



FORT ORD REUSE AUTHORITY

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MEDIA RELEASE

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JOSH METZ APPOINTED FORA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

Josh Metz has been appointed the new economic development coordinator for the Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA). Over the next two years, he will focus on business creation and land use opportunities on former Fort Ord lands. He will establish a single-point data resource system to assist cities and the counties in economic development planning, attracting new businesses, and helping existing businesses with new opportunities or expansions.

Michael Houlemard, FORA's Executive Officer, says "Josh brings extraordinary skills and an understanding of community needs to the job. His academic preparation, combined public and private sector background, and institutional knowledge as a FORA employee made him an ideal leader for the FORA Economic Development program."

Since 2013, Metz has served as FORA senior planner. He previously owned companies in environmental planning, information services, and communication for wine, tourism, arts, and environmental sectors. Metz also served as general manager and director of sales and business development for other start-ups and small businesses. He holds a Bachelor degree in Environmental Science and a Master degree in Landscape Architecture.

When Fort Ord closed, communities in the tri-county region lost jobs, revenues, and residents. Due to significant loss of revenue, local jurisdictions experienced difficulty in maintaining services and addressing emerging and future needs. Many businesses struggled to recover from the economic losses, and a number of smaller businesses were simply forced to close their doors.

Local communities in the region joined together and created the Fort Ord Base Reuse Plan (BRP), which has continued to guide economic recovery for the region. The BRP identified three key components for reuse of the 28,000 acres formerly known as Fort Ord: *Education, Environment, and the Economy*.

CSU-Monterey Bay, Monterey Peninsula College, and UC Santa Cruz became the foundation for addressing the *Educational* component in the recovery process. Preservation of 18,000+ acres of open space and habitat protection, now the Fort Ord National Monument, significantly advanced the *Environmental* component. The *Economic Development* component is still to be fully realized and is an increased focus of FORA recovery activity.

"In reality, economic development/job creation has always been at the heart of FORA's activities," Metz says. "The work to-date in planning, cleanup, land transfers, and coordination with partner jurisdictions has significantly contributed to preparing for new business and job growth in our region, as well as new access to recreational and open space areas for residents and visitors."

"Good planning helps meet the needs of today and considers how current actions may impact the needs of the future," Metz notes. "Jurisdictions are responsible for determining how to use areas within their boundaries and I will be a "one-stop" information resource to assist in development and implementation of their plans. Former Fort Ord's location in the world-famous Monterey Bay region, adjacent to the Salad Bowl of the World, the Language Capital of the World, Wine Country, and Big Sur provides a foundation for dynamic economic opportunity and jobs for generations to come."

Josh Metz can be reached at (831) 883-3672 or via email at josh@fora.org. For more information about FORA, please visit the FORA website at www.fora.org.

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