

## Library offers free help with e-filing income taxes

If you file your taxes electronically, you can get free help at the Folsom Library. Confidential AARP tax aides take appointments Mondays 10 a.m. to 3 p.m and Tuesdays 10 a.m. to 2:45 p.m through April 12. 355-7374.



## Inside

The “community’s college” plans a regional theater in Folsom. See story, page 3.

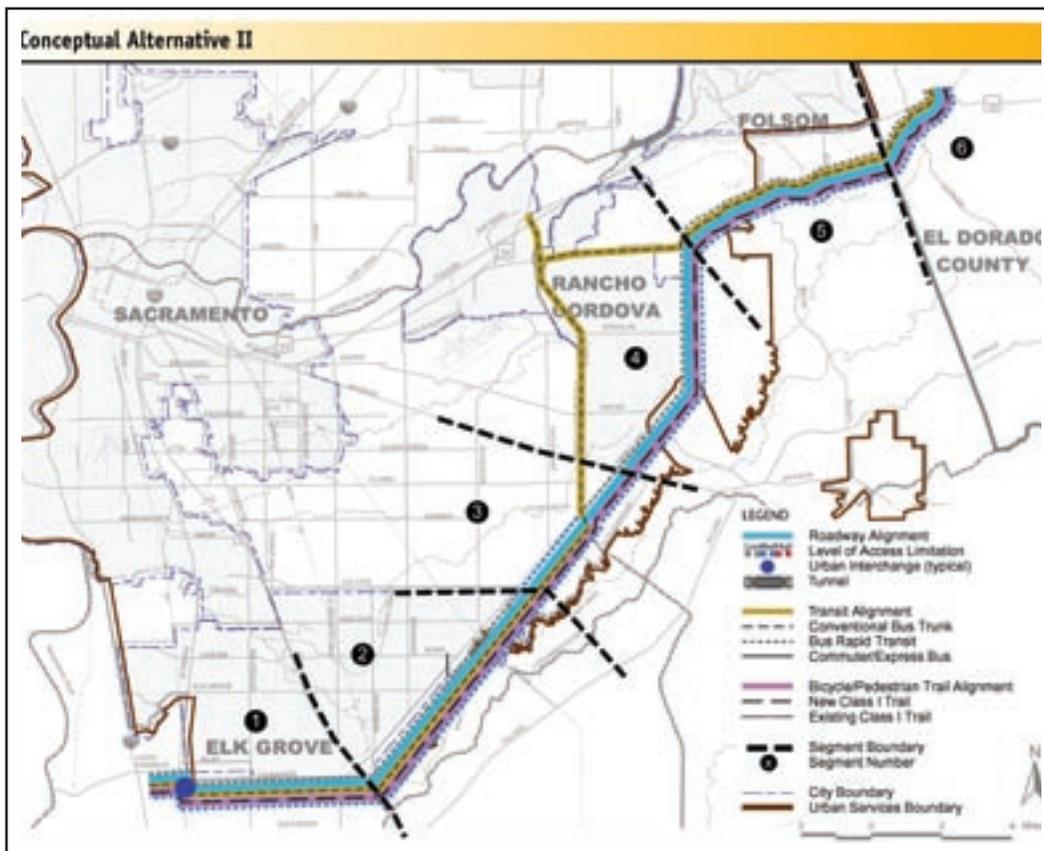


# City of Folsom

# Newsletter

Published 10 times a year for the residents and businesses of Folsom

February 2005



Of four similar routes SACOG has proposed in a draft study of a connector between El Dorado Hills and Elk Grove, the Folsom City Council endorsed this concept, with some qualifications. The blue line is the general roadway alignment. It runs about 35 miles from east of El Dorado Hills Boulevard along White Rock Road and the southern edge of Folsom’s sphere of influence area to Grant Line Road, across Route 99, through tiny Sheldon to Elk Grove and

I-5. Access to the road will be limited in some areas. The green line is public transit, possibly bus rapid transit, which has its own guideway and has been described as a “rubber-tire train.” The violet line is a bikeway. Another alternative shows the bikeway along the Folsom South Canal. The connector is several years from completion, but it will eventually reduce traffic on Highway 50 through Folsom.

