***Joint Land Use Studies to support our civilian and military communities***

The Naval Construction Battalion Center (NCBC) maintains and operates facilities and provides services and materials in support of equipping, training and mobilizing Naval Construction Force units, with 1,098 acres of property located in the City of Gulfport, Mississippi, forty-five tenants, five significant educational missions, and special areas, which includes Camp Keller Small Arms Range in Woolmarket, Stennis Space Center, Stennis Airport, and the Western Maneuver Area in Hancock County and the lay berth facility in the Port of Gulfport. NCBC Gulfport has 6,000 employees and a payroll of $245 million.

Keesler Air Force Base (KAFB) maintains 1,784 acres of mission critical facilities, infrastructure, and property located in the City of Biloxi, Mississippi, is a chief hub of education for the Air Force, and is home to the 81st Training Group, 81st Medical Group and 81st Mission Support Group Established in 1941, KAFB has over 11,000 active duty/civilian personnel and annually trains nearly 30,000 airmen, reservists, joint service members international students and civilians, and actively supports the Gulf Coast communities over 100,000 volunteers hours annually, working with the schools and public. The total annual economic impact of these military bases to the regional economy is over $2 billion.

As many military bases across the country have experienced, the urbanization of the land surrounding the bases can create compatibility issues. Many of these issues relate to the safety of civilians as the military performs its various missions on the land, sea and air. These issues can be mitigated by communication, education and planning, in a collaborative process that involves the local jurisdictions, the military *and* key stakeholders, in particular the people that live, work and play in proximity to military operations.

As the cities of Biloxi, D’Iberville, Gulfport and Long Beach and the counties of Harrison and Hancock grow and develop, it is important to study if and how compatibilities issues exist with NCBC and KAFB. The United States Department of Defense, Office of Economic Adjustment, is working with the cities and counties, assisted by the Gulf Regional Planning Commission, to apply for funding to perform a Joint Land Use Study (JLUS), a study that will promote compatible development patterns near active military operations. Recommendations to mitigate existing and potential issues may include an update local plans and supporting regulations, infrastructure improvements and other strategies. The studies will take from one to two years and there will be considerable public engagement throughout the study process.