

Little Rock Air Force Base Compatible Use Study

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Chapter 7: Strategies and Recommendations

Introduction

Chapter 7 sets forth recommendations for maintaining and enhancing long-term land use compatibility between the civilian populations that live and work near LRAFB and its outlying installations. These recommendations build on the Conflict and Compatibility Analysis set forth in Chapter 3 of the Compatible Use Study and the authorities and programs identified in Chapters 4-6.

Over the course of the Study, the Policy and Technical Committees developed these recommendations based on stakeholder and community input. The decision to implement them, it should be noted, is entirely up to the local stakeholders, LRAFB, and the local governments that participated in the study. For that reason, this chapter includes a prioritization of the Committees' recommendations, highlighting those most critical to maintaining and enhancing land use compatibility.

There are two discrete phases needed to fully effectuate the recommendations in this report: **adoption** and **implementation**.

While the CUS process itself resulted in a series of prioritized recommendations, unless these recommendations are adopted and implemented by local governments and stakeholders, the full benefits of the Committees' and community's efforts will not have been achieved. Therefore, during the final stages of the CUS, the community and Committee members already had begun planning for an immediate start to the "CUS Implementation" Phase.

"A History of Collaboration"

The communities and LRAFB have a long history of communication and coordination that has created an environment with very little in the way of major encroachment threats.

Over the years, to the extent potential conflicts have been identified, local planners, officials, and stakeholders have worked in partnership to take action to address those concerns before they became a threat.

Therefore, preceding the discussions of most of the seven Procedural Contexts for implementation in this chapter is a callout box titled "The Current Environment," which details "what's already working" today.

Chapter Organization

CUS Strategies and Recommendations are organized according to the “procedural context” in which they would be implemented. For example, those implemented through the local comprehensive planning process have been grouped into section A, “Comprehensive and Small Area Planning.” And, strategies implemented through coordination among staff and designated officials are grouped into section E, “Interagency Cooperation,” for example. The seven Procedural Contexts are as follows:

- A. Comprehensive and Small Area Planning
- B. Zoning and General Code Provisions
- C. Subdivision Regulations
- D. Notice to Property Owners and Occupants
- E. Interagency Cooperation
- F. Public Outreach and Communication
- G. Ongoing Land Use Planning Activities

The sources of *potential* land use incompatibilities within the CUS Study Area, including the more compact Focus Areas, evaluated during the study, include:

- 1. Land Use Encroachment
- 2. Airspace and Interference
- 3. Safety and Accident Potential
- 4. Noise Impacts
- 5. Transportation, incl. aviation and highways
- 6. Civilian UAV Usage affecting LRAFB Operations
- 7. Explosives Safety
- 8. Cultural and Natural Resources

Each of these subjects was evaluated within the CUS Study Area and individual Focus Areas, which are shown on Map ~~<to be finalized>~~. It is within these geographic areas that the CUS Strategies and Recommendations, discussed below, apply, based on the compatibility analyses described in Chapter 3 and the authorities identified in Chapters 4 through 6.

Each recommendation is described in detail in the section that follows and summarized in Appendix ~~<to be finalized>~~ in matrix form, for ease of review. In both cases, the recommendations are organized according to the Procedural Context in which they fall, as described above. However, the highest priority recommendations also have been consolidated into a separate list included at the beginning of the section that follows.

Relationship Between Recommendations

Some Strategies or Recommendations may be referenced within two or more Procedural Contexts, because some tasks will be implemented through more than one procedure.

For example, the categories of “Interagency Cooperation” and “Ongoing Land Use Planning Activities” each contain recommendations related to a community-wide Memorandum of Understanding for facilitating ongoing land planning around LRAFB installations.

The MOU would be developed in the context of interagency cooperation and implemented in the context of ongoing planning activities.

Compatible Use Strategies & Recommendations

The Policy Committee recognized that each CUS strategy and recommendation is important to maintain compatibility in the region; therefore, the overall priority given to a particular tool is relative to the urgency of the issue to be addressed, overall costs, and, in particular, whether immediate safety and quality of life concerns are implicated. The Policy Committee’s recommendations were prioritized as “medium” or “high” priority.

These priority indicators also are included in the narrative discussion below for reference. In both the Summary and the narrative, the highest priority strategies and recommendations are presented first.

High Priority CUS Strategies and Recommendations

The highest priority recommendations within each Procedural Context are:

Procedural Context: Comprehensive and Small Area Planning

- Prepare Comprehensive or Small Area Plans in Pulaski County, Jacksonville, and Cabot
- Update Existing Comprehensive Plans in Sherwood and North Little Rock

Procedural Context: Zoning and General Code Provisions

- Prepare Updates to Existing AICUZ Overlay Boundaries in Sherwood and Jacksonville
- Prepare Updates to Existing AICUZ Overlay Regulations in Sherwood and Jacksonville
- Prepare AICUZ Overlay Regulations Within Pulaski County, Lonoke County, and Cabot
- Add Height and Interference Review to Local Development Review Processes
- Include Review of Military Impact During Consideration of Annexation Applications

Procedural Context: Subdivision Regulations

- Prepare Regulatory Requirements for Plat Acknowledgements

Procedural Context: Notice to Property Owners and Occupants

- Provide Notice on Local Permit Approval of Potential Military Impacts on Property
- Prepare Potential Purchaser and Tenant Awareness Disclosures

Procedural Context: Interagency Cooperation

- Appoint CUS Implementation Committee
- Seek Funding from State Military Affairs Grant Program
- Prepare a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Regional Coordination with LRAFB
- Propose Legislative Revisions to Clarify Scope of Local Government Authorities
- Prepare GIS Layers Illustrating Extent of Local Government Regulatory Authorities

A central thread running through the recommendations of the CUS Policy Committee relate to the need to clarify the land use, planning, zoning, and subdivision authorities of the local governments surrounding LRAFB’s installations within the Study Area.

The LRAFB community has adopted a significant slate of tools to maintain land use compatibility, including state statutes, zoning, and a history of informal communication and coordination over the years.

Many of the recommendations from the CUS Policy Committee seek to formalize these arrangements and to clarify the relative roles of LRAFB and the local jurisdictions through the initial development of a Memorandum of Understanding. See recommendation E.3.

- Facilitate LRAFB Input Prior to Local Approvals of New Growth-Inducing Infrastructure
- Monitor Defense Community Infrastructure Program (DCIP) for Funding Opportunities in the Region

Procedural Context: Public Outreach and Communication

- Community Noise and Impact Reporting
- Set Up Military Planning & Coordination Website
- Prepare Public Outreach Materials on Civilian Unmanned Aircrafts Systems (UAS) Regulations and Risk Areas, Including Street Signs

Procedural Context: Ongoing Land Use Planning Activities

- Establish a Standing Military Planning & Coordination Committee
- Maintain Updated MOU for Continued Community-Wide Coordination
- Support the Jacksonville Economic & Cultural Alliance as the Coordinating Agency for Ongoing Interagency Coordination

Strategies and Recommendations Summary

The matrix at Appendix *<to be finalized>* indicates the agencies or parties affected by or responsible for implementing the development of each tool. Once CUS implementation begins, however, the CUS Implementation Committee may engage stakeholders in addition to those currently listed. Also, the estimated timeframes for implementation, costs, and *potential* funding sources for each task are provided. It should be noted, in particular, that whether OEA can or will provide funding for an implementation task depends on availability of OEA funds and other priorities and demands of the Department of Defense at the time such funds are requested.

The anticipated timeframes for implementation of each recommendation are shown in the summary as:

- S (Short-term): within the first 3 years following completion of the Compatible Use Study
- M (Medium-term): the next 10 years
- L (Long-term): the next 20 years

The range of estimated costs for each recommendation is broken down as follows:

- \$ = less than \$5,000
- \$\$ = between \$5,000 and \$25,000
- \$\$\$ = greater than \$25,000

A. Comprehensive and Small Area Planning

Comprehensive and small area planning affords cities and counties an opportunity to establish a cohesive and deliberate vision for future land uses within their jurisdictions or within portions thereof that face land use challenges. As is clear from the compatibility analyses in Chapter 3, LRAFB and its installations within the Study Area represent a unique and significant land use in this region of the state. Further, as noted in Chapter 2, additional civilian growth is expected in the region and, of course, the community wishes to expand and protect the Air Force presence here.

Therefore, the CUS Policy Committee recommended that the City of Jacksonville and Pulaski County undertake planning efforts to directly address the vision these communities have for lands in the vicinity of LRAFB or Camp Robinson, and that North Little Rock and Sherwood update their plans for the same purposes, consistent with the 2020 Compatible Use Study. In addition, the Committee recommended any other planning documents, whether related to transportation, economic development, or other matters impacting land use, be updated to reflect the recommendations and findings of this Study.

A.1. Prepare Comprehensive or Small Area Plans in Pulaski County, Jacksonville, and Cabot (High Priority)

Some cities and counties in Arkansas have adopted jurisdiction-wide “comprehensive plans” or, the more limited alternative, “area plans,” which address only a portion of the jurisdiction.

The Current Environment

The cities of North Little Rock and Sherwood have jurisdiction-wide comprehensive plans, which are described in more detail in Chapter 5.

