



The Fort Benning Regional Growth Management Plan is funded by a grant from the Department of Defense, Office of Economic Adjustment, an agency charged with helping BRAC-affected communities adjust to the impacts of mission changes at military installations

Fort Benning

REGIONAL GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN

Education Task Force Meeting

January 29, 2009



In association with:



Regionalism is the Key

"Coordination and Synchronization Continue To Be Our Greatest Strengths"
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Commanding General, Fort Benning, Alabama and Georgia



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Fort Benning

REGIONAL GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN

Education Task Force Meeting – January 29, 2009



Agenda

- **Project Overview**
- Key Issues & Findings
- Draft Growth Projections
- Discussion of Recommendations

Project Purpose

RGMP Study Area:
(10 Counties – 35 Mile Radius)

Ten County Study Area:

Georgia

- Columbus - Muscogee
- Cusseta - Chattahoochee
- Harris
- Marion
- Talbot
- Taylor
- Stewart

Alabama

- Barbour
- Lee
- Russell







Identify:

- What growth will occur?
- Where will it occur?
- Impacts to local communities
- Action plans to prepare

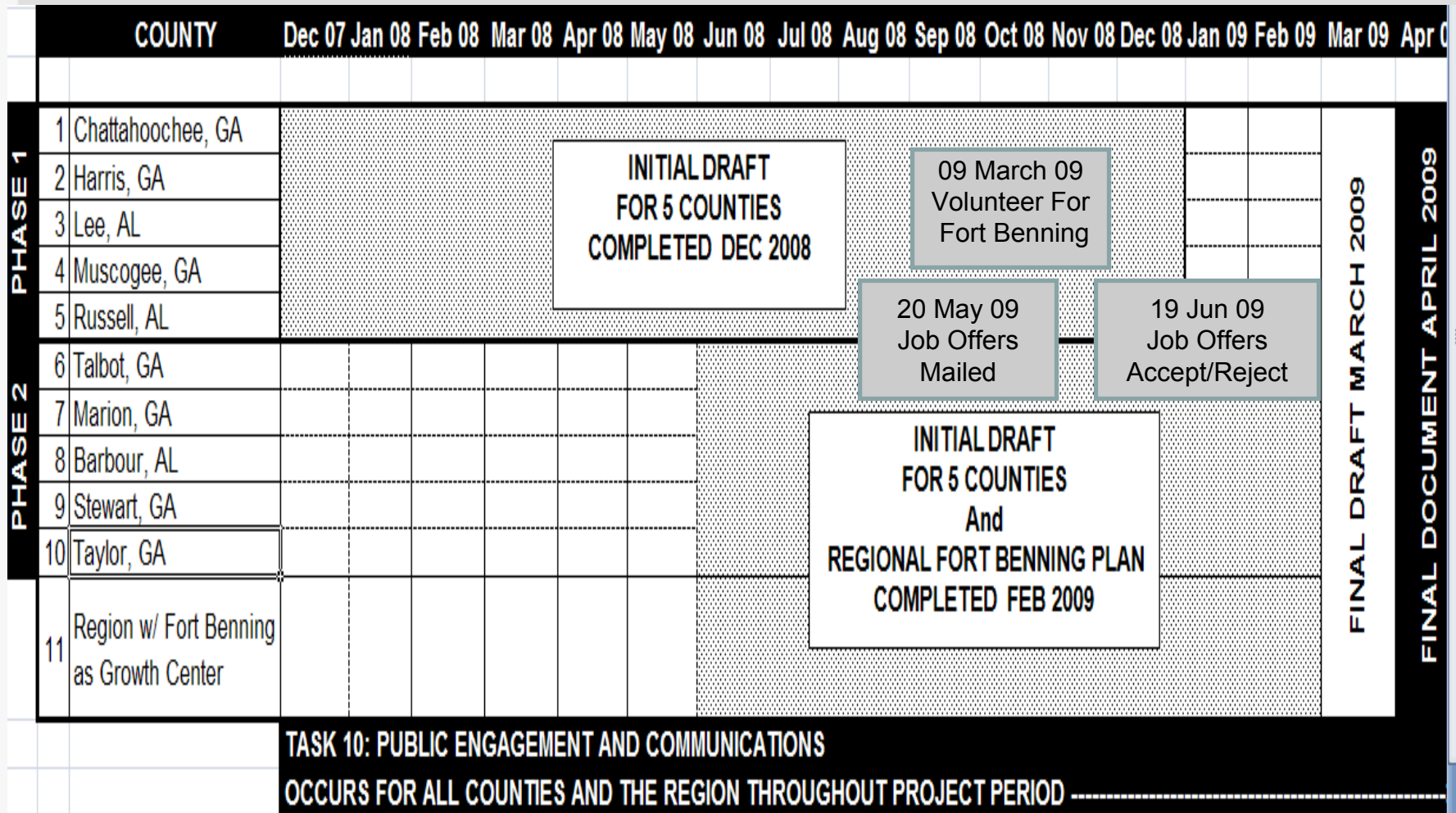
Task Review Summary

TASK	Phase 1		Phase 2		Region		REMARKS
	Status	Due	Status	Due	Status	Due	
1: ID Existing Conditions & Issues	C	12/31/08	C	3/31/09	C	3/31/09	
2: Growth Forecast & Modeling	C	12/31/08	G	3/31/09	G	3/31/09	No issues
3: Economic Impact Analysis	C	12/31/08	G	3/31/09	G	3/31/09	No issues
4: Transportation	C	12/31/08	G	3/31/09	G	3/31/09	No issues
5: Utilities & Infrastructure	C	12/31/08	G	3/31/09	G	3/31/09	No issues
6: Housing Market Analysis	C	12/31/08	G	3/31/09	G	3/31/09	No issues
7: Education	C	12/31/08	G	3/31/09	G	3/31/09	No issues
8: Land Use Planning	C	12/31/08	G	3/31/09	G	3/31/09	No issues
9: Regional Mapping	C	12/31/08	G	3/31/09	G	3/31/09	Some counties no GIS
10: Public Engagement & Comm.	G	12/31/08	G	3/31/09	G	3/31/09	Website maintenance
11: Environmental Impacts	C	12/31/08	G	3/31/09	G	3/31/09	No issues
12A: Health Care	G	12/31/08	G	3/31/09	G	3/31/09	Regional focus
12B: Social Services	C	12/31/08	G	3/31/09	G	3/31/09	No issues
13: Public Safety & Emergency Services	C	12/31/08	G	3/31/09	G	3/31/09	No issues
14: Quality of Life	C	12/31/08	G	3/31/09	G	3/31/09	No issues
15: Fiscal Analysis & Sustainability	G	12/31/08	G	3/31/09	G	3/31/09	Pending other impacts
16: Implementation	G	12/31/08	G	3/31/09	G	3/31/09	Coord. w/RDC&COG

 Complete
  On Track
  Issues
  At Risk



Schedule (County View)



Purpose of this Meeting

- Review Key Issues & Findings
- Discuss Draft Growth Projections
- Discussion of Recommendations

Agenda

- Project Overview
- **Key Issues & Findings**
- Draft Growth Projections
- Discussion of Recommendations

Key Issues & Findings

- This presentation examines the expansion of Fort Benning and other economic changes on the regional Local Education Agencies (LEAs) within the Fort Benning Regional Growth Management Plan (RGMP) study area.
