



SOURCES: Forestar Land Partners, Google Maps

Staff illustration

Anticipated development

Forestar Land Partners plans to build more than 420 homes in the New Model Colony area of southern Ontario. The city's General Plan projects as many as 47,600 homes to be built for 162,500 people in the Colony area. **KEY:** ■ = Areas slated for development by Forestar

Colony growth

Developer eyes 420-plus homes in Ontario

By Andrew Edwards Staff Writer

ONTARIO — A developer's progress in gaining approval to build more than 420 homes in the New Model Colony area suggests renewed life for Inland Empire development.

Forestar Land Partners has secured preliminary approval from Ontario to develop the Countryside area of New Model Colony. Forestar's work could pave the way for home construction to begin there in nine months to one year.

"I think Ontario is a great place to be," said Steve Cameron, president of Irvine-based Foremost Communities, one of two firms that formed a joint venture to create Forestar.

Countryside homes will likely sell in the low \$300,000s when ready for the market, Cameron said. Forestar's other half is Starwood Capital Group Global.

New Model Colony is a sprawling area in the city's southern reaches where Ontario planners expect to see the city's population nearly double over the coming decades.

Thus far, Brookfield Homes is the only builder to begin construction in New Model Colony. Costa Mesa-based Brookfield has permits to build 584 homes in the Edenglen area, which is in the northeast corner of New Model Colony, near where Riverside Drive and Milliken Avenue meet.

Ontario officials have approved roughly 2,000 homes in New Model Colony, assistant planning director Scott Murphy said.

Forestar and other developers need to make substantial improvements before houses can be built, he said. The colony area needs new water and sewer lines, wider streets and traffic signals.

The city's general plan calls for 47,600 homes for about 162,500 people to ultimately exist in New Model Colony. About 172,000 people live in Ontario today.

"It really is like building a whole new city," Murphy said.

Forestar's Countryside area is near Riverside Drive's crossing with Archibald Avenue.

The City Council has already approved Forestar's development agreement with the city. But the agreement still requires approval from the Council at a second reading, which is typically a formality.

Assuming the paperwork moves as expected through City Hall, Cameron said, Countryside may begin construction in nine months to one year. Forestar will sell the Countryside land to a merchant builder when the lots are ready for construction, he said.

Uncertainties hang over residential developments as to how healthy the market will be for new homes or if people who are in a position to buy instead will opt for foreclosures and short sales.

Distressed homes accounted for 76 percent of San Bernardino County's home sales in February, according to the California Association of Realtors.

A "shadow inventory" of foreclosed homes is a concern, Cameron said, but he also said builders are working hard to tout energy efficiency and other virtues of newly-constructed homes as opposed to their lived-in counterparts.

Forestar's work is not the only recent news in New Model Colony. Two firms — Genstar/GDC Communities and CV Communities — purchased three parcels totaling 176 acres at a combined price of \$30 million.

San Diego-based GDC acquired land for 660 lots within New Model Colony's southeastern Esperanza area, business development director David Waters said Wednesday.

"We're hoping to be delivering houses within two to three years, although the market's going to dictate that," he said.

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