

Fort Gordon Regional Growth Management Plan Newsletter



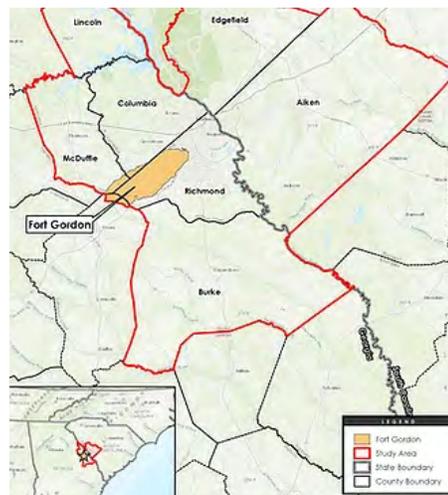
CSRA-RC
CENTRAL SAVANNAH RIVER AREA
REGIONAL COMMISSION

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Work on the Fort Gordon Regional Growth Management Plan Nears Completion

The final chapters of the Fort Gordon Regional Growth Management Plan (GMP) have entered the draft stage and are ready for public review. The GMP has been examining recent and continuing growth in the Augusta Metropolitan Area that is related to growth at Fort Gordon. Since 2012, the Installation has added 8,449 new service members and an additional 894 are anticipated through 2024.

In addition, family members, contractors, and other support jobs will translate into thousands of new residents to the area. The GMP addresses both the challenges and opportunities resulting from increased activity and personnel at Fort Gordon. The challenges consist of ensuring the region develops sufficient infrastructure and service



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capacities to accommodate growth while maintaining a high quality of life for military personnel and area residents. The opportunities relate to increased economic activity and capitalizing on economic development opportunities to sustain the region's vibrant economy.

Housing Costs in the Augusta Area are Currently More Affordable than the National Average, but Continued Growth Presents Challenges

When compared to the national average, housing costs in the Augusta Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) are below average.

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Three major goals are part of the planning process:

- 1 Provide a comprehensive assessment of potential infrastructure, service impacts and needs associated with growth at Fort Gordon to **enable area communities to prepare and plan for growth.**
- 2 **Develop a collaborative public involvement process** which enables and facilitates the coordination of the region's various stakeholders and focuses on sustaining quality of life benefits and opportunities for both military and civilian communities.
- 3 Sustain the region's focus as a **military supportive community and integrate economic development opportunities** as part of this focus.

In order to accomplish these goals, the following topics and themes, central to growth management planning, will be addressed as part of the GMP process:

- Demographic & Growth Profile
- Transportation
- Public Services
- Public Infrastructure
- Employment, Workforce Development and Economic Development
- Education
- Housing
- Health Care Services
- Child Care Services

This effort will culminate into a plan to assist surrounding communities in making informed decisions regarding growth management and include an implementation strategy for communities to use as a guide.

Continued Growth Presents Challenges, continued from Page 1

2021 Housing Tenure and Vacancy



However, Fort Gordon plays a significant role in tightening the demand for housing. There are limited housing options on the Installation, and military personnel and their families are seeking housing outside of the Installation.

In all three of the MSA's fastest-growing counties, Aiken, Columbia, and Augusta-Richmond, the average cost, sale price, and size of home have increased since 2014. While the average price per home for each of these counties varies, sales prices for all price areas have risen, indicating that housing is becoming more

expensive in the area. Burke County is experiencing a nearly zero percent vacancy rate. As the expansion of the Alvin W. Vogtle Electric Generating Plant has expanded, the demand for housing in this area has exceeded supply.

As a result, median home values rose 22% between 2000 and 2017, and median rent has increase 36% during the same time period. To address rising prices, and demand for additional housing units, local governments have employed a range of housing strategies. These strategies include comprehensive plan policies, incentives, and coordination with the private sector providing housing.

To ensure an adequate supply of diverse and affordable housing, a number of strategies are recommended:

- Identify and create a regional housing leadership team
- Engage with area housing developers
- Create a priority land set-aside
- Increase the availability of missing middle housing
- Create affordable housing incentives
- Create housing transition zones

For additional information on housing assessments and the recommendations, please see the draft chapter on the project website.

[Click here to read the Chapter](#)

Additional Child Care Facilities Needed to Support Growth

Military families are more likely than the general population to have children under the age of six, with 21% of military households having at least one child in this age range. New military households arriving in an area will likely increase the demand for childcare.