- This presentation includes the following LEAs: Chattahoochee County Schools, Lee County Schools, Harris County Schools, Muscogee County School Districts, Phenix City Public Schools, and the Russell County School District

Key Issues & Findings (Continued)

- Population data from the REMI model was extrapolated to provide estimates of student population over the next two decades. Growth patterns in age cohorts from the ages of 5-10, ages 11-13, and ages 14-17 were used to provide estimates for grades K-5, middle school (6-8), and high school (9-12), respectively. These forecasts are then compared to capacity in terms of “spaces” per student by the LEA. While many discussions related to school impacts include references to the number of “classrooms,” classroom size can vary between districts, and classroom size requirements can change over time. Thus, “spaces” are used in the discussions related to student population to apply a universal measurement of impact.
- Education services are assessed in terms of impacts to facilities as well as operations. The demand for new facilities will require LEAs to plan, fund, and execute the construction of new schools and/or additional classrooms. *The largest concern among all LEAs is related to funding for new facilities*

Key Issues & Findings (Continued)

- Because many of the LEAs have been preparing for the expansion of Fort Benning and other regional economic expansion for some time, they have identified the required facilities necessary to meet the increasing demand for educational services. Chattahoochee County Schools, Lee County Schools, Harris County Schools, Muscogee County School District, Phenix City Public Schools, and the Russell County School District have all identified the need for additional facilities in order to meet the expected increase in student population.
- *These LEAs must build at least seventeen new schools and add a significant number of new classrooms in order to accommodate the forecast growth. While the LEAs have access to reasonable state and local funding sources for facilities, they will not have the ability to fund the new facilities on their own.*

Key Issues & Findings (Continued)

- The expansion of Fort Benning and other economic impacts have been the topic of discussion by the regional community for the past few years. Many community leaders have begun preparing for the impacts through planning and careful consideration of the impacts.
- Several sources of information were used to perform this analysis. First, the REMI model was used to provide an estimate of students for the study area. Second, data provided through interviews and discussions with key stakeholders was used to examine impacts related to facilities and operations. Key stakeholders included administrative and teaching staff from local LEAs and other state and local officials. Third, data was collected through public sources from state and local education organizations. Fourth, other data sources (e.g., housing trends, etc.) and general observations were used to adjust the analysis accordingly. Comparing the student population forecasts to capacity information provided by LEA stakeholders was used to provide the basis for the examination of possible impacts on facilities.

