

East and South Vancouver Barracks Draft Master Plan and Environmental Assessment

Fort Vancouver National Historic Site Clark County, Washington

December 2011

This *East and South Vancouver Barracks Draft Master Plan and Environmental Assessment* describes and analyzes four alternatives for managing the East and South Vancouver Barracks. The East and South Vancouver Barracks are being relinquished from the Department of Defense, U.S. Army, to the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, through the Base Realignment and Closure process and through previous legislation. This *East and South Barracks Draft Master Plan and Environmental Assessment* will help managers make decisions about managing cultural and natural resources, rehabilitation of the structures, and potential leasing options for the property for the next 20 years. Some issues to be addressed are how to manage and preserve the varied cultural resources within the property, including the Hudson's Bay Company Cemetery, archaeological sites and cultural landscapes pertaining to the Hudson's Bay Company and the U.S. Army, and the twenty historic structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places; how to establish a vision for the rehabilitation and public use of the East and South Barracks; and to recommend new uses and activities for the site that are compatible with the NPS mission, the purpose and significance of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site and the Vancouver National Historic Reserve, and the character and needs of the surrounding community and region.

Alternative A, the no-action alternative, describes how the National Park Service would manage the Barracks according to the *Fort Vancouver National Historic Site General Management Plan* (2003) and other relevant policies. Primary land uses would be NPS administrative, maintenance and storage functions with buildings occupied by the National Park Service and Vancouver National Historic Reserve partners. The National Park Service would not actively seek additional tenants.

The three "action" alternatives describe various approaches to managing these new resources.

Alternative B, *A Vibrant, Urban District in a Historic Setting*, would focus on creating a vibrant urban district in the East and South Barracks to complement downtown Vancouver and the surrounding community with a variety of land uses, including retail, office, and residential. The primary land uses would be NPS administrative, maintenance, storage, and curatorial functions as well as a mix of offices, businesses, shops, restaurants, art galleries, and residences for the general public. There would be a heavy emphasis on commercial uses (restaurant, office, etc.).

Alternative C, *A Sustainable, Historic Campus for Public Service (Preferred Alternative)* would create a dynamic, sustainable public service campus where the multi-layered history of the East and South Barracks is preserved and interpreted. This would be accomplished through long-term leases with public agencies to adaptively reuse the existing structures. Primary land uses would be National Park Service and other public agencies' administrative, maintenance, storage, and curatorial functions as well as a mix of offices, businesses, shops, and restaurants.

Alternative D, *A Historic, Educational Campus for All* places a heavy focus on educational, community and nonprofit uses that support the focused interpretation of site-specific history, including Hudson's Bay Company history (1829-1860) south of East 5th Street and U.S. Army history (1901-1948) north of East 5th Street. Buildings would be rehabilitated to serve as offices, classrooms, community spaces and a limited amount of complementary commercial services.

Notes to Reviewers and Respondents

If you wish to comment on the *East and South Vancouver Barracks Draft Master Plan and Environmental Assessment*, you may submit comments to the addresses below.

Individual respondents may request that we withhold their personal information from the record, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law. If you want us to withhold your name and address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. We will make all submissions from organizations and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

Reviewers may submit comments in the following ways:

Online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/fova> (preferred)

Mail to:

Fort Vancouver National Historic Site

Attn: East and South Vancouver Barracks Draft Master Plan and Environmental Assessment

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Acronyms Used in this Document

ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
BMP	Best Management Practices
BNSF	Burlington Northern Santa Fe
BRAC	Base Realignment and Closure
CCC	Civilian Conservation Corps
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CRC	Columbia River Crossing
CRV	Current Replacement Value
C-TRAN	Clark County Transit Benefit Area Authority
DAHP	Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
HBC	Hudson's Bay Company
IDT	Interdisciplinary Team
ITE	Institute of Transportation Engineers
LOS	Level of Service
MASH	Mobile Army Surgical Hospital
MMRP	Military Munitions Response Program
MPH	Miles Per Hour
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAGPRA	Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation
NCRI	Northwest Cultural Resources Institute
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NHS	National Historic Site
NPS	National Park Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
PM	Particulate Matter
REC	Recognized Environmental Conditions
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
TCFO	Total Cost of Facility Ownership
VNHR	Vancouver National Historic Reserve
WSDOT	Washington Department of Transportation

