

Base Realignment and Closures: How Communities Can Plug Into the Process

By Courtney Mailey



En route to Langley Air Force Base, a U.S. Air Force pilot flies over Fort Monroe in Hampton, Virginia.

Photo: AP/Wide World Photos

Abstract:

The Department of Defense's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process ultimately means that an affected community must change. Whether it's a community experiencing growth or loss, by recognizing potential partners and understanding the redevelopment process, localities can be better equipped to address common community development issues such as housing, schools, workforce development and infrastructure. An assessment of the 2005 BRAC recommendations reveals that most affected Fifth District military bases/communities will experience growth. This article provides information about how communities can utilize the Office of Economic Adjustment's (OEA) framework for organizing, planning and implementing an effective community development strategy.

For many communities with a significant military presence, the term Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) can evoke apprehension and uncertainty. BRAC is a process authorized by Congress that restructures military bases for efficiency and better military preparedness. It can result in a considerable increase or decrease in population and employment. When a community is affected by a BRAC announcement, preparation and resource coordination play a vital role in how easily the area can make the transition.

Unlike previous rounds of BRACs where installations were downsized or closed, BRAC 2005 produced many expansions. For the Fifth District, the gains will be significant. Seven out of 20 (35 percent) of these growth communities are located in the Fifth District (See Figure 1 on page 4). Previous rounds of BRAC focused on shedding excess buildings, real estate and equipment to create a more nimble, information-based organization. The 2005 BRAC recommendations will go one step further. Its goal seeks to create more effective coordination among the military branches and their missions. Many in community development refer to this practice as resource leveraging. This metamorphosis resembles that of other large organizations and corporations that have become more competitive by becoming leaner, more flexible and more integrated through information technology.

So where do local communities fit in the process? Community leaders, economic developers and other professionals can make the BRAC process smoother and more rewarding by recognizing they have a stake in the changes taking place at their nearby military bases. While no standard approach to address realignments or closures exists, communities can effectively use the organization, planning and implementation tools of the DoD's Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) to their advantage.

BRAC– Base Realignment and Closure

DoD– Department of Defense

LRA– Local Redevelopment Authority

OEA– Office of Economic Adjustment

PDC– Planning District Commission

WHAT IS BRAC?

Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) is the congressionally authorized process the Department of Defense (DoD) uses to reorganize its base structure to more efficiently and effectively support U.S. forces, increase operational readiness and facilitate new ways of doing business. (The original legislation actually states that the title of the process is Base Closure and Realignment.)

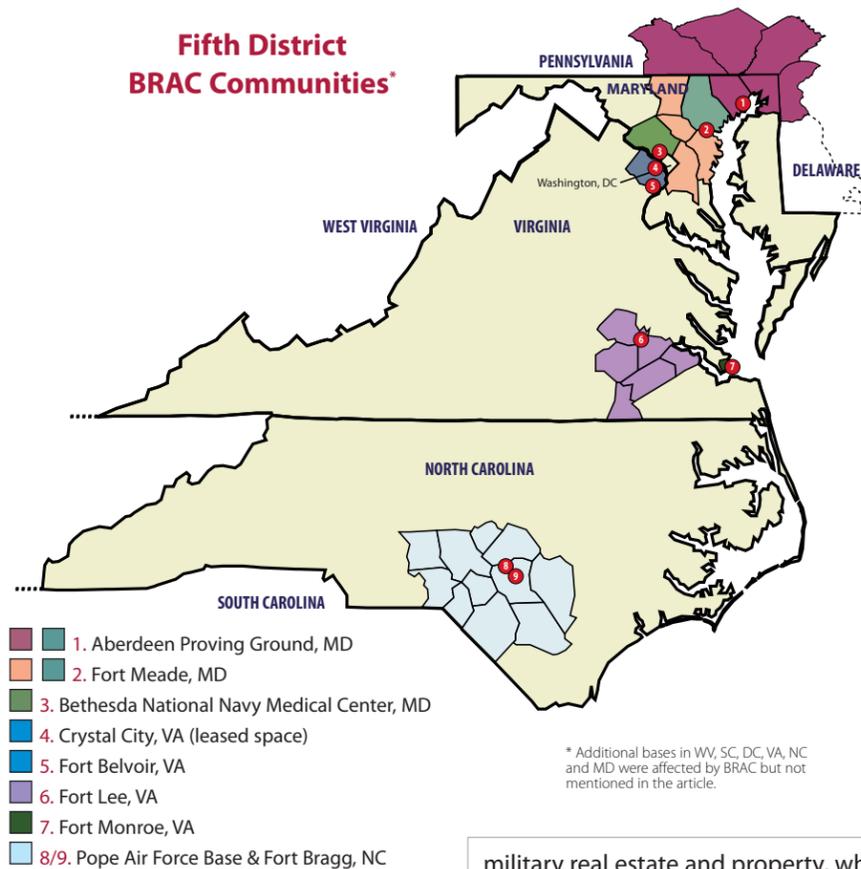
In 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995, the Defense Department executed base realignments and closures through BRAC's legally specified process, which is still in use today. This process enables the DoD to evaluate its current plan against multiple variables: the changes in threat, force structure, technologies, doctrine, organization, business practices and plant inventory.