Key Issues & Findings (Continued)

- Student population growth is a function of population trends as forecast over the next twenty years. Two factors contribute to population change: baseline growth, as well as the combination of direct growth, and indirect growth.
- The Ten County region included in the Fort Benning RGMP study area will receive an additional 7,981 students to the region by 2013. However, some student populations in outlying counties will be decreasing in population as some families migrate to other areas. Thus, the net change in population between 2008 and 2013 is a net gain of 6,959 students for the Ten County Area (Phase I and II). By 2028, the region will experience a net gain of 19,803 new students.

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- Project Overview
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Draft Growth Projections

Growth Projections for Phase I Counties

Total Change In Student Enrollment (K-12) - PHASE 1	2009	2013	Percent Allocation of Students				2028	Percent Allocation of Students 2028 (PHASE 1)	Avg. Annual Change 2008-2028 (PHASE 1)	Total Change from 2008-2028 (PHASE 1)
			2013 (PHASE 1)	2018	2023	2028				
Alabama LEAs										
Lee County Schools	162	1,094	13.7%	2,338	3,446	3,645	17.7%	1.6%	37.6%	
Phenix City Public Schools	158	922	11.6%	1,687	2,466	2,760	13.4%	1.9%	45.6%	
Russell County School District	95	463	5.8%	642	921	1,159	5.6%	1.5%	34.2%	
Subtotal, Alabama LEAs	414	2,478	31.1%	4,666	6,833	7,564	36.7%	1.7%	39.5%	
Georgia LEAs										
Chattahoochee County Schools	47	377	4.7%	544	969	1,007	4.9%	3.6%	101.0%	
Harris County Schools	204	730	9.2%	1,424	2,105	2,564	12.4%	2.1%	51.6%	
Muscogee County School District	1,020	4,381	55.0%	7,136	8,797	9,499	46.0%	1.3%	29.1%	
Subtotal, Georgia LEAs	1,271	5,487	68.9%	9,104	11,871	13,070	63.3%	1.5%	33.8%	
Total	1,685	7,965	100.0%	13,771	18,704	20,634	100.0%	1.5%	35.7%	

Source: REMI, RKG Associates, inc.

All enrollment numbers represent growth from baseline growth, Fort Benning Expansion, and other economic expansion.

Draft Growth Projections (Continued)

- Chattahoochee County Schools has identified the need for 10 classrooms at the Elementary School, providing additional capacity for about 200 students; the construction of a new middle school to serve 400 pupils; and the addition of 24 classrooms at the high school. Since the original inception of the facilities plan, the District has provided local funding to provide 12 additional classrooms to the middle school campus, alleviating some of the crowding that is beginning to occur.
- Harris County Schools has identified the need for the construction of a new intermediate school in 2009, with capacity of 700 students; the construction of a high school and elementary school between 2013 and 2014, with a capacity of 1,500 students; and other classroom expansions as necessary, likely funded through SPLOST monies and state entitlements.
- Lee County Schools intends to build a new high school for grades 10-12 in the Smith Station area, and combine 7th, 8th, and 9th grades. Other facility improvements include converting the junior high school to a K-6 school, and building a new K-6 school in Smiths Station over the next few years.

Draft Growth Projections (Continued)

- Muscogee County School District has identified the need for the addition of 4,475 elementary school student spaces through classroom expansions and new elementary schools; the addition of 3,025 middle school student spaces through classroom expansions and new middle schools; and the addition of 1,105 high school student spaces through classroom expansions and new high schools. Since the beginning of the five-year plan, the LEA has utilized state and local funding to construct two elementary schools and one middle school, proactively alleviating some of the crowding that is beginning to occur.
- Phenix City Public Schools has identified the need for two new elementary schools, plus the addition of at least 68 additional classrooms in its facilities plans. Many of these additions have been added over the past few years, in anticipation of the expansion of Fort Benning.
- The Russell County School District has identified the need for an additional elementary school, as well as several expansions to current school programs. Since the five-year plan was initiated, many of the expansions have been funded through state and local sources, and have been built in anticipation of the increase in students related to the expansion of Fort Benning.

Draft Growth Projections (Continued)

- The demand for services to younger children (under the age of 5) is expected to increase significantly over the next decade. Within the Fort Benning RGMP study area the following counties have been forecasted to have an increased demand for child care: Harris, Lee, Muscogee and Russell Counties.

