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This Issue:
Master Planning

Master Planning	3
Successes	26
Technical Support	36
Professional Development	40



Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., plans to build three-level townhouse barracks along a new transit corridor, a plan that will support walkability and infill development. Image courtesy of The Urban Collaborative LLC. Page 14



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Master Planning

- 3 Planning essential for maintaining installations, *by Maj. Gen. Jeffrey J. Dorko*
- 4 Fort Hood: Master planning for 2020 and beyond, *by Brian Dosa and Kristina Manning*
- 6 Back to basics: The next generation for master planning, *by Mark Mitsunaga*
- 8 Planning with SRM and OPM for a sustainable future at Fort Hood, *by Mark L. Gillem and John Burrow*
- 10 Solutioneers wanted; inquire within, *by Jerry Zekert*
- 12 Army to establish enterprise real property utilization tool, *by Dwayne Melton*
- 13 New guidance on master planning on its way, *by Jerry Zekert*
- 14 Using townhome barracks to meet sustainable planning goals, *by Mark L. Gillem and Cyndi Skinner*
- 16 Housing and master planning, *by Jonathan Winkler*
- 18 Master planning more important during downsizing than ever, *by Kathryn J. Haught*
- 20 Capacity planning: Preparing for an unknown future, *by Jill A. Schreiber*
- 21 Bulletin presents smart-growth strategies, *by Natalie Myers*
- 22 Balancing the TAB: Fort Wainwright's experience, *by Kate Siftar*
- 23 How to build area development plans, *by Anne de la Sierra*
- 24 Capital investment strategy important to carrying out master plan, *by Michael Hipp, Alexandra Peet and Joseph Tomley*

Successes

- 26 Fort Belvoir transportation management: Becoming multimodal, *by Steve Gleason, Jennifer Wiley and Christopher Landgraf*
- 28 Huntsville planners work with Fort Carson, Joint Base Lewis-McChord to plan new combat aviation brigade campuses, *by Jimmie Lee Jackson*
- 29 Master Planning Institute earns environmental award, *by Andrea Wohlfeld Kuhn*
- 30 Joint Base Lewis-McChord designs modern, efficient Lewis North post, *by Thomas Tolman, Leah Anderson and Gary Stedman*
- 31 Master planners help name Lewis North education center for hero, *by Duane Denfeld and Gary Stedman*
- 32 Joint Base Lewis-McChord builds to plan for special forces, *by Tanya King*
- 33 Huntsville Center plays role in chemical agent disposal facility, *by Debra Valine*
- 34 At Fort Hood: Daring to go net-zero waste, *by Christine Luciano*

Technical Support

- 36 Wizards' magic is just warming up, *by Susan Nachtigall and Nadia Abou*
- 37 Bulletin describes novel erosion control method using compost mulch, *by Heidi R. Howard*
- 38 Center assesses check dams for erosion and sediment control, *by Heidi R. Howard*
- 38 Guidance to ensure successful vegetation and hard armoring, *by Niels Svendsen*
- 39 Bulletin offers insight into composting for explosives remediation, *by Giselle Rodriguez*
- 39 Schultz is Corps' acting chief of Installation Support, *by Mary Beth Thompson*

Professional Development

- 40 Dreams can come true, *by W. Chris Hinton-Lee*
- 41 Federal Planning Division regional conference report, *by Andrea Wohlfeld Kuhn and Jill A. Schreiber*
- 41 Planning conferences to convene in April
- 42 Department of Defense Master Planning Institute 2012 classes, *by Andrea Wohlfeld Kuhn*
- 43 Career Program18 centrally funds web-based training, *by Dana Gunter*



Planning with SRM and OPM for a sustainable future at Fort Hood

by Mark L. Gillem and John Burrow

“Nothing succeeds in war except in consequence of a well-prepared plan.” Napoleon Bonaparte

While these wise words are not directly applicable to the efforts of Public Works staffs, the underlying theme is certainly relevant. Without a plan, which is more than a list of projects and platitudes, success is hard to reach.

But planners also know that plans change as soon as they encounter reality, so the recommendations and findings in installation master plans must be flexible if they are to last beyond the printing date. Moreover, planners cannot simply hand over their well-prepared plans to engineers and architects and just hope for the best.

Planning is much more about the process and much less about the actual document. That process should begin with a clear vision that structures the planning and design process. Plans should be crafted to support the vision, projects should be programmed, and then detailed facility designs should be prepared in conformance to the plan. In this way, planning precedes programming and design, which is consistent with the Department of Defense’s Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution System.

All too often, programming comes first, and planners are given a DD Form 1391 and asked to find a suitable site. This inevitably results in “vacant lot planning,” because there usually is no effective plan to

guide these siting actions.