In 2011, Pulaski County adopted a small area plan applicable within the Lake Maumelle Watershed, which it updated in December 2012.

Other local governments have also adopted localized economic development plans, including, for example, Cabot’s Master Street Plan, Lonoke County’s Northwest Planning Areas Map, Pulaski County’s Master Road Plan, and North Little Rock’s 2013 Bicycle Plan.

These plans establish the community’s vision for its future, but they are not mandates; that is, they are not directly enforceable without the force of an implementing regulation behind them.

Nonetheless, comprehensive and small area plans are necessary precursors to implementing regulations that ensure the vision the community develops for its future comes to fruition. Also, lacking the urgency that crafting an ordinance may have in some cases, the planning process allows community members, appointed bodies, and elected officials to discuss and clarify a consensus view of its future.

Sherwood and North Little Rock have adopted jurisdiction-wide comprehensive plans, and Pulaski County has adopted an area plan applicable only within the Lake Maumelle Watershed. Neither Jacksonville nor Cabot have full comprehensive plans.¹

While Sherwood’s and North Little Rock’s comprehensive plans reflect the range of key land use issues in those jurisdictions, Pulaski County’s “Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the Lake Maumelle Watershed,” illustrates an effective means of planning for key land use issues, even where a community has not adopted a full comprehensive plan.

Similar to the Lake Maumelle watershed, compatibility issues in any military community amount to an urgent and important land use concern that warrants a deliberate, long-term approach to planning.

¹ The 2011 AICUZ Study indicates the City of Cabot adopted a “general plan” in 1999 and during the course of this Study it was confirmed the City, in 2015, prepared a draft comprehensive plan map. However, the general plan for the City was not able to be verified and may well not remain in effect.

Therefore, the CUS Policy Committee considered the criticality of all jurisdictions within the CUS Study Area adopting either comprehensive plans or areas plans in order to address, at the very least, military land uses in their futures. However, after deliberation and input from the more outlying rural areas, and based on the compatibility assessment in Chapter 3, the Committee limited its recommendation to adopt new plans to Pulaski County, the City of Jacksonville, and the City of Cabot, given the adjacency of each of these local governments to LRAFB and/or Camp Robinson.

Unincorporated Pulaski County has a number of documented military impacts present within its jurisdiction, including: a noise zone (65-69 dB), as well as imaginary surfaces and flight tracks associated with both Camp Robinson and LRAFB.

Jacksonville, of course, has even more extensive impacts, including: noise zones (65-80+ dB), APZ 2, and imaginary surfaces and flight tracks associated with LRAFB, but not Camp Robinson.

In addition to flight tracks and imaginary surfaces, including approach and departure surfaces associated with LRAFB, Cabot also has 65-74 dB noise zones in its ETJ and 65-69 noise zones within its corporate boundaries.

With the completion of this Study, the members of the CUS Policy Committee emphasized the importance of pursuing a deliberate approach to land planning in these most critical operational areas. The 15-month CUS process marked the community's first compatible use study and its initial step to formally incorporate prior AICUZ findings with comprehensive land use planning efforts in the individual jurisdictions.

The Committee felt it important to recommended development of full comprehensive plans for these three jurisdictions, in order to provide a full context for land planning around LRAFB and Camp Robinson. If resources or funding are not sufficient in the near term, however, the Committee encouraged the County and the Cities to pursue small area plans within the documented military impact areas in each jurisdiction.

A.2. Update Existing Comprehensive Plans in Sherwood and North Little Rock (High Priority)

As noted in Chapter 5, and as shown in Appendix *<to be finalized>*, the City of Sherwood adopted *Sherwood Vision 2040*, pursuant to A.C.A. § 14-56-403, in December 2019, just after the start of the Compatible Use Study. In addition, the City of North Little Rock has a "Comprehensive Land Use Plan," which sets forth nine (9) generalized land use goals for the city.

However, neither adopted plan directly addresses the presence of, or impacts related to, Little Rock Air Force Base. Neither city has impacts associated with Camp Robinson within their boundaries or ETJs. Impacts from LRAFB may be of less concern for North Little Rock, since it is further from the base and has only imaginary surfaces and flight paths within its primary and extraterritorial jurisdictions. Sherwood, on the other hand, has more extensive documented impact areas within both its corporate and extraterritorial jurisdictions, including noise zones (65-69 dB), APZ 1, APZ 2, as well as imaginary surfaces and flight tracks associated with LRAFB.

Therefore, the Policy Committee recommended the CUS Implementation Phase include preparation of revisions to both the Sherwood and North Little Rock comprehensive plans to incorporate this Study's results and recommendations into the applicable elements of the cities' plans. Revisions could be made to the applicable chapters of the *Sherwood Vision 2040* plan and to the goals set out in the North Little Rock plan.

For example, Goal 3.3 of the Sherwood plan ("Enhance the city's land use regulations and development review processes") could be revised to add a policy incorporating LRAFB's input into its zoning and review procedures.

Similarly, Goal 8 of the North Little Rock plan ("Promote and sustain a progressive and positive planning process for North Little Rock") could be supplemented by noting the CUS's recommendations related to LRAFB input, particularly on matters related to height and obstruction concerns.

Alternatively, Sherwood and North Little Rock also could create separate chapters, sections, or addenda to their plans that address military-related land use issues specifically and, as applicable, cross-referencing the 2020 Compatible Use Study.

A.3. Prepare Updates to Other Policy and Planning Documents (Medium Priority)

As noted above and in Chapter 5, the CUS participating jurisdictions have prepared a range of planning and policy documents related to transportation corridors, economic development, hazard mitigation, bike and pedestrian planning and the like. During the CUS Implementation Phase, each of the local governments should identify current policy documents and plans impacted by the recommendations of the 2020 Compatible Use Study or which may simply benefit from being supplemented by the study findings.

By incorporating the findings of the CUS into the region's policy and planning documents, the community meaningfully demonstrates its awareness of the impact LRAFB has on many of the areas of land use each jurisdiction addresses.

B. Zoning and General Code Provisions

Both Sherwood and Jacksonville have adopted military-based zoning that applies within each of their corporate jurisdictions, as well as portions of unincorporated Pulaski County. Both cities reference authorities provided in A.C.A. 14-56-201, -301, 401, and 413(a)(1)(A), as well as 14-56-426 in their AICUZ zoning overlays.

During the course of developing the 2020 CUS, the Policy and Technical Committees put a great deal of effort into evaluating the scope of municipal and county authority regarding not only military-related land uses, but zoning and land use in general.

In fact, the Policy Committee appointed an *ad hoc* subcommittee to work with the Consultant Team to identify areas of current state legislation that might be updated to clarify the scope of the local governments' powers. Based on the feedback of the subcommittee, the Policy Committee concluded the scope of open legal and statutory questions was significant enough to warrant taking up the matters during CUS Implementation. And, in fact, the Committee included a number of recommendations in this Chapter facilitating clarification of statutory authorities and, subsequently, implementation of corresponding CUS recommendations during implementation of this study.

For context, note the CUS recommendations directly connected to these needed statutory clarifications include all five recommendations under Section B, but also three important recommendations under Section E, as well. Together, they are:

- B.1. Prepare Updates to Existing AICUZ Overlay Boundaries in Sherwood and Jacksonville

The Current Environment

The Cities of Sherwood and Jacksonville have adopted zoning overlays protecting properties from some impacts associated with LRAFB's mission and operations.

The Cities apply the overlays within Sherwood's and Jacksonville's corporate boundaries, as well as beyond, within the APZ and CZs.

Additional impacts associated with noise and potential airspace intrusions also have been documented, but are not yet addressed fully, according to current Air Force guidelines.

There are varying interpretations of the scope of authority local governments have with regard to military-related zoning, under A.C.A. § 14-56-301, -413, and -426, which need to be reconciled to fully implement the recommendations set out here.

- B.2. Prepare Updates to Existing AICUZ Overlay Regulations in Sherwood and Jacksonville
- B.3. Prepare AICUZ Regulations within Pulaski County, Lonoke County, and Cabot
- B.4. Add Height and Interference Review to Local Development Review Processes
- B.5. Include Review of Military Impact During Consideration of Annexation Applications
- E.3. Prepare a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Regional Coordination with LRAFB
- E.4. Propose Legislative Revisions to Clarify Scope of Local Government Authorities
- E.5. Prepare GIS Layers Illustrating Extent of Local Government Regulatory Authorities

B.1. Prepare Updates to Existing AICUZ Overlay Boundaries in Sherwood and Jacksonville (High Priority)

The AICUZ overlays adopted by the Cities of Jacksonville and Sherwood each address clear zones, accident potential zones, and, to a degree, potential airspace interference. However, neither overlay maps the imaginary surfaces and flight tracks associated with LRAFB, which could be impacted by new land uses and structures, and neither includes noise zone impacts, which each experiences in both their corporate and extraterritorial jurisdictions.

Therefore, the Policy Committee recommended the AICUZ boundaries for Sherwood and Jacksonville be augmented by other documented impact areas shown in the 2011 AICUZ Study, based on the compatibility analysis in Chapter 3 of the 2020 CUS.

However, it also is important the Cities update the regulations implemented within the overlay boundaries, which is discussed in the following section.

