

NORTHERN NEWS



American Planning Association
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A Publication of the Northern Section of the California Chapter of APA

DECEMBER 2012/JANUARY 2013

A Taiwan reflection

By Lydia Yen

[Ed. note. This article by Lydia Yen summarizes her experience as an intern with Cosmos Inc. Planning Consultants in Taipei, Taiwan. Rob Eastwood, AICP, as International Director for Northern Section, facilitated placing Lydia in the three-month internship.]

With a wandering mind and a pair of itchy feet, I traveled to Taiwan to experience what urban planning is in the first democratic country in Asia.

Only in Taipei can one see the beautiful scene of Taipei 101's glaring lights smoke the surrounding humidity into gassy clouds. I have thought of that since coming back from my short internship in Taiwan, because being there meant I was moving towards a tangible future.

Ever since graduating from Cal Poly Pomona's undergraduate Urban Planning program, I have had an interest in international planning. For those who don't know, it is hard to break into the international planning field. Most international planning careers are in the UNDP or UNESCO, in other countries, or in a nonprofit. Working as a planner in these organizations usually requires much more education or experience than I had. Also, I wasn't sure if I could commit to such an extensive amount of time away from everything I knew. I only knew that I wanted to experience life outside the United States.

My interest in international planning stems from my culture. I have always had my feet in different cultures, one American

and one Taiwanese. My parents are from Taiwan and the idea of "backwards immigration" started sounding better and better after I realized the full extent of the recession. At that point, it seemed that the future I thought I would have was not within my grasp. The question of whether I could live in my parent's home country always floated in the back of my mind.

I took the first step when I saw a short statement on the Northern California APA job board about an internship in

Taiwan. It was the perfect opportunity. I have family in Taiwan — free living and food! I also knew enough Mandarin to find my way home if I became lost. Working in Taiwan would be a good introduction into understanding the Asian Market, as many Taiwanese firms work in China. What could be better?

After two months of communicating with the Northern California APA international director, Rob Eastwood, who had previously worked for Cosmos — the company where I would be working — and with other miscellaneous government bureaus, I was on my way to Taiwan!

On the first day — however "Taiwanese" I thought I was — it was obvious I was a foreigner. I dressed in what I had thought would be appropriate and spoke what I thought was Mandarin, but unfortunately I was wrong. The work atmosphere at Cosmos was casual — to the point that everyone arrives thirty minutes after the office opens! As I later learned, that it is because



Taipei 101 fully lit. Built in 2004, and later renamed for its 101 stories, Taipei 101 is 1,474 feet high. It is currently the second tallest building in the world, after the Burj Khalifa in Dubai (2010).

Photo: AllAboutSkyscrapers.com, <http://bit.ly/SLCyTH>

(continued on page 4)

WHAT'S INSIDE

A Taiwan reflection

Taiwan is a “beautiful mess.” If it were more “organized,” it would just be Singapore. A planning intern summarizes her experience. *Lydia Yen* [PAGE 1](#)

Director's note

A recap of Northern Section's accomplishments over the past two years. *Hanson Hom, AICP.* [PAGE 3](#)

Planners talk “Smart Parking,” new solutions

Summary of a November workshop on parking policies and 2012's Assembly Bill 904. [PAGE 7](#)

Who will do what about climate change, and when?

[PAGE 9](#)

Norcal roundup

News from around Northern Section: Arcata, Pleasant Hill, San Francisco, Santa Cruz, Sonoma County, and Silicon Valley. [PAGE 10](#)

Where in the world

This month's mystery photo. *Chandler Lee.* [PAGE 12](#)

Holiday Party photos

[PAGE 13](#)

Make the transition to an era of cooperation

This article from our 1986 archives posits public/private partnerships as a new way of doing things. *David E. Booher.* [PAGE 13](#)

The 2013 Northern Section planning awards

It's time to consider which projects and planners shined in 2012. Members can volunteer to serve on the Awards Jury. [PAGE 15](#)

A one-year building slowdown for Google

[PAGE 16](#)

[Quite a bit about] climate change

Water, water everywhere, and soon a lot to drink. Plus GHG, non-results from Doha, and advice for the President. [PAGE 16](#)

Cheap seats to LA and back

Megabus restarts operations in California. [PAGE 17](#)

Money for green schools and government buildings

[PAGE 18](#)

Rebuild now — with solar

Poles and wires just ask to be blown down. [PAGE 19](#)

SF's Richardson Apartments for formerly chronically homeless

Situated in a prime location in the nation's most expensive rental market, Richardson Apartments offers an important lesson in socially responsible development. *Republished courtesy of HUD USER.* [PAGE 20](#)

What others are saying

Transit, housing, high-speed rail, parking, GDP, flood insurance, and remaking downtown Las Vegas. [PAGE 23](#)

Board member directory and newsletter information

[PAGE 26](#)

JOBS and EVENTS CALENDAR

have moved to the Northern Section website, norcalapa.org. ■

We're now seeing in a significant way the Arctic amplification of global warming, a phenomenon that was predicted 30 years ago. The widespread reduction in snow and ice cover in summertime has darkened the ocean surface and land in the Arctic, allowing it to absorb more sunlight, which leads to enhanced warming — changes that affect weather patterns in the US. — Richard Monastersky and *Nature News Blog*, <http://bit.ly/XC46ip>

Director's note

By Hanson Hom, AICP



As 2012 draws to a close, on behalf of the entire Board, I wish everyone a happy holiday season and a very prosperous and productive 2013.

The New Year will see a change of leadership on the Northern Section Board as I end my two-year term, and **Jeff Baker**, Director-Elect, becomes Director. The Section is in very capable hands as Jeff is a long-time Board Director who also served as Board Treasurer for six years. I will continue to support the Board as Immediate Past Director. Additionally, congratulations to **Andrea Ouse, AICP**, who has been elected Director-Elect, and to **Justin Meek, AICP**, who has been re-elected as Administrative Director.

I am extremely proud of the accomplishments of the Board during my two years as Section Director, and I am honored to have worked with an energetic and dedicated Board of Directors. Major accomplishments and initiatives include the following:

- Over **225 AICP CM** credits for free or low-cost professional development activities were offered to APA members during my two years as Director. Most events were centered in the Bay Area, but activities were offered throughout the Northern Section from the Redwood Coast to Monterey Bay regions. While Northern Section organized many of the events, we also partnered with other organizations to co-sponsor a number of quality learning opportunities.
- Our co-sponsorship efforts expanded the visibility of APA with related professional and community-based organizations. These include the Bay Area Planning Directors Association (BAPDA), SPUR San Francisco and San Jose, Urban Land Institute, Association of Environmental Professionals (AEP), Greenbelt Alliance, and Urban Habitat.
- The Section's website was completely redesigned under the guidance of **Ronny Kraft, AICP**, Section Webmaster, with the direct involvement of many Board members. While the website will continue to evolve, we hope you have enjoyed the increase in content and timely information.
- The **Northern News** continues its stellar reputation for providing relevant planning information and quality articles for planners under the tireless, astute leadership of **Naphtali Knox, FAICP**, Newsletter Editor.
- The Section increased its commitment to membership outreach and communication by appointing a separate Membership Director and Communications Director and redefining the role of these two positions in the Section's By-laws. Along with expanding our use of social media, we expect to increase our membership and communications efforts in 2013.
- Our commitment to the Young Planners Group continues with events targeted to student/young professionals.

Additionally, the Board reached out to support the graduate urban planning programs at UC Berkeley and San Jose State University. We also contribute to the California Planning Foundation to fund CPF student scholarships.

- The Northern Section continues to support initiatives for APA members such as the Mentorship Program, Sustainability Committee, Energy Working Group, Planning Commissioners Training Program, AICP Exam Preparation Workshops, and Diversity Ambassador Program.

For a more detailed review of Northern Section activities in 2012, see my Director's Notes at <http://norcalapa.org/about/directors-notes/>.