By assessing similar facilities using a set of comprehensive criteria, the DoD develops realignment and closure recommendations. An independent commission reviews the Secretary of Defense's BRAC recommendations and makes its own recommendations to the president. The president, in turn, reports his decision on the recommendations to Congress for its review and approval. The president and Congress must accept or reject the entire package of the commission's recommendations.

Source: DoD

FIGURE 1

Fifth District BRAC Communities*



Whether BRAC recommendations call for base realignments or closures, the course of action followed revolves around the OEA and the community. Open communication along with shared interests and goals can

create an abundance of new opportunities and positive outcomes. The involvement of the community leads to a broad-based coalition of stakeholders that **organizes** to speak as one voice, uses that voice to **plan** in response to change at the installation and works as a team to **implement** the plan. Communities have found by learning about and staying engaged in the BRAC process, they can participate in shaping the future of their region. (See *Sidebar: What is BRAC?* on page 3.)

Although closure and growth communities follow a similar process of organizing, planning and implementation, there are key differences. Base closures often require planning for the eventual transfer of

military real estate and property, whereas a base expansion usually requires planning for growth across a larger region. Community developers cannot directly receive grant funding when a base grows or closes. Additionally, there are few legal requirements for growth communities. "When I was looking through the BRAC legislation for guidance about what would be required of us, I noticed that it was geared toward base closures. There wasn't much in there about communities experiencing growth," says Paul Dordal, executive director of the BRAC Regional Task Force in North Carolina. The task force oversees the community response to both the closure of Pope Air Force Base and the growth of Fort Bragg. As communities plan for their future, stakeholders can help gain focus and clarity during the anticipated change.

Step One: Organizing

Regardless of whether the 2005 BRAC announcements will ultimately

result in base closures or expansions, local governments began the organizing process with the same goal. The community's ongoing objective is to create a broad-based coalition of stakeholders that makes decisions and speaks with one voice to the DoD and to the appropriate constituencies. During this time, the OEA contacted local governments that would be affected. The OEA's project management team provided information that enabled local governments to start setting a process for decisionmaking and organizing into a single, usually regional, entity. In some cases, a single local government acts as this entity. (See *Figure 2 as an example of typical organizational relationships for a broad-based community response to BRAC growth on page 6.*)

Sometimes communities can turn an initial closure into a plan of action for future development. BRAC law requires that the DoD recognize the regional decisionmaking entity for a base closure as a Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) before it can typically receive grant funding. "At Fort Monroe, we dodged the bullet in several previous rounds of BRAC," says Curt Shaffer, interim BRAC coordinator with Hampton, Virginia. "In preparation for BRAC 2005, the City of Hampton worked with the General Assembly to create a Federal Area Development Authority (FADA) to plan compatible use with Fort Monroe and prevent its closure. After the 2005 [closure] announcement, this entity switched its emphasis to reuse and in the summer of 2007, the Fort Monroe FADA became the LRA." (See *the web for extra material on the compatible use program at http://www.richmondfed.org/community_affairs/.)*

Anticipating possible growth, key local leaders near Fort Lee in Petersburg, Virginia, gathered information as early as 2001, when the BRAC 2005 legislation passed. Dennis Morris, executive director of Crater Planning District Commission (PDC) in central Virginia, recalls his region's preparations. "In 2001, our Congressman wanted to know more about the capabilities of Fort Lee and our region," says Morris. "He [our congressman] saw BRAC 2005 as an opportunity for us and as soon as the BRAC 2005 announcement was finalized, we had some good information to start bringing people together to talk about how the expansion of the mission at Fort Lee would change our region." The Crater PDC now acts as the contact for the planning and implementation phases of the transition.