B.2. Prepare Updates to Existing AICUZ Overlay Regulations in Sherwood and Jacksonville (High Priority)

Jacksonville and Sherwood adopted their AICUZ overlays in 1999 and 2007, respectively. Since that time, not only was a subsequent AICUZ Study prepared for LRAFB, but the Air Force also has updated its guidance regarding land use compatibility with noise impacts and accident potential. Though noise-related compatibility standards would be new in these jurisdictions, current regulations related to accident potential and safety lack complete consistency with AFH 32-7084 and AFI 32-7063, most recently updated in December 2015.

For example, the AICUZ Overlay District adopted by Sherwood in 2007, currently permits one (1) “residential structure” per acre, within the Clear Zone, APZ 1, and APZ 2. AFI 32-7063, on the other hand, recommends no residential uses be permitted in the Clear Zones or Accident Potential Zone 1, and only limited single-family development of not more than 2 units/acre in Accident Potential Zone 2. So, in some cases, the local overlays are more restrictive than current Air Force Guidance and in others less restrictive.

Therefore, the CUS Policy Committee recommended both Sherwood and Jacksonville update their AICUZ regulations – in addition to their boundaries – during the implementation phase of the Compatible Use Study.

Clarification of the scope and nature of the land use and zoning authorities of the jurisdictions in the CUS Study Area may involve amendments to the Arkansas Statutes, discussions between the local governments, and interlocal agreements, or all three.

The five recommendations in Section B will necessarily build on the recommendations related to a MOU for Regional Coordination (Recommendation E.3.) and/or revisions to Arkansas statutes related to the allocation of land use and zoning powers of local government (Recommendation E.4.).

B.3. Prepare AICUZ Overlay Regulations Within Pulaski County, Lonoke County, and Cabot (High Priority)

Overlay zones are a commonly used zoning tool that add specific regulations to lands in a certain geographic area beyond those required generally by the underlying zoning district. They already are being used locally, as noted above. Military overlays will serve several purposes.

First, they may indicate areas within which notice and coordination between the Air Force and the local governments will occur, providing a means of implementing the recommendations in Section E, “Interlocal Cooperation.” This type of overlay might indicate only those areas within which coordination would occur and would not govern allowable land uses in the area. This may be appropriate where land use compatibility is not as urgent a concern, but where potential conflicts, including those related to Air Force airspace, may still present themselves on a case-by-case basis.

Second, an overlay zone could limit the allowable land uses within them to those that are compatible with the Air Force’s mission. This approach would be aligned with the existing zoning or general codes for the adopting jurisdiction and would identify any conditional, discretionary, or special uses that would be appropriate given a proposed development’s proximity to an LRAFB installation or impacts from Air Force operations. In this regard, the overlays would be similar to the initial overlays adopted in Sherwood and Jacksonville.

In order to fully implement a regional regulatory framework, at least in the jurisdictions most heavily impacted by LFAFB operations, the CUS Policy Committee recommended, in addition to Jacksonville and Sherwood, that Pulaski County, Lonoke County, and Cabot also adopt limited AICUZ zoning to address the compatibility issues identified in Chapter 3.

In addition to coordination protocols, new overlays in these jurisdictions would relate to noise (unincorporated Pulaski County and Cabot), accident potential (unincorporated Pulaski County, but within Cabot’s one-mile planning jurisdiction), and airspace interference potential (unincorporated Pulaski County, Lonoke County, and Cabot) associated with LRAFB operations at the base as well as the Camp Robinson All-American Landing Zone.

Given the proximity of these three (3) jurisdictions to LRAFB installations and operations, the Committee gave this recommendation high priority and recommended they be adopted during the CUS implementation phase.

B.4. Add Height and Interference Review to Local Development Review Processes (High Priority)

As shown on Maps *<to be finalized>* in Chapter 3, the imaginary surfaces and flight tracks associated with LRAFB operations at the main base, the All-American Landing Zone, and the Blackjack Drop Zone impact each of the jurisdictions participating in the CUS, except the City of Lonoke. Therefore, in most jurisdictions there is the possibility of a structure (like a communications tower) or a land use (like a landfill or electromagnetic device) being established that interferes with Air Force airspace.

“No one-size-fits-all solutions.”

The members of the CUS Policy Committee recognized each local government jurisdiction is unique and that the solution or recommendation that works for one, may not work for all.

For example, some jurisdictions are more urbanized, while others are largely rural. Some have full zoning, while many do not. Some are more heavily impacted by base operations, while the impacts on others are less frequent or less intense.

The Recommendations in the 2020 CUS reflect the unique nature of each jurisdiction and agency participating, including LRAFB.

The only jurisdictions at the time of the CUS that addressed this potential incompatibility were Sherwood and Jacksonville, as is discussed above. In each case, the Cities appear to apply airspace protections throughout their one-mile extraterritorial “planning jurisdictions” (see section 14.09.02(F), *City of Sherwood Zoning Code*; section 15.20.01, *Sherwood Subdivision Regulations*; and section 18.66.050, *City of Jacksonville Zoning Code*, Title 18).

However, as noted above and discussed in detail in Recommendation E.4., A.C.A. § 14-56-426 also appears to extend the extraterritorial powers of most of the CUS jurisdictions to up to five miles for purposes of regulating documented military impacts, like Air Force airspace. And, of course, this airspace is impacted by the land use decisions of most of the local government jurisdictions.

Therefore, in conjunction with the other four recommendations in Section B and Recommendations E.3. through E.5., the Policy Committee recommends that each participating local government adopt measures to mitigate potential impacts on the Air Force airspace above their jurisdictions. These measures will likely be

regulatory in jurisdictions that have zoning and are closest to an installation boundary, but may be non-regulatory, voluntary, or by interlocal agreement in jurisdictions that do not have zoning and are further from the installations.

B.5. Include Review of Military Impacts During Consideration of Annexation Applications (High Priority)

Building on its analysis of extraterritorial jurisdictions, the Policy Committee also felt it important for municipalities and landowners to take into account military impacts within an area planned for annexation. Indeed, annexations are an important component in the land development process, as seen at the largest scale recently in 2008 with Sherwood’s annexation of the Gravel Ridge community, which nearly double the City’s size.

First, property owners may not be aware at all that their unincorporated lands are subject to documented military impacts or that a planned future use of their property could negatively impact base operations. Annexation is, after all, the first step rural property owners may take to develop property.

The Policy Committee recommendation, therefore, is twofold.

First, during the planning process or during the next comprehensive plan updates, municipalities should add consideration of military impacts to their planning models and policies. For example, the *Sherwood Vision 2040* comprehensive plan calls for an Annexation Plan to identify future annexation areas and Annexation Analyses precedent to voluntary annexation (see p. 46). Both the eventual Plan and Analyses should include consideration of LRAFB impacts, as shown in Chapter 3, and any subsequent AICUZ studies prepared for LRAFB.

Second, when a site-specific annexation is under consideration, the Committee recommends that ordinances and internal protocols require consideration of the impact, if any, the annexation, if approved, could have on LRAFB or, conversely, LRAFB operations could have on future development and property owner expectations about buildability in the area. For example, note that Policy 3.4.4. of *Vision 2040* requires annexation as a condition of utility extension. These extensions, not to mention the cost and time required to finalize the annexation, will bring expectations of a return on investment. It is best, of course, if property owners are made aware through pre-planning processes of whether military impacts are present on lands under consideration for investment.

Recommendation B.5. may be accomplished in part, as noted above, through preparation of site-specific Annexation Analyses in the case of Sherwood, but also should be made part of also the annexation process and regulatory framework for each of the municipalities.

C. Subdivision Regulations

C.1. Prepare Regulatory Requirement for Plat Acknowledgements (High Priority)

Consistent with the theme of the recommendations in Sections B and D, the Policy Committee recommended local governments exercising subdivision authorities revise their regulations to require acknowledgement on newly approved plats that impacts from Air Force operations may be present on the lots on the plat and that future purchasers are encouraged to inquire with local agencies or local installation officials.

For example, regulatory language could read as follows:

“Property owners should be aware that (i) parcels in this subdivision and its subsequent occupants could experience Air Force operational impacts, including impacts related to noise, vibration, odors, flight safety hazards, and other impacts related to operations associated with Little Rock Air Force Base; and (ii) the property may be subject to regulatory limitations on development due to the property’s proximity to an Air Force installation.”

The language developed during the CUS Implementation phase may vary, of course, following discussions and input by each participating jurisdiction.

Note too, this recommendation would run in tandem with Recommendation D.1. related to similar permitting acknowledgement for zoning and land use applications.

The Current Environment

The following jurisdictions currently regulate subdivisions of land:

Cabot
Jacksonville
Lonoke
Maumelle
North Little Rock
Sherwood
Ward

D. Notice to Property Owners and Occupants

It is important for a number of reasons that property owners and other occupants of land be aware of the impacts they may experience associated with nearby military activities. So too is it important that they be aware of any limitations – regulatory or otherwise – on the expected use of their property as early as possible in the process of development, purchase, or lease.

First, of course, is the element of fairness. Some moving into the area may not be familiar with the extent of the bases’ importance and influence in the region. Others may be unaware of the extent of military impacts and, in particular, of the distance from the installations’ actual boundaries where a land use could negatively impact U.S. military operations.

