

12:31



5 Messages

[Back](#) **Urgent Support Ne...** [Up](#) [Down](#)

Subject: Support for shipyard legislation from Solano EDC

I understand that legislation is under consideration to restore the Collinsville shipyard site to its former 7,500-acre size and to allow shipbuilders to rely on Solano County's existing Environmental Impact Report in order to begin construction by 2026.

Provided that Solano County retains its authority to approve or deny individual projects as they are proposed, I strongly support this effort.

Please support and pass this legislation now so we don't lose the opportunity. 10,000+ generational jobs and our national security depend on your leadership.

Thank you,

Hope you're having a great holiday.



Chris Rico

President and CEO

Solano Economic

Development

Corporation

5050 Business Center

Drive, #200

Fairfield, CA 94534

[\(707\) 864-1855](tel:(707)864-1855)

[x11](#)

Solanoedc.org



12:31



5 Messages



Back

Urgent Support Ne...



Esteemed Board,

I'm sorry to be reaching out on a holiday weekend. We are in really strong contention to bring 10,000 generational ship building jobs, in support of our national security, in Solano County, a project that is supported by a strong coalition of cities, unions, and the major employers and job creators in Solano. We are going to offer our support for urgent legislation that Assembly Member Wilson and Senator Cabaldon are prepared to introduce with support of the community. I encourage you to join us.

Draft wording below. Please send to:

To: Lori.Wilson@asm.ca.gov,
senator.cabaldon@senate.ca.gov,
CRJames@solanocounty.com,
mebrown@solanocounty.com,
WLWilliams@solanocounty.com,
jmvasquez@solanocounty.com,
MHMashburn@solanocounty.com

Subject: Support for shipyard legislation from Solano EDC

I understand that legislation is under consideration to restore the Collinsville shipyard site to its former 7,500-acre size and to allow shipbuilders to rely on Solano County's existing Environmental Impact Report in order to begin construction by 2026.

Provided that Solano County retains its authority to approve or deny individual projects as they are proposed, I strongly support this effort.



September 9, 2025

Dear Solano County Board of Supervisors and Staff,

I have been made aware that Assemblywoman Wilson and Senator Cabaldon have been approached by California Forever LP/Flannery Associates LLC to introduce legislation to convert 7,500 acres of agriculturally-zoned land into a “Solano Maritime Zone” in connection to Saronic Technologies' Project Gondor request for proposal (RFP), a company owned in part by Marc Andreessen's Andreessen Horowitz (part owner of California Forever) and Peter Thiel's Founders Fund. To put the size of acreage in perspective, this proposed rezoning by legislation would affect acreage nearly double the size of Rio Vista's incorporated lands for the purpose of “urgency” and “national security.”

Proponents of the rezoning cite the “Collinsville Montezuma Hills Area Development Study” prepared in 1989. However, the study “questions the operational suitability of the Collinsville location for a container terminal [port] in view of its remoteness from main highway and rail lines and the 35' depth of the Sacramento River Channel.” Additionally, the study was done in order to pass redevelopment bonds to fund infrastructure in the area for proposed water industry related to a history of interest mainly in petrochemical plants and refineries but also steel production, nuclear power, and coal power, **not** shipbuilding.

In 1989, 81% of water-dependent industrial land in the Bay Area was used for petroleum-related industry. By 1989, Solano County already had a history of 25 years of proposed industry in the Collinsville area, most notably for chemical and plastic plants from Dow Chemical and ARCO. However, none came to fruition. The proposal for redevelopment bonds by Solano County was struck down by the California Court of Appeals in *Emmington v. Solano County Redevelopment Agency*, partly as a result of the agricultural lands considered for “redevelopment” being erroneously categorized as “blighted.”

As it stands, this attempt to change local county zoning at the state level could set a precedent that California Forever need only to reach out to the state legislature to change the zoning of their properties and circumvent the vote of the people of Solano County and the Solano County Board of Supervisors. However, should any effort be made in the California legislature to rezone agricultural lands in Solano County, it **must** align with current County policies through an environmental impact report and Measure T's “Orderly Growth Initiative” through the Solano County voters. In addition, any proposed legislation **must**:

1. Limit the legislation to the approximately 1,574 existing acres of water-dependent industrial land at Collinsville
2. Directly tie to the response to Saronic Technologies' “Project Gondor” and not any other proposal, lands, or broader ideas
3. Be cost-neutral to Solano County via a development agreement
4. Be time-limited and contingent that the Collinsville site is selected by Saronic Technologies
5. Be transparent through review by the County and the public, and, once finalized, not to be changed without the County's knowledge and consent
6. Study the feasibility of shipbuilding at the former Mare Island Naval Shipyard at Vallejo and former Army Reserve Center at Rio Vista
7. Include funding for environmental remediation of the former Mare Island Naval Shipyard at Vallejo and the former United States Army Reserve Center at Rio Vista, if neither locations are feasible for either Saronic Technologies' “Project Gondor” or the shipbuilding industry as a whole
8. Provide for the protection of farmland and habitat on the current parcels owned by Flannery Associates LLC, a subsidiary of the proposed developer, within 5 miles of the proposed Collinsville site through permanent conservation easements to be held by the Solano Land Trust, if interested, or else Solano County, at a 3:1 mitigation ratio
9. Recommend that the proposed project may be partly owned by the United States Federal Government

I appreciate the county's leadership on this issue and the consideration of the public's role and interest in this process. Thank you for taking my comments into consideration.

Sincerely,

Aiden Mayhood, Rio Vista resident and member of Solano Together Coalition



September 9, 2025

Solano County Board of Supervisors
675 Texas Street, Suite 6500
Fairfield, CA 94533

RE: Support for Shipbuilding in Solano County

Dear Chair Mashburn and Members of the Board of Supervisor,

On behalf of Opportunity House, I am writing to express our support for the effort to bring next-generation shipbuilding to Solano County by California Forever.

As a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving individuals and families experiencing homelessness throughout Solano County, Opportunity House understands the critical role that economic opportunity and stable employment play in helping people achieve lasting self-sufficiency. The introduction of a modern shipbuilding industry to our region represents a transformational opportunity to create accessible, well-paying jobs for a wide range of skill levels offering a direct path to economic mobility for the individuals we serve.

The regional potential of this project to generate high-quality, skilled jobs, particularly those that can be accessed through training, apprenticeships, and local hiring initiatives, strongly aligns with our mission to empower people toward independence. We are especially encouraged by the opportunities this initiative can create for vulnerable populations who often face barriers to stable employment.

Opportunity House supports this initiative and looks forward to partnering with community stakeholders to ensure that the residents we serve can participate in and benefit from the opportunities it creates.

Thank you for your leadership and thoughtful consideration of this important investment in Solano County's future.

Sincerely,

Ashley Banta
Executive Director
Opportunity House

From: [AIDEN MAYHOOD](#)
To: [CAO-Clerk](#); [James, Cassandra R.](#); [Brown, Monica E.](#); [Williams, Wanda L.](#); jmvazquez@solanocounty.com; [Mashburn, Mitchell H.](#)
Subject: BoS Meeting 9.9.2025 Item #22 Public Comment
Date: Sunday, September 7, 2025 12:57:27 PM
Attachments: [Aiden Mayhood Comment to Solano Co. BoS 9.9.25 Meeting-3.pdf](#)

Hello,

Please find attached my public comment for Item #22 of the Board of Supervisors Meeting on 9.9.2025. Thank you.

Best,

Aiden Mayhood
Rio Vista resident and member of Solano Together Coalition

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Golden Eagles with Suisun City in the background
 Photos by Michael Lopez posted on the California ForNever Facebook page

From the Desk of Jim DeKloe

Solano County Board of Supervisors
 Fairfield, CA 94523

September 4, 2025



The Route to Collinsville California

California Forever conducted a survey yesterday, right after the announcement by Assemblymember Lori Wilson that she would not carry legislation to rezone a portion of Solano County.

Initially the point of the survey wasn't completely clear, but it became apparent at the end. An obvious "push poll," it was not designed to really gain honest information but to instead produce a specific result that they could use as a talking point.

There were three questions.

Thank you for your interest in our survey on the future of Solano County. Your answers are completely anonymous. All questions must be answered for your opinion to be counted. Thank you for your time!

1. Generally speaking, would you say that Solano County is headed in the right direction, or are we off on the wrong track?

Right Direction

Wrong Track

Unsure

2. From the following list, what is the biggest concern that you have for Solano County?

Housing and housing prices

Jobs and the local economy

Crime, including homelessness

Unsure

3. A new shipyard has been proposed on the industrially designated waterfront across the bay from Pittsburg and Antioch, which would bring billions of dollars of investments and over 10,000 permanent jobs to our county. Legislation would need passed [sic] to allow the shipyard to meet national security standards and break ground in 2026. Would you support or oppose legislation what would allow this new shipyard in Solano County?

Support

Oppose

Unsure

Press the button below to submit your answers.

Thank you!





The last question clearly identified this as a push poll with an agenda.

A new shipyard has been proposed on the industrially designated waterfront across the bay from Pittsburg and Antioch, which would bring billions of dollars of investments and over 10,000 permanent jobs to our county. Legislation would need passed [sic] to allow the shipyard to meet national security standards and break ground in 2026. Would you support or oppose legislation what would allow this new shipyard in Solano County?

This does not assess or obtain any true public opinion or solicit any concerns or true thoughts. This push poll shoves the answers in a particular direction. The final question might as well be... "Do you support the wonderful idea of having legislation rezone land ... knowing that unicorns will appear and that it will save kittens and puppies?" It's designed to get an "I support" answer so that they can go to elected officials and say "A majority of the residents of Solano County support our proposal (and puppies and kittens)."

They would get a different answer if they told the truth: "Do you support Sacramento politicians interfering with Solano County zoning laws specifically so that Silicon Valley billionaires can get their land rezoned in order to make more billions? Do you support this even though it would involve building an Oakland-sized city in remote Solano County and a report released last week concluded that the infrastructure costs would be \$4.9 billion per year for every year between 2026 and 2071?" Does the fact that experts say that this project would jeopardize the drinking water supply of most of the state alter your opinion?

That probably would gain a different answer.

The question contains a deceptive phase within it: "Legislation would need passed [sic] to allow the shipyard to meet national security standards and break ground in 2026." - No, the legislation isn't needed to comply with some sort of federal standard - the legislation is needed to override the agricultural zoning that voters - the people - locked in by initiative. And the invoking of national security seems a bit over the top too.



Collinsville, CA

The other (and dishonest) part of this survey that would have made a difference: If the question was, California Forever is behind an effort for shipbuilding... the numbers would have dropped into the tens. This is one of the most hated and distrusted entities in Solano County. If they identified that they were behind it as they conducted the poll, the numbers would have dramatically dropped.

So, it wasn't a surprise when this push poll generated their desired result:

55.3% support legislation to allow the Solano Shipyard,
22.2% oppose,
22.5% unsure.

But then California Forever made an unforced error. To the question,

From the following list, what is the biggest concern that you have for Solano County?

The results that they obtained completely undermines their argument.

CRIME AND UNHOUSED: 51.5%

HOUSING: 28.4%

JOBS/LOCAL ECONOMY: 17.5%

UNSURE: 2.6%

This shows that the citizens of Solano County have little concern for Jobs and the Local Economy, and that their concern over housing is dwarfed by concerns over crime and homelessness. The opposition can argue, “see, the public is MUCH more concerns that resources, effort, and attention should be directed toward fixing problems in existing cities and not toward expansion.

I have to say that if I were California Forever, I would not have shared that information that undermines their entire argument.



Sincerely

Jim DeKloe
Biologist
Solano County
[jimdekloe@gmail.com](mailto:jimdeklloe@gmail.com)

From: [Lisa Jerue](#)
To: [CAO-Clerk](#); [James, Cassandra R.](#); [Brown, Monica E.](#); [Williams, Wanda L.](#); [Vasquez, John M.](#); [Mashburn, Mitchell H.](#); Mark.Rossow@asm.ca.gov; Timothy.Knox@sen.ca.gov
Subject: California Forever/Collinsville
Date: Sunday, September 7, 2025 10:56:37 PM

Hello!

I have been made aware that Assemblywoman Wilson and Senator Cabaldon have been approached by California Forever LP/Flannery Associates LLC to introduce legislation to convert 7,500 acres of agriculturally-zoned land into a “Solano Maritime Zone” in connection to Saronic Technologies’ Project Gondor request for proposal (RFP), a company owned in part by Marc Andreessen’s Andreessen Horowitz (part owner of California Forever) and Peter Thiel’s Founders Fund. To put the size of acreage in perspective, this proposed rezoning by legislation would affect acreage nearly double the size of Rio Vista’s incorporated lands for the purpose of “urgency” and “national security.” Proponents of the rezoning cite the “Collinsville Montezuma Hills Area Development Study” prepared in 1989. However, the study “questions the operational suitability of the Collinsville location for a container terminal [port] in view of its remoteness from main highway and rail lines and the 35’ depth of the Sacramento River Channel.” Additionally, the study was done in order to pass redevelopment bonds to fund infrastructure in the area for proposed water industry related to a history of interest mainly in petrochemical plants and refineries but also steel production, nuclear power, and coal power, not shipbuilding.

In 1989, 81% of water-dependent industrial land in the Bay Area was used for petroleum-related industry. By 1989, Solano County already had a history of 25 years of proposed industry in the Collinsville area, most notably for chemical and plastic plants from Dow Chemical and ARCO. However, none came to fruition. The proposal for redevelopment bonds by Solano County was struck down by the California Court of Appeals in *Emmington v. Solano County Redevelopment Agency*, partly as a result of the agricultural lands considered for “redevelopment” being erroneously categorized as “blighted.”

As it stands, this attempt to change local county zoning at the state level could set a precedent that California Forever need only to reach out to the state legislature to change the zoning of their properties and circumvent the vote of the people of Solano County and the Solano County Board of Supervisors. However, should any effort be made in the California legislature to rezone agricultural lands in Solano County, it must align with current County policies through an environmental impact report and Measure T’s “Orderly Growth Initiative” through the Solano County voters. In addition, any proposed legislation must:

1. Limit the legislation to the approximately 1,574 existing acres of water-dependent industrial land at Collinsville

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8. Provide for the protection of farmland and habitat on the current parcels owned by Flannery Associates LLC, a subsidiary of the proposed developer, within 5 miles of the proposed Collinsville site through permanent conservation easements to be held by the Solano Land Trust, if interested, or else another trust accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, at a 3:1 mitigation ratio
9. Recommend that the proposed project may be partly owned by the United States Federal Government

I appreciate the county's leadership on this issue and the consideration of the public's role and interest in this process. Thank you for taking my comments into consideration.

Sincerely,
Lisa Jerue

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From: [Adriana Bejarano](#)
To: [CAO-Clerk](#); [James, Cassandra R.](#); [Brown, Monica E.](#); [Williams, Wanda L.](#); [Vasquez, John M.](#); [Mashburn, Mitchell H.](#)
Subject: Circumventing the will of the people of Solano County
Date: Sunday, September 7, 2025 2:37:14 PM

September 9, 2025

Dear Solano County Supervisors,

I have been made aware that Assemblywoman Wilson and Senator Cabaldon have been approached by California Forever LP/Flannery Associates LLC to introduce legislation to convert 7,500 acres of agriculturally-zoned land into a “Solano Maritime Zone” in connection to Saronic Technologies' Project Gondor request for proposal (RFP), a company owned in part by Marc Andreessen’s Andreessen Horowitz (part owner of California Forever) and Peter Thiel’s Founders Fund. To put the size of acreage in perspective, this proposed rezoning by legislation would affect acreage nearly double the size of Rio Vista’s incorporated lands for the purpose of “urgency” and “national security.”

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In 1989, 81% of water-dependent industrial land in the Bay Area was used for petroleum-related industry. By 1989, Solano County already had a history of 25 years of proposed industry in the Collinsville area, most notably for chemical and plastic plants from Dow Chemical and ARCO. However, none came to fruition. The proposal for redevelopment bonds by Solano County was struck down by the California Court of Appeals in *Emmington v. Solano County Redevelopment Agency*, partly as a result of the agricultural lands considered for “redevelopment” being erroneously categorized as “blighted.”

As it stands, this attempt to change local county zoning at the state level could set a precedent that California Forever need only to reach out to the state legislature to change the zoning of their properties and circumvent the vote of the people of Solano County and the Solano County Board of Supervisors. However, should any effort be made in the California legislature to rezone agricultural lands in Solano County, it must align with current County policies through an environmental impact report and Measure T’s “Orderly Growth Initiative” through the Solano County voters. In addition, any proposed legislation must:

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7. Include funding for environmental remediation of the former Mare Island Naval Shipyard at Vallejo and the former United States Army Reserve Center at Rio Vista, if neither locations are feasible for either Saronic Technologies' "Project Gondor" or the shipbuilding industry as a whole

8. Provide for the protection of farmland and habitat on the current parcels owned by Flannery Associates LLC, a subsidiary of the proposed developer, within 5 miles of the proposed Collinsville site through permanent conservation easements to be held by the Solano Land Trust, if interested, or else another trust accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, at a 3:1 mitigation ratio

9. Recommend that the proposed project may be partly owned by the United States Federal Government

I appreciate the county's leadership on this issue and the consideration of the public's role and interest in this process. Thank you for taking my comments into consideration.

Sincerely,

Adriana Bejarano
Rio Vista

Sent from my iPhone

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From: [Glenn Loveall](#)
To: [James, Cassandra R.](#); [Brown, Monica E.](#); [Williams, Wanda L.](#); [Vasquez, John M.](#); [Mashburn, Mitchell H.](#)
Cc: [Jacob Martinez, Yuritzi](#); [Stewart, Tony J.](#); [Glidden, John M.](#); [Madeiros, Wanda L.](#); [Wilson Alford, Latressa L.](#); [Lawton-Caesar, Kathy M.](#); [Hamilton, Jennifer](#); [Chalk, Ryan L.](#); [Mercado, Danette I.](#); [Lake, Veronica A.](#)
Subject: CLC Statement on CA Forever and Shipbuilding in Solano County
Date: Monday, September 8, 2025 11:25:16 AM
Attachments: [NSCLC Statement on California Forever and Shipbuilding in Solano \(1\).pdf](#)

Good morning Solano County Supervisors,

See attached statement ratified by the Labor Council's Executive Board - note opposition to any exemption or reduction of existing state and local-level labor and other critical laws/regulations, and the standard for open community and open democratic oversight. We look forward to discussing any process moving forward.

Thank you,

Glenn Loveall
Executive Director
Napa-Solano Central Labor Council (AFL-CIO)
Mobile: 707-410-7239
glennloveall@gmail.com
<https://napasolanoclc.org/>



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From: [James DeKloe](#)
To: [CAO-Clerk](#); [James, Cassandra R.](#); [Brown, Monica E.](#); [Williams, Wanda L.](#); [Vasquez, John M.](#); [Mashburn, Mitchell H.](#); [Mark.Rossow@asm.ca.gov](#); [alex.pader@sen.ca.gov](#); [Timothy.Knox@sen.ca.gov](#)
Subject: Collinsville Shipbuilding
Date: Monday, September 8, 2025 12:37:45 AM
Attachments: [Supervisorsletter2.pdf](#)
[California Forever poll.pdf](#)

Board of Supervisors

Please accept these comments on the upcoming discussion of Shipbuilding in Collinsville and on the possibility of pending legislation.

Jim DeKloe
Solano County

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From: [James Pezzaglia](#)
To: [CAO-Clerk](#); [James, Cassandra R.](#); [Brown, Monica E.](#); [Williams, Wanda L.](#); [Vasquez, John M.](#); [Mashburn, Mitchell H.](#)
Cc: Mark.Rossow@asm.ca.gov; Timothy.Knox@sen.ca.gov; [Edwin Okamura](#); [Edwin Okamura](#)
Subject: Comment on Solano County Board of Supervisors, Agenda Item 22, (9/9/25) Receiving staff report/providing direction
Date: Monday, September 8, 2025 10:57:31 AM
Importance: High

Comment on Solano County Board of Supervisors, Agenda Item 22, (9/9/25) Receiving staff report and providing direction on proposal for Collinsville rezoning study for a maritime zone for a potential shipbuilding project.

Dear Solano County Board of Supervisors:

I am informed that California Forever LP/Flannery Associates LLC seeks to introduce legislation to convert 7,500 acres of agriculturally-zoned land into a “Solano Maritime Zone” It is alleged the project is needed for the purpose of “urgency” and “national security” and your County staff is asking for direction.

I am requesting you direct staff follow existing procedures as outlined below to protect the public interest.

Background: Studies prepared in the past have questioned the operational suitability of the Collinsville location for a container terminal [port] in view of its remoteness from the main highway, no adequate highway infrastructure, inadequate rail lines and extensive dredging to achieve an adequate delivery and depth of the Sacramento River needed near the project. Channel. A history of interest, mainly in petrochemical plants, utility company, steel production, nuclear power, and coal power were abandoned, notably Dow Chemical. The rationale to change local county zoning at the state level appear based on national security, but we have Travis Airforce Base that provides our county with existing superior facilities and Mare Island nearby is more easily converted in a Maritime facility. Moreover, this effort is appears to circumvent the interests and vote of the people of Solano County and the Solano County Board of Supervisors and its provisions for growth within cities. We must urge that the California legislature align with Solano County’s current County policies and follow State and federal environmental impact report requirements with new or supplemental EIR’s and EIS’s, and follow Solano County’s “Orderly Growth Initiative”.

Any proposal must consider: 1. the need for any water-dependent industrial land at Collinsville; 2. alternative locations, and the no project alternative; 3. Upgrade Highway 12 from Suisun to Rio Vista and upgrade the Rio Vista bridge across the Sacramento River, with an enforceable development agreement; 4. be definitive and purposeful maintaining annexation to a city, as well as local and regional control of the project and the mitigation of adverse impacts; 5. be transparent through reviews, and the County, and the cities must place the public interest on an equal footing with mega corporate power and government pre-emption; 6. Study the the upgrading of shipbuilding capacity at the former Mare Island Naval Shipyard in Vallejo and consider Rio Vista as an alternative location where there is already a 45 foot deep channel and local dredging capability; 7. Ensure any proposal protects open space, farmland and ranching habitat on the current parcels in the Collinsville, Birds Landing and Montezuma Hills area.

I have always appreciated Solano county’s leadership in addressing, respecting and balancing the uses and issues affecting the County’s public interest, and I trust you will continue to do so. Thank you for receiving these comments on this important matter.

Sincerely,
James Pezzaglia

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Eagle Photos by Michael Lopez posted on the California ForNever Facebook page

From the Desk of Jim DeKloe

Solano County Board of Supervisors
675 Texas Avenue
Fairfield, CA 94533

September 9, 2025

Dear Board Members,

“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.”
African proverb.

Again, I believe that the African proverb cited above needs to be amended in this case. If you want to go fast, you need to have previously built a community of trust and common vision – you need to go together.

