

BRAC-onomic Development

By Tom Rumora

PURSUING THE "ART-OF-THE-POSSIBLE"

The size, location, purpose, and operation of our nation's military ports, airfields, schools, field training areas, research centers, storage / staging / mobilization facilities, and other assets – including personnel and related real estate – **are constantly changing to meet the demands** of world and domestic events, budgets, and technology. These ongoing changes impact the economy of virtually every community in the country, in one way or another. This will be particularly true in the next few years, when hundreds of changes occur simultaneously.

Each community must develop its own strategy, tools, and trained professionals to anticipate and react to these changes.

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BRAC-onomic

DEVELOPMENT

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CONTEXT

The Congressionally devised “BRAC” (base realignment and closure) process, which began in 1988, has affected hundreds of military installations across the country, and will affect hundreds more in the coming decades. Military agencies admit that real estate management is not their core competency.

Economic development professionals who become proficient in “art-of-the-possible” problem solving can help optimize the consequence of BRAC in conjunction with elected officials, city / county managers, utility companies, realtors, investor / developers, taxpayers, neighboring communities, business leaders, and expert advisors. The blending of traditional economic development tools for retention, expansion, and recruitment of major employers as well as small businesses with the unique and complex nature of military installation expansion / disposal processes requires specialized training, diligent attention to detail, awareness of prior and emerging case studies, and broad collaboration among multiple stakeholders.

COSTS

Military installations require local public investment and services. Whether the community is a net gainer or loser of jobs and military missions, the “cost” of expanding, preserving, or redeveloping a military installation – and its positive economic and patriotic impacts – can be an ongoing challenge during its active stages, mission changes, and even beyond its closure.

“Cost” can be defined in terms of infrastructure elements such as roads, water, sanitary sewer, nat-



The first-of-its-kind conveyance of an **active** military installation to a local development entity was at Brooks City-Base in San Antonio, Texas. The Air Force became the anchor tenant, while all real estate, utilities, roads, housing, and operating responsibility were transferred to the community.

ural gas, electricity, storm drainage, and security systems, as well as support functions such as day-care, housing, police / fire / EMS, schools, public transportation, medical services, waste disposal, recreation programs, and social services. These “costs” are part of the price paid for the jobs and economic multiplier effect created by the military presence. “Cost” can also be defined to include the time and other resources which must be diverted toward integration and management of these issues into the full spectrum of public / private activities that comprise the fabric of a community’s economy and quality of life – especially during periods of significant growth or decline in military missions.

In some cases, a military installation is one of the largest economic generators in the community or region. Military growth or cuts can dramatically alter public organizational structures, decision

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PURSUING THE “ART-OF-THE-POSSIBLE”

The size, location, purpose, and operation of our nation’s military ports, airfields, schools, field training areas, research centers, storage / staging / mobilization facilities, and other assets – including personnel and related real estate – are constantly changing to meet the demands of world and domestic events, budgets, and technology. These ongoing changes impact the economy of virtually every community in the country, in one way or another. This will be particularly true in the next few years, when hundreds of changes occur simultaneously. Each community must develop its own strategy, tools, and trained professionals to anticipate and react to these changes.

making processes, priorities, master plans and regulatory controls, capital project budgets, schools, traffic, allocation of time and energy, and the attitude / image of the area. City and county managers, governors, and elected officials at every level can become directly involved in a complex multi-level process that spans many decades.

MULTI JURISDICTIONS

Planning and executing BRAC changes can be complicated by numerous factors: funding gaps, weather, location, inadequate infrastructure, deferred maintenance, market forces, legal constraints, environmental issues, historic preservation, multiple competing interests, political rivalries, short-sighted actions or inactions, inexperienced leadership, plus the potential impact of future BRAC decisions.

In communities where military bases cross jurisdictional boundaries, and in communities where bond levies, tax increases, capital improvement plans, zoning, raises for teachers and police/fire employees, and jointly funded economic development programs are not commonly supported, collaborative and efficient base closure or realignment initiatives may not be feasible. In these cases, communities should consider opting for disposal by military agencies to private developers who will risk their own resources and run the gauntlet of public approval while trying to reach the highest and best use for the property.

In communities where there is a proud tradition of genuine collaboration, respectful inclusiveness, shared leadership, joint funding, and civilized discourse, multi-jurisdictional installations can accomplish great success. Constant communication, training, recognition, and empowerment are key to ensuring teamwork, trust, and performance.

