

FORT ORD REUSE AUTHORITY BOARD REPORT

BUSINESS ITEMS

Subject:	UC Monterey Bay Education Science and Technology Center Status	
Meeting Date:	May 12, 2017	INFORMATION
Agenda Number:	8a	

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive a University of California Monterey Bay Education Science and Technology (UCMBEST) Status Report.

BACKGROUND:

In 1994 the University of California (UC) obtained approximately 1,000 acres of Fort Ord land, approximately 600 acres for habitat conservation, and 400 acres to provide research and development opportunities associated with the UCMBEST Center, which was to be managed by the UC Santa Cruz (UCSC) campus. Despite high aspirations, market demand for the Center has failed to meet expectations. Over the course of the last fifteen years, UC engaged in two unsuccessful attempts to partner with a master developer. The UCSC Campus has managed the property for more than 20 years.

UCSC Chancellor George Blumenthal announced in March 2010 that UC intended to shrink the footprint of the Center and consider alternative uses for peripheral lands. In response to a request from Congressman Sam Farr, a group of stakeholders was assembled to discuss and make recommendations regarding a future vision for UCMBEST Center lands. UCSC and the Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA) hosted a series of facilitated stakeholder meetings. Stakeholder recommendations from that effort are summarized in the 2011 UCMBEST Center Visioning Process Report (<http://bit.ly/1SBPITt>), and memorialized in a letter executed by stakeholders. Stakeholders agreed on the following intended outcomes:

- UC's presence continues to be valued. Stakeholders recommend that UC retain control of the UCMBEST Center;
- The local institutions of higher education (and potentially others) should be invited to join an advisory group to help guide the UCMBEST Center;
- UC to actively seek new UCMBEST Center tenants and work to streamline the approval process;
- UC peripheral lands may be used in the near term for economic development opportunities; and
- UC may be expected to retain and utilize reasonable revenues for development.

Next steps outlined in the 2011 Report include:

- 1) Convene a special Working Group meeting to explore potential federal initiatives;
- 2) Convene a meeting between UCSC and CSUMB to explore Eighth Street parcel uses;
- 3) Invite local higher education institutions to collaborate in supporting UCSC development of the UCMBEST Center and to establish a process for expanding the range of potential research uses;
- 4) Seek funding for entitlements and additional water resources; and
- 5) Complete entitlements.

While many of the recommendations above remain valid, continued lack of progress at the UCMBEST project area has repeatedly raised Board and community concerns. Recently, following Board direction, the strengthening of Monterey County Economic Development staffing, and the hiring of a new FORA Economic Development Coordinator, efforts have renewed to catalyze reuse activity at UCMBEST. To this end a series of meetings were held in the fall of 2015 culminating with an Executive-level meeting at UCSC on December 22, 2015.

FORA staff and Board representatives met again with UC Santa Cruz representatives on 2/11/16, 3/4/16, and 3/17/16 to define paths forward including drafting a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on collaboration including establishment of a staff-level UCMBEST Working Group. Subsequently, UCSC presented at the March 11, 2016 FORA Board meeting to present the current UCMBEST project status and clarify their commitments to moving the project forward. The MOA was formally completed at the July 8, 2016 FORA Board meeting. Since then, bi-weekly status calls with UC Santa Cruz and Monterey County representatives have continued with the MOA collaboration and new development interests as the main focus.

Vice Chancellor Scott Brandt provided a UCSC-UCMBEST Status Report at the November 14, 2016 Board meeting. Since then Mr. Metz has continued to represent FORA in bi-weekly status update calls with UC Santa Cruz and Monterey County representatives. An executive level meeting with Chancellor Blumenthal and the UCSC team with Supervisor Potter, Supervisor Phillips, Mr. Houlemard, Mr. Spaur and Mr. Metz was held at UCSC on Dec 12, 2016. The outcome of this meeting was an acknowledgement of the 2016 progress and commitment to build on the momentum during the year ahead. In particular, discussion focused on a planned near-term auction of West Campus parcels, as well as potential mixed-use development including job generating and affordable housing on the East Campus. Staff was directed to further develop these initiatives, schedule future meetings to include additional County and FORA representatives and report back at a planned spring 2017 meeting.

DISCUSSION:

Efforts to advance the UCMBEST property to active use have continued. UCMBEST and FORA representatives supported the City of Marina staff in conducting a joint City Council/Planning Commission special meeting focused on the UCMBEST/Airport Specific Plan. UC staff is working with broker contractors to advance its West Campus Parcels to public auction in May 2017. County, FORA, City of Marina, MCWD, and UC staff are supporting recruitment of an out-of-state company through the Governors Office of Economic Development. Each of these efforts has the potential to catalyze long-planned economic development and jobs growth at the UCMBEST properties.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Reviewed by FORA Controller .

Staff time for this item is in the approved annual budget.

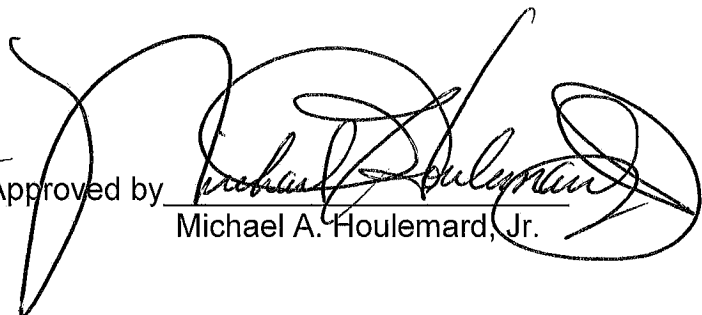
COORDINATION:

UCSC and Administrative Committee

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Approved by


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