I’m a pretty engaged citizen. I subscribe to most of the local newspapers. I especially have followed the saga of California Forever. Yet I was blindsided this week – multiple times. I learned about so many secret and back-room deals and conversations that had been conducted out of the public eye over the last year. These conversations involved shipbuilding and especially many concerned California Forever.

I recognize that in the corporate world that deal-making involves secrets and strategies and posturing and keeping everything close to the vest. That doesn’t work in the public sphere.

Let’s set aside the merits of shipbuilding, and the merits of the particular Saronic proposal for a moment. And let’s set aside any merits of the California Forever plans. (I don’t see any, but...for the sake of argument, let’s assume that there are some positives somewhere). Knowing that the entire County is enveloped in an atmosphere of dissent and distrust, how did anyone think that secrecy that would inevitably be discovered would benefit this project?

A similar lack of transparency has been a disaster for the Suisun City Council. Every meeting has been described as torture; it’s been compared to an invasion of the Harry Potter characters the Dementors that suck the joy out of the room. The lack of transparency of that Council has led to a credible recall movement.

The spirit of the Brown Act is to eliminate back-room deals and to have all actions of governing bodies open to the public. While real estate, personnel, and legal matters are exempt, land use decisions are not. If a multi-month, backroom negotiation with a specific company doesn’t violate the law behind the Brown Act, it certainly violates the spirit.

From the agenda for the September 9, 2025 Board of Supervisors meeting:

The Solano County supervisors will be updated on what has been nine months of staff activities related to the Collinsville Special Study Area and potential shipbuilding opportunities.

Nine months of secret activities? Nine months of secret collaboration with billionaire land speculators that have the highest unfavourability rating of any organization in Solano County? What happened to transparency?

So as it was revealed this week there is a proposal by a Texas company called Saronic to build in Solano County. The fact that their lead investor is one of the backers of California Forever doesn't instill public confidence that this is anything but a gimmick to promote the California Forever land speculation efforts.

"In July 2024, Andreessen Horowitz led the \$175 million Series B funding round for Saronic, a defense technology company that builds autonomous surface vessels. This investment valued Saronic at \$1 billion. Andreessen Horowitz also participated in Saronic's \$600 million Series C funding round in February 2025."

Of course there have been announcements about shipbuilding. Assemblymember Lori Wilson assembled a committee to examine shipbuilding in Solano County.

<https://www.thereporter.com/2025/04/01/assemblywoman-lori-wilson-names-solano-shipbuilding-working-group/>

I'll admit that I took one look at the make-up of the committee, recognized that many of the members chosen were vocal proponents of California Forever.

"Members of the group include Chair of the Solano County Board of Supervisors Mitch Mashburn, Jan Sramek of California Forever, County Administrator Bill Emlen, Suisun City Mayor Alma Hernandez, Suisun City Manager Bret Prebula, Rio Vista Mayor Edwin Okamura, Rio Vista City Manager Kristina Miller and former worker at Mare Island Naval Shipyard, Dwight Calloway."

Really? That's the committee? Meeting in secret? That's not the way to instill public confidence.

I (and everyone that I know) immediately dismissed this committee as an advocacy vehicle for the California Forever proposal. The placement of California Forever CEO Jan Sramek immediately destroyed any credibility that the committee might have had. The placement of Mayor Alma Hernandez and City Manager Bret Prebula on the committee – the most active and zealous advocates for California Forever – further eroded any credibility. Their behavior and lack of transparency has triggered a well-deserved recall effort in their home city. Rio Vista Mayor Edwin Okamura and Rio Vista City Manager Kristina Miller are much higher

on the credibility list, but their city is in annexation negotiations (perhaps has been forced to be in negotiations) with California Forever. And of all of the public members to chose, my former Solano College colleague Dwight Calloway – the most zealous of all California Forever boosters – he is all over their webpage and was a critical voice in their (later aborted) campaign. The inclusion of the more reasonable and trusted Supervisor Mitch Mashburn and Bill Emlen didn't blunt the credibility impact of the other members.

Most people that I know took one look at that committee and said, "the California Forever fix is in." It's credibility died before the committee even met.

If the committee wanted to earn credibility, they should have added representation by Orderly Growth, perhaps former Supervisor Duane Kromm, and some Delta advocate like former Mayor Elizabeth Patterson. The inclusion of known skeptics might have slowed things down, but it would have eliminated group-think and would have instilled some more credibility into the shipbuilding effort.

Let me pull an example that I think is useful from my own field – biotechnology. It involves Genetically Modified Organisms GMOs. This was outlined in a famous New York Times article called "Biotechnology Food: From the Lab to a Debacle."
<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/01/25/business/25FOOD.html>

From the article:

"For many years, senior executives at Monsanto, the [plant biotechnology] industry's undisputed leader, believed that they faced enormous obstacles from environmental and consumer groups opposed to the new technology. Rather than fight them, the original Monsanto strategy was to bring in opponents as consultants, hoping their participation would ease the foods' passage from the laboratory to the shopping cart.

"We thought it was at least a decade-long job, to take our efforts and present them to environmental groups and the general public, and gradually win support for this," said Earle Harbison Jr., the president and chief operating officer at Monsanto during the late 1980's.

But come the early 1990's, the strategy changed. A new management team took over at Monsanto, one confident that worries about the new technology had been thoroughly disproved by science. The go-slow approach was shelved in favor of a strategy to erase regulatory barriers and shove past the naysayers. The switch invigorated the opponents of biotechnology and ultimately dismayed the industry's allies: the farmers, agricultural universities and food companies.

"Somewhere along the line, Monsanto specifically and the industry in general lost the recipe of how we presented our story," said Will Carpenter, the head of the company's biotechnology strategy group until 1991. "When you put together arrogance and incompetence, you've got an unbeatable combination. You can get blown up in any direction. And they were."

Monsanto began with a strategy of “we are going to communicate our vision that the genetic engineering approach is pro-environment. Rather than spraying chemical pesticides on plants, let’s genetically engineer them to produce a natural pesticide derived from bacteria that is harmless to non-insect animals. That way the pesticide would be targeted within the leaves, rather than widely broadcast. Let’s genetically engineer crops to be herbicide resistant, and that would promote “no-till agriculture” that would preserve topsoil.” So they had committees of environmental and consumer groups. New management replaced this go slow and include everyone approach with “full steam ahead” and “we don’t care what you think.”

From the article:

“The outcome, at least according to some fans of the technology? “Food biotech is dead,” Dr. Miller said. “The potential now is an infinitesimal fraction of what most observers had hoped it would be.”

I would say that the industry did recover, at least in the United States, but it took over two decades. And the name GMO still carries a taint. The industry followed this Monsanto arrogance with decades of blunders. If I were to intentionally design, to engineer, behavior meant to undermine confidence in GMO (which in reality are harmless, useful, and in the future essential) – I could have done no better job than the industry managed in the 1990’s and in the early 2000s.

The situation is the same here. If I were to design a scheme to undermine shipbuilding in Solano County – if I were plotting to sink shipbuilding effort (pardon the pun) = I could not have done a better job.

The background is that it is my belief that the public is generally favorable to the idea of shipbuilding. A proposal at Mare Island would not only have been met with approval, it would have enjoyed (near) universal acclaim. An open conversation that truly engaged the public would have gone a long way toward preventing the public relations nightmare of the last week.

If I had intended to intentionally erode public trust, I would have put California Forever in the lead. I would have had a menagerie of back-room deals and secrets build up and then be revealed to the public at the same time. I would have proposals to have billionaire-backed companies receive special favors – to enact special legislation specifically for them and sneak it in at the last minute during the last week of the legislative session. I would have the public learn of the intense behind-the-scene lobbying by the Governors office. I would have the proposal involve land owned by California Forever, supported by a bogus survey carried out by California Forever, and backed by a JLL consultant’s report commissioned and paid for by California Forever released the week before this hits.

No one really could have done a better job at undermining public trust if they had tried.

So, what have we learned moving forward? First, the County gained additional credibility with the public for not caving and for standing firm defending process. The press, especially the Vacaville Reporter, gained some credibility by (finally) informing the public about what was going on. But the shipbuilding cause has been damaged. Perhaps the credibility of the state to engage in economic development has been damaged – I wouldn’t be surprised if national politicians or political corporation exploit this, our own debacle, against us.

Let's not do this again.

If you want to go fast, go together.

If you want to go far, go together.

Jim DeKloe
Solano County

From: [Keira Noonan](#)
To: [CAO-Clerk](#)
Subject: Item 22, Public Comment on September 9th 2025
Date: Monday, September 8, 2025 2:39:03 PM

Hello,

I wish to make a public comment on item 22 of the agenda

My name is Keira Noonan and I am a student who presides in Solano County in present. I strongly urge you not to expand the areas zoned for IDW and IWD from the existing acres. I ask of council members to be transparent about the proposal and further progress within it.

Thank you for your time,

Keira Noonan

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From: gaylecrawley@sbcglobal.net
To: [CAO-Clerk](#)
Subject: Item 22
Date: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 6:02:40 AM

September 9, 2025

Dear Board of Supervisors, and County Clerk

I have been made aware that Assemblywoman Wilson and Senator Cabaldon have been approached by California Forever LP/Flannery Associates LLC to introduce legislation to convert 7,500 acres of agriculturally-zoned land into a "Solano Maritime Zone" in connection to Saronic Technologies' Project Gondor request for proposal (RFP), a company owned in part by Marc Andreessen's Andreessen Horowitz (part owner of California Forever) and Peter Thiel's Founders Fund. To put the size of acreage in perspective, this proposed rezoning by legislation would affect acreage nearly double the size of Rio Vista's incorporated lands for the purpose of "urgency" and "national security."

Proponents of the rezoning cite the "Collinsville Montezuma Hills Area Development Study" prepared in 1989. However, the study "questions the operational suitability of the Collinsville location for a container terminal [port] in view of its remoteness from main highway and rail lines and the 35' depth of the Sacramento River Channel." Additionally, the study was done in order to pass redevelopment bonds to fund infrastructure in the area for proposed water industry related to a history of interest mainly in petrochemical plants and refineries but also steel production, nuclear power, and coal power, not shipbuilding.

In 1989, 81% of water-dependent industrial land in the Bay Area was used for petroleum-related industry. By 1989, Solano County already had a history of 25 years of proposed industry in the Collinsville area, most notably for chemical and plastic plants from Dow Chemical and ARCO. However, none came to fruition. The proposal for redevelopment bonds by Solano County was struck down by the California Court of Appeals in *Emmington v. Solano County Redevelopment Agency*, partly as a result of the agricultural lands considered for "redevelopment" being erroneously categorized as "blighted."

As it stands, this attempt to change local county zoning at the state level could set a precedent that California Forever need only to reach out to the state legislature to change the zoning of their properties and circumvent the vote of the people of Solano County and the Solano County Board of Supervisors. However, should any effort be made in the California legislature to rezone agricultural lands in Solano County, it must align with current County policies through an environmental impact report and Measure T's "Orderly Growth Initiative" through the Solano County voters. In addition, any proposed legislation must:

1. Limit the legislation to the approximately 1,574 existing acres of water-dependent industrial land at Collinsville
2. Directly tie to the response to Saronic Technologies' "Project Gondor" and not any other proposal, lands, or broader ideas
3. Be cost-neutral to Solano County via a development agreement
4. Be time-limited and contingent that the Collinsville site is selected by Saronic Technologies
5. Be transparent through review by the County and the public, and, once finalized, not to be changed without the County's knowledge and consent
6. Study the feasibility of shipbuilding at the former Mare Island Naval Shipyard at Vallejo and former Army Reserve Center at Rio Vista
7. Include funding for environmental remediation of the former Mare Island Naval Shipyard at Vallejo and the former United States Army Reserve Center at Rio Vista, if neither locations are feasible for either Saronic

Technologies' "Project Gondor" or the shipbuilding industry as a whole

8. Provide for the protection of farmland and habitat on the current parcels owned by Flannery Associates LLC, a subsidiary of the proposed developer, within 5 miles of the proposed Collinsville site through permanent conservation easements to be held by the Solano Land Trust, if interested, or else another trust accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, at a 3:1 mitigation ratio

9. Recommend that the proposed project may be partly owned by the United States Federal Government

I appreciate the county's leadership on this issue and the consideration of the public's role and interest in this process. Thank you for taking my comments into consideration.

Sincerely,
Gayle Crawley
299 Marks Rd.
Rio Vista, Ca 94571

For Board of Supervisors:
clerk@solanocounty.com
crjames@solanocounty.com
mebrown@solanocounty.com
wlwilliams@solanocounty.com
jmvasquez@solanocounty.com
mhmashburn@solanocounty.com

For Assemblywoman Lori Wilson:
Mark.Rossow@asm.ca.gov

For State Senator Christopher Cabaldon:
Timothy.Knox@sen.ca.gov

Sent from my iPad

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From: [Charlene Hummel](#)
To: [CAO-Clerk](#)
Subject: No Shipbuilding in Collinsville
Date: Monday, September 8, 2025 5:02:52 PM

To Solano County Supervisors,

I am opposed to the attempt by California Forever LP/Flannery Associates LLC to introduce legislation to convert 7,500 acres of agriculturally-zoned land into a "Solano Maritime Zone" in connection to Saronic Technologies' Project Gondor request for proposal (RFP), a company owned in part by Marc Andreessen's Andreessen Horowitz (part owner of California Forever) and Peter Thiel's Founders Fund for the purpose of "urgency" and "national security."

Proponents of the rezoning cite the "Collinsville Montezuma Hills Area Development Study" prepared in 1989. However, the study "questions the operational suitability of the Collinsville location for a container terminal [port] in view of its remoteness from main highway and rail lines and the 35' depth of the Sacramento River Channel." Additionally, the study was done in order to pass redevelopment bonds to fund infrastructure in the area for proposed water industry related to a history of interest mainly in petrochemical plants and refineries but also steel production, nuclear power, and coal power, not shipbuilding.

The proposal for redevelopment bonds by Solano County was struck down by the California Court of Appeals in *Emmington v. Solano County Redevelopment Agency*, partly as a result of the agricultural lands considered for "redevelopment" being erroneously categorized as "blighted."

As it stands, this attempt to change local county zoning at the state level could set a precedent that California Forever need only to reach out to the state legislature to change the zoning of their properties and circumvent the vote of the people of Solano County and the Solano County Board of Supervisors. However, should any effort be made in the California legislature to rezone agricultural lands in Solano County, it must align with current County policies through an environmental impact report and Measure T's "Orderly Growth Initiative" through the Solano County voters.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Charlene Hummel
Vacaville resident

Sent from my iPhone

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NAPA-SOLANO CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

"Working People Standing Together"

NSCLC Statement on California Forever/East Solano Plan and Shipbuilding in Solano

President

Lily Starling
Communications Workers
Association #9404

Treasurer

Corey Penrose
Vacaville Teachers Assoc.

Vice Presidents

Darion Pittman
Painters #376

Jesse Espinoza
Operating Engineers #3

Audrey Jacques
Fairfield Suisun United
Teachers Association

Tazamisha Alexander
SEIU #1021

Rachel Allen
NUHW

Alicia Mijares
Sheetmetal Workers #104

Aureliano Ochoa
HFIW #16

Mike Tilden
IBEW #1245

Trustees

Jimmy Thiessen
Teamsters #315

Mike Tebo
Vallejo Education Assoc.

Danny Bernardini
Napa-Solano Building Trades
Council

Samantha Webster
UFCW #5

Executive Director

Glenn Loveall

Office Manager

Shirley Herbert

Bookkeeper

Teresa Villasenor

Intern

Edward Fabi

The Napa-Solano Central Labor Council (AFL-CIO), representing nearly 45 local unions with about 40,000 workers across both of these counties, has the following statement on California Forever/the East Solano Plan and current shipbuilding proposals in Solano.

As a group of stakeholders impacted by growth in Solano County, we recognize both the continued underinvestment in jobs, essential services, housing, and infrastructure in this region (in addition to other outlying Bay Area communities) as well as the need for accountable, equitable, and sustainable growth. This labor movement also recognizes the importance of the broader community's voice in the future of growth.

With regards to the proposed project(s) known as California Forever (alternatively known as the East Solano Plan) as well as on local shipbuilding proposals, the Napa-Solano Central Labor Council calls for the following items:

- 1) The establishment of strong Labor standards and protections across sectors - Following the establishment of a Project Labor Agreement (PLA) in construction, all involved parties must now engage to ensure worker protections in other fields under any potential future development. This would include, but is not limited to, card check neutrality for hotel and grocery workers, high labor standards in health care, card check neutrality in manufacturing, the use of conventional public schools, and the use of conventional public services (as opposed to privatized alternatives), all with strong protections of workers' right to unionize. On public education, it is vital that funding in local school districts (including on a per student and per teacher basis) not be reduced or undermined by any potential changes in District boundaries, and that new or expanded District properties are not used to proliferate charter school with little or no public accountability.
- 2) Democratic oversight - Any potential development under California Forever/the East Solano Plan must be under conventional democratic oversight. This excludes the creation of special unregulated zones (including Freedom Cities and similar charter city proposals), or any reduction of current state and local-level labor, environmental, and other major regulations. The ultimate supervision of any project must be under elected representatives, whether under Solano County, individual existing cities, or any combination thereof, with all related public policy and accountability measures established in advance. Further governance measures should also be explored and encapsulated in any city charter or equivalent documents, including but not limited to citizens' commissions and collaborative governance.
- 3) Community Benefits - Any local governments overseeing any prospective development must engage in an open and extended community benefits process. This includes various stakeholders from the labor, business, environmental, housing, social justice, underserved, and other impacted communities. This process should also be open to stakeholders regardless of their prior or current positions on these projects. It is vital that any potential future development within this county occur with open and consistent community input and oversight on both the nature and quality of any such growth, and that no precedent is set in which investors unilaterally and completely determine the composition of any new city or major expansion of an existing city.

The labor movement has the responsibility to ensure accountable and equitable growth that is beneficial to local workers in partnership with their broader communities. We look forward to any future discussions to establish both worker protections and community oversight on any future growth within and across Solano County.

Best regards,

Glenn Loveall
Executive Director
Napa-Solano Central Labor Council (AFL-CIO)

From: [Sarah Soroken](#)
To: [James, Cassandra R.](#); [Brown, Monica E.](#); [Williams, Wanda L.](#); [Vasquez, John M.](#); [Mashburn, Mitchell H.](#); [mark.rossow@asm.ca.gov](#); [timothy.knox@sen.ca.gov](#); [CAO-Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comment on Item 22 on the Solano County BOS meeting agenda on 9/9/25
Date: Monday, September 8, 2025 2:52:12 PM

Hello Solano County Board of Supervisors, Assemblywoman Lori Wilson, and State Sen. Christopher Cabaldon:

My name is Sarah Soroken, I live in Rio Vista, and I work for Solano County in the Health & Social Services division as a mental health clinician. I am concerned that the proposed legislation being discussed amongst the Board of Supervisors, Assemblywoman Lori Wilson, State Sen. Christopher Cabaldon, and California Forever/Flannery Associates LLC on a “Solano Maritime Zone” would take away my rights as a citizen to vote on local land use decisions and subvert the democratic process in general, encouraging a dangerous precedent to allow people with money and power to go directly to the state or national government to undermine local land use decisions and public processes. The proposed legislation would allow the state to rezone over 7000 acres of land in the Suisun Marsh without regards to our voter approved Orderly Growth Initiative, without an Environmental Impact Review, it would bypass a public process, and cede local control over land-use decision-making.

The project seeker for the shipbuilding facility is Saronic Technologies, whose owners include Marc Andreessen (an investor in California Forever) and Peter Thiel (infamous for his anti-democratic beliefs). I am not aware of these tech billionaires or Saronic Technologies being favorable toward creating or encouraging union jobs. Are the touted 10,000 “generational” jobs to be created by this shipbuilding facility going to be well paid union jobs with worker protections? Given that Collinsville is a remote area without industrial-scale infrastructure such as road, rail, water, and sewage services, what sort of public investment would it take to accommodate 10,000 workers there, and what potential negative harms would we incur (which we could not know for certain without an adequate stakeholder, public, and governmental review and oversight process)? Prior research by the US Army Corps of Engineers indicates a project like the proposed Collinsville shipbuilding facility would threaten the quality of drinking water and lead to saltwater intrusion, which would impact farming as well. Any proposed legislation should:

1. Limit the legislation to the approximately 1574 existing acres of water-dependent industrial land at Collinsville
2. Directly tie the legislation to Saronic Technologies’ “Project Gondor” and not any other proposal, lands, or broader ideas
3. Be cost-neutral to Solano County via a development agreement
4. Be time-limited and contingent that the Collinsville site is selected by Saronic technologies
5. Be transparent through review by the County and the public, and, once finalized, not to be

changed without the County's knowledge and consent

6. Study the feasibility of shipbuilding at the former Mare Island Naval Shipyard at Vallejo and former Army Reserve Center at Rio Vista
7. Provide for the protection of farmland and habitat on the current parcels owned by Flannery Associates LLC, a subsidiary of the proposed developer, within 5 miles of the proposed Collinsville site through permanent conservation easements to be held by the Solano Land Trust, if interested, or else another trust accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, add a 3:1 mitigation ratio
8. Recommend that the proposed project may be partly owned by the United States federal government

Supporting the passage of the legislation without the above protections would not allow for the essential assessments, reviews, and public process to thoughtfully make an informed decision in a democratic manner so we don't do irreparable harm, end up settled with negative outcomes, or cede our democratic rights.

Sincerely,

Sarah Soroken

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From: [Jeff Deiss](#)
To: [CAO-Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comment submitted in connection with Agenda Item 22 (Shipbuilding)
Date: Monday, September 8, 2025 4:58:55 PM

September 8 ,2025

Subject: Public comment submitted in connection with Agenda Item 22 (Shipbuilding)
Solano County Board of Supervisors Meeting, September 9 ,2025

I have been following with great interest the news about the prospect of a shipyard near Collinsville. In these discussions, nearly all of the attention has been focused either on the promise of jobs or on concerns about America's maritime competition with China. Well, we all like jobs and we are all patriotic.

But, I want to encourage us to think critically and long-term before we wager our County's future on this alluring shipyard in Collinsville. I say, wager because if we acquiesce to the pressure, the shipyard development and its substantial accompanying infrastructure improvements will forever transform our county.

Let's examine who it is that wants to develop this shipyard. At last we know it is a start-up company called Saronic, a company based in Austin, Texas that was created just 3 years ago. To its credit, it has become something of a darling among venture capital investors, "having raised just under \$850 million making it the fifth most capitalized defense-tech startup" – [according to an 8/9/2025 online article on newcomer.com](#). Saronic has great aspirations to become a major player in the development and production of autonomous "drone-ships" – [according to a quite detailed report by Contrary Research](#). But to date, it has only built a few small prototype boats, and apparently a recent US Navy test of its boat resulted in a mishap – [according to an 8/20/2025 article in Reuters](#).

