

# Fort Knox

## Compatible Use Plan

Executive Summary – November 2021

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*Prepared by*

Lincoln Trail Area Development District



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## Executive Summary

*The last Joint Land Use Study was completed in June 2008, just as some of the effects of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Process were beginning to occur. Longtime residents only knew the Armor School, which was originally established in 1940. In 2011 it relocated to Fort Benning, and new missions came to Fort Knox. Funding dollars became available for roads, water systems, and schools. Many in the community thought the new 880,000 square foot office complex would mean the end of noise, training, and transient populations; heralding in an era of office workers living in the local area. This was not, however, the whole story. The Fort Knox Garrison continues its mission to deliver "...base support to enable training, force projection, and Soldier and Family readiness." The new Digital Air Ground Integration Range, summer training of over 10,000 cadets, and the 2020 reactivation of V Corps means the Army continues to play a huge role in the geographic, social, and economic impact of the region. The region, in turn, continues to effect Fort Knox. Thus, the need to revisit the relationships through the new Compatible Use Program.*

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### STUDY PURPOSE/NEED

The basic purpose of a Compatible Use Study is to identify methods that will allow cooperative relationships between Fort Knox and its surrounding communities to the benefit and consensus of all parties.

Identifying issues and concerns, highlighting success stories and solutions are all part of a pro-active approach to resolving conflicts, providing tools, and continuing the positive accomplishments that are integral to everyone. The focus to bring together as many community leaders and representatives as possible to the table to gather data, feedback, stories, and creativity was a primary mission.

Laying out this information, tying together the needs of Fort Knox, and then presenting a coherent framework to enable more success stories going forward was the goal.

This study is presented in five sections:

#### **I Region and Community Profiles**

#### **II Fort Knox Military Reservation Profile**

#### **III Compatibility Issues**

#### **IV Compatibility Mitigation Tools**

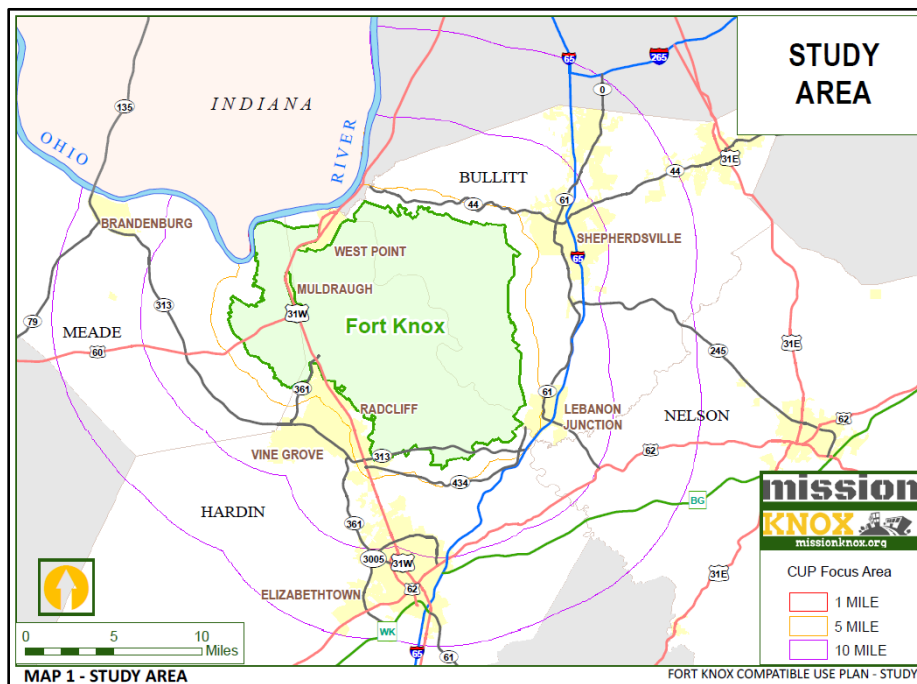
#### **V Implementation Strategy**

## I Region and Community Profiles

This section provides the framework of the region or more specifically as we will refer to it the “study area.” It is a compilation of the geography, governmental structure, planning focus, infrastructure, and socio-economic data that was gathered and evaluated during the study. The initial meetings with community representatives and the public at large began in September 2019.

