

1.0 Introduction

Introduction

This ~~Draft~~ Environmental Impact Report (~~Draft~~ EIR) has been prepared by the Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA) as the Lead Agency in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and implementing guidelines. The proposed project is the adoption of the ~~Draft~~ Fort Ord Reuse Plan (Reuse Plan) for the former military base known as Fort Ord.

As established by Senate Bill (SB) 899, FORA is a governing body, formed to accomplish the transfer of former Fort Ord property from the Department of the Army (Army) to the local communities. The Fort Ord Reuse Authority Act (Title 7.85, Section 67651(a)(b)(c)(d) of the Government Code) requires FORA to accomplish the following:

- a) To facilitate the transfer and reuse of Fort Ord with all practical speed;*
- b) To minimize the disruption caused by the base's closure on the civilian economy and the people of the Monterey Bay area;*
- c) To provide for the reuse and development of the base area in ways that enhance the economy and quality of life of the Monterey Bay community; and*
- d) To maintain and protect the unique environmental resources of the area.*

The proposed project is the intended vehicle for achieving these goals.

Section 67652(a) of the Government Code identifies the basis for establishing FORA as follows: “The policy set forth in Section 67651 is most likely to be achieved if an effective governmental structure exists to plan for, finance, and carry out the transfer and reuse of the base in a cooperative, coordinated, balanced, and decisive manner.” FORA is governed by a 13-member board consisting of representatives from the following jurisdictions:

- City of Carmel
- City of Del Rey Oaks
- City of Marina
- City of Sand City
- City of Monterey
- City of Pacific Grove
- City of Salinas
- City of Seaside
- County of Monterey

1.1 Background to the Project

The former Fort Ord Base was downsized and realigned in 1991 pursuant to the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990, commonly referred to as BRAC. Before former Fort Ord property can be transferred from military to civilian use, a reuse plan and an environmental review document on the reuse plan must be developed. This ~~Draft~~ EIR has been prepared to evaluate potential impacts to the environment under CEQA that may result from implementing the proposed ~~Draft Fort Ord~~ Reuse Plan, following disposal of former Fort Ord lands by the Department of the Army (Army).

A FORA Interim Reuse Plan was presented and analyzed in the Army's Final ~~Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)~~ SEIS and approved by the FORA Board on December 12, 1994. The basis of the Interim Reuse Plan was driven in large measure by the desires and needs of the land use agencies involved. Based on early assessments of the Interim Reuse Plan and extensive outreach to the community, a series of plan refinements were developed and incorporated that addressed both the shortcomings in the original plan and the substantial number of refinements initiated by each of the land use agencies. The result is a revised plan, referred to as the ~~Draft Fort Ord~~ Reuse Plan.

The ~~Draft Fort Ord~~ Reuse Plan represents an ultimate buildout scenario for the reuse of the former Fort Ord over the next 40 to 60 years. The level of development proposed under the proposed project is consistent with the level of projected regional growth (as predicted by AMBAG until the year 2015). Some of the environmental impact analyses (e.g., projected traffic impacts) in Chapter 4.0 of this ~~Draft~~ EIR are based on the year 2015, in cases where specific requirements projected for a 40-60 year buildout could not be realistically determined. A description of the 2015 development scenario is provided in the ~~Draft Fort Ord~~ Reuse Plan. Table 5.2-1 in Chapter 5.0 of this ~~Draft~~ EIR also represents 2015 development scenario projections for employment, population, and housing.

1.2 Background and Purpose of the EIR

Since the realignment of the former Fort Ord, the Army has prepared the following documents relating to the disposal and reuse of the military base: the *Fort Ord Disposal and Reuse Final Environmental Impact Statement* (June, 1993) and the *Fort Ord Disposal and Reuse Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement* (December, 1995), herein referred to as the Army's FEIS and DSEIS. Senate Bill 1180 (as amended February 1995 and contained in CEQA Sections 2100-21178.1 of the California Public Resources Code and *the State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15221) allows FORA to rely in part on the Army's previous analyses in the FEIS and DSEIS for environmental review of the proposed project.

SB 1180 states that the Lead Agency may "utilize an environmental impact statement prepared pursuant to federal law as the environmental impact report for a federal military base reuse plan," as defined by conditions described in SB 1180 Section 21083.8.1(c). Section 21083.8.2 requires that "the draft environmental impact report shall consist of all or part of the environmental impact statement and any additional information that is necessary to prepare a draft environmental impact report in compliance with this division." Therefore, in 1996 FORA determined it would prepare a ~~Draft~~ EIR with two major objectives:

- 1) To supply any missing elements from the NEPA documents required in order to comply with CEQA in adopting the ~~Draft Fort Ord~~ Reuse Plan; and
- 2) To evaluate revisions in the Reuse Plan made since December 12, 1994.