Like communities experiencing base closures, those experiencing BRAC growth are eligible for the OEA's technical, operational and planning assistance. The growth community is not required to form an LRA but instead can create a single, regional, growth management organization to develop a long-range growth management plan. In response to the increased military and civilian personnel at Fort Meade in Anne

FIFTH DISTRICT BRAC COMMUNITIES

2. FORT MEADE, MD

Anne Arundel County
Bob Leib, Special Assistant to County Executive for BRAC for Anne Arundel County
410.222.1227
rleib@aacounty.org
www.aacounty.org/BRAC/Resources.cfm
Affected Localities: Anne Arundel • Baltimore County • Baltimore City • Prince George's Laurel City • Howard • Montgomery • Carroll

3. BETHESDA NATIONAL NAVY MEDICAL CENTER, MD

Montgomery County
Phil Alperson, BRAC Coordinator
240.777.2595
phil.alperson@montgomerycountymd.gov
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/BRAC
Affected Locality: Montgomery

4. CRYSTAL CITY, VA (leased space)

Arlington County
Andrea Morris, BRAC Coordinator
703.228.0865
aymorris@arlingtonva.us
www.arlingtonvirginiausa.com/index.cfm/11250
Affected Localities: Arlington • Fairfax County

5. FORT BELVOIR, VA

Fairfax County
Mark Canale, BRAC Coordinator
703.324.1177
mark.canale@fairfaxcounty.gov
www.fairfaxcounty.gov
Affected Localities: Fairfax County

6. FORT LEE, VA

Crater Planning District Commission
Dennis Morris, Executive Director
804.861.1666
dmorris@cpdc.state.va.us
www.craterpdc.state.va.us/Index.htm
Affected Localities: Chesterfield • Dinwiddie Greenville • Prince George • Surry • Sussex Colonial Heights • Emporia • Hopewell Petersburg

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BASES AND ORGANIZATIONS

1. ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, MD
Chesapeake Science & Security Corridor
APG Regional BRAC Office
Karen Holt, BRAC Manager
410.273.5708
klholt@harfordcountymd.gov
www.apg-cssc.com
Affected Localities: Harford, MD • Cecil, MD Baltimore County, MD • Baltimore City, MD New Castle, DE • Chester, PA • Lancaster, PA York, PA

continued on page 5

FIFTH DISTRICT BRAC COMMUNITIES

7. FORT MONROE, VA

Fort Monroe Federal Area Development Authority

Conover Hunt, Interim Executive Director
757.637.7778

chunt@mfada.com

www.fmfada.com (under construction)

Affected Localities: Hampton

8/9. POPE AIR FORCE BASE & FORT BRAGG, NC

BRAC Regional Task Force

Paul Dordal, Executive Director
910.436.1345

pdordal@bracrftf.com

www.bracrftf.com

Affected Localities: Bladen • Cumberland
Harnett • Hoke • Lee • Montgomery • Moore
Richmond • Robeson • Sampson • Scotland

Arundel, the county is creating a regional growth management group of six counties and two cities in Maryland. "At the end of the organizing phase, ideally, we will agree as a group on the issues, the vision and the principles for change in our region," according to Bob Leib, special assistant for BRAC/Education to the Anne Arundel County executive.

Growth can also bring trade-offs. When multiple jurisdictions are involved in the organizing process, challenges exist. "Of course that means sometimes you have to give something up for the larger good," says Leib. "That isn't always easy." LRAs and growth management organizations usually develop a committee structure to address specific growth or redevelopment issues with input from affected communities and stakeholder groups. These committees often include local government staff from each locality in the region, as well as high-capacity organizations with expertise in the committee's issues.

During the organizational stage, many communities and military installations hold public hearings and other forums for public participation and citizen input. "Our LRA," says Shaffer, "holds monthly board meetings which are open to the public both for conveying information and for receiving comments about the reuse of Fort Monroe. As part of our planning process, we will also hold a few additional community participation hearings until the plan is complete in the early spring of 2008." (See pages 4-6 for a list of community contacts for the regional entities discussed in this article. A complete list of contacts may be found at www.oea.gov.)

Step Two: Planning

Two years after the 2005 BRAC announcement, most regional entities have already moved into the planning phase. Through the planning process, the military departments and the regional entities collect detailed information about the planned changes at the military installation and their impact on the community. Even before the military department issues its final decision about land use or disposal, the LRAs and growth management organizations start gathering information. Local data and information on transportation, housing, schools, workforce development and other issues help them to prepare future funding sources.

Transportation and Housing

Transportation needs arising from installation growth are an important component of economic adjustment, according to Leib. Indeed, transportation improvements are the issue that all communities cite in response to BRAC growth actions. While transportation is important, housing, schools, workforce development, business development, infrastructure and community services are also key BRAC planning issues in the Fifth District. (See Sidebar "Dealing with Mission Growth: A Community's First Steps" on page 7.)

Growing installations mean more soldiers and those soldiers need housing. Today, military bases such as Fort Bragg in North Carolina prefer not to build housing on the base, but rather work with private sector and nonprofit developers to provide homes to rent or own. An influx of new residents catches the attention of many citizens, community development groups, and according to Dordal, "A lot of realtors." Dordal describes the impact at the first public regional planning meeting related to growth at Fort Bragg: "Two hundred people came out to participate. When we broke into self-selected committees for our key planning concerns, the housing group pulled 35 volunteers, the biggest crowd of all."