Harris, Lee, Muscogee, and Russell Counties	2008 (1)	2009	2013	2018	2023	2028
Future Forecast for Children Ages 0-5		1,506	6,879	8,526	7,863	7,773
Children Between 0-5 Using Child Care		628	2,845	3,531	3,262	3,219
Demand for Child Care	11,065	11,693	13,910	14,595	14,327	14,284
Current Child Care Capacity (2)	14,072	14,072	14,072	14,072	14,072	14,072
Total Capacity Surplus/(Deficit)	3,007	2,379	162	(523)	(255)	(212)

Source: Child Care Resource Center and Referral Center., NACCRRRA, REMI, RKG Associates.

(1) 2008 Estimate for Child Care provided by Alabama Kids Count and Child Care Resource Center, Inc.

(2) Does not include expanded capacity of child care at Fort Benning.

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Discussion of Recommendations

- Unless outside sources of funding are sought, LEAs and local taxpayers will incur the costs of growth spurred by outside economic impacts (e.g., Fort Benning expansion and other economic activities). The LEAs have been successful in funding new facilities through local, state, and other sources of funds, but almost all LEAs report they are limited in their ability to fund any more facilities through local tax sources. Federal funds that are received could be used to build facilities constructed to accommodate regional economic expansion, or could be used toward new facilities. “But for” the expansion of Fort Benning and other economic impacts, the LEAs would not be experiencing this level of increased impacts on educational services.

Discussion of Recommendations (Continued)

It is recommended that the LEAs within the region formally establish a regional educational voice possibility in association with existing regional organizations, mirroring the one created under the Chattahoochee Valley Project. It is recommended that the LEAs undertake the following steps:

1. Meet to formally create ties among the LEAs interested in pursuing outside sources of funds for impacts related to Fort Benning, as well as other significant regional impacts that may occur in the future.
 - The group, tentatively referred to here as the Chattahoochee Valley Schools Coalition (CVSC), and possibly formed by the Valley Partnership, should meet and enter into a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU), where each LEA agrees to work to solve regional education-related issues. The first issue would involve impacts related to Fort Benning.

Discussion of Recommendations (Continued)

The CVSC would also agree to a hiring process to select and employ a Full Time Employee (FTE) to run the regional entity, should funding be made available.

2. The CVSC should then pursue federal funding for an FTE. Through DoD and DOE.
 - The Director would take the lead on resubmitting a new solicitation to the DoD and DOE for funds related to new facilities.
 - The Director would represent the regional LEAs and provide a link among other areas of impact, such as Fort Benning, the State of Georgia, the State of Alabama, the housing community, the child care community, etc.

Discussion of Recommendations (Continued)

- Because military planning numbers are, as a general rule, subject to change due to national and international forces, the impacts of Fort Benning will require continual monitoring and updating on a regular, annual basis.
- Many superintendents have begun to express a level of frustration with a lack of information related to timing of troop arrival, on-post housing numbers, etc. It is imperative that open communication be established between all affected LEAs and Fort Benning.
- The CVSC Director will also be able to represent the region to Alabama and Georgia State officials. The next few years will likely experience economic and fiscal challenges on a statewide level with state sources of monies prorated or decreased. Given that the region is set to experience growth during a time of economic challenge, it is essential that the CVSC Director provide updated information to state lawmakers concerning the region's special circumstances.

Discussion of Recommendations (Continued)

- While child care and early childhood education programs are essentially considered expandable, they all require increased levels of communication to occur between Fort Benning and local early childhood education professionals. All organizations within the community have experienced growth before, and are capable of successfully planning for expansion as long as information related to the expansion of Fort Benning and other economic impacts are communicated in a timely manner. Thus, the CVSC Director would also work as a liaison between Fort Benning and the child care and early childhood education communities.
- Housing trends obviously provide a direct correlation to student population, and will usually dictate where student impacts will be greatest. Housing data should be compiled and presented to LEAs, without local school districts having to spend time and energy preparing their own housing forecast. The CVSC Director, or another regional entity working with the CVSC such as the Valley Partnership Development Authority, could also provide these types of services to the LEAs.

Discussion of Recommendations (Continued)

3. Currently, there is no formal relationship between the building and education communities. It is recommended that LEAs establish some level of formal communication with county, city, or private organizations through the CVSC to monitor local housing trends, and specifically, building permits.

It is vital that all LEAs impacted by Fort Benning work together toward a common goal of improving education funding and support throughout the region. The regional LEAs have worked together in the past through informal organizations to address growth issues. It is imperative that all LEAs formally organize and seek outside assistance for new facilities, and work together to improve the regional education infrastructure.

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