Plan Summary

Located at an early terminus of the historic Oregon Trail, the East and South Vancouver Barracks represent critical aspects of the history of settling the Pacific Northwest and the United States. The site's resources tell nationally significant stories about American Indian history and culture, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), and more than 160 years of continuous U.S. military occupation.

In 2011, the U.S. Army will deed ownership of the East and South Barracks to the National Park Service (NPS). This change will effectively end the longstanding military presence at the Vancouver Barracks, which was the first major U.S. Army post in the Pacific Northwest. At this important moment in the ongoing history of the site, the National Park Service must carefully plan for the preservation and reuse of the East and South Vancouver Barracks as part of an urban national park site.

Purpose of the Plan

Established planning documents provide general guidance for the reuse of the Vancouver Barracks. Yet prior to this *East and South Barracks Draft Master Plan and Environmental Assessment (Environmental Assessment)*, no other document reports specific management direction for the East and South Barracks – including the reuse of its buildings for public or other functions and direction for site design and development. The purpose of the *Environmental Assessment* is to collaborate with partners, other agencies, and the community in order to:

- establish a comprehensive vision for the rehabilitation and public use of the East and South Barracks,
- determine clear direction for future site design and development, and
- recommend new uses and activities for the site and its buildings that are compatible with the National Park Service mission, the purpose and significance of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, the mission and goals of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve (VNHR), and the character and needs of the surrounding community and region.

This *Environmental Assessment* is intended to be flexible, offering future managers the background and direction necessary to make knowledgeable decisions about how best to implement the spirit of this plan.

Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Adaptive reuse strategies in previously approved plans such as the *Cooperative Management Plan for the Historic Reserve* (2000) and the *Fort Vancouver National Historic Site General Management Plan* (2003) will be adhered to. These strategies are in keeping with Federal Management Regulations (41 CFR 102-79.55), which in part state, “Federal agencies must assume responsibility for the preservation of the historic properties they own or control. Prior to acquiring, constructing or leasing buildings, agencies must use, to the maximum extent feasible, historic properties already owned or leased by the agency.”
- The National Park Service will assume and retain ownership of all structures and properties within the East and South Barracks. The National Park Service will also maintain the buildings it occupies, as well as the HBC Cemetery grounds.

- The National Park Service will retain final approving authority for proposed reuse and tenant improvements for all barracks buildings and grounds.
- Certain National Park Service functions will be relocated to the East or South Barracks under all alternatives and include administration, maintenance, and storage. Park administrative headquarters would likely be relocated to one of the four Parade Ground buildings, and NPS storage and maintenance functions would be relocated to suitable locations in the East or South Barracks.
- All alternatives would have an increased level of visitor access and use. Some degree of interpretation will also be provided consistent with established goals and themes in the *2004 Long-Range Interpretive Plan* and other guidance.
- The National Park Service would actively pursue opportunities to reduce resource consumption and improve the efficiency of building and landscape systems within the East and South Barracks. Techniques such as rainwater collection, renewable energy generation, water and energy conservation, and incentives to encourage healthy activity, public transportation, and waste reduction would be implemented.
- Site improvements would be consistent with the City of Vancouver's Historic Reserve Conservation District ordinance.
- To the greatest extent possible, site improvements and building rehabilitation would accommodate all people and abilities without the need for individual adaptation. For example, improvements such as accessible parking, loading zones, fire access, elevators, ramps, and other modifications would be made in accordance with the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards and the Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas.
- The National Park Service would assume principal responsibility for maintenance and interpretation of the HBC Cemetery grounds and adhere to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act and all other applicable laws and best practices with respect to historic preservation and government-to-government consultations on American Indian and Native Hawaiian burials and human remains. The erection of new buildings would not be considered within the boundaries of the HBC Cemetery grounds.
- Current visitor parking at Fort Vancouver will be reduced to only a few, accessible spaces and drop-off. Primary parking for Fort visitors would be relocated either to the East or South Barracks. In place of existing parking, the cultural landscape would be restored, potentially incorporating an expanded HBC Garden and Orchard.
- The National Park Service would continue to foster public and private partnerships, which are critical in the management and improvement of the park and NPS staff would also encourage new partnerships as opportunities arise.
- Vegetated screening for parking and maintenance areas in the South Barracks will be planted.
- Building 409 (flammable materials storage) would be demolished.
- Tenant improvements to the buildings and grounds would occur.

