



Aligning Middle-Wage Jobs with Housing in Solano

Solano Transportation Authority Board of Directors

6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, July 8, 2026

Presenters:
Robert Guerrero, STA
Sean Quinn, Solano EDC





Solano Priority Production Area Plan (PPA) Plan

MTC/ABAG Planning Grant to STA and Solano EDC for a Countywide Plan

Problem Statement: Two-thirds of Solano's workers commute to jobs in other counties, and three major employers in Solano have closed in a single year

PPA Plan Purpose: Attract, create, and retain middle wage jobs in Solano County

- **Focus on Manufacturing** - Manufacturing supports 4.5 jobs for every 1 job created and \$3.92 in earnings for every \$1 in wages
- **Partnerships, collaboration, and coordination are key to removing barriers** - A regional approach is needed to address issues like workforce skills and the need to attract/retain younger workers
- **Whole Ecosystem Approach and Long-Term Strategy to Economic Development** – Future economic growth depends on the ability to attract and retain workforce talent aligned with the needs of emerging industries

The planning process was led by a **Project Leadership Team**, which included existing members of the **Solano EDC Economic Task Force**. The PLT was represented by: Local Jurisdictions, Utilities, Workforce Partners, Industry, and STA and Solano EDC

Strategy Framework

1

Fundamental Elements

Identifying and removing barriers that local jurisdictions, workforce training, education, utilities and regional organizations can address as a regional strategy

Remove Barriers

2

Leadership Capacity

Alignment on implementation priorities that ensures equitable economic development across all Solano jurisdictions and strengthens working relationships

Lay the Foundation

3

Key Initiatives

Multi-jurisdictional efforts that require collaboration, partnerships, and trust; build on Solano's strengths; and align with state and federal priorities

Accelerate Growth

Solano Can Enhance Its Competitiveness Through Coalition Building and Leadership

- Build on **Solano's competitive advantages**:
 - Location: link between the Bay Area and the Sacramento region (and access to regional assets like UC Davis)
 - Industrial land, existing workforce, affordable housing, extensive transportation infrastructure (including a deep-water port), and robust education institutions
 - Existing economic clusters and small- and medium-sized businesses, and community support for job growth
- Secure key growth **opportunities**:
 - **Build initiatives around existing assets**, like the Port of Benicia, Travis AFB (Fairfield), municipal airports, UC Davis, etc.
 - **Align initiatives with state and federal programs**, like Advanced Air Mobility, Shipbuilding, energy resilience, etc.
 - **Build multi-stakeholder regional coalition** that include local jurisdictions, utilities, workforce partners, major research institutions, and the state

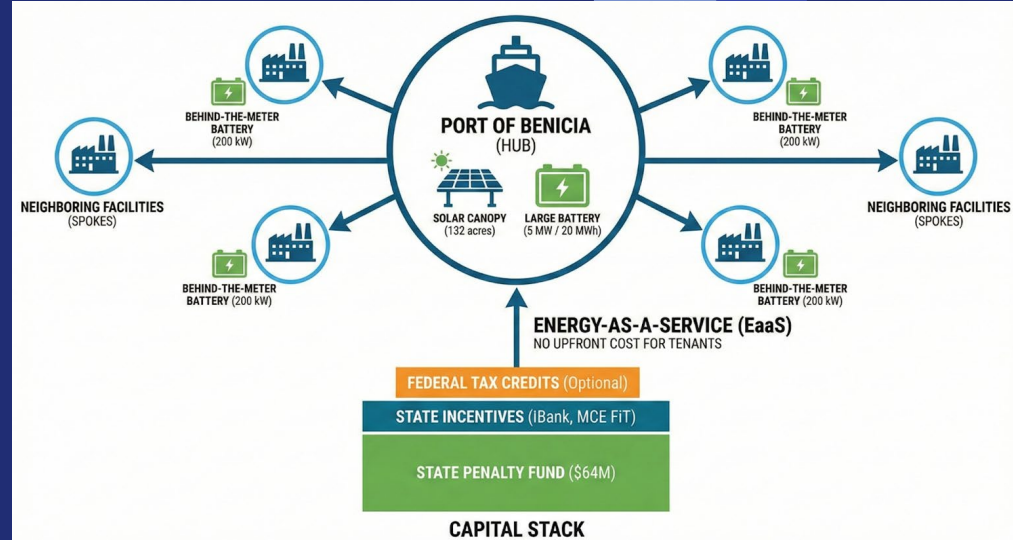
Key Initiatives

A. Industrial Energy Resilience Pilot

- Microgrid at the Port of Benicia
- Potential Inference Data Center
- Explores Energy-as-a-Service model
- Reduces energy cost, improves reliability, builds resilience

