

Magnolia Community Meeting on Fort Lawton October 17, 2006

Questions & Answers

Answers in Italics are those given at the meeting. If more information or clarification is needed that follows. Unless otherwise noted all respondents were city staff.

1. Request for list of all applicants attending 9/26 workshop
We will put that on the Fort Lawton website.
All of the organizations which attended the September 26th workshop for interested homeless and public benefit conveyances are listed on the website.
2. Do homeless service providers have equal consideration with public benefit conveyances?
HUD is looking for a balance between different uses.
The federal Department of Housing and Urban Development is responsible for evaluating the city's local redevelopment plan. They will be among other things looking for a balance between the homeless needs and economic and other redevelopment needs.
3. At the end of the process, who has ownership of the property?
If received for public benefit or homeless uses, the agency receives the property and will have ownership in perpetuity (or up to 30 years, depending) for the use committed to in the conveyance.
An organization that receives the property for homeless purposes or for a public benefit conveyance purpose has the ownership of the property but with federal constraints on the uses. If the property is purchased at fair market value the purchaser has the ownership and there are no federal restrictions on uses.
4. Are there any opportunities outside of the BRAC process to take ownership of the property?
No. All of the property is going through BRAC; when the City does the reuse plan, we will include all of the available property. That doesn't guarantee that it will all be conveyed. The Army could decide to sell some parcels at fair market value.
The BRAC process includes several ways of disposing of the property at BRAC facilities; it does not include any ways not covered by the BRAC regulations.
5. Are any City departments interested in any portion of the site?
We have discussed this with the Mayor; he understands the process and has indicated that he may want to consider some elements of open space.

6. Can DOD accept some parts of the reuse plan and reject others?
The Army will make the final decisions. In this round of BRAC, the Army is also looking to sell some properties at fair market value, to generate some revenue. They may not accept the LRA's entire plan; any property not conveyed through the LRA could be sold at fair market value.
7. Describe how properties might be sold on the open market.
They could be sold at public auction.
8. How will the property be subdivided? What is the Army's expectation for return?
When the City prepares the reuse plan, we will look at who has requested what and the compatibility of uses. Can't answer second question.
The Army has not indicated to the City as the Local Redevelopment Authority what expectation they may have regarding any financial return related to the closure of Fort Lawton.
9. If sold at fair market value, what input does the City have?
The City as the LRA will do a comprehensive reuse plan that covers all of the property. The City is the zoning authority and has that level of control over any potential reuse outside of the LRA proposal.
The Army will control any sale of the Fort Lawton property.
10. Provide some examples of other BRAC processes.
Sand Point
Here are two documents that have examples of prior base closure redevelopments. Some of these are from a publication done by the federal Environmental Protection Agency on BRAC and some are from a Department of Housing and Urban Development BRAC manual. Because these are from prior BRAC rounds they are dealing with larger parcels and a much longer local timeframe. The current round of BRAC is different in several respects so the examples in these two publications may not be directly applicable to the Fort Lawton situation.
www.oea.gov
Look on the left hand side for these two publications - EPA: Turning Bases Into Great Places and HUD: Military Base Reuse.
11. What is the VA looking at using the (FLARC?) property for?
Likely office space
We have been told that the federal Department of Veteran's Affairs is interested in the Fort Lawton Army Reserve Center for offices. We expect to learn more when they have completed their purchase of this building.
12. When are the properties available for viewing?
Army representative responded: The base is open; people can drive through at any time. The buildings are secured; there are still officers carrying out a mission at the base.

13. Who approves the homeless assistance piece? Both HUD and the Army?
The Department of Housing and Urban Development is responsible for evaluating the LRA's redevelopment plan. When they have completed their review they will notify the Department of Defense of the buildings and property that are suitable for homeless services. The Department of Defense will consult with HUD and the LRA about HUD's recommendations and will incorporate these recommendations where they determine the recommendations are appropriate and compatible with the best reuse of the military base. The local redevelopment plan is a part of the Department of Defense's decision process.
14. Does HUD take into account the immediate community, transportation access, services, etc?
HUD representative responded: Takes into account the broader community and the compatibility of homeless uses
The city as the LRA will be submitting to HUD information on how the homeless Notices of Interest selected for inclusion in the redevelopment plan address these issues.
15. Do we know yet whether there is interest on behalf of homeless providers?
HUD representative responded: Don't specifically know, but several providers attended workshop.
16. Comment that the reuse plan should include services on site along with the housing; that is most successful model (example is Sand Point).
17. Is Parks interested in any of the property?
Parks is concerned about the scenic entrance; trees; want to make sure that VA property is managed well.
The Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation is looking at the Texas Way West parcel that extends northerly from the entrance of Discovery Park. This treed corridor is the present entrance to the Army Reserve property, but if acquired could extend the park to 36th Avenue. Parks is also looking at the wooded north slope of the Army Reserve property too.
18. Multiple questions about historic housing
These related to property not a part of Fort Lawton.
19. How much property is undeveloped?
Guess that it's a couple of acres and half of the cemetery
The edge of the Texas Way West parcel and the north slope represent about 5 acres of undeveloped property. The rest of the site is developed with buildings, parking lots, roadways and other features.

20. Will the plan propose new uses for that undeveloped space?

The plan will include this undeveloped space but it is too soon to say if there will be new uses.

21. Comment that we need to honor the work that has gone into preserving the space already.

The following questions were asked of city staff at the table regarding zoning, which was available to meeting attendees following the presentation and questions period.

Would the city own the land?

It is unlikely the city would own much of the land. The land would be owned by the recipients of the public benefit and homeless conveyances – agencies offering housing or services for homeless person for instance. The federal government may also decide to sell some of the land to a private party who could develop and sell individual lots.

How would the city calculate density on the property if the existing buildings were used for homeless housing units?

The city would probably treat the existing structures and the land they sit on separately from the remainder of the site, and would calculate density only for new units located on the remainder of the site.

How can the city ensure that new development would protect natural features on the site and existing residents near the site?

In the reuse plan, the city could designate certain portions of the site for specific uses, with an eye toward minimizing impacts and incompatibilities. New development on the site would need to go through city permitting processes and would be subject to development regulations and would need to provide mitigation for identified environmental impacts.

How many houses could be built on the site?

The site's current zoning allows approximately six units per acre, or a little over seven units per acre if the City Council were to approve a Planned Residential Development on the site. The total number of units would depend on how much land is being used for housing development and the final zoning.