## Council endorses new road

*Future Elk Grove connector would reduce congestion*

The City Council on Dec. 14 endorsed a plan for a future traffic corridor that will one day make it easier for Folsom residents to travel to Elk Grove and will help reduce traffic congestion on Highway 50.

The route alignment is still being determined, but the corridor will link El Dorado Hills and Elk Grove roughly along the existing White Rock and Grant Line roads. Traffic that now travels to Elk Grove on Highway 50 and Route 99 could bypass Highway 50 at Folsom.

The project is being coordinated through  
See Road, page 5

# Final decision on Dam Road due in spring

The period to comment officially on the closure of the Folsom Dam Road ended in January, and the Bureau of Reclamation plans to issue its final environmental report, along with its “record of decision” on the fate of the road, in the spring.

Until then, bureau and city officials are continuing to work to find a way to relieve some traffic congestion for beleaguered Folsom drivers while still maintaining the security of the dam.

The bureau closed Folsom Dam Road in February 2003, saying public access to the dam was a security risk. The closure left 18,000 vehicles a day needing new routes across the river.

The final decision on the road will likely be one of three alternatives identified in a draft environmental impact study the bureau issued in December. The study also identified a fourth alternative – the “no action alternative” – to reopen the road full time, as it was until two years ago, but bureau officials say they won’t consider that option.

The bureau’s “preferred alternative” would keep the road closed permanently, as it is now. The other two would open the road on weekdays – either four or six hours a day – during times of heaviest traffic. These options, which the City of Folsom proposed, would limit traffic flow and require vehicles be subject to inspection. The city would provide security.

As part of its environmental study, the bureau held public hearings in Sacramento and Folsom in January. About 100 people turned out at the Folsom hearing Jan. 5. Every

speaker at that meeting urged the bureau to open the road.

Most of the speakers advocated operating the road on weekdays for three hours during morning and evening peak times. They cited such hardships as traffic congestion, lost revenues, decreased quality of life, increased emergency response time to hospitals, worsening of air quality as cars stand still, increased noise from traffic and the creation of a functional barrier dividing the city.

Police Chief Sam Spiegel is heading a city team that is working with the bureau to reopen the road. The goal, he says, is to develop a plan for operating the dam road that will provide the bureau with “a satisfactory level of security” while allowing some traffic to cross the dam.

He is encouraged, he says, by the “collaborative effort of the bureau and the city in moving forward on this operations plan.”

Bureau spokesman Jeff McCracken, who lives in Folsom, also says his agency “has been working very closely with the city” to see if the road can be opened without increasing the security risk to the dam.

“We’ve got a real difficult issue we’re working with,” McCracken says, “but we certainly are looking to try to find a way to meet both of our interests.”

The obvious long-term answer, McCracken says, is a new bridge. That solution may not be far off. Congress has authorized funding for a new bridge parallel to the dam. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has begun preliminary work on the project, and the \$66 million, four-lane crossing could open by late 2007.



## City’s tenth public safety academy begins March 2

The agenda has changed for the next Citizens Academy public safety education program. The popular classes are required of residents who want to become police or fire volunteers but are open to anyone who’d like to learn more about public safety in Folsom.

The new curriculum includes courses in child safety and Buckle-Up Baby as well as CPR trainer certification and CERT (Citizens Emergency Response Team) training. The program still includes such topics as crime scene investigation, fire safety, Neighborhood Watch,

identity theft, 911 reporting, Megan’s law, animal control and a K9 demonstration. There are opportunities for ride-alongs and sit-alongs (with a dispatcher), and participants will meet city officials.

The classes are free but are limited to 40. They begin March 2 and run for 10 consecutive Wednesdays from 6 to 8 p.m. All candidates will be interviewed and will be subject to a background check.

For more information, call Sharon Roloff at 351-3536 or check the city’s Web site.