My point here is that it is *not* the United States government asking Solano County to supply land for a US Naval Shipyard for our national defense. Rather it is a start-up, private company funded by venture capital whose future fortunes are unknown. It is not the only company competing to build the new high-tech drone-ships. It has not been chosen by the US Navy for a major shipbuilding contract. It could become the Apple of autonomous ships, or it could flame out.

With this mind, I want to commend you on the course that the Board of Supervisors and our County staff have hued in the midst of what sometimes verges on irrational exuberance among shipyard boosters. The timeline of your recent communications with the developers shows that you have been consistently ready and willing to engage, but you have not been

willing to act in the absence of solid information and plans sufficient to be critically evaluated.

If Saronic is interested in the currently zoned industrial property in its existing condition, and if the obligation of County infrastructure funding is minimal, well and good. But when Saronic wants special considerations, hasty commitments, exemptions from environmental and planning analysis, industrial acreage beyond what is currently zoned, or seeks to bypass the prudent steps of diligent due process, these are neighbors that will only bring additional trouble. The highly volatile private shipbuilding sector is littered with bankrupt companies, undelivered job promises, and contaminated sites. Solano County's open space and farmland is not replaceable venture capital; it is the only capital we will ever have.

Jeffrey Deiss

1908 Illinois St, Vallejo, CA 94590

510-809-5233

deissjeff@gmail.com

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From: [James Dekloe](#)
To: [CAO-Clerk](#); [James, Cassandra R.](#); [Brown, Monica E.](#); [Williams, Wanda L.](#); [Vasquez, John M.](#); [Mashburn, Mitchell H.](#); [Mark.Rossow@asm.ca.gov](#); [alex.pader@sen.ca.gov](#); [Timothy.Knox@sen.ca.gov](#)
Subject: Saronic
Date: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 6:59:39 AM
Attachments: [Saronic.docx](#)

Colleagues,

Here is another analysis by Jeff Deiss, a Vallejo shipbuilding expert. (Attached).

And his letter:

Jim DeKloe
Solano County

Subject: Public comment submitted in connection with Agenda Item 22
(Shipbuilding)
Solano County Board of Supervisors Meeting, September 9 ,2025

I have been following with great interest the news about the prospect of a shipyard near Collinsville. In these discussions, nearly all of the attention has been focused either on the promise of jobs or on concerns about America's maritime competition with China. Well, we all like jobs and we are all patriotic.

But, I want to encourage us to think critically and long-term before we wager our County's future on this alluring shipyard in Collinsville. I say, wager because if we acquiesce to the pressure, the shipyard development and its substantial accompanying infrastructure improvements will forever transform our county.

Let's examine who it is that wants to develop this shipyard. At last we know it is a start-up company called Saronic, a company based in Austin, Texas that was created just 3 years ago. To its credit, it has become something of a darling among venture capital investors, "having raised just under \$850 million making it the fifth most capitalized defense-tech startup" – [according to an 8/9/2025 online article on newcomer.com](#). Saronic has great aspirations to become a major player in the development and production of autonomous "drone-ships" – [according to a quite detailed report by Contrary Research](#). But to date, it has only built a few small prototype boats, and apparently a recent US Navy test of its boat resulted in a mishap – [according to an 8/20/2025 article in Reuters](#).

My point here is that it is *not* the United States government asking Solano County to supply land for a US Naval Shipyard for our national defense. Rather it is a start-up, private company funded by venture capital whose future fortunes are unknown. It is not the only company competing to build the new high-tech drone-ships. It has not been chosen by the US Navy for

a major shipbuilding contract. It could become the Apple of autonomous ships, or it could flame out.

With this mind, I want to commend you on the course that the Board of Supervisors and our County staff have hued in the midst of what sometimes verges on irrational exuberance among shipyard boosters. The timeline of your recent communications with the developers shows that you have been consistently ready and willing to engage, but you have not been willing to act in the absence of solid information and plans sufficient to be critically evaluated.

If Saronic is interested in the currently zoned industrial property in its existing condition, and if the obligation of County infrastructure funding is minimal, well and good. But when Saronic wants special considerations, hasty commitments, exemptions from environmental and planning analysis, industrial acreage beyond what is currently zoned, or seeks to bypass the prudent steps of diligent due process, these are neighbors that will only bring additional trouble. The highly volatile private shipbuilding sector is littered with bankrupt companies, undelivered job promises, and contaminated sites. Solano County's open space and farmland is not replaceable venture capital; it is the only capital we will ever have.

Jeffrey Deiss

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From: [James Dekloe](#)
To: [CAO-Clerk](#); [James, Cassandra R.](#); [Brown, Monica E.](#); [Williams, Wanda L.](#); [Vasquez, John M.](#); [Mashburn, Mitchell H.](#); [Mark.Rossow@asm.ca.gov](#); [alex.pader@sen.ca.gov](#); [Timothy.Knox@sen.ca.gov](#)
Subject: Shipbuilding in Collinsville
Date: Monday, September 8, 2025 8:56:47 AM
Attachments: [Shipbuildinganalysis.pdf](#)

Colleagues,

There is a citizen with shipbuilding expertise who lives in Vallejo who has given me permission to pass on his analysis of the potential for shipbuilding in Solano County and in Collinsville

Here it is

Jim DeKloe
Solano County

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What’s all the excitement about?

Historical appeal – Solano County had a shipbuilding economy – Mare Island, Vallejo – Naval Shipyard 1852-1996 – built over 400 ships; employed 40,000 at its peak.

Key dates in recent discussion of shipbuilding

12/18/2024	SHIPS Act is introduced in 118 th Congress
3/4/2005	President Trump’s State of the Union mentions restoring maritime dominance
3/21/2025	California Forever announces Collinsville shipyard concept
3/28/2025	Congressman Garamendi & Vallejo Mayor Andrea Sorce promote SHIPS Act at Mare Island
4/1/2025	Stockton mayor boosts Port of Stockton as shipbuilding location
4/9/2025	President Trump’s Executive Order, Restoring America’s Maritime Dominance
4/15/2025	Suisun City, Rio Vista, & Fairfield pass pro-shipbuilding resolutions
4/22/2025	Vacaville City Council passed pro-shipbuilding resolution
4/15/2025	Mayor Sorce statement on shipyards
4/29/2025	Solano EDC issues shipyard support letter
4/30/2025	SHIPS Act is re-introduced in 119 th Congress

Two recent political developments

Neither of these proposals are anywhere near a reality and each face considerable headwinds.

1. SHIPS Act

What is it?

12/18/2024 bill H.R. 10493, named “Shipbuilding and Harbor Infrastructure for Prosperity and Security (SHIPS) for American Act,” introduced in 118th Congress by Senators Mark Kelly (D-AZ) and Todd Young (R-IN), along with Representatives John Garamendi (D-CA-8) and Trent Kelly (R-MS-1). Bipartisan support is notable, and the bill was in the process of being written in Congress during the Biden Administration. At that time, then Rep. Michael Waltz (R-FL) was a cosponsor, and Waltz was briefly President Trump’s National Security Advisor.

4/30/2025 bill S. 1536 reintroduced in 119th Congress by same co-sponsors, renamed “Building Ships in America Act of 2025”

Provisions:

310-page bill, addressing many aspects of US commercial shipping and shipbuilding.

Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/senate-bill/1536/text/is>

Section-by-Section: https://www.kelly.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/SHIPS-for-America-Act_Section-by-Section_4.30.2025.pdf

Summary: <https://garamendi.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/garamendi.house.gov/files/evo-media->

[document/SHIPS%20for%20America%20Act%20Section%20by%20Section%20%2812.9.24%20-%20General%29.pdf](#)

Act would establish a Maritime Security Trust Fund, provide \$250 million annually for shipyard projects, offer tax credits for shipyard investments, boost the U.S.-flagged fleet by 250 vessels over the next decade

Key Initiatives:

- US Commercial Fleet Expansion. A key goal of the SHIPS Act is to grow the U.S.-built and flagged international commercial fleet of 250 ships within 10 years. (There are currently just 80.) The program permits foreign-built reflagged vessels permitted in early years (till 2029), thereafter must be all US-built. (This allows South Korea to apply for a competitive bid to build U.S. interim vessels in South Korea's shipyards.)
- Shipbuilding Financing and Subsidies. Federal government subsidizes the difference in capital costs and operating costs associated with constructing and operating a US-built, US-flagged vessel as compared to a fair and reasonable estimate of the costs of constructing and operating that type of vessel in a foreign shipyard or under a foreign flag
- Shipyard Investments Incentives. Establishes financial incentives for investments in U.S. shipyards, including a [twenty-five percent](#) investment tax credit.
- Grants. Provides for federal grants of \$250 million per year for shipbuilding or shipyards; \$100 million per year for small shipyards.
- Streamlined environmental reviews so these are completed within two years.

Status:

118th Congress – introduced in House and referred to committee. No further progress.

119th Congress – introduced in Senate and referred to Finance Committee. Action pending.

Proposed bill with no action since initial introduction – <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/senate-bill/1536/all-actions>

Public Reactions:

“Bipartisan SHIPS Act aims to revitalize US maritime industry, counter China’s dominance.” (12/19/2024) <https://gcaptain.com/bipartisan-ships-act-aims-to-revitalize-u-s-maritime-industry-counter-chinas-dominance/>

“Papaviza says Trump ‘executive order’ supports US Ships Act & shipbuilding,” American Journal of Transportation. (3/11/2025) <https://www.ajot.com/insights/full/ai-papavizas-says-trump-executive-order-supports-us-ships-act-shipbuilding>

Collaboration with countries such as Japan and South Korea will be key: “I’m sure you know that most of the existing large shipyards are property constrained and can’t easily expand. So that means new shipyards. And who’s going to build the new shipyard? Well, the South Korean shipyards could. But the demand signal is going to have to be pretty strong.”

Prospects?

Uncertain. In order to become law, it must pass both the House and Senate and be signed by the President. The bill is complex, expensive with uncertain funding, and controversial, though it has bipartisan sponsorship. If it does become statute, it will not be for some time and only after being amended.

There are many provisions in the SHIPS Act which comport with the Executive Order (below), so the Maritime Action Plan would presumably influence any final amendment of the SHIPS Act.

2. Executive Order, “Restoring America’s Maritime Dominance”

What is it?

A Presidential Executive Order directing action by the Executive Branch.

4/9/2025 issued by President Trump

Provisions:

Text: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/04/restoring-americas-maritime-dominance/>

Key Initiatives:

- Maritime Action Plan to be developed Develop within 210 days
- US Commercial Fleet Expansion. Budgeting assessment for increasing the number of U.S.-flagged vessels in international trade and enhancing subsidies for militarily useful commercial ships
- Shipbuilding Financing and Subsidies. Legislative proposal to set up a Maritime Security Trust Fund and a Shipbuilding Financial Incentives Program to provide consistent, long-term financing, possibly backed by tariffs, fees, or tax revenue
- Shipyard Investments Incentives. Identify options within 180 days for the use of Defense Production Act and private capital to invest in and expand the commercial and defense shipbuilding capabilities, component supply chains, ship repair and marine transportation capabilities, port infrastructure, and workforce
- Maritime Prosperity Zones (modeled on Trump1 Opportunity Zones) design within 90 days to target new investment in U.S. waterfront regions—including beyond the traditional coastal shipyard hubs

Public Reactions:

Maritime specialists call hopes for a Lazarus-like revival of U.S. shipbuilding unrealistic, saying it would require decades of consistent federal support. Imposing hefty fees on Chinese ships now, before American-made alternatives exist, would only raise freight costs and snarl global supply chains, they said. “It appears to be written by people who have absolutely no idea how the maritime supply chain works,” said Lars Jensen, chief executive of Vespucci Maritime, a consultancy in Copenhagen.

Arnav Rao, “How America Lost Control of the Seas,” *The Atlantic*. 5/28/2025.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/economy/archive/2025/05/american-shipbuilding-decline/682945/>

“A bipartisan bill in Congress and a recent executive order seek to address the problem. The plans aim to levy tariffs on Chinese-owned ships and create new tax incentives to spur investment in shipyards, among other provisions. These ideas, though helpful, are too simplistic and small-bore. The central problem is not just inadequate investment or insufficient tariffs. It is the abandonment of a system of regulated competition that structures the industry to meet public purposes. Restoring a robust version of that system would revive the government’s ability to direct cartels to operate in the public interest.”

“US ships championed by Trump cost 5 times as much as Asian Ones,” *New York Times*.

5/27/2025. <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/05/27/business/economy/trump-shipbuilding-china.html>

“Trump wants to build more ships. It’s not so simple.” *Washington Post*. 3/23/2025.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2025/03/23/trump-shipbuilding-fees-china/>

“Maritime specialists call hopes for a Lazarus-like revival of U.S. shipbuilding unrealistic, saying it would require decades of consistent federal support. Imposing hefty fees on Chinese ships now, before American-made alternatives exist, would only raise freight costs and snarl global supply chains, they said.”

“An industry revival faces numerous hurdles. U.S. shipyards today have little presence in the commercial market, concentrating instead on producing vessels for the Navy. The only significant recent contract won by a U.S. shipyard came in 2022, when Matson, a Hawaii-based carrier, ordered three midsize container ships from the Hanwha Philly Shipyard in Philadelphia.... Matson paid roughly \$330 million per ship, while Chinese shipyards offer similar vessels for just \$60 million, according to Lloyd’s List, a London-based industry publication.”

Schumpeter, “Will the trade wars capsize shipbuilders?” *The Economist*. (5/3/2025).

<https://www.economist.com/business/2025/05/01/will-the-trade-war-capsize-shipbuilders>

“The domestic industry has been virtually non-existent for decades, displaced first by the Japanese and then the South Koreans. As long ago as the 1970s America made just 5% of the world’s merchant vessels. Today that figure is 0.1%. Except for a few mostly naval facilities, there is no supply chain to speak of. Remaining commercial shipyards are small; last year Hanwha bought one in Pennsylvania for \$100m, the list price of two bog-standard modern vessels. The labour pool is dry. Tariffs on steel push up the cost of materials.

A medium-size tanker or container ship made in America costs around \$300m..., six times as much as one built in South Korea. It is proving hard enough to bring back from Asia semiconductor manufacturing, where America still accounts for one-tenth of global output. Reshoring shipbuilding is dead in the water, sums up the chairman of a large maritime-engineering firm.”

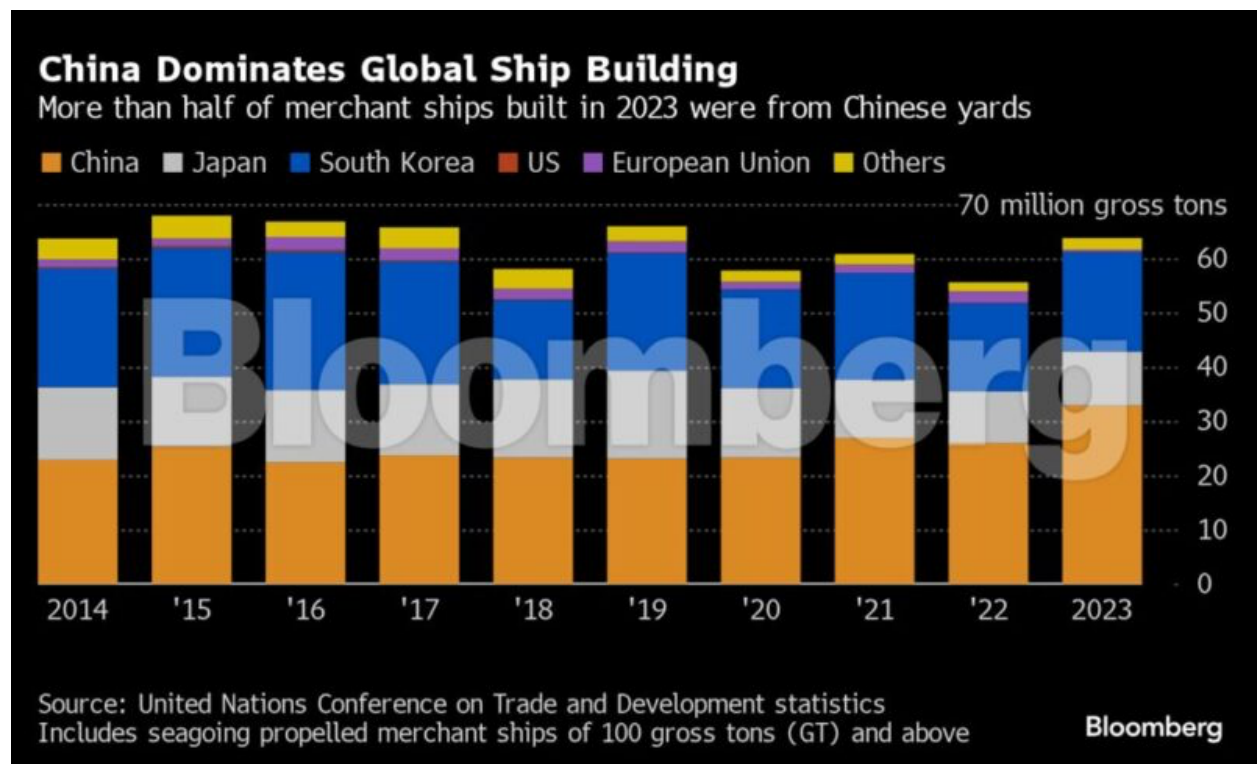
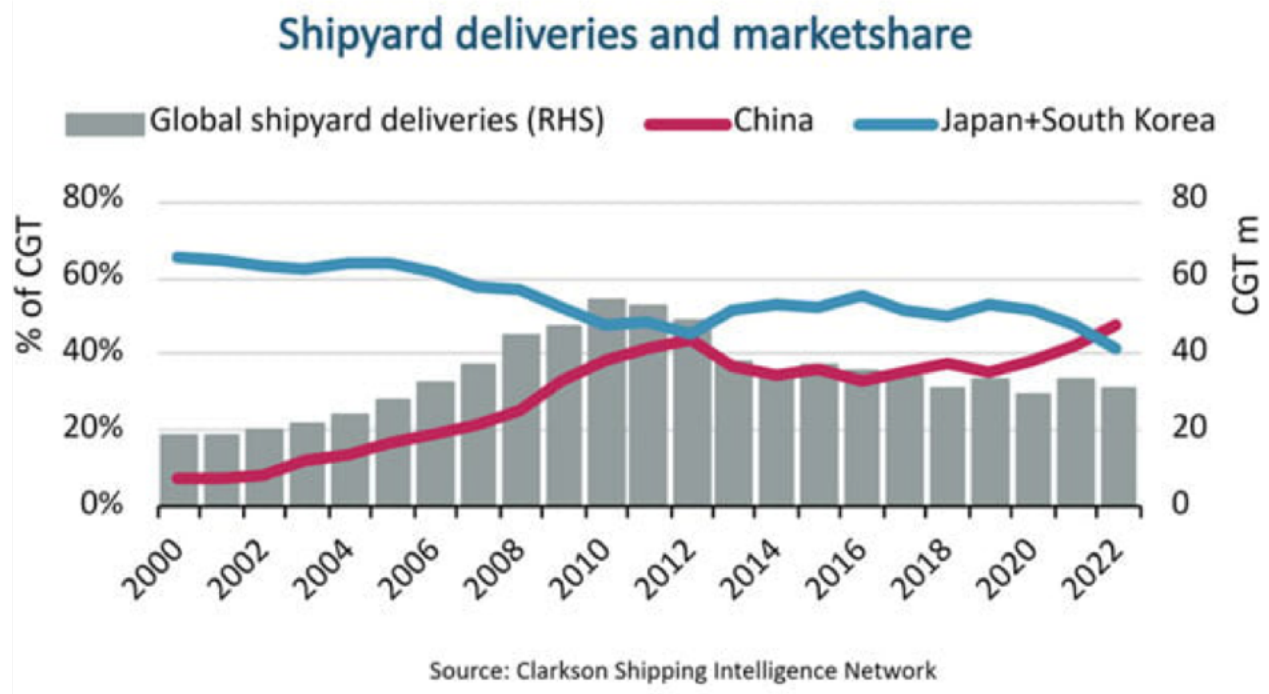
Prospects?

As an Executive Order, it will almost certainly result in the requested “Maritime Action Plan” being drafted for Presidential review and consideration within 7 months’ time. Then it would remain to be seen which recommendations President Trump would endorse and which he would act upon unilaterally or refer to Congress.

There are many provisions in the Executive Order which comport with the SHIPS Act (above), so the Maritime Action Plan would presumably influence any final amendment of the SHIPS Act.

What's driving these proposals?

Competition with China. China has become the dominant shipbuilding nation of the world.



Source: <https://gcaptain.com/us-navy-collaborates-with-allies-shipyards-to-counter-chinas-maritime-expansion/>

- Concern that the U.S. has an inadequate number of commercial ships to support the military, especially the Navy, with logistical support in the event of a future overseas conflict.
- Further, it is calculated that stimulating U.S. commercial shipbuilding will increase the capabilities of U.S. shipyards which have fallen behind in their ability both to maintain and build the U.S. Naval fleet.

Center for Strategic & International Studies, “Unpacking the White House’s Executive Order on restoring the U.S. shipbuilding industry” (4/10/2025) <https://www.csis.org/analysis/unpacking-white-houses-executive-order-restoring-us-shipbuilding-industry>

Shipbuilding Economics and Naval Defense

The problems that afflict the U.S. commercial shipbuilding sector also have placed significant challenges on the maintenance and production of naval ships. Nearly entirely dependent on fewer and fewer capable US shipyards, the Navy is facing a crisis with ship production falling far behind schedule. The loss of a robust commercial shipbuilding sector has limited the Navy’s options. This problem has been recognized for some time and the following articles provide more details.

Brent D. Sadler, “The nation needs a shipbuilding revolution,” US Naval Institute Proceedings. (2/2025) <https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2025/february/nation-needs-shipbuilding-revolution>

Philip A. Dur, “The high costs of doing (shipbuilding) business,” US Naval Institute Proceedings. (2/2025) <https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2025/february/high-costs-doing-shipbuilding-business>

Martin J. Bollinger, “Shareholder interests are at odds with Navy needs,” US Naval Institute Proceedings. (2/2025) <https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2025/february/shareholder-interests-are-odds-navy-needs>

The current industrial base is falling short in many areas, and the demands of shareholders often misalign with the interests of customers and taxpayers. More investment in workforce training, supply-chain clarity, and manufacturing technology is certainly part of the solution. The question is whether it is enough. Perhaps it is time to consider “bold action with confidence” to build the right industrial base

This final article is particularly salient in that it points out the divergence between the interests of the Navy and US corporate shipyard companies and their stockholders.