Northern Section Holiday Party. A great turnout of over 100 planners and guests braved the weather to attend the annual holiday celebration at Mua Oakland Bar & Restaurant on November 30. The atmosphere was warm and festive and not at all dampened by the weather. Much thanks to Florentina Craciun, who served as Holiday Party Chair, and to **Erik Balsley, AICP**, **Darcy Kremin, AICP**, **Emy Mendoza, AICP**, **Tania Sheyner, AICP**, and **Brian Soland, AICP**, all of whom contributed to a successful event. In addition to the party being a fun affair, funds were raised for CPF scholarships with our annual raffle. Thank you to the firms and individuals who generously donated raffle prizes. See [pages 13–15](#) for photos from the party.

Smart Parking Workshop. Organized by the Northern Section and Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the workshop drew approximately 75 participants on November 9 at the MetroCenter in Oakland. An informative panel discussion and lively breakout session yielded a list of suggestions for reforming parking policies in transit-rich areas. See article on [page 7](#) for a brief report on the workshop. The input from this workshop will be forwarded to the APA California Legislation and Policy Committee for consideration when its reviews anticipated state legislation on this topic.

Board Transitions. Our appreciation is extended to **Rob Eastwood, AICP**, for his service as International Director over the past six years. During his term, educational trips were organized to China, India, and most recently Brazil. The Northern Section will expand its activities in this area with the appointment of International Co-Directors: **Hing Wong, AICP**, will continue the Section's international travel program, and **Alex Hinds** will explore international planning opportunities. **Darcy Kremin, AICP**, Immediate Past Director, will shift to the CPF Liaison position to replace Hing Wong. Darcy also sits on the CPF Board, so we are fortunate to have her continue on the Section Board as well. ■

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A Taiwan reflection *(continued from page 1)*

most people there work overtime almost every day, and can show up later than regular office workers. The culture is different but the people were very friendly. By lunchtime I was bombarded with random questions only a foreigner like me could answer, such as: “Do westerners think Sarah Jessica Parker is pretty?”

At least the first day wasn’t too awkward, and it showed that my new co-workers are friendly with each other. I truly enjoyed working with such a youthful group. They would hold outside gatherings whenever there was a need to de-stress. During busy times, there were always chances to get into the humid weather for an afternoon boba run; and after work, there were interesting restaurants to try. Luckily, my coworkers gave me the grand tour of what every urban planner would love to know! From what I heard, most planners and architects are inclined to marry within the field since they tend to work such long hours. Marriage and relationships play a big role in Taiwanese culture. Last year, Taiwan was ranked for having the lowest birth rate in the world. Perhaps all the overtime work for no additional pay plays a role.

I came to understand more about Taiwan’s culture through my work. While I was there, I researched the Datong and Wanhua Districts on the east side of Taipei’s CBD. Both neighborhoods are considered outmoded but filled with history. The Wanhua District, for example, houses Long Shan Temple (1738), which exemplifies Taiwanese classical architecture filled with local folk deities.

Even more interesting is the mix of activities in the area. Near the temple are a daily Night Market and some of Taipei’s oldest restaurants — many of them passed down through the generations over a span of 200 years. The nearby Snake Alley, which also used to be a red-light district, is where snakes are sold for soup or shown off to passing tourists by men yelling from microphones about the fear factor of the animals. Animal activists should probably skip this area entirely. Across from the temple is where most of Taipei’s transients sleep at night, while below is a three-story underground mall that leads to the MRT station.

Although Taipei City has colorful historic business districts, city planners are interested in applying western planning methods to revamp older corridors. During my research, I studied the High Line Park and the regeneration of the Canary Wharf and of Berlin. However, whenever I reached a certain point in my research, the question from my manager was always the same. “How do the city officials inspire residents to participate?”

In the U.S., I never thought about how municipalities promote civic participation. I had assumed that either there were enough people who had nothing better to do, or these people were truly affected by the issues brought up at the council meetings, or some reason in between. In Taiwan, the extremes are more extreme. When looking at apartment rentals during my first week in Taipei, I happened to be on the busiest street in Taiwan, Zhong Xiao East Road. There I saw a pre-inauguration protest parade of more than 1,500 people (mainly

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A Taiwan reflection *(continued from previous page)*

from the south of Taiwan) who rode buses for more than four hours to stage a mock funeral for the reelected President Ma. This was one extreme.



Protest parade on a rainy day, May 2012. Taipei 101 in background.

On the other hand, I recently read an article on how the Taipei government held a lottery for those who picked up dog excrement and the winner won a gold nugget. The event was a success, but it still seemed an extreme measure for the Taiwan government. I told my manager that social activism is self-motivated in the U.S., but the cultural rift is hard to explain.

Taiwan is quite the enigma. As one of the more liberal economies of the Asian Tigers (see the Heritage Foundation's 2008 Index of Economic Freedom), it was hard to believe that "public participation" is such an issue. However, I understand that the people in Taiwan work hard, and often there is no time to participate in civic duties when there isn't even time to be home for dinner. With all the unpaid overtime and the fierce competition, working 12 hours a day is a Taiwanese survival skill.

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"No governor since CEQA passed has seemed more receptive to loosening its requirements than the current version of Jerry Brown. ... Brown's turnaround on this law stems from his experience as mayor of Oakland from 1999 to 2007, when several projects he saw as bettering blighted areas of that city were delayed or stymied by challenges under CEQA." —Tom Elias, <http://bit.ly/XHV1Vg>

A Taiwan reflection *(continued from previous page)*

The bigger picture is that an issue in Taiwan is not "an issue" unless it is huge, as in the recent argument over the Senkaku Islands. Perhaps public participation does not need to be "in person" for such a technologically advanced country. Council meetings could be shown on big screens at city centers or on a free app for smart phones. Regardless of the issue, I believe there are many options for promoting public participation. The Taiwanese governmental system, including contemporary planning methods, is modeled after Western standards. All that is needed is to be flexible and perceptive.

As much as Taiwan is a mesh of the old, new, and odd, their flexibility should be as innovative as their land use planning. Although the mix can cause inevitable incompatibility, it can be considered a "beautiful mess," since if Taiwan were more "organized" then it would just be Singapore.

Going to Taiwan was no mistake, and I have no regrets. I answered my own personal questions about whether international planning is for me. I learned so much in and about Taiwan that I am currently applying to graduate school to increase my knowledge about international planning. I truly enjoyed all those overtime hours and dumbfounding my manager with "Americanisms" such as saying "bless you" after a sneeze. Perhaps in the future, I can be less of a foreigner in a not so foreign country.



The author (front row, second from left) with coworkers, July 2012

Special thanks to Rob Eastwood and to Cosmos Planning and Engineering Consultants.

Lydia Yen holds a Bachelor of Science in Urban Regional Planning from Cal Poly Pomona and was a planning intern at Cosmos Inc. Planning & Design Consultants, Taipei, from May through July 2012. ■

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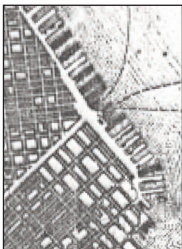
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Planners talk “Smart Parking” in quest for new solutions

This past November, 75 planners, interested parties, and stakeholders gathered in Oakland to attend a “Smart Parking for Smart Growth” Workshop. They heard six experts present the pros and cons of having the state of California restrict cities’ minimum parking requirements in “transit intensive areas” as defined in Assembly Bill 904 (Skinner), a bill proposed in 2012.

The event sought to find common ground between supporters and opponents of efforts by the bill’s author, Assemblymember Nancy Skinner (D-Berkeley), to support infill development through reduced parking requirements in “transit intensive areas.”

Since the 1950s, most California cities have specified minimum levels of parking for every new development, typically based on Institute of Transportation Engineers standards for suburban locations without transit. Not surprisingly, people have different perspectives on which parking policies best serve public interests. In an effort to share those perspectives among representatives of local governments, developers, transit and housing advocates, and environmental organizations, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) hosted the workshop, co-sponsored by the Northern California Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA).

“Smart parking” is a new name for an issue that has challenged planners, policymakers, and developers for decades: What should be the role of the public sector in parking policies? Should cities require developers to provide parking for their projects, and if so, should the required levels be related to use or location (e.g., the central business district or around a rail station) or both? Should the private sector be allowed to determine how much off-street parking to provide for specific developments? Is there an appropriate role in this for the state of California, and if so what is it? And how should neighborhood interests be balanced with broader goals of housing affordability, economic efficiency, equity, and environmental concerns?