This program-level ~~Draft~~ EIR thus incorporates by reference pertinent background information and analysis from the previous NEPA documents, which is relevant to the identification and evaluation of base-wide environmental impacts addressed in this ~~Draft~~ EIR. This ~~Draft~~ EIR, as certified on June 13 1997, is therefore a supplemental document to the FEIS and DSEIS prepared by the Army.

1.2.1 Indexing the Army's FEIS, DSEIS, and Other Documents

An Index has been provided in Section 1.9 in the form of a table (Table 1.9-1), in order to simplify for the reader access to relevant information from the Army's previous documents. The ~~Draft~~ EIR summarizes key information from the FEIS and DSEIS where appropriate. Readers interested in further details of a particular resource or analysis will need to refer directly to the Army's FEIS and DSEIS. Since so much environmental documentation on the reuse of former Fort Ord is already available to the public, this ~~Draft~~ EIR seeks not to duplicate previous information, nor to provide additional extraneous detail, but to focus on the critical modifications to previous plans in a concise manner.

1.2.2 Baseline Determination

As with the Army's FEIS and DSEIS, this ~~Draft~~ EIR determines whether the proposed project may have a significant impact on the environment based on physical conditions that were present at the time the decision became final to close Fort Ord as a military base (September, 1991). This complies with Section 21083.8.1 of the Public Resources Code and utilizes the extensive research already conducted for the Army's NEPA documents, which use the same baseline year. Section 21083.8.1 (b)(1) of the Public Resources Code states:

"When preparing and certifying an environmental impact report for a reuse plan, including when utilizing an environmental impact statement...the determination of whether the reuse plan may have a significant effect on the environment may be made in the context of the physical conditions which were present at the time that the federal decision became final for the closure or realignment of the base or reservation."

1.3 Intended Uses of the EIR

This program-level EIR is intended to be used as the CEQA compliance document for "all public and private actions taken pursuant to, or in furtherance of, a reuse plan [which] shall be deemed a single project (Public Resources Code, Section 21166)." Additional, future CEQA analysis beyond this ~~Draft~~ EIR shall be conducted, however, if any of the events specified in Public Resources Code Section 21166 should occur, as follows:

"When an environmental impact report has been prepared for a project pursuant to this division, no subsequent or supplemental environmental impact report shall be required by the lead agency or by any responsible agency, unless one or more of the following events occurs:

- a) Substantial changes are proposed in the project, which will require major revisions of the environmental impact report;*
- b) Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is being undertaken which will require major revisions in the environmental impact report; or*

c) New information, which was not known and could not have been known at the time the environmental impact report was certified as complete, becomes available.”

CEQA environmental review conducted for future individual projects that implement the ~~Final Fort Ord~~ Reuse Plan will be tiered to this EIR to the extent this program-level analysis remains adequate for such purposes. Section 15152(b) of the *State CEQA Guidelines* establishes:

“Where an EIR has been prepared for a program, plan, policy, or ordinance consistent with the requirements of this section, any Lead Agency for a later project pursuant to or consistent with the program, plan, policy, or ordinance should limit the EIR on the project to effects which:

- 1) Were not examined as significant effects on the environment in the prior EIR; or*
- 2) Are susceptible to substantial reduction or avoidance by the choice of specific revisions in the project, by the imposition of conditions, or other means.”*

Additional CEQA analysis may also be required at the specific project level to give decision makers more information about site-specific issues which are not addressed in this program-level EIR. Agencies that are expected to utilize this ~~Draft~~ EIR in project approvals include the following:

Local Agencies

- County of Monterey
- City of Marina
- City of Seaside
- City of Del Rey Oaks
- Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)

State Agencies

- Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA)
- California Coastal Commission
- California State Parks Department
- California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB)
- University of California

Federal Agencies

- United States Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- United States Army (Army)

It is understood that certain project-specific environmental documents are in preparation for facilities such as UC MBEST and CSUMB. This document is intended to provide guidance for such project-specific documents and also adequate CEQA review of cumulative and base-wide issues, which may not need to be addressed in subsequent tiered documents. In response to comments received on the Notice of Preparation (NOP), this ~~Draft~~ EIR includes a listing of policies, programs, and CEQA-specific mitigations for which key land use agencies would be responsible.

