

INSTALLATION MISSION GROWTH

Community Profile

November 2009

Fort Riley, Kansas

Community Growth

Point of Contact:

Kristina Hyland
Regional Growth Coordinator
Regional Planning Organization
45 Barry Avenue, Room 214
Fort Riley, KS 66442
785-410-5550
growthcoordinator@rpoproject.com
www.rpoproject.com

Installation Growth

Point of Contact:

Linda Hoeffner
Deputy Garrison Commander
Fort Riley
Building 500
Fort Riley, KS 66442
785-239-2471
linda.hoeffner@riley.army.mil
www.riley.army.mil

State Contact:

John Armbrust
Executive Director
Kansas Governor's Military
Council
501 Poyntz Avenue
Manhattan, KS 66502
785-776-8829
john@manhattan.org
www.fortrileyconnection.com

Community at a Glance

Growth Management Organization (GMO):

The Region is in the process of formalizing a Regional Planning Organization. The Steering Committee for this process acts as the current GMO.

Geographic area affected by military installation growth:

The primary impacts are in Cities of Manhattan and Junction City and the Counties of Geary, Riley and Pottawatomie; however, the growth impacts the surrounding seven counties (including Dickinson, Clay, Morris, and Wabaunsee) and their cities.

Regional Population of affected area: 121,935 (July 2008)

Top growth challenges:

- Affordable Housing
- Transportation
- Availability of an adequate and skilled/trained workforce
- Social Services/Healthcare
- Utilities and Infrastructure

Outstanding requirements in support of mission growth:

Project Category	# of Projects	Sum of Project Cost	Sum of Funding Gap
Utilities and Infrastructure	16	\$ 60,692,900	\$54,335,175
Transportation	29	\$43,674,623	\$40,891,550
Social Services	7	\$20,907,015	\$20,844,765
Education	3	\$20,400,485	\$18,360,085
Planning and Zoning	4	\$745,000	\$ 607,500
Communication	2	\$425,000	\$375,000
Totals:	61	\$1,468,450,200	\$1,354,140,080

Fort Riley at a Glance

Growth Action:

Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), Grow the Army (GTA), Army Modular Force (AMF), Global Defense Posture Review (GDPR)

Population Statistics for Fort Bliss

	Baseline (January 2005)	Build-out Projection (2011)
Military Personnel	9,471	19,000
Dependents	13,922	27,930
Civilian Personnel	3,431	3,214
Contractors	1,586	6,238

Source: Fort Riley, Estimates 2009

Growth Factors affecting community planning: Uncertainty of troop deployment and arrival of accompanied troops greatly affect planning for additional housing.

Background

Location

Fort Riley is comprised of 100,656 acres within Riley and Geary Counties in Kansas (Figure 1).

The projected 2011 population for the affected geographic area is 134,904. The primary geographic area to be affected by military installation growth includes the cities of Manhattan and Junction City which together comprise just over half of the region's population. However growth will also impact the surrounding area in Geary, Riley, and Pottawatomie Counties including the City of Wamego and the outlying area including Dickinson, Clay, Morris, and Wabaunsee counties and their cities.



Figure 1: Fort Riley and Surrounding Areas

Mission Growth / BRAC / Military Growth Action

The September 2005 BRAC Commission "Report to the President" (Commission Report) approved the Department of Defense's recommendation to realign Fort Riley's mission by: inactivating an Engineer Brigade Headquarters, two other engineer units, two maneuver battalions, and other smaller units; activating a Brigade Combat Team; and, relocating 1st Infantry Division Headquarters, Division Support Command Headquarters, Aviation Brigade units, other units from Germany and Korea, an attack aviation battalion from Fort Campbell, and the Civilian Personnel Operations Center from Rock Island Arsenal, IL.

These BRAC actions will result in an estimated net increase of 4,415 (2,415 military and 334 civilian) direct positions at Fort Riley. Fort Riley MILCON construction is under way for new mission facilities on the installation estimated at \$2.3 billion. In addition to BRAC, Fort Riley will also see increases due to ongoing Department of the Army Transformation and GDPR, for a total increase of 9,529 military personnel by 2011.

GMO

The Fort Riley Accommodation Task Force was formed by the state of Kansas prior to the BRAC decision. Subsequently, the Flint Hills Regional Task Force was established and includes elected leaders of local governments and their key administrative officials, other key community organizations, representatives of the Command Group from Fort Riley, and state agencies and officials.

