consideration should be given to development of a hotel. A significant open space component should be included which can also connect the activity centers within the site and preserve the site's environmental features.

## Other Studies

### Technical Memorandum on Existing Conditions

#### Assessments:

- Cultural
- Economic
- Environmental
- Facilities
- Historical
- Sanitary Sewer System: Inflow & Infiltration Study
- Market Analysis
- Shared Emergency Services
- Traffic and Transportation
- VPS (Visual Preference Survey)

### Contractual Services:

- Auditor
- BRAC Special Counsel
- Planner
- Shared Emergency Services Consultant
- Sanitary Sewer System Evaluation Consultant

## Homeless Submission

The Authority chartered a Social Services Advisory Committee (SSAC) which was chaired by an Authority Board member and included public members, other Authority members, and the Monmouth County Director of Human Services. The SSAC was also supported by Authority staff.

The SSAC collected data and information from Monmouth County, the Homeless Assistance Notice of Intent (NOI) submitters, and other homeless assistance providers. The SSAC also held open public meetings to discuss issues and to listen to information and concerns from the Homeless Assistance NOI submitters and other homeless assistance providers. The SSAC visited at least one facility being operated by each Homeless Assistance NOI submitter to better understand of the services and operations being provided as well as to ask questions regarding what the Homeless Assistance NOI submitter saw as the unmet needs and priorities in the community.

The SSAC, the Authority staff, and the Garrison staff at Fort Monmouth conducted tours of potential facilities for reuse as homeless assistance facilities. The Chair of the SSAC also personally participated in the January 2008 Point-In-Time Survey process conducted by the Monmouth County Department of Human Services. The Authority Executive Director and Deputy Director made frequent presentations to the public as well as at meetings of the homeless advocates and the Monmouth County Health and Human Services Advisory Council. Throughout the current planning, implementation and redevelopment and reuse plan initiatives, the Authority has maintained a commitment to public solicitation and outreach. By means of a series of meetings, advertisements, workshops, and tours, the Authority consistently created opportunities for public input, for community outreach, and for a free flow of information regarding Homeless Assistance and Public Benefit Conveyance NOIs.

The SSAC's proposed homeless accommodations were reported at a SSAC meeting held in June 2008. Soon thereafter, the Chair of the SSAC gave a report presenting the SSAC's proposal concerning homeless accommodations to the Authority at a Special Meeting of the Authority. At this meeting, a resolution was adopted by the Authority authorizing the Authority staff and professionals to commence negotiations with the Homeless Assistance NOI submitters.

The following reflects the needs of the homeless identified by the SSAC for accommodation in the Reuse Plan and Homeless Assistance Submission:

- Maintain the existing Monmouth County Emergency Shelter
- Increasing/emergent need for emergency housing for families identified in the 2008 Monmouth County Point-in-Time Survey
- Unmet need for victims of domestic violence and their children

- Permanent Supportive Housing

To provide flexibility and maximum usage of available permanent supportive housing by all subpopulations, including the Chronic Homeless, the SSAC proposed and the Authority decided to create a Permanent Supportive Housing “Bank.” It is proposed that the permanent supportive housing units be scattered throughout the various development areas outlined in the Reuse Plan and that these permanent supportive housing units be accommodated in existing buildings and facilities targeted for reuse or in newly-constructed buildings or facilities.

Taking into account the SSAC’s proposed homeless accommodations, the results of the NOI Evaluation Checklist scoring process and the analysis of the financial capabilities of the Homeless Assistance NOI submitters, the homeless accommodations in Table 2 are proposed by the Authority and are supported by Legally Binding Agreements. The Authority submitted their application to HUD and a decision is pending.

Provider/NOI Submitter	Type of Accommodation	Facility	# of Units
Family Promise	Emergency Family Day Center	Building 501	10 Families
County of Monmouth	Single Adult Emergency Shelter	Build to Suit in Oceanport	35 Beds
180, Turning Lives Around, Inc.	Cash in the amount of \$4.5M		
Affordable Housing Alliance	Permanent Supportive (PS) Bank Administrator	Bldg. 270, 40 single family units	56

Table 2: Proposed Homeless Accommodations

## Implementation and Partnering Strategies

The Reuse and Redevelopment Plan will require \$260 million to address critical challenges, which the affected communities and impacted region face as a result of the base closure.

Some, but not all, of the challenges include:

- Infrastructure upgrades
- Transportation and traffic mitigation
- Municipal Services requirements
- Environmental oversight

The Authority will need significant Federal financial assistance, particularly in the first seven to ten years during which the revenue streams will not support the imposed burden.