## News Roundup

### Council elects Miklos, Morin

Steve Miklos was reelected mayor and Andy Morin was elected vice mayor at a special City Council meeting Dec. 13. Miklos is serving his seventh term as mayor.

Miklos was elected to the council in 1994 and was vice mayor in 1995 and 1996. He was first elected mayor in 1997.

Morin is serving his first term on the council and has not held a previous council office.

### Murer House classroom opens

Joe Murer – born Giuseppe – would surely be pleased. His beloved property on Folsom Boulevard now



offers Italian cultural classes to the public.

The Parks and Recreation Department recently opened a learning center in a cottage on Joe Murer's property, now the Murer House Historical Site. The center has already scheduled Italian language classes – the next session starts in the spring – and a winemaking and

Italian treats class on April 9.

Before the center opened, the city improved the parking lot, added lighting and sidewalks and made the small building accessible to all users.

Murer's imposing pink Italianate-style house is still being renovated. When it opens, the house is expected to be used for exhibits and tours.

Murer, who was born in Crespano del Grappa, now Folsom's Italian sister city, came here about 1910. He brought with him his love of his homeland and his skills as a craftsman. His distinctive contributions to Folsom can be seen in the bar he built at the Folsom Hotel and several old-world

facades on Sutter Street. Numbers 627, 701 and 705 are examples.

Murer built his house in 1925, staying in the cottage that is now the learning center while the house was under construction. He lived in the house nearly 50 years – until he died in 1973.

Murer planted his grounds in the Mediterranean style, with terraced gardens and a multitude of fruit and nut trees. The Folsom Gardening Club will maintain the terraces and offer gardening classes.

Because the learning center has a small kitchen, Italian cooking classes are held at R.G. Smith Clubhouse. For information on the classes, call 355-7285.

## Folsom Lake College planning a performing arts center

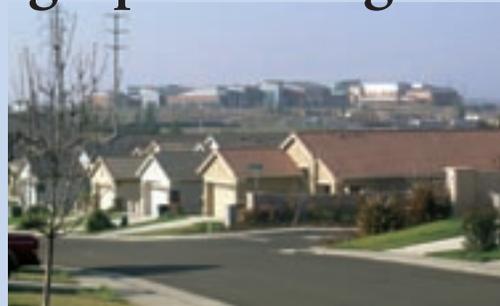
Folsom may soon have a regional theater to rival the Mondavi Center at U.C. Davis.

A fine and performing arts complex being planned for Folsom Lake College will include a state-of-the-art theater that will support the types of cultural programs the Mondavi Center offers – programs Folsom residents now must leave town to attend.

The City Council unanimously endorsed the college's plans and the Los Rios Community College District's fund-raising efforts to build the center.

College President Thelma Scott-Skillman told the council in a presentation Dec. 14 the new facility could bring professional touring performances to Folsom. Programs geared to families and children also will be a priority of the center, Scott-Skillman said.

Building the complex involves expanding the plans for a fine arts building that was funded by a bond measure passed in 2002. The expansion will cost \$4.7 million more. The money will be raised through Los Rios' "building careers of distinction" campaign, in



**Construction at Folsom Lake College is creating a new skyline on the campus.**

which all Los Rios campuses identify a "program of distinction." Folsom Lake College has selected fine and performing arts as its program of distinction.

The new fine arts complex will be 35,800 square feet, nearly double the original size. It will include an 800-seat theater (up from 600) as well as a smaller 200-seat theater intended mostly for student use. There also will be recital and lecture halls, space for an art gallery and classrooms.

The complex is expected to open by 2008. When it does, Scott-Skillman told the council, it will help fulfill the school's mission to be "the community's college."

## News Roundup

### Veterans project designers chosen

The city's Veterans Recognition Committee selected Acanthus Architecture and artist Phillip Sciortino to create a veterans memorial behind the future main library in City Lions Park.

The preliminary concept calls for remodeling the existing boulder monument to add a draped bronze American flag and eagle. Behind the library will be a court of military flags and lifesize bronze figures of a soldier and scout dog. The figures would represent, but not depict, Marshall Farley and his dog, who died in Viet Nam in 1967.