The Flint Hills Regional Task Force received a grant from the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) to develop a Regional Growth Management Plan. A key recommendation of the plan was to form a Regional Planning Organization (RPO). The process of forming the RPO was started in October 2008 and is well on the way to creating a regional entity which will serve as a single point of contact for growth-related activities in the seven-county region serving Fort Riley.

As this planning organization is still being formed, the Steering Committee for the project serves as the current growth management organization. The Steering Committee is made up of the elected leaders of local governments and is aided in its task by the Technical Management Team which consists of the key administrative officials for each local government and representatives from the area chambers of commerce. Both groups are actively working toward a standalone RPO.

As the process continues, the new RPO will be authorized by a Member Agreement among the participating municipalities. In the interim, OEA has funded a Regional Growth Coordinator to help facilitate the coordination necessary for the RPO's creation and growth associated with Fort Riley.

Activities Undertaken to Meet Growth Needs

Fort Riley MILCON is underway for new mission facilities on the installation, estimated at \$2.3 billion. Outside the installation, the communities' regional priority requirements involve critical transportation, utility, and other improvements needed to support recent and planned new residential construction responding to off-installation housing demand for Fort Riley mission growth. Three state/community transportation projects related to installation growth have already been funded/constructed.

On June 23, 2009, OEA staff visited the Fort Riley community to consider project need assessment (PNA) projects submitted by the community in response to OEA's request to identify growth project funding gaps and potential Federal funding assistance opportunities, as well as to update information obtained from the initial May 28, 2008 site visit. An identified funding gap of over \$1.3 billion was identified by this process.

Several studies and analyses have been completed in response to the growth at Fort Riley including an OEA-funded joint land use study and Department of Labor funded Strategic Action Plan and Growth Impact Assessment which led to several other studies including an OEA-funded regional growth plan, OEA-funded regional labor basin study, an OEA-funded airport assessment, several transportation corridor studies, a number of water/sewer/stormwater comprehensive plans or plan updates, and the current OEA-funded process to set up the RPO. As previously mentioned, an OEA-funded Regional Growth Coordinator has also been hired to help facilitate the coordination necessary for the RPO's creation and the growth associated with Fort Riley.

In addition to these studies, there are ongoing Community Partnership Conferences (CPCs) hosted by Fort Riley on several topics pertaining to the expected or current growth at Fort Riley. These CPCs are held on housing, workforce, recreation and leisure, health care, child care, and education.

Fort Riley is also creating a sustainability plan and has worked to include the community in this process as well through a Sustainability Conference in early 2009. The final details of Fort Riley's specific plan have not yet been released, but several measures are already in place including the use of hybrid and alternative fuel vehicles, vanpools, and deconstruction practices when refitting on-post housing. Deconstruction allows Fort Riley to salvage materials that could be used in renovation projects in the region, keeping these items out of local landfills and creating usable materials for other projects. There are also plans to explore wind and solar energy options for Fort Riley. Current initiatives focus on helping the on-post community create daily energy savings; and assist the region as a whole attract companies and industries to the area to create local suppliers for Fort Riley's service needs.

Implementation and Partnering Strategies

Affordable Housing

In the 2007 growth profile for the region serving Fort Riley, the real estate market was experiencing a boom and pricing reflected that market boom. Today the real estate market within the Flint Hills region is experiencing a slowdown as permanent troop assignment to Fort Riley has neared its end state and deployments have continued to affect the age and number of soldiers seeking housing in the region. Sales within the region have declined somewhat, and the number of finished products has increased at a relatively high rate, leaving unsold inventory on the market.

Apartments and other rental properties currently have extremely low vacancy rates. Rents have remained relatively stable, and the region's communities recognize that military personnel are a key factor in the demand for rental units.

Developers/builders have requested that more timely and consistent information be made available on troop movements. A regional housing database was created and several housing summits were held to gauge the outlook for the region's real estate, banking, and building professionals and to share known troop movement information. The recent housing CPC reported the results of those activities to the region. The primary concern for off-post housing is the demand for affordable two-bedroom units. The consensus is that this need would be better met through an increase in rental units rather than additional for-sale units. Several communities are working to streamline the process for converting properties zoned for single-family units to properties zoned for multi-family units. The RPO and Fort Riley are considering building additional three- and four-bedroom units on-post since it is difficult to build affordable units of this type off-post. The on-post privatization housing contractor is no longer building two-bedroom units as those will be built by communities off-post.

