



## *“Balancing the Needs of the People With the Care of the Environment.”*

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November 17, 2014  
Fort Ord Reuse Authority-FORA  
920 Second Avenue, Suite A  
Marina, CA 93933



Re: “FORA Oks \$100k for economic Work.”

Dear All FORA Board Members,

During the most recent FOR A Board meeting, Friday November 14, 2014, the FORA Board voted to give \$100, 000 to a new non-profit organization that works in economic development. The Monterey Bay Economic Partnership, was incorporated in June of 2014 and is a regionally-based effort formed by the Monterey County Business council. Whereas, more experienced non-profit organizations, such as the Fort Ord Environmental Justice Network has successfully and continually been working towards better environmental policies and bridging the immense gap between the (local) politicians and the public they represent, and doing so for more than twenty years. There was not any public knowledge or awareness that such an extensive financial opportunity was available for local non-profit organization. As such, this office was neither contacted nor made aware of any financial opportunities, nor of the guidelines to be considered among other local, well established non-profit organizations.

We understand that the Monterey Bay Economic Partnership is working with businesses to possibly move their companies to our local and surrounding areas. Thus the possibility of improving our local economy as well the possibility of offering and proving employment on a local level to local residents. However, the FORA Board, Fort Ord Reuse Authority, was established to oversee and support local communities and is central to local-jurisdiction based educational reuse, environmental protection and conservation. Including, reestablishing and the reuse of the former Fort Ord military base. Primarily, FORA is responsible for overseeing the clean-up efforts, munitions site safety, reuse housing development and the environment. In turn, the Fort Ord Environmental Justice Network predominately fights towards a better environment and ensuring that past and/or current contamination is properly disposed of to protect against future health risks/issues. Having stated that, the FOR A Board itself was not able to unanimously vote for, yet were split on the *hiring* of an “*untested*” non-profit organization. Why wouldn’t FOR A, a local agency, hand over such a substantial amount of money to a brand new non-profit organization, versus selecting an already well known, well established and accomplished non-profit? A non-profit that is run by a staff that has been born and raised on the Monterey Peninsula, worked on Fort Ord, and for the military, has lived on Fort Ord and has been involved with the reuse project in its entirety.

If, “*we want to compete on a national level,*” we need to value the opinions of the actual local residents that are affected by this entire project, instead of considering appointed board members as ‘local residents/public,’ and actually create an informed open dialogue and work in



partnership with local and affected communities. We **need** to work together—FORA, local non-profit organizations, local communities and local governments. Thereby educating one another based on facts and necessity to begin creating local legislation and policies that can make us an example to others, nationally. The Monterey Bay Economic Partnership does not have enough proven work with FORA. Local knowledge IS *"invaluable,"* which is why going with a non-profit organization that has only been established for five months is highly questionable and of great concern. The Fort Ord Environmental Justice Network has been working tirelessly and usually without the proper financial resources needed, yet has continued to work successfully and in partnership with local communities. This vote was not unanimous because there are still a few members of the FORA Board that realize and understand that working with local, well established non-profit organization is more politically and economically responsible.

According to an article in the Monterey County Herald (Saturday November 15, 2014), the draft contract between Monterey Bay Economic Partnership has, *"very little mention of Fort Ord-specific functions."* Fort Ord Reuse Authority is justly named for its specific purpose, Fort Ord. Since this non-profit organization is only five months old, their experience to advocate for sustainable economic development and jobs, provide a link between educational institutions and workforce needs, as well as provide research data, introductions and networking, is cause for a lack of confidence in their abilities to make such highly set goals a reality. Especially with such a blatant lack of experience, acknowledgement and results. Clearly, local non-profit organizations, such as the Fort Ord Environmental Justice Network continues to remain ignored. Thereby ignoring the public and local residents of our county. Ironically, ignoring the same local residents that voted for and appointed local governmental officials and Board positions. In voting, hopeful to establish a voice, to be heard and to work toward positive results, creating a brighter, better tomorrow. For the future of our communities, our environment and our local youth.

Sadly, the Fort Ord Environmental Justice Network has worked independently from the FORA Board as well as local governments. It has been the duty and responsibility of our non-profit organization to work directly and freely with local residents. There has consistently been statements made that all decisions, for example the \$100, 000, does in fact, include local public residents. However, the vast majority of said public is never actually involved, educated nor consulted. Public residents are "allowed" to ask questions, make comments, and share concerns, yet only get an allotted three minutes to do so without opening any dialogue. Thus, being told to make appointments and/or calls to follow-up, yet never actually attaining that goal. This organization believes that if this entire process actually included everyone, more can be accomplished and better results to be achieved.

In closing, The Fort Ord Environmental Justice Network strongly and respectfully ask the Fort Ord Reuse Authority-(FORA) Board to reconsider their decision to "hire" a newly established non-profit organization. Fort Ord does not appear to be the sole priority of the Monterey Bay Economic Partnership, nor does the importance of the Fort Ord reuse and clean-up projects, the environment, disadvantaged and low-income families.  
Respectfully,



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December 2, 2014

Mayor Jerry Edelen, Chair  
Fort Ord Reuse Authority  
920 2nd Avenue, Suite A  
Marina, CA 93933

RE: **Request for Assistance for Key Economic Development Programs**

*Jerry*

Dear Chair Edelen,

As you may be aware, a key objective of CSUMB is to provide positive assistance for the future economic development of Fort Ord. From the very outset of the Fort Ord Reuse Plan, two of the key design principles set out in the plan (Design Principles 1 and 3) put CSUMB as the center and focus of regional development of the former military facility. Since that time, CSUMB has been at the center of efforts to develop the former base and surrounding region, not least through its growth and the spin-off effects as well as targeted efforts to develop the area.