Actions Common to All Action Alternatives

- The park boundary would be adjusted to include Fort Vancouver Way so that the National Park Service would own and be responsible for the Hudson's Bay Company Cemetery grounds.

- Infrastructure upgrades would occur, utility lines would be buried underground, and landscaping would be installed strategically throughout the site. Sustainable stormwater improvements would be constructed that are compatible with the cultural landscape.
- Building 405, an Aircraft Maintenance Building, would be rehabilitated for use as a regional museum management facility; building 704, an office building, would be reused as retail (café or convenience); building 721, an Auditorium, would be an arts/events/community space; building 754, a Quartermaster Storehouse, would remain retail (potentially existing Post Exchange); building 991, a Double Infantry Barracks, would be mixed use: office and arts/event/community space.
- The overall cultural landscape would be rehabilitated; methods vary by alternative. Asphalt would be reduced where feasible.
- Interpretive exhibits would be encouraged in rehabilitated historic buildings to relate military and American Indian history.
- Throughout the site, circulation for pedestrians and motorists would be enhanced over time to create a welcoming, safe, and sustainable environment. Paving, barricades and fences would be removed, sidewalks would be repaired and extended, trails added, certain internal roads would be redesigned and way finding would be improved.
- New construction would occur, such as plazas, site furnishings, outdoor gathering areas and/or small-scale historic reconstructions of military features; the extent varies by alternative.
- Increased public access to archeological digs would be provided.
- National Park Service staffing levels would increase to accommodate expanded operations and needs. Numbers and types of positions vary by alternative.

Alternatives Considered

This *Environmental Assessment* analyzed four alternatives. Brief summaries are below; more detailed descriptions of the alternatives can be found in Chapter 2.

Alternative A, The Extension of Current Management Practices in the East and South Barracks (No Action Alternative)

This alternative describes current conditions and the application of current management practices to the East and South Barracks. Under the no action alternative, the National Park Service would manage the barracks according to the *Fort Vancouver National Historic Site General Management Plan* (2003) and other relevant policies. The primary land use would be for National Park Service administrative, maintenance and storage functions and buildings would be occupied by the National Park Service and VNHR partners. The National Park Service would not actively seek additional tenants. National Park Service and Fort Vancouver National Trust administrative offices would be relocated to building 991 along the Parade Ground. The HBC cultural landscape restoration would include reconstruction of the Summer House, restoration of the Orchard (south of building 422), relocate Fort visitor parking to the East Barracks, restore the historic U.S. Army period Maple Allée in the South Barracks, and preserve, rehabilitate and interpret the military landscape north of East 5th Street. Visitor access to the buildings and grounds would be somewhat increased, but there would be few new visitor services or amenities. Pending additional consultation as needed, building 409 would be removed. No substantial changes would be made to the appearance of the barracks and no major rehabilitation efforts would be undertaken.