## II Fort Knox Military Reservation Profile

Following a similar path with the previous section, the focus this time being the installation itself. Data obtain from Fort Knox, and publicly available sources was compiled into a snapshot that provides elements of its operations, land use, its personnel, residents, and the economic impact it has on the study area.



## III Compatibility Issues

The concerns of both Fort Knox and the communities around are evaluated in the section. It provided details on encroachment of many types, issues that can create problems on both sides of the fence, and a look at the infrastructure and workforce needs that can impact all concerned.

## IV Compatibility Mitigation Tools

Presented here are some tools that may help prevent or resolve any issues. Combining resources from Federal, State, and Local participants, it presents options to address several different areas of concern. It includes backgrounds of programs, templates of ordinances, concepts, and strategies to assist communities to work independently or in partnerships to help promote compatible use.

## V Implementation Strategy

Finally, a summary of recommendations is laid out to be considered by the various entities. They are then charged to undertake specific actions that all revolve around the goal of promoting compatible use. This strives toward the overall objective of Fort Knox being able to support not only its current mission, but also future ones that will occur. The 2005 BRAC has, if nothing else, illustrated that nothing is constant, and the challenge of change must be and can be addressed in a manner that promotes positive outcomes for all.

## RESULTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The current state of Fort Knox is functional and thriving. The efforts of all the parties involved in the study process were enthusiastic and committed to working together to maintain this. The actions proposed are in many cases continuations of some successful programs just

applied to new geographies in the area. Thus, the people involved can continue to work with their neighbors to learn from each other what works and how to implement those recommendations. Some strategies are new to the region. It will take persistence to apply those and will involve many different groups from local planners, elected officers of the study area communities, business leaders, state agencies and state officials to work together to implement those policies. Not every party will agree to every action, but the willingness to reach a consensus to promote the greater good and maintain the continued presence of Fort Knox has been evident throughout the process.

The number of regulations that have been created at federal and state levels create new levels of bureaucracy to deal with. Governments are confronted with the need to meet these requirements with limited staffs and funding sources. The initial cost of infrastructure is great, the long-term maintenance expense can be even greater. Highways must be repaired, water and wastewater systems must be replaced, growth of a community must be affordable in the long term. Including this into the planning process is unavoidable and must be considered.

In the past the, Joint Land Use Study looked strictly at land uses. Such things and zoning and development density were the greatest concern. We have expanded this out somewhat to encompass a more holistic view. Consideration of workforce and economic factors play a role in the stability of Fort Knox and the regions. Technology has created new issues of encroachment such as lasers and drones. Frequency bandwidth has surged with the growth of cellular equipment and remote-control devices. These also must be factored into this broader approach to compatible use.

The region is very dynamic and has consistently grown over the years. This has been due in large part due to two factors, the existence of Fort

Knox and the region's central geographic location not, only in Kentucky, but in the United States as a whole. It is now, however, on the threshold of an era of even more rapid growth. The announcement of Ford Motor Company's 5,000 employee battery plant, to be located in Hardin County is an economic boom but all the afore mentioned planning elements become even more critical. The facility will be only 25 miles south of Fort Knox's main gate via US31W. This will place additional stress on the area's already strained housing stock.

The return back to the key of all this continues to be communication and planning. Understanding your neighbor's needs, meeting, discussing and being involved in the multitude of situations or scenarios that can occur is demanding. Support of local officials to look at the big picture is crucial. Planning for things that may be years down the road can be difficult but must be done. All this must also happen with the awareness that flexibility is required as plans, in many cases, will have to adapt to these new and ever-changing situations.

It is hoped that the development process of this plan that was embraced by the parties involved and the resulting content can assist in guiding the region forward for the betterment of all concerns.