Elizabeth Deakin, Professor of City and Regional Planning at UC Berkeley, moderated a panel representing an array of parking stakeholders. Before introducing the panelists, Deakin explained that Assemblymember Skinner introduced AB 904 last June in an attempt to support additional infill development around transit by limiting the scope of local governments’ authority in mandating parking within one-half mile of “high quality transit.” Under the bill’s provisions, cities could require no more than one space per residential unit and two spaces per 1,000 square feet of commercial space, with lower levels established for low-income housing, in “transit intensive areas.”

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Planners talk Smart Parking in quest for new solutions (continued from previous page)

The proposed legislation did not impose a parking cap or “maximum”; it only lowered the number of spaces that cities may require. Developers could build more parking if they like. Deakin also noted that the bill contained generous provisions for cities to opt out.

While the panelists agreed that parking policies need to be reformed, they disagreed on the approach envisioned in the bill. The panelists were David Snow of the California Chapter of the American Planning Association, Eric Figueroa of the League of California Cities, Rebecca Long of MTC (standing in for Valerie Knepper), Mott Smith of Civic Enterprise Associates LLC and the California Infill Builders Federation, Justin Meek of San Jose State University’s Urban and Regional Planning Department, and Tom Pace of the City of Sacramento. The audience was invited to participate in small group discussions after the panel.

“The genesis of this conversation is that a number of jurisdictions have antiquated parking policies still on the books,” said David Snow. While stating that the APA supports parking reform, he said a major concern is whether parking policies should be addressed at the state or local level. California APA surveyed its members and found that the majority saw parking as a local issue, not the subject of statewide legislation, although other strong views were expressed. “Planners should be able to do their work without having their hands tied by statewide legislation,” he said.

Eric Figueroa offered the League of California Cities’ perspective. “The League did oppose the bill,” he said. “Parking is a matter of statewide importance, but the state budget and revenue for schools are bigger issues.” He added, “There doesn’t need to be a statewide mandate, but it can be a framework. We’re looking for an incentive-based approach; carrots and not sticks. We’re not looking for a one-size-fits-all approach.” He emphasized that cities are looking for financial assistance.

MTC’s Rebecca Long said the agency considers parking policies an important piece of the puzzle because they affect land use and transportation and have other regional impacts, and MTC supported a previous bill with a similar approach to AB 904. “Excessive parking requirements ... lead to increased housing costs, more congestion and higher transportation expenses, restrict the choices available to residents, and bias the commute choice of workers,” said Long. She noted that MTC has long focused on the supply side of transportation, and that this focus on the demand side as well is essential in addressing the requirements of SB 375.

Current parking policies are a “massive, massive failure,” said Mott Smith of the California Infill Builders Federation. “If anybody wonders why we have 7-11s and Taco Bells all over the place, the reason is

(continued on next page)

Who will do what about climate change, and when?

<http://nyti.ms/TnBia3>

On Nov. 7, President Obama said this in his victory speech: "We want our children to live in an America that isn't ... threatened by the destructive power of a warming planet." Two weeks before the election, New York Times columnist John M. Broder wrote: "For all their disputes, [the presidential candidates] agree that the world is warming and that humans are at least partly to blame. [Yet it] remains wholly unclear what either of them plans to do about it. ... Should the United States cut its greenhouse gas emissions, and, if so, how far and how fast? Should fossil fuels be more heavily taxed? Should any form of clean energy be subsidized, and for how long? Should the United States lead international mitigation efforts? Should the nation pour billions of new dollars into basic energy research? Is the climate system so fraught with uncertainty that the rational response is to do nothing? ... Any serious effort to address climate change will require a transformation of the nation's system for producing and consuming energy and will ... mean higher prices for fuel and electricity. ... [According to] Christiana Figueres, the United Nations' top climate change diplomat, 'The challenge for any administration that comes in is to take a serious look not only at the cost of climate change for everyone else on the planet, but the cost to this country. And they have to ask themselves: What is the cost of not doing enough?'" —John M. Broder, "Both Romney and Obama avoid talk of climate change," *The New York Times*, Oct. 25, 2012.

"The decline of [CO₂] emissions in the developed countries is more than matched by continued growth in developing countries like China and India, with coal-related emissions leaping more than 5 percent in 2011, compared with the previous year."

<http://nyti.ms/YKa8O8>

Planners talk Smart Parking in quest for new solutions

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because our parking requirements demand it." He said the parking minimums don't work because they increase housing costs, they are exclusionary, they destroy neighborhood commercial districts and encourage displacement, and they don't mitigate demand for on-street parking. "Developers build as much as they think the market requires, even when zoning requires none," said Smith, so minimum requirements are both unnecessary and very counterproductive to creating more housing.

Tom Pace, the city of Sacramento's principal planner, described the city's parking reforms. Sacramento's "previous policy was to gobble up farmland, build highways and strip housing," said Pace. The city set out to update its 50-year-old zoning code, including parking, with the goal of promoting economic development in infill areas. The city's new parking requirements are context sensitive, depending on the type of neighborhood. Key outcomes include the city's decisions to eliminate minimum parking requirements in the central business district, simplify the requirements to permit many changes in use without evoking new parking requirements, permit more shared parking by right, and to allow developers alternatives, such as providing extra parking for bicycles. The new parking requirements are expected to support more infill development and small business development; they take effect in December 2012.

Following the panel and a brief question and answer period, the participants divided up for lively small group discussions. The small groups then reported their findings. The main finding was a high level of support for statewide parking legislation, with some notable exceptions. Some participants said legislation is needed to provide cities political cover to make policy changes that might be considered risky or prohibitively costly, especially given the interest in documenting why the status quo isn't working.

Another concern raised in the small groups was that, while AB 904 had addressed the need for parking policy reform in "transit intensive areas," the definition of these areas could be improved. Others suggested that new legislation could also apply to density-rich areas, even those not close to transit, drawing on the high degree of walkability. All agreed that any major overhaul in parking policies — whether at the state or local level — would need to be accompanied by extensive education and public relations efforts targeted to both lawmakers and the public, to make the subject less confusing, explain the significant benefits that can result, and generate public support.

The workshop results will be forwarded to Assemblymember Skinner, the California APA Policy Committee, and others to help decision makers craft smart parking solutions that everyone can support. ■

Norcal roundup

Assembled by the editors

Instant disclosure

<http://bit.ly/Z7xJc2>

"In a nod to the ubiquity of handheld devices at public meetings, San Jose City Council members have imposed strict rules on themselves requiring that they disclose communications from lobbyists who email or text them during council meetings. The policy, which the council approved unanimously, cements San Jose's role as a leader in requiring its elected officials to disclose their communication with lobbyists. The rules are effective immediately and make permanent the temporary requirements approved by the council in March 2010. Videos and transcripts of the council meetings are posted on the city's website, giving the public a way to track any disclosures made by council members. Council members are already required to disclose the identity of lobbyists they communicate with outside of public meetings before taking a vote." —Jennifer Gollan, "San Jose's disclosure rules here to stay," *The Bay Citizen*, Dec. 10, 2012.

Demolition for 1967 'Dome' theater?

<http://bit.ly/VDfHgP>

"After years of delay brought on by the struggling economy, SyWest Development has unveiled plans to modernize the southern half of the Crossroads Shopping Center in Pleasant Hill. The proposal calls for demolishing the distinctive, geodesic dome-roofed theater and building a two-story, 73,176-square-foot Dick's Sporting Goods store. The wrecking ball has loomed over the theater since at least 2003. The timeline for the project is unclear, but SyWest needs approvals from the Planning Commission and the Architectural Review Commission before moving forward with its plans. Councilman David Durant said he's excited for the opportunity to revitalize that part of the shopping center. 'It's always sad to lose something iconic like the dome, but the real challenge for a lot of people to understand is that there's no way effectively to keep that theater operating,' he said." —Lisa P. White, "'Dome' movie theater in Pleasant Hill may be demolished," *The Contra Costa Times*, Dec. 7, 2012.

Zoning to support renewable energy in Sonoma County?