There are several challenges associated with population growth in the child care industry in the Augusta area, including:

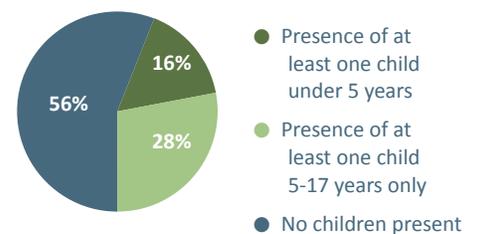
- Shortage of 24-hour capacity for military personnel
- Affordability
- Employee hiring and retention
- Quality of child care

There are a variety of recommendations to meet these challenges, including **creating more child care facilities, increasing awareness of what makes a quality child care facility, retaining existing child care facilities, increasing affordability, and increasing the sustainability of careers in child care.**

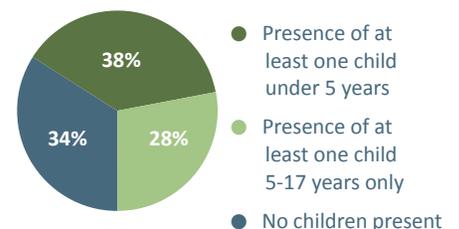
For additional information on childcare assessment recommendations, please see the draft chapter on the project website.

[Click here to read the Chapter](#)

Nationwide Civilian Population



Nationwide Active Duty Military

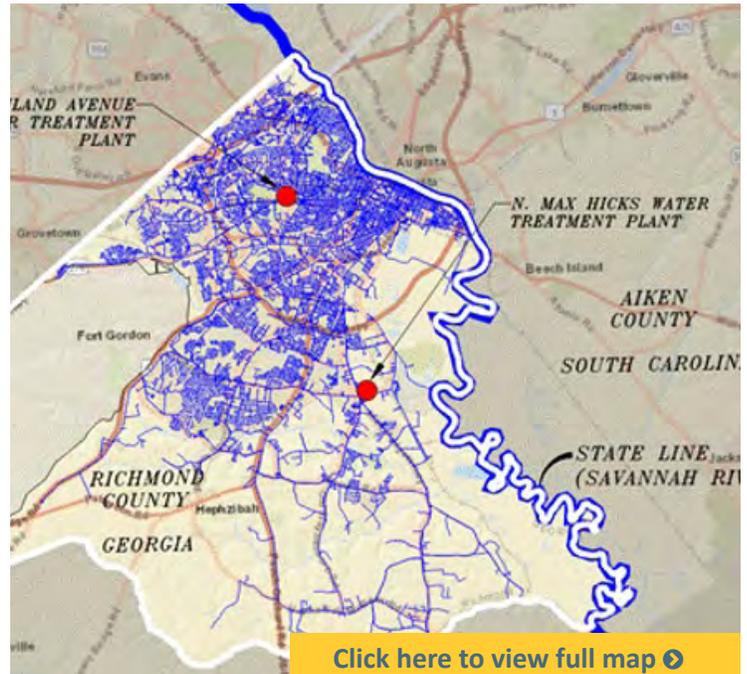


Public Infrastructure Well-Positioned for Area Growth

The GMP examined public utilities and infrastructure, including water, wastewater, solid waste collection and treatment, electric distribution systems, and natural gas in the Augusta area.

Overall, the analysis found that these infrastructure systems have adequate capacity to serve future growth.

- **Water:** Potable water systems generally have adequate capacity to serve future anticipated population growth. Existing water lines are clustered around urbanized areas, and future growth outside of these areas will need to be extended.
- **Wastewater:** Wastewater treatment systems have adequate capacity to serve future anticipated population growth. Existing sewer service areas are clustered around developed areas and may need to be extended if growth expands beyond these areas.
- **Solid waste:** Solid waste collection and treatment takes place at a few regional locations, with each location serving areas consisting of several counties. These locations have sufficient capacity to accommodate demand expected from future population growth.
- **Electric distribution systems:** There are several electricity generating locations, including solar, nuclear, biomass, petroleum, natural gas, and hydroelectric facilities. There is adequate capacity to meet demand from future populations.



- **Natural Gas:** While there are no natural gas producing facilities within the Study Area, there are natural gas providers, who use natural gas provided through an intranational network. There is adequate capacity to serve future projected demand.

While there is adequate capacity to serve the future projected population, the GMP does recommend that infrastructure providers coordinate with the CSRA Regional Commission on funding for future expansions. For additional information on public infrastructure assessments and the recommendations, please see the draft chapter on the project website.

[Click here to read the Chapter](#)

What's Coming Up

The last four chapters and the entire Draft Plan are available for public review and comment on the project website.

Comments will be accepted through July 14, 2022 and can be emailed to [Costa Pappis](#), or provided [through the project website](#).

[Review and Comment Here](#)

Next Meeting

The entire draft report will be presented at the next virtual public meeting scheduled for June 27, 2022.

[Meeting Link for June 27th](#)