

31 July 2023

Fiscal Year 2023 Summary Report – Fort Knox Compatible Use Implementation Activity

Summary

In January 2022 the Fort Knox Compatible Use Plan (CUP) was completed and published. It provided a detailed analysis the interactive relationships between Fort Knox and its regional partner communities. It emphasized various programs or policies that contribute to Fort Knox and these surrounding communities' successful relationships. However, it also revealed some areas of concern that could compromise Fort Knox's missions due to incompatible policies or issues. The end focus of the plan identified additional strategies that could expand these positive relationships and try to alleviate problem areas going forward.

Prior to the CUP even being completed. the process revealed potential policies that could mitigate pressures faced by Fort Knox and the surrounding communities. Fort Knox, local legislators, community leaders, and LTADD began working together to promote some of these policy solutions. This led to the understanding of the need to work toward review and implementation of the entire suite of strategies that resulted. Thus, promoting concepts that would be in everyone's best interest.

In September 2022 Lincoln Trail ADD announced the receipt of a grant from DoD's Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation (OLDCC) to work on enacting these implementation strategies. This document touches on some of the various activities and efforts to date undertake to meet the objectives of this grant. This includes the engagement of our partners at Fort Knox and our local communities. The current regional growth trends and ongoing infrastructure and economic changes have added obvious urgency to this work.

The grant application laid out three primary goals as targets for this effort:

Goal 1: Communication

Develop and expand the interaction between the communities and Fort Knox. Increase overall public awareness of Fort Knox's missions and how the need and concepts of compatible use sustain them. Use this to form ongoing partnerships that understand the symbiotic physical, geographic, and economic relationships that exist.

Goal 2: Land Use Policy

Develop and provide specific language and promote its adoption by the communities that reflect compatible use in support of Fort Knox. This, in turn, assists in mitigating adverse impacts to Fort Knox missions.

Goal 3: Conservation

Promote compatible use through land conservation efforts in the immediate vicinity of Fort Knox. This promotes compatible land use adjacent to the installation and resiliency with respect to the natural hazards that are prevalent in the area. The result being preservation of natural areas, mitigation of natural hazards, and limiting incompatible man-made development activities. Fort Knox derives additional benefits with respect to the natural habitat protection concerns that they deal with regarding protected or endangered species regulations.

These goals involve numerous and, in some cases, disparate stakeholders. They do however, as a group, understand the need to maintain the presence of Fort Knox and its respective missions which in turn provide benefit to everyone in our region.

Activities

The goals above provided a fairly broad scope but specific tasks were undertaken to work toward them. Much of the behind-the-scenes work was undertaken by LTADD staff in collecting, analyzing, and preparing data to be provided to the stakeholders. This summary will focus however on some of the activities that have occurred during this past year.

Communications and meetings with Fort Knox Garrison Command, legislators, Federal and State officials, interested parties such as the Knox Regional Development Alliance,

and the Lincoln Trail ADD Board of Directors which includes the elected and citizen members of our region have been occurring. A highlight here is the work of the Hardin County Planning Commission who began updating their Comprehensive Plan this past fall. Hardin County has directly involved the Fort Knox Garrison in developing this update. This update was in part driven by the impact of the BlueOvalSK development in Glendale, 25 miles south of the installation's main gate. Many of the implementation strategies have taken on a much greater level of concern as a result of this growth.

LTADD staff participated with Fort Knox Garrison Command and local legislators on efforts to implement Real Estate Disclosure policies in the state. This was a continuation of efforts that began because of the initial out briefs of the draft Compatible Use Plan to the Executive and Technical Advisory Committees. The Garrison and legislators felt this program could be very effective with respect to promotion and maintenance of compatible use in the area. This led to legislators, Garrison, and LTADD staff briefing the state legislature's Interim Joint Committee with administrative regulatory jurisdiction. This also involved cooperation of the Governor's Department of Military Affairs and presentations to the administrative components of the Kentucky Real Estate Commission. Garrison also briefed the Interim Joint Committee on Military Affairs on the Fort Knox missions and real estate disclosure concepts. The parties have continued working on potential statutory and regulatory mechanisms to promote this implementation strategy. Concerns raised by Realtor Associations resulted in even more outreach to these professional organizations for explanation of issues and to obtain buy in.

