

**Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan
Housing Partnership Group Meeting Summary
October 5, 2010
3:00 – 4:30 pm
Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG)**

Attendees:

- Larry Gilland, LGA Studios
- Kate Hatten, PPACG
- Bruce Martin, Aspen View Homes
- Tom Miller, PPACG
- Marge Nuñez, Fireside Apartments
- Richard Nuñez, Fireside Apartments
- Carl Schueler, City of Colorado Springs
- Jerry Stafford, Fort Carson Housing
- Frank Stampf, Partners in Housing
- Sarah White, PPACG
- Lee Wolf, citizen
- Sam Young, US HUD

Phase II Recap/Phase III Status Update:

Sarah White started introductions and led the discussion by providing a recap of Phase II of the Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan (“Growth Plan”). On July 14, 2010, PPACG’s Board of Directors adopted and approved the final report of the Growth Plan, which is available on PPACG’s website at <http://www.ppacg.org/military-impact/fort-carson-regional-growth-plan-intro/project-materials/growth-plan-documents>.

The Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) awarded PPACG approximately \$500,000 for Phase III of the Growth Plan. Phase III will consist of continuing information-sharing and communication, including the ongoing impacts of deployments, and implementation of the recommendations from Phases I and II of the Growth Plan. Updated information will include a new survey of Soldiers and family members to supplement the demographic information and modeling developed in Phase II and track any changing trends related to deployments, housing, etc. The OEA funding will also assist in the development of a regional sustainability plan which will link the sustainability efforts of Fort Carson (along with other military installations and local institutions with sustainability goals) with other regional efforts.

Fort Carson Community Forums Recap:

Since the Housing Partnership Group last met in March 2010, PPACG hosted two Fort Carson community events. The Fort Carson Community Partnership Town Hall held in April and the Fort Carson Community Partnership Forum held in August allowed the public to hear from Fort Carson leaders, PPACG staff and community leaders. They discussed upcoming deployments, impacts to the community related to Fort Carson’s growth and deployments, and existing and planned efforts to assist Fort Carson Soldiers and families. PPACG rolled out the Phase II Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan draft report to the public at the April event. PPACG also conducted two smaller community

forums in Pueblo and Canon City to discuss the draft plan and Fort Carson's impacts to Pueblo and Fremont counties.

Presentations from the events are available on PPACG's website at <http://www.ppacg.org/military-impact/fort-carson-regional-growth-plan-intro/meetings/town-halls>.

Housing Trends:

The group discussed current trends related to the growth and deployment of Fort Carson Soldiers. The Housing Demand Model, as indicated in the Phase II Growth Plan report, projected there should be enough existing housing and rental inventory in the off-post market to accommodate Fort Carson's growth overall, but there may be areas, such as around Fountain, where the submarket may be stretched. Members of the group suggested that the rental market in Fountain may not be sufficient enough, either in quality or quantity of housing, to accommodate the Soldiers. PPACG continues to monitor and analyze Fort Carson numbers, deployments, and current housing and rental trends to compare to the model's projections. PPACG tries to obtain the most current numbers of Soldiers at Fort Carson and deployments and reports those numbers on a quarterly basis. However, personnel changes at Fort Carson have affected the timeliness of receiving the most up-to-date numbers and deployment schedules.

PPACG will be conducting another Fort Carson survey to determine whether the Soldiers' and their families' housing preferences or needs have changed since the last survey was conducted. PPACG also continues to track DEERS data and is developing maps to show aggregated information about where Soldiers and their families are living off-post. This mapping capability will be useful in identifying and projecting the areas most impacted by Fort Carson populations, including school districts, apartments and child care centers.

The OEA contracted with the Voorhees Center at the University of Illinois - Chicago to analyze housing, economic and workforce conditions in growth communities. The Voorhees representatives met with PPACG in August to discuss their preliminary data and obtain feedback about what information would be useful for the region. The Voorhees Center relies on US Postal Service data regarding property that's been vacant for 90 days or more to track vacancy rates, which differs from PPACG's methodology.

Bruce Martin indicated that sales in new homes have risen slightly, mostly with homes with a \$236,000 price point. He estimated 60-70% of the people who come to him looking for new homes are military. There are 300 more single family unit permits this year-to-date than last year. Family incomes may be starting to stabilize, with more families looking to buy homes to establish their "roots".

Fireside Apartments representatives reported that military families usually do not stay in the apartments very long, sometimes even as short as a month before moving to a home. In general, military families (looking to move into a home) prefer temporarily renting

furnished apartments and like to move in and out of the apartments quickly and with little inconvenience.

The group briefly discussed whether Soldiers and their families are affecting the foreclosure inventory. Although families may want to look for deals when purchasing homes, in general the process of purchasing foreclosed homes is too lengthy for most Soldiers. Usually Soldiers want to move into a home quickly.

On-Post Housing Trends:

Fort Carson reported that the on-post housing current consists of 3,060 housing units, with approximately 1,024 of those being new. Fort Carson is currently building 308 new units: 180 of those units will be near Gate 1 and will be for junior enlisted; 120 units will be for company grade officers and will be near the PX; and 8 units will be for senior grade officers and located near the Ute homes. The barracks are currently at 76% occupancy (some are off-line for renovation).

Open Discussion:

The group discussed having another housing forum, similar to the forum conducted in December 2009. The group discussed possible topics to be discussed at the forum including deployment impacts/issues, home builder credit issues and/or the need for economic counseling for spouses during deployment. It is anticipated that the forum will be held around the January 2011 timeframe.

Next Steps

The next CDMC meeting is scheduled for March 17, 2010 at 3:00 pm.

The Fort Carson Community Partnership Town Hall will be held on April 16, 2010 from 3:00 – 6:00 pm at the Double Tree Hotel Colorado Springs – World Arena.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.