Second, many communities have found a correlation with military awareness of impacts and tolerance of those impacts. In other words, where the population is stable and the presence of the military installation is long-term, there may be fewer complaints of those impacts, since the history and importance of the local military installation in the community is well known.

Therefore, the Policy Committee identified three recommendations related to property owner and occupant awareness.

D.1. Provide Notice on Local Permit Approval of Potential Military Impacts on Property (High Priority)

Consistent with Recommendation C.1., the Committee recommended that all building, zoning, and land use approval documents include a notation or even the applicant’s acknowledgement that the property and its eventual occupants may experience noise, safety, or other impacts associated with Air Force operations at the LRAFB installations.

Approvals including such an “awareness” statement may include building permits, rezonings, annexations, certificates of occupancy, site plans, conditional/special uses, and planned developments.

The language would be determined by each local government during the CUS Implementation phase, and may be similar to that set forth in C.1. above.

D.2. Prepare Potential Purchaser and Tenant Awareness Disclosures (High Priority)

The state of Arkansas does not currently require a residential real estate disclosure at time of closing. Although, the Arkansas Realtors Association does recommend agents representing sellers encourage them to complete a standard disclosure form that includes known impacts from noise and other nuisances.

The Policy Committee considered recommendations for providing supplemental *voluntary* disclosure forms related specifically to military impacts in the vicinity of Little Rock AFB, All-American Landing Zone, and Blackjack Drop Zone to local realtors in the area. However, after evaluating *mandatory* military disclosures used in other states, the Committee elected to recommend seeking a statutory revision that would require disclosure of military impacts. And, if that effort were not successful, to develop a standard voluntary form for local real estate agents and business community members to provide to potential purchasers, tenants, and investors.

During the CUS Implementation phase, the Committee recommended that the communities and real estate professionals evaluate disclosures and other means of notifying potential purchasers of military impacts and to work with the local legislative delegation to develop a revised statute for consideration during the 2022 legislative session. Input and involvement of the Arkansas Realtors Association and the North Pulaski Board of Realtors during CUS Implementation was also recommended.

Communicating “Early & Often”

Members of the Policy and Technical Committees pointed out the importance of the base officials and local planning and zoning officials communicating “early and often,” when a proposed land use or infrastructure plan could impact LRAFB operations.

If a local jurisdiction has begun informal discussions with a landowner regarding a development near an Air Force installation, the jurisdiction would communicate this to the designated Air Force liaison, perhaps sooner and more broadly than may be required by an ordinance, MOU, or statute, so site planning may be finalized in consideration of any preliminary base comments.

Similarly, if a proposed Air Force operation or land use near a base boundary could have an off-base impact, the Air Force would consult the neighboring jurisdiction to ensure the project meets the land use and operational goals of both parties, even where state or federal law may not require coordination.

D.3 Street Signage

Many communities have used street signs as a means of not only creating awareness of the immediate presence of military impacts and operations along a given portion of roadway, but also generalized awareness in the community as a result of the signs.



For example, the photo to the *<to be finalized>* shows a sign near Grissom Air Reserve Base, alerting travelers along State Highway 31, which passes through an off-base portion of the clear zone, to refrain from congregating in the area, consistent with Air Force guidance discouraging gatherings of population in the CZs.



Similarly, the sign in the photograph to the *<to be finalized>* puts current and future residents of a subdivision near Shaw Air Force Base on notice of the potential to experience jet noise associated with that air installation.

E. Interagency Cooperation

Effective coordination among CUS participants already is occurring, even where processes have not been formalized or adopted by local ordinance, including, but not limited to, development and infrastructure projects that had the potential for impacts on both sides of the fence. Also, as noted in the discussion of Recommendation E.4., below, the Arkansas statutes do not currently require military-local government coordination prior to development permitting and approvals or even rezonings, which will in some cases impact LRAFB operations or may be impacted by them.

The Committee, therefore, recommended that LRAFB and the local governments formalize coordination efforts through a MOU for regional cooperation, perhaps in support of any overlay regulations that also require coordination, where applicable. See Recommendations B.1. through B.4.

This section describes *<to be finalized>* (*<enter final number>*) additional recommendations the CUS Policy Committee made as a result of its work during the 2020 CUS process related specifically to formalizing the informal, though effective, nature of coordination between LRAFB officials and civilian community stakeholders. Doing so was important to the Committee for several reasons.

First, as noted in Chapter 2 and in several local plans, growth in the communities around LRAFB installations is expected to continue. For example, the City of Sherwood alone projects 13,000 to 20,000 additional residents by 2040. See *Sherwood Vision 2040*, p. 19.

Second, as the Committee found during the CUS compatibility analysis, detailed in Chapter 3, some potential incompatibilities exist with current and zoned land use near LRAFB. For example, the study found existing land use incompatibilities in APZ 1 and the potential for current zoning to allow additional ones. See Maps *<to be finalized>* in Chapter 3. It is therefore critical that the regulatory tools recommended in Section B be supplemented by a formalized coordination effort to ensure proposed future land uses do not negatively impact operations at LRAFB.

The Current Environment

Little Rock Air Force Base has existed since 1955. It has been and remains an integral part of what makes this community unique.

Over the last 65 years, civilian leaders and local officials have interacted with military leaders to keep lines of communication open and, as a result, the base and the community remain “good neighbors,” with few areas of land use incompatibility.

Implementation of the interagency cooperation recommendations begins with the establishment of a CUS Implementation Committee that will oversee the implementation of the high priority recommendations in this Chapter. In fact, the CUS project manager began assembling the Implementation Committee as the Study was being completed in the Fall of 2020.

E.1. Appoint CUS Implementation Committee (High Priority)

A “CUS Implementation Committee” will oversee CUS Phase II and the development of the tools and work products recommended in this Chapter, according to priority. The duration and cost of Phase II will depend, in part, on which recommendations the Implementation Committee elects to pursue first. During its final discussions, the Policy Committee indicated a preference to pursue implementation of the “high priority” recommendations within the first year to 18-months following completion of the CUS.

Therefore, as Phase II of the CUS process begins, the administering local agency, likely the City of Jacksonville, will finalize the “CUS Implementation Committee” in late 2020 or early 2021. This Committee will consist of members of the jurisdictions involved in the CUS itself, other impacted levels of government, and affected stakeholder groups.

Based on the experience of the Policy and Technical Committees during development of the CUS, the recommendation is to include both policy and technical expertise on a single CUS Implementation Committee, in order to continue the efficient and informed work that began with the CUS.

Upon initiation of the CUS Implementation Phase, the Committee will meet periodically (virtually or in-person) and, as needed, call upon staff members of the participating agencies to provide technical support.

E.2. Seek Funding from State Military Affairs Grant Program (High Priority)

The [Military Affairs Grant Program](#) (MAGP), administered by the Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC), provides funding for projects that sustain and strengthen military installations in Arkansas. The first grant awarded by through the MAGP, in 2018, provided funding to the City of White Hall to develop a Compatible Use Study for Pine Bluff Arsenal.²

Also in 2018, the AEDC awarded over \$375,000 in MAGP funding to the LRAFB Community Council and Jacksonville High School to develop a first-of-its-kind cybersecurity training curriculum.³ This partnership exposes students to the field of cybersecurity, a rapidly expanding career field in both military and civilian contexts. Students have opportunities to work with LRAFB cybersecurity personnel, as well as educators from Arkansas State University-Beebe.

Applicants eligible for MAGP funding include counties, cities, economic development agencies, military community councils, military installations, and State agencies.⁴ The program operates on a quarterly grant cycle, subject to available funding (which is appropriated by the State Legislature). The FY20-21 State budget authorized \$500,000 for the program. At the time of this writing, the anticipated program budget for each of the next two fiscal years (FY21-22 and FY22-23) is \$750,000.⁵

² <https://www.arkansasedc.com/news-events/newsroom/detail/2018/04/09/governor-aedc-announce-first-military-affairs-grant-award>

³ [https://www.arkansasedc.com/news-events/newsroom/detail/2018/05/14/governor-aedc-announce-\\$377-812-military-grant-for-cyber-training-at-jacksonville-high-school](https://www.arkansasedc.com/news-events/newsroom/detail/2018/05/14/governor-aedc-announce-$377-812-military-grant-for-cyber-training-at-jacksonville-high-school)

⁴ AEDC Military Affairs Grant Program Rules, May 2017, available: https://www.arkansasedc.com/docs/default-source/community-resources/military_affairs_grant_program_rules.pdf?sfvrsn=d4ee83fa_4

⁵ Arkansas State Legislature Budget Hearing Information (2021-2023 Biennium), Volume 02 – Department of Parks, Heritage & Tourism, DFA and Department of Commerce, Summary Budget Information, p. 338, available:

In Phase II, the community should identify components of the CUS Implementation Plan, particularly any high priority recommendations, that could be funded by the MAGP. According to AEDC, the grant program typically funds multiple smaller projects during a budget year, rather than one large project that utilizes the entire budget appropriation. Many of the high priority recommendations in this Chapter have moderate associated costs (estimated at less than \$25,000). Thus, the MAGP represents a potential source of significant funding to help advance the CUS recommendations.