Garrison also stepped forward to provide area planners and decision makers with on-post briefings and overflights of the range and training areas. These briefings provided individuals a broad education regarding missions, noise, problem areas, and future development risks of the installation. The impending opening of the DAGIR range and subsequent effects were highlighted.

Meetings and communications are ongoing with local planners to obtain feedback and provide background on the implementation strategies and mitigation measures for documented issues. These discussions have also included many new members who were not involved with the original CUP process.

In a perfect example of communication, Fort Knox hosted the May 2023 meeting of the Lincoln Trail Board of Directors. This allowed many of those community leaders a chance to see and understand many of the missions of the post up close.

LTADD also took the understanding of this collaborative and regional planning focus statewide in a presentation to the Kentucky Chapter of the American Planning Association's Spring Conference. The presentation gave background on the compatible use process and lessons learned from a regional planning perspective.

Housing has become a word at the forefront of many discussions among the public and area leaders. Supply and demand, escalating material and labor costs, and rising interest rates are some factors that have driven formation of the Lincoln Trail Workforce Crisis Taskforce's Housing Roundtable meetings. This topic is also an integral part of the Regional Economic Strategy group coordinated by the Kentucky League of Cities This group, like the Workforce program, is working to provide a list of priorities to legislators in an effort to deal with the pressures arising from BlueOvalSK. In coordinating with these efforts, LTADD continues creation of one of the primary deliverables for the CUP Implementation a Housing Study for the Fort Knox market area.

Upcoming

Addressing the housing issue is of primary concern. In addition to the study, concepts that would mediate the issue are being worked on. This includes items that will become part of the planning and zoning policy "toolbox". Procedures to perhaps streamline permitting processes, promotion of updating the state's acceptance of more current building codes and other concerns that may have to be dealt with at a state vs. local

level due to statutory government restrictions. This process will also look at the need and “how-to” of Military Influence Areas Overlay or Planning Districts. This information will also be provided to local planners and policy makers. This will allow more understanding and consideration of the many potential impacts to the military’s mission and undesirable infrastructure or economic fallout that could otherwise occur inadvertently during decision process.

On the real estate disclosure possibility, it has not yet come to fruition but effort will be made to continue to promote. This especially critical in light of the housing situation that now expands far beyond the issues that Fort Knox was already facing.

The conservation goal has not yet been laid out for consideration except to a very limited extent. Presentation of the Sentinel Landscapes program, other potential state and federal programs, and engaging the many natural and conservation organizations that were involved in the CUP process will be undertaken.

Additional analysis and dissemination of the incompatible land use risk analysis will also be started. This will allow planners, the installation, and conservation-oriented groups to understand and monitor at risk areas and hopefully provide solutions.

The completion and recent approval of the regional Hazard Mitigation Plan and new emphasis on resiliency will also be tied to concerns facing Fort Knox and its communities. Understanding of not only the natural hazard that have been of historical concern but also man-made issues that can affect the area will be considered.

In summary, we still have much work to do to fully satisfy the needs of the Garrison, the region’s communities, and the requirements of the grant. Due to the many unforeseen impacts to the region by what is being considered the largest economic event in Kentucky’s history, BlueOvalSK, we have been reviewing all our processes. It is being surmised that in addition to the 5,000 employees at the facility itself when fully operational by the end of 2025 another 3,000 jobs will be created in direct support of this plant. This is also forecast to add an additional 22,000 to the current 2022 Census population estimate of 111,862 in Hardin County itself. A gain of almost 20% by 2030. The potential need for an additional 8,800 housing units in Hardin County alone places

incredible stress on a housing situation that was already tenuous. These numbers don't reflect the additional growth that will hit the other counties and communities in the Fort Knox study area. Changes to the data are occurring rapidly. In addition, LTADD's continued support of our member communities and the numerous programs we serve have also created internal issues with staffing levels. Thus, LTADD has applied to the grantor, OLDCC, for a no cost, time extension of one year to ensure that the implementation strategies promoted by the CUP are given the best opportunity to be promoted and evaluated.

If you have questions, concerns, suggestions or other interest regarding any of this information or activities please reach out to us at LTADD.

For those of you unaware we are now at a new location:

750 S. Provident Way
Elizabethtown, KY 42701
Phone: 270-769-2393
Fax: 270-769-2993
www.ltadd.org

For information about the
Compatible Use Implementation
Go to:
missionknox.org
or follow us on Facebook.

Primary Point of Contact:
Mike Robinson
mrobinson@ltadd.org