



June 17, 2022

The Honorable Frank Kendall
Secretary of the Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330

Subject: Progress Update on Community Support for Vandenberg Space Force Base as the location of Space Force Space Training and Readiness Command Headquarters

Dear Secretary Kendall:

As a coalition of leaders and organizations from business, education, and government, representing the interests of the community as well as the current and future workforce on the Central Coast of California, we are united in our enthusiastic and unqualified support for Vandenberg Space Force Base (VSFB) as the natural and intuitive fit for STARCOM.

We are committed to deepening our long-standing partnership with VSFB and making the Central Coast a home for military families and a growing hub for our nation's space future. As such, we write to provide an update on our recent actions and proactive planning to support the selection of VSFB as the permanent STARCOM Headquarters.

Since our [community's letter](#) on June 30, 2021, our region and state have taken concrete steps to prepare for a growing Space Force footprint, support VSFB's mission and build the physical and human infrastructure to position it at the center of a vibrant Central Coast space ecosystem. We appreciate this opportunity to share our latest progress and a roadmap of steps we are taking to meet the needs of STARCOM and amplify the impact that the selection of VSFB will have in preparing US Space Force Guardians to defend our national security in space. As this process advances, we look forward to working with you, not only to showcase our readiness, capacity and desire to support STARCOM, but also to develop a dialogue, working collaboration and action plan to support the Space Force and further mobilize our community resources for this important effort.

Preparing Our Communities to Host an Expanding Space Force Footprint

Military communities have a vital responsibility to serve as a home for military families, civilian personnel, retiring servicemembers and the wider workforce that supports base operations. In anticipation of the potential growth of VSFB and welcoming of STARCOM HQ, we have been actively working to prepare our communities.

Growing the **housing supply** is an important factor in supporting the expansion of VSFB's mission and the broader ecosystem around the base. While we are clear eyed on the challenges, our communities are working proactively to expand options for working families today and ensure a pipeline of future supply. Of note:

- Lompoc is expected to break ground on 700+ new homes in two separate developments in 2022 (up to 476) and 2023-2024 (up to 257). Lompoc is also updating the housing element of its general plan, looking to address the required 2,395 housing units.
- Santa Maria, in updating the housing element of its General Plan, is looking to add 16,000 housing units to accommodate 50,000 more residents.
- Orcutt continues to build out a 725-unit project. An adjacent project is currently seeking to construct up to 4,000 residential units.
- Nipomo is advancing a project for up to 1,270 housing units.
- Solvang is actively planning for future housing supply as part of the ongoing development of its General Plan.

Enhancing broader **community and enabling infrastructure** is also a top priority. Recent developments of note include:

- Lompoc is an active member of the **Association of Defense Communities (ADC)**. Lompoc sent representatives to the Installation Innovation Forum Conference in November of 2021, held in San Antonio, Texas, and the most recent Defense Communities National Summit in March of 2022 in Arlington, VA. It is actively participating in ADC to advance policies and ideas that address the key issues facing installations, military families, and the communities they call home.
- Inclusion of eligible base and community interconnection broadband projects into the regional Broadband Strategy to support regional **connectivity**. This will increase the eligibility of these projects for state broadband infrastructure grant funds.
- To support regional **transportation**, significant bridge replacement and upgrade projects on Floradale Avenue that will benefit traffic to and from the base. Additionally, over \$1 billion in improvements are being made to the U.S. 101 corridor as part of the Santa Barbara U.S. 101 Multimodal Corridor Project in South Santa Barbara County with local, state, and federal investments. The corridor connects Los Angeles to the base on the National Highway System and is the only designated Critical Urban Freight Corridor in the Central Coast of California.
- To bolster regional **healthcare resources**, Santa Maria has supported the launch of a new campus for A.T. Still University of Health Sciences, which welcomed an inaugural class to its Central Coast Physician Assistant program in September 2021.

We also continue to take steps to enhance the **educational and economic opportunities** for service members, military spouses and veterans. For instance, this spring Allan Hancock College opened a brand new Veterans Success Center to support prospective and enrolled student veterans, active duty, and dependents of veterans in accessing resources, navigating processes and transitioning to civilian life. Cuesta College also maintains Veterans Resource Centers at its San Luis Obispo and North County campuses. Last year Cal Poly was ranked the best college in the West for veterans for the second year in a row. In October 2021 the state of California approved AB 107, which will take effect on July 1, 2023, and provide expedited, temporary authorization for military spouses to practice certain professions. We are fully committed to continuing to expand opportunities and support military families that are stationed on the Central Coast and decide to make it their home.