E.3. Prepare a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Regional Coordination with LRAFB (High Priority)

As is discussed in greater detail under Recommendation E.4., most of the “high priority” recommendations of this Study will benefit from a deliberate and facilitated effort to define and then articulate the roles each local government, the base, and the state will play in the future to maintain compatibility between Air Force and civilian land uses.

A.C.A. § 14-56-426 was passed in 1995 to require local governments near an Air Force base to take specific steps to advance compatibility. In fact, the legislature was one of the early states to take such a step. The Policy Committee has recommended this section be updated to reflect the current regulatory and land use environment in the CUS Study Area to provide a clear and solid foundation for full CUS Implementation.

And, further, that a Memorandum of Understanding be developed to lay out the framework for ongoing planning activities (see Recommendation G) and to establish a consensus view of where the authority to regulate, plan, and coordinate stops and starts for each local government.

Therefore, the Policy Committee recommended that CUS Implementation begin with and be built around the development of an MOU early on. The Committee envisioned the development of the MOU to include:

1. An initial statement of the current legislative framework and settled areas of law related to municipal and county land use powers, including those related to military impacts;
2. An inventory of areas of uncertainty as to local government authority;
3. A survey of the manner in which other communities in Arkansas and other states are addressing compatibility and coordination in the modern military context;
4. A series of one-on-one focus group meetings with local governments, the base, and other stakeholders identified by the CUS Implementation Committee to ensure a complete understanding of the interests and needs of each for the resulting MOU;
5. One or more joint meetings of the parties to finalize an MOU that:
 - a. Sets out a consensus view of the best regulatory approach to ongoing planning and zoning in the CUS Study Area long-term;
 - b. Defines the scope of authority the parties to the MOU agree best meet those needs;
 - c. Clarifies the locations in which regulations are most appropriate versus those where non-regulatory approaches are most feasible and are sufficient to meet compatibility objectives;

Regional Coordination Area Designated

Since participating CUS jurisdictions vary so widely with respect to their proximity to LRAFB installations, their use of zoning or planning tools, and their development densities, the CUS Implementation Committee should consider designating a “regional coordination area” within which parties to the MOU, including LRAFB, agree to coordinate on major land use changes.

Coordination triggers may include major rezonings, adoption of new zoning or planning provisions, and development of new “growth-inducing” infrastructure, like roads, water, and wastewater.

<https://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/Committees/Document?type=pdf&source=2019%2FSummary+Budget+Manuals&filename=Volume%202-%20Dept%20of%20Parks,%20Heritage%20and%20Tourism,%20DFA%20and%20Dept%20of%20Comm> (last accessed November 2, 2020)

- d. Maps these locations and provides GIS data for local use;
- e. Delineates the geographic extent of agreed-to authorities and boundaries; and
- f. Any other matters the Implementation Committee deems feasible and appropriate.

In addition, the MOU likely will address, among other things:

1. Ongoing coordination;
2. The operational protocols of a standing Military Planning & Coordination Committee (see Recommendation G.1.);
3. The maintenance of a dedicated Military Planning and Coordination website or webpage (see Recommendation F.2.);
4. The manner in which local regulations and state legislation (current or as revised on the recommendation of the CUS Implementation Committee) work together to achieve a comprehensive approach to compatibility long-term;
5. How notice will be provided and comments received when cooperation between the base and local governments is needed;
6. How cooperation between LRAFB and the local governments will occur as to lands that are not subject to zoning regulations, but that may be affected by military impacts;
7. Procedures for regular updates by the base to local governing bodies; and/or
8. Notice or expected changes in military missions (temporary or permanent).

At the time the CUS was completed, the Policy Committee believed full implementation of the CUS Recommendations may also depend on key clarifications to state legislation. However, the Committee also recognized that local stakeholders may arrive at an agreed-to set of legislative changes through the initial discussions that lead to development of a draft MOU; and, however, that the MOU eventually may need to reflect the final version of any legislative revisions, which likely would follow the 2022 session of the Arkansas Legislature.

Therefore, the Policy Committee recommended the CUS Implementation Committee consider keeping the MOU in draft form until a legislative solution is settled upon. This would ensure the MOU is finalized consistent with the final statutory and local regulatory framework.

The MOU will be coordinated and consistent with any adopted overlay zoning, as discussed with respect to Recommendations [B.1.](#) through [B.5.](#), as well as any proposed changes to Arkansas state legislation, discussed in [Recommendation E.4.](#)

E.4. Propose Legislative Revisions to Clarify Scope of Local Government Authorities (High Priority)

The Scope of LRAFB's Review and Comment on Local Development Actions

While it is important that LRAFB receive notice of pending land developments presenting real threats to compatibility, it also is in all parties' interest to avoid coordination on minor developments not likely to impact base operations.

The base and local governments will define an effective balance during CUS Implementation, based on project size (acres, units, square footage), distance from the installations, or land use types.

The Policy Committee recommends the CUS Jurisdictions work collaboratively to prepare and seek legislative support for revisions to [A.C.A. § 14-56-426](#), and other affected statutes, regarding the scope and nature of local government regulatory jurisdiction over areas impacted by LRAFB operations; particularly as the statutes relate to extraterritorial powers and overlapping areas of authority and impacts.

The Policy Committee appointed an *ad hoc* subcommittee to review the statutes, but ultimately concluded the scope of open legal and statutory questions was significant enough to warrant taking up the matters during CUS Implementation (see callout box, below).

The subcommittee found the statutes could benefit from clarification of the scope of municipal authority in territorial jurisdictions subject to A.C.A. § 14-56-426. The subcommittee also identified other potential revisions to A.C.A. § 14-56-426 that

would help clarify the scope of regulation and the process for review of potentially incompatible land uses.

Ad Hoc Legislative Subcommittee

During development of the CUS, the Policy Committee appointed an *ad hoc* legislative subcommittee to review the current statutory requirements for land use controls in military impact areas. The subcommittee worked with the consultant planners and attorneys to identify areas of current state legislation that might be updated to clarify the scope of the local governments' powers.

The subcommittee focused on the relationship between two Arkansas statutes that authorize municipalities to act outside their corporate boundaries: A.C.A. § 14-56-413 and § 14-56-426.

A.C.A. § 14-56-413 authorizes municipalities to adopt "planning ordinances" (distinct from "zoning ordinances") within their territorial jurisdictions. These territorial limits range from 1 to 2 miles, based on a municipality's population. The statute authorizes "zoning ordinances" only in territorial jurisdictions of cities with a population of 8,000 or more that are situated on a navigable stream.

A.C.A. § 14-56-426 requires first-class cities within 5 miles of a military installation to restrict or prohibit land uses "that might be hazardous to aircraft operation." In the vicinity of Little Rock Air Force Base, this results in four cities (Cabot, Jacksonville, North Little Rock, and Sherwood) with significantly overlapping jurisdictions. In addition, portions of LRAFB's documented impact areas fall outside these territorial limits, in unincorporated areas of counties without jurisdiction-wide zoning regulations.

Land use regulation, as required by A.C.A. § 14-56-426, might typically be considered in the nature of "zoning." However, it is unclear how or whether A.C.A. § 14-56-413 limits the type of regulation a municipality can adopt in the 5-mile "military territorial jurisdiction."

The subcommittee found the statutes could benefit from clarification of the scope of municipal authority in territorial jurisdictions subject to A.C.A. § 14-56-426. The subcommittee also identified other potential revisions to the statute that might clarify the scope of regulation and the process for review of potentially incompatible land uses.

Based on the feedback of the subcommittee, the Policy Committee concluded the scope of open legal and statutory questions was significant enough to warrant taking up the matters during CUS Implementation. The Policy Committee included a number of recommendations in this Chapter facilitating clarification of statutory authorities and, subsequently, implementation of corresponding CUS recommendations during implementation of this study.

E.5. Prepare GIS Layers Illustrating Extent of Local Government Regulatory Authorities (High Priority)

Due to the number of local government jurisdictions within LRAFB impact areas, the various territorial jurisdictions (discussed in Recommendation E.4., above), and the existing AICUZ overlay zoning districts in Jacksonville and Sherwood, mapping the extent of local government regulatory authorities is an important component of the CUS Implementation Plan.

Mapping extraterritorial areas that are both authorized and active under state statute will allow CUS Jurisdictions, citizens, and stakeholders to be readily aware of the geographic extent of zoning and planning powers currently being exercised. It also informs development of the MOU (see Recommendations E.3. and G.2) and helps illustrate the need for the legislative revisions discussed in Recommendation E.4., above.

Therefore, the Committee recommended either that a regional GIS database be established to reflect the legislative authorities and jurisdictions clarified following completion of Recommendations E.3. and E.4. or that the GIS database of an existing jurisdiction be expanded or updated to include all areas within the CUS Study Area and / or CUS Regional Coordination Area. As noted above, the CUS Implementation Committee may determine whether Pulaski County has the capacity and resources to fulfill this role or whether the CUS Implementation Phase should include establishment of an independent database.

E.6. Facilitate LRAFB Input Prior to Local Approvals of New Growth-Inducing Infrastructure (High Priority)

The need to coordinate on land use matters may go beyond those necessarily captured in the local planning and zoning context. For example, expansions to growth-inducing infrastructure initiated by local governments or other agencies may be coordinated with LRAFB to ensure infrastructure extensions are not setting up encroachment vulnerabilities for the future.