DEFINING SUCCESS

Cities, counties, states, private companies, non-profits, and military organizations share the common challenge of defining what they consider to be “success”. Definitions can be genuinely elusive among even the most collaborative and skillful participants.

Commonly named elements of success in BRAC impacted communities (as well as in cities, counties, and states) include jobs, economic stability, revenue, compatible uses, target industries, environmental excellence, safety, appearance, speed, risk avoidance, quality of life, and pride. All of these are noble and worthy elements of a healthy and positive approach to “visioning,” and setting goals, objectives, and decision making criteria. Anything or anyone at odds with these values and prior-

Military leaders are instinctively proficient at strategy, tactics, and confidentiality. Civic leaders who expect win-win negotiations, patient inclusiveness, open public deliberation, full disclosure, and attention to job creation, land use studies, noise ordinances, long-term revenue generation, or real estate management principles may be disappointed by military processes.

Base realignment or closure can be the single biggest challenge in the lives of many economic development professionals. The complexities and sophistication of this emerging career field are already spawning discussions about creation of new college degree programs which would combine elements of economic development, political science, engineering, law, city planning, environmental safety, historic preservation, data and communication systems, public administration, property and facility maintenance, housing, transportation / logistics, public relations, construction, marketing, finance, and business management.

The author was involved in an experimental college-level class in 1998, and is currently in discussions with other institutions considering BRAC-related courses or degree programs.

ities may cause delays, diminished efficiency, and dysfunctional paralysis.

Practically, however, it is unrealistic to rank each of these elements as equally important. Attempts to do so will frustrate implementers who have to allocate time and resources to schedules and complex issues.

One measure of success can be the day-to-day attitude of media, civic leaders, and average citizens. If the answer to questions like “How are things going at the base?” includes any of the following comments, then there must be a general interpretation of progress and success:

- We have great people in charge, and we trust them.
- BRAC is complicated, but progress has been steady.
- We have faith in our enthusiastic team to do what is right.
- We are focused on turning challenges into opportunities.
- We aren't wasting time and resources on negativism.
- Our community loves the military, no matter what happens to our base.

COLOSSAL CULTURE CLASH

Note that a military organization's definition of success is much different than that of a community. This is one of the fundamental paradoxes of BRAC – the colossal culture clash. It is simply not the goal of the military organization to help accomplish the community's definition of success, or the community's goal to help accomplish the military organization's definition of success.

Military organizations strive to avoid predicaments, leverage advantages, and overwhelm or outmaneuver foes. Thankfully, our nation is safe and strong because military members excel at their jobs, and excel at their definition of success.

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deliberation, full disclosure, and attention to job creation, land use studies, noise ordinances, long-term revenue generation, or real estate management principles may be disappointed by military processes.

In some ways, military real estate might simply be described as an expendable short-term resource, like fuel and bullets, rather than a long-term balance sheet asset used to leverage investment and return. This analogy helps to explain why hundreds of bases have become inefficient, outdated, and unneeded, and why the condition of active and disposed property does not meet commercial standards. It also explains why a new platform must be found for military installations – one which avoids the shortcomings of the past and offers dramatically enhanced flexibility, efficiency, security, durability, and quality of life.

Perhaps a topic for a future article, or a national focus group, might be “The military base of the future”. It would be valuable to develop some generic characteristics of such an ideal facility, which could then be compared to today’s active installations and thereby guide decision makers regarding infrastructure improvements, encroachment, mission relocations, privatization, and innovative methods by which a community-military partnership might develop and operate efficient facilities and services for national defense and homeland security purposes.

Individual military installations could be impacted by multiple BRAC actions over many decades. This happens as a complex balance of military force structure, recruiting, retention, contracting, weapons systems, training, housing, environmental issues, construction programs, budgets, and encroachment problems create the need for more or less or different kinds of operational assets and services.

A community might avoid BRAC for decades, then enjoy substantial growth, then suffer total closure. An installation that “closed” years ago might be proposed as a potential site for a relocated mission with thousands of jobs, as occurred in Jacksonville, FL, where months of legal wrangling have not yet concluded regarding potential relocation of flying missions from Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia to the former Cecil Field – a plan opposed by many community leaders. A community could lose thousands of military related jobs due to concerns about security/safety in leased space, as is occurring in some Washington DC suburbs.

