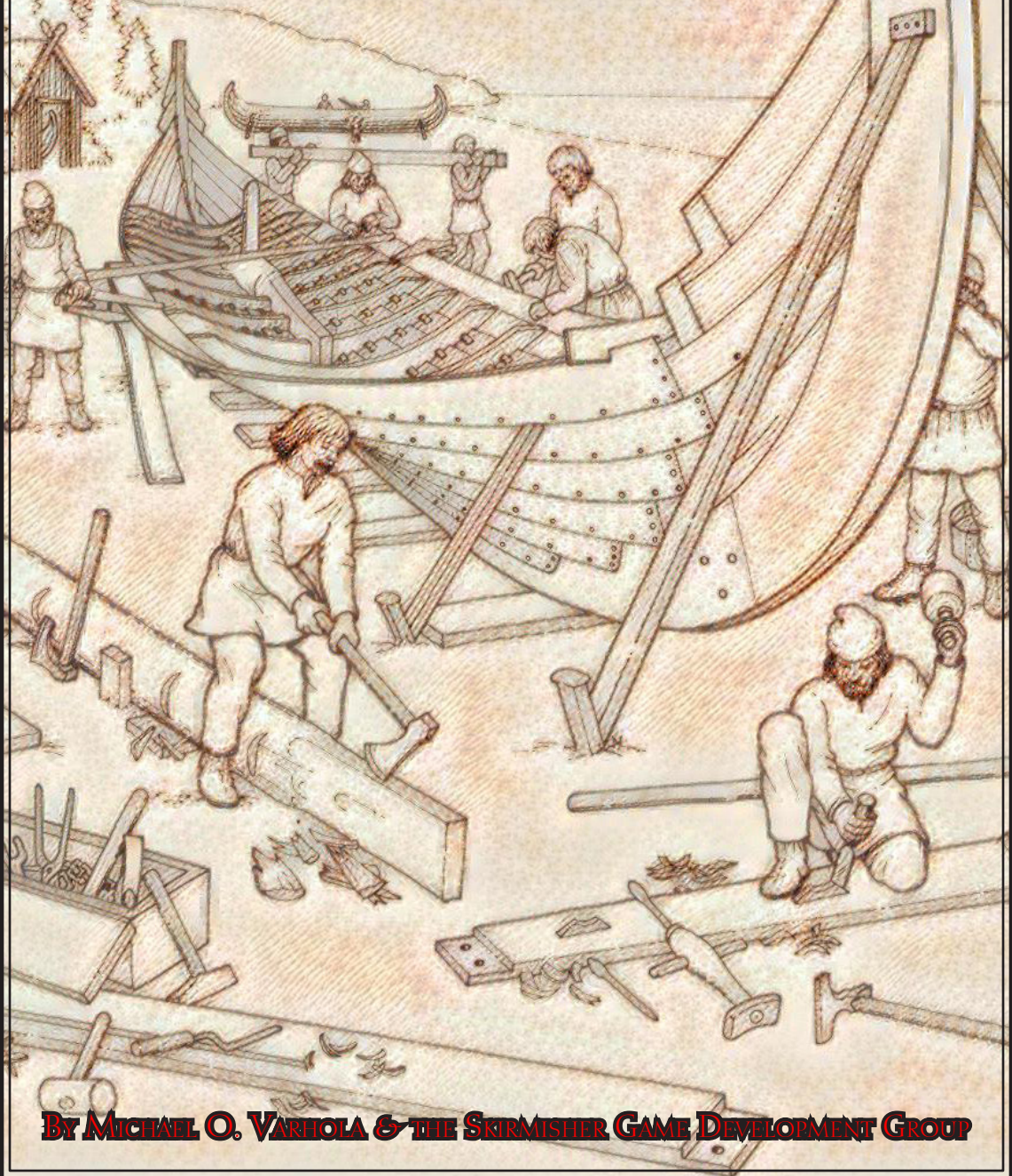


# THE SHIPYARD

BONUS CONTENT FOR *CITY BUILDER*



BY MICHAEL O. VARHOLA & THE SKIRMISHER GAME DEVELOPMENT GROUP

City Builder: A Guide to Designing Communities

# The Shipyard

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## City Builder: A Guide to Designing Communities