For example, a proposed road extension into an APZ-1 area does not, by itself, create an incompatibility with Air Force accident potential guidance. However, dense residential development that naturally could be expected to result from the road extension may well create an incompatibility.

The objective of coordinating “early and often” will best be met – along with property owner expectations – where even these types of infrastructure expansions are coordinated prior to approval, through regulatory, MOU, or other mechanisms developed during CUS Implementation.

E.7. Monitor Defense Community Infrastructure Program (DCIP) for Funding Opportunities in the Region (High Priority)

[Title 10 U.S. Code § 2391\(d\)](#) authorizes the Secretary of Defense to provide grants to “address deficiencies in community infrastructure supportive of a military installation” through the [Defense Community Infrastructure Pilot Program](#) (DCIP). Congress authorized the DCIP for ten years following enactment of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019, but did not fund the program in FY2019. Fiscal Year 2020 marks the first time funding has been available for the DCIP.

The DCIP focuses on three priorities established by the Secretary of Defense:

1. Military family quality of life,
2. Military resilience, and
3. Military value.

The statute defines “community infrastructure” as a product or facility that is located off of a military installation and is owned by a state or local government or not-for-profit, member-owned utility service ([10 U.S.C. § 2391\(e\)\(4\)](#)). Thus, eligible applicants for DCIP funding include only state and local governments and not-for-profit, member-owned utility services.

The [Final Federal Funding Opportunity \(FFO\) for the FY2020 DCIP](#) identifies other eligibility and programmatic requirements, including those discussed below, which may or may not be the same in subsequent funding years.

Individual awards range from \$250,000 to \$25 million. Unless the project location is in a rural area or for national security reasons, grantees must provide a non-Federal funding match totaling at least 50% of project costs (per the FFO). [Note [10 U.S.C. § 2391\(d\)\(2\)](#) requires a minimum 30% match for non-rural projects.] The FFO defines “rural area” as a city, town, or unincorporated area with a population of 50,000 or less. An applicant proposing a project in a rural area must specifically request a waiver of the matching requirement.

The FFO defines eligible community infrastructure projects as “any complete and useable transportation project, school, hospital, police, fire, emergency response, or other community support facility; or water, wastewater, telecommunications, electric, gas, or other utility infrastructure project, that:

- support a military installation;
- are owned by a state or local government or a not-for-profit, member owned utility service;
- will enhance military family quality of life, resilience or military value at the supported military installation;
- are endorsed by the local installation commander representing the installation benefitting from the proposed project; and
- are construction-ready” (FFO, Section C.3., p. 3).

Further, at least 50% of the beneficiaries of a project funded by the DCIP must be active duty military service members and their families.

A key requirement is that the proposed construction can begin within twelve months of the grant award. This requires “all necessary final design and planning, Federal and state/local environmental planning, and local permitting actions” to be “substantially complete” ([FFO Questions and Answers, Part I](#), Section A, Questions 27 and 56; June 4, 2020). As with other Federal funding, compliance with the [National Environmental Policy Act](#) is required.

The CUS Implementation Committee should monitor the DCIP for potential funding opportunities in FY2021 and beyond. The community could use funding in a variety of ways to support the three DCIP priorities. For example:

LRAFB has a legacy of supporting education, including through establishment of the University Center, a degree center of Arkansas State University-Beebe. The Jacksonville Little Rock AFB University Center offers educational programs for both military and community members.

The City of Jacksonville contributed \$5 million to the construction of a new facility, located just off-base, in 2011. This location allows community members to use the facility without special security or access requirements.

In September 2020, the DoD announced the first grants awarded through the Defense Community Infrastructure Pilot Program. These 16 grants, totaling approximately \$50 million, leverage an additional \$45 million in non-Federal funds. Funded projects include recreational and sports complexes, educational facilities, emergency medical facilities, and utility infrastructure improvements.

In November 2020 the U.S. Senate released its proposed FY2021 spending package, which proposes a \$100 million increase in funding for the DCIP.



Improvements to this facility could be eligible for DCIP funding.

The City of Jacksonville provides water service to and treats wastewater from LRAFB. In addition, LRAFB has developed a strong partnership with Entergy, the local utility, to improve energy efficiency and reduce costs.⁶ Improvements to these critical infrastructure systems also could be eligible for DCIP funding.

E.8. Evaluate Opportunities with the Air Force Community Partnership Program (AFCP) (Medium Priority)

While the DCIP is an opportunity for military communities and the Department of Defense to share in the costs and benefits of capital/infrastructure projects, the Air Force's Community Partnership (AFCP) program facilitate partnerships built on shared resources and capabilities beyond infrastructure.

The Air Force Community Partnership program brings together community and Air Force leaders to identify opportunities for and engage in mutually beneficial partnerships. These partnerships often result in reduced operational costs and improved service delivery and, perhaps more importantly, strengthen relationships between a military installation and the surrounding community.

The AFCP program facilitates coordination at the local level on initiatives as varied as the participating communities.

Examples include:

- Shared firing ranges;
- Cooperative medical/EMT training;
- Shared refuse management services;
- Cooperative educational programs; and
- Shared water and wastewater treatment facilities.



The AFCP process involves three groups: a Leadership Committee, comprised of key decision makers; Work Groups, comprised of Air Force and community members with expertise related to the potential partnerships; and stakeholders/participants representing a broad range of community members.⁷

LRAFB was an early participant in the AFCP program, which has resulted in several local partnerships including a memorandum of agreement with the Central Arkansas Library System (CALs) in which CALs provides staff for events at LRAFB to support base library staff.

The CUS Implementation Committee, LRAFB, and the CUS Jurisdictions should evaluate opportunities for continued engagement with the AFCP program, including an assessment of potential new partnerships to address common issues and leverage resources.

⁶ *Utility Services Case Study: Energy Efficiency Upgrades for Little Rock AFB*, Federal Emergency Management Program, November 2000, available: <https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy01osti/26811.pdf>

⁷ Air Force Community Partnership Program, Groups and Roles, available: <https://community.apan.org/wg/airforcepartnerships/p/aboutus>

E.9. Increase Statewide Coordination (Medium Priority)

This study recommends that the standing Military Planning and Coordination Committee (see Recommendation G.1.) work to increase statewide coordination efforts related to mission sustainment and military value and encroachment-related matters.

This could include coordination with the Commanding Officers of Arkansas military installations and with the Arkansas Economic Development Commission's Military Affairs office, as well consideration of statewide legislation or interagency agreements to facilitate the development of statewide military planning tools and coordination frameworks.

The CUS Implementation Committee also should explore recommending regular meetings of the Commanding Officers from around the state. Other states like Florida, for example, have a formalized means of coordination among high ranking military officials and state officials to ensure communication between these levels of government.

Finally, the Policy Committee also discussed the benefits of having a designated state-level grant writing subject matter expert to ensure Arkansas installations are fully availing themselves of available resources and programs, particularly those at the federal level.

E.10. Perform Strategic Planning to Stand Up a Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program with Conservation and Community Partners (Medium Priority)

The Little Rock AFB Installation Complex Encroachment Management Action Plan (ICEMAP) provided recommendations for the installation to engage with community partners to develop a REPI program to identify partnership conservation solutions to help mitigate the impacts of off-base land uses that are potentially incompatible with military training and operations through [10 U.S.C. §2684a](#) and [16 U.S.C. §670c-1](#).

These authorities allow Little Rock AFB to enter cost-sharing partnerships with willing property owners that protect compatible land uses and address regulatory restrictions that inhibit military activities on non-DoD properties in the vicinity of installations. Through proactive work with conservation partners, a Little Rock AFB REPI Program can provide win-win-win solutions that support the community, preserve agricultural and natural lands, and most importantly, protect and enable current and future military training and operations. During the CUS process, multiple stakeholders shared an interest in establishing such a program after the completion of the CUS. However, developing and standing up a successful REPI program requires a thorough understanding of unique tools available under federal authorities, as well as an understanding of the collaborative interests of potential compatible land use partners that may include private conservation organizations and local communities.

Therefore, the Policy Committee recommended the base work with conservation and community partners to stand up a local REPI program, which may include the following steps:

- Seek specialized expertise and obtain education on REPI program fundamentals and best practices, including information on project planning and real estate execution requirements.
- Identify initial and ongoing leadership structure and personnel needs for installation stakeholders to provide input, identify metrics, and execute the program.
- Engage with potential eligible entity community partners to identify interest in the program, geographic focus areas, and collaborative funding opportunities.
- Engage with installation stakeholders and develop GIS maps that prioritize partner focus areas and locations that support military readiness.
- Develop a written REPI 5-year plan that identifies mission capabilities, encroachment threats, a holistic encroachment mitigation strategy, a desired end state, and the expected strategic benefit.

Little Rock AFB should seek specialized expertise and perform strategic planning to stand up an installation REPI program. Strategic planning may include obtaining education and identifying best practices, identifying leadership and personnel requirements, engaging with potential community partners, performing a GIS analysis to identify priority areas of mutual interest, and developing a written REPI 5-year plan. To start this process, the installation should engage with the Air Force Civil Engineering Center (AFCEC/CIUB), which leads USAF REPI programming, to understand potential frameworks, procedures, and Air Force guidance for the program. Additional strategic planning could occur with installation staff or with support from AFCEC or specialized consultants. These efforts should be designed to work with and support CUS goals to promote collaborative military and community conservation solutions.