1.4 Focus of the EIR

The ~~Draft~~ EIR focuses on the additional CEQA analysis that is needed to supplement existing analyses in the Army's FEIS and DSEIS. The new information included in this document is highlighted below. [The Army's FEIS and DSEIS should be consulted for all other impact analyses, including impacts associated with the Army's disposal of the former Fort Ord.]

1.4.1 CEQA considerations not present in the Army's FEIS and DSEIS

The FEIS and DSEIS were reviewed for coverage of CEQA issues not required under NEPA, including:

- Areas of known controversy of the proposed project;
- Effects of the proposed project found not to be significant;
- Impacts to resources of local or statewide concern;
- Reasonable mitigation measures;
- Definition of significance criteria in the impact analyses and conclusions regarding the level of significance of each impact;
- Growth inducing impacts of the proposed project;
- Significant irreversible environmental changes resulting from the proposed project; and
- Unavoidable significant impacts of the proposed project.

The above issues are addressed in this document.

1.4.2 Changes in the Proposed Project

The ~~Draft~~ EIR also focuses on the proposed project as a modification of FORA's Interim Reuse Plan of December 12, 1994 (Alternative 7), which is analyzed in the Army's DSEIS. The proposed project includes a land use concept as well as several implementation plans and programs (refer to Chapter 3.0 for a more detailed description). The following project components are addressed in this document:

The ~~new Draft Fort Ord Reuse Plan~~, which contains revised land use areas (refer to Figure 3.2-2) that have been modified from the FORA Interim Reuse Plan of December 12, 1994, included the following:

- Conservation plan;
- Recreation plan;
- Transportation plan
- Capital improvement program;
- Local general plan modifications to incorporate former Fort Ord properties;
- Redevelopment planning for former Fort Ord properties; and
- Potential changes in city, county and special district boundaries within former Fort Ord.

The revised land use areas contained in the proposed project consist of additional golf, hotel, equestrian, grade school, community park, and convenience retail opportunities. Additional dwelling units and mixed-use areas are proposed, as well as a slight reconfiguration of the Presidio of Monterey (POM) annex (Now known as “Ord Military Community”), and a smaller and less-costly circulation infrastructure.

Accompanying plans and programs are included as part of the proposed project in order to implement the land use concept. The ~~Draft~~ EIR has been prepared concurrently with the ~~Draft Fort Ord Reuse Plan~~ (released May, 1996), so as to maximize opportunities to build necessary environmental mitigations into the project planning process. New policies and programs have been developed for each resource element in order to alleviate potential impacts and make the proposed project as self-mitigating as possible. The policies and programs organized as amendments to local general plans serve as a separation of mitigation responsibilities by jurisdiction. FORA must adopt the Reuse Plan, including all policies and programs incorporated in it, in order to approve implementation of the proposed project. This assumes implementation of the policies and programs as a pre-condition of reuse and represents a commitment embodied in the certification of the EIR by FORA.

1.4.3 Project Alternatives

The ~~Draft~~ EIR evaluates a new No Project Alternative which takes into account the land conveyances that have already been completed. This differs from the No Project Alternative used in the DSEIS, which is primarily a “caretaker alternative” that would occur if the Army was unable to dispose of its property. In this ~~Draft~~ EIR, the No Project Alternative recognizes the current reality of land transfer agreements already in place. [Refer to Section 6.4 in this EIR for a description of lands conveyed under this alternative.]

In addition, the ~~Draft~~ EIR considers three alternatives to the proposed project, which were analyzed in detail in the Army’s FEIS and DSEIS: Alternatives 6R, 7 and 8. Alternative 6R is evaluated in the FEIS and represents the Revised Anticipated Reuse Plan in that document. Alternative 7 is evaluated as the proposed project in the DSEIS and represents the FORA Interim Reuse Plan of December 12, 1994. Alternative 8 is also evaluated in the DSEIS and represents a slight modification of Alternative 7.

1.5 Environmental Review Process

A Notice of Preparation (NOP) was released on January 8, 1996 for a 30-day public review period. The NOP describes the proposed project that is examined in this ~~Draft~~ EIR (a copy is included as Appendix A). Two Public Information and Comment meetings were held on January 22, 1996 and February 12, 1996 to obtain comments on the scope of the EIR. Each issue that was raised during the scoping process has been considered, and those deemed to be within the scope of this EIR are addressed within the document.

Following public review of ~~this a~~ Draft EIR, a Final EIR ~~was will be~~ prepared in response to written comments received during the review period. The Final EIR consists of the response to comments under separate cover, as well as the revisions to the text of the Draft EIR included herein. The FORA Board ~~must take the~~ took final action to certify ~~the this~~ EIR, as adequate for decision-making purposes and to approve ~~or deny~~ the proposed Reuse Plan, on June 13, 1997. Specific Findings of Fact pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081 ~~will be~~ were prepared and approved to reflect the final action of the FORA Board.