Contributing Partners:

- Marin Community Energy (utility)
- Amports (Port of Benicia operator)
- **City of Benicia**
- State and Federal Agencies
- Velo Energy Partners and Provocative Solutions



Key Initiatives

B. Maritime Industrial Base

- Existing infrastructure at Mare Island, Port of Benicia, and Valero Refinery Site
- National industrial policy support for commercial and defence industries

Potential Nonprofit/Public Partners:

- Cities and the County
- Cal Poly Maritime Academy and Working Waterfront Coalition
- Solano WBD and CCD
- Labor and Community Organizations
- STA and **Solano EDC**



Benicia and Vallejo together form one of the most strategically positioned and underutilized maritime-industrial subregions on the U.S. West Coast. Located along the Carquinez Strait and anchored by legacy shipyard and port infrastructure, the subregion combines deep-water access, extensive industrial land, multimodal goods-movement infrastructure, and a skilled maritime workforce.

Key Initiatives

C. Life Sciences and Ag-Tech Industrial Base

- Limitations on expansion for UC Davis in the City of Davis
- UC Davis has significant growth plans
- Opportunity to grow westward
- Spin-off and multiplier effects

Potential Nonprofit/Public Partners:

- UC Davis
- **Cities** and the County
- Solano WBD and CCD
- Labor and Community Organizations
- Solano EDC



The \$66.4 million Resnick Center for Agricultural Innovation will open in 2026.



Phase 1 of the \$1.1 billion Aggie Square District in Sacramento opened in 2025.



The innovation district, with more than 1.2 million square feet of research space, will support startups, continuing education and job training, and community uses.

Key Initiatives

D. Advanced Air Mobility Industrial Base

- Industry is maturing
- **Local airports** can become anchors
- Adjacent industrial land is an asset

Potential Nonprofit/Public Partners:

- **Nut Tree and Rio Vista Airports**
- Cities and the County
- STA and Solano EDC
- Solano WBD and CCD
- Labor and Community Organizations



Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) Implementation Plan

Near-term (Innovate28) Focus
with an Eye on the Future of AAM
Version 1.0 / July 2023

In addition to expanding general aviation, existing local airports can catalyze job growth in manufacturing, testing, and certification in the emerging AAM industry on airport land and adjacent industrial areas.

Key Initiatives

E. Next-Generation Battery Manufacturing Industrial Base

- Capitalize on Bay Area's strength in research and development
- Seek state and federal investments in innovation hubs to grow manufacturing

Potential Nonprofit/Public Partners:

- Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, SLAC National Accelerator, UC Berkeley, Electrochemistry Foundry
- **Cities** and the County
- Solano WBD and CCD
- Labor and Community Organizations
- STA and Solano EDC



This pilot line, located at the University of Michigan, offers near-industrial-scale processing for electrode and cell fabrication using automated, reel-to-reel equipment. The Bay Area lacks such an ecosystem that can translate research to commercialization locally.

Key Takeaways from Assessments

- **Infrastructure gaps exist across all jurisdictions**, even for current uses, requiring modernization and capacity enhancements.
- To attract advanced manufacturing, **Solano must build redundancy and resilience** in the infrastructure systems.
- **Solano must address significant energy constraints**; microgrids may offer reliability and cost advantages.
- Jurisdictions can fund infrastructure upgrades by themselves, but **regional coordination can unlock federal investments**.
- **Inconsistent land use and zoning regulations** across jurisdictions may be a barrier to business attraction.
- Strong **transportation and workforce linkages** are still essential for competitive industrial clusters.
- **Solano still needs to build more housing** to meet the needs of new workers.

A smaller state ask, stacked with many other sources

A coalition unlocks capital a single jurisdiction can't reach — the state dollar is the catalyst, not the whole budget.