Global and US shipbuilding in historical context:

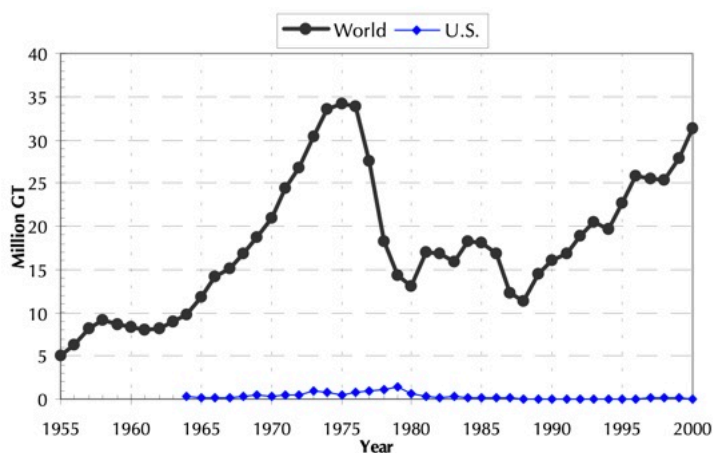
Arnav Rao, “Charting a New Course: Steering U.S. Maritime Policy toward Security and Prosperity.” Open Markets Institute: 5/2025.

<https://www.openmarketsinstitute.org/publications/charting-a-new-course-steering-us-maritime-policy-towards-security-and-prosperity>

Tim Colton & LaVar Huntzinger, “Brief History of Shipbuilding in Recent Times.” (CNA-Center for Naval Analyses: 2002) <https://www.cna.org/reports/2002/history-of-shipbuilding-in-recent-times>

Central finding from this history is that the US has *never* been a major international player in commercial shipbuilding, and its most productive years have been thanks to heavy government subsidy. US shipyards are fewer and lack the scale and workforce experience to compete with large players like South Korea, Japan, and now China. Meanwhile, these large foreign players show very little profit from their shipbuilding business.

Figure 1. World and U.S. merchant ship deliveries



“Why China’s targeting of the maritime, logistic, and shipbuilding sectors for dominance is important to the United States.” <https://gcaptain.com/why-chinas-targeting-of-the-maritime-logistics-and-shipbuilding-sectors-for-dominance-is-important-to-the-united-states/> (3/21/2025)

Instead of investing in America’s maritime infrastructure the United States government decided in the 1980’s there was only room for one sector – commercial or military – and they chose the latter. With the end of the Cold War, the 600 ship Navy went down to less than 300 and the nation’s shipyards could only rely on a small anemic commercial sector to support intra-US shipping.

It was at that moment that China made its appearance onto the world’s oceans. China, in 2003 expressed their desire to become a strong maritime, shipbuilding, and shipping nation. This coincided with a doubling of the world’s maritime trade from six billion tons in 2000 to twelve billion tons in 2024.

Since 2000, the maritime industry has experienced consolidation in nearly all areas. The number of shipyards has dropped 60 percent since 2007. The top ten container firms that controlled fifty percent of the container capacity afloat in 2000 now control eighty-five percent. China built fifty-one percent of all commercial ships in 2024, up from five percent in 1999 and are on track to have seventy-five percent of all orders in Chinese yards.

Congressional Research Service, “U.S. Commercial Shipbuilding in a Global Context.” (11/15/2023). <https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/IF12534>

China is building hundreds of ships per year, and the United States is building five or fewer. In terms of gross tons, which is a measure of a ship's volume, China, Korea, and Japan build over 90% of the world's tonnage; the United States builds about 0.2%. The minuscule U.S. market share in shipbuilding long pre-dates China's ascent. Since the 1980s, U.S. shipyards have been building around five ships per year, which is the current rate of U.S. shipbuilding.

Table 1. Year-End Orderbook for Large Oceangoing Ships (number of ships under construction)

Shipbuilder	2022	2021	2020
China	1,794	1,708	1,216
South Korea	734	626	441
Japan	587	612	533
Europe	319	288	284
United States	5	3	4

There are only a few large U.S. shipyards which have the workforce and infrastructure (e.g., larger dry docks, deeper channels) needed to construct large oceangoing ships. Two shipyards, one Philadelphia and one in San Diego, have built the majority of domestically built commercial cargo ships in recent years.

Table 2. U.S. Shipyards Constructing Large Commercial Cargo Ships, 2010-2023

Shipyards	Location	Ships Built
Philly Shipyards	Philadelphia, PA	16 tankers 2 container ships
General Dynamics NASSCO	San Diego, CA	12 tankers 4 container ships
VT Halter Marine*	Pascagoula, MS	2 container ships 1 roll-on/roll-off
Keppel AmFELS	Brownsville, TX	2 container ships
BAE Systems	Mobile, AL**	1 tanker (2012)
Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding	Sturgeon Bay, WI	1 dry bulk "laker"

Notes: *acquired by Bollinger Shipyards in 2022; **closed in 2018.

No overseas purchase of large U.S.-built ships has occurred in decades because U.S.-built ships can be four or more times the world price because of the artificial internal market created by The Jones Act (a 1920's era law that requires that all intra-U.S. shipping be conducted only with U.S.-built ships). The lack of exports prevents U.S. shipyards from achieving economies of scale.

Worldwide, overcapacity plagues the shipbuilding sector. As a result, there has been considerable recent consolidation in the industry. The three largest shipbuilding firms in China, Korea, and Japan (nine firms in total) account for 75% of world shipbuilding capacity. The number of active shipyards in 2022 was 301 compared with a peak of 699 in 2007. Current worldwide shipyard capacity is about 1,200-1,300 ships per year compared with about 2,000 ships per year between 2005 and 2010.

Despite the consolidation in Korea and Japan ***even the most successful shipbuilding firms often operate at a loss. Ship sale prices seldom exceed their building costs.*** Korean and Japanese shipbuilders are traditionally part of large manufacturing and financial conglomerates (e.g., Samsung, Hyundai, Mitsubishi, Kawasaki) where other profitable segments can help weather the poor profitability of their shipbuilding sector. Even so, ***Korean shipbuilders have repeatedly required large government bailouts.*** Chinese shipbuilders are heavily subsidized or even government-owned.

If the U.S. seeks a more robust U.S. commercial shipbuilding sector, heavy subsidization, dim profitability, and expensive new federal programs will be required.

“Shipyards faced with vexing capacity issues.” <https://splash247.com/shipyards-faced-with-vexing-capacity-issues/> (1/23/2023)

There is uncertainty about future shipbuilding demand. On the one hand, larger shipyards are sitting on longer orderbooks than they have enjoyed for many years, with experts predicting a wave of orders for alternative-fueled ships to replace an aging, polluting global merchant fleet. But now shipbuilders have to balance the global fleet renewal requirements against a backdrop of muted trade growth.

The world's 95 first-tier shipyards utilized 70% of their capacity in 2022, but the more numerous second-tier shipyards only utilized 40% of their capacity in 2022 and will use even less in 2023.

Some project that further consolidation in the industry is likely as up to 30% of today's shipyards are on course to run out of orders soon

What is the outlook for commercial or naval shipyard revitalization in the U.S.?

Clearly there are major obstacles to any revitalization effort. The world's shipbuilding economy is highly competitive, making any undertaking to change it daunting. Even the current large shipyard “winners” are largely unprofitable and facing stress, resulting in greater consolidation. The successful world players are large operations with major resources and generally backstopped by subsidies and other support from their national governments.

McKinsey & Company, “Charting a new course: The untapped potential of American shipyards.” (6/5/2024) <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/aerospace-and-defense/our-insights/charting-a-new-course-the-untapped-potential-of-american-shipyards#/>

Many US shipyards have been in service for decades, with some infrastructure dating back to the World War II era or even earlier. Despite their age, domestic shipyards still have a great deal of life: the existence of robust ecosystems for sustainment and repair have allowed them to remain functional and relevant, though often in need of targeted operational and productivity improvements.

McKinsey primarily recommends improvement management of operations, supply chains, and workforce development as the first and critical step. Carefully targeted capital improvements may be necessary as well. However, because of their complexity, shipbuilders are at an elevated risk of sinking millions of dollars into ineffective capacity expansions. Two common pitfalls include expanding capacity where it’s not needed and replicating unproductive operating systems in new facilities.

What shipyard revitalization projects currently underway in the US?

With the McKinsey report’s findings in mind, the wisdom of leveraging the managerial skills and production practices of existing high-volume international shipbuilders seems promising. Indeed, there is some evidence that this is happening via South Korean investment in the US.

Recent signs of revitalization at existing U.S. shipyards:

Recent shipyard revitalization projects have all focused on upgrading and repurposing existing US shipyards, seemingly driven by either new tech companies or foreign investors (prominently South Korea):

“HD Hyundai Signs Two Major U.S. Defense MOUs, Signaling Korean Push into American Shipbuilding.” (4/9/2025) <https://gcaptain.com/hd-hyundai-signs-two-major-u-s-defense-mous-signaling-korean-push-into-american-shipbuilding/>

HD Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI) has signed two separate memorandums of understanding this week with major American defense contractors [Fairbanks Morse Defense (FMD) and Huntington Ingalls Industries (HII), America’s largest military shipbuilder] in a move seen as underscoring growing South Korean involvement in U.S. shipbuilding.

“Hanwha Completes \$100M Acquisition of Philly Shipyard, Marking First Korean Shipbuilder in U.S.” (12/20/2024). <https://gcaptain.com/hanwha-completes-100m-acquisition-of-philly-shipyard-marking-first-korean-shipbuilder-in-u-s/>

South Korean conglomerate Hanwha Group has completed its \$100 million acquisition of Philly Shipyard.

“Saronic acquires Louisiana shipyard, unveils next-gen ASV [autonomous surface vessel].” (4/18/2025). <https://www.navaltoday.com/2025/04/18/saronic-acquires-luisana-shipyard-unveils-next-gen-asv/>

US tech company Saronic will acquire Gulf Craft, a Louisiana-based shipbuilder, to accelerate its growth into building autonomous ships.

Development of New U.S. shipyards

There is no indication of any specific new, greenfield shipyard projects.

The only sign comes from the new Secretary of the Navy John Phelan has said he wants to consider opening additional shipyards- <https://www.stripes.com/branches/navy/2025-04-09/navy-secretary-shipbuilding-shipyards-17419816.html>

What are the specific prospects for shipyards in the Bay Area?

Northern California has an existing maritime industry, but Southern California is the dominant location for shipping. The Ports of Long Beach (ranked #5 in the US) and Los Angeles (#11) are the largest on the West Coast; San Diego has the West Coast's major shipyard (General Dynamics NASSCO).

Bay Area shipping is led by the Ports of Richmond (#28) and Oakland (#33). Also Stockton (#73), San Francisco (#120), Redwood City (#124), Sacramento (#138).

<https://usace.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16021coll2/id/14589>

"California's Bay Area is an ideal location for a new Navy shipyard," *Forbes*. (9/8/2023).

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/craighooper/2023/09/08/californias-bay-area-is-an-ideal-location-for-a-new-navy-shipyard/>

This commentator has suggested there is an opportunity for a shipyard in the Bay Area. He suggests numerous locations for a new Navy nuclear submarine shipyard in California – Mare Island, West Sacramento, Stockton, Antioch, Pittsburg, Concord, Benicia, or replacing a shuttering fuel refinery. (*Collinsville is NOT mentioned.*)

Flannery announces a shipyard project

After over a century of quietude, Collinsville was announced as a shipyard site by the proponents of the East Solano Plan/California Forever, i.e., Flannery Associates:

"Billionaire-backed California Forever plots big shift: Huge shipbuilding operation," San Francisco Chronicle. (3/21/2025) <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/california-forever-shipbuilding-solano-county-20233657.php>

"A shipbuilding operation would mark a sharp departure for California Forever, a controversial billionaire-backed development group that has spent more than \$1 billion buying up over 50,000 acres in Solano County. The group's ambitions include developing a city of up to 400,000 residents on 17,500 acres near Rio Vista. While the plan had included the development of some light manufacturing — including drones, robotics and modular housing — it didn't previously mention anything as heavy as shipbuilding, nor did it propose that any maritime industries would take advantage of the land it owns on the Sacramento River.... In a statement, California Forever confirmed the group was considering constructing a shipbuilding facility on the site about 2 miles east in Collinsville, an unincorporated community of fewer than 100 residents."

Collinsville “Water Dependent Industrial” (WDI) zoned parcels – 1989 to present

When the 1989 Solano County General Plan was developed, it included a specific “Collinsville-Montezuma Hills Area Plan and Program”.

<https://www.solanocounty.com/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=6492> (see pp. LU.67-LU.73)

“This plan was drafted to analyze the economic, planning, and environmental conditions related to providing for water-dependent industrial development, though this has not occurred to date in this part of the county, despite some development proposals.”

As a result, Collinsville had 5 parcels zoned for “Water Dependent Industrial” use. These are indicated on the map below in lavender:



<https://www.solanocounty.com/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=6492>

There is 1 parcel zoned Water Dependent Industrial immediately WEST of Collinsville:

- APN 0090120270

This parcel is apparently not part of any shipyard proposal. It is owned today by **Montezuma Wetlands, LLC** - <https://montezumawetlands.com>

“The Montezuma Wetlands project is a private initiative that has successfully begun to address two important societal challenges – historic loss of wetlands and finding a responsible and beneficial use for millions of cubic yards of sediments dredged annually from San Francisco Bay Area ports, harbors and channels”

In recent years this parcel has offered the primary commercial maritime activity near Collinsville, as a receiver of dredging mud from other Bay Area projects.

“Collinsville plan to dump mud near Delta wins OK,” San Francisco Chronicle (3/16/2001)

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/collinsville-plan-to-dump-mud-near-delta-wins-ok-2941300.php>

There are 4 contiguous parcels zoned Water Dependent Industrial EAST of Collinsville:

- APN 0090180250
- APN 0090180280
- APN 0090220310
- APN 0090100380

These were owned at one time by Dow Chemical, then Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD), and now by Flannery.

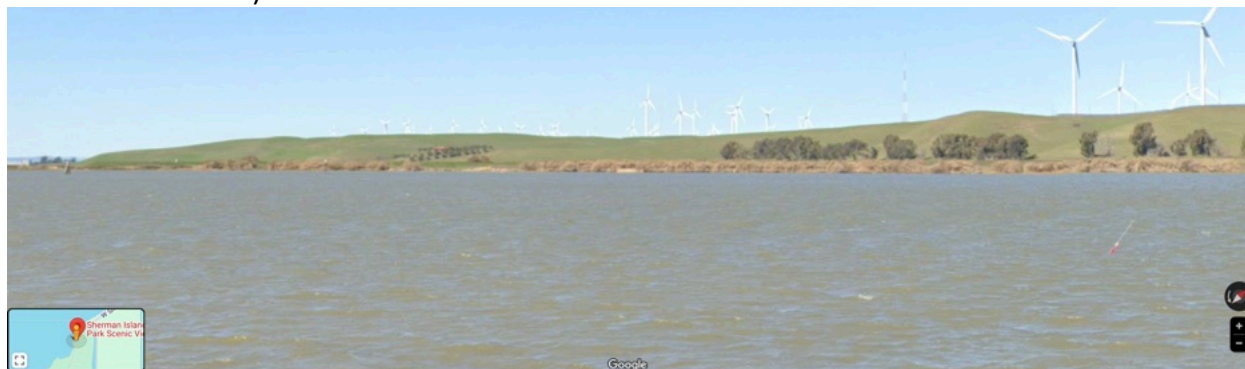
The location and topography of these parcels are shown below with the Water Dependent Industrial parcels approximately outlined in black. Most of the property is low-lying and level, but it includes several valleys, the longest one stretching out to the northwest to connect with Talbert Lane:



The aerial photo below from the California Forever web site shows the westernmost portion of the WDI parcels which mostly consists of the low-level land (which appear to have been created by past dredge spoils) fronting the point on the right. (The wind turbines are in the hills above the parcels and not part of the subject property.)



In this Google Maps photo, you can see the easternmost portion of the WDI parcels viewed from across the Sacramento River. Again, the property consists of low-level land (not the ridges with wind turbines):



Is a Collinsville shipyard viable?

The shipyard proponent's view

At present there is only limited detail about the size and nature of the proposed Collinsville shipyard. The California Forever web site says the “Solano Shipyard Complex” will span 1,400 acres and “accommodate a full-scale, next-generation shipyard and maritime logistics hub.” [Note: The actual WDI zoned property is 1,210 acres.]

<https://californiaforever.com/faq-category/solano-shipyard-faqs/>

“The 1,400-acre Solano site provides exceptional flexibility—capable of supporting multiple dry docks, modular fabrication lines, laydown yards, logistics hubs, and clean propulsion infrastructure. Its scale allows for the co-location of defense and commercial operations, supply chain partners, and future expansion, offering a rare West Coast opportunity to establish a resilient, dual-use maritime complex.”

Is it really such a compellingly feasible project?

Past Studies:

In 1989, in connection with the development of a Solano County General Plan, the County commissioned **a 34-page feasibility study of the maritime industrial viability of Collinsville**, including all of the land south of Hwy 12 and north of the Sacramento River, bounded by Montezuma Slough on the west and Rio Vista on the east. At that time, the area was apparently being considered by Dow Chemical and Arco for industrial use as a refinery served by tanker barges. Nothing ended up being developed, but the report is useful.

Williams-Kuebelbeck & Associates, Inc., “Collinsville Montezuma Hills Area Development Study.” (5/24/1989) <https://californiaforever.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/5-24-1989-Collinsville-Montezuma-Hills-Area-Development-Study.pdf>

The study reported that the site was not currently feasible due to its remote location and being “almost entirely unserved by major infrastructure.” “Only when those other sites are

exhausted or approach in price the cost of extending infrastructure to Collinsville do we expect the area to become competitive....” While also noting, “This situation could change rapidly if future national economic development policies and world trade conditions create a more favorable climate for domestic heavy industry.” It also notes, “There is always the possibility, as well, that some sites in current use for declining industries will be redeployed for expanding industries in the future.”

Other interesting findings in the report include:

- “The use of Collinsville as a deep draft terminal is currently somewhat limited by the depth of the Sacramento Channel which is maintained at 35 feet.” Noting the 45-foot depth needed for shipping at the head of the Bay, “unless the channel serving Collinsville is also deepened, it will suffer a competitive disadvantage for certain uses....”
- “Land transportation constraints are even more severe than marine restraints. The existing roadways are incapable of supporting heavy truck traffic, and access to Interstate highways is 25 miles from the site.”
- “Rail service exists only as Southern Pacific and Union Pacific jointly own the right-of-way to the site; the bed and trackage would require major work to become serviceable.”
- “Industrial use of the site cannot be approved by the county unless water and sewage are developed.”
- “Before it becomes suitable for port or water-dependent heavy industrial use the Collinsville area will need an inlet channel, a turning basin and a place to dispose the dredge spoils, a major industrial road connecting to Highway 12 and a reconstructed rail line... together with enhanced water supply and storage, a sewage and storm drainage system and improved flood protection.”
- **“In round numbers, at least \$50 million worth [in 1989 \$’s, which would be \$130 million today if the costs align with general \$ inflation] of infrastructure will be needed.”**

All of the problems noted in 1989 appear to be unchanged.

Recent Studies:

“Board of Supervisors to Receive Report on Impacts of California Forever Initiative”
(7/18/2024) <https://www.solanocounty.com/news/displaynews.asp?NewsID=2533&TargetID=1>

Although a not shipyard study, Solano County did obtain a preliminary independent study on the impacts of the shipyard proponent’s proposed city “California Forever” and their “East Solano Plan”. The study found that such a large-scale undertaking would require new infrastructure costing \$6.4 billion for Phase 1 of the project.

It does not seem unreasonable to project the cost of bringing heavy industrial scale infrastructure to a Collinsville shipyard would cost as much or more, considering further that the Collinsville site currently has no infrastructure connection and is an additional 5+ miles beyond the “California Forever” city site.

Clearly turning this “greenfield” site into a modern shipyard would be tremendously costly, indicating that the 1989 feasibility study’s core conclusion: “Only when those other sites are exhausted or approach in price the cost of extending infrastructure to Collinsville do we expect the area to become competitive....”

Feasibility consideration #1 – Channel Depth Questions:

What size ships would a Collinsville shipyard build?

Ship Sizes:

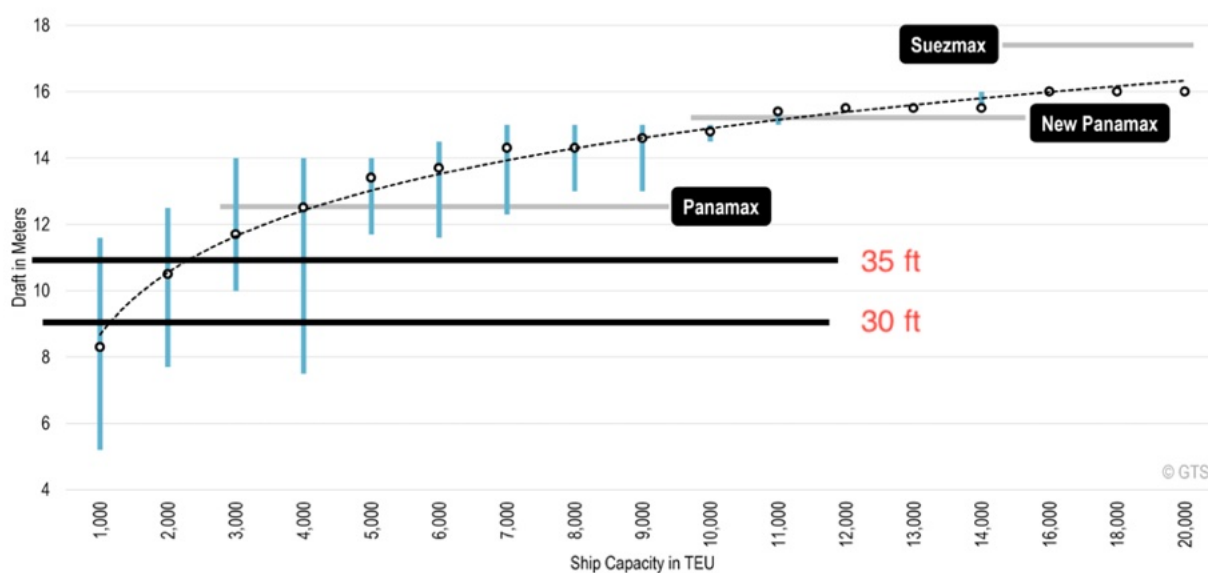
<https://www.virtuemarine.nl/post/ship-sizes-understanding-maritime-vessel-classes>

Sample Container Ship by TEU Class Range - <https://www.aapa-ports.org/files/PDFs/CONTAINER%20SHIP%20SAMPLING.pdf>

The proposed shipyard site is about 53 miles by water from the Golden Gate. Ships produced there will need to be able to navigate the Sacramento River Channel, Suisun Bay Channel, and San Pablo Bay Channel before reaching the deeper San Francisco Bay.

