

**Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan
Colorado Defense Mission Coalition Meeting
Wednesday, December 16, 2009; 3:00 – 5:00 pm
Meeting Summary**

Meeting attendees:

- Heidi Aggeler, BBC Research & Consulting (BBC)
- Carrie Bailey, Veteran Trauma Court
- LTC Alan Bal, Fort Carson, 4ID
- Mary Barber, Fort Carson Sustainability
- Brian Binn, Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce (CSCC)
- LTC Ron Bolton, Fort Carson
- Terry Brubaker, Fort Carson Adult Education
- Lisa Cochrun, City of Fountain
- Ford Frick, BBC
- Vince Guthrie, Fort Carson Public Works/Utilities
- Kate Hatten, PPACG
- Terence Jackson, Pikes Peak Workforce Center
- Doug Jeavons, BBC
- Tim Jordan, Evans Army Community Hospital (EACH)
- Adrian Miller, Governor Ritter's Office
- Tom Miller, PPACG
- Bill Moore, Pueblo Area Council of Governments
- Charlotte Nal, Community Partnership of Child Development (CPCD)
- Rick Orphan, Fort Carson
- Paul Oskvarek, Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA), DoD
- Marian Percy, El Paso County Department of Human Services
- Diane Price, Child Nursery Centers
- SPC Alexis Ramos, Fort Carson, Public Affairs Office (PAO)
- Sarah White, PPACG
- Jason Wilkinson, PPACG

Growth Plan Phase 2 Status

Ms. Sarah White started introductions. Mr. Ford Frick, Ms. Heidi Aggeler and Mr. Doug Jeavons with BBC Research & Consulting (BBC) provided an overview of the Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan ("Growth Plan") model project evaluation. The BBC presentation focused on the project evolution, data sources, soldier population, an overview of the socioeconomic model, observations, project status and product schedule. A PDF version of the presentation can be found on PPACG's website <http://www.ppacg.org/military-impact/fort-carson-regional-growth-plan-intro/meetings/585-colorado-defense-mission-coalition>.

Phase 2 Observations:

- The growth planning effort and the Pikes Peak region have encountered unforeseen external and internal challenges, including the national economic decline. However, Fort Carson growth has helped to minimize some economic and housing impacts in the region compared to other regions.
- Data collection has been a challenge, but the focus on actual Fort Carson-specific data versus Army-wide standard numbers is an important change since the Phase 1 report and will be beneficial for the region in quantifying the effects of Fort Carson.
- Spouses are not working as much as they intended, according to comparisons of the Fort Hood surveys; spouse employment also affects the need for child care providers.
- The housing industry has had a softer fall in Colorado Springs compared to other regions. The Soldiers' intentions to purchase homes compared with their behavior and actual data suggest there are fewer home owners and more renters. The rental market has felt a large

impact with the growth. The areas most impacted are the Security/Widefield/Fountain areas where there may be tightening in the rental market for single family homes.

- The Fort Carson population has more children with special needs, especially autism, than the general population. This suggests that families might prefer the region because of the accessibility to services and providers for their children.
- There is a mismatch between count day and student enrollment, as many military students enroll after count day. This year's growth should help schools' funding for next year.
- In order to bolster support for the region, it will be important to communicate Fort Carson's economic impacts to state officials. Fort Carson's impacts are not confined to the Pikes Peak region, and these impacts include an estimated \$12 million in sales tax and \$34 million in income tax to the state, in addition to direct economic impacts (jobs, earnings, sales).
- Anticipated service short falls include the areas of domestic violence and child advocacy. These service areas have less capacity than demand and are considered "critical impact" areas. The subtask involving the assessment of impacts to the El Paso County Department of Human Services task will be an additional component to this section of the report.

Project Status:

Most tasks of the Growth Plan are on-track or nearly complete, including data collection, economic impact, education, social services and housing. Draft reports for the transportation and sustainability tasks will be completed in January. The transportation task relies heavily on housing data, which is forthcoming. Medical and behavioral health are more complicated task areas, but significant headway is being made. Communication tasks will be ongoing, including an e-newsletter and an updated PPACG website.

Discussion:

The group discussed some of the challenges regarding medical and behavioral health care in the region. Ms. Aggeler discussed coordination with Triwest, which has developed capacity demand models that look at cross-sections of needs and impacts for Soldiers and families both on-post and off-post. The Growth Plan will provide additional data and analysis based on the Phase 2 research that Triwest can also use in its capacity demand models. Mr. Tim Jordan announced that Evans Army Community Hospital has a daily average of 40-45 Soldiers for in-patient mental health treatment. Psychologists, especially child psychologists, are needed both regionally and nationally and there is competition for these providers. Fort Carson and other local groups are trying to address this capacity issue and attract more mental and medical health professionals (e.g., psychologists, neurosurgeons, school counselors) to the region. It was noted that the Army needs to assess mental and medical health capacity issues, not just at the installation levels, but for surrounding communities as well.