The softball field where the library will be built was named for Farley. He will be honored with a display inside library.

The design team expects to present a final concept to the committee and some city commissions beginning in February and then bring it to the council.

The memorial is planned to be completed in 2006.

### City awards arts grants for 2005

The City of Folsom and the Arts and Cultural Commission have awarded 10 grants for 2005 to help support community arts and cultural programs.

The city offers \$25,000 a year to local arts programs that benefit the community.

This year's recipients: Folsom High Music Boosters for music programs; Folsom Middle School for a mural project; Oak Chan parent-teacher organization for a visual art program; Folsom Patrons of the Arts for the gourd festival; Folsom Lake Symphony Orchestra for concerts; Carl Sundahl School Foundation for a visual arts program; Folsom Lake Civic Ballet for an Evening of Dance; and the Folsom High art department for a library public art project.

Two mini-grants were awarded to the Folsom High Music Boosters and Empire Oaks school.

### 2005 nature run moved to May

Folsom's popular Run With Nature won't be held this October. It's moving up six months to May.

The Parks and Recreation Department changed the race date to avoid conflicts with other races being scheduled in the fall. The race will again take place on trails at The Parkway.

The race, which draws thousands of runners and walkers, offers 5K and 10K runs, a 5K walk and a half-mile youth run. Entrants in past races will get a registration form in the mail.

For information and registration forms, see [www.folsomrunwithnature.com](http://www.folsomrunwithnature.com). Volunteers are needed, too: Call 355-7285.



The Nisenan Maidu, native inhabitants of Folsom, are shown in this design concept as they lived, with a hut of bark and baskets and garments of grass.

### A future walk through city's past

You certainly know Folsom once was a Gold Rush camp. But do you also know that for thousands of years the Maidu people plucked salmon from the American River with baskets made of grass? Or that in 1880 Folsom's population was 80 percent Chinese?

You'll learn about the city's diverse history in a new exhibit now going up at the Folsom History Museum. The exhibit, being created and built by Toxey/McMillan Design of Benicia, will lead visitors chronologically through Folsom's past, beginning with Native Americans and including the Gold Rush, railroad, ethnic heritage, Natomas Company, prison, agriculture, powerhouse, Sutter Street and more.

The coming exhibit is part of a renovation of the museum's interior. The permanent history display is being expanded and moved from a small annex to the main exhibit room. The temporary exhibits, such as the annual quilt show and recent Art Deco show, will move to the annex. By switching the rooms, says museum manager Karen Mehring, visitors will always enter an exhibit area and displays under construction can be closed off.

The new exhibit will be built in phases over five years. The first phase will open in April and will offer primarily murals, artifacts and text. Museum admission is free until the opening, but donations are accepted.

By the fifth phase – in 2009 – the displays will feature three-dimensional scenes and interactive elements.

At a cost of \$150,000, "we're investing a lot in the future," says Mehring. "I think we have the potential to become a destination on Sutter Street."

To volunteer to work on the exhibit, call 985-2707.

## Road (from page 1)

SACOG – Sacramento Area Council of Governments – which provides transportation planning and funding for the region. The jurisdictions affected by the route – Folsom along with El Dorado and Sacramento counties and the cities of Rancho Cordova and Elk Grove – serve as a policy advisory committee that is working with the SACOG board to evaluate and develop the plans.

The El Dorado-Elk Grove connector was a high-priority piece of the Sacramento County transportation measure that passed in November. The measure will fund \$84 million for the project; another \$200 million will be paid with state and federal funds and by the cities and counties involved.

The project is still in the very early planning stages. SACOG has published a draft study on the need for the connector and preliminary route alignments and will begin an environmental study early this year. Because of the complexity of the route, the environmental study could take as long as five years to complete, but the study will not prevent interim improvements to the roadway, says Public Works Director Rich Lorenz.