The Army has responsibility for the environmental contamination on Fort Monmouth and for developing a remediation plan acceptable to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and the Authority. The Authority continues to monitor ongoing and proposed remediation actions and maintains continuous contact with Army officials and NJDEP.

The Authority continues to work closely with the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA), the Base Transition Coordinator, the BRAC Environmental Coordinator (BEC), and Army Secretariat and Staff. At the state level, the Authority interfaces with the Governor’s office, the Department of Economic Development, the Department of Community Affairs, the NJDEP, the NJ Department of Transportation, NJ Transit, the NJ Economic Development Authority, the NJ Department of Labor Workforce Development, the NJ Department of Higher Education, the NJ State Historic Preservation Office, the Monmouth County Planning and Engineering, and each of the affected municipal operations. The formation of a Fort Monmouth Implementation Local Redevelopment Authority (FMILRA) is projected

to occur in the first quarter of 2010. FMILRA will have the responsibility for executing the redevelopment plan. How, when, and with what partners is to be determined by the FMILRA.

### **Additional Affordable Housing State Mandate**

The State of New Jersey, through the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH), has stipulated statewide that based on the availability of open space, as characterized by an independent study, each community has been levied with the requirement to build affordable homes for low- and moderate-income households. Each community therefore has been assigned an obligation which consists of a base number plus growth factors. The base number is one out of every five new dwelling units must be “affordable” as defined. The growth obligation is predicated on new jobs which are introduced into the business community: one new home for every 16 new jobs introduced; or, one new home for xyz square feet of new commercial space built. The formula changes (xyz) depending on the type of commercial space as it relates to the number of employees that space will accommodate.

Consequently, the communities of Tinton Falls, Eatontown, and Oceanport are faced with proportionally adding 1,126 acres of land, 1,500+ homes, and several million square feet of commercial space, with no corresponding revenue stream. In the context of the affordable housing mandate described above, the fiscal impact is potentially devastating.

The Authority is working with the communities, DCA, COAH, and the Governor’s Office to formulate a reasoned approach to addressing the need for affordable housing to be built without further burdening our taxpayers in the affected communities.

### **Input on Additional Municipal and County Services Required**

The incorporation of hundreds of acres of property with millions of square feet of physical assets would be a challenge to the most well managed entity. It is especially daunting when that entity is a local municipality that has limited capability to service a sudden increase of responsibility such as will occur as a result of the closure of Fort Monmouth.

The role of the emergency response elements at Fort Monmouth has been instrumental throughout the Monmouth County region, and that does not include law enforcement or security. Subsequent to any property disposition, and certainly after September 15, 2011, the deadline for the base’s closure, the bulk of these Federal services will be eliminated. Thus, these host communities will shoulder an increasing burden of emergency services and law enforcement. This then will require additional personnel in support of these services and in all probability require added facilities and equipment.

## **Successes/Lessons Learned**

- Establish relationships between federal (OEA and Army), state, county, and local governing bodies/organizations
- Establish relationships with small and large for-profit and non-profit organizations/businesses interested in doing business on the Fort Monmouth property
- Establish advisory committees and working groups including public members
- Conduct outreach to organizations that address the goals and objectives of the submitted Reuse Plan (e.g., incubators, high tech and medical businesses and jobs, green/sustainable community initiatives, transportation, infrastructure, etc.); focus on revenue generation, job creation from high- to low-tech (white/blue/green) jobs, and community revitalization that seamlessly crosses town boundaries
- Encourage public transparency, awareness, and input throughout the planning process
- Plan reuse of Fort Monmouth assets (e.g., geo-thermal wells, high-tech and historic buildings, golf course, etc.) for redevelopment, as appropriate
- Communicate and share information – it is essential and must be a priority for success for all parties
- Plant the seeds, via efforts and relationships, to implement the submitted reuse plan
- Phase the efforts of redevelopment and reuse
- Update the communities regularly:

- There will be ups and downs however; being upfront and honest with the public is key
- Too much information can cause panic, fear of the unknown, and not in my back yard (NIMBY) syndrome
- Be decisive with information based on supporting facts
- Be sensitive to the community(s); they are facing change
- Fair and open competition with extensive evaluation practices – key to contract awards and avoiding protests
- Establish fair and reasonable practices for sharing ratable(s) and services (e.g., emergency, public works, transportation, etc.) when crossing county and municipal boundaries