Research and analysis of the housing market plays an important role in the planning and decisionmaking processes. Morris explains, "We are still quantifying the estimated impact of new troops at Fort Lee." While the market for single-family homes tends to respond quickly to increased demand for homes, the rental market can be a bit slower to come around. Once the Congressman's BRAC team finalizes its market research, Morris says, "We can structure a game plan of incentives to encourage the kinds of affordable housing development that will be needed and that the market, on its own, may not be compelled to produce when we need it."

Dealing with Mission Growth: A Community's First Steps

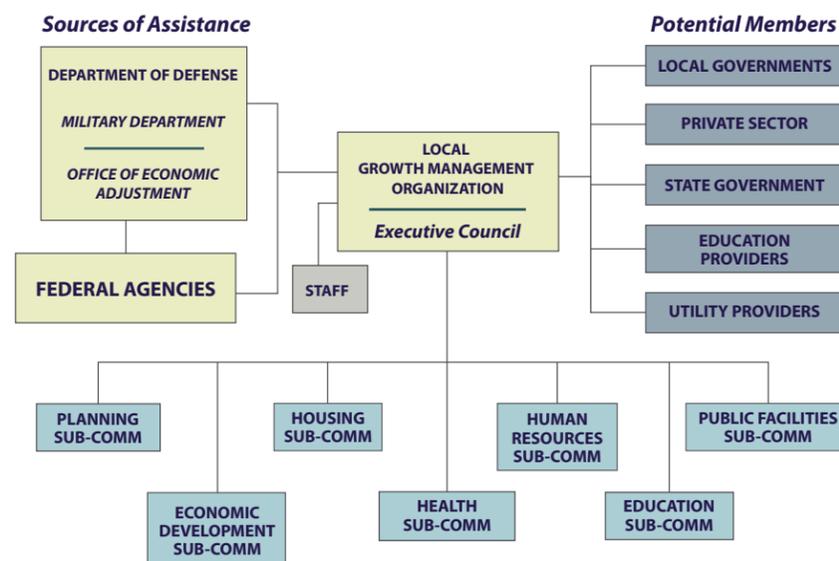
Defense communities can take several steps to address the potential impacts of installation growth:

- Determine the number of new military personnel and work with the installation to estimate the total number of new community residents.
- Perform a housing assessment to identify available demand and supply.
- Evaluate infrastructure capacity, including roads, water/sewer and utilities.
- Communicate with local school districts to plan for new children entering their schools.
- Analyze the labor market, incorporating increases in military personnel.
- Initiate planning that engages local stakeholders to consider impacts, determine priorities and develop an action plan.
- Identify or develop a partnering organization to bring the community together with the base to plan for the impacts of growth.

Source: Yvonne Dawson, "When an Installation Grows: The Impact of Expanding Missions on Communities," Association of Defense Communities, *Infobrief Series*, January 2005, page 11.

FIGURE 2

Organizational Relationships for a Broad-Based Community Response to BRAC Growth



Source: The Office of Economic Adjustment

He [our congressman] saw BRAC 2005 as an opportunity for us and as soon as the BRAC 2005 announcement was finalized, we had some good information to start bringing people together to talk about how the expansion of the mission at Fort Lee would change our region.

– Dennis Morris
Crater Planning District Commission

ASSOCIATION OF DEFENSE COMMUNITIES

The Association of Defense Communities (ADC), with approximately 1,200 members, aims to unite the diverse interests of communities, state governments, the private sector and the military on issues of base closure and realignment, community military partnerships, defense real estate, mission growth, mission sustainment, military privatization and base development.

ADC defines defense communities as those adjacent to active and closed defense installations. These defense communities depend on local communities for housing, services and even operational support. Defense communities have active installations where local governments and states are working to support the military. Defense communities also may have closed or realigned installations where local governments find new economic uses for former bases.

ADC offers comprehensive information to members through newsletters, research and a library of publications.

Source: www.defensecommunities.org

Schools

Along with soldiers often come spouses and children. “Schools are the most critical issue for the counties and towns in the southern central North Carolina region right now,” says Dordal. “Schools are so critical that we have to start moving forward with some problem solving and funding applications even before the plan is complete.”

Local school systems may apply for federal Impact Aid from the Department of Education prior to January 31. To help accommodate the influx of school-aged children, those school systems may apply for Impact Aid as long as they qualify based on the Department of Education’s requirements. (For more information about Impact Aid, see www.ed.gov/programs/8003/eligibility.html.)