The draft of modern ships places limits on the types of ships that could be produced by a Collinsville shipyard. Commercial ships have become much larger in recent decades, and the channel depths they require are deeper. For instance, to accommodate New Panamax ships that call on the West Coast, the Port of Oakland had to increase its channel depth to 50 ft. The graph below shows channel depth requirements for a range of commercial ship sizes:

Average Draft by Containership Capacity



Average Draft by Containership Capacity

Source: Adapted from Clarkson Research.

Note: US channel depths are given in feet, whereas the above chart uses meters for draft.

8 m = 26.2 ft | 10 m = 32.8 ft | 12 m = 39.4 ft | 14 m = 45.9 ft | 14 m = 45.9 ft | 16 m = 52.5 ft

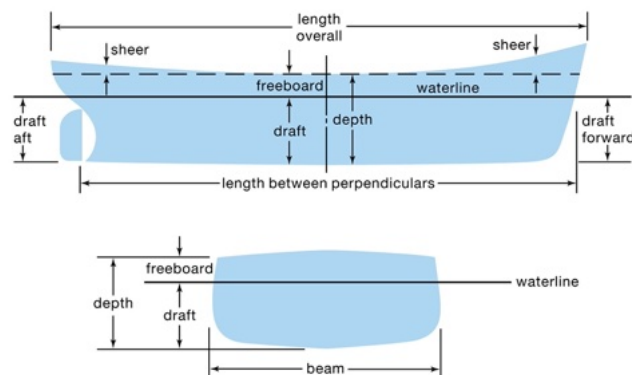
<https://transportgeography.org/contents/chapter5/maritime-transportation/draft-containership-capacity/>

Larger ship capacities require deeper drafts since capacity is a function of weight, and that weight influences buoyancy. Depth requirements are deeper than design drafts because a ship in movement in a harbor usually requires an additional two feet of draft because of hydrodynamic factors (known as the “squat effect”). While for a 1,000 TEU containership, the average draft is 8.3 meters, these figures reach 16 meters for ships above 14,000 TEU. Smaller ship classes are associated with a larger variation in draft since they have several design specifications, such as coastal ships, reefer ships, or geared ships. Larger ships above 8,000 TEU have a uniform design with little draft variations being observed. The 4,000 TEU range is the class having the largest variation, with an average draft of 12.5 meters, which corresponds to the service depth of the old locks of the Panama Canal (Panamax). The New Panamax standard that was set in 2016 with the expansion of the Panama Canal has a draft of around 15 meters, allowing ships with a capacity of about 12,000 TEU.

As noted in the 1989 feasibility study, “The use of Collinsville as a deep draft terminal is currently somewhat limited by the depth of the Sacramento Channel which is maintained at 35 feet [actually the maintained depth is now 30 ft].”

Given current channel depth at Collinsville (30 ft), a shipyard there would be limited to commercial ships on the smaller end of the scale of current shipbuilding.

Examples indicating modern commercial ship draft requirements:



© 2012 Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.

- 30'6" Training Ship Golden Bear - <https://www.csum.edu/about/tsgb/history.html>
- 25' Golden State II (under-construction National Security Multi-Mission Vessel - NSMV) – next generation maritime academy ships being built in Philly Shipyard - <https://gcaptain.com/philly-shipyard-delivers-first-national-training-ship-to-marad/>
<https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/systems/ship/nsmv-specs.htm>
- ? 3,600 TEU Container Vessels – Aloha Class CV3600 container ships – largest Jones Act containerships ever built (2018 & 2019) - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aloha-class_freighter

33-66' Average draft of a cargo ship - <https://www.boatingworld.com/question-answer/what-is-the-draft-of-a-cargo-ship/>

Lessons from other shipyards and their channel depths:

There are 9 major US private shipyards – i.e., shipyards building commercial ships. The characteristics of these shipyards offer useful benchmarks against which the Collinsville shipyard site can be compared.



<https://californiaforever.com/the-solano-shipyard-location/>

Fincantieri Marinette Marine, Marinette, WI

<https://fincantierimarinegroup.com/about-us/us-shipyards/bay-shipbuilding/>

Their commercial shipyard is located in Sturgeon Bay, WI, on Sturgeon Bay, which opens into Green Bay, which in turn opens into Lake Michigan. It is primarily a manufacturer of smaller vessels and barges with smaller drafts.

The Sturgeon Bay ship channel is dredged to 20 ft. (As a Great Lakes shipbuilder, its ship draft building limitation is 30 ft., the depth of the St. Lawrence Seaway locks. See Ohio case study below.)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sturgeon_Bay_Ship_Canal

Austal USA, Mobile AL

<https://usa.austal.com>

This shipyard is located near the mouth of the Mobile River where it empties into Mobile Bay. The Mobile Ship Channel is currently in the last phases of a 5-ft deepening that will result in a 50-ft channel depth. The project will “deepen the existing Bar, Bay and River Channels Bar, by 5 feet (ft) each to a project depth of 50 ft, (15.24m), with additional depths for wave allowances, advanced maintenance, and allowable over depth for dredging (total depths of 56, 54, and 54 ft, respectively). The project also includes widening the Bay Channel by 100 feet (328.08m) for three nautical miles to accommodate two-way vessel traffic and other safety improvements.”

<https://www.alports.com/mobile-harbor-construction-begins/>

Ingalls Shipbuilding, Pascagoula, MS

<https://hii.com/what-we-do/divisions/ingalls-shipbuilding/>

This shipyard is located near the mouth of the Pascagoula River where it empties into Mobile Bay. The Port of Pascagoula has a 42-ft ship channel.

<https://portpascagoula.com/port-pascagoula/port-facts-and-stats/>

Bath Iron Works, Bath, ME**General Dynamics Electric Boat, Groton, CT****General Dynamics Electric Boat, Quonset Point, RI****Philly Shipyard, Philadelphia, PA**

The Philly Shipyard – the largest commercial shipyard in the US – is located on the Delaware River which has had its channel depth increased from 40 ft to now **45 ft**.

<https://www.nap.usace.army.mil/Missions/Factsheets/Fact-Sheet-Article-View/Article/490804/delaware-river-main-channel-deepening/>

Huntington Ingalls Industries, Newport news, VA**General Dynamics NASSCO, San Diego, CA**

The most active large commercial shipyard on the West Coast is General Dynamics NASSCO in San Diego. It has a channel depth of **35 ft** and can handle ships up to 1,000 ft. in length.

<https://nassco.com/about-us/>

Other shipyards – Bartlett Maritime, Lorain, OH

In 2022, Bartlett Maritime Corporation promoted the harbor-town of Lorain, OH, on the banks of Lake Erie as a new naval shipyard to service nuclear submarines. However, it has faced the complex challenge of limited channel depth along the St. Lawrence Seaway which can be as shallow as 27 ft in places, and additionally in its locks which have only a **30-ft** depth (which also limit ships to 766-ft length and 80-ft width). US nuclear subs require more depth, so the proponents came up with the idea of using an “Oceangoing Transit Carrier” – a kind of mobile, high-floating dry dock/barge to carry submarines into deeper channels beyond the barriers.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/craighooper/2022/03/15/navy-shipyard-proposal-for-2-ohio-towns-needs-revision/>

Ultimately, the plan was viewed unfavorably by the Navy, so Bartlett instead opted for a site in Charleston, SC at the Naval Weapons Station Goose Creek where a significantly deeper, dredged channel is present.

<https://www.news5cleveland.com/news/local-news/bartlett-maritime-releases-revised-plan-to-bring-submarine-repair-facilities-to-lorain-and-lordstown>

Collinsville shipyard channel analysis: Dredging required

With the above case studies in mind, it appears that for any Collinsville shipyard to be commercially viable, the shipyard would need to have access to at least a 35-ft deep channel to the Pacific to be considered as even a smaller-size commercial shipyard site. However, the proposed shipyard site is adjacent to the Sacramento River Deepwater Channel which is maintained at 30 ft. (= 9.1 m). This is at least 5 feet too shallow.

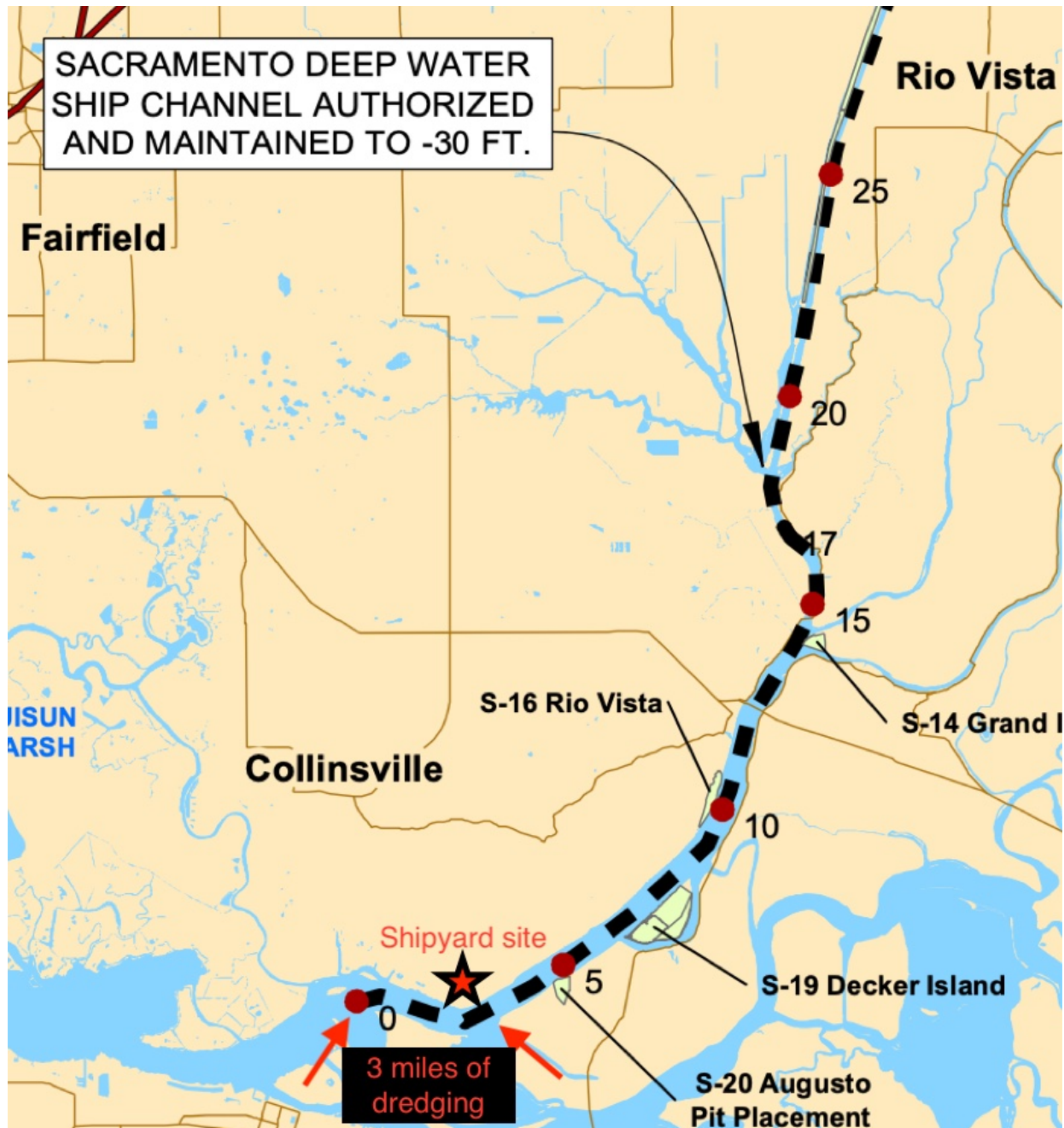
The closest 35 ft. channel to the Collinsville site is the John F. Baldwin Shipping Channel that connects Stockton via the San Joaquin River all the way to San Francisco Bay. This channel is maintained at 35 ft. (= 10.7 m)



The 30-ft Sacramento River Deepwater Channel ties into the 35-ft Baldwin Channel in New York Slough about 3 nautical miles west of the shipyard site.

Dredging Required:

It therefore appears that for a Collinsville shipyard to be viable, at least 3 miles of the Sacramento River Deepwater Channel – from the site to New York Slough – would need to be dredged an additional 5 ft deeper. In addition, a 35-ft deep turning basin would be needed in the Sacramento River area adjacent to the shipyard. This 3-mile stretch is shown in the map below:



The Sacramento River Deep Water Ship Channel is only dredged to 30'

- <https://www.spn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Projects-and-Programs/Current-Projects/Sacramento-River-Deep-Water-Ship-Channel-C/> - which mentions "Further deepening study work has been on hold since 2014, pending resumption/start of ... demand for the project." How much dredging would be needed would obviously ultimately depend on the size ships to be built in Collinsville.

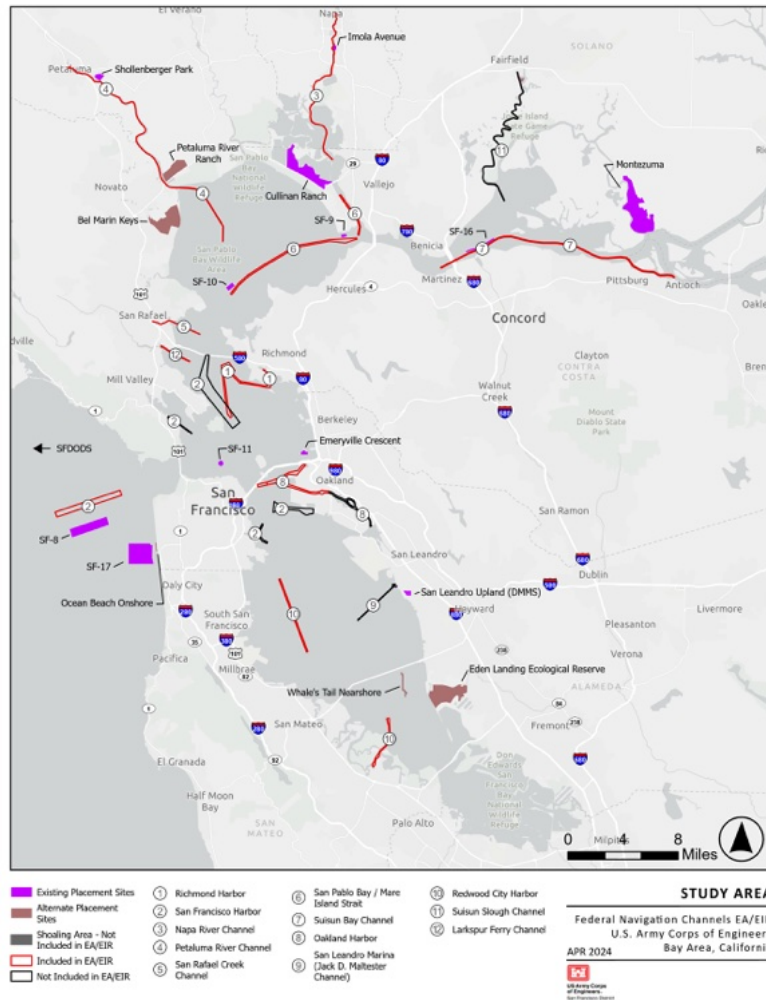
Dredging always creates major environmental problems. Any dredging of the Sacramento River Deep Water Ship Channel will face even more severe environmental challenges given that the portion of the Sacramento River needing dredging to serve the Collinsville site is located within the highly sensitive and protect Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta. **See Environmental Problems section below.**

Army Corps of Engineer dredging of the Bay Area shipping channel:

<https://youtu.be/Zgr8uPMLQKo>

Additional detail on Bay shipping channel depths between inland sites and the Pacific Ocean:
 Map of Federal Navigation Channels below the Sacramento River

https://www.spn.usace.army.mil/Portals/68/siteimages/2024%20Projects%20and%20updates/03APR24_EA_EIR_Figure.jpg?ver=Kn8JhY2ZzFOT2QxtMVM2GQ%3d%3d



The current dredged depths of the Bay shipping channels are maintained at 30-35 ft or greater, as indicated in the Army Corps of Engineer maps below.

30 ft (9.1 m) – Sacramento River Deepwater Shipping Channel –

<https://www.spn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Projects-and-Programs/Projects-A-Z/Sacramento-River-30ft-Channel-O-M/>



NOTE: This is the channel that services the proposed Collinsville shipyard site (indicated by the star). Note that the channel is only 30 ft deep there, and it is 3+ nautical miles upriver from the deeper New York Slough where the San Joaquin River joins with the Sacramento River.

35 ft (10.7 m) – San Joaquin River (New York Slough to Stockton) –

<https://www.spn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Projects-and-Programs/Current-Projects/San-Joaquin-River/>



NOTE: If a 35 ft channel depth is adequate for the shipbuilding envisioned for Collinsville, the pre-existing 35 ft San Joaquin River Channel may give a competitive advantage to Stockton as a shipyard site. The Port of Stockton offers existing channel depth, available land, industrial scale infrastructure, and trained workforce advantages not present in Collinsville.

<https://bxjmag.com/port-of-stockton/>

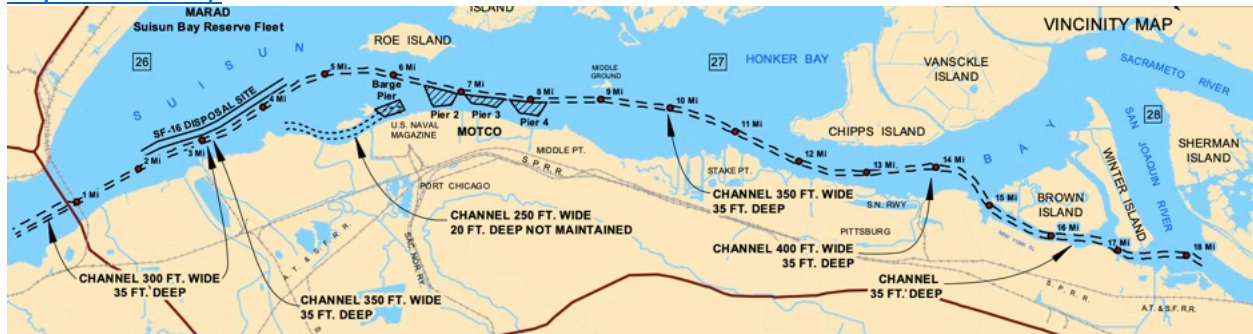
“California officials are lobbying for a new Trump windfall: Funds to create shipyards,” San Francisco Chronicle. (4/1/2025) –

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/shipbuilding-trump-funding-20250084.php>

“While the port’s east complex is built out and near capacity, there is room for development in the 1,400 acre west complex.... In particular, Rough & Ready Island, which the Navy transferred to the Port of Stockton in 1996, ... would be a prime candidate for a shipbuilding facility.”

35 ft (10.7 m) – Suisun Bay Shipping Channel –

<https://www.spn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Projects-and-Programs/Current-Projects/Suisun-Bay-Channel->

**35 ft (10.7 m) – San Pablo Bay & Mare Island Strait Channel –**

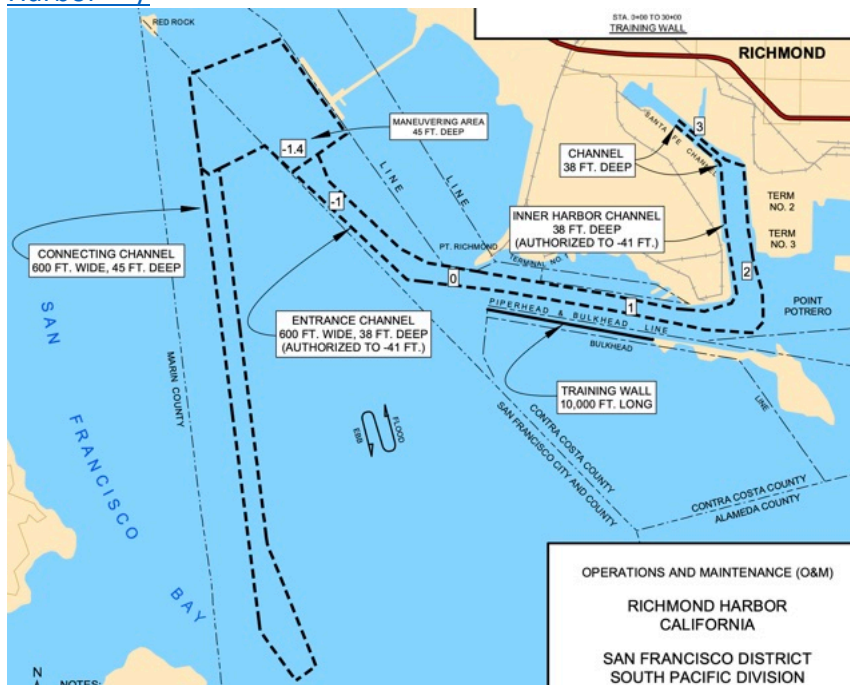
[https://www.spn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Projects-and-Programs/Current-Projects/San-Pablo-](https://www.spn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Projects-and-Programs/Current-Projects/San-Pablo-Bay-Channel-)

Bay-Mare-Island-Strait----

NOTE: Mare Island Straits had been at 30 ft, but it is currently not maintained. Assuming a 35-ft channel is required, dredging may be needed to make Mare Island a viable location too.