SACOG has proposed four preliminary routes, and

Folsom is the first jurisdiction to identify a preferred alternative (see drawing and caption on page 1).

The primary function of the connector is to create a new link between U.S. 50 in the east and Route 99 and I-5 in the south. Not only would the route relieve traffic on Highway 50, but it also would improve traffic flow within the connector area. The project will include public transit and bike routes as well as a highway.

The new route, according to SACOG, will “enhance economic vitality” by making it easier to commute to jobs along the corridor. The project also includes \$15 million of initial funding to preserve open space and wildlife habitat.

Folsom’s participation in the corridor project is less complicated than for other jurisdictions because the route would run along the southern edge of the city’s sphere of influence area, which is not developed. Other areas, including business parks in El Dorado Hills and the tiny town of Sheldon near Elk Grove, must consider existing development in their plans.

The connector does not satisfy any transportation requirements for the sphere of influence area, nor does it replace a future roadway to provide parallel capacity south of Highway 50.

## You can donate in Folsom to help tsunami victims

President Bush has asked Americans who want to help South Asian earthquake and tsunami victims to donate cash rather than goods. That way, he said, the relief organizations can buy what the countries and people need. The American Red Cross has made the same request.

If you’d like to give money to help the thousands of people who suffered losses in the Dec. 26 tsunami, you will find that easy to do in Folsom. Churches, stores, community organizations and even schools are trying to help.

Most churches, and other houses of worship, are collecting money from their members. If you don’t have a place of worship, you can bring a check with “tsunami relief” in the memo line to a church of your choice. Every penny is donated to the quake victims. Journey Church, formerly Folsom Presbyterian, will send it on to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance in Pennsylvania, for instance; Trinity Folsom will send it through the national Episcopal Relief Fund. You can also make donations to worship organizations online.

Many local chain stores, such as Raley’s, Bel Air and

Wal-Mart, are collecting, too. Look for containers at entrances or checkout counters. All the money is donated, usually to the Red Cross or United Way. You can give directly to the Red Cross online at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) or to the United Way at [www.unitedway.org](http://www.unitedway.org).

Natoma Station Premium Outlets mall is collecting for UNICEF, which specifically helps children. Thousands of children were orphaned or injured by the quake and resulting flooding. You can donate any time during shopping hours through Feb. 15.

School children are helping, too. At Blanche Sprentz, students brought in money; the goal was \$1 from each child, but many gave more. Natoma Station third graders held a bake sale and will give the proceeds to the Red Cross.

You can also donate through local service clubs. Rotary, Lions and Kiwanis all have major relief efforts under way; you can contact Folsom members or donate online. You can also give through Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. Other local and online options: Habitat for Humanity and the Salvation Army.

## Special Events

Continuing through Feb. 6 – **Art Deco Exhibit.** Folsom History Museum. 985-2707.

Feb. 5 - **Free Museum Day.** Folsom History Museum joins other area museums to offer free admission all day, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. 823 Natoma St. 985-2707.

Feb. 5 – **The Edlos.** Concert benefits WEAVE and Soroptimists. 8 p.m. Folsom High School theater. \$20 before Feb. 3, \$25 at door, \$15 seniors/children. 983-3561 or 983-1358.

Feb. 9 – **Chinese New Year at the Zoo.** The year of the rooster begins this date. Roosters are surprisingly sociable and varied animals. The Folsom Zoo is introducing its roosters in honor of the Chinese New Year. Noon to 1 p.m.

Feb. 10 – **Biz Expo.** Local businesses showcase services, products. Noon to 6 p.m. Lakeside Church, 745 Oak Avenue Parkway. 985-5555.

Feb. 12 – **Folsom Lake Symphony Concert.** Mozart, Brahms, Smetana, Copland. 8 p.m. \$13-\$25. Folsom High School Theater. 983-4277.

Feb. 16 – **Sacramento Valley Conservancy Workshop.** Public meeting on ways to save oak woodlands and identify uses for Deer Creek Hills. 6-9 p.m. Community Center. 492-0908.