There is some concern about the current lending situation and how it will affect the home buyers' ability to obtain financing. The region and Fort Riley are working with sources such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Office to educate potential home buyers, real estate agents and banking professionals about financing opportunities available. The USDA Rural Development Office has certified 11 financial institutions as USDA/Fort Riley Regional Initiative Approved Lenders under the Guaranteed Rural Housing Loan Program to improve single-family homeownership opportunities. Twenty-five million dollars of the USDA Rural Development Guaranteed Rural Housing Loan Program is to be used in the Fort Riley region. Additionally, discussions are underway with the Kansas Development Finance Authority about making tax credits more readily available for use by builders in the region.

Thus, the local market reflects a relative slowdown, but is still poised to deliver a sufficient amount of housing once the remaining troops settle into the region.

Workforce

Geary, Pottawatomie, and Riley Counties will absorb the majority of job growth associated with mission expansion at Fort Riley. Employment forecasts suggest a shift in employment from retail trade, wholesale trade, and manufacturing to more service-based industries, a trend consistent with the national economy. Key employment growth sectors include: Construction, Transportation Warehousing, Professional Technical Services, Health Care/Social Assistance, and Public Administration. Approximately 18,000 jobs are forecast by 2012 based on the expansion of Fort Riley; over two thirds of these will be new, direct jobs, and approximately one third will be secondary jobs.

Employment growth is projected to occur in two distinct phases within the region. The first phase, 2005-2012, will primarily involve an increase in Riley, Geary, and Pottawatomie Counties for construction, retail services, and government employment, especially teachers. After 2012, employment demand will increase for individuals in the professional services and information sectors. As a result the strategies to attract and train new workers will need to change over time. Due to this rapid change in demand, additional information about workforce characteristics, including wages, is required. A workforce study was conducted to determine workforce characteristics and wage requirements. At Fort Riley a CPC was also held on this topic.

Employers have had difficulty in recruiting and retaining skilled workers in health care, construction, clerical, and heavy equipment due to a shallow labor pool. The recruitment of health care and mental health care professionals, in particular, has been intense, resulting in rising concern over predatory hiring practices among local institutions. A regional health care recruiting effort is underway in the area with a goal of recruiting from outside the region so as to avoid hiring staff away from one community in the region to another. Stakeholders in the education field have also cited difficulty in hiring teachers that meet existing state licensure requirements. Fort Riley has been an active part of this regional recruiting effort. Limited vehicular access and the lack of transit options also affect employment opportunities for many of the region's prospective employees.

Social Services/Health Care

The Flint Hills region is experiencing a significant increase in the demand for social services, including housing assistance, youth intervention programs, health care (especially traumatic brain injury and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) and mental health, substance abuse, support for victims of domestic violence, and legal assistance. The younger, transient population associated with military personnel and their dependents tends to display higher participation rates in such social service programs. The state has formed a mental health and substance abuse task force to help address some of these areas of concern.

Some of the communities of the Flint Hills also face many of the demographic challenges common to rural areas, including an aging population, uneven geographic distribution of economic opportunities and services, and limited transportation options.

A key challenge is the chronic lack of adequate funding for nearly all social service agencies. Additional factors that diminish well-being and increase the likelihood that vulnerable residents will seek increased levels of assistance from the community and community organizations include:

- Escalating cost of living and housing in the region, coupled with decreasing vacancies, places greater pressure on people seeking living arrangements
- Lack of affordable child care
- Lack of transportation for many military families and low-income residents and the absence of transit alternatives; the Riley County Area Transportation Agency bus is experiencing more requests, particularly from workers seeking transportation to their jobs
- Increasing diversity of the population and a rise in the number of residents in need of translation services

Population and economic growth associated with Fort Riley has increased demand for child care programs. Broader demographic trends including the rise of two-worker households and one-parent households further reinforces the need for quality, affordable child care services in the Flint Hills region.

Lack of funding limits efforts to improve child care services for the families of the Flint Hills. The low profitability makes it difficult to attract new child care providers into the industry to fill increasing need. Lower levels of compensation also make it difficult to attract and retain highly-qualified child care professionals. Limited funding also increases the cost of child care for low- and middle-income parents and in turn may dampen job participation that could improve their financial position. Financing also constrains the ability to expand and improve existing child care programs operating on tight margins.

