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**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT
MARK MAZZAFERRO (707) 208-5198**

CITY OFFICIALS HAVE PRODUCTIVE MEETINGS WITH REPRESENTATIVES

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Four days in Washington D.C. have given a delegation of Vallejo officials a clearer understanding of the issues related to the final reuse of Mare Island and the level of support from elected officials.

“We had a frank discussion of the issues facing us at Mare Island,” Vallejo Mayor Tony Intintoli said of a Monday morning meeting with Wayne Arny, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Installation and Environment. “Mr. Arny was well aware of those issues, and we hope to reach some level of resolution as soon as possible.”

Intintoli, City Manager David Martinez and Community Development Director Craig Whittom met with Navy officials to discuss issues related to the transfer of the final 360 acres of Mare Island to the City of Vallejo.

“Our meeting with Arny went as we expected, and we came away with an understanding of the Navy’s position on the final transfer,” Intintoli said. “It’s something we can work with to come to a resolution of the issues.”

Arny is the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Installation and Environment.

The City would like to separate Area 1 and Area 10 in order to speed up the reuse of the entire base. Area 1 is relatively clean and work can begin almost immediately. Area 10 is one of the more contaminated areas of the base.

Following a meeting with Navy officials, the Vallejo delegation spent the next three days meeting with elected officials or their representatives, including U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, Congressmen George Miller and Mike Thompson, and Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher.

All voiced strong support for helping Vallejo resolve any issues that might slow down the reuse of Mare Island, as well as for keeping Travis Air Force Base off the Base Realignment and Closure list, a process that is expected to start in 2005.

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“No more BRAC should come to California,” Tauscher said during a Wednesday morning meeting. “BRAC is bad for California, and Travis should never be on any list. It’s a one of a kind base with a unique mission.”

Feinstein told the Vallejo group that while she doesn’t expect to see Travis on any BRAC list, it’s better to be vigilant on the issue.

“Travis is not a likely candidate for shut down, but that doesn’t mean you shouldn’t stay on guard,” Feinstein said.

Other topics discussed with elected officials was the city’s plan to request funding for streetscape and other improvements in the downtown area and plans for transportation funding in 2004-2005.

Specifically, the city plans to ask for \$5.5 million for downtown improvements to dovetail with the \$125 million investment being made by Triad Communities, Inc.

Thompson, whose office is located in the Cannon House Office Building, expressed his willingness to help the city in its various efforts to reuse Mare Island as well as his support for Travis. Fairfield was formerly part of Thompson’s district.

“They may move you,” Thompson said of his connection to Solano County, “but you never lose your relationships or your admiration for a place.”

Vallejo officials also learned that \$1.25 million was earmarked for the Vallejo Station, a \$50 million parking structure project that is considered one of the keys to downtown revitalization. The money will come from a transportation bill that was reauthorized. The structure would be used for parking for downtown visitors as well as ferry and bus riders. The structure would also include retail and office space.

Intintoli, Martinez and Whittom returned to Vallejo Thursday.



Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher, left, met Wednesday morning with Vallejo Mayor Tony Intintoli, center, and Craig Whitton, Community Development Director for the City of Vallejo, during a recent visit to Washington, D.C.