

Plan answers Elk Grove call for

Project includes enough space for 13,000 workers, 4,900 homes

MIKE MCCARTHY / STAFF WRITER

A proposed 1,200-acre development in Elk Grove includes almost 2.7 million square feet of much-needed office space that could help the fast-growing city to address its critical job shortage and possibly reduce some of the worst commuter traffic in the Sacramento region.

The high-profile project, just west of the planned Elk Grove Promenade mall, would also include 4,886 homes and a community college education center.

The office space — enough for at least

Mixed-use business park planned for Elk Grove:
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13,000 employees — is the most notable element of the city's Southeast Area Specific Plan.

Elk Grove has tons of new homes, but lacks office space to house companies with well-paid workers.

That's why many commuters flood the freeways at peak hours, headed for downtown Sacramento offices. The lack of companies also means the city's economic growth is restricted.

"We've included significant (job-creating) land uses to help keep trips in the city," said Todd Chambers, director of entitlements for Richland Planned Communities Inc., the landowner taking the lead in planning the development.

One of the city's largest-ever proposed developments is "an opportunity for the city to make sure we have the land use in place to promote more office space to improve the jobs-housing balance," Elk Grove planning director Christine Crawford said.

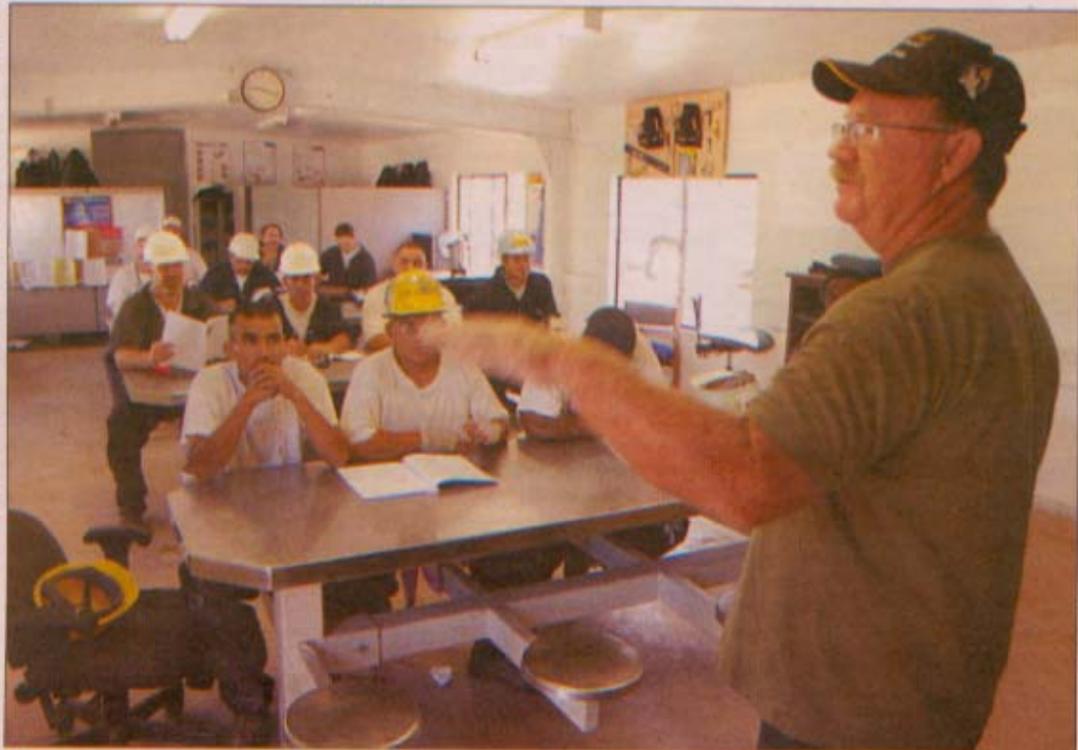


Grubb & E

Building a life outside of prison

Carpenter supervisor Terry Shupe conducts class at Folsom State Prison, in a program that teaches inmates skills so they can be hired in the construction industry once they leave prison. The program, started last year, is believed to be the first of its kind in the nation. Story, Page 6.

DENNIS MCCOY / SACRAMENTO BUSINESS JOURNAL



Intel adds special division

MELANIE TURK

Intel Corp. announced the largest number of layoffs in its history, with 5,000 employees losing their jobs.

The new division will produce a line of products that will be sold in two of its largest markets, both with a similar name, in the same time, amidst a global economic downturn that has produced a business recession.

Intel employees outside the U.S. are also affected.

The uncertainty at Folsom is being updated by a recruiter, and the finance for workers at least tripled.