Alternative B, A Vibrant, Urban District in a Historic Setting

Alternative B would focus on creating a vibrant urban district in the East and South Barracks to complement downtown Vancouver and the surrounding community with a variety of land uses, including retail, office, and residential. The primary land uses would be NPS administrative, maintenance, storage, and curatorial functions as well as a mix of offices, businesses, shops, restaurants, art galleries, and residences for the general public. There would be a heavy emphasis on commercial uses (restaurant, office etc.). National Park Service headquarters, costume storage and other administrative uses would be relocated to building 993 along the Parade Ground. Building 402 in the South Barracks would be the primary NPS maintenance facility and building 401 would be used for NPS maintenance and storage. Building 405 would be rehabilitated as a regional museum management facility, and building 991 would be rehabilitated for partners and special events. Pending additional consultation as needed, two contributing historic structures (buildings 749 and 750) and three noncontributing structures (buildings 409, 710, and 787) would be removed.

The cultural landscape rehabilitation would include enhancing access and improving vehicular and pedestrian circulation, establishment of lush, ornamental plantings, and updates to interpretive signage as needed. There would be a distinct emphasis on visitor appeal. The HBC cultural landscape restoration would be the same as alternative A, except that the Summer House would not be reconstructed, and a new interpretive loop trail would be restored through the historic Maple Allée. The barracks would have new features such as shuttle stops, crosswalks, plazas, lighting, trees, ornamental vegetation, etc. Roads, parking, and circulation would be redesigned for the new uses and to improve circulation, safety, drainage and appearance. Sidewalks would be repaired and extended to connect the barracks, the city of Vancouver, and the rest of the VNHR. Fleet parking would be provided in the South Barracks and some additional small surface lots could be constructed in the East Barracks. The new Fort visitor parking lot would be located east of building 405 in the South Barracks.

Alternative C, A Sustainable, Historic Campus for Public Service (Preferred Alternative)

The primary intent of this preferred alternative would be to create a dynamic, sustainable public service campus where the multi-layered history of the East and South Barracks is preserved and interpreted. Headquarters for Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, other NPS administrative uses, and certain interpretive functions would be relocated to either building 991, and/or 993, both of which are located along the historic Parade Ground. Buildings 400 and 401 in the South Barracks would be retained for NPS maintenance use and storage. Building 753 may also be used for NPS maintenance storage. Building 405 would be rehabilitated as a regional museum management facility for the National Park Service, partners, and the public. Other buildings would be available for use by VNHR partners and other public agencies and organizations with missions that are compatible with that of the National Park Service. Other uses would include retail and nonprofit functions.

Cultural landscape rehabilitation would be extensive. In addition to the actions in alternative B, the National Park Service would remove the gravel lot on the HBC Cemetery, and, pending additional consultation as needed, building 422 would be removed in order to extend historic HBC features such as the Garden, Summer House, Orchard and the U.S. Army period Maple Allée into the South Barracks. The cultural landscape restoration may be expanded to include reconstruction of historic cabins and topographical features in the western portion of the South Barracks reflective of the historic HBC Village. The plant palette would emphasize historic species that are also water wise, as well as some compatible natives. The emphasis on depicting/interpreting historic

conditions would focus on HBC history south of East 5th Street and early/late U.S Army history in the East Barracks.

Alternative D, A Historic, Educational Campus for All

This alternative places a heavy focus on educational, community and nonprofit uses that support the focused interpretation of site-specific history, including HBC history (1829-1860) south of East 5th Street and U.S. Army history north of East 5th Street (1901-1948). Buildings would be rehabilitated to serve as offices, classrooms, community spaces and a limited amount of complementary commercial services.

As in alternative C, park headquarters, NPS costume storage, and other NPS administrative uses would be relocated to building 993. A portion of building 993 would also be devoted to the interpretation of early military history. Building 404 would become the primary NPS maintenance facility, and other South Barracks buildings may be retained for associated NPS maintenance use and storage. Buildings 749, 750, 753, and 787 would also be retained for these purposes. Building 405 would be rehabilitated as a regional museum management facility.

Building 991 could be reserved and rehabilitated for Fort Vancouver National Trust offices, as well as for special events. Buildings 400 and 402 could be reserved for maintenance or storage use by the Fort Vancouver National Trust or other partners. Pending additional consultation as needed, one contributing historic structure (building 422) and four noncontributing structures (buildings 401, 409, 410, and 710) would be removed.