<http://bit.ly/RFIn7u>

Sonoma County planners are considering whether to relax zoning rules, increase housing densities, and reduce parking requirements

as ways to encourage more renewable energy generation, such as solar and wind projects. One option would open up non-prime agriculture land to commercial development of facilities such as solar parks, but the intent is to protect prime agriculture land, scenic corridors, and sensitive natural resources. The new proposals would allow unlimited solar power on any rooftop, whether it is a home, business, covered parking structure, barn or warehouse, as long as it is an allowed building that can hold the weight. Another proposal allows solar panels, wind turbines, biomass plants, and other energy facilities that are mounted on the ground to be installed if they provide 125 percent of energy demand for that on-site use. Also, the county is proposing to allow businesses to reduce the amount of parking required if they provide electric vehicle charging stations, showers, and bicycle lockers." —Bob Norberg, "Sonoma County looks to boost renewable energy at homes, businesses," *The Press Democrat*, Dec. 6, 2012.

Santa Cruz will challenge EIR decision

<http://bit.ly/VUkQNW>

"The city of Santa Cruz will appeal a recent ruling that invalidated an environmental analysis of long-standing plans to expand water and sewer service to an undeveloped corner of UC Santa Cruz's north campus targeted for growth. The ruling by a three-judge panel ordered fixes to the environmental impact report and halted a local commission's review of four-year-old applications to expand the city's service area and provide up to 100 million gallons of additional water to the university for new academic and housing buildings. The judges agreed with Habitat and Watershed Caretakers, a group that filed the original lawsuit, that the purpose of the project was improperly described. The judicial panel said the report incorrectly asserted that the project existed because the city was obligated to provide the water based on the 2008 agreement to largely restrict university growth to the north campus. The city has long said it doesn't have the right to block university growth, and that by winning a concession to house two-thirds of future growth — about 3,000 students — on campus, it avoided increased traffic, housing, and water use in town. If the city is ultimately required to change the environmental analysis, it would require new public hearings and certification by the City Council." —J.M. Brown, "Santa Cruz will appeal university water ruling rather than redo environmental review," *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, Dec. 5, 2012.

(continued on next page)

Proposition 39 benefits public buildings

<http://bit.ly/THUKeS>

"By overwhelmingly passing Proposition 39, voters closed a tax loophole on out-of-state corporations that will generate \$1.1 billion a year. But the measure, buried in a crowded ballot, also required that half of that money fund projects to install new windows, better insulation, modern lighting, and more efficient heating and air conditioning at thousands of public schools and other government buildings over the next five years. That windfall dwarfs anything that California or any other state has ever spent on energy efficiency for public buildings. While not as flashy as money for solar or wind projects, many experts say such seemingly routine changes as weatherizing buildings and replacing leaky windows is actually one of the cheapest ways to reduce smog, greenhouse gases, and utility bills. However, the proposition did not spell out in much detail where the \$550 million a year should be spent. It says the money should pay to retrofit schools, colleges, universities, and other public buildings; it can also be used to fund job-training programs in energy efficiency — and incentives to put solar panels on homes." —Paul Rogers, "Tidal wave of money coming to make California schools greener," *Marin IJ*, Dec. 1, 2012.

Silicon Valley explores ways to reduce congestion <http://bit.ly/SQIzAm>

"The Mountain View City Council in July approved a plan that allows companies in what it calls the North Bayshore Area to expand to 10.7 million square feet of buildings by 2030, or almost one-and-a-half times the current square footage. Conservatively, that growth could bring the number of employees trundling their way to work each day to 28,000. The roads weren't designed for that much traffic. And it's not just high-way intersections that transportation planners are scratching their heads over. Increasingly, officials are turning to additional transportation tools to ease congestion, techniques that go squarely to one central goal: convincing people to leave their cars

at home. As with other efforts to get people to change their habits, transportation-demand management programs, as they are known, offer people both carrots and sticks to motivate them to adopt new ways. The toolbox includes passes for free public transit, shuttle buses, van- or carpools, car- and bike-sharing and even cash and raffles for those who convert to alternate modes of transportation. Many of the larger companies in Palo Alto, Menlo Park and Mountain View [including Google, H-P, and Facebook] have started to tackle these issues. One local organization to look to when it comes to getting people out of their cars is Stanford University, a national leader in transportation-demand management." —Jocelyn Deng, "In search of the car-less commute," *Palo Alto Weekly*, Nov. 16, 2012.

Zeppelin endz service

<http://bit.ly/XmFTO7>

"The familiar sight of a dirigible plying the sunny skies of Silicon Valley may well be a thing of the past. Unless a 'white knight' surfaces, the 246-foot-long Zeppelin NT [longer than a 747-400] will be dismantled and sent back to Germany. Grounding of Airship Ventures cost 35 full-time and 10 part-time employees their jobs. Tickets to ride on the Eureka had dropped from \$495 to \$375 for a 45-minute day tour. More recently, \$300 hour-long night trips were added. Awareness, not cost, appeared to be the real problem. Most people who saw the airship didn't realize they could ride on it." —Jason Green, "Lack of sponsorship grounds Airship Ventures, Moffett Field zeppelin company," *Mercury News*, Nov. 16, 2012. Airship Ventures ceased operations on Nov. 14.



Takeoff. Zeppelin NT "Eureka" at Moffett field, November 21, 2008.
Photo by Bill Wohler, <http://www.newt.com/wohler>

(continued on next page)

Golden Gate Bridge traffic safety measure delayed <http://bit.ly/XyQxQx>

"The Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District scored a major coup in Sept. 2007, when it announced that it was anticipating a \$20 million regional grant to finally build a movable median barrier on the Golden Gate Bridge. But lengthy environmental studies and bureaucratic disagreements between the bridge district and Caltrans, the state's Transportation Department, have consistently delayed the implementation date [from 2010 to 2014]. While the bridge district has already received a categorical exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act, Caltrans has yet to provide its corresponding approval. The state Transportation Department is asking the bridge district to review every specific detail of the median barrier to see if the project can help improve the conditions of U.S. Highway 101, which was built under standards that are now obsolete. While the two agencies seek conciliation, the median barrier languishes." —Will Reisman, "Long-awaited median barrier on Golden Gate Bridge beset by delays, despite funding in hand," *The San Francisco Examiner*, Nov. 8, 2012.

Arcata grows its trails <http://bit.ly/QRQ7C2>

"The city of Arcata has broken ground on two major new sections of trails in the Arcata Community Forest, which will eventually be used by hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians. What used to be a small, overgrown trail along a crumbling logging road in the Sunny Brae Forest was recently built into a widened, well-draining gravel road to help with the logging and trail building process. With the addition of trails on the northern and southern ends, the four-mile Ridge Trail will run without break from West End Road to Buttermilk Lane in Sunny Brae. On the northern West End Road side of the forest, there will also be a trail built called Samuels Loop. Mark Andre, Arcata's Environmental Services director, said the community forest additions are also a significant part of the city's economic development strategy." —Luke Ramseth, "Arcata Community Forest additions underway; Ridge Trail will link them up," *The Times-Standard*, Nov. 5, 2012. ■

Where in the world?