The 53 Folsom labor filings affected by the layoffs. They'll have job within the one within the terminated.

Intercare flush with investors, ready to expand

KELLY JOHNSON / STAFF WRITER

Intercare Holdings Inc., a Roseville-based insurance services company with almost 400 employees, is making moves to get a lot bigger.

The company has new investors pumping in millions, industry sources say, and a larger board of directors to provide more expertise as Intercare expands into new services and other states.

care's third-party-administration division has expanded into handling property-casualty and liability claims.

The company opened an office in Bellevue, Wash., in April to oversee the new work. Two more out-of-state offices are expected to follow within nine months, as the company pursues work in multiple states. The company opened the new office



Mike Ramser

claims management and cost containment divisions.

Intercare also is expanding its workers' compensation claims handling and its cost-containment services outside of California. First up is Nevada,

Inmates nail union jobs through prison program

KATHY ROBERTSON / STAFF WRITER

Aaron Reed made money by making methamphetamine before he went to state prison in Folsom. He hopes to make a living in construction when he gets out.

Reed is one of 16 inmates set to graduate June 28 from an innovative new pre-apprenticeship program that teaches construction skills and offers a path to employment after inmates are released.

The program, started last year, is believed to be the first of its kind in the nation. It's operated by the Prison Industries Authority in partnership with the Northern California Carpenters Regional Council, and is intended to help inmates transition to a union apprenticeship program and a job.

In addition to classroom instruction, inmates are getting practical experience making modular buildings at Folsom State Prison and converting an old fire camp on the hill above it into a training and engineering center. The Prison Industries Authority will pay initial union dues and provide a full set of tools to inmates who complete the program and join Carpenters Union Local 46.

"They should have work the day they walk out," said Charles Pattillo, PIA's acting general manager.

The program grew out of discussions about how to connect training provided in prison with market demand outside.

Construction is the third-fastest growing industry in California, according to the state Employment Development Department. The number of jobs is projected to increase 30 percent from 2002 to 2012 in construction and carpentry.

The PIA is a state organization that provides jobs for inmates. They make goods that are sold to other government entities, including flags, shoes, eyewear, license plates, clothing and modular furniture.

There's unmet demand within the corrections system for modular buildings built by the PIA, and other state agencies also want to buy them. The new plant at Folsom can churn out the product while providing hands-on training for inmates.

"The benefit to the PIA is a trained work force turns out a quality product," Pattillo said. "The benefit to society is the guy who's walking out the gate with a higher probability of obtaining employment immediately equals a guy who's not coming back."

It costs the state about \$36,000 a year to house and feed an inmate.

Productive union members: The program offers a pipeline of trained and willing workers prepared to join the union.

"We're hoping to get some good folks out of this," said Paul Cohen, a spokesman for Northern California Carpenters Regional Council. "We see a lot of work coming." Local 46, based in Oakland, includes Greater Sacramento and covers 29 locals with about 40,000 members from Visalia north to Oregon.

The building industry demands big investments in time and energy to master construction skills, said Bob Alvarado, executive officer at the regional council.

"We are pleased to partner with the PIA and extend an opportunity to people who are ready to make a commitment and are serious about re-entering society as productive citizens," he said.

Inmates with at least 18 months left to serve are eligible. They must have an ability — and willingness — to do the work. There already are a couple of hundred names on the waiting list.

Training takes six months; inmates get 10 hours of classroom instruction and 30 hours of hands-on training per week. Training runs the gamut from math and reading blueprints to framing, roofing and building staircases.

Set-up cost PIA about \$750,000, Pattillo said. Union trainers cost another \$50,000 a year. Inmates get paid 45 cents to \$1.05 an hour for their labor, but there's already an immediate need for \$12 million worth of modular buildings.

Another chance: Prospective graduates see new possibilities.

David Slaughter, 44, did some construction work before he went to prison for vehicular manslaughter. Noting his age and that he has one year left on his sentence, he's hoping to get a full-time job with retirement benefits when he gets out.

Ruben Gonzalez is in prison for stealing a car and gets out in October. Gonzalez, 31, was never involved with organized labor before. "It's something I want to explore — and can fall back on," he said.

Reed looks at starting pay of about \$16 an hour when he gets out Jan. 2. He likes the mix of training he's getting at Folsom. His mother and sister will travel to Folsom next week for his graduation, he said proudly.

"I look forward to graduating and starting work," he said. "I don't want to come back."

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DENNIS McCOY / SACRAMENTO BUSINESS JOURNAL

David Slaughter caulks cabinets as part of the pre-apprenticeship program at Folsom prison.