A rural community initially identified as a “closure” site might miraculously find a whole new mission, as happened at Cannon Air Force Base in Curry County, NM, where Air Force Special Operations are now headed from Florida and other locations, thus avoiding sudden and severe economic impact on the cities of Portales and Clovis, and also the County of Roosevelt. Missions designated to relocate to other installations might become stranded at a “closed” base for a decade or more, awaiting funding for construction / renovation of new facilities at the “gaining” location.

WHO PAYS?

Base realignment and closure (BRAC) actions can create a tsunami of short-term and long-term impacts on economic development plans, community priorities, and budgets for roads, utilities, schools, public safety, parks, labor negotiations, environmental clean-up, and the structure and process of decision making.

Three universally crucial economic development questions will often be the focus of public debate, as they are for most typical recruitment, retention, incentive, and marketing efforts.

- Who creates the plans and makes the decisions?
- Who takes the risks and pays for the costs?
- Who gets any proceeds that are generated?

Sensitivities over control, risk, and money increase in times of stress, even if the stress is brought on by the apparent opportunity of massive influx of missions and population, as in the case of BRAC 2005 “gainers” such as Manhattan, Kansas; El Paso, Texas; Lawton, Oklahoma; and even more so if the community stands to lose thousands of jobs, as in the case of Brunswick, Maine; Monmouth County, New Jersey; or Forest Park, Georgia.

PRIORITIES

BRAC simply doesn’t fit into the normal day-to-day, year-to-year planning/budgeting process for cities, counties, and states. It is difficult to insert unexpected BRAC impacts into prioritized workplans and funding patterns that have evolved over many years. There is no easy way to quickly re-prioritize and divert funding to or from stormwater projects, fire stations, highway overpasses, airports, sewage treatment plants, or other major projects in order to accommodate BRAC impacts.

But military bases are often one of the largest employers in the community and act as significant catalysts for education, housing, infrastructure, and business recruitment. They require massive attention and resources. Converting the “challenges” of BRAC into “opportunities” will keep economic development professionals busy for decades.

Some of the key issues for integration into planning and implementation efforts are briefly explained in the remainder of this article.

UTILITIES

Electricity, natural gas, storm drainage, telecommunications, central heating/cooling plants, sanitary sewers, and water systems on military installations differ in many ways from commercial or municipal systems. There are often no easements, rights-of-way, individual meters, accurate drawings, loop connections, pressure tests, capacity studies, leak detection methods, or overall planning. Systems frequently run diagonally across parcels, under buildings, and through the woods. This makes recruitment, retention, or expansion of tenants or developers difficult at a military installation.



At Rickenbacker Air Industrial Park, a combination of County subsidies, lease and sale revenue, a joint cargo/military airport, a foreign trade zone, and other creative mechanisms resulted in a "base-of-the-year" award in 1994.



ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACTS

BRAC often results in changes to the organizational structure of economic development agencies. Chambers of commerce, cities, counties, states, school districts, regional area councils of government (ACOG's) and clearinghouses, utilities, growth foundations, politically powerful "committees-of-fifty," and others accustomed to leading or collaborating on major recruitment/retention / expansion issues may have to rearrange their roles and responsibilities when a BRAC impact occurs.

BRAC FUNDING

As an example of the impact of war and emergency relief costs, the Air Force is \$1.8 billion short on funding to accomplish its BRAC objectives under the law. While senior officials pledge compliance with the law, they also admit that shortfalls like this create a massive problem, and an opportunity for innovative exchanges and other creative collaboration.

Economic development agencies may be wise to approach military departments with suggestions on accelerating BRAC actions, avoiding costs, sharing space, and enhancing missions. One idea to explore involves privatizing some of the operational aspects of base activities.

Fire stations are a good example of the kind of creative thinking that is needed. Most cities and counties already have fire departments within required distances of the inhabited portions of military installations which could cover the base if an agreement could be reached to do so. This action was taken at Brooks City-Base in San Antonio, Texas, and saved \$2 million in military operating expenses (largely salaries) without any significant cost to the community.

Exploring this approach further can disclose other methods of cutting military costs and may lead to even larger ideas for mutual benefit.

