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Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno Marks a New Day for Fort Monmouth

Thursday, May 17, 2012

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Agreement with Army Paves the Way for State to Reclaim and Revitalize Region

Trenton, NJ – Today, the State of New Jersey took an historic step forward in the redevelopment of Fort Monmouth with the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) transferring the Fort Monmouth property from the U.S. Army to the Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Authority (FMERA). Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno, FMERA Board Chairman James V. Gorman and Paul Cramer, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Army, participated in the signing ceremony held in Gibbs Hall.

Totaling over 1,100 acres and spanning the municipalities of Eatontown, Oceanport and Tinton Falls, Fort Monmouth served as the center for development of communications, computers, intelligence and reconnaissance for the U.S. Army for more than 90 years. Today's signing ceremony comes seven years after the post was selected for closure by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission. Fort Monmouth performed its final daily retreat ceremony as an active army installation last September.

"Fort Monmouth has been an important part of the historical and economic foundation of Monmouth County and New Jersey, and today we are reclaiming it as a new source of jobs, investment and community pride," said Lt. Governor Guadagno. "The Governor and I may not have had a say in the closing of the base, but we are committed to recreating this area as a thriving hub of innovation and job creation, and a destination for families and businesses."

In August 2010, Governor Chris Christie signed into law the "Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Authority Act," creating FMERA and charging it with advancing the Reuse and Redevelopment Plan authored by FMERA's predecessor agency, the Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Planning Authority. The essential component of the initial redevelopment effort is the transfer of property from the Army to FMERA, which takes place through the Economic Development Conveyance (EDC) agreement. The MOA signed today was approved by the FMERA Board at its April 24 public meeting and is the overarching agreement between the Army and FMERA, which lays out the process by which the former Fort property will be transferred to FMERA.

Mr. L. Jerry Hansen, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy, and Environment, stated: "Conveying property to support job creation is a goal we all share; despite that, negotiating a mutually acceptable position entails a lot of hard work. But it is absolutely necessary in order to promote local and regional economic recovery. Today's ceremony is a major milestone, but not the end of the process. The Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) must still review the EDC application, including today's MOA but hopefully that will be completed expeditiously. The US Army has had a mutually supportive relationship with the communities in Monmouth County for a very long time. We believe the conveyance process outlined in this agreement will facilitate a win-win solution and serve as a catalyst for both job creation and economic renewal."

FMERA has led an extensive negotiation process with the Army to establish the terms of the MOA, which sets forth a two-phased process for the property transfer. Phase 1 consists of Charles Wood, and three parcels from the Main Post, to be transferred to FMERA by February 1, 2013. Phase 1 parcels include the Golf Course, Howard Commons, Marina, Clinic parcel, Parcel E, Parcel F, Parcel C, Parcel C1 and Parcel B, totaling just over 600 acres. Phase 2 would include the balance of the Main Post, which will be transferred to FMERA at a time that has not yet been finalized by the U.S. Army.

"The FMERA Board has focused on three main priorities – jobs, jobs and jobs. Today, we are one step closer to achieving this objective," FMERA Board Chairman James V. Gorman said. "We have already made great strides, and as we continue to move forward, the Board remains committed to carrying out FMERA's mission to create an atmosphere in which employers will employ and investors will invest, to maximize the jobs created and the value of the property."

Leading up to the signing of the MOA, FMERA marked significant achievements as it worked to attract investors, developers and employers to the property. The Board has approved FMERA's continuing negotiations with AcuteCare, a company that would create 200 new jobs and invest an estimated \$15 million to renovate a facility on the 16-acre former Clinic Parcel in Oceanport. AcuteCare's new facility would offer improved medical services to the community, including the elderly, veterans and other patients in need. The Board also approved FMERA entering into exclusive negotiations with CommVault, a leading data management software company that would construct a new, 650,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art headquarters on Parcel E in Tinton Falls that would house an estimated 2,500 employees

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once it is fully built out. In addition, last September, Chairman Gorman announced the reopening of the Suneagles Golf Course which had temporarily closed while a lease was executed between the U.S. Army and FMERA.

Led by Chairman Gorman, FMERA Board members include EDA Chairman Alfred Koepp, Governor's Authorities Unit Director Regina Egea, Monmouth County Freeholder Lillian Burry, Eatontown Mayor Gerald Tarantolo, Oceanport Mayor Michael Mahon, Tinton Falls Mayor Michael Skudera, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Commissioner Richard E. Constable III, Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Bob Martin, New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development Commissioner Harold Wirths, New Jersey Department of Transportation Commissioner James Simpson, and Public Member Dr. Robert Lucky.

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (EDA) staffs FMERA, which currently has eight employees working out of an office in Eatontown. In November 2011, Bruce Steadman was selected to serve as FMERA's Executive Director. Steadman previously served as the President and CEO of the Plattsburgh Air Base Redevelopment Corporation, where he led and managed the redevelopment of the former Plattsburgh Air Force Base in New York.

For more information on FMERA and the Fort Monmouth Reuse and Redevelopment Plan, visit www.fortmonmouthredevelopment.com.

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