Partnership Group Reports

Adult Education:

Mr. Terry Brubaker announced that adult education on Fort Carson has seen a significant degradation in education services provided on-post because of increased demands without accompanying increases in staffing/resources. He also stated that the next iteration of MyCAA

(career advancement assistance for spouses) has required a lot of additional unfunded staff time to explain the program and assist spouses.

Mr. Terence Jackson reported that the Pikes Peak Workforce Center's BRAC program will end in June 2010. However, there is still \$100,000 left in account which needs to be spent by June. This money is left over from spouses who unexpectedly dropped out of programs, primarily because of problems related to deployments and child care.

The next Adult Education/Workforce Partnership Group will meet on December 18, 2009 at 10:00 am.

Child Development

The preliminary draft report will be presented to the partnership group in January 2010 for review. Ms. Diane Price presented child development information at the OEA conference in November 2009. There is currently state legislation being proposed to assist off-post services with child care, but Ms. Price indicated proposed language may not be what is needed for this region.

Economic Development/Sustainability

The Economic Impact partnership group met on December 14th. Mr. Jeavons gave a detailed presentation about the socioeconomic model. Overall the group agreed with the data and methodology. The data and graphs need a little more "tinkering", but otherwise the model looks good. The most important findings from the model (i.e. job creation, state income generated) need to be conveyed to the state for more regional and military support.

PPACG and GBSM had a workgroup session at the Southern Colorado Sustainable Communities conference on November 4th where participants provided input on some of the preliminary recommendations for this section of the Growth Plan. The recommendations still need further refinement, but a draft report will be finalized in mid-January. The Sustainability/Economic Development partnership group will meet on December 17th at 8:30 am.

K-12 Education

Overall timing of the Fort Hood troop arrival was good for school districts. There are some students who are "trickling" in after the October 1st count day, but the majority of student growth occurred before the count day. While capacity is challenging in some areas, such as District 8, the growth has actually helped some schools in the area from closing. Challenges continue to be the timing of growth and funding to pay for additional capacity where needed and staffing during extreme fiscal distress for the districts and the state. The geographic distribution of children attending some schools has changed, reflecting where families are finding adequate affordable housing. School districts continue to address issues related to educating and treating children with special needs.

Health & Behavioral Health/Social Services

The partnership group has reviewed most of the sections of report and will review the draft report again in January 2010. Mr. Jason Wilkinson noted that PPACG will host a training session for off-post behavioral health providers to enhance their understanding of Army culture

and Soldier issues. This type of collaboration will help address Army concerns that off-post providers do not fully understand Army specific issues and thus may not be able to adequately treat Soldiers.

Housing

PPACG hosted a successful housing forum on December 4th at which industry professionals reviewed and provided input to the housing model, preliminary data and key assumptions. The group's input will help BBC refine and modify some assumptions regarding location, affordability issues, vacancy rates, and loan packages. The partnership group will reconvene in February to review the draft report.

Public Safety

Ms. Carrie Bailey reported that the Veteran Trauma Court (VTC) is making progress and will hear its first case tomorrow. She stated that the VTC is also discussing similar issues, especially regarding the issue of off-post trauma providers not having proper military experience or understanding of military culture.

Legislative Funding/Issues:

Mr. Paul Oskvarek announced that OEA's budget will be reduced along with every agency at the federal level. The importance of coordination and municipal, county and state partnerships will be increasingly more important.

Ms. Kate Hatten discussed potential state legislation to assist military spouses with career portability and licensing issues and address accreditation for child care facilities serving military families.

Federal legislation (S.475, Public Law 111-97), the Military Spouses Residency Relief Act, prohibits a spouse's income from being considered income earned in a tax jurisdiction if the spouse is not a resident and moved solely to be with a service member. This may have a significant impact on state income tax revenue.

Other Business:

PPACG's Board of Directors approved a Letter of Commitment for sustainability. The signatories of the letter, comprising of public officials, local leaders, businesses and organizations, will be invited by COL Robert McLaughlin, Garrison Commander of Fort Carson, to discuss regional sustainability on February 2, 2010 (location TBD).

January 25, 2010 is Military Appreciation Day at the Colorado State Legislature; and the Department of Defense will be conducting listening sessions with military families at installations across the nation regarding military family life in the near future.

Next Steps:

The next CDMC meeting is scheduled for January 20, 2010 at 3:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.