

# Folsom expands to El Dorado Hills border

By: Don Chaddock, Telegraph Managing Editor

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Folsom's expanded territory was marked with a sign last week, culminating years of work to annex the area south of Highway 50. Elected officials, community leaders, property owners and others gathered on Feb. 28 to commemorate the posting of the first city limit sign in the 3,585-acre Folsom Plan area. The Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) voted unanimously in January to allow the expansion of Folsom's borders. The growth area is bounded by Highway 50, Prairie City Road, White Rock Road and the El Dorado County line, and is close to six square miles in total, representing a 25 percent increase in Folsom's physical size, according to officials. The land is owned by private property owners, who will likely develop the land gradually over the next two to three decades. Thirty percent of the land, more than 1,000 acres, will be maintained as open space and wetland corridors, including a large tract of protected oak woodlands. Plans for the remainder of the land include more than 300 acres for parks and schools, 1,400 acres of residential construction (10,000 housing units), and 500 acres of commercial, industrial and office space. "We're happy about it," said landowner Eric Gragg, of Folsom. "It's taken a long time but we still have a lot of work to do." Gragg owns property located near the old rail line and was on hand for the gathering. Jeff Starsky, Folsom City Council member, said the move helps ensure a bright future for the city. "It's a good thing," he said. "It guarantees the future of the city for the next 30 years." Some of the officials and community leaders at the gathering included Police Chief Cynthia Renaud, Fire Chief Ron Phillips, Utilities Director Ken Payne, City Manager Evert Palmer, Mayor Kerri Howell, Councilman Andy Morin, Councilman Ernie Sheldon, Councilman Steve Milkos, attorney Bob Holderness (also a former mayor and council member) and Folsom Chamber of Commerce CEO Joe Gagliardi. The project features a strong jobs/housing balance, according to city officials. They anticipate the creation of approximately 13,000 jobs, including many highly paid positions in high-tech and medical industries. City staff is currently working on detailed phasing plans for infrastructure, including roadways, water conveyance, and gas and electricity, as well as funding for infrastructure improvements.

