Advanced Shipbuilding ‘Factory of the Future’ Opens in Alabama



Facility will help accelerate submarine production

From the Navy Office of Information, March 20, 2026

Funded in part by Navy investments provided in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), the advanced manufacturing company

Hadrian officially opened a new facility in Cherokee, Alabama March 20th that will boost production of U.S. Navy nuclear submarines.

The 2.2 million square foot site will host a highly-automated “factory of the future,” known as F4, which will mass produce components for Virginia-class attack submarines and Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines. The Navy’s $900 million investment of OBBBA funds combine with $1.5 billion in private capital for a total investment of more than $2.4 billion. According to Hadrian, up to 1,000 high-paying manufacturing jobs are being created in the venture.

“Both chambers of Congress delivered the generational investment required to rebuild our shipbuilding capacity, bring those jobs back to Alabama and put American skilled laborers back at the center of American strength,” said Secretary of the Navy John C. Phelan. “I look forward to building on this progress together in the months ahead, because we are just getting started. This factory is the first of three facilities designed to address the most critical bottlenecks in the maritime industrial base.”

Using advanced manufacturing techniques, workers at the new factory will be able to mass produce components that are needed to build Virginia-class and Columbia-class submarines. A dedicated production plant focused on these components frees up submarine shipyards in Rhode Island, Connecticut and Virginia to focus more resources on submarine module production, increasing capacity in the submarine industrial base.

“We call this distributed shipbuilding, and it’s a key tenet of our plan to achieve required shipbuilding production rates,” said Mr. Jason Potter, Performing the Duties of Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development & Acquisition (ASN RDA). “These factories of the future might be several states away from the yards where the ships are

ultimately built, but by taking on this work they reduce bottlenecks, having a profound effect on the speed of delivery."

The Factory 4 project is estimated to take 18-24 months from initiation to full-rate production, including stand-up of automated production facilities, qualification of components, compliance qualifications like submarine safety program (SUBSAFE), and low-rate initial production. By the third year, the facilities will operate sustainably through delivery of submarine product lines.

Congressman Aderholt Joined U.S. Navy Secretary and Alabama Delegation: Ribbon Cutting on $2.4 Billion Submarine Factory in Cherokee

From the Office of Congressman Robert Aderholt, March 23, 2026

CHEROKEE, Ala. – On Friday, Congressman Robert Aderholt (AL-04) spoke alongside local and national leaders at a landmark ribbon-cutting ceremony for a new $2.4 billion public-private defense industrial facility in Cherokee, Alabama.

The facility in Barton Riverfront Industrial Park is part of a broader public-private effort to strengthen the U.S. maritime industrial base, representing more than $2 billion in combined investment and up to 1,000 new manufacturing jobs for the area.

"It was a privilege to help open an event that has been years in the making, an effort that many worked toward and believed in. This 2.2 million square foot facility will now be a symbol of U.S. defense, anchoring shipbuilding and maritime production in Northwest Alabama. Proving that maritime dominance is not just a coastal priority.

This project didn't happen by accident. It happened because

people believed in this community, and because we made a deliberate effort to bring opportunities back to places that had been overlooked.

This facility is only part of a much larger opportunity, and I intend to keep working until that full potential is realized. Because that's what this community has always done. America needs sea power more than ever, and Alabama is up to the challenge. We will build a 21st century collaborative campus here that no conventional shipyard or industrial park can rival.

With the leadership of President Trump and Republican majorities in Congress, we passed the One Big Beautiful Bill, legislation focused on restoring American strength. And I worked to ensure that communities like ours were part of that vision. Alongside my colleagues in the Alabama delegation, we helped turn that vision into reality right here at home.

By investing in workforce training and building the right partnerships, we made sure Alabama's Fourth Congressional District would be ready when opportunity came and ready to compete for the kind of jobs that strengthen both our economy and our national security. And Friday, we saw that work pay off.

This facility will help bring thousands of manufacturing jobs and new opportunities to Northwest Alabama. But just as importantly, it will help restore America's ability to produce the tools necessary to defend freedom and maintain strength at sea.

I want to thank Secretary of the Navy John C. Phelan, Senator Tuberville, Senator Britt, Senator Wicker, and Armed Services Chairman Mike Rogers. We all worked diligently in the crafting of the One Big Beautiful Bill to make this happen today. But government alone doesn't build something like this. Thank you to AE Industrial Partners and AE Shoals, Hadrian,

Retirement Systems of Alabama, and the Shoals Economic Development Authority for believing in this vision and making a generational investment.

This is just the beginning of a stronger region, a stronger workforce, and a stronger United States of America.”