DEFERRED MAINTENANCE

Military facilities are often not maintained to commercial standards. At Brooks City-Base in San Antonio, Texas, a survey of 50 out of 200 total facilities (conducted by ISES Corp. of Atlanta) disclosed approximately



\$90 million in deferred maintenance which if not scheduled and budgeted for attention over the next few years could jeopardize the useful life of these assets. This could potentially result in premature expenses for demolition as well as the loss of rental revenue and functional space for tenants that are vital to the redevelopment agency.

This predicament is common to many public entities such as schools, libraries, parks, cities, counties, and states across the country. These entities will eventually reach the point of no return when the maintenance and renovation costs for aging structures exceed their value, at which time some form of tax or innovative public-private partnership will be needed for replacement facilities. Failing to find some creative financing solution, the next logical option may be consolidation with other cities, school districts, etc. This is not normally a desirable option.

DEAL MAKING HANDBOOK

In addition to the typical contents of a generic economic development "toolkit" of incentives, grants, etc., BRAC involves its own laws, policies, acronyms, and challenging complexities.

Economic development professionals who have not compiled a "dealbook" of BRAC-related techniques and mechanisms could benefit from doing so at the earliest convenience, engaging outside expertise as necessary.

Knowing about innovative mechanisms such as Partnership Intermediary Agreements (PIAs), Cooperative Research And Development Agreements (CRADAs), Joint Operating Agreements (JOAs), Facility Use Agreements (FUAs), Enhanced Use Leases (EULs), caretaker agreements, Military Construction (MilCon) exchanges, and

the broad “city-base” concept can be the difference between rapid economic adjustment to BRAC impacts or a painful struggle.

Communities’ leaders generally know how to recruit, retain, and expand employers, but when it comes to military installations, things are somewhat different. First of all, the Army, Navy, and Air Force are not typical prospects. They don’t even follow the same policies and practices, and wield enormous power through a network of contractors and retirees who have almost immediate and unlimited access (through so-called “committees-of-fifty”) to federal, state, and local decision makers.

Second, the BRAC process can be diabolically complex, beginning with the Surplus Personal Property Act of 1949 and then adding over 50 years of other related (and sometimes conflicting) laws, guidelines, and precedents.

Third, it is important to note that Congress rarely gets involved in traditional local economic development. In BRAC, Congress creates the laws, approves the list, empowers the Services to execute the plan, and then gets barraged by both sides when negotiations don’t go smoothly.

The following examples depict the spectrum of innovation that may be helpful to evaluate as part of an overall strategic economic development plan at each military base community.

- **A Partnership Intermediary Agreement (PIA)** can facilitate transfer of funds and information among military/civilian/governmental/academic agencies. This technique was used at Brooks City-Base to enable Air Force scientists to participate with teams from three universities in a study of disease characteristics in South Texas.
- **A Cooperative Research And Development Agreement (CRADA)** facilitates the exchange of research-related activities and materials. This mechanism has been used at the Indiana Army Ammunition Plant, Brooks City-Base, and many other installations where military missions have received services, shared expertise, scientific data, access to technology, or other benefits by collaborating with academic or private entities.
- **A Joint Operating Agreement (JOA)** approximates what private entities would call a “joint venture.” This device was used at Brooks City-Base in place of a standard commercial lease.
- **Facility Use Agreements (FUA)** enable non-military entities to use military space and equipment, and in some cases personnel. This mechanism has been used by the Army to attract commercial contractors to ammunition plants.
- **Enhanced Use Leases (EUL)** enable private developers and tenants to use military facilities. This mechanism was piloted by the Veterans Administration over 15 years ago, and is just gaining traction in the Dept. of Defense in the past three to four years.

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- **Caretaker agreements** allow military agencies to reimburse local communities for property management activities during the transition of military missions. K.I.Sawyer AFB in Michigan and Loring AFB in Maine received five years of caretaker funding at \$2-\$3 million per year due in part to the severity of winter weather impacts and remote locations.
- **Military Construction Program (“MilCon”)** exchanges are a new concept whereby public or private entities fund and build facilities and infrastructure in exchange for land and buildings which can be used for profitable commercial purposes. An example might be a military daycare center built and operated by a private sector developer inside a base, in exchange for highway frontage property along the edge of the base which is developed for a shopping center. The base gets a much-needed facility without “paying” directly or waiting for Congressional processes.
- **Special “efficient facilities initiative” legislation** enabled Brooks Air Force Base in San Antonio, to be completely “privatized” in one combined action – including utilities, streets, buildings, land, houses, and operating responsibility for an “active” military base. This legislation also allowed each Service Branch to have two more “city-bases,” but none volunteered due to complexity and fear of the unknown. Initially, Air Force officials thought they might “go to jail” for even trying such a sweeping and unprecedented approach, but after a year of Friday afternoon negotiations, the transaction closed in mid-2002, giving the Brooks Development Authority several years head start in preparing for BRAC impacts.