FORA ~~has~~ conducted a continuous coordination program with the local community and regulatory agencies in the process of developing the ~~Draft Fort Ord Reuse Plan~~ through regular working group sessions. Other methods to involve the public in the EIR process have included and will include: publishing public notices of hearings; mailing public announcements; coordinating media coverage, press releases and feature articles; and creating and updating a mailing list to disseminate information. FORA ~~has also been working to~~ provides the public with ~~an this EIR to be which is as~~ simple to understand and as user-friendly as possible, while being consistent with and making reference to previous environmental documents.

1.6 Areas of Known Controversy

As required by Section 15123 of the CEQA Guidelines, the areas of known controversy known to the lead agency are identified below and addressed in this EIR:

- Effects on traffic and the need for an adequate road network to serve the proposed level of development;
- Need for an available and adequate water supply and concern over seawater intrusion into the local groundwater aquifer;
- Need for and effects of economic development and local growth to replace economic losses due to the military base closure;
- Regional need for additional and appropriately-located housing, in order to balance the number of local jobs created and to accommodate projected regional population growth;
- Protection of the visual quality along State Highway 1, the scenic entry to the Monterey Peninsula;
- Preservation of natural resources and open space; and
- Effects on the coastal zone.

1.7 Effects Found Not to be Significant

An Initial Study for the proposed project was not required (pursuant to *State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15063(a) and Public Resources Code Section 21083.8.1), since FORA determined that an EIR would be necessary based on FORA's decision to rely on the Army's FEIS and DSEIS in identifying significant issues. The NOP identified the following areas of potential impact:

- Land Use;
- Socioeconomics;
- Geology and Soils;
- Public Services, Utilities and Water Supply;
- Hydrology and Water Quality;
- Public Health and Safety;
- Traffic and Circulation;
- Climate and Air Quality;
- Noise;
- Biological Resources;
- Visual Resources; and
- Cultural Resources.

The potential for the proposed project to result in significant adverse effects to these environmental resources is analyzed in Chapter 4.0.

Effects on energy resources are discussed in this ~~Draft~~ EIR in terms of gas and electrical requirements under Public Services and Utilities, and as a significant irreversible impact (refer to Section 5.3).

Potential effects of the proposed project on mineral resources were found not to be significant, because former Fort Ord lands do not contain significant mineral resources which would potentially be used for extraction, and proposed reuse activities are not expected to substantially alter landforms containing mineral resources. Effects on mineral resources are therefore not analyzed further in this ~~Draft~~ EIR.

1.8 Organization of the Document

This document is organized into the following sections:

1.8.1 Chapter 1.0 - Introduction

The Introduction provides a context for the EIR and describes the EIR background and scope, the environmental review process leading to approval of the EIR, as well as some assumptions critical to the environmental analysis.

1.8.2 Chapter 2.0 - Summary

This chapter summarizes the environmental impacts that would result from the proposed project and mitigation measures identified to reduce or eliminate these impacts, other CEQA considerations including cumulative impacts, and alternatives to the project and their associated impacts.

1.8.3 Chapter 3.0 - Project Description

The Project Description describes the proposed project, including: its objectives; the policies and programs associated with the project; modifications to local general plans; redevelopment planning for former Fort Ord properties; and potential changes in city, county, and special district boundaries.

1.8.4 Chapter 4.0 - Environmental Setting, Impacts and Mitigation

Chapter 4.0 briefly characterizes baseline conditions for former Fort Ord land (referencing the Army's FEIS and DSEIS), discusses the environmental impacts associated with the proposed project, identifies levels of significance, and identifies mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate the impacts.

1.8.5 Chapter 5.0 - Other CEQA Considerations

Other considerations required by CEQA are analyzed in this section, including cumulative impacts of the project, growth-inducing impacts, significant irreversible environmental changes, and unavoidable significant impacts.

1.8.6 Chapter 6.0 - Alternatives

This chapter discusses the alternatives to the proposed project and the impacts associated with each alternative. It provides a comparison of the impacts of the alternatives with those of the proposed project.

1.8.7 Chapter 7.0 - Report Preparation

Report Preparation lists the document preparers, persons and organizations consulted, bibliography, and acronyms used in the ~~Draft~~ EIR.

1.8.8 Appendices

The Appendices include supporting documentation for the environmental analyses.