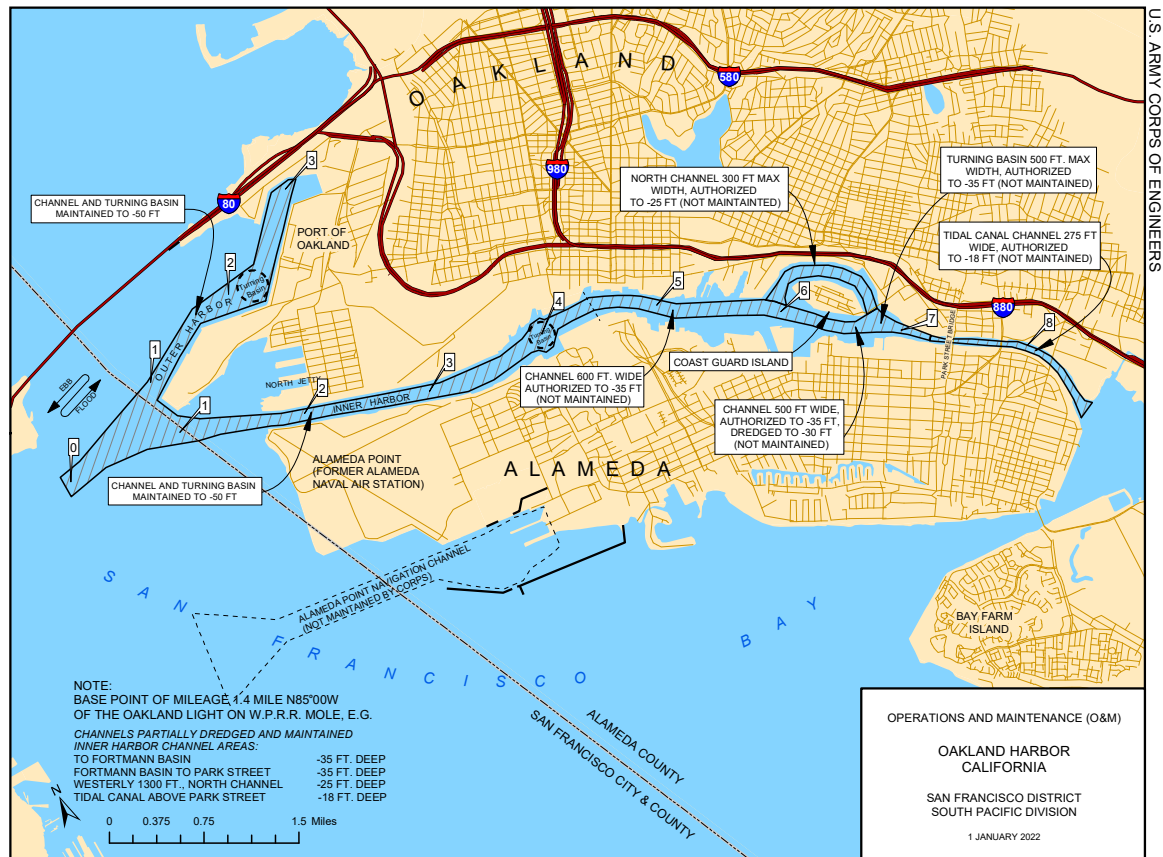
40 to 38 ft (12.2 to 11.6 m) – Richmond Shipping Channel –

https://www.spn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Projects-and-Programs/Current-Projects/Richmond-Harbor----



50 to 35 ft (15.2 to 10.7 m) – Oakland Harbor –

<https://www.spn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Projects-and-Programs/Current-Projects/Oakland-Harbor-Sonoma-Baylands-/>

**Workforce constraints**

Workforce is one of the key constraints in American shipbuilding. There is a shortage of skilled shipbuilding workers.

Buildsubmarines.com

A sign of the shortage is the Navy's "Buildsubmarines.com" program. It's a partnership between marine fabrication job-training providers (BlueForge Alliance) and the US Navy. "Paid for by the U.S. Department of the Navy in partnership with BlueForge Alliance." The Navy says it needs a workforce of 140,000 to maintain and build projected subs, etc. They are obviously worried that our shipyard workforce is thinning and aging out and so won't be up to the task. "We are on an unprecedented recruitment mission to discover, connect, and employ the most exceptional and promising talent with our network of more than 15,000 suppliers to bridge this widening gap."

The only BuildSubmarines.com workforce opportunity in California on the program's website is in San Diego where California's biggest shipyards - General Dynamics NASSCO - <https://nassco.com/about-us/> - is located. There's nothing on offer in the Bay Area or Solano County.

<https://www.buildsubmarines.com/training?state=California>

There is however a Working Waterfront Coalition (WWC) for the entire Bay Area - <https://waterfrontjobs.com/what-we-do/> - a coalition of existing waterfront organizations and county workforce development boards in Alameda, Contra Costa, Solano and San Francisco.

Skilled workforce is definitely a key puzzle piece the US will have to figure out, and the seemingly preferred way to do that is to use an in-shipyard apprenticeship like this one at the Philly Shipyard where existing skilled workers train novice workers. The apprenticeship program takes 5 years to complete (skilled workers are not created overnight):

<https://www.buildsubmarines.com/newsroom/giants-of-skilled-trades-shawn-jenkins-philly-shipyard>

A similar plan for in-shipyard apprenticeships was part of the Ohio shipyard proposal mentioned above.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/craighooper/2022/03/15/navy-shipyard-proposal-for-2-ohio-towns-needs-revision/>

This appears to be another reason why building a brand-new shipyard from scratch in Collinsville is a long shot (vs. revitalizing existing shipyards... like Mare Island where there is an existing workforce). All the workers would have to relocate here from elsewhere or be trained from scratch. Just as there is no infrastructure serving the Collinsville site, there is no preexisting workforce or workforce training capacity here.

Other challenges for Solano County in a nationally-competitive environment:

Chris Rico, head of Solano County EDC noted in the May 2025 Solano EDC News:

"The Governor of Louisiana verbally committed to a \$250 Million investment if they bring this project [i.e., a new shipyard] to his state. We won't be able to compete with a lot of the investment and tax incentives that other states can offer. But where we can compete is on enthusiasm and a united front as a region to support this project."

https://issuu.com/solanoedc/docs/solano_economic_update_may_update_25?fr=sMzRkZTg0MTk3Mzc

Environmental concerns

A project on the industrial scale of a major shipyard will require intensive environmental review and permitting. (This is in marked contrast to the ballot measure approach that the California Forever developers have also pursued to try to re-zone the agriculturally-zoned land where their new city would be located. Through the ballot initiative, re-zoning might be achieved without environmental review, deferring such due diligence to a later stage.)

These reviews would need to be conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) as well as California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Presumably the highest level of Environmental Impact Statement / Environmental Impact Report would be required for a project of this nature.

Environmental considerations would need to consider not just the 1,210-acre site, but all of the infrastructure connections (road, rail, pipeline, water and waste disposal, etc.) that would need to be deployed to make the site viable. And of course, the dredging and riverfront modifications to operate a shipyard would need careful study and permitting.

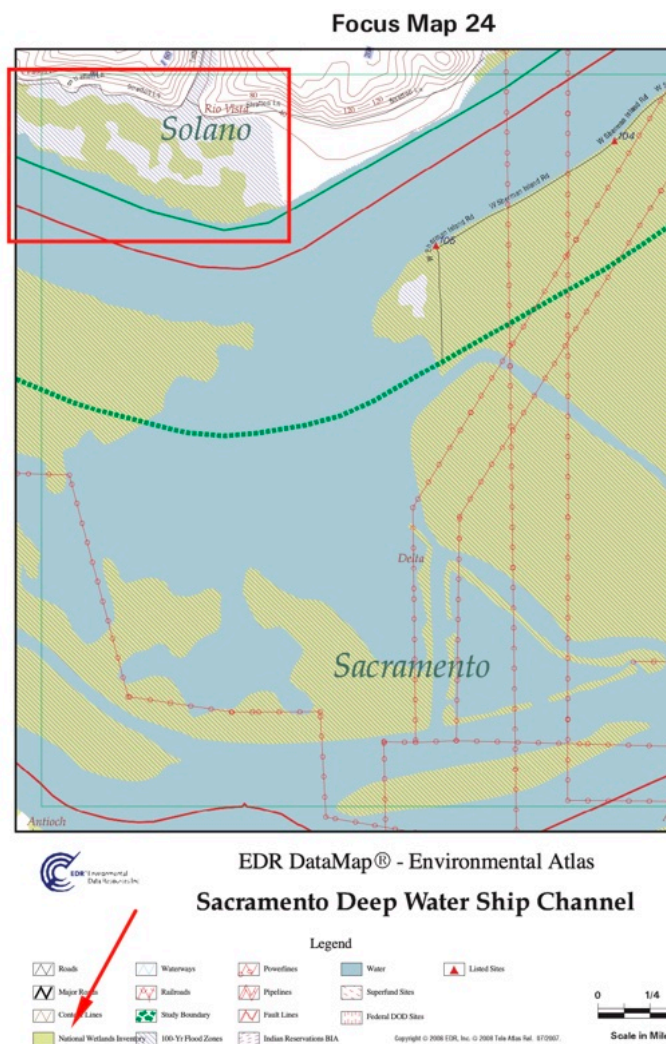
The environmental analysis required will likely take a considerable amount of time. The environmental impacts of the project appear likely to be significant.

Wetlands and Floodplain concerns:

Significant portions of the Collinsville shipyard site appear to be in a 100-year floodplain and also have wetlands, based on Environmental Data Report (EDR) maps included in Appendix Q of the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Subsequent EIR – Sacramento Deep Water Ship Channel, Feb 2011:

https://www.spn.usace.army.mil/Portals/68/docs/SRDWSC/Appendix_Q.pdf

EDR Map 24 (which depicts most of the shipyard site) shows **the Collinsville site is mostly 100-year floodplain and wetland inventory**. (Maps 18 and 19 depict small slices of the parcel and also indicate the presence of wetlands along the riverfront.)



Endangered species

The Delta smelt is a recurring concern whenever dredging and waterfront projects are proposed in the vicinity of the Collinsville shipyard site.

Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Subsequent EIR – Sacramento Deep Water Ship Channel, Feb 2011 – investigates the possibility of deepening the channel to 35 ft; finding suggest deepening to 33 ft alternative is preferred (but *still* delta smelt concern)

<https://www.spn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Projects-and-Programs/Current-Projects/Sacramento-River-Deep-Water-Ship-Channel-C/Main/Documents/>

Executive Summary

https://www.spn.usace.army.mil/Portals/68/docs/SRDWSC/01_Executive_Summary.pdf

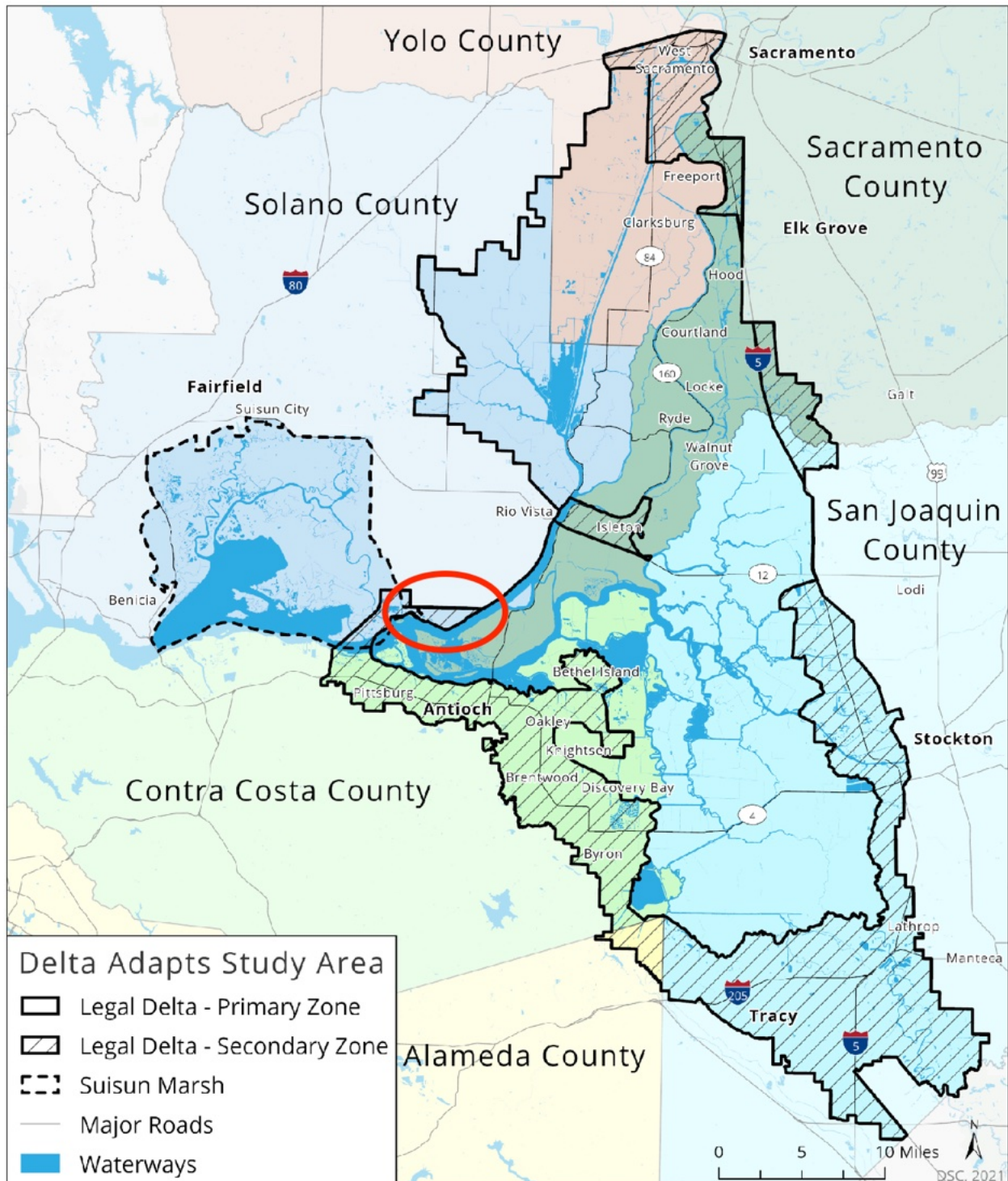
Environmental Data Report (EDR) maps including in Appendix Q:

https://www.spn.usace.army.mil/Portals/68/docs/SRDWSC/Appendix_Q.pdf

EDR Map 24 shows the site is mostly 100-year floodplain and wetland inventory

Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta impacts

The proposed Collinsville shipyard site (circled below) is inside and directly adjacent to the Delta, a highly-sensitive, environmentally-protected resource area. The shipyard site is in the “Legal Delta - Secondary Zone”, and the Sacramento River channel that would serve it is in the “Legal Delta – Primary Zone”.



<https://deltacouncil.ca.gov/images/2023-08-15-map-of-the-sacramento-san-joaquin-delta.png>

Any heavy industrial project proposed in this region, such as a shipyard, would be subjected to extensive environmental reviews that would be time-consuming, expensive, and highly likely to be adverse to the ultimate project.

Among the many sensitivities that would be considered would be:

- Impacts of deeper dredging leading to increased saltwater intrusion in the Delta
- Any polluted sediments with hazardous chemicals
- Impacts on endangered or threatened fish or other species, such as the Delta smelt
- Impacts on levee and channel integrity

At least 3 State agencies exercise control of development in the Delta - <https://delta.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Meet-the-Deltas-State-Agencies-Information-Sheet-508.pdf> :

- Delta Stewardship Council - <https://deltacouncil.ca.gov/about>
- Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy - <https://deltaconservancy.ca.gov/about-delta-conservancy/>
- Delta Protection Commission – <https://delta.ca.gov>

Projects in the Delta are subject to “The Delta Plan”, an enforceable long-term sustainable management plan adopted in 2013. The Plan covers most projects that will occur in whole or in part within the boundaries of the Delta which involve local public agency action, approval, or funding. Since, as discussed above, the shipyard project would require dredging of the Sacramento River channel, the project would need to be reviewed and approved under the Delta Plan. <https://deltacouncil.ca.gov/pdf/delta-plan.pdf> (Appendix F).

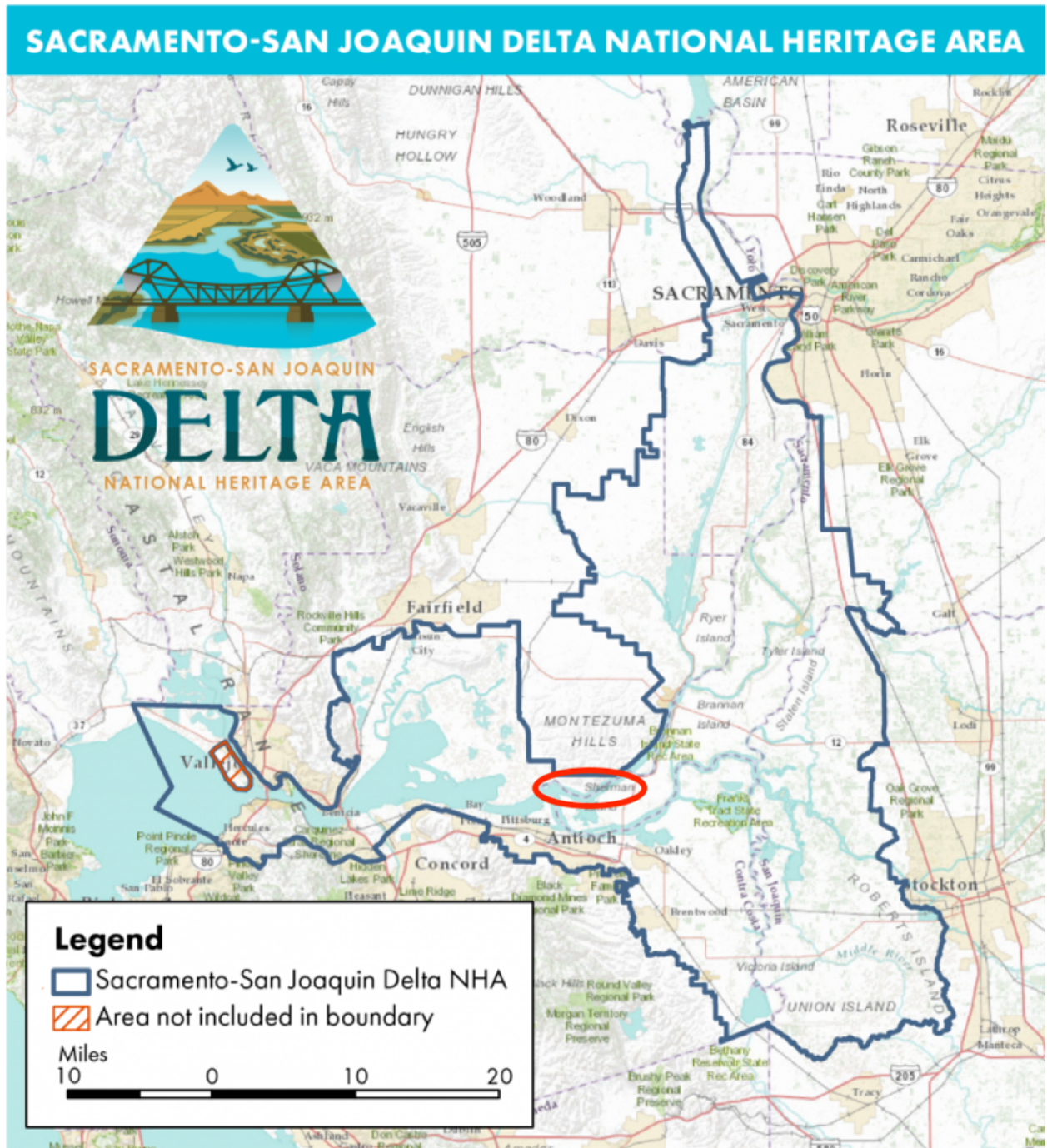
Dredging impacts would also be subject to the Delta Dredged Sediment Long-Term Management Strategy (LTMS) - <https://deltacouncil.ca.gov/pdf/delta-plan.pdf> (Appendix K). The LTMS describes the process used by the US Army Corps of Engineers in evaluating dredging projects. https://www.spn.usace.army.mil/Portals/68/docs/P%20and%20Programs/Navigation/LTMSFacts_Apr24.pdf

1. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regulates work in Navigable Waters pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and also the disposal of dredged or fill material in Waters of the United States pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. A permit application would be required for a proposed shipyard. The Corps would also be the lead agency for National Environmental Policy Act compliance and consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the potential effects of the project on endangered species (e.g. Delta smelt).

The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board has the delegated authority (from the US EPA) to regulate non-point sources of pollution, including dredged or fill material, pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act. The regional board also has authority pursuant to the state Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act.

In addition to this, an even larger region of the Delta has recently been established under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service as the “Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area” - <https://delta.ca.gov/NHA/>. NHA’s are designated by Congress, and in the Delta’s case, this occurred in 2019. Although an NHA designation does not restrict private property rights - <https://www.nps.gov/articles/national-heritage-areas-faqs.htm> - it would likely apply to any dredging or impacts on the Sacramento River channel.

Both the Collinsville shipyard site and the adjoining Sacramento River are included in the NHA designation:



From: [Jason Russell](#)
To: [Jason Russell](#)
Subject: Solano Shipyard Project
Date: Monday, September 8, 2025 3:34:38 PM

Dear Members of the Solano County Board of Supervisors,

I'm writing today to express my strong support for the proposed shipyard development in the Collinsville Special Study Area, as discussed in recent Board updates and legislative briefings.

The opportunity for Solano County to partner in building a next-generation shipyard is both timely and transformational.

Here's why this project deserves your continued support:

Economic Impact: A study by the Bay Area Council Economic Institute projects over **517,000 permanent jobs** and **\$2.7 billion annually** in local tax revenue once the California Forever project reaches full build-out. A significant share of these benefits would be concentrated in Solano County through long-term shipyard employment and local infrastructure investment

Strategic National Importance: As the U.S. works to rebuild domestic shipbuilding capabilities and reduce dependence on China (which currently builds over 1,000 ships annually compared to just five in the U.S., our region can play a vital role in securing America's maritime and industrial future.

Local Advantages: Collinsville's location near Travis Air Force Base, the Mare Island Shipyard, and major shipping lanes makes Solano County uniquely suited for this level of investment and growth.

Generational Opportunity: This project would revive California's shipbuilding legacy—last seen at scale during WWII—while creating thousands of durable jobs and drawing new talent, trade, and technology to our region.

I urge you to continue pursuing this initiative with transparency, public accountability, and the urgency it deserves. I believe that with the right governance and collaboration, Solano County can become a national leader in the next era of American shipbuilding.

Thank you for your service and stewardship of our county's future.

Jason Russell
Dixon Resident
707.208.5544

[EXTERNAL Email Notice!] External communication is important to us. Be cautious of phishing attempts. Do not click or open suspicious links or attachments.



Eagle Photos by Michael Lopez posted on the California ForNever Facebook page

From the Desk of Jim DeKloe

Solano County Board of Supervisors
675 Texas Avenue
Fairfield, CA 94533

September 7, 2025

Dear Board Members,

“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.”
African proverb.

I believe that the African proverb cited above needs to be amended in this case. If you want to go fast, you need to have previously built a community of trust and common vision – you need to go together. That isn’t what we have here.

The current Shipbuilding proposal is being championed by California Forever, outsiders, and the least trusted entity in Solano County that I’ve seen in my many years here.

The Silicon Valley billionaire land speculators behind California Forever have worked in secret, sown distrust, sued our family farmer neighbors, worked around the County process, ignored standard planning practices, chased a completely crazy annexation proposal in Suisun City, and now tried to get special legislation passed in order to pursue their goals. It’s hard to trust anything that comes from them. It’s hard to not immediately dismiss any proposal from them as solely self-serving. California Forever intentionally split the community.

If you want to go fast, go together.

I understand the impulse to want to show that California and that Solano County can work fast and jump on an opportunity. I get that California would like to shed the reputation that in California these pesky planning procedures and inconvenient environmental analyses get in the way of progress. But those procedures are intended to make any project proceed in a methodical way, keep the public informed and involved in the process, and prevent a major mistake.

California Forever has poisoned this well. They bought land secretly. They sued families for their farmland. They initially claimed that they would gain voter approval – then withdrew their initiative. They said that they would work with the County, then didn’t. They did an attempted end around to weasel their way into an approval with the Suisun City annexation scheme. They offended the community. They symbolize back-room deals, like this one.