Impact Aid, however, cannot cover all the costs associated with an increase in school-aged children from military families. Harford County, Maryland, and other localities in the Chesapeake Science and Security Corridor regional partnerships already have adjusted their capital improvement plans. Karen Holt, BRAC Manager for Harford County near Aberdeen Proving Ground, explains how in the Chesapeake Science and Security Corridor region “Local governments have been very good about stepping up to the plate and expediting their school and infrastructure budgets to accommodate growth from their own tax bases.” (See *Sidebar “Finding Solutions” on page 9.*)

New military families may also spur demand for private childcare facilities when both parents work. Morris indicates that when the growth management team strategizes about how to accommodate the families of new soldiers at Fort Lee, the team realizes that many spouses will look for new jobs in the region and will also need childcare. When providing BRAC-related business development workshops, the Planning District Commission includes information about taking advantage of the potential childcare market. “It will be important for the typical soldier at Fort Lee that we include childcare in addition to education and workforce development in our growth management plan,” Morris said.

Workforce Development

In a growth installation community, an increase in the number of military spouses requires growth management organizations to coordinate a variety of activities such as job skills training and/or placement with local industries. Near Fort Lee, the Planning District Commission is planning these activities in cooperation with the regional Workforce Investment Board. “Once the new soldiers and their spouses arrive, we want to have our job search and placement infrastructure in place. We are already

sending information to the places where these troops are about our local industries in case they want to get a head start,” says Morris.

Currently, Arlington County, Virginia, markets its high concentration of skilled science and technology workers with security clearances as one of its competitive business location advantages. To retain that advantage, Arlington County’s BRAC coordinator, Andrea Morris, explains that when the BRAC announcements were made in 2005, the county immediately “started gathering data about local defense agencies, their contractors, subcontractors and suppliers to give us a sense of the full breadth of the people and the skills that make up this local industry cluster.”

That information is being used to set targets for workforce development efforts that include working with the county school system to prepare students for work in science, technology and national security professions; working with national security agencies to help make security clearance criteria more uniform and transferable between agencies and their contractors; and providing job placement services for civilian workers and military spouses across a variety of professions. Arlington County has already been awarded \$3 million from the Department of Labor to implement its workforce development plans.

Despite these workforce development opportunities, base closings may reduce the labor force in many ways. Spouses of soldiers, as well as civilians and defense contractors and suppliers that locate near bases for convenience, are affected. The Crystal City neighborhood of Arlington

Photo: PhotoDisc



As military bases expand, the community must prepare for an influx of school-aged children.

FINDING SOLUTIONS

For Fifth District communities experiencing military facility closures, the primary issues of their planning process tend to revolve around the best reuse of the base’s real estate. (The *Summer 2003 and 2005 issues of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond’s Region Focus discuss the impacts and outcomes of military base closure and redevelopment throughout the Fifth District prior to 2005.*) Several announcements of installation growth in the Fifth District present clear

economic opportunities but also offer challenges as perplexing as base closure.

The BRAC Planning and Advisory Council, responding to the expansion of Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland, anticipates that the counties in the Chesapeake Science and Security Corridor will all change their approach. The council will jointly prioritize action steps in their own jurisdictions, integrate the individual plans and align a regional approach.

This regional approach will drive future funding requests as the base transitions from BRAC planning to implementation. The council believes a cooperative effort among municipalities, counties, and state and federal agencies is imperative to ensure success for the region. For more in-depth information about Aberdeen Proving Ground’s approach, see pages 18-19.

BRAC has opened doors for our region to cooperate with one another in ways that we never had imagined before.

– Karen Holt
BRAC Manager for Harford, MD

County will see the cancellation of leases by the military departments in civilian office buildings. Approximately 17,000 military and DoD civilian personnel will vacate approximately 3.4 million square feet of space over an area of less than one square mile by 2011.

Building New Opportunities

In military growth communities, the plans include ways to maximize new business opportunities. Dennis Morris explains that the Petersburg

community will be constructing additional buildings over the next few years. “The Crater Planning District Commission is holding forums and workshops all the time to make sure that local people have every opportunity to get in on that work and other supply contracts associated with the increased level of troops.”

In addition to preparing for building and supply contracts, Dordal’s regional task force plans to try to draw civilian defense contractors and subcontractors that will create new high-skill jobs in the region. “We see the influx of troops as an opportunity to build the region’s defense industry cluster,” says Dordal. Similarly, Phil Alperson, Montgomery County, Maryland’s BRAC coordinator, perceives the expansion of the Bethesda Naval Medical Center as “not only an opportunity to provide wounded soldiers the high-quality care they need and deserve, but also to further build on the health science research and industry niche of this particular place and enable military medicine and biomedical research to excel here.”

Additional Infrastructure and Community Services

Communities in the Fifth District with growing installations must also consider expanding a number of other infrastructure and community services. Making these available depends on existing regional capacity, water and sewer, public safety, healthcare services, environmental impacts of land use development, arts, culture, and recreational amenities. Fairfax County’s proffer (similar to an impact fee) system typically requires private investors to contribute to infrastructure and service needs from developing more intensive land uses. (See Sidebar “Getting Involved and Contributing to the

Getting Involved and Contributing to the Process

Even though local governments are the primary players in growth management organizations and LRAs, there are a number of ways for people to participate in their region’s response to BRAC actions. During the *organizing* phase, there will be opportunities to

- encourage key leaders to participate in consensus building activities, and
- attend forums where information is shared about the BRAC process.

