



# FORT ORD REUSE AUTHORITY

920 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Suite A, Marina, CA 93933

Phone: (831) 883-3672 | Fax: (831) 883-3675 | [www.fora.org](http://www.fora.org)

## MEDIA RELEASE

Contact: Josh Metz, Economic Development Manager

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### **FORA Economic Development Program Extended**

Following the success of an initial 2-year trial, the Fort Ord Reuse Authority (“FORA”) Board unanimously extended funding for its Economic Development Program on May 12, 2017. Funding supports staff resources, and regional economic development agencies including the California State University Monterey Bay (“CSUMB”) Startup Challenge, the Small Business Development Center (“SBDC”), and the Monterey Bay Economic Partnership (“MBEP”), among others. Josh Metz will continue to lead the program and is responsible for developing and sustaining economic development strategies: building on regional economic strengths; engaging with regional partners and stakeholders; developing and maintaining information resources; pursuing new and retaining existing businesses; and measuring and reporting progress to the FORA Board.

Working towards a planned FORA transition in 2020, the economic development program will build on the momentum created during the past 2-years, and work to realize many of the remaining Fort Ord reuse visions. Particular focus will be given to supporting new activity at the University of California Monterey Bay Education Science and Technology (“UCMBEST”) center; strengthening regional marketing power to attract new businesses/investment to regional opportunity sites; supporting the FORA member jurisdictions in achieving their economic development goals; working with regional partners to expand and strengthen the regional entrepreneurial ecosystem; and continuing to strengthen technical and information resources to meet partner and stakeholder needs.

Key program accomplishments include: launching a new Fort Ord reuse oriented, economic development web resource [www.OrdForward.org](http://www.OrdForward.org); strengthening Startup Monterey Bay with funding and digital marketing, strategy and implementation support; implementing biennial jobs surveys indicating ~12-15% growth over the period; completing a co-working market feasibility study; successfully recruiting a new medical foods company and winery to the region; supporting FORA member jurisdictions in activating development opportunities; supporting the completion and Board adoption of a regional trails blueprint; and finalizing the creation and adoption of new regional urban design guidelines by the FORA Board.

“We’re very happy the FORA Board understands the value of building on our existing successes, and leveraging regional partnerships and relationships. Consequently, we are creating jobs, housing and workforce improvements in the near term” says Josh Metz, FORA Economic Development Manager. “We have a unique opportunity to focus, accelerate, enhance and coordinate between now and the coming decade, so the regional economy is humming when the time comes for FORA to transition.”

The Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA) is responsible for the oversight of Monterey Bay area economic recovery from the closure of and reuse planning of the former Fort Ord military base. The former Fort Ord is located on the California coastline near the Monterey Peninsula consisting of 45 square miles/28,000 acres.

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