ENVIRONMENTAL

Environmental issues are some of the strongest forces in the base realignment and closure business. They affect timelines for all other actions, as well as reuse of land and structures, public perceptions, and an extensive list of legal and financial matters.

Some of the key environmental concepts with which economic development professionals should be familiar when dealing with BRAC actions include:

- Nature and extent of environmental issues at the base that are related to physical planning, infrastructure, cost, risk, disclosure, and perception of potential impact on tenants/users. Records about testing, accidents, and alleged incidents or conditions are often lacking.
- “Indemnification,” particularly what is called “Section 330” which assures military responsibility for environmental impacts. Note: “responsibility” may not actually ensure adequate funding or timely clean-up to desired standards.
- “Early transfer” is an innovative process by which the military conveys contaminated property and clean-up funding to the local community. Advantages can include speed for the community and potential cost savings for the military. Disadvantages can involve liability, insufficient funding, and potential future surprises. This crucial topic should be well understood by all stakeholders before promoting projects inside or outside the fence.

variety of methods for telling the positive story include how-to-do-business-at-the-base handbooks, site and floorplan drawings, websites, environmental reports, disclosures, utility information, incentives, zoning, surveys, and other information are essential elements in economic development.

Obtaining and converting this information to standard formats should be a priority activity, particularly for closing or downsizing installations that have underutilized property. It should even be a priority activity for active bases where innovative public/private collaboration may involve shared use of facilities with academic, business, scientific, medical, emergency management, law enforcement, public health, recreation, or other entities for mutually supportive purposes.

Promoting a BRAC site, or a BRAC-impacted community, involves the same activities as a typical real estate parcel, but in a more detailed scope. Since military installations have typically been “off limits” to the general public, and since many codes and regulations do not apply, it is understandable that tenants, investors, utility companies, and other stakeholders have heightened concerns about environmental issues, military timetables, property ownership issues, insurance, infrastructure capacity, facility condition, etc.



At K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base, “art-of-the-possible” attitudes resulted in a commercial airport, reuse of 1,600 housing units, several years of “caretaker” funding, multiple grants from the Economic Development Administration, and “base-of-the-year” honors in 1999.

MARKETING

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The job of the economic development agency is to disclose pertinent data, dispel fears, and bridge the communication gap between military and civilian entities. A

DECISION MAKING CRITERIA

The quest for jobs, revenue, speed, and pride is a challenging activity that requires strong leadership, clear objectives, constant vigilance, massive resources, and solid criteria for decision making. If political expediency, media attacks, threats by opponents, personal rivalries, or other adversarial forces become the reasons for action or inaction, then the chances for success diminish exponentially.

Carefully calculated and documented decision making guidelines, as well as communication processes that emphasize integrity, accuracy, full disclosure, shared risk and rewards, trust, and timely performance will help communities accomplish their BRAC goals.

Favorable leasing concessions for a host of special categories such as entrepreneurs, local start-ups, incubator tenants, non-profits, social service agencies, and large corporations, should be weighed against real-world requirements for sustaining revenue. One way of avoiding “give-aways” is to require that fair market value be paid by and to the public agencies involved.

At Brooks City-Base, both the Air Force and city of San Antonio (Brooks Development Authority wasn’t

formed until later) agreed to hire and accept the work of one appraiser, instead of the traditional adversarial approach where each party gets its own appraisal and then battles for years over discrepancies. By a joint decision to accept the work of one trusted Master Appraisal Institute-certified firm (Dugger Canaday of San Antonio), the process avoided protracted debate and potential lawsuits.

As is true in most economic development deals, decisions to emphasize cheap rent, speed, and unrealistic job creation goals at a BRAC base will almost certainly lead toward financial distress. Note: The term “rent” can be defined as the sum of all expenses including normal and reasonable costs, profit, and reserves. A public entity may decide to waive “profit,” but should establish policies and decision making criteria that ensure funding for all actual costs and reserves. This sounds logical, but is considerably elusive in practice, particularly under intense political and media pressure to “do the deal” and worry about paying the bills later!