Though each regional entity conducts its planning differently, there are a number of ways to contribute to the *planning* phase, including

- providing data about programs and constituents to the appropriate planning task forces,
- attending forums designed to gather input from the public,
- learning and sharing information gathered by the LRA or growth management entity about the potential impacts of BRAC in the region, and
- identifying opportunities to implement the plan, i.e., affordable housing development, child care provision, etc.

The *implementation* phase offers a variety of opportunities for entities and businesses with sufficient capacity to

- conduct redevelopment activities,
- support the fund development of the LRA or growth management organization, and
- coordinate with other organizations through the LRA or growth management entity to provide essential goods and services to families, such as affordable housing, workforce development/education, health care, etc.

Photo: AP Wide World Photos



Residents in Charleston sell “Keep ‘Em Flying” T-shirts to the West Virginia National Guard supporters headed to BRAC hearings in North Carolina, Tuesday, June 28, 2005.

Process” on page 10.) According to Fairfax County’s BRAC Manager, Mark Canale, “Because federal installations are exempt from certain local requirements, creative funding and financing have to be pursued to make up the gap.”

Step Three: Implementation

The regional BRAC entity identifies funding and financing to make the regional plan for growth or base reuse plan a reality. There are a few public funding and property transfer programs available for BRAC-related projects, such as low- or no-cost property transfer in cases of extreme economic hardship to a locality. For the most part, however, regional BRAC entities and their partners must compete with local, state and federal governments to produce needs such as roads, housing, schools, employment, job fairs and business contracting seminars.

“Our local governments have been willing to take responsibility for building up the school system in terms of both capital and curriculum,” says Holt. Like so many of the regions experiencing growth, Holt believes that the availability of state and federal funding will be very important to implementing their plan. “The challenge,” according to Alperson “is convincing the state and federal governments that your priorities really should rise to the top, even when there are so many other communities that need those funds too.”

The public sector is not the only source of capital for implementing the local plan. Several regions, particularly those experiencing growth, look for significant participation from the private sector in order to grow

WEBSITES

Department of Defense – Office of Economic Adjustment
www.oea.gov

Department of Defense – Base Realignment and Closure 2005 – Main BRAC page
www.defenselink.mil/brac

Association of Defense Communities
www.defensecommunities.org

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESEARCH

Office of Economic Adjustment Publications:

Joint Land Use Study Program Guidance Manual
[www.oea.gov/OEAWeb.nsf/FD3D3C042BA4EC1285256E83004497AD/\\$File/Joint%20Land%20Use%20Study%20Guidance%20Manual.pdf](http://www.oea.gov/OEAWeb.nsf/FD3D3C042BA4EC1285256E83004497AD/$File/Joint%20Land%20Use%20Study%20Guidance%20Manual.pdf)

Organizing for BRAC
[www.oea.gov/OEAWeb.nsf/977A1C0375EA9208525710E0062F436/\\$File/Organizing-for-BRAC.pdf](http://www.oea.gov/OEAWeb.nsf/977A1C0375EA9208525710E0062F436/$File/Organizing-for-BRAC.pdf)

Responding to Change: Communities & BRAC
[www.oea.gov/OEAWeb.nsf/130593004D6D595685257000005CD36B/\\$File/Responding%20to%20Change.pdf](http://www.oea.gov/OEAWeb.nsf/130593004D6D595685257000005CD36B/$File/Responding%20to%20Change.pdf)

Base Redevelopment Planning for BRAC Sites
[www.oea.gov/OEAWeb.nsf/0EAC404E79CD6AEC85257170004C03DA/\\$File/Base-Redev-BRAC-4-13-web.pdf](http://www.oea.gov/OEAWeb.nsf/0EAC404E79CD6AEC85257170004C03DA/$File/Base-Redev-BRAC-4-13-web.pdf)

Converting Military Airfields to Civil Airports
[www.oea.gov/OEAWeb.nsf/4A8BB846BEBBF78B852570880062D7E8/\\$File/Converting%20Military%20Airfields%20to%20Civil%20Airports.pdf](http://www.oea.gov/OEAWeb.nsf/4A8BB846BEBBF78B852570880062D7E8/$File/Converting%20Military%20Airfields%20to%20Civil%20Airports.pdf)

Economic Transition of BRAC Sites
[www.oea.gov/OEAWeb.nsf/2F24671463ACAA1B8525701500417E71/\\$File/Economic%20Transition%20final.pdf](http://www.oea.gov/OEAWeb.nsf/2F24671463ACAA1B8525701500417E71/$File/Economic%20Transition%20final.pdf)

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Photo: Bill O'Leary/TWP



Bart Physioc, chaplain at Fort Belvoir, has a cup of coffee with daughter Carly Physioc Fox, right, while his grandson plays with a friend at the new main street complex. The ground floors are retail, with the upper floors used as housing.