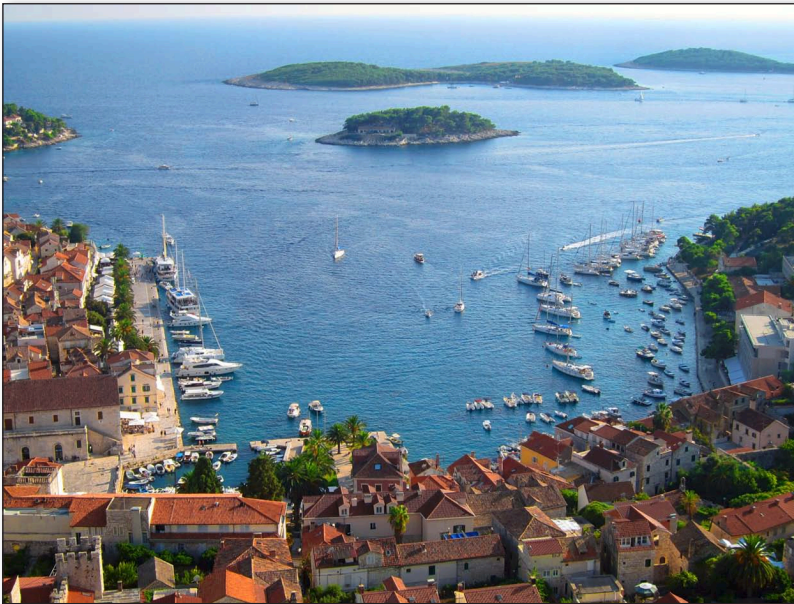


Photo by Chandler Lee. (Answer on [page 25](#))

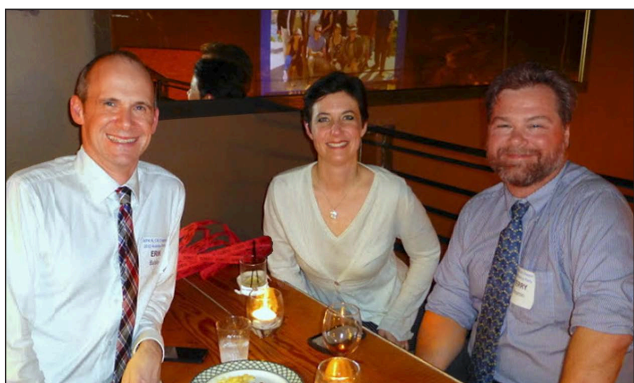
"College students on dozens of campuses have demanded that university endowment funds rid themselves of coal, oil, and gas stocks. The students see it as a tactic that could force climate change back onto the national political agenda."

<http://nyti.ms/YNmu8s>

We enjoyed a great night on the uptown



Holiday party from above



Erik Balsley, Darcy Kremin, Terry Kremin



Barry Miller, Beth Greene, Crescentia Brown, Lynette Dias, Andrea Ouse, Sally Barros, Alex Amoroso

(continued on next page)

FROM THE NORTHERN NEWS ARCHIVES

This article first appeared in the March/April 1986 issue of Northern News

Make the transition to an era of cooperation

"Public/private partnership" is more than an idea; it's a whole new way of doing things

By David E. Booher

Over a decade has passed since the Council on Environmental Quality published the seminal study, *The Quiet Revolution in Land Use Control*. The key finding of the study was that an "ancient regime" was being overthrown: "... the feudal system under which the entire pattern of land development has been controlled by thousands of individual local governments, each seeking to maximize its tax base and minimize its social problems, and caring less what happens to all the others."

The tools of the revolution, the study noted, were "new laws taking a wide variety of forms but each sharing a common theme — the need to provide some degree of state or regional participation in the major decisions that affect the use of our increasingly limited supply of land."

Since 1971, this new order has further evolved in the public opinion and public policy arenas. Planning is no longer the exclusive responsibility of local, state, and regional governments. Planning law and practice have been changed by a growing recognition of the limits of government — limits that have taken tangible form in tax and spending limitations imposed by voters in California and elsewhere.

The result has been a growing emphasis on public/private cooperation, both in planning for development and in the resolution of major local and state policy issues. A new set of planning tools has emerged, occurring in a variety of forms: public/private task forces, innovative financing schemes, development agreements, greater reliance on exactions, more corporate participation in political action, more communication between corporate and political leaders, emergence of private policy advocacy coalitions such as the Bay Area Council, and joint public/private proposals to the voters, to name just a few examples.

(continued on next page)

We enjoyed a great night on the town
(continued from page 1)



Veronica Flores, Tania Sheyner, Jason Su



Barry Miller, John Steere, Joanna Jansen



Hannah Young, Nisha Chauhan, Julia Chan, Christopher Wolf

(continued on next page)

Make the transition to an era of cooperation (continued from previous page)

All reflect awareness that both public and private interests are better served when land-use decisions are made in a cooperative, rather than adversarial environment. This fundamental shift requires that both public and private planners change traditional ways of doing things. To be successful, planners will have to learn to think politically, finding solutions on which diverse constituencies can agree. Planners also need to fine-tune their judgments about the capabilities of their institutions. Each decision must be considered in light of its impacts, and the reactions of constituencies affected.

Finally, and most important, planners must learn to act instead of reacting, to take the initiative in identifying issues and solutions, to speak in the interest of rational use of resources rather than in the interest of governmental entities, and to build constituencies for sound planning. Rather than merely being regulators, they must be effective leaders.

The transition will not be easy. The private sector finds itself accepting new, riskier roles, forging new relationships with public agencies, and taking on more responsibility for the costs of public decisions. Public agencies are giving up some of their autonomy, and adjusting to the private sector's constraints. But if the long-term result is a planning process more integral to the decisions shaping the use of land and other resources, it will be worth the effort.

David E. Boohar is Senior Policy Advisor, Center for Collaborative Policy, California State University, Sacramento. He holds Master degrees in political science from Tulane University and in planning from the University of Tennessee. When this article was written in 1986, Mr. Boohar was vice president and general manager of Geyer Associates, Inc., a Sacramento-based public policy consulting firm. The California Planning Roundtable (established in 1980) was initially envisioned in 1979 by Mr. Boohar when he was President of the California Chapter of the American Planning Association. ■

Exceptional photos of Munich's subway stations.
—Nick Frank, FastCompany, <http://bit.ly/PQ7XF1>

We enjoyed a great night on the town
(continued from page 1)



Janet Palma, Laura Thompson, Larry Tong

APA CA thanks you!

The Northern Section 2012 holiday party was a smash hit, with good company, good food, and drinks. Thanks to Florentina Craciun (Chair) and her committee (Darcy Kremin, Erik Balsley, Emy Mendoza, Tania Sheyner, and Brian Soland), and to all those who volunteered to plan and manage the event. Thanks also to our sponsors for their generous donations for the California Planning Foundation drawing: URS, LSA, ESA, GHD, HNTB, The Planning Center/DC&E, PMC, Eisen/Letunic, and Hanson Horn.



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Time to think about the 2013 planning awards



American Planning Association Awards are given to encourage quality in planning and to increase the public's awareness of the planning profession. APA does that by recognizing outstanding planning achievements. Each year, as part of the nationwide effort, APA California Northern Section honors the most innovative plans and projects, distinguished APA members, and lay contributors to planning and achievements in this area.

APA California Northern wants to be able to consider the best people, plans, programs, and projects for the 2013 APA California Northern Section Awards. Our awards recipients frequently win State Chapter and National awards, and we hope to continue the tradition.

Jurors wanted

Serve your profession, and have fun at the same time! Are you enthusiastic and energetic? Then volunteer for the 2013 Awards Jury. Jurors will review and evaluate some of the finest planning work and distinguished professionals in the Section, then deliberate as a group to determine the award winners. Jurors will have the opportunity to present the awards to the recipients and receive a complimentary admission to the Awards Gala in May.

Your time commitment will vary, depending on the number of awards applications received. Deliberations will be held on a Friday afternoon in April. If you would like to be considered for the Section's 2013 Awards Jury, please email your name and contact information, along with a short résumé, to Andrea Ouse, AICP, at andrea.ouse@lsa-assoc.com, no later than Wednesday, February 13, 2013.

Do you know of outstanding planning projects, plans, programs, and people?

Now is the time to start thinking about who and what warrant consideration for a 2013 Planning Award. We expect to publish the Section's awards categories and application forms for 2013 in late January, after APA California finalizes the 2013 Chapter Awards Program.

We'll provide more information as it becomes available. Please visit www.norcalapa.org or contact Awards Program Co-Directors Andrea Ouse, AICP, at andrea.ouse@lsa-assoc.com or Eileen Whitty, AICP, at ewhitty@ebmud.com. We look forward to seeing the very finest in the Northern Section shine in 2013! ■

A one-year building slowdown for Google

<http://bit.ly/VTaZYA>

Google has put on hold its plans to build 1.2 million square feet on the 18.6-acre Charleston East site near its existing headquarters in Mountain View. Google also had wanted to build housing in the area north of Highway 101, “but the city council did not approve the approach in the city’s new general plan. The company has begun construction on a 1.1 million square-foot campus on 42.2 acres at NASA Ames Research Center. The NASA site is separated from Google’s existing campus by Stevens Creek and Stevens Creek Trail.”

