

# Landing Tesla is latest chapter in Reno's reinvention

By Dale Kasler, Sacramento Bee

RENO – It seems hard to believe, in the afterglow of the Tesla jackpot, that Reno was an economic basket case just a few years ago, with even bigger problems than Sacramento.

Yet even as unemployment soared and its casinos struggled during the recession, the “Biggest Little City in the World” was reinventing its economic base. The Reno-Sparks region marketed itself to distribution and manufacturing companies, and big names like eBay and Toys R Us began opening warehouse facilities.

The latest victory exceeded anyone's expectations. After months of anticipation, Tesla Motors Inc. last week chose a sprawling industrial park east of Reno for its 6,500-employee “Gigafactory,” which will build batteries for the electric-car maker's new mass-market vehicle. The news sent community and business leaders grasping for ways to describe how Tesla will transform the Reno area.

“They're going to change the course of history within this community and within this state,” said Lance Gilman, the Stetson-wearing developer of the industrial park where Tesla will build.

Gilman compared Tesla's pending arrival with the discovery of silver in northern Nevada in the 19th century and the opening of casinos in Las Vegas in the 20th. Gov. Brian Sandoval, announcing the company's decision at the Capitol in Carson City, said Tesla will deliver \$100 billion in economic benefit over the next two decades and expand the region's economy by a whopping 20 percent.

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