

Brunswick Naval Air Station

Brunswick, ME

PROJECT DETAILS

Project Area: 3,000+ acres
Client: US Environmental Protection Agency
Year Produced: 2007

For more information, visit doverkohl.com.



The Professional Office District can be transformed over time using traditional neighborhood design concepts. As an alternative to the conventional design of office parks, buildings are designed to create spaces, while empty pads are left for future buildings and the middle of blocks are reserved for parking.



The long-term prospects for office space provide mid-block parking and buildings that form solid street walls, two elements that help create a pedestrian-friendly environment.



A prominent civic building fronts a central green; homes overlooking the green provide natural surveillance and a stronger sense of place.



A typical street view in the Professional Office District illustrates how office buildings can be designed to fit within the local urban fabric.

The Project

Scheduled to close in 2011, the 3,000+ acre Brunswick Naval Air Station offers an ideal redevelopment opportunity for the region. The Brunswick Local Redevelopment Authority (BLRA), responsible for establishing a reuse plan and land development regulations for the site, created a preferred master reuse plan that divides the base into nine land use districts that range in intensity and type of use, from airport operations to residential and mixed-use areas to open space. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which has long been involved in overseeing cleanup of Superfund sites on the base, wanted to ensure that the BLRA's reuse plan and zoning regulations for the land were also environmentally-sensitive, and offered to fund technical assistance to the plan. Understanding that Smart Growth is an important part of environmentally-sound development, the EPA hired Dover, Kohl & Partners to illustrate how pedestrian-friendly, high-quality, neighborhood development could be arranged on the naval base in accordance with the BLRA's preferred master reuse plan.

Environmental Benefits of Smart Growth

Reuse that is based on Smart Growth practices, such as compact, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly development, produces fewer air emissions from cars and other vehicles and less stormwater runoff as compared with sprawling patterns of development. Smart Growth is an important part of sustainable development, since the location of buildings, streets, parks, and other features of the built environment have a strong effect on whether people walk, bike, or take transit to some of their daily destinations.

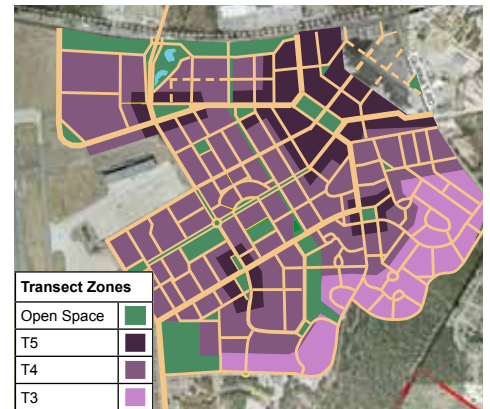
Process and Status

A hands-on workshop was held in October 2007 to gather public input on how Smart Growth practices could be applied to the BLRA's base reuse plan. The design team illustrated how the site, even with predetermined land use designations, could be treated as a series of complete, compact neighborhoods, bound together by a network of walkable streets of varying dimension and character. During this time, common themes for the future of the site emerged from the community, including a bus or trolley service, parking hidden from view, diversity of housing types, parks and performance areas, locally-owned businesses, and green buildings. The information generated at the workshop and subsequent design work was intended to serve as a foundation for the land development regulations. The designs are accompanied by recommended guidelines for development standards. This work can be incorporated into land development regulations that the BLRA will be drafting for consideration and eventual adoption by the Town of Brunswick.

Transect Map and Neighborhood Plans

Great neighborhoods feature a wide range of building types and street scenes of varied character that differ from center to edge in building height, distance between buildings, and land use intensity. To ensure that this kind of healthy variety and mixture of building types are found within the land use districts set forth in the BLRA's preferred master reuse plan, the design team created a Transect Map based on the concept of transect zones. Classifying human habitats in a range from the most natural to the most urban, the transect zones help to organize the existing physical environment so that new development occurs in a predictable manner that reinforces the intended quality of the place.

In addition to the Transect Map, three plans illustrating the hypothetical build-out of complete neighborhoods were designed to demonstrate the application of Smart Growth principles. The Cantonment area, shown below, features a large number of existing buildings of varied vintages, sizes, and current uses. To illustrate how one can integrate these existing buildings into a new mixed-use neighborhood, a plan was created that reuses the former Navy structures for the purposes of a new community campus, boutique hotel, and grocery store.



Transect Map

The Cantonment Neighborhood Plan

Student dorms are created from the former Bachelor Officer Quarters and new wings added, with parking located in the interior of the block.

New Police Station

Buildings front the street and are close to it, creating a pedestrian-friendly environment.

Sidewalks and on-street parking are located on all streets.

Fitch Avenue becomes a boulevard with a landscaped median.

The new museum and historic planes become a destination for visitors and a focal point adjacent to the roundabout.

The Navy Exchange could be reused as a grocery store.

Mixed-use buildings provide opportunities for ground floor office or retail, with apartments above.

New neighborhood parks provide informal gathering spaces for residents.



A crescent of faculty townhouses are located across from the campus, creating a green.

The Brunswick Mall is recreated, providing a ribbon of green space and walking paths.

Classrooms are located in existing buildings that are expanded and wrapped with new space.

A mix of housing types is available, from townhouses to duplexes to live/work units.

A traditional quad is created in the center of the college campus.

New street connections and infill buildings transform the development into a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly environment.

A new place of worship provides a focal point at the corner of the green.

A large green serves as a community space at the neighborhood center.

The base headquarters is reused, and the block is completed with small scale apartment buildings.

Existing buildings
Proposed buildings
Parks and open spaces



This rendering illustrates how a portion of an existing building can be saved and repurposed as the student center and main entrance into the Cantonment Area's university campus. Multi-story, mixed-use buildings are introduced, wrapping the edges of existing buildings. Street-oriented buildings shape the space with retail on the ground floor and residences or offices above.