If you want to go fast, go together.

I get that the Silicon Valley philosophy of “go fast and break things” might work in software development, but it really hurts the credibility and execution of this particular cause. They didn’t wait; they didn’t bring the community along. The hubris of California Forever costs them and throws doubt upon anything that they do.

A credible expert on the Delta has claimed that a proposal like this has the potential to do so much damage to the Delta that it would jeopardize the water supply of half of the state. A shipbuilding expert has written an analysis that concluded that shipbuilding really isn’t appropriate here. I, for one, would like to see these claims aired, analyzed, and criticized before a major decision was made. These are assertions whose extreme consequences force us to take seriously.

If you want to go fast, go together.

The Issues with Collinsville and the Delta

There is a proposal floating around to craft legislation that would apparently excuse the Collinsville shipbuilding proposal from most of the standard environmental review procedures. The irony is that this proposal to compromise the Delta would presumably be authored and carried by the Co-Chair of the Delta Caucus of the Assembly. Allowing this proposal to bypass most environmental review for construction in this sensitive area is unconscionable. Why? Water.

Elizabeth Patterson, an expert on the Delta has made the following statement: *“The Army Corps of Engineers with over seventy technical studies determined that deepening the Sacramento ship channel likely needed for the Collinsville area proposed ship building would introduce additional salt water into the Delta. Such introduction would compromise water quality for 23 million municipal and agricultural users and water conveyance for the State Water Project.”* <https://www.timesheraldonline.com/2025/09/04/elizabeth-patterson-why-shipbuilding-in-collinsville-is-a-dumb-idea/>

SHE CLAIMS THAT THIS PROJECT MIGHT JEOPARDIZE MUCH OF THE WATER SUPPLY OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA!!!

I’ve known Elizabeth Patterson for decades. Her academic preparation and professional experience made her an expert on the Delta. She has taught policy at Sonoma State University. As a state policy maker she helped craft the Delta Protection Plan. As former mayor of Benicia, she is not prone to alarmist hyperbole. There is no one else that I would trust more on information about the Delta. <https://gep.sonoma.edu/faculty-staff/elizabeth-patterson-0>

With the stakes this high, we are going to eliminate studies that would examine this claim? That doesn’t make any sense.

THE CLAIM IS THAT THIS PROJECT MIGHT JEOPARDIZE MUCH OF THE WATER SUPPLY OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA!!!

The headline of Mayor Patterson’s opinion piece says it all:

Why shipbuilding in Collinsville is a dumb idea

I guess that this proves the maxim that I’ll paraphrase as: those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.

Why Not Mare Island Naval Shipyard?



Bow of the U.S. Coast Guard Ice Breaker Polar Star undergoing maintenance work at Dry Dock #3 on Mare Island. Photo by Ryan Geller
<https://www.vallejosun.com/can-shipbuilding-return-to-vallejo/>

OK, someone explain this to me. We have an operating shipyard in Vallejo. In late March, U.S. Rep. John Garamendi held a press conference with union leaders at the Mare Island Dry Docks to promote his bill designed to revitalize the U.S. shipbuilding industry. He highlighted the legislation's potential to bring middle class jobs to Mare Island.

Mare Island has a 150 year history of being Mare Island Naval Shipyard. It has the infrastructure already there – it's on Interstate 80, it has electricity already, it's already plumbed – it doesn't need several billions of dollars of investment. The City of Vallejo could use the economic development. This revitalization does not jeopardize the main source of drinking water of the state. And it's place in an already urbanized area rather than in the most environmentally sensitive region in the County. And it's much closer to the ocean. The access is deeper.

It's ready to go. And it could be expanded.

And there will be no opposition.

But it won't benefit California Forever.

To us who are suspicious of that company, this seems like a very naked ploy for California Forever to try to get someone else to pay for their infrastructure. It's the classic real estate strategy of using OPM – other people's money – to make money.

This is the classic case where urban sprawl sucks resources away from the existing cities – at the expense of current residents – so that billionaires can make more billions through the rezoning process. This makes no sense.

Let's say this plainly. Supporting Collinsville is betraying Vallejo.



The Route to Collinsville California

California Forever - Flannery

The involvement of California Forever immediately triggers distrust, and immediately mobilizes an established, well organized, and sophisticated opposition. The involvement of California Forever divides the community. It divided Suisun City so much that there is a possible recall of their City Council. And the sensitivity of the Delta mobilizes the entire statewide environmental community.

If you want to go fast, go together.

It isn't clear to anyone that I know why we pursuing shipbuilding here rather than at the historic site of Mare Island. The Mare Island site would have garnered immediate and universal support. This Collinsville proposal to pursue a greenfield development seems like a betrayal of existing economic development proposals and sites. I view it as a betrayal of the County.

As I said to the Local Agency Formation Commission in March 2025.

"We lament that the twin threats of California Forever and now Suisun City's sprawl proposal threaten to trigger a renewed growth war. We lament that Suisun City has placed Rio Vista into the position that they are in. We do not want Solano County to gain a reputation of being "anti-growth," a reputation that could stymie infill development.

The concern is that rejecting a bad idea from California Forever might be misinterpreted as rejecting all ideas. It might play into the narrative that California isn't business friendly. I believe that California Forever is going to do extreme damage to our County's economy.

If you want to go fast, go together.



Flannery and this group of Silicon Valley nouveau robber barons came to Solano County and immediately offended us with secret land acquisitions, lawsuits against our neighbors, and hubris and an arrogance toward the residents (and elected officials and city staff) of Solano County. But let's set all of that aside to evaluate a proposal.

This is a land speculation scheme.

I recognize that this is anecdotal, but I just encountered an East County farmer that sold their land to Flannery. They sold it for \$6,800 an acre. Speculation about Flannery's construction of Broligarch City has already inflated the value to \$32,000 an acre – a five-fold increase so far without doing anything. After rezoning this value will increase at least ten-fold – value-added not through any work but by the manipulation of government. Any that is what this is all about.

I don't think that the Shipbuilding proposal is a real proposal. There are less remote places where the infrastructure is at least partially in place – here everything would have to be divided and it would cost a fortune. I don't believe that a Texas-based manufacturing company is going to come here rather than staying in Texas; they are teasing us because of the ties that they have with their investors. Not-likely. Most everyone that I know believes that shipbuilding and "the Solano Foundry" are gimmicks devised by California Forever to promote their residential development proposal. And the goal is for them to make money through the rezoning of their holdings without the designated area.

The claim of 10,000 jobs? Where did that number come from? Who believes this. This is a number pulled out of the air backed by nothing. These factories, if they are built, will largely be automated. It is robots that will be building these robots. Saronic is a start-up and start-ups have a high failure rate. And we are compromising our planning and environmental soul – and undermining our democratic process - to chase a dream? That doesn't make sense.

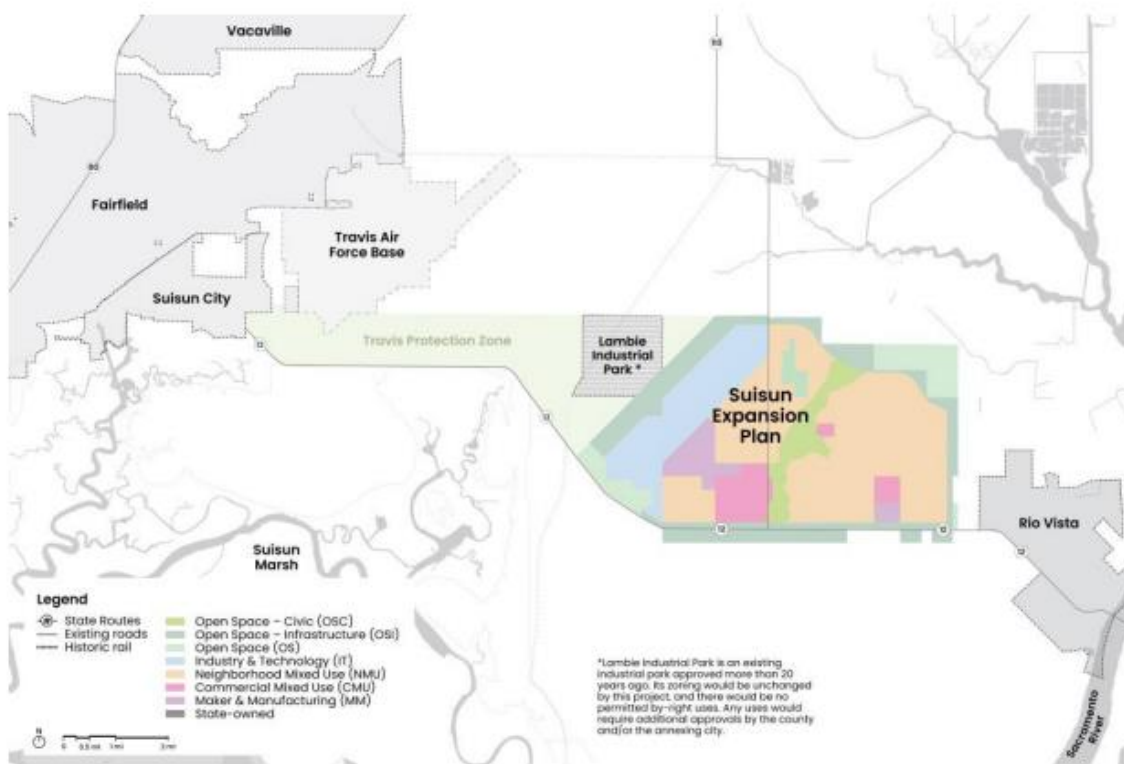
If you want to do fast – go together. And...

If you want to go far – go together.

This proposal to bypass Measure T – the will of the people – and to bypass environmental review is a route for them to make money. It is an exercise designed to make mega-hyper-uber billionaires more billions.

I will state the obvious. California Forever has poisoned the local well – the will – with the community. The fact that this hated company is behind this dramatically increases the distrust and opposition to the whole idea. Again, I suppose that they think that the “move fast and break things” is the method to get things done, but their behavior in this community really undermined this particular effort.

What this is really about is this:



Source: Reimbursement Agreement between Suisun City and California Forever

If you want to go fast, go together.

The Location - Collinsville

From Elizabeth Patterson's article:

Where is Collinsville?

If you know the answer to that question, consider yourself in the less than 1% of people in the Bay Area who know. Collinsville is in the news because the California Forever or Flannery investor billionaires are working their uncommon influence to persuade the California Legislature to funnel federal funds for shipbuilding for a facility a little east of the Town of Collinsville.

Collinsville is one of the smallest, most rural, most out-of-the-way areas in the unincorporated county. It is located at the mouth of the Sacramento River, on the north side of the river where it debouches into the Suisun Bay. Collinsville is effectively separated from the more intense urban development in Contra Costa County immediately across the river, as no bridge exists connecting the two areas. The area was once a proposed spot for a major chemical plant for the Dow Chemical Company in the 1980s. Environmental issues and lack of infrastructure killed the project.



Collinsville, CA

I wrote an article on Collinsville when the Shipbuilding story first broke in March 2025:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/introducing-collinsville-california-jim-dekloe-7n1hc/>

Collinsville is one of the smallest, most rural, most out-of-the-way areas in the unincorporated county. But, it's about to gain a lot of local, regional, and national attention. And it's proposed - magically - to become a major port with shipbuilding and maritime activities.

I drove South from Dixon down the two lane Highway 113 and stopped to see the vernal pools at the Jepson Prairie. Vernal pools are a major source of pride in Solano County – these ephemeral water ponds fill with water in winter, explode with plant and animal life, and then entirely dry out in summer. They were destroyed anywhere that the land was plowed for farming, which is most everywhere, and therefore they are very rare. Less than 10% of the historic acreage remains.

Driving down Highway 113 there were beautiful vernal pools along the way. They are pretty easy to identify – there will be a ring of yellow flowers around a shallow pond. And there were a lot of cows with their calves. As you drove further south cows gave way to many sheep with their new lambs.

California Forever always tries to denigrate the value of this land by showing bare brown ground in summer, but during this time of the year the rolling green hills remind me of the stereotype of a Wisconsin Post Card. (The barns aren't red, though, and they don't have silos). As you travel farther South windmills begin to appear.

When you cross Highway 12, a small highway with one lane in each direction (there is a roundabout) you are heading toward Collinsville – and it's quite a ways. Halfway there you encounter the crossroads of Birds Landing – there aren't many houses, but I've always found it picturesque. More green hills, more windmills, and more lambs, the road winds and you go over a rise where you can see Mount Diablo and then the Bay-Delta waterway.

Then you arrive at a small collection of houses, and that's Collinsville. The road dead-ends at the Marsh (and there are interesting stories there – for a different time). You can sort of fit all of the houses into a single picture – it's that small. It's difficult to imagine this becoming a boomtown leading to a major port – but that proposal is being pulled out of ... a hat and unveiled today.



Over the rise is Collinsville - about to become famous or infamous - as the site of a new port. The recent report from the Bay Area Council Economic Institute projects that infrastructure for the California Forever proposal would cost \$4.9 billion per year for the life of the project – this is a total \$226 billion total. A significant portion of this would have to be spent to provide roads and utilities to this distant site.

It's hard to see how this plan makes sense.

Timeline of the New Developments Regarding Shipbuilding

The first week of September 2025 has been a busy week – mainly behind the scenes – for Solano Shipbuilding proposals.

August 25, 2025 A published newspaper article reported that Bay Area Council Economic Institute issued a report on the California Forever proposal

<https://www.thereporter.com/2025/08/25/bay-area-council-issues-california-forever-study/>

The report wasn't made public, just the fact that there was a report and a general synopsis that painted the California Forever proposal in a positive light.

August 26, 2025 Suisun City Council served recall papers over their involvement with California Forever

<https://www.thereporter.com/2025/09/02/suisun-city-recall-effort-launched/>

before September 1, 2025 Solano EDC President and CEO Chris Rico secretly solicits letters from local elected officials to support state legislation that would rezone the Collinsville industrial area from 1,200 acres to 7,500 acres and remove CEQA protections

September 1, 2025 The story breaks that Assemblymember Lori Wilson is considering rezoning legislation that also excused the project from a new EIR.

September 3, 2025 California Forever conducts a push poll with a question on the Shipyard

September 4, 2024 California Forever gives the results of their push poll to the local press

<https://www.thereporter.com/2025/09/04/california-forever-announces-preliminary-survey-results/>

https://www.dailyrepublic.com/open_houses/open-house-sat-sun-11am-1pm-703-mustang-court-fairfield/article_8854bbd0-33a5-4c82-9821-12bd4e7d7378.html

The poll results show that the public is mainly concerned about crime and homelessness in the existing communities, with economic development being a distant third concern. It also shows a positive opinion of the shipyard proposal as it had been described.

September 3, 2025 The state representatives announce that they are no longer pursuing rezoning legislation

<https://www.thereporter.com/2025/09/03/solano-state-reps-decline-shipyard-legislation-requests/>

September 4, 2025 4:19 pm News story breaks that the County and California Forever have been talking about shipbuilding behind closed doors and the first report of the Saronic proposal

<https://www.thereporter.com/2025/09/04/county-california-forever-collaborate-on-shipyard-permitting/>

“On Thursday afternoon, California Forever CEO Jan Sramek sent an email confirming that his team, county staff, and GO-Biz met on Thursday and revised language for draft legislation to meet Emlen's [the county's] requests.”

September 4, 2025 Board of Supervisors agenda is published and Shipyard is listed as a discussion item at the September 8, 2025 meeting.

September 4, 2025 California Forever and Solano County staff discussed the draft legislation and reportedly amended it to more closely reflect the county's requests.

September 6, 2025 News breaks that legislative intervention is still possible
<https://www.thereporter.com/2025/09/05/officials-mull-fast-track-shipyard-bill/>

September 12, 2025 The end of the legislative session

September 15, 2025 Site visit scheduled by Saronic

And then the documents that accompany the Solano County Board of Supervisors agenda item filled in a few previous dates.

https://solano.granicus.com/DocumentViewer.php?file=solano_4e437b39d27ea6c62a2e3b4c6323ead8.pdf&view=1

December 2024 California Forever Team met with County staff to discuss potential shipbuilding opportunities in the Collinsville Special Study Area

March 2025 County staff are invited to attend Virtual Town Halls hosted by California Forever to discuss shipbuilding in the Collinsville Special Study area.

March 28, 2025 Assembly Member Wilson convened a "working group" at City of Suisun City office where it became apparent that discussions around shipbuilding between California Forever and community members had occurred outside the presence of County representatives.

April 22, 2025 The Board of Supervisors received a detailed proposal on the history and 2008 General Plan designation of the Collinsville Special Study area. The Board encouraged the property owners/project proponents of the shipbuilding concept to directly engage with the County on the details of the proposal and necessary steps to achieve General Plan and Zoning compliance.

Subsequent to this meeting, the County Administrator and California Forever CEO spoke and the CAO encouraged California Forever to begin the rezoning of the Collinsville Special Study area.

June 5, 2025 California Forever met with County staff where County staff once again encouraged California Forever to initiate a rezoning for the Collinsville Special Study area. The California Forever staff present stated that no site plan or other project specific work had been completed but expressed enthusiasm for the County support of shipbuilding within the Study area.

July 15, 2025 County Administrator, Bill Emlen, sends a support letter to the site selection committee in support of the inclusion of Solano County as a finalist in the national site selection process for a next-generation shipyard.

August 25, 2025 County staff met with GO-Biz to discuss the Collinsville Special Study area for purposes of identifying the viability of the site for shipbuilding. County staff were made aware that the property owners/project proponents might be seeking special legislation to expand the Water Dependent Industrial designation to five times its current size, with an exemption from any additional EIR or a vote as required by Measure T, and to include all infrastructure and additional land uses within the area.

August 27, 2025 County staff met with California Forever and the California Forever CEO stated their goal of using special legislation to obtain a blanket entitlement of approximately 7,500 acres by using the 2008 General Plan EIR to exempt the land use change from any project specific analysis. California Forever stated they would provide the County with a copy of the proposed legislation but rather provided County staff with a one page summary.

August 29, 2025 County staff identified an aggressive, yet achievable, schedule that would allow the proposed project to receive the necessary entitlements without the need for any legislation. The schedule was shared with GO-Biz.

And more dates in the timeline from the preceding timeline:

2017 “Michael Moritz, the billionaire venture capitalist, sent a note to a potential investor about what he described as an unusual opportunity: a chance to invest in the creation of a new California city.”

2023. Land acquisition begins by a secret company called Flannery Associates. The proximity to Travis Air Force Base forces speculation that this is a Chinese shell company acquiring land to spy on the United States. This draws the attention of the local Congressional delegation.

July 7, 2023 Wall Street Journal: Investors Bought Nearly \$1 Billion in Land Near a California Air Force Base. Officials Want to Know Who Exactly They Are. Flannery Associates’ purchases near Travis Air Force Base have alarmed local and federal officials
<https://www.wsj.com/politics/investors-bought-nearly-1-billion-in-land-near-a-california-air-force-base-officials-want-to-know-who-exactly-they-are-fd868e38?>

San Francisco Chronicle
<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/mystery-company-buying-bay-area-land-new-city-18321807.php>

It turns out not to be due to foreign intrigue, but good ol’ All-American greed.

August 22, 2023 The San Francisco Chronicle reports a poll being conducted by a “Shadowy group that owns 52,000 Bay Area acres may be planning to build a new city.”
<https://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/mystery-bay-area-buyer-poll-new-city-18311007.php>

August 23, 2023 The New York Times outs Flannery as a land speculation scheme being backed by Silicon Valley billionaires

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/25/business/land-purchases-solano-county.html>

August 29, 2023 New York Times: A California Land Mystery Is Solved. Now the Political Fight Begins.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/29/business/economy/california-land-solano-county.html>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/29/technology/solano-flannery-tech-city.html>

January 17, 2024 California Forever launches an Initiative Drive
Their initiative is deceptively called the “East Solano Homes, Jobs, and Clean Energy Initiative”

<https://www.thereporter.com/2024/01/17/california-forever-introduces-rio-vista-ballot-initiative/>

January 2025 The opposition group Solano Together launches

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErYvMUhFXKM>

February 2024 Initiative Campaign launches

<https://calmatters.org/economy/2024/02/california-forever-promises/>

January – July 2024 California Forever spends \$2 million in the first three months and then \$7 million in the last three months on the initiative campaign - \$ 9 million

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/C66nliorOl6/>

<https://beniciaindependent.com/california-forever-going-dark-after-spending-7-million-in-april-june/>

April 4, 2024 Poll shows 70% opposed to California Forever plan

<https://www.solanotogether.org/post/poll-shows-solano-county-voters-overwhelmingly-reject-california-forever-solano-together-calls-for>

July 18, 2024 The County releases a report on the effect if the initiative were to pass
It indicates tremendous economic damage

<https://www.solanocounty.gov/government/registrar-voters/historic-election-results-files/november-5-2024-general-election-results/east-solano-plan-supporting-documents>

July 22, 2024 California Forever withdraws initiative after unfavorable polls

<https://californiaforever.com/joint-statement-by-solano-county-and-california-forever/>

“In shock move, California Forever pulls measure to build Bay Area city”

<https://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/california-forever-pulls-measure-bay-area-city-19589780.php>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/07/22/business/economy/california-forever-solano-county-city-on-hold.html>

“The people have spoken and California Forever has been forced to withdraw their hastily drawn, poorly designed initiative, given a surefire loss in November,” Solano Forever,

<https://www.solanotogether.org/post/statement-solano-together-win>

July 2024 With their initiative withdrawn, California Forever claims that they will work with the county:

Joint statement: “Instead, they will submit an application for a General Plan & Zoning Amendment and proceed with the normal County process which includes preparation of a full Environmental Impact Report and the negotiation and execution of Development Agreement. As part of the normal County process, California Forever will reimburse the County’s costs for this future work, including both staff time and external consultants.”

December 2024 California Forever still expresses interest in going back to the voters in 2026 – after an Environmental Impact Report

January 17, 2025 Suisun City announces they are exploring annexation; the Mayor explicitly denies that it has anything to do with California Forever
https://www.dailyrepublic.com/news/updated-is-suisun-city-california-forever-making-annexation-deal/article_25dcac38-d84f-11ef-bdf9-d7639def4d11.html

March 3, 2025 Suisun City and Rio Vista City Councils independently hold meetings to discuss annexation. Rio Vista explains that they aren’t really interested, but Suisun City forced their hand. Suisun City still doesn’t show a map and still is vague about the area that they are considering annexing. The public learns about Suisun City’s plans from Rio Vista.
<https://www.thereporter.com/2025/04/03/california-forever-to-officially-explore-annexation/>

After November flop, California Forever launches new city concept
<https://www.sfgate.com/local/article/california-forever-new-bay-area-city-factory-20788666.php>

March 2025 Congressman Garamendi announces shipbuilding bill – in Vallejo
<https://www.vallejosun.com/can-shipbuilding-return-to-vallejo>

March 21, 2025 California Forever tries to link their plans to the Shipbuilding efforts to the Executive Order signed by President Trump <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/mar/28/california-forever-tech-boats>

July 17, 2025 California Forever announces the gimmick of the Solano Foundry
<https://www.thereporter.com/2025/07/17/california-forever-launches-solano-foundry/>

August 25, 2025 Bay Area Council Economic Institute releases report
<https://www.thereporter.com/2025/08/25/bay-area-council-issues-california-forever-study/>

And that brings us full circle to the present time where California Forever is trying to use their influence to bend the California legislature in their favor.