Unlike many important social services, no clear entity in the Flint Hills region assumes responsibility for ensuring access to quality child care. As a result, each locality typically develops its own piecemeal approach, often leaving the community without a clear advocate for child care issues. In the past, families were solely responsible for securing adequate child care. Demographic shifts, such as an increase in two-working-parent families, as well as more one-working-parent families, call for a coordinated and measured approach to early childhood care and development.

Currently the health care infrastructure of the region reflects the general state of health care including shortages of doctors and nurses; continued growth will strain current health care infrastructure, services and personnel further in the next five to six years. As mentioned above, the region has started the health care recruiting effort. This is especially important as many health care facilities are already operating at capacity because of the shortage of health care workers.

While the Army seeks to meet the health care needs of its soldiers through inpatient units and outpatient centers, the private sector must continue to provide care to military personnel. While the historical volume information and service patterns required to quantify this demand can be difficult to access, the Health Care CPC at Fort Riley has been working towards quantifying the demand for community health care services. An estimated 53,443 persons will be eligible for the TRICARE system in 2011; this reflects a 59 percent increase in eligible members from 2005. On average 78 percent of eligible parties enroll in TRICARE creating an estimated 41,686 TRICARE members in 2011. According to

research from the Housing CPC in March of 2008, approximately 23 percent of local emergency room visits are TRICARE members while an estimated nine percent of local primary care visits are TRICARE members. Overall 66 percent of local specialty physicians participate in TRICARE. Future Health Care CPCs will work to recruit additional health care workers to meet the increased demand and prevent unnecessary emergency room visits by increasing primary care availability.

The overall utilization rate for care in the Flint Hills will decrease as the population becomes younger. Nonetheless, an increasing deficit of physicians is expected, which can restrict the community's access to care. Forecasts indicate that the most severe shortages will occur in those highly-specialized service lines that are most difficult positions for hospitals to fill (e.g., obstetrics, cardiology and pediatrics). There will be a regional need to recruit physicians to the Flint Hills that will require leaders to rethink their current strategies and work to improve coordination through a regional health organization. As a move toward more regional coordination in the area of health care, the Health Care CPC is held annually.

Transportation

Growth relative to the military expansion at Fort Riley is straining transportation infrastructure. The theme for many years has been the improvement of existing intersections and enhancing intersections at the time new streets and/or driveways are connected. Several corridors have been studied and the result is several blueprints for carefully planned access, the identification of long-term configurations and near-term improvement needs.

The number of needed and desired improvements will remain significant. Fortunately, the region has basic highway configurations that can meet the challenges presented by the population surge; however, many intersections will still need improvements to allow for safe and efficient flow along corridors. Funding for the desired improvements will remain a challenge.

The Flint Hills area has 22 providers of various forms of public transit. Virtually all of the services are some form of "demand response" for target populations such as elderly and people with disabilities who make transportation arrangements when travel is needed. Typically, such providers have limited capacity for general public riders, and just over half of these providers also serve the general public. The Kansas Department of Transportation has started a pilot study in the region looking at ways to coordinate these regional transit options. Coordination in the area of transit is essential in rural areas as ridership numbers and transit patterns can be hard to identify without close cooperation.

Air transportation to the area has recently received a boost with the addition of American Eagle service to Kansas' Manhattan Airport (MHK). The OEA-funded airport assessment was essential to bringing American Eagle to MHK. The daily service through American Eagle and Great Lakes Aviation provide greatly increased opportunities for travel to the region. Great Lakes Aviation was the primary carrier providing flights from Kansas City International Airport to the region. American Eagle began service from Dallas Fort Worth to Manhattan Regional Airport on August 25, 2009. As a result of increased flights, Fort Riley is exploring making MHK the point of arrival/departure for soldiers assigned or returning to the Fort.

Utilities and Infrastructure

Rural communities face significant infrastructure challenges. Service providers of planned developments along rural corridors have had to augment their services by connecting to municipal systems. Improvements to Rural Water District infrastructure have been required so corridors can realize their growth potential. In some cases, counties have been required to take on infrastructure improvements and upkeep in order to meet demand associated with new residential development along the major rural corridors.