JOBS

Economic development professionals understand the importance of accurate job projections. One of the classic challenges of BRAC involves promises and expectations about jobs – jobs to be added inside the fence, jobs to be indirectly generated outside the fence, jobs to be lost, jobs to be replaced, and of course the perception of “family sustaining” military related jobs vs “less desirable” service-sector jobs.

Public perceptions and media attention establish high expectations for employment opportunities, starting when the first BRAC lists are prepared. Elected officials often respond by escalating these numbers to even higher levels, without a thorough understanding of the financial and technical issues that must be addressed in order to reach even a fraction of the projections.

The result is a self-inflicted paradox of overzealous promises and underwhelming performance, which then adds stress and urgency to every step thereafter. If the community expects 5,000 new high-paying jobs in a year or two, and all the elected officials say that’s what will happen (or don’t deny that it will happen), then the stage is set for decades of media reminders that the community “failed” to accomplish its goals.

As is true in all economic development scenarios, it is wise to refrain from exaggerating or making premature promises about job numbers, salaries, benefits, and timing in BRAC situations.

CONSULTANTS AND DEVELOPERS

After more than 15 years of BRAC history, military and community leaders can find many experienced and innovative advisors who can help save time, cut costs, increase efficiency, improve quality of life, reduce risk, overcome obstacles, and capitalize on opportunities. The cost, while not insignificant, can often be easily justified by performance-based compensation formulas.

One creative option is to pay development related advisors in whole or in part with property rather than money. This would encourage actions which raise property value, integrate plans, solve infrastructure challenges, attract further investment, and avoid distractions and delays.

BUSINESS PLAN

One of the most important elements in BRAC planning and execution is a solid business plan that identifies all sources and uses of funds, by quarter for five to six years, or by month for two to three years. If this task proves too difficult to accomplish, decision makers should re-evaluate their roles and resources, and perhaps seek outside partners and advisors. Without the confidence and efficiency that comes from stable structure, measurable goals, defined resources, specific timelines, written decision criteria, and diligent monitoring systems, the chances of succeeding in a major BRAC action are dramatically reduced.

The business plan should include two key interconnected elements: a detailed spreadsheet and a geographic information system. A streamlined version of the 11-page spreadsheet done for the redevelopment of the closed K.I.Sawyer Air Force Base in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan

helped the County Board of Commissioners to see the effects of changing various assumptions and theories which were displayed instantaneously on a video screen. This enhanced the awareness of the challenges ahead.

By linking cells on a spreadsheet to coordinates on a map, and vice versa, decision makers can perform endless what-if analyses as conditions and forces evolve over many months and years.

In BRAC or in other large scale development projects, sophisticated interactive spreadsheets and a geographic information system are essential for anticipating and reacting to a variety of potential forces, both positive and negative!

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HEADLINES

BRAC is one of the most complex, long-term, and intensive experiences a community may face in 50 years. Positive media attention is crucial. Reporters who use sensational, misleading, and unclear wording in headlines and stories to attract more attention, do a great disservice to their communities. While demeaning and accusatory techniques may entertain a variety of chronic skeptics, well-intentioned critics, uninformed gossipers, and recreational obstructionists, they can also damage the credibility, image, and success of BRAC actions.

Business travelers, elected officials, and prospective employers/investors/developers see and hear these stories. The frequency, tone, and cumulative effect of media stories, and particularly headlines, can create a positive force in a community, or an embarrassing cloud of ridicule and self-destructive perceptions. This is especially true of BRAC actions, which unlike a normal economic development deal, garner more frequent and sustained attention due to the high-stakes long-term process.

In some cases it may be appropriate to utilize informal media “background” briefings, coaching, assignment of specific reporters/headline writers, regular editorial board meetings, and other methods of ensuring balanced, unemotional, and proud coverage of the exceedingly demanding process of BRAC.

SUMMARY

Military bases rival almost any other economic development activity for technical complexity, demands on resources, and high-visibility impact on the community over many decades. Whether the community gains or loses jobs as a result, BRAC involves extraordinary challenges and a whole new acronym-filled process.

Communities that combine a sophisticated business plan, a creative art-of-the-possible deal making attitude, intensive networking with peers, careful selection of boards and staffs and consultants, and support from elected officials and the media will be well on the path to efficiency and success. 🌐

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