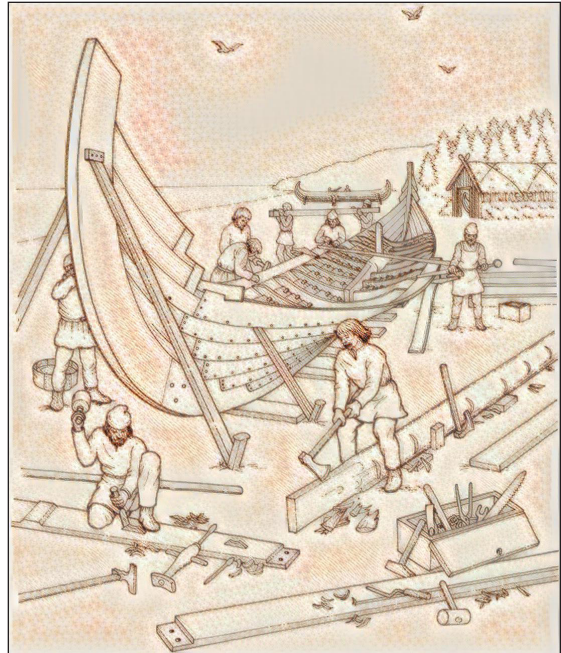
# The Shipyard

Shipyards are places devoted to the construction of vessels of all sorts, including rowboats, keelboats, longships, sailing ships, warships, and galleys. Such places might be very specialized and used only for construction of one or a few sorts of ships or boats, or more comprehensive and used variously for multiple purposes, to include building many sorts of watercraft, repairing and maintaining them, and possibly even breaking up decommissioned vessels. Shipyards are sometimes also known as boatyards or dockyards, although places with the latter label are often more associated with maintenance or basing operations.

Famous shipyards include the one at the Harappan city of Lothal on the Sabarmati River in what is now India, which became active around 2,600 B.C.; the ancient Greek city of Naupactus, the name for which literally means “shipyard”; and the Arsenal of Venice, a sprawling complex of ship-building facilities and armories that was founded in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century.

Shipyards will necessarily be located on bodies of water, whether on islands or a mainland, and these might include sites in sheltered bays, harbors, lagoons, deltas, fjords, or river estuaries with ready access to the sea. They might also be established near places where supplies of appropriate materials are readily available (e.g., generally forest for timber, but possibly also wetlands with papyrus for reed vessels).

Depending on their size and various needs, to include adequate labor, shipyards could be located in anything from purpose-built villages to towns and cities, and if security is a requirement they might be established within fortified areas or in conjunction with naval bases or other military facilities. They might range in



size from small yards with a minimum of infrastructure that are used only periodically, to full-blown factory complexes that employ hundreds of fulltime personnel.

Facilities associated with shipyards might include open areas for the staging and assembly of vessel components; storage yards for timber and other bulk materials; warehouses for sailcloth, rope, nails, and the like; slips for the launching of large vessels; dry docks for repair of vessels of various sizes; workshops for performing specific tasks and securing tools; timbers for rolling vessels or heavy equipment like cranes; quarters for shipwrights, laborers, and guards; and stables for draft animals if they are used at the site.

Ancillary workshops might be located in or near a shipyard. A bronze-working foundry, for example, might be located in a shipyard dedicated to the manufacturing of war galleys and used to create rams for

their prows. Facilities for making rope, sails, and other elements of finished vessels might similarly be part of a shipyard.

Shipwrights, skilled craftsmen who know how to construct various sorts of vessel, are the most important sort of worker associated with shipyards. Expert shipwrights are valued craftsmen who might be hired by shipyards from other lands who are trying to expand their own maritime capabilities, whether for military, trade, or exploratory purposes. Shipwrights might also be interested in working in the yards of other nations both because it is lucrative and to learn about their techniques.