Several utilities and infrastructure projects have been undertaken by the various communities in reaction to recent growth spurred by Fort Riley. Planning for future improvements to water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure has been also assessed at various levels in the communities. In addition, the region has fast-tracked many infrastructure improvements as a result of growth demands on infrastructure including several bond issues to fund schools and a hospital expansion and bonds for other infrastructure requirements.

PNA

As noted on the opening page of this Community Profile, the recent PNA (June 2009) identified mission-ready projects totalling \$1.3 billion dollars. Table 1 provides a summary of the projects with most immediate need.

Project	Category	Total Project Cost	Funding Committed	Funding Gap
U.S. Highway (US) 77 Traffic Corridor Study	Transportation	\$273,092	\$273,092	0
K-18 and Davis Drive / Miller Parkway Intersection Improvements	Transportation	\$82,650	\$82,650	0
US-24 and Marlatt Avenue Intersection Improvements	Transportation	\$3,200,000	\$3,200,000	0*
US 24 Traffic Corridor Study	Transportation	\$365,000	\$365,000	0
West Anderson Avenue / Kimball Avenue Road and Intersection Improvements	Transportation	\$1,156,000	0	\$1,156,000
Tuttle Creek Boulevard and Northfield Road Intersection Improvements	Transportation	\$225,000	0	\$225,000
East Poyntz Avenue (US-24) / Tuttle Creek-Fort Riley Blvd.	Transportation	\$170,000	\$144,500	\$25,500
Scenic Drive & Miller Parkway	Transportation	\$1,207,000	0	\$1,207,000
Rucker Rd/US-77	Transportation	\$4,200,000	0	\$4,200,000
Relocate Spring Valley Road	Transportation	\$4,500,000	0	\$4,500,000
Spring Valley Road/K-18	Transportation	\$1,700,000	0	\$1,700,000
18 th Street / Washington Street	Transportation	\$2,800,000	\$100,000**	\$2,700,000
Green Valley Road north of Elk Creek Road	Transportation	\$36,110,000	\$2,110,000	\$34,000,000***
Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade and Expansion Project	Utilities	\$5,400,000	0	\$5,400,000
Pottawatomie County-Manhattan Sewer Extension	Utilities	\$5,842,000	0	\$5,842,000
Pottawatomie County-Manhattan Water Service (Line Extensions and Water Storage Structure)	Utilities	\$2,100,000	0	\$2,100,000
Pottawatomie County / Saint George Water Service	Utilities			
Total		\$69,330,742	\$6,275,242	\$63,155,500

Table 1: Disposition of Project Costs, Funding, and Funding Gap Summary

* \$1,536,000 committed with balance planned for bond funding.

** Committed funds are for design only.

*** Total Project Cost. Although approximately 32 percent of the wastewater treatment expansion is attributed to Fort Riley Growth, the project cannot be subdivided for construction purposes.

Successes/Lessons Learned

The most significant lesson for the region in meeting the needs of the growth at Fort Riley is the need for formalized regional coordination. While ad hoc coordination worked in the past, the rapid growth at Fort Riley made clear the need for a formal process for coordinating regional response to growth and other regional goals. The process of forming the RPO has illuminated how much informal cooperation already existed in the region and has clarified the areas where more detail will be welcome and helpful for future work. It is hoped the RPO will be on its feet in the next nine months.

The importance of Fort Riley as a community partner in the process has also been reinforced. Through the successful CPCs hosted by Fort Riley Command Personnel there has been a good start on regional coordination for several of

the most challenging aspects of the growth of Fort Riley. In addition to working with Fort Riley personnel and the regional partners, coordination at state and federal level has been essential to the success so far. Including elected leaders and administrative personnel at the state and federal has contributed to the smooth operation of the RPO project, and the response to transportation issues to date.

The most challenging aspect of the process has been continuing to plan and make decisions when the flow of the growth associated with Fort Riley is extremely fluid. Building ample checks and communication into the process can help even out the jolts created by new information, assignments, or tasks. It is imperative that regular communication between all parties is built into the planning process.

The RPO as a single point of contact can greatly increase the amount and level of communication among all the parties. Overall, the region has found that quick decision making using the best available information allowed the communities near Fort Riley to react in a positive manner. Scheduling regular communication among the region's entities allowed changes to those decisions in a timely manner, when required.