

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### Why are we asking for donations?

- An objective of 1000 Friends Protecting Historic Benicia (a nonprofit organization; donations are tax deductible) is to protect, purchase, plan and develop a park along Jefferson Street in the [Benicia Arsenal Historic District](#) to preserve and enhance this historic resource for the public's use.
- 1000 Friends is raising legal defense funds because the historic district is threatened with the [Jefferson Ridge](#) and [Park Rd](#) development projects that will blot out Historic District structures and the surrounding grounds.

### What is the Benicia Arsenal Historic District?

- The Benicia Arsenal Historic District is on the prestigious [National Register of Historic Places](#). This District has four sub-districts: A, B, C and D. District C, also known as Jefferson Ridge, is the heart of the Arsenal Historic District and contains the nation's most impressive assemblage of mid-19th century military architecture still largely intact as built over 150 years ago. District C includes the Clocktower, six historic residences along Officers' Row on Jefferson Street, 11 non-historic structures and adjacent open space.

### Why is new development in the Arsenal Historic District a problem?

- More than eight acres of open space on Jefferson Ridge are privately owned and slated for development. In 2022, the City approved construction of 138 condos on these parcels, saying high-density housing was an allowed use that qualifies for expedited processing without any environmental review.
- The condos will be in [18 buildings, two to three stories high](#), dominating Officer's Row, conflicting with the formal military layout and diminishing the historic character of Historic District C so it no longer qualifies for the National Register of Historic Places.
- This high-density housing will be adjacent to [six active petroleum pipelines and surrounded by heavy industrial uses](#) (see pages 8 thru 10), including the Port of Benicia and the Valero Petroleum Coke Terminal which caught fire in April 2022.

### What is 1000 Friends doing to protect the Arsenal Historic District?

- 1000 Friends is fighting the City's approval of the high-density housing projects in **Court**, arguing that the City did **have lawful choices** and made the wrong decision by approving projects that destroy the historical significance of the nationally listed site.
- 1000 Friends is also developing support to purchase the privately owned open space parcels on Jefferson Street for expansion of the City's existing Clocktower Park as

proposed in the City's adopted [Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan](#) (see page 4-13) to preserve and enhance this historic resource for the public's use.

## Is 1000 Friends against more housing in Benicia?

- 1000 Friends believes more housing is needed to meet demand in Benicia, but this new housing does not belong in the Arsenal Historic District.
- 1000 Friends supports sites for new housing that are outside the two City-designated historic districts: the [Arsenal Historic District](#) and the [Downtown Historic District](#). The City's Environmental Impact Report prepared for the state-mandated update of the Benicia Housing Element found an [Environmentally Superior Alternative](#) (see pages 6-23 to 6-25) that accommodated more housing than the state required while eliminating all proposed sites for new housing in the two historic districts.

## What can I do?

- **DONATE**

Donate at [1000friendsphb.org](http://1000friendsphb.org).

Donate with check to 1000 Friends, P.O. Box 193, Benicia, CA 94510.

Donate with cash in person where you see us – see cash box and get a receipt.

*All donations are tax deductible.*

- **CONTACT BENICIA CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS AND MAYOR**

Tell your elected officials to support preservation and enhancement of Benicia's historic resources and to expand Clocktower Park on Jefferson Ridge.

- Mayor Steve Young ([syoung@ci.benicia.ca.us](mailto:syoung@ci.benicia.ca.us))
- Vice Mayor Terry Scott ([tscott@ci.benicia.ca.us](mailto:tscott@ci.benicia.ca.us))
- Kari Birdseye ([kbirdseye@ci.benicia.ca.us](mailto:kbirdseye@ci.benicia.ca.us))
- Trevor Macenski ([tmacenski@ci.benicia.ca.us](mailto:tmacenski@ci.benicia.ca.us))
- Tom Campbell ([tcampbell@ci.benicia.ca.us](mailto:tcampbell@ci.benicia.ca.us))