

# Master plan for Fort Belvoir stalled amid uncertainty

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It's been 14 years since Fort Belvoir last updated its master plan, a sweeping blueprint that maps how best to use the base's sprawling 8,600 acres. Now the long-delayed rewrite, part of a \$60 million planning effort at the southern Fairfax military base, again has been held up.

Officials had predicted the plan would be complete in May. But the same issue that delayed the update in 2005 is blamed for this year's seven-month slippage: Base Realignment and Closure, or BRAC.

The nationwide shift of military personnel is scheduled to bring 19,000 workers to Belvoir. Recent changes to those orders have altered the number and location of the jobs and have complicated the

planning effort.

Two companies — Orlando, Fla.-based PBS&J and Skidmore, Owings & Merrill of Chicago — were contracted to plan the BRAC move and the master-plan update.

Belvoir spokesman Don Carr said the plan should be finished in January.

The delay, he said, comes from the base's need to "exercise due caution to make sure we didn't end up doing something that would fail to take into account the BRAC considerations."

Originally, 22,000 jobs were headed to the base by 2011, with about 18,000 to be placed on the 800-acre Engineer Proving Ground off Interstate 95 and the rest on the main post to the south. After an outcry from local officials and members of Congress who said the placement would bring massive gridlock, the Army agreed this summer to halve the number of employees moving

to the proving ground and place the others elsewhere. The Army in August then cut 3,000 from the total number.

Now, the destination of 6,200 Washington Headquarters Services workers could be any of nine locations. The Army is considering two sites — the Victory Center in Alexandria and a tract of federal warehouses in Springfield. Seven groups also have submitted proposals to house the workers, according to the Army.

Carr said master plans typically should be updated every three to five years. The base had set to update its plan in 2003, but those efforts were dashed when Congress passed the round of base realignments two years later.

"We were about 85 percent complete with a much-needed update when BRAC hit," he said. "And all of that was put on hold."

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