

Overview

“The vision for the future of the former Fort Ord is that a community will grow up on the former Base, having a special character and identity. This community, at the same time, will fit with the character of the Peninsula, complementary with the scale and density of the existing communities from Marina to Carmel. It will demonstrate a respect for the special natural environment of the Peninsula and the scenic qualities of the Bay, coastal dune areas, and upland reaches. It will also be complementary to the rich tradition and reality of agriculture in the Salinas Valley, which forms such an important part of the regional character and economy, while enhancing the experience of visitors to the Peninsula. Most importantly, the community will be a special place for living and working. It will provide a diversity of experience and opportunity, with a development approach that is sustainable and appropriate.” - Base Reuse Plan, p. 56

The Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA) adopted a state and federally required Base Reuse Plan (BRP) in 1997. Under state law, FORA oversees planning, financing, and implementing reuse and recovery programs described in the 1997 BRP. These Regional Urban Design Guidelines (RUDG) are required BRP policy refinements intended to facilitate community reuse goals. The guidelines were developed under a broadly-inclusive public planning process that incorporated significant local resident, property owner and stakeholder input. FORA jurisdictions must consider these guidelines when submitting proposed land use plans, zoning codes, entitlements and other implementing actions. FORA must then determine the consistency of such plans, zoning, and actions with the guidelines (and other BRP requirements), the process for which is set forth in the FORA Act and Article 8.01 of the Master Resolution. The RUDG are not zoning plans or zoning ordinances; such are the purview of the local jurisdictions. These guidelines are built from the BRP, draw on existing local policy, and incorporate national urban design best practices.

Design Principles

The following 6 BRP Design Principles are included to guide former Fort Ord reuse:

Design Principle 1: Create a unique identity for the community around the educational institutions.

“The centerpiece of the community at the former Fort Ord will be the education centers that have been integrated into the reuse of the former Fort Ord. Three major post-secondary institutions are participating in the reuse of the base. The CSUMB campus, the UC MBEST Center, and the Monterey Peninsula College District will all become significant catalysts to

the economic development of the region. In addition, land and/or facilities have been subject to public benefit conveyance for Golden Gate University and the Monterey Institute for Research in Astronomy and the Monterey Peninsula Unified School District (MPUSD). The CSUMB campus, currently planned to ultimately accommodate 25,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) students, will occupy a central site, and will support retail and recreation facilities, housing units, and a variety of services and businesses. In addition, the special facilities found on a major university campus such as art galleries, performance and lecture halls, libraries, athletic facilities, and bookstores will greatly enhance the surrounding community and provide opportunities for access by all age groups. The other educational institutions will offer diverse educational opportunities. The UC MBEST Center will become a unique employment center, complementary to other research institutions in the region and capitalizing on the unique physical and intellectual attributes of the area.” (BRP p.56-57).

Design Principle 2: Reinforce the natural landscape setting consistent with Peninsula character.

“The former Fort Ord is part of the gentle crescent that frames Monterey Bay, situated between the great Salinas River Valley and the dramatic coastal range that juts into the Pacific to form the Peninsula. The historic “cantonment” area within Fort Ord is bounded by State Highway 1, sand dunes and ocean beyond to the west and by the native landscapes of the upper elevations to the east. The entire Peninsula, as a whole, is characterized by a highly memorable landscape character. The former Fort Ord is a critical centerpiece of this landscape and serves as the entry and introduction to the Peninsula for the visitor arriving from the Salinas Valley to the east or from Santa Clara State Highway 1 to the north.”

“The natural landscape setting at the former Fort Ord is not only an important visual resource within the region. It is also a key natural resource with significant biological value. As part of the base reuse, 15,000 acres of the site will be managed as open space for habitat resource protection and for limited recreational use. These environmental resources will add significantly to the supply of protected regional open space within the County of Monterey and will provide linkages to other regional open space assets. Approximately 1,000 acres of the coastal area will be conveyed to the State of California Department of Recreation to create the Fort Ord Dunes State Park.” (BRP p.57-58).

Design Principle 3: Establish a mixed-use development pattern with villages as focal points.

“Consistent with the character of a college town with a vibrant, around-the-clock level of activity and vitality, the former Fort Ord is planned to consist of a series of villages with

mixed-use centers. Some will be built around existing and new residential neighborhoods, while other village themes will include: the Marina Town Center with employment, retail and housing; CSUMB with its educational focus and housing; and the East Garrison with a potential mix of employment, housing and recreation. The village pattern will sustain a transit and pedestrian friendly development pattern. The core of each village will consist of services and amenities for districts and neighborhood, from retail and service establishments to transit stops and parks. Higher development densities and a mix of uses (e.g. office and housing over retail) will enhance the vitality of the village centers. The villages will be linked by transit routes and by open space corridors suited for cycling and walking. The villages will be designed to be compact and walkable, each developed with its own identity and character.” (BRP p.58-59).