SoCal · SQUAD	\$11.8M	→ drives ~\$70M near-term activity, incl. a 10:1 private match	   
Capital · CAPBIO	\$4.2M	→ de-risks activation of a \$90–100M UC-owned facility	  
San Diego · FORGE	\$13M in*	→ ecosystem startups have since raised \$13.5B in capital	    
San Joaquin · The Forge	\$3.7M	→ matched by \$2M+ already leveraged & committed locally	  
Northern CA · Bay Area Maritime	\$8.5M	→ targets \$4M+ in federal awards captured in year one	   

Capital sources:

 State

 Federal

 Private/Industry

 University/Education

 Philanthropic

**FORGE seeks state funds to scale an ecosystem with \$13M already invested; figures are reported regional impact, not all attributable to the new ask.*

How other California regions are competing for state and federal investment

Four moves the strongest Day-1 regional pitches all had in common.



01

Build on local assets

Anchor the bid in real regional strengths the area already owns — not a wish list.



02

Align to state & federal priorities

Map the project directly onto California Jobs First goals and national priorities.



03

Form multi-stakeholder coalitions

One named regional lead pitches the project to the state — not individual jurisdictions.



04

Assemble diverse funding stacks

Blend state, federal, private, university and philanthropic capital.

Solano is already running this playbook

A recent Solano-EDC-led regional bid put all four moves into practice at once.



01

Built on local assets

Anchored in strengths the region already owns: a world-class quantum-research cluster, existing industrial space, port and cryogenic logistics, and a cryogenics-trained workforce.



02

Aligned to state & federal priorities

Mapped onto quantum as a national-security priority and California's own state quantum program — with the state's economic-development tools lined up behind it.



03

One regional coalition

Led by Solano EDC with East Bay EDA, four cities, UC Berkeley, UC Davis, two county workforce boards, and GOBiz — a single coordinated offer, not seven separate ones.



04

A diverse support stack

Blended state incentives, local commitments, a private energy partner, university research and federal workforce pathways into one package.

Specifics withheld — this is an active, confidential proposal. Shown only to illustrate that the regional playbook is already in practice here.

Each project is pitched by a regional coalition — not a single city

A named backbone organization convenes universities, industry, labor and government behind one bid.



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

SoCal Quantum Alliance (SQUAD)

Backbone: SoCal Quantum Alliance, led by UCLA + CSU San Marcos

Partners: HRL, Boeing, JPL, Caltech, IBM, USC, UC San Diego, LAEDC, OC Business Council — 15 regional partners.



SAN DIEGO

Defending California's Future

Backbone: San Diego Regional EDC Defense Initiative

Partners: UC San Diego, SDSU, Cyber Center of Excellence, RISE UP, Qualcomm, General Atomics, U.S. Navy.



KERN / MOJAVE

Mojave Institute Aerospace Hub

Backbone: The Mojave Institute — a dedicated cluster entity with a public-private-federal steering committee

Partners: CSU Bakersfield, BAE Systems, Stratolaunch, NASA, Kern County Schools, Mojave Air & Space Port.



NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Bay Area Maritime Industrial Base

Backbone: Solano County EDC + East Bay EDA

Partners: Cal Poly Maritime Academy, 3 counties, 17 municipalities, regional industry & labor.

the same model, close to home

Recommended Next Steps for Consideration in Final Document

1. Build on the **Manufacturers Roundtable** to **assess regional workforce needs** and collaborate with education institutions and Workforce Development Board to **develop a workforce pipeline that addresses current and future industry demands** and identify and **address other key issues that manufacturers are facing in Solano.**
2. Seek resources to support Solano EDC or another lead entity in **coordinating with Solano jurisdictions and regional partners to pursue federal or state grants** and develop competitive proposals with accelerated application timelines.
3. Form a coalition of local jurisdictions, education, workforce and industry to establish the **Solano Manufacturing Alliance** to focus on the **attraction, retention and creation of manufacturers in Solano County.**

Next Steps

Project Timeline:

May-July 2025

- Stakeholder Interviews
- PLT Meeting—Economic and Market Assessment

September

- PLT Meeting—Public-Private Co-Investment Strategy

October

- PLT Meeting—Infrastructure and Energy Assessment

December

- PLT Meeting—Draft Strategy Framework

February-March 2026

- PLT Meeting—Key Initiatives
- Public Works Directors
- Planning Directors

June

- PLT Meeting—Draft Plan 1.0

July



- Presentation to the STA Board
- 4Cs and Other Solano Stakeholders

September

- Final Plan and STA Board Adoption

Questions?

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