—Sharon Simonson, *The Registry* real estate news, Dec. 7, 2012. ■

“Hot, broke, and hungry. Since 1980, drought has been the fourth most common type of disaster in the U.S. but the second most costly overall and per incident.”

—*Planning*, Dec. 2012, p.44,

<http://bit.ly/VtQ4sY>

[Quite a bit about] climate change

Climate conference ends by kicking can down the road <http://bit.ly/VuzFEK>

“In a year in which the impacts of climate change pounded people in rich and poor countries alike, negotiators in Doha failed to deliver even the minimum expectations for the UN climate negotiations. But a broad spectrum of civil society organizations vowed to continue the fight for a global climate agreement in 2015, starting with their return home from Doha. ‘Here in Doha, for the first time in history, people marched to demand real leadership to tackle climate change,’ said Tasneem Essop, head of the World Wildlife Federation delegation to COP 18. ‘The most significant development in Doha happened outside the negotiations. Social movements, labor unions, and civil society joined hands to take a stand against the governments’ lack of ambition and urgency. We will return home and work together to ensure that governments act with the speed and scale that the climate crisis requires. That includes a fair, ambitious, and binding agreement in 2015.’” —“WWF statement on COP 18: People are ready, World leaders are not,” *Webwire.com*, Dec. 10, 2012.

Also see John M. Broder, “Climate talks yield commitment to ambitious, but unclear, actions,” *The New York Times*, Dec. 8, 2012. <http://nyti.ms/RTjlfQ>

A world with oceans five to 12 feet higher

<http://nyti.ms/V0QB5C>

“This past summer, a disconcerting new scientific study by the climate scientist Michiel Schaeffer and colleagues — <http://bit.ly/Tc1voR> — suggested that no matter how quickly we cut pollution, we are unlikely to keep the seas from climbing less than five feet. More than six million Americans live on land less than five feet above the local high tide. (Searchable maps and analyses are available at SurgingSeas.org for every low-lying coastal community in the contiguous United States.) Any sea level forecast must be interpreted carefully: things could be better, or worse. There are two basic ways to protect ourselves from sea level rise: reduce it by cutting pollution, or prepare for it by defense and retreat. To do the job, we must do both. We have lost our chance for complete prevention; and preparation alone, without slowing emissions, would — sooner or later — turn our coastal cities into so many Atlantises.” —Benjamin Strauss and Robert Kopp, “Rising seas, vanishing coastlines,” *The New York Times*, Nov. 24, 2012.

Jane Holtz Kay, 74, early climate prophet

<http://nyti.ms/UTNts4>

“Jane Holtz Kay calculated in her 1997 book, ‘Asphalt Nation,’ that in less time than it takes you to read this sentence, Americans riding around in cars and trucks will dump another 180,000 pounds of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere — and thereby accelerate global warming and hasten the

(continued on next page)

Cheap seats to LA and back

<http://bit.ly/11fgfed>
<http://bit.ly/10Wq7sb>

Low-cost commuter bus company Megabus.com is coming back to California with service to and from Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose starting Dec. 12. Megabus operated between San Francisco and Los Angeles in 2007 and 2008 with smaller and less luxurious buses. Megabus will run six express trips daily between LA and the Bay Area (about an eight-hour ride), as well as trips between Sacramento and San Francisco and Reno. The 22 glass-topped, double-decker buses each have a capacity of 81 passengers. All seats have power outlets, and there's free wi-fi onboard. Tickets for most seats will range from \$5 to \$9.

What keeps costs so low? Megabus is a "curbside carrier" that does without bus stations and ticket vendors, arranging stops in city centers and relying solely on its website for ticket sales. The Bay Area stops are the CalTrain station at Fourth and King in San Francisco; in front of the West Oakland BART station on 7th Street near Center; and near the main entrance of San Jose's Diridon Caltrain Station at 65 Cahill. The LA stop is Union Station's Transit Plaza at 800 North Alameda Street.

Sourced from Megabus.com and articles by Gracie Zheng (Neon Tommy, USC Annenberg Digital News) and Michael Cabanatuan (San Francisco Chronicle), Nov. 28, 2012.

"Climate-driven crises could lead to internal instability or international conflict and might force the United States to provide humanitarian assistance or, in some cases, military force to protect vital energy," economic or other interests, according to a report issued by the National Research Council. —John M. Broder,
<http://nyti.ms/WNiMfi>

[Quite a bit about] climate change

(continued from previous page)

advent of catastrophic flooding in coastal cities like New York. Ms. Kay, an architecture critic who died in Boston on Nov. 5 at 74, based her prediction on government statistics and well-established scientific evidence. Her book, subtitled 'How the automobile took over America and how we can take it back,' proposed ways to reverse the environmental damage caused by suburban sprawl: by returning to the city, using public transit, living one's daily life, as much as possible, within walking distance. 'Asphalt Nation,' considered her most ambitious book, offered a unified vision for saving the cities and the planet and achieving social harmony by overthrowing the cultural dominance of the internal combustion engine." —Paul Vitello, "Jane Holtz Kay, a prophet of Climate Change, dies at 74," *The New York Times*, Nov. 21, 2012.

Scientists examine 55-year water record in Tanzania

<http://nyti.ms/W3VHic>

"More than anything else, climate change is a water problem. Scientists expect more coastal flooding and possibly more inland flooding. They expect higher temperatures and greater evaporation to deplete water resources, creating risks for the food supply. They believe sea-level rise will eventually render some regions uninhabitable. But a new paper published in the journal *Nature Climate Change* suggests that the outlook on fresh water may not be entirely bad. In many places around the world, groundwater is the most important source of local water supplies. And the new analysis, by Richard G. Taylor of University College London and a half-dozen other scientists, found that the more intense rainfall expected in many parts of the world as a result of climate change may help to recharge the aquifers that supply groundwater. Since an intensification of rainfall is one of the most confident predictions scientists make about global warming, proof that this pattern applies worldwide would suggest that improved groundwater availability may help offset some of the ill effects of climate change." —Justin Gillis, Water Supply in a Warming World, *The New York Times [Green]*, Nov. 12, 2012.

A "to do" list for climate change

<http://bit.ly/ZvyLw3>

"When he ran for president in 2008, Obama made three big promises: end the Iraq War, extend health care coverage to all Americans, and take federal action to reduce the threat of global climate change. He delivered on the first two. Here are five steps the president should take to address climate change: 1. [Add] to the conversation that began in Sandy's wake [and help] Americans connect the dots between emissions, climate change, and extreme weather. 2. Take immediate steps to reduce potent greenhouse gases other than carbon, such as methane and fluorinated gases. 3. Start a clean energy race to promote energy efficiency and clean, renewable technologies. 4. Use the Clean Air Act to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, under authority confirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Massachusetts v. EPA*. 5. Cut carbon pollution by imposing

(continued on next page)

Money for green schools and government buildings

<http://bit.ly/THUKeS>

"When you drive around California and look at the physical condition of some of the schools, it can be a little shocking, don't you think? In a historic environmental shift, the state's voters triggered a multibillion-dollar tidal wave of new green spending.

By overwhelmingly passing Proposition 39, voters closed a tax loophole on out-of-state corporations that will generate \$1.1 billion a year. But the measure also required that half of that money fund projects to install new windows, better insulation, modern lighting, and more efficient heating and air conditioning at thousands of public schools and other government buildings over the next five years.

The lack of specifics is on purpose. The measure notes that the Legislature must appropriate the money, which means lawmakers will pass a bill to create new programs in one or more agencies like the state Department of Education or the California Energy Commission. Those agencies will set up grant programs for school districts and other local governments to compete for the money.

The windfall, roughly \$550 million a year, or \$2.75 billion before it sunsets in 2018, dwarfs anything that California or any other state has ever spent on energy efficiency for public buildings. The program is on par with the \$3 billion that voters approved in 2004 for stem cell research and the \$3.3 billion that former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger committed to his 'Million Solar Roofs' plan in 2006."