Other personnel associated with shipyards might include laborers to do things like move materials from one location to another; specialist craftsmen like carpenters, blacksmiths, and sailmakers; and security forces that might range from simple watchmen to combat troops like marines and artillerymen. Sailors, pilots, and navigators might also be found in or around shipyards if their skills are required on a regular basis.

While Humans are generally the most prolific of the seagoing peoples, members of any races might be found in shipyards. Elves, although often associated with woodlands, have been known to build excellent vessels for everything from crossing great oceans to navigating inland waterways. Likewise, humanoids — especially highly organized and militarized ones like Hobgoblins — might be inclined to build vessels like warships or troop carriers. Even people not necessarily associated with seafaring might be found in shipyards as a result of their special skills. Dwarves, for example, might be employed to forge anything from nails

to prow rams; Gnomes might be the most suitable people for producing mechanical devices of various sorts; and Halflings might be the best rope-makers or skilled sailmakers in a particular region.

Depending on why they were founded, by who, and where, shipyards might make their products available to anyone with ready coin or only to specific clients, such as the government of a major state. Most will be at least somewhat flexible in this regard.

Adventurers might end up in shipyards for any number of reasons, to include commissioning construction of vessels or having existing ones repaired; serving as security personnel; posing as workers or otherwise gaining access to facilities to gather information or steal things; or being hired to oversee transport of completed vessels to clients in other places.

### **Adventure Hooks**

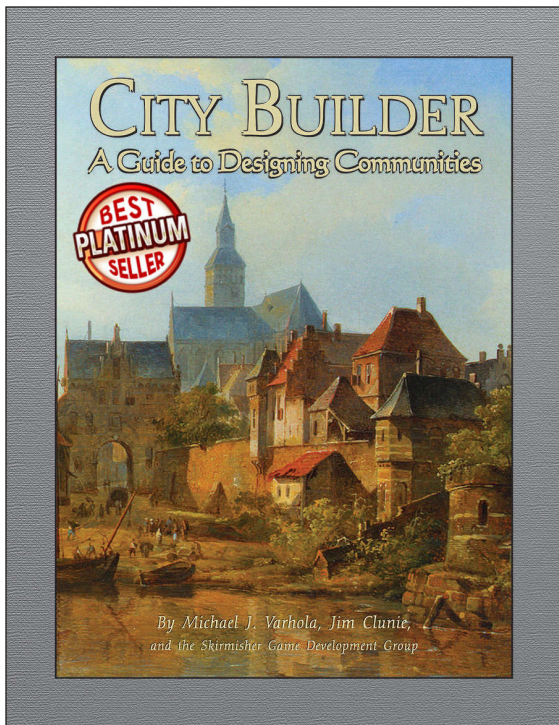
\* Because shipyards are places where innovative techniques and the best naval technologies are implemented they are often the targets of military or industrial espionage. Appropriate characters might thus be tasked variously with infiltrating the shipyard of a rival state and learning some of its secrets, or with protecting a shipyard from spies and/or finding ones possibly already operating within one.

\* Lack of materials necessary for building vessels can slow operations at a shipyard or even bring them grinding to a halt or cause such a facility to be shut down. Adventurers of various sorts might be needed to acquire anything from new sources of lumber to hardware like nails, rope, or sails.

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*“The Shipyard” is a rules-free description of a specific sort of place that might be found in many different sorts of communities and cultures. It is formatted like the more than 70 places found in the **Skirmisher Publishing LLC book City Builder: A Guide to Designing Communities and intended to stand by itself or serve as bonus content to that title. Both this supplement and City Builder overall are intended to be compatible with the needs of almost any ancient, Dark Ages, Middle Ages, Renaissance, fantasy, or other role-playing milieu. City Builder was developed by Jim Clunie, Michael O. Varhola, and the Skirmisher Game Development Group and is available both in hard copy (\$27.95; 174 pages) and as a PDF download (\$17.99; 174 pages) from online sales venues that include Drive-ThruRPG and the Skirmisher Game Store. This comprehensive, fully-illustrated manual is specifically designed to help guide storytellers through the process of creating exciting and compelling urban areas and other sorts of communities and places within them for their campaigns.***



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