1.9 Index to Other Environmental Documents

Table 1.9-1 indexes relevant resource sections of the Army NEPA documents and other key documents, and indicates where these resource sections are used in this ~~Draft~~ EIR. Page numbers refer to the first page of the referenced sections. Where necessary, the ~~Draft~~ EIR repeats or condenses key sections from the referenced documents. In general, the environmental setting descriptions presented in this ~~Draft~~ EIR essentially summarize the environmental setting (in 1991)

described in the FEIS. Additional information on the environmental setting provided in the Army's DSEIS is also incorporated where necessary.

The Impacts and Mitigations and Cumulative Impacts sections of this ~~Draft~~ EIR differ in format and some content from similar sections in the other relevant environmental documents. However, the impact discussions contained in this ~~Draft~~ EIR reference the FEIS and DSEIS and incorporate applicable information wherever appropriate. The primary difference in the impact analyses contained in this ~~Draft~~ EIR is that new information pertaining to the proposed project and CEQA criteria are included.

Table 1.9-1 Index Table to Other Environmental Documents

Issue Areas	Fort Ord Reuse Plan Draft EIR (March, 1996)	Army's Draft DSEIS (December, 1995)	Army's Final FEIS- vol. I (June, 1993)	Other Documents (see Key)
1. Land Use Environmental Setting Impacts and Mitigations Cumulative Impacts	p4-3 p4-7 p5-2	p4-1 p5-12; 5-87 p5-48; 5-92	p4-3 p6-3 p6-6	
2. Socioeconomics Environmental Setting Impacts and Mitigations Cumulative Impacts	p4-20 p4-24 p5-3	p4-3 p5-12; 5-87 p5-49; 5-87	p4-7 p6-7 p6-14	
3. Geology and Soils Environmental Setting Impacts and Mitigations Cumulative Impacts	p4-27 p4-29 p5-3	p4-8 p5-19 p5-52	p4-31 p6-27 p6-31	Soils (entire report); Other (p9-13 and 9-20)
4. Public Services, Utilities and Water Supply Environmental Setting Impacts and Mitigations Cumulative Impacts	p4-36 p4-39 p5-4	p4-8 p5-20 p5-53	p4-45 p6-32 p6-37	
5. Hydrology and Water Quality Environmental Setting Impacts and Mitigations Cumulative Impacts	p4-45 p4-47 p5-5	p4-8 p5-22; 5-87 p5-55; 5-93	p4-53 p6-52 p6-56	OPABS (p6-7 and p9-25)
6. Public Health and Safety Environmental Setting Impacts and Mitigations Cumulative Impacts	p4-53 p4-56 p5-6	p4-11 p5-23 p5-57	p4-61 p6-62 p6-62	
7. Traffic and Circulation Environmental Setting Impacts and Mitigations Cumulative Impacts	p4-68 p4-76 p5-6	p4-11 p5-6; 5-88 p5-58; 5-93	p4-65 p6-71 p6-74	
8. Climate and Air Quality Environmental Setting Impacts and Mitigations Cumulative Impacts	p4-90 p4-94 p5-6	p4-12 p5-26; 5-88 p5-61	p4-66 p6-76 p6-76	

9. Noise				
Environmental Setting	p-98	p4-13	p4-72	OPABS (Section 3 and p9-17)
Impacts and Mitigations	p-104	p5-26	p6-77	
Cumulative Impacts	p5-8	p5-65	p6-95	
10. Biological Resources				
Environmental Setting	p4-113	p4-23	p4-88	
Impacts and Mitigations	p4-124	p5-32; 5-88	p6-106	
Cumulative Impacts	p5-8	p5-66; 5-93	p6-130	
11. Visual Resources				
Environmental Setting	p4-143	p4-33	p4-120	
Impacts and Mitigations	p4-145	p5-44	p6-132	
Cumulative Impacts	p5-9	p5-85	p6-134	
12. Cultural Resources				
Environmental Setting	p4-150	p4-33	p4-124	
Impacts and Mitigations	p4-151	p5-45	p6-135	
Cumulative Impacts	p5-10	p5-85	p6-136	

Key: ~~FORP 4~~ = Draft Fort Ord Reuse Plan, Chapter 4.0 Reuse Plan Elements, sections indicated (May, 1996).
~~FORP App~~ = Draft Fort Ord Reuse Plan, Appendix: The Business and Operations Plan, sections indicated (May, 1996)

Soils = Soils Baseline Study of Fort Ord, California (April, 1992).
OPABS = Other Physical Attributes Baseline Study of Fort Ord, California (April, 1992).

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