—Paul Rogers, "Tidal wave of money coming to make California schools greener," *Marin IJ*, Dec. 1, 2012.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission reports that from January through October 2012, 46.2 percent of new electricity generating capacity added in the U.S. was renewable —Philip Bump, <http://bit.ly/YPEe35>

[Quite a bit about] climate change

(continued from previous page)

a price via a cap or tax." —Eric Pooley, "A business-friendly climate agenda for Obama's second term," *HBR Blog Network*, Nov. 12, 2012

Cap-and-trade rules on industry remain contentious <http://bit.ly/ZII9IH>

On Nov. 14, California became "the first state to begin requiring a broad range of businesses to reduce their greenhouse gas pollution [when] the California Air Resources Board [held] its first auction to sell pollution allowances under the state's landmark cap-and-trade law. The event comes six years after former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger signed AB32, the law that required California to lower its greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 to 1990 levels — the equivalent of a 17 percent reduction. It's the largest carbon market in the United States, and the second largest in the world, behind the European Union. Some business groups, particularly those representing oil companies, power plants, and large factories that burn vast amounts of fossil fuels, call the process a hidden tax that will result in higher utility bills and gasoline prices. The California Air Resources Board estimates the regulation will add 10 cents per gallon to the price of gas for every \$10 per ton that industry pays for allowances. [On Nov. 9], the futures market pegged the price at \$12 a ton, which could result in a 12-cent per gallon increase. The pollution market was originally a Republican idea, put in place by President George H.W. Bush in 1990 to reduce sulfur dioxide pollution that causes acid rain. Since then, sulfur dioxide emissions from industry have fallen 65 percent. Under California's system, each company needs to have its greenhouse gas allowances in place starting in November 2014." —Paul Rogers, "California's landmark global warming law becomes real with first cap-and-trade auctions," *Mercury News*, Nov. 10, 2012.

Going up in smoke <http://nyti.ms/TDlbTL>

"But while environmentalists have lamented America's slow response to climate change, the United States is actually on a much better path than Europe. It is making the transition from coal to gas, it is investing in new energy technologies, and its carbon emissions are falling faster than Europe's. [Yet] virtually nothing has been done to slow the buildup of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. How could so little have been achieved, despite all the already considerable economic costs of climate change? The main reason emissions have been going up is the rise of coal — in China, in particular. America has only the crudest energy policy. And yet its carbon emissions have been falling sharply. Why? Because the United States is switching from coal to gas. Europe's 'answer' to global warming is wind farms and other current renewables. But the numbers won't ever add up. There are three sensible ways to do this: tax carbon consumption (including imports); accelerate the switch from coal to gas; and support and finance new technologies rather than pouring so much money into wind and biofuels. What is missing is a global agreement on a proper carbon price. Putting a price on carbon is fundamental." —Dieter Helm, "To slow warming, tax carbon," *The New York Times*, Nov. 11, 2012.

Rebuild now — with solar

<http://nyti.ms/U9wH9r>

When our power industry is unable to perform its most basic mission of supplying safe, affordable, and reliable power, we need to ask whether it is really sensible to run the 21st century by using an antiquated and vulnerable system of copper wires and wooden poles. Electricity-producing photovoltaic panels installed on houses, on the roofs of warehouses and big box stores and over parking lots can be wired so that they deliver power when the grid fails. As we rebuild the tens of thousands of houses and commercial buildings damaged and destroyed by [Sandy], let's incorporate solar power arrays and other clean energy technologies in their designs, and let's allow them to be wired so they still are generating even when the centralized grid system is down."

—David Crane and Robert F. Kennedy Jr.,
"Solar panels for every home,"
The New York Times, Dec. 12, 2012.

"While China's ... fossil fuel expansion continues apace at a rate of one 1,000-megawatt thermal (coal-fired) power station per week," it is "adding more power-generating capacity in hydro, nuclear, and 'new' renewables than in conventional thermal power stations."

—John Matthews, *The Globalist*
<http://bit.ly/Sp21CW>

[Quite a bit about] climate change

(continued from previous page)

Should Jersey rebuild beaches?

<http://nyti.ms/SQ5cUP>

"When Hurricane Sandy came ashore, it washed enormous quantities of sand off beaches and into the streets — or even all the way across barrier islands into the bays behind them. But even as these towns clamor for sand, scientists are warning that rising seas will make maintaining artificial beaches prohibitively expensive or simply impossible. Even some advocates of artificial beach nourishment now urge new approaches. The practice has long been controversial. Opponents of beach nourishment argue that undeveloped beaches deal well with storms. Their sands shift; barrier islands may even migrate toward the mainland. But the beach itself survives, because buildings and roads do not pin it down. By contrast, replenishment projects often wash away far sooner than expected. The critics say the best answer to coastal storms is to move people and buildings away from the water, a tactic some call strategic retreat. Supporters of these projects counter that beaches are infrastructure that must be maintained. They say beaches attract tourists and summer residents, conferring immense economic benefits that more than outweigh the costs of the projects. Also, they argue, these beaches absorb storm energy, sparing buildings inland." —Cornelia Dean, "Costs of shoring up coastal communities," *The New York Times [Science]*, Nov. 5, 2012.

'The time has come,' the Walrus said, 'To talk of climate and other things, and why the sea is boiling hot.'¹ <http://nyti.ms/SLrKpG>

"In recent years, the most sophisticated global-warming skeptics have seized on errors in the forecasts of the United Nations' International Panel on Climate Change (I.P.C.C.) in order to undermine efforts at greenhouse gas reduction. These skeptics note that global temperatures have increased at only about half the rate the I.P.C.C. predicted in 1990, and that they flatlined in the 2000s (albeit after rising sharply in the late 90s). Silver runs the numbers to show that the past few decades of data are still highly consistent with the hypothesis of man-made global warming. He shows how, at the rate that carbon dioxide is accumulating, a single decade of flat temperatures is hardly invalidating. On the other hand, Silver demonstrates that projecting temperature increases decades into the future is a dicey proposition. ... Sorting through the numbers on climate change is a much more daunting challenge than figuring out which shortstops will hit for power or which candidate will carry Ohio."

—Noam Scheiber, "Known Unknowns": A review of "The Signal and the Noise," by Nate Silver. *The New York Times [Sunday Books]*, Nov. 2, 2012.

¹ With apologies to Lewis Carroll, "Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There," 1872. ■

Permanent supportive housing for former chronically homeless

Drs. Julian and Raye Richardson Apartments, San Francisco

Republished courtesy of HUD USER, <http://bit.ly/S7GawV>

Located near City Hall in the heart of San Francisco, the Drs. Julian and Raye Richardson Apartments provide 120 permanent supportive housing (PSH) units to former chronically homeless San Franciscans. The modern architecture project is a model both for its green design and for providing stable and affordable housing for individuals who have experienced prolonged homelessness. The development team and the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency (SFRA) have demonstrated that a thoughtfully planned building with housing for formerly homeless residents can be a positive addition to the neighborhood.¹ In May 2012, the Richardson Apartments development was honored with the 2012 American Institute of Architects/HUD Secretary's Housing and Community Design Award for Excellence in Affordable Housing Design.

Project context and history

When the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake damaged San Francisco's Central Freeway, the subsequent demolition of that road, north of Market Street, provided the city with an opportunity to redevelop the Market and Octavia neighborhood. The city reconnected the street grid where the old freeway was located by building a pedestrian-friendly road, Octavia Boulevard, completed in 2002.² The freeway's demolition also provided nearly seven acres of land for infill development where the city planned to provide housing for low- and moderate-income households, a range of services and amenities that would help foster "whole" neighborhoods, and a balance of transportation options.³ An integral component of the city's revitalization plan was the development of affordable housing units, which would be concentrated on 22 publicly owned parcels, including seven sites that SFRA purchased from the city.⁴

The Market and Octavia neighborhood is located in the Western Addition area of the city, just west of downtown. Richardson Apartments is located between the Western Addition's eastern edge, a historically African-American community, and the northern edge of the upscale Hayes Valley community. The site, one of the last of the former Central Freeway parcels to be redeveloped,⁵ is at the southeast corner of the intersection of Fulton



Richardson Apartments, looking east to City Hall along Fulton Street.
Photo © Bruce Damonte, www.bruce-damonte.com

and Gough Streets, on a prominent sight line looking east toward city hall two blocks away.⁶ The site is surrounded by small-scale residential buildings to the west, larger residential and commercial uses to the east, and the Performing Arts Garage to the south. Because the site is centrally located and accessible by transit, the city wanted to maximize the amount of housing at the site and create an active streetscape in keeping with the neighborhood's pedestrian-friendly character.