The Solano Maritime Act and “Environmental Review” of the Shipbuilding Proposal.

We do not have a copy of the proposed legislation being floated around, but we have a hint of the wording in the “Solano Maritime Act” from the newspaper The Reporter.

<https://www.thereporter.com/2025/09/05/officials-mull-fast-track-shipyard-bill/>

But if this wording is anything near the real thing, it’s an outrage.

“The Reporter has obtained a draft of this legislation, which would mandate that the county change its zoning designations near Collinsville.”

“The bill would require the board of supervisors of County of Solano to amend its general plan and zoning code to accommodate certain applications for development of maritime uses in certain areas, for a period from now until January 1, 2029.”

“By imposing additional duties on the county, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.”

What? The bill would impose a General Plan change from the State? The bill would impose a “state-mandated program?” The bill would impose additional duties?

To call this a naked power-grab by the state would be given it a compliment.

Outrageous. What state did I wake up into?

And then, about the environmental review:

“The bill would allow the 2008 Solano County General Plan’s Final Environmental Impact Report to be “conclusively presumed to satisfy the requirements of CEQA for maritime streamlining projects that are located in the water dependent industrial area.”

“The bill would require a dispute between Solano County and one or more responsible agencies, or between an applicant and one or more responsible agencies, to be submitted in writing as a dispute resolution request to the Governor and would require the Governor to resolve the dispute within 45 days.”

I guess that means that the proposal is to silence the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, the Delta Protection Commission, the Delta Stewardship Council, ABAG/MTC, the Air Quality Control Boards, CalTrans, and all other review of this expedited plan on behalf of billionaires.



Protected Swainson’s Hawk Flying over the Suisun Marsh near Collinsville

“Environmental Review” of the Shipbuilding Proposal

The irony of the Assembly Co-Chair of the Delta Caucus even considering sponsoring legislation that would irreversibly damage the Delta has not escaped me.

I cannot get an answer whether this legislation – not published yet even though the legislative session is winding down – is off as reported on Wednesday or is back on as reported on Thursday. The rumors of back-room discussions over the weekend involving California Forever and the County and the Governor’s office are swirling, and there is that newspaper report from Thursday:

“On Thursday afternoon, California Forever CEO Jan Sramek sent an email confirming that his team, county staff, and GO-Biz met on Thursday and revised language for draft legislation to meet Emlen’s [the county’s] requests.”

My guess is that we might still see the Golden Rule in action: “He who has the Gold, makes the rules.”

I have been reading the 2008 Solano County General Plan and the accompanying Environmental Impact Report all weekend.

<https://www.solanocounty.gov/government/resource-management/planning-services/2008-solano-county-general-plan>

Also I reread the Collinsville General Plan Special Study Area document and all of the sections within the General Plan and EIR that referred to Collinsville.

<https://solano.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7649141&GUID=FDA7BF52-EC47-4BA6-8378-99EAAC596A39>

The Collinsville General Plan Special Study Area document is a quick read – it’s five pages and a map. And there frankly isn’t much mention of Collinsville in the General Plan or in its accompanying EIR. There is no there, there.

If this report is true:

“The bill would allow the 2008 Solano County General Plan’s Final Environmental Impact Report to be “conclusively presumed to satisfy the requirements of CEQA for maritime streamlining projects that are located in the water dependent industrial area.”

then I have a request. Please eliminate this hypocrisy to say that the bill just waiving CEQA. Please spare us the insincerity that implies that there has been environmental review. The wording should be:

“CEQA is waived for shipbuilding projects in the Collinsville area.”

California Forever's CEO Jan Sramek has said as much:

"Sramek called for legislation similar to that which was written for the Golden One Center in Sacramento, Apple HQ in Cupertino, and the Warriors Arena in San Francisco.

"If wealthy cities like Sacramento, San Francisco, and Cupertino can use special legislation to bring about stadiums and office jobs, why can't Solano County do the same to create thousands of construction jobs, 10,000 permanent blue-collar jobs, and build a shipyard that makes major contributions to our national security?" Sramek asked." Source, Vacaville Report

That's what this is – waiving CEQA, removing the regular planning process, going forward without analysis, taking away that authority of any state agency charged with protecting the Delta or Protecting the environment.

Let's not pretend. Let's just not.

If we are going to eliminate environmental review – let's call it that.

I get it. California Forever wants to push their project – they have almost a billion dollars sunk into it. The Solano Economic Development Corporation wants a big win. California Forever negotiated a PLA with some of the labor unions to get them on their side – and they are exerting pressure. The Governor's office wants to appear pro-business. California politicians want to counter the narrative that those inconvenient planning procedures and pesky environmental regulations slow things down and get in the way of really being pro-business. But those procedures are put in place so that the right decisions are made and put in place so that the entire governmental apparatus doesn't promote special interests and the elite (ahem, like California Forever) at the expense of the rest of us.

So, sigh, I will make my case and point out what we are not doing.

Let me first point out that the Environmental Impact Report that accompanied the General Plan is a program EIR. This really needs a project EIR as a follow up.

The "Collinsville General Plan Special Study Area" document is rudimentary. This really needs a Collinsville Specific Plan and either a Focused EIR or at least a mitigated Negative Declaration.

The infrastructure costs to provide road access are massive – and this really needs a financial analysis. I don't know what fraction of the \$4.9 billion per year in infrastructure costs for a total of over two hundred billion dollars will be required by this project; of course, no one knows this – the study hasn't been done.

The Collinsville General Plan Specific Study Area document sat on a shelf since 2008. The General Plan says, *"Limited changes were made to the land use designations found in the 1979 Collinsville–Montezuma Hills Area Plan."* So we really are certainly examining an out-of-date document. .

I don't believe the 80,000 employees for a minute – but if this were to be the case, doesn't everyone think that a Traffic study is in order?

Program Elements of the General Plan EIR called for follow up studies. These haven't been accomplished.

From the General Plan Environmental Report:

Goal SS.G-3 calls on the County to maintain the historic communities of Birds Landing and Collinsville while providing opportunities for industrial development compatible with the Collinsville

Can you do this with the massive road construction likely required for shipbuilding? Can you do this if 80,000 people are commuting in every day? (Again, I don't believe that).

Program SS.I-6 requires the County to review and update the Collinsville–Montezuma Hills Area Plan and Program consistent with the Collinsville Special Study Area's land uses, policies, and programs.

This hasn't been done.

Program SS.I-7 directs the County to evaluate the circulation system within the Collinsville Water Dependent Industrial area and ensure that industrial and nonindustrial uses can coexist in the area. If a new industrial roadway is developed, the program requires the County to consider an alternative to the alignment shown in the 1979 Collinsville–Montezuma Hills Area Plan.

This hasn't been done.

The Land Use chapter of the 2008 Draft General Plan includes the following policies and program that are intended to minimize impacts on valley floor grassland habitat and vernal pool grassland habitat:

► Policy LU.P-6: Review and update the Collinsville-Montezuma Hills Area Plan and Program consistent with the Collinsville special study area land uses, policies and programs. The Area Plan policies and programs that apply to the secondary management area of the Suisun Marsh shall be reviewed and updated consistent with the Suisun Marsh Protection Plan.

This hasn't been done.

Program SS.I-6: Review and update the Collinsville-Montezuma Hills Area Plan and Program consistent with the Collinsville special study area land uses, policies and programs. The Area Plan policies and programs that apply to the secondary management area of the Suisun Marsh shall be reviewed and updated consistent with the Suisun Marsh Protection Plan.

This hasn't been done.

► Goal SS.G-3 and Policies SS.P-20 and SS.P-27 contain measures that acknowledge the historical character of the communities in the Montezuma Hills. These measures call for the preservation of significant buildings in the communities of Birds Landing and Collinsville, development that is consistent with the character of these rural communities, and protection of

these communities from flood events. These Study Area measures, specific to historical resources and the traditional character of the Montezuma Hills area, would be used to update the 1979 Collinsville–Montezuma Hills Area Plan and Program. Expanded focus would be given to maintaining and enhancing the traditional communities of Collinsville and Birds Landing, and ensuring that new uses are compatible with those communities.

It's hard to see how this will be accomplished.

Policy RS.P-9 goes beyond the preservation of buildings and structures to provide for the restoration of historic marshes to wetland status, thereby restoring the historical environmental context of the Montezuma Hills communities. Similarly, the Suisun Marsh Local Protection Program and Suisun Marsh Protection Plan seek to maintain the ecological balance of this sensitive marsh area, thus further maintaining the natural qualities that comprised the historical setting in the vicinity of Collinsville and Birds Landing.

Policy SS.P-21: Preserve the residential character of the Collinsville town site; ensure that any future nonresidential uses are compatible with the residential character and that an adequate buffer is established between residential and nonresidential uses.

Good luck with that.

In addition, a group called the “Collinsville Coalition for Protection of the Environment” wrote four letters critiquing the adequacy of the EIR and their letters, of course, are included in the Final EIR with responses from the consultants. Reading these, I believe that the consultants gave handwaving answers to legitimate questions. This is the weakness of CEQA: the only recourse is through the courts and that takes money – lots of money. So the handwaving answers stand.

And then there will be no review, or delayed review, of Federal environmental laws.

California Forever happened to purchase some of the most environmentally sensitive land within Solano County.

There's the Solano County Multispecies Habitat Conservation Plan:

<https://scwa2.com/solano-multispecies-habitat-conservation-plan/>

And there is a specific analysis of the impact of the California Forever project performed by the consultant group LSA.

And Mayor Elizabeth Patterson's analysis of the HCP specific to Flannery.

<https://beniciaindependent.com/elizabeth-patterson-where-solanos-habitat-conservation-plan-flannerys-new-city-collide/>

The Solano County Water Agency took the lead in crafting the Solano Multispecies Habitat Conservation Plan; this took several decades and hundreds of meetings of a committee that included biologists, ranchers, farmers, developers, and governmental planners.

The Solano HCP has been developed to support the issuance of a Section 10(a)1(B) incidental take permit under the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 (as amended). This permit is required by the March 19, 1999 Solano Project Contract Renewal Biological Opinion between the USFWS and Bureau of Reclamation. The Solano HCP has expanded the scope of the Biological Opinion and includes additional voluntary applicants and additional species for incidental take coverage. These additional species include federally-listed fish species under the jurisdiction of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) and species listed as threatened or endangered under the State's Endangered Species Act. The HCP further addresses other species of concern (i.e., species recognized by groups such as the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and California Native Plant Society (CNPS) as having declining or vulnerable populations, but not officially listed as threatened or endangered species). Thirty-seven (37) species are proposed to be covered under the Solano HCP.

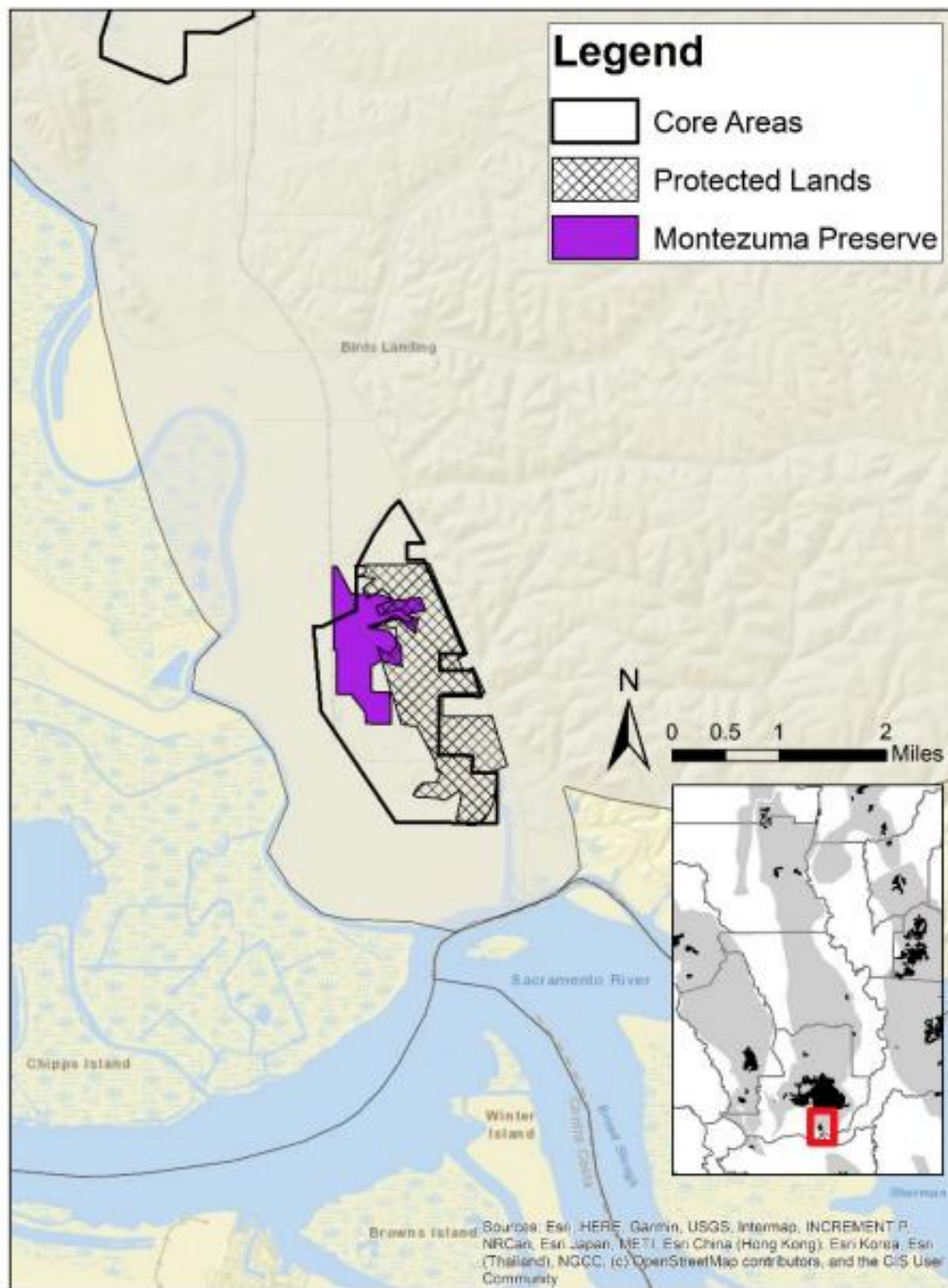
I recommend reading the Habitat Conservation Plan if you have any interest in the natural history of our area – it's basically a textbook on how geology generates ecosystems and it focuses on our ecosystems. It fleshes out some of the topics that I've been covering. And it mentions Suisun City:

Suisun City is located between the City of Fairfield and Suisun Marsh. It is bounded by the City of Fairfield on the north and west, Suisun Marsh on the south, and Travis AFB on the east, thereby limiting the potential for Suisun City to grow. Despite these constraints, the population of Suisun City has grown rapidly over the last three decades, from 2,917 people in 1970 to 26,118 people in 2000, and 28,111 people in 2010 ([http:// www.bayareacensus.ca.gov](http://www.bayareacensus.ca.gov)). However, the population growth in Suisun City is expected to slow due to the constraints on physical expansion imposed by neighboring communities and the Suisun Marsh. The planning horizon for the current General Plan is 2010. The city is in the process of completing a General Plan update, which is scheduled to be adopted in the spring of 2012.

Ah, a bygone era – before the California Forever invasion, before Suisun City went crazy, and when everyone acknowledge the obvious – that the growth of Suisun City had constraints.

The HCP discussed the ecosystems of the County and emphasizes the ecosystems that makes Solano County Solano County: vernal pools, native grasslands, and coastal salt marsh. It adds freshwater marsh and riparian (riverside) habitats and does talk about 36 species, but in an integrated way.

Collinsville Core Area - Protected Lands



https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2024-05/20240506_vpfs_vpts_cfs_final5yr_appendix_publicversion_chapter11.pdf

The HCP explains the process that a developer must follow in order to develop within one of these sensitive areas and the mitigation measures that will be required if destruction of habitat cannot be avoided.

Under Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) incidental take standards, an HCP must:

- (1) “...to the maximum extent practicable, minimize and mitigate the impacts of such taking” (animals);
- (2) “...not jeopardize the continued existence of any species” (plants and animals); and
- (3) “...not appreciably diminish the value of the critical habitat for the survival and recovery of the species” (critical habitat). Under Section 2081 of the California Fish and Game Code, a mitigation plan must “minimize and fully mitigate the effects of the authorized taking” (plants and animals).

Conservationists call mitigation “the M word.” A mitigation measure must compensate for habitat loss, but what constitutes “compensation” can be open to interpretation. This document sets the minimum standards. This is a topic worthy of more discussion later. And, as I’ve chronicled, many of these sensitive lands have fallen into the clutches of ... California Forever.

We are awaiting the drafting of the EIR that would analyze the destruction caused by the proposed Oligarch City section of Suisun City, and a section of this document will examine the Biological implications of their plan, but we already have a study that had been commissioned by the SCWA.

Here is that LSA document’s summary of the California Forever holdings, and if you happen to fall into the category of “I don’t trust them,” the news isn’t good:

The results are summarized below, showing how CF-owned lands significantly affect the remaining unprotected lands for both vegetation/cover types within the Valley Floor Grassland and Vernal Pool Natural Community and to the freshwater marsh cover type.

- CF owns **48%** of the unprotected valley floor grassland cover type (26,545 ac out of 55,241 ac), which leaves 28,696 ac remaining after excluding CF-owned land for potential mitigation.
- CF owns **42%** of the unprotected vernal pool grassland cover type (9,093 ac out of 21,773 ac), which leaves 12,680 ac remaining after excluding CF-owned land for potential mitigation.
- CF owns **60%** of the unprotected freshwater marsh cover type (276 ac out of 462 ac), which leaves 186 ac for potential mitigation.
- CF owns **6%** of the unprotected agricultural cover type (10,106 ac out of 163,239 ac), which leaves 153,133 ac.
- Other vegetation/cover types and Natural Communities besides the agricultural cover type are still abundantly available for HCP mitigation and conservation after subtracting CF-owned lands due to the small percentages CF owns in the Plan Area (e.g., open water, coastal marsh).

Endangered habitats have endangered species.

There are no surveys or mitigation strategies or mitigation ratios.

Quite a lot of this is in the area under discussion. But it won’t be discussed or examined under the “Solano Maritime Act.”

Again, let’s not pretend that there is environmental review. If the legislature wants to waive CEQA – then be honest and say that.

Executive Summary

1. Let's be frank, the involvement of California Forever taints the project and generates suspicion and opposition. These are land speculators whose behavior has offended many residents.
2. The outrage here is that the process of special legislation is being driven by outsiders like California Forever – not by Solano County.
3. The draft language of the bill reported in the Vacaville Report was obviously written by California Forever.
4. It isn't clear to the public why this shipbuilding effort is going into Collinsville rather than Mare Island. (OK, it is clear – because of California Forever's billionaires).
5. This entire discussion is a back-room deal. The language has not been published and is not available to the public – a little over a week before the end of the legislative session.
6. This bill is being rushed at the very end of a legislative session.
7. This is too important – there is too much at stake - to half-ass this proposal through the legislature in this way.
8. Legislation would steal power away for citizens – this literally would undermine democracy.
9. This proposal involves the most environmentally sensitive area in Solano County and one of the most environmentally sensitive in the state.
10. This proposal potentially threatens the water supply for most of California.
11. This proposal will certainly damage the Delta – in one of the most untouched areas of the Delta.
12. You are asking the Co-Chair of the Delta Caucus to sell out the Delta to support compromising the Delta.
13. The proposal doesn't just undermine CEQA, it eliminates it for this project. If that is the intent, then be honest and say, "CEQA is waived for this project."
14. This takes place in the Collinsville Study Area without a study. This document has been sitting on a shelf and the promised follow-up studies have not been performed.
15. This certainly will disrupt Collinsville and Birds Landing – contrary to the policies of the General Plan
16. This means that we follow proper planning procedures- until we don't want to.
17. I can't count how many General Plan policies that this violates.
18. Limit the legislation to the approximately 1,574 existing acres of water-dependent industrial land at Collinsville.
19. This project takes place in an area that contains some of the most sensitive habitat in California. There are no mitigation ratios for habitat or farmland.
20. The massive infrastructure costs are not known – there is no financial analysis. There is no analysis of return-on-investment. The cost to the taxpayer isn't known. Where the money will come from isn't known.
21. This is the opposite of transparency. I guess we won't know if there is a bill or not before the Board of Supervisors meeting.



Vernal Pool Source: UC Davis

Summary

I wanted to compliment the County Staff for their effort to be transparent amidst a roller coaster of bill proposals. They were an island oasis of honesty on a sea of secrecy and misdirection. Even then, the “Solano Maritime Act” was crafted behind closed doors in the proverbial smoke filled rooms (although now they are likely latte filled rooms). The only visibility, if you can call it that, was provided by the efforts of Nick McConnell of the Vacaville Reporter.

The Draft language for the “Solano Maritime Act” reporter by the Vacaville Reporter was horrifying. This is the quintessential special interest bill.

I understand that California and Solano County would like to chase economic development. And I understand that this bill provides expediency by eliminating standard procedures and by suspending laws designed to protect the environment. But those procedures and checks and balances were put in place to assure true public input, a democratic process, that we do not cater to special interests, and that we don’t make a major mistake. Do we really profit if we lose our soul?

And if you want to go fast – go together.

Sincerely
Jim DeKloe
Solano County

From: [Ashley Banta](#)
To: [CAO-Clerk](#); [James, Cassandra R.](#); [Mashburn, Mitchell H.](#); [Vasquez, John M.](#); [Williams, Wanda L.](#); [Brown, Monica E.](#)
Subject: Support for Shipbuilding in Solano County
Date: Monday, September 8, 2025 12:29:14 PM
Attachments: [Board of Supervisors 9 9 25 Agenda Item 22.pdf](#)

Good Afternoon Chair Mashburn, Members of the Board of Supervisors, and County Clerk,

Attached is a letter of support for the shipbuilding initiative in Solano County pertaining to the upcoming Board of Supervisors Meeting on Tuesday September 9th, Agenda Item 22.

Thank you for your time,

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Ashley Banta (she/her)
Executive Director
Opportunity House



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