Supporting VSFB's Mission and Building the Physical and Human Infrastructure for a Vibrant Central Coast Space Ecosystem

Our region and state are working in close partnership to support VSFB's mission and create the **enabling physical and human infrastructure** for the world's leading space ecosystem. We have launched several flagship initiatives in the past year and have an active agenda over the coming months in alignment with the need to support STARCOM and the growth of Space Force's broader mission. Recent activities include:

- The [VSFB Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\) Group](#) – an innovative public-private partnership that includes Space Launch Delta 30, the State of California, the County of Santa Barbara, Cal Poly, Deloitte and REACH – is moving ahead with implementing the [Phase 1 Commercial Space Master Plan](#) launched in June 2021. This includes active efforts with the state to identify and leverage funding to advance on- and off-base infrastructure opportunities. As part of these implementation efforts, the Counties of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo have also budgeted funding to support a **waterfront infrastructure study** that is exploring opportunities to enhance the boat dock and related waterfront infrastructure at VSFB.
- The State of California places a high priority on its military installations and the members and their families. Additionally, California is the home of space industry pioneers and innovators. The **Governor's Military Council and the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development** are making significant efforts to support and facilitate military and commercial space activities in the state. The Governor has even appointed a local Santa Maria member to the statewide council, signaling his support and focus on VSFB and space.
- REACH, the regional economic action coalition, with support from the Counties of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo and the Economic Development Administration, has recently launched an initiative to create a **regional workforce strategy, pipeline and industry consortium for the aerospace, defense and precision manufacturing sectors**. This initiative recognizes the significant opportunities to harness the combined energies of VSFB and the commercial activity in the surrounding communities and will provide a platform to convene employers, educational institutions and government to develop a common roadmap for enhancing this regional talent pool and industry cluster. The regional space ecosystem continues to expand, with plans underway for a horizontal launch spaceport in Paso Robles, growing space companies, and new educational and research programs (see below).
- The [Uplift Central Coast Coalition](#) – spanning the entire Central Coast from Santa Cruz through VSFB and south to Ventura – was launched in late 2021 to accelerate a 6-county space and aeronautics ecosystem centered around VSFB. This coalition is actively collaborating to apply for state and federal funding to grow this critical sector and advance the regional talent pool and innovation base that supports it.
- Colleges, universities and training providers across the Central Coast continue to expand **educational and research opportunities in space, aerospace and related fields**, advancing the regional talent pool and innovation base and creating potential opportunities to amplify STARCOM's educational and training activities.
 - This year Cal Poly received additional federal funding to create new and innovative laboratories to test subsonic Vertical Take-Off and Landing (VTOL) technologies in support of its partnership with the Air Force Research Laboratory, and it continues to advance a range of collaborative activities through its Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) with Space Operations Command and Space

Situational Awareness Sharing Agreement with USSTRATCOM. It also provides tours of relevant labs and facilities (CubeSat Lab, CubeSat Clean Room, Space Environments Lab, Vibration Lab) to all of the 533d Training Squadron classes to discuss the current state of CubeSat/small satellite technology and is exploring ways to further collaborate with faculty lectures and programs to students of the 533d hands-on command and control experience with CubeSats on-orbit.

- UC Santa Barbara is a world leader in space-related research, including \$6-9m in annual NASA funding for areas such as mapping, sensors, and climate/ocean sciences. The nation's #5 public university, it is also a hub for fields such as planetary defense, photonics, quantum and materials research, hosts an array of unique shared instrumentation facilities that supports this research, and has close ties with the Las Cumbres Observatory in Goleta.
- To enhance the local talent pool, San Luis Obispo County approved \$500,000 in funding in May 2022 to support a new aviation technical training program that was developed as a public-private partnership with Cuesta College, supporting a highly skilled aviation maintenance workforce on the Central Coast.

Preparing for our Nation's Space Future

As Vice President Harris underscored in her recent visit to VSFB, "there are so many opportunities in space for our country and for all of humanity — from science, to commerce, to national security." VSFB plays an indispensable role in advancing these national goals, which will require an all hands on deck effort, uniting public and private sectors, and requiring close partnerships between community, educational institutions, industry and government at all levels.

Our region and state are committed and actively mobilizing our resources and collaborative energies to support STARCOM and the VSFB mission, create a welcoming home for military families and collaborate to foster a vibrant space ecosystem. VSFB is uniquely situated to host STARCOM – building on its long-standing training role – and with strong community support and collaboration, advance our nation's space future. We appreciate this opportunity to share our progress and plans in these efforts and look forward to working together to support STARCOM and this important process.

Sincerely,




Dee Dee Myers
Senior Advisor and Director
Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development



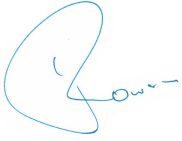
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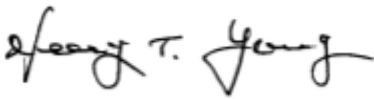
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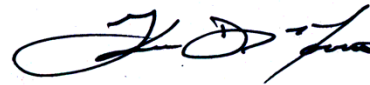
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