

A ‘One Community’ Agenda

Pursuing Partnership and Innovation in Today’s Defense Community

Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin has said that the cornerstone of the new National Defense Strategy will be integrated deterrence, with innovation and partnership as two key concepts.

As DOD and Congress implement this new strategy, it is essential that we strengthen the foundation of our military – the places where our military trains, deploys from, and calls home: our installations and defense communities.

It is here that we must begin to institutionalize the concepts of innovation and partnership. When communities and the military are working as one, we make a difference, we find new solutions, we strengthen networks, and we build great places for our servicemembers and their families to call home.

The Association of Defense Communities believes a “One Community” approach will foster a new level of military-community collaboration to tackle the major issues facing our nation and national defense.



Drive Installation-Community Innovation at the Local Level

Our national security depends upon innovative solutions to key challenges, and that begins at the local level. We can incentivize new initiatives to break down barriers among the military, communities, and the private sector. Together we can:

- Develop installation-community innovation hubs that bring together local leaders from the military, community, academia, and private sector.
- Integrate defense communities into DOD innovation programs, such as AFWERX, the National Security Innovation Network (NSIN) and Defense Innovation Unit (DIU).
- Plan for the evolving expectations and capabilities of the defense sector workforce.
- Invest in defense workforce development initiatives (e.g., the Defense Manufacturing Communities Support Program).



Institutionalize the One Community Partnership Concept

When it comes to the big issues facing our military, service members, and their families, the fence line does not matter. Collaboration will help us:

- Institutionalize the “one community” concept by training installation leaders through professional development opportunities where they and their community counterparts can learn side-by-side about new installation management and partnership best practices and ideas.
- Strengthen installation-community partnership authorities including the Intergovernmental Support Agreement (IGSA) & the Enhanced Use Lease (EUL) programs.
- Develop clear and viable benchmarks for community and state spousal employment support and military child education standards. Provide resources and partnership opportunities to help communities achieve them.
- Address racism & equity in the communities our military calls home by listening to those who have experienced the impact of racism and inequality and how we can improve.



Invest in Infrastructure that Supports Missions and Families

Our military and our families rely on a complex network of roads, buildings, facilities, utilities, and land—both on and off base—to support critical training, power-projection platforms, and the everyday needs of our families. To prioritize investment in our nation's defense infrastructure, we can:

- Expand the Defense Community Infrastructure Program (DCIP) to support both traditional community infrastructure and facilities that enhance quality of life.
- Promote sustained investment in our installations through a stable, robust military construction program that replenishes any redirected funds.
- Enhance the value of public-public (P4) and public-private partnerships (P3) to improve the efficiency and resilience of defense infrastructure.
- Strengthen the ongoing collaboration between military and community by supporting and enhancing the role of the DOD Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation (OLDCC).



Promote Climate Resilience for Installations and Communities

Sea level rise, extreme weather events, and other climate-related activities are impacting our installations, defense communities, and national security. We can coordinate a response across the fence line, regionally and nationally if we:

- Create a coordinating point within OSD to connect DoD and communities on climate change, ideally through the OLDCC.
- Continue funding and support for the Military Installation Sustainability (MIS) program.
- Embrace programs, including DCIP, which support joint installation-community climate resilience planning and infrastructure.
- Develop clear, quantifiable program benchmarks that provide a baseline measurement of DCIP and MIS program performance.



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