



## Region 7

Iowa  
Kansas  
Missouri  
Nebraska

## Fact Sheet

May 2005

### **LAND REVITALIZATION** *Richards-Gebaur Air Force Base*

#### **SITE HISTORY**



*Former Air Defense Control Center*

The former Richards-Gebaur Air Force Base (RGAFB) is located approximately 18 miles south of downtown Kansas City (KC) and 2 miles east of the Kansas-Missouri state line. The northern part of the base is located in Jackson County, and the southern part is located in Cass County.

In 1941, portions of the land that later became RGAFB were acquired by KC for use as an auxiliary airport (Grandview Airport). Prior to that time, the area consisted primarily of farmland. In 1952, the Air Force (USAF) purchased additional property adjacent to the installation to lengthen the primary runway and develop family housing areas. At about the same time, the USAF purchased the property for the Belton Training Complex, which is 4 miles

south of the installation. In 1957, the base was renamed RGAFB in honor of two aviators who died in service of their country. Over time, various quantities of fuels, oils, lubricants, and solvents were used to support the mission. As a result, contaminants from these substances were released into the environment.

In 1980, prior to base closure, about 80% of the installation property was declared excess to USAF needs and transferred to the General Services Administration. Most of this property was transferred to the cities of KC (1,360 acres) and Belton (313 acres) in August 1985 via public benefit conveyance. Environmental issues resulting from past USAF activity on this property are addressed under the Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) Program, which is implemented by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

The remainder of RGAFB closed on September 30, 1994, as part of the second round of Base Realignment and Closures (BRACs). At the time of base closure, the RGAFB consisted of 429 acres from the original 3,111.70 acres. As part of the BRAC property disposal process, the property at the former RGAFB was conveyed to the Department of the Army, Navy and the cities of Kansas City and Belton.

### *Former Alert Hangers*



*Former Weapons Storage Area Bunkers*

## **SITE UPDATE**

A Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) was established in 1994 to provide for the discussion and exchange of environmental restoration program information between the USAF, U.S. USACE, regulatory agencies, community members, and other stakeholders. During its tenure, the RAB gave the community the opportunity to provide input on cleanup decisions and provided a mechanism for the USAF and USACE to disseminate information regarding the investigation and cleanup of contaminated property.

During the August 8, 2003 RAB meeting, the USAF and USACE proposed that the RAB consider adjournment due to the upcoming completion of the environmental cleanup program, as well as inadequate sustained community interest. The RAB was adjourned in November 2003. November 2005 will mark two years since the adjournment of the former RGAFB RAB. At that time, the USAF and USACE will solicit public input and assess the need to reestablish the RAB. The RAB may be reestablished if there is sufficient and sustained

community interest and environmental restoration activities are ongoing at the installation.

Last year (2004) was a landmark year for the RGAFB and marked the completion of more than 20 years of environmental assessments, investigations, and active cleanup operations. In July 2004, the Air Force Real Property Agency (AFRPA) submitted a Final Record of Decision (ROD) regarding the cleanup of contaminated soil and groundwater at the former base. In September 2004, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and the EPA signed the ROD, closing a significant chapter in the cleanup of contaminants at the former base.

In March 2005, the USAF transferred its final parcel of property at the RGAFB. In this transfer, 184 acres of land were conveyed by deed to KC for commercial and light industrial development. This transfer was the last in a series that began prior to base closure. In 1985, approximately 1,360 acres were transferred to KC for use as a municipal airport. At that time, and again in 1998, 2002, and 2005, smaller parcels of property were also transferred to the City of Belton and the Dept. of Army and Navy.

In total, more than 2,200 acres of property have been transferred out of USAF control with the majority (more than 1,800 acres) going to the cities of KC and Belton for economic development, benefiting the local community and region at large.

## **RGAFB REDEVELOPMENT**

Redevelopment of the property has been ongoing. The municipal airport ceased operation in January 2000. Since that time, the former flight line has been transformed into an intermodal port

anchored by an automotive complex. The automotive complex is used for the staging, loading, and unloading of new automobiles. The facility is responsible for outbound distribution of automobiles throughout the nation and the world, as well as inbound processing of vehicles destined for Midwestern dealerships. Transfer of this last remaining parcel of USAF property will allow comprehensive redevelopment of the entire former installation to begin in earnest.



*Excavating at Site ST 007, Former Underground Storage Tank Area*



*Transfer of Parcels K & L to City of Belton*



*Reuse of the Former Flight Operations Area as an intermodal port*

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

If you have questions or need further information, please contact:

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