Feb. 17 – **Magic of Timothy James.** Comedy magic. Spon-

## Closely watched train

Though it will only be a test, the first light rail train to Folsom will arrive in February or early March. Regional Transit will run a light rail car along the new line from the Sunrise station to the future downtown Folsom station. The car will move very slowly – 5 to 10 mph – and stop frequently so inspectors can check the train's interaction with the track and the overhead wiring that runs the trains. Traffic encountering the trains at intersections will be stopped by the crossing guards. The test is expected to last all day.



sored by Mervyn's. 7 p.m. Community Center. \$6/\$20 family; \$7/\$24 at door. 355-7285.

Feb. 20 – **Audition Deadline for Benefit Show.** Actors, singers 12 and older. Show is April 17 in Community Center. Proceeds benefit Folsom. Call 952-6854.

Feb. 24 – **The Abaca Duo.** Singer Wendy Sayvetz and guitarist Andrew Schulman offer a spin on classical music. Community Concert Series. 7:30 p.m. Community Center. \$10-\$20. 984-9928, 983-1008, 988-0772.

Feb. 27 – **Aquatic Swim Pass Deadline.** Buy by this date for priority registration for swim programs. Good May 28-Sept. 5. \$199 family. 355-7285.

## Coming Up

March 1 – **Bunko Bash Benefit.** Play Bunko and benefit Folsom and El Dorado Hills. Prizes, raffle, auction. 7-10 p.m. Community Center. \$15. bunkobash@yahoo.com.

March 5 – **Bridge Opening.** Ribbon cutting for Folsom's longest trail bridge, built by volunteers over Humbug Creek. 9 a.m. Harrington and East Bidwell streets. 355-7304.

March 6 – **Father-Daughter Dinner Dance.** Unforgettable evening for a daughter or grand-daughter. Dinner, dancing, photograph, craft. Semi-formal. **Reservations taken only until seats are filled.** All ages. 5-8 p.m. Community Center. \$50/couple; extra person, \$18. 355-7285.

March 11-13 – **Friends Book Sale.** Benefits library. R.G. Smith Clubhouse. 355-7374.

March 13 – **Women in History.** Monologues portraying famous women in the arts: Isadora Duncan, Georgia O'Keeffe, Frida Kahlo, Lola Montez. 2-4 p.m. Community Center. Fills fast so reserve early. 985-2707.

## Meetings

**City Council** meets 6:30 p.m. the second and fourth Tuesdays, City Hall.

**Planning Commission** meets 6:30 p.m. the first and third Wednesdays, City Hall.

**Parks and Recreation Commission** meets 7 p.m. the first Tuesday, City Hall.

**Library Commission** meets 6:30 p.m. the first Monday, Library.

**Architectural Review Commission** meets 7:30 a.m. the second and fourth Thursdays, City Hall.

**Historic District Commission** meets 5 p.m. the first and third Wednesdays, City Hall.

**Traffic Safety Committee** meets 4 p.m. the fourth Thursday, City Hall.

**Murer House Foundation** meets 6 p.m. the third Tuesday, Murer House classroom.

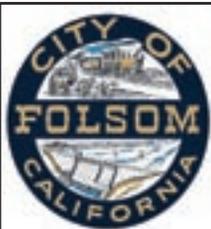
**Redevelopment Advisory Committee** meets 4 p.m. the last Thursday, City Hall.

**Landscaping/Lighting Districts** meets 7 p.m. the third Thursday, City Hall.

**Arts and Cultural Commission** meets 7 p.m. the second Thursday, City Hall.

**Utility Advisory Committee** meets 6:30 p.m. the third Tuesday. Location varies.

Unless otherwise noted, all activities are in Folsom and all area codes are 916.



## City of Folsom Newsletter

February 2005

Published since April 1997

<http://www.folsom.ca.us>

Folsom radio station: 1500 AM

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## Folsom City Council

Steve Miklos, Mayor

Andy Morin, Vice Mayor

Kerri Howell, Eric King, Jeff Starsky

Martha Clark Lofgren, City Manager

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