In the other buildings, the National Park Service would encourage uses such as classrooms, offices, and community spaces through partnerships and other arrangements with educational institutions, nonprofits, and community organizations. Limited commercial services would also be allowed that support the primary functions of the site, such as a café, art gallery, or other functions. Overnight accommodations would be provided to support conferences, educational field schools, school groups, and elder hostel groups. General residential use by the public is not anticipated under this alternative.

Major objectives of landscape rehabilitation would include the depiction and interpretation of historic conditions, with a focus on HBC history south of East 5th Street, and early-to-late U.S. Army history in the East Barracks. Non-historic Douglas-firs along the southern edge of the Parade Ground would be removed to restore open views of building facades across the Parade Ground. Throughout the East and South Barracks, the plant palette would include historic species only. Cultural landscape restoration would include full restoration of the HBC Orchard and Garden to their full extents, as well as reconstruction of the Summer House. The Orchard and Garden would extend north to East 5th Street and encompass the area extending east from building 405 to the existing garden north of the reconstructed Fort Vancouver stockade. Landscape rehabilitation may be expanded to include reconstruction of historic cabins and topographical features west of building 405 in the South Barracks that are reflective of the historic HBC Village. Interpretation of the historic “Crossroads of the Pacific Northwest” would be provided at the former Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) site, along with parking for visitors to Fort Vancouver. Historic maps of the HBC and U.S. Army period both show a major intersection of historic roads, generally where East 5th Street and Alvord Road meet with Fort Vancouver Way. It appears that this intersection was in place at least by the early 1840s, and possibly as early as 1829. This intersection helped to define the landscape of the HBC and the U.S. Army, and it is suggested that its importance could be demonstrated by interpreting it as

the “Crossroads of the Pacific Northwest.” Fleet parking would be limited to the westernmost portion of the South Barracks to accommodate expanded restoration of the HBC Village.

Environmental Consequences

This *Environmental Assessment* also addresses the likely impacts of implementing each of the alternatives on historic structures; cultural landscapes and vegetation; archeological resources; museum collections; air quality and climate change; visitor resources; socioeconomic factors and land use; park operations; and health, safety and the environment.

The action alternatives are expected to have negligible to moderate adverse impacts on historic structures, and the no action alternative could have moderate to major impacts due to neglect of the historic buildings. Beneficial effects are expected from the rehabilitation of the various cultural landscapes, and negligible to moderate adverse impacts to cultural landscapes could result from the rehabilitation of buildings, removal of structures, landscape treatment actions, and the cultural landscape restoration itself. The no action alternative would have minor adverse impacts to archeological resources and the action alternatives will also have minor adverse impacts from ground disturbance, and potentially moderate adverse cumulative impacts when combined with the Columbia River Crossing (CRC) project. Impacts to museum collections would be moderate to major adverse with no action due to the lack of a new museum management facility, and beneficial to negligible with the action alternatives.

There could be negligible to moderate adverse effects to air quality due to increases in emissions from increased traffic to and within the barracks. Adverse impacts to traffic and circulation patterns and parking could be negligible to moderate. Beneficial effects are anticipated for the socioeconomic climate from the potential increase in jobs, increased spending, and available space for leasing; minor adverse effects to the local real estate market could also result because the additional properties on the market could compete with existing buildings. Beneficial effects to park operations would result from relocating National Park Service functions, development of a museum management facility, and improved infrastructure. Negligible to moderate adverse impacts to park operations are expected due to the additional staff needs, responsibilities and operating costs. Effects to public health and safety would be beneficial or negligible. There will be many benefits to visitors with only short-term adverse impacts during construction.

Numerous mitigation measures are included in the *Environmental Assessment* to help reduce impacts and protect resources. None of the adverse impacts would be extensive, or severe enough to result in impairment of value or resources on National Park Service lands.

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