Design Principle 4: Establish diverse neighborhoods as the building blocks of the community.

“The special character of the communities in the Peninsula is due, at least in part, to the diversity of their residential neighborhoods. They are typically small scaled, with one and two story buildings. Open space is plentiful, giving the overall impression of a green and lush landscape. In some neighborhoods, historic styles and buildings predominate, including adobes characteristic of the pre-statehood era. A regional vernacular, the Monterey style which evolved during the colonial period, is joined by an array of other architectural styles: Victorian, California bungalow, “Mediterranean”, post WWII tract, and more recent modern and post-modern styles.”

“Several of the existing residential communities on the former base - including portions of Patton, Abrams, Schoonover, and Frederick housing areas - will be retained and renovated for a variety of housing unit types where feasible. In addition, new residential neighborhoods will be added, ranging from high density units in the Town Center and village centers, to large lot single family areas. In all cases, particular attention will be paid to ensuring that the residential neighborhoods retain or establish special identities and characters, and that they have available a full range of amenities - schools, parks, transit, and shopping - within a convenient and walkable distance.” (BRP, p. 59-60).

Design Principle 5: Encourage sustainable practices and environmental conservation.

“Sustainable development means economic growth that we can live with and that future generations can live with too. It means growth that improves human welfare but does not squander the resources of the planet nor undermine the biological systems on which life

depends.”-World Resources Institute

“The reuse of the former Fort Ord as a mixed-use community within the larger Peninsula provides the opportunity to demonstrate a wide range of design and planning practices that are consistent with accepted notions of sustainability and environmental conservation. A majority of the area of the former Fort Ord will be set aside for habitat management with limited recreation opportunities included. The remaining portions of the former base will be developed into a balanced community which provides housing and employment opportunities, reducing the need for long distance commuting throughout the region. Major destinations such as employment centers, the university, and regional shopping will be located along transit rights-of-way to ensure the availability of modes of transit besides the automobile. Specific areas of the community will also be designed to include a mix of uses such as housing, shopping and office, and to be pedestrian friendly. In addition, individual sites and buildings should be designed to minimize energy consumption and to take advantage of local climatic conditions to enhance comfort.” (BRP p.60-61).

Design Principle 6: Adopt Regional Urban Design Guidelines.

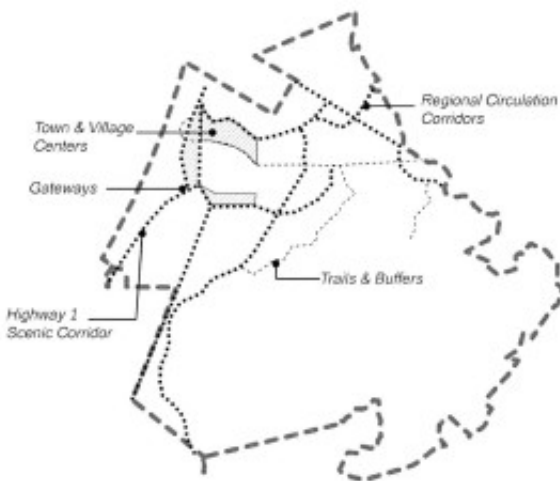


Figure 1. BRP Regional Urban Design Guideline Locations

“The visual character of the Monterey Peninsula plays a major role in supporting the area’s attractiveness as a destination for many visitors every year. The location of the Fort Ord property is such that it functions much like a gateway to Peninsula attractions such as the beach and dunes area which will be a state park; the communities of Monterey, Pacific Grove, Carmel; and the Carmel Valley, Big Sur and points south. Maintaining the visual

quality of this gateway to the Peninsula and where necessary enhancing it is of regional importance to ensure the economic vitality of the entire Peninsula.”

“Regional urban design guidelines will be prepared and adopted by FORA as a separate implementation action to govern the visual quality of the following areas of regional importance. The guidelines will address the State Highway 1 Scenic Corridor, the freeway entrances to the former Fort Ord are from State Highway 1 (12th Street and the Main Gate areas) and from the east, areas bordering the public accessible habitat-conservation areas, major through roadways such as Reservation Road and Blanco Road, as well as other areas to be determined. **The urban design guidelines will establish standards for road design, setbacks, building height, landscaping, signage, and other matters of visual importance.**” (BRP p.61).