Fortunately, with the assistance of staff from Headquarters Installation Management Command, Headquarters U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Corps’ Fort Worth District, Fort Hood, Texas, is on track to have a completely updated real property master plan that will address this problem and recent assistant chief of staff for installation management guidance that requires planners to focus on more sustainable infill development. Now planners at Fort Hood are making flexible plans to guide investment decisions at all levels, from the smallest Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization repairs to the largest Military Construction projects.

Fort Hood planners have been asking a key question: what role should master planning play in an era of constrained budgets with a new focus on repurposing, removal and repair as well as more emphasis on using other people’s money, such as the Exchange, housing partners and enhanced use leases?

The RPMPs of the last era largely focused on siting MILCON projects and left the SRM and OPM efforts up to programmers and engineers. This situation resulted in uncoordinated and asynchronous development where, for example, recently rebuilt roads and parking lots were demolished to accommodate utility work in support of facility projects. Such waste is not acceptable.

Acronyms and Abbreviations	
ADP	area development plan
BRAC	Base Realignment and Closure
MILCON	Military Construction
OPM	Other People’s Money
RCI	Residential Communities Initiative
RPMP	Real Property Master Plan
SRM	Sustainment, Restoration, Modernization

To begin the planning process at Fort Hood, more than 140 participants worked together to develop a new planning vision. Their vision is for Fort Hood to be “the Great Place with Accessible Campuses, Walkable Small Towns, and Modern Infrastructure.” (*Editor’s note: See article on page 4 for more on Fort Hood’s planning process.*)

Now, smaller groups have begun preparing area development plans, or ADPs, for four of 11 districts and will have all of the ADPs completed by the end of 2012. In addition, they have prepared repurposing plans for a soon to be excess post exchange and hospital. And they have found room for significant new housing on the installation in a way that supports infill and transit-oriented development.

How does this connect to SRM and OPM projects? The process begins with a well-prepared plan not with a program or listing of projects. This way of doing business is perhaps the most innovative aspect of the Fort Hood effort. All too often, planners site known program requirements on open land. That

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Qualities

Like playing chess on a grand scale, master planners must plan many steps ahead while being strategic and persistent when the moment calls for action. They must use the Asian philosophy of being patient as they work toward the end state. They need to be ready to take advantage of opportunities, no matter how small, and then execute quickly and deliberately.

Master planning is a living process that has interruptions and distractions. When obstacles arise, master planners must implement cautious but deliberate alternatives that will allow them to shift focus without losing ground. Master planning covers subject matters that are broad and deep, making it a very difficult and complex profession.

They must deal with the past 20 to 50 years and plan for the future 20 to 50 years. Others have the luxury of giving up.

Master planners are the Army’s installation gatekeepers. They can flex and adjust to take on future challenges that better align us toward the mission of the Army.

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method is not effective planning. Moreover, these actions have generally been limited to MILCON-scale work, which is on the decline.

The well-prepared plan is an actual drawing made to scale that shows the relationships between buildings, roads, sidewalks, parking areas, natural systems, operational constraints and utilities. After the plan is created, planners and programmers identify projects that are needed to implement the plan. Planning comes before programming. These projects include SRM-, OPM- and MILCON-scale work.

SRM – The surprising finding at Fort Hood is that comprehensive, sustainable planning visions can be achieved largely through SRM-scale efforts. Since much of the work needed to make Army installations more walkable, more compact and more energy-efficient can be done as renovations, repairs and upgrades, SRM funds are an ideal mechanism.

In the 1st Cavalry District, for example, restriping roads to allow for on-street parking, adding sidewalks to make a connected network, converting unused parking lots into usable parks, adding street trees to promote comfortable walks, demolishing World War II wood structures to make room for infill and renovating buildings so that they address streets are projects identified in the planning process and shown on the ADP.

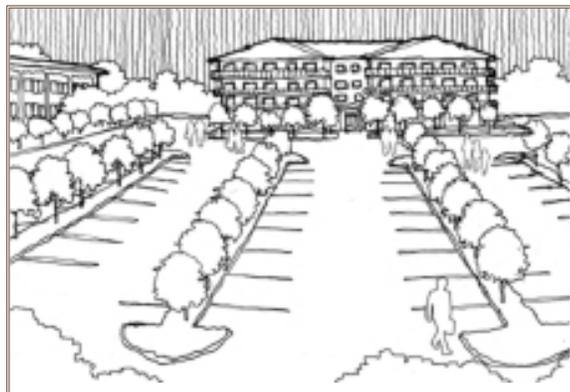
By locating SRM projects geographically, they can be more easily synchronized with other work. Now, programmers can

proceed with preparing the requisite documentation and prioritization for these projects.