E.11. Formalize Protocol for Periodic LRAFB Updates to Local Governments (Medium Priority)

As noted throughout this study, there currently is a significant amount of informal coordination amongst the CUS Jurisdictions and LRAFB. For example, the City of Jacksonville’s Mayor briefs newcomers on-base every month and LRAFB personnel occasionally brief the Jacksonville City Council.

This study recommends increasing this type of interaction between LRAFB and local governing bodies. Regular updates by LRAFB representatives to local governing bodies and planning commissions would address ongoing or anticipated future activities at LRAFB, Blackjack Drop Zone, or the All-American Landing Zone. These updates should be consistently made and formalized, perhaps as part of the Memorandum of Understanding (see Recommendations E.3 and G.2). Written communications may augment in-person presentations, or may be provided in lieu of meeting in person, if issues appropriately allow. Written updates also could be posted on the dedicated military planning and coordination website (see Recommendation F.2.).

Other CUS communities have found this connection augments relationships between the community and the military and helps to mitigate the risk of misinformation being disseminated.

E.12. Continue to Pursue Initiatives for Improved Quality of Life for Military Families (Medium Priority)

Access to quality public education remains one of the most important quality of life issues for military families. Little Rock AFB can continue to support educational programs and initiatives by leveraging installation resources and partnerships with local schools. As part of an overall effort to reduce challenges for military families, public educational opportunities can influence future basing decisions. The Arkansas Department of Education provides the Purple Star School Award to recognize military-friendly schools, and Cabot School District is recognized as a Purple Star School District. Continuing to expand the number of awarded schools in the area and prioritizing resources and programming that serve the needs of military families significantly improves quality of life. Little Rock AFB can also build on its relationships with the local community colleges and universities to provide enhanced opportunities, including special programs and discounted tuition rates, for military personnel and their dependents. Little Rock AFB and the City of Jacksonville have already established a joint-university center for Airmen and civilians that facilitates education opportunities for the military population and local community.

In a 2020 Department of the Air Force assessment of public education quality in school districts serving Air Force installations, the following areas were identified for Little Rock AFB as requiring additional support: student learning rate, suspension rate, and chronic absenteeism rate. Several policies could be adopted by school districts to improve public education support for military families. One option is to expand school choice by requiring home school districts to release military children if they have been accepted into another district. If a military family who lives in on-base housing moves to off-base housing in another school district, the students should be allowed to remain in their current school district. This policy change would help improve student learning and graduation rates by allowing students to remain with the same school system. Another option would be to allow children of an active

duty military member who is transferring to a military installation to complete early remote registration with the chosen school. By the time a military family receives PCS orders, certain classes or extracurricular activities may already have been filled for the academic semester or year.

Another opportunity to improve military family quality of life and stability is through improving license portability for military spouses who work in occupations, including healthcare and teaching, that require licenses. When moving to a new state as part of a permanent base change, spouses with professional licensure requirements face more significant barriers to employment due to lengthy, complex processes to obtain licensure within the new state. In 2019, the State of Arkansas passed Act 820, which enabled military personnel, veterans, and their spouses to automatically be granted a professional license in Arkansas if they held an equivalent license issued by another state or territory. To build on that improvement, a military spouse liaison could be established at the installation level to assist spouses who are seeking employment or who are underemployed. Little Rock AFB and its community stakeholders should continue to understand potential limiting factors to military family quality of life and work together to advocate for and pursue solutions.

Little Rock AFB could also consider establishing an innovation lab for on-base and community benefits. Numerous Air Force installations across the country are standing up innovation labs, designed to provide a collaboration space equipped with 3D printers, virtual reality equipment, and other technology to cultivate innovative ideas. An on-base innovation lab could also support entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial initiatives within the community through partnerships with Little Rock AFB. These combined efforts help create a stronger, more resilient community and enhance base-community partnerships.

F. Public Outreach and Communication

The Current Environment

In the community survey (see Appendix *<to be finalized>*), 77% of respondents characterized communications between the Air Force and the community as good (50.2%) or fair (26.8%).

Respondents also indicated a preference for communication from Little Rock AFB via social media and via the LRAFB website.

Communities that host military installations benefit from frequent outreach and communication from officials at the installation on matters that impact their lives, businesses, and quality of life. Indeed, that level of communication by Little Rock AFB has been very good over the years.

While communication may not initially appear to be related to encroachment and land use compatibility, generally speaking, it promotes cooperation when matters directly impacting compatibility arise. This allows a more expedient and fair response from all parties, thereby reducing the potential for encroachment that would threaten base mission or the communities' quality of life.

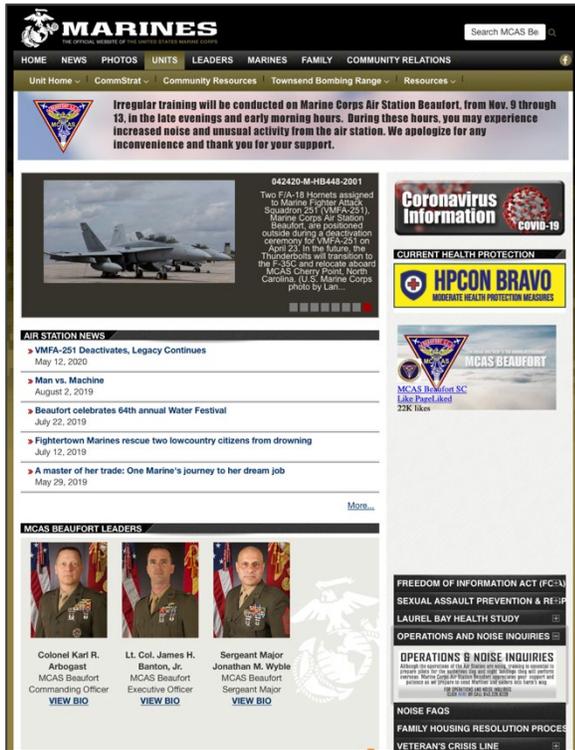
LRAFB Community Council

The Little Rock Air Force Base Community Council, a civilian non-profit organization that works to support the base, its mission, and its people,¹ has played an important role in connecting the base with the community.

The Community Council promotes, plans, and carries out functions and events supportive of the Community and the Base mission including, for example, the annual air show. LRAFB leadership and other personnel often attend quarterly Community Council meetings.

F.1. Community Noise and Impact Reporting (High Priority)

In the community survey conducted at the beginning of the CUS process, a majority of respondents (77%) characterized communications between the Air Force and the community as good (50.2%) or fair (26.8%). Slightly fewer than half of respondents (44.8%) know who to contact at LRAFB if they have a question or a concern, although 77.5% of survey respondents have never needed to contact the base.



Community members should be able to easily determine how to ask a question or report a concern to LRAFB, and community inquiries related to noise or other off-base impacts from Little Rock AFB should be handled in a consistent manner. Procedures should be maintained, if they are not already, to ensure inquiries are responded to in a timely manner and that the resolution of each inquiry is documented and retained in a consistent way.

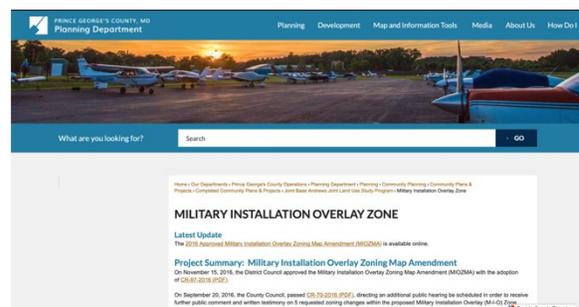
The Policy Committee recommends supplementing existing protocols regarding public reporting of noise and other impacts from LRAFB by including on LRAFB's website the installation's point of contact, policies, and timeframes for responding to inquiries. This would clarify the process for the public, help manage community expectations, and further demonstrate LRAFB's long-standing commitment to working with the community.

Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort has a link on its [home page](#) for Operations & Noise Inquiries, as well as a [list](#) of frequently asked questions related to noise and a [Community Resources page](#) with additional information

F.2. Set Up Military Planning & Coordination Website (High Priority)

The first source of information for many people today is the Internet. The Policy Committee, therefore, recommended establishment of a dedicated military planning and coordination website to facilitate public engagement and provide a single source of reliable and current information about the CUS implementation process.

The website could be a page on an existing agency website, likely the City of Jacksonville, or a standalone website. The Committee anticipated that Pulaski County's GIS staff would assume an important role in the website if parcel-level information can be made available to public users.



Prince George's County, MD maintains military overlay zone information on its Planning Department's [website](#).

It would serve as a central location for information related to land use and military planning in the area, such as:

- The 2020 Compatible Use Study and related materials;
- Anticipated changes in mission at LRAFB, when applicable
- GIS layers available to citizens in order to easily identify applicable regulations;
- Downloadable brochures identifying regulations, policies, impact areas, and points of contact;
- How to avoid land uses and land use activities (like drone use or Radio Frequency Interference [RFI]) that would negatively impact air operations at LRAFB or All-American Landing Zone;
- A Story Map feature that presents a cohesive, easy-to-follow “story” of LRAFB’s relevance to the community and the importance of the community’s ongoing coordination with the base related to land use matters;
- Frequently Asked Questions (e.g., “What is the economic impact of LRARB in our community?;” “Are there limitations on the use of my property based on LRAFB operations?”)and
- Contact & reporting information for LRAFB.