Renaissance – New Life for Former Military Bases

[www.oea.gov/OEAWeb.nsf/5B1C3B7F9E157F6D852571490063F919/\\$File/Renaissance.pdf](http://www.oea.gov/OEAWeb.nsf/5B1C3B7F9E157F6D852571490063F919/$File/Renaissance.pdf)

Federal Assistance for Impacted Communities

[www.oea.gov/OEAWeb.nsf/All+Docs/DA40363CFECE18A5852571B6004F9895/\\$File/Federal%20Assistance%20for%20Impacted%20Communities.pdf](http://www.oea.gov/OEAWeb.nsf/All+Docs/DA40363CFECE18A5852571B6004F9895/$File/Federal%20Assistance%20for%20Impacted%20Communities.pdf)

ASSOCIATION OF DEFENSE COMMUNITIES PUBLICATIONS

Organizing Your Planning Effort: The First Steps in Installation Redevelopment
www.defensecommunities.org/Downloads/Planning_LRA.pdf

The Community Base Reuse Planning Process: A Layman's Guide
www.defensecommunities.org/Downloads/Base_Reuse.pdf

Case Studies in Base Conversion
www.defensecommunities.org/Downloads/Case_Studies.pdf

When an Installation Grows: The Impact of Expanding Missions on Communities
www.defensecommunities.org/Downloads/Expanding_Mission.pdf

Understanding Base Realignment: What Communities Should Know First
www.defensecommunities.org/Downloads/Base_Realignment.pdf

FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM PUBLICATIONS

Base Closures in the Fifth District
www.richmondfed.org/publications/economic_research/region_focus/winter_2006/pdf/special_section.pdf

Redevelopment Boot Camp
www.richmondfed.org/publications/economic_research/region_focus/summer_2005/pdf/feature2.pdf

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their economy and infrastructure. "When looking at the usual government sources, we see that federal and state coffers are only so deep," says Leib. Echoing the sentiments of other regions Leib expands, "We are looking aggressively at local incentives, special tax districts and so forth to encourage private sector investment and development which we see as the primary source for implementing our plan."

According to Holt, the regional planning process at Aberdeen Proving Ground "started out as a regional marketing project and evolved into a coordinated regional planning and implementation effort." For example, this new cooperation among the participating counties and partners "involves working in subcommittees, such as Geographic Information Systems, to explore ways to level the technology playing field across jurisdictions. That way we can all be on the same page with mapping software and datasets when we generate growth projections and modeling for future growth in our region." "BRAC," according to Holt, "has opened doors for our region to cooperate with one another in ways that we never had imagined before."

Just as the broad-based regional organization speaks as one voice for all the localities and stakeholders during the planning phase, it maintains that role during implementation. "Our BRAC Planning and Advisory Council executive committee will continue to monitor activity and timelines within the action plan," says Holt.

Implementation of the base reuse or growth management plan "is exciting, intense, busy and never boring," says Holt. The action plan is a working document, and unforeseen dynamics could shift priorities identified in the plan. Shaffer echoes this sentiment: "Our plan will serve as the primary road map for the reuse of Fort Monroe. But as implemen-

tation begins, we have to remain flexible. You never know what is going to turn up during the clean-up phase, and everyone has to be ready to adapt to that. It wouldn't be practical to prohibit modification to the plan."

Shaffer explains that the process is dynamic, saying, "During the implementation phase, I expect that the composition of our board and staff will probably change substantially. Implementation just takes a different set of skills than planning does," he says.

The BRAC process for the military departments must be completed by 2011. However, the process will be a much longer-term proposition for communities of both growing and closing military facilities. In Crystal City, even though all excess property is already privately owned and the county has drafted a redevelopment plan, complete implementation is still slated to take as long as 30 years. Leib in Anne Arundel County explains, "I can't imagine implementing all of this will take anything less than 15 to 20 years. Like so many things, growth doesn't just end when you want it to. You have to be ready for changes all along the way."

ENDNOTES:

Yvonne Dawson, "When an Installation Grows: The Impact of Expanding Missions on Communities," NAID/ADC Infobrief, January 2005, p. 5.

"BRAC 2005 OEA Major Growth Projects," Office of Economic Adjustment available online under Growth Communities at www.oea.gov. For a complete map of all proposed BRAC 2005 closure and growth actions, see the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond's Summer 2005 issue of Region Focus available at www.richmondfed.org/publications/economic_research/region_focus.