Recent efforts include the Base Reuse Colloquium held in December 2013 highlighting a variety of important strategies, and the continuing demolition of abandoned and blighted former military structures throughout the campus. Other ongoing efforts include the continued spending of the university in the local economy through purchasing of goods and services, and the impact of the employees and the growing student population. All of these efforts require significant resources to accomplish and sustain - resources that are scarce given the needs of a growing campus to maintain its high academic and community service standards.

At the November 14, 2014 meeting, the FORA Board considered and approved the allocation of resources toward the Monterey Bay Economic Partnership for important programs and projects relating to economic development on the former Fort Ord. Specifically, the FORA staff recommendation was for FORA to enter into an agreement to provide up to \$100,000 to this partnership. According to the staff report, these funds are part of a total of \$164,000 that has been earmarked this year for the recruitment of a staff position, which was recently unsuccessful. CSUMB applauds this effort to build strategic partnerships and further economic development efforts on Fort Ord.

There are other important strategic partnerships, however, that can assist greatly in the implementation of economic development programs and projects, and are worthy of funding by FOR A. Specifically, CSUMB sponsors three key economic development efforts that are targeted toward and benefit small businesses and the development of the former base and immediate region: the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), the Startup Challenge, and the Startup Weekend. These programs are well recognized in the region, have specific benefit for the former Fort Ord, and are led by highly qualified staff and partnership organizations. As small businesses represent two-thirds of all job growth nationwide, it is important that programs have sufficient resources to meet the needs of businesses starting, expanding or retaining their operations within the former Fort Ord. Below is a brief description of each program, with further information contained in the attached hyperlinks. Also provided is a suggested amount to assist in funding the specific programs.



#### **CSUMB Small Business Development Center (CSUMB-SBDC) – Counseling Services**

The CSUMB-SBDC provides many services for small business throughout the County. One primary service is the one-on-one counseling for small businesses. The benefit of this program is that it evaluates small businesses financial status, provides in-depth analysis with comparisons to business peers and provides solid recommendations to ensure business owners pursue and secure the right sources of capital to achieve their goals. The SBDC counselors help business owners understand their financial statements, financial ratios and how a prospective lender might view a loan request. The SBDC helps business owners understand who can best provide for their capital needs, how best to match sources of capital with uses of capital and how to pitch loan proposals so that they get funded. The CSUMB-SBDC has conducted specific counseling services for small business in and around Fort Ord to encourage their retention and growth in the former base and surrounding region. According to a recent study, SBDC *in-depth* clients experienced 6 times the sales growth, and created 13 times the jobs of average small businesses. For more information, please see [www.sbdcsymb.edu](http://www.sbdcsymb.edu). CSUMB is requesting \$25,000 to assist in this program.

#### **Startup Challenge**

The Startup Challenge is an annual new venture competition held each spring throughout Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito counties and supported by the Institute of Innovation and Economic Development (IIED) in the CSUMB College of Business. It is an opportunity for prospective entrepreneurs, start-ups and emerging companies to showcase their ideas and business concepts. The Challenge connects regional entrepreneurs to other entrepreneurs, funders, consultants, support programs, regional and local angels and venture capitalists. The Challenge is a tool that strengthens our regional start-ups and emerging businesses by providing entrepreneurs with the best foundation possible. Since 2010, through the Startup Challenge process and competition, there have been more than 50 free regional workshops across Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz counties to provide 300+ businesses and entrepreneurs advice and coaching on their business plans and ideas. The winners of the venture division in the past five years are still in operation and building their businesses. Successful start-ups are assisted in finding funding and encouraged to remain in the area. The Startup Challenge attempts to raise a total of for \$85K in sponsorship which will primarily provide cash prizes and assistance for the winners with marketing. There will be a final event on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015 which will be open to the community to hear presentations and observe the selection of winning startups and the award process. More information is available at [www.thestartupchallenge.org](http://www.thestartupchallenge.org). CSUMB is requesting that FORA participate as a Marquee Sponsor at \$25,000 to support this activity and supported by the Institute of innovation and Economic Development at CSUMB.

#### **Startup Weekend**

Startup Weekend is a global grassroots movement of active and empowered entrepreneurs who are learning the basics of founding startups and launching successful ventures – all in one weekend! It is the largest community of passionate entrepreneurs with over 1,800 past events in 120 countries around the world in 2014. CSUMB is bringing Startup Weekend to the Monterey Bay region for the third time, on January 23-25, 2015. CSUMB is seeking \$10K in total sponsors to help with keeping the 80-100 participants fed and caffeinated all weekend.

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The final event is on Sunday evening (1/25) where all the new startup companies pitch their idea to a panel of judges, and this is open to the community. (Note – in the past the winners and several participants have gone on to compete in Startup Challenge. Last year's winner was one of the three finalists in Startup Challenge). More information is available at [www.startupweekend.org/about](http://www.startupweekend.org/about). CSUMB is requesting that FOR A participate and provide \$5,000 as a sponsor to support entrepreneurship efforts at CSUMB located within Fort Ord.

As a strategic partner, it is important for CSUMB to assist FORA in the redevelopment of the former Fort Ord through the development and operation of a growing university campus. Equally important, is for FORA to partner with CSUMB in the implementation of key economic development programs as noted above, as such programs assist startup and small businesses that will help generate jobs to replace those lost with the closure of Fort Ord. The campus is therefore requesting a total of \$55,000 for these programs from the \$64,000 in funds remaining in the FORA budget allocation for economic development. The funding of these small business programs is complementary to the broader scoped economic development programs proposed by the MBEP.

CSUMB appreciates the consideration of the FORA Board for this funding request, and we look forward to discussing this further at the upcoming Board meeting.

Sincerely,



Eduardo M. Ochoa  
President