Regardless of the final location and management responsibility of the website, all CUS jurisdictions would be linked and would participate in its content and functionality. The structure and management of the website or webpage would be addressed in the Memorandum of Understanding described in Recommendation E.3.

F.3. Prepare Public Outreach Materials on Civilian UAS Regulations and Risk Areas, Including Street Signs (High Priority)

The CUS process revealed few current concerns with the civilian use of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), or “drones,” in the vicinity of LRAFB. However, drones continue to increase in popularity for personal, commercial, and government use. As noted in Chapter 3, while the FAA regulates the operation of UAS by civilians and has imposed altitude restrictions and defined certain areas as off limits for their use, a review of the current UAS restrictions in the CUS Study Area revealed the potential for conflict, and thus hazard, in areas that are critical for military aviation, but are not yet subject to FAA regulation. There are national security restrictions over LRAFB and a portion of Camp Robinson, as well as off-base restrictions, but there are no restrictions over All-American Landing Zone (*see Map <to be finalized>*).

The Policy Committee recommended that steps be taken to ensure the public is aware of restrictions on the use of drones near LRAFB and AALZ and of their potential danger to Air Force operations in the area.

These steps should include publicization by the CUS Jurisdictions and LRAFB of federal requirements and FAQs (including website links for FAA and other relevant federal agencies) related to the use of “drones” in the vicinity of LRAFB and AALZ. In particular, the community should seek to increase public awareness of how to notify LRAFB of proposed drone use within federally protected areas.

The community also should evaluate the need for signs near the installation to notify the public about federally protected airspace.

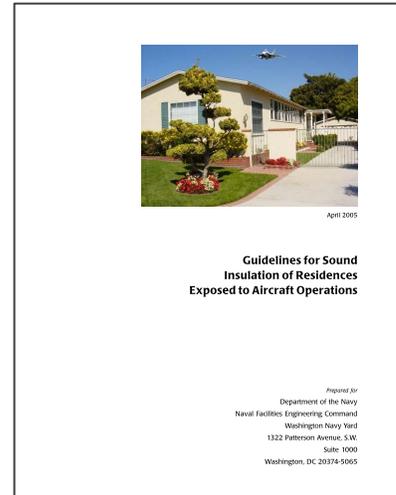
F.4. Prepare Public Outreach Materials for NLR Construction Standards (Medium Priority)

Although noise from Little Rock AFB, Camp Robinson, and the Blackjack Drop Zone is present in the community, most respondents to the CUS community survey either do not find the noise disruptive (64.8%), or do not experience noise impacts from operations at all (28.5%). However, one respondent finds the noise severely disruptive, and two respondents characterize the noise as so bad they wish they could move.

The local jurisdictions within documented noise zones should make Noise Level Reduction (NLR) construction standards available to citizens, builders, and developers. NLR helps to mitigate or "attenuate" noise associated with military air operations and training. These would be available for use voluntarily for residential or non-residential developments, but would not be mandatory or required by code.

Examples of NLR techniques include:

- Using fixed or casement windows with weather-stripping, rather than sliding, pivoting, or double-hung windows;
- Using solid core wood exterior doors with vinyl seal around the edges; and
- Increasing the amount of insulation in walls and ceilings.



In the late 1980s, the Department of the Navy and the FAA jointly commissioned the preparation of Guidelines for Sound Insulation of Residences Exposed to Aircraft Operations. In 1992, the document was published more broadly by the U.S. Department of Transportation. The [Guidelines](#) were updated in 2005, and remain a widely used resource for NLR in residential buildings.

G. Ongoing Land Use Planning Activities

Land use compatibility can be maintained and strengthened through effective coordination between military installations and the communities surrounding them. This section, therefore, identifies two strategies for ongoing, long-term coordination.

The history of pre-planning and coordination already in place has created an environment that is relatively free of significant encroachment concerns.

G.1. Establish a Standing Military Planning and Coordination Committee (High Priority)

Once the recommended CUS tools have been developed and full implementation has begun, the CUS Policy Committee recommends the establishment of a “standing” committee to facilitate ongoing planning and coordination in the region.

The committee, perhaps designated as the “Military Planning and Coordination Committee” or “MPCC,” would meet on a regular basis, or simply would be convened by its members as circumstances warrant. The Military Planning and Coordination Committee would serve as a clearinghouse for issues and information related to military-related planning in the region and may adopt bylaws to guide its structure and protocol. The primary objective is to ensure that the Air Force, local jurisdictions, and citizens have a designated agency to which they may address military compatibility issues.

If a Memorandum of Understanding, or MOU, is developed for purposes of ongoing military-civilian coordination (see Recommendations E.3. and G.2.), the MPCC would be responsible for ensuring its provisions are met and for overseeing changes to the agreement. The organizational structure of the MPCC could be formalized into the MOU, but a separate set of formal or informal bylaws may be more fitting.

G.2. Maintain Updated MOU for Continued Community-Wide Coordination (High Priority)

Once the community develops the tools recommended here, in Phase II, the question arises of what framework will remain in place to monitor the implementation of those tools. This will be the final and ongoing phase referred to as Phase III in the next section titled “The Next Phases: CUS Implementation & Tools Adoption.” The CUS Policy Committee recommended consideration of a Memorandum of Understanding to memorialize this local coordination framework for the purpose of maintaining the current positive encroachment environment.

As discussed in Recommendation E.3., the Policy Committee recommended the CUS Implementation Committee consider keeping the MOU in draft form until a legislative solution is settled upon (see [Recommendation E.4.](#)). This would ensure the MOU is finalized consistent with the final legislative and local regulatory framework.

Once the MOU is finalized, it will guide the continuing work of the MPCC (see [Recommendation G.1.](#), above) and other community stakeholders in matters related to military land use planning, after the recommended CUS tools have been implemented in Phase II.

The Current Environment

LRAFB and the surrounding CUS Jurisdictions have a long history of working together to avoid land use incompatibilities. As demonstrated in Chapter 3, this practice has paid off, as there are very few major threats to land use compatibility at this time.

Nonetheless, the CUS Policy Committee has recommended a complete “toolbox” of strategies to protect the current operating environment over the long-run, including the strategies for continued coordination discussed in this section.

G.3. Support the Jacksonville Economic & Cultural Alliance as the Coordinating Agency for Ongoing Interagency Coordination (High Priority)

The City of Jacksonville’s Economic and Cultural Alliance served as the lead agency and program manager for the 2020 CUS and was anticipated to serve the same role during the CUS Implementation Phase to follow. In order to build on its base of experience and given LRAFB’s location within the Jacksonville city limits, the Policy Committee recommended that the MOU discussed in Recommendation E.3. designate the City of Jacksonville as the coordinating agency on regional military issues moving forward. Accordingly, so long as the City is able, it would continue to provide staff support to the CUS Implementation Committee and (following CUS implementation) to the standing “Military Planning and Coordination Committee” established pursuant to Recommendation G.1., above.

The CUS Implementation Committee

As discussed in Recommendation E.1., a “CUS Implementation Committee” will oversee CUS Phase II and development of the tools and work products recommended in this Chapter, according to priority.

The Committee will be established in late 2020 or early 2021, and will consist of representatives from CUS Jurisdictions, LRAFB, other impacted agencies, and affected stakeholder groups.

The Next Phases: CUS Implementation & Tools Adoption

Compatible Use Studies are similar to other planning processes our local communities regularly engage in. There typically are three general phases:

- I. The planning process, which assesses needs and identifies recommendations to address those needs;
- II. Development of implementation tools recommended during the planning process; and
- III. Adoption and implementation of those tools.

This report is the result of the Phase I planning process, and is similar in nature to the comprehensive or area planning process undertaken by Sherwood, North Little Rock, and Pulaski County in recent years.

In Phase II, a “CUS Implementation Committee,” similar to the CUS Policy & Technical Committees, will perform the implement the highest priority recommendations described in this Chapter, including preparation of implementing documents, ordinances, agreements, comprehensive plan policies, and the like.

CUS Implementation is commonly funded with a matching grant from the Office of Economic Adjustment. That funding, however, is contingent upon availability and is not a prerequisite to effective implementation.

In the third phase, the tools developed in Phase II are presented to implementing agencies (e.g., local governments, state agencies, and the LRAFB) for adoption and application. This is similar in nature to the implementation of a zoning ordinance or interlocal agreement after adoption or execution.

The following table illustrates the three phases of a Compatible Use Study.

	PHASE I	PHASE II	PHASE III
	CUS	CUS Implementation	Tools Adoption
Phase Objective	Needs Assessment Tools Identification	Tools Development	Tools Adopted, Effective, Amended as Needed
Oversight	Policy Committee Technical Committee	CUS Implementation Committee	Military Planning and Coordination Committee (MPCC)
Funding Eligibility	OEA-eligible	OEA-eligible	Local Funding, as needed
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	MOU Recommended	MOU Drafted	MOU Adopted & Effective