OPM – Given declining MILCON budgets, using OPM will be even more essential in the future. At Fort Hood, for example, the Residential Communities Initiative partner has money to build new housing on the edge of Fort Hood. But the new planning vision called for housing not on the outskirts but in the heart of the installation.

The RCI partner is now fully engaged in replanning its investments to match this vision. In addition to the much-needed housing, it will build the streets, utility networks, parks and open spaces for the development that will also benefit the entire installation.

Similarly, the Exchange has agreed in principle to plan for a new walkable town center in the heart of the installation. When the project proceeds, the Exchange will fund much of the infrastructure needed to create what it calls a “lifestyle” ➤



SRM-funded car parks with integrated bioswales will replace uninterrupted oceans of asphalt at Fort Hood.



Fort Hood will develop boulevards using OPM and SRM funds that accommodate pedestrians, transit, bikes and automobiles.



The new town square at Fort Hood can be developed using a combination of OPM, SRM and MCA funding. Images courtesy of The Urban Collaborative LLC



SRM-funded street repairs will incorporate medians to support low impact development goals and to help establish streets that will be a magnet for future infill development.



Solutioneers wanted; inquire within

by Jerry Zekert

As the year 2012 initiates, the world is experiencing much change. Financial challenges include the constant beat of reduced budgets, limited construction dollars and smaller workforces.

Faced with the rapid churning of stationing activities resulting in the need for new or revised facilities, installations see their land and facilities being consumed at a more rapid rate. At the same time, they recognize the importance of seizing opportunities for energy-effective and sustainable development, and maintaining stewardship of the environment, including natural and cultural resources.

The struggle to meet all these requirements now and in the future is not just a black and white decision solved by an infusion of resources. Meeting these needs resides in how we formulate solutions.



*Jerry Zekert
Photo courtesy of the Master Planning Team*

The traditional linear problem solving and project management process is antiquated. Today's solutions have to be holistic, comprehensive and collaborative, involving many diverse stakeholders. Planners and designers cannot just solve a problem in their cubicle. They must

interact and work with integrated teams. Analyzing criteria and designing a simple project is no longer acceptable. Teams have to be nimble and formulate many diverse alternatives to solve these complex problems.

What is needed is a new set of problem solvers — SOLUTIONEERS — who embrace the holistic process of translating complex requirements into integrated solutions.

What is a solutioneer? A solutioneer is a professional planner, designer, engineer, architect or other professional who uses his or her skills creatively and collaboratively to facilitate imaginative, holistic solutions that meet not only the needs of today but long-term requirements as well.

Solutioneers embrace the planning process, have a broad knowledge of ➤

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center.” In the long term, the Defense Commissary Agency may also come to the table with funds for a new facility that is aligned with the planning vision.

MILCON – Although in decline, a few MILCON projects will still occur. At Fort Hood, these will be primarily mission-related facilities and some quality-of-life buildings. In addition, significant remodels, like those planned for the old hospital, may need MILCON funding. Planners should proactively prepare for just such an event.

BRAC – The Army just completed the last round of Base Realignment and Closure, but another round may be justified. Installations that position themselves with effective capacity plans will be able to respond quickly to BRAC initiatives and may be able to make more compelling cases for staying off the BRAC list.

In Fort Hood's Clear Creek-Darnall District, planners have identified room for up to 6 million square feet of new infill

construction, 9,000 new on-street and off-street parking spaces and sustainable sites for more than 1,000 Family housing units. None of this needs to be programmed just yet, but the installation now has a plan in place should the need arise for redevelopment.

This planning approach also supports the Army's net-zero goals. Fort Hood has been chosen by the Army to be a pilot for net-zero waste by 2020. The lessons learned from Fort Hood will be critical in allowing other installations to achieve their net-zero waste goals by 2050.

Planning is a key component of net zero in many respects. Planning focuses on the repurposing of real property to be more efficient; reducing waste, energy and water; recycling materials and resources; and probably the most significant, changing habits. Not only is net zero the right thing to do, it will also free up resources during current and future eras of constrained budgets.

Past planning efforts have usually stopped at siting known requirements, which typically stretch out, at most, five

years into the future. This type of short-term planning is not that helpful.

While plans must accommodate known requirements, they need to also show the long-term vision for the installation and identify a variety of funding strategies to meet that vision. Without this proactive approach, RPMPs are bound to be little more than poorly prepared report cards rather than well-prepared plans. And little will succeed in installation management except in consequence of a well-prepared master plan.

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