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A Detailed Overview of the BRAC process
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Measuring the Economic Effects of Military Base Closures
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VIDEOS

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Communities Responding to Change
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Base Redevelopment
www.oea.gov/OEAWeb.nsf/BR?readform

The Office of Economic Adjustment: A Resource During Transition

David Larson
Office of Economic Adjustment

1. What is the Office of Economic Adjustment and what does it do?

The Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) is the Department of Defense's (DoD) primary source for assisting communities that are adversely impacted by Defense program changes, including base closures or realignments, base expansions, and contract or program cancellations. To assist affected communities, the OEA manages and directs the Defense Economic Adjustment Program and coordinates the involvement of other federal agencies.

Economic adjustment assistance provides a community-based context for assessing economic hardships caused by the DoD program changes by identifying and evaluating alternative courses of action, identifying resource requirements, and assisting in the preparation of an adjustment strategy or action plan to help communities help themselves.

The OEA staff has vast experience in economic and community development, land-use planning, real estate redevelopment, federal real property programs, military programs, and worker adjustment. Also, project managers bring a working knowledge of

other federal agencies and their respective programs to help communities carry out an adjustment program combining federal, state, local and private resources.

2. What types of assistance does the OEA offer to communities?

The OEA may provide technical and financial assistance to help communities that are adversely impacted by Defense program changes, including base closures or realignments, base expansions, and contract or program cancellations. The OEA also administers the Compatible Use Program to encourage cooperative land-use planning between military installations and the surrounding communities where civilian encroachment is likely to impair the operations of an installation. In these instances, the OEA may provide technical and financial assistance to state and local governments to achieve compatible land-use and development activities near Defense facilities.

3. What is one misconception about the OEA?

The OEA provides assistance to state and local governments that it recognizes as a local redevelopment authority but does not provide assis-

tance to private enterprises or individuals.

4. What is economic diversification?

There are times when a major cutback in a Defense contract results in substantial job losses. The OEA provides community economic adjustment assistance to states and communities affected by the cutbacks to pursue economic adjustment and diversification strategies appropriate to their particular problem. The OEA also serves as the clearinghouse for information on other relevant federal assistance programs that can support coordinated programs to plan and implement adjustment strategies.

In addition, the OEA serves as the executive director of the President's Economic Adjustment Committee (EAC). The EAC provides coordinated federal economic adjustment assistance to affected communities, businesses and workers from the effects of major Defense base closures, realignments, and contract-related adjustments.

The EAC is composed of 22 federal departments and agencies and plays a pivotal role as the clearinghouse for information exchanges among federal, state and local community officials involved

in resolving challenges that stem from Defense program changes.

5. What's the best way for financial institutions to get involved during the BRAC process?

Financial institutions can get involved in the BRAC process by contacting the state and/or local lead agency and participating in the community outreach process. Banks, thrifts, credit unions and other financial institutions can play a vital role in providing access to credit and investment opportunities for individuals, small businesses and other organizations impacted by a base closure, realignment, or growth. Financial institutions can also partner with local government and private organizations to help address and plan for the community redevelopment, economic diversification, and/or growth-related needs of the community.

The credit needs of the BRAC-impacted communities are likely to be affected depending on the military action. Low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, military and civilian personnel, and small businesses depend on the financial community to address the local needs and provide assistance where

applicable. Under these circumstances, financial institutions may receive credit under the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA).

6. From your experience of working with communities, which poses the biggest challenge/opportunity: a community experiencing a base closure or a base realignment? Why?

Each BRAC-related military action poses unique opportunities and challenges for communities. For example, Fort Monroe in Hampton, Virginia, is considered a major closure by the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission Final Report to the President. Closing Fort Monroe will affect 3,564 direct and 4,418 indirect jobs resulting in a loss of nearly 8,000 jobs in the area. Small businesses, housing, and the overall economy will be adversely affected by the closure.

Growth communities will also be significantly impacted. Installations such as Fort Lee in Petersburg, Virginia, and Fort Bragg in Fayetteville, North Carolina, are currently addressing issues related to the availability of affordable housing, transportation, spousal employment, health care, education, infrastructure and public services.

The growth at Fort Lee and Fort Bragg, while economically appealing over the long-term, creates immediate challenges for regional growth management planning for the impacted communities. And although there are tremendous long-term opportunities for the redevelopment and reuse of Fort Monroe, economic concerns as well as challenges related to historic preservation, environmental concerns and property disposition exist today.

Photo: AP Wide World Photos



Col. Kenneth O. McCreedy, installation commander at Fort Meade, right, responds to questions during military base relocations and closings, as Maryland Lt. Gov. Anthony Brown listens. The Office of Economic Adjustment can be a potential partner for localities facing base realignments and closures.