Planning and development review process

As Richardson Apartments' location fell under the planning purview of SFRA,⁷ SFRA issued a request for proposal (RFP) calling for a development with 115 to 120 PSH units and ground-level retail for the site at 365 Fulton Street in 2005. SFRA initially accepted the proposal submitted by David Baker and Partners (DB+P) in March 2006 because their submission included the architectural vision that won an earlier neighborhood design competition held for the former Central Freeway parcels.⁸ However, because some community members felt that the selection process was flawed, SFRA agreed to a second RFP process, and in October 2006 a DB+P proposal was again selected, this time with support from the community.⁹

During the planning review phase, between 2007 and 2009, the development partners and property managers of Richardson Apartments, Community Housing Partnership (CHP) and Mercy

(continued on next page)

Housing California, together with their management affiliate Mercy Services Corporation, worked closely with neighborhood groups to address their concerns and familiarize residents with the concept of PSH for chronically homeless persons. Community residents wanted Richardson Apartments to serve individuals with ties to the neighborhood. CHP went beyond the SFRA requirement — that preference in new housing development at the site be given to Western Addition residents who had been displaced by the city's urban renewal program during the 1960s — and partnered with a local nonprofit to actively search the city's homeless population for former Western Addition residents.

To gain approval, the project needed to obtain several variances from the SFRA code, including density, parking, and off-street parking variances.¹⁰ These were granted, in part, because the underlying zoning code did not have the same requirements and because the building's target residents were unlikely to own cars.¹¹ Although the project was undergoing development review with SFRA, the developers also consulted with the San Francisco Planning Department to ensure that the project would comply with the underlying zoning code in the existing plan for the Market and Octavia neighborhood.¹² In addition, the variances the project would normally be required to obtain under existing zoning regulations — rear yard encroachment, open space, and street projection — are routinely granted.¹³ SFRA approved the project in November 2008.

Financing

With a \$1 annual land lease and a \$2.7 million predevelopment loan from SFRA, the development team secured a \$10 million

permanent loan from the California Department of Housing and Community Development's Multifamily Housing Program (MHP) in October 2008.¹⁴ Poor economic conditions — including the possibility of the state falling into bankruptcy — threatened to derail the project. To reassure the other funders, SFRA agreed to provide the \$10 million if the MHP funding fell through.¹⁵ SFRA's backstop promise prompted Citi Community Capital to provide a loan that included \$25 million in tax credits through the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program.¹⁶ Annual operating costs for 12 of the units are subsidized by \$1.2 million in California Mental Health Services Act funds; San Francisco's Local Operation Subsidy Program provides annual operating subsidies for 108 units.¹⁷

Sustainable by design

Richardson Apartments' design maximizes the nearly half-acre site with a five-story, 65,419-square-foot plan organized around an interior courtyard. To give the building a sense of identity, the architects created a distinctive street edge. The ground floor is constructed in glass to convey a sense of transparency and includes offices for the property manager and residential support services staff (including a medical clinic and counseling suite), retail spaces (including a frame shop and a restaurant), and a social-venture bakery that offers jobs and training to tenants and disabled neighborhood residents. The building's top four floors feature a façade with alternating exterior patterns, natural colors, and materials (including aluminum, zinc, and ipe wood, a highly durable and dense Brazilian wood) that slightly curve outward to mark the corner of Fulton and Gough Streets.¹⁸

With a GreenPoint multifamily rating score of 139 (a California rating classification comparable to LEED for Homes Multifamily Midrise), Richardson Apartments is rated well above the median score of 85 with features that include a green roof, permeable courtyard paving that optimizes stormwater drainage, and solar hot-water panels that handle 70 percent of the domestic hot-water load.¹⁹

The building's 120 studio units — each approximately 300 square feet, with a private bathroom and kitchenette — are intended to house former chronically homeless individuals referred through the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFPDH) Direct Access to Housing program. This program is designed to stably house individuals with precarious housing patterns who are released from, or have a prolonged

Primary Financing	
Citi Community Capital / Raymond James Tax Credit Funds, Inc.	\$25,125,475
California's Department of Housing and Community Development Multifamily Housing Program	\$10,000,000
San Francisco Redevelopment Agency	\$2,753,291
California's Mental Health Services Act	\$1,200,000
Enterprise Green Communities Grant	\$5,000
<i>Source: Grand opening of Richardson Apartments is San Francisco's bittersweet goodbye to redevelopment. http://bit.ly/TAyDWp</i>	
Development Team	
Developer	Community Housing Partnership
Architect	David Baker and Partners
General Contractor	Cahill Contractors, Inc.
Primary Service Provider	University of California - San Francisco Citywide Case Management

(continued on next page)

history with, institutional or transitional settings.²⁰ Eligible individuals must have incomes at or below 50 percent of the area median income, with a maximum annual income of \$34,800.²¹ Forty-two units are reserved for residents earning up to \$18,825 per year. Residents pay rent equal to 30 percent of their income — anywhere from \$0 to \$870.²² All units meet the requirements set by the Americans with Disabilities Act and are designed to be accessible to those with mobility, hearing, and vision impairments.²³ The Richardson Apartments community also provides residents with supportive services to prevent returns to homelessness. In 2007, SFDPH selected the University of California San Francisco's Citywide Case Management Program to provide wraparound services onsite. These voluntary services provide residents with access to a case manager, a full-time registered nurse, and a part-time psychiatrist.²⁴

Experience gained

Situated in a prime location in the nation's most expensive rental market, Richardson Apartments offers researchers and policy-makers an important lesson in socially responsible development.²⁵ The city's investment in its highest-needs homeless individuals not only benefits its residents but also provides cost savings for the city. By providing stabilization for chronically homeless persons — individuals who, on average, have a high prevalence of hospital and emergency room use — the development is projected to save the city \$1.6 million in healthcare costs in its first year of operation.²⁶ Richardson Apartments' modern, sustainable design and iconic street presence demonstrate that a homeless housing development can make a valuable contribution to the diversity of a dense, mixed-income urban neighborhood.

Footnotes

- ¹ The Richardson Apartments project was built on land owned by SFRA. Along with all of California's redevelopment agencies, however, SFRA was dissolved in 2012 and its activities folded into the Mayor's Office of Housing as part of statewide budget-cutting measures.
- ² Congress for the New Urbanism. "[San Francisco's Octavia](#)." Accessed 10 June 2012.
- ³ San Francisco Planning Department. "[Market & Octavia: An Area Plan of the General Plan of the City and County of San Francisco](#)," 1–4. Accessed 15 July 2012.
- ⁴ San Francisco Planning Department. November 2010. "[Market & Octavia Plan: Monitoring Report 2005 – 2009](#)," 13. Accessed 15 July 2012; San Francisco Redevelopment Agency. 2008. "[Redevelopment Plan for the Western Addition A-2 Redevelopment Project](#)," 1–3, 5. Accessed 15 July 2012; Interview with Olson Lee, director, San Francisco Mayor's Office of Housing (former executive director of SFRA until its dissolution). 1 June 2012.
- ⁵ California Housing Partnership Corporation. February 2012. "[Grand Opening of Richardson Apartments Is San Francisco's Bittersweet Goodbye to Redevelopment](#)." Accessed 27 July 2012.
- ⁶ San Francisco Planning Department. 2002. "[The Market and Octavia Neighborhood Plan](#)," 141–142. Accessed 15 July 2012.
- ⁷ During the planning process, SFRA was being phased out, but this project was completed before SFRA was absorbed into the Mayor's Office of Housing.
- ⁸ Interview with Olson Lee, 1 June 2012.
- ⁹ Interview with Olson Lee, 1 June 2012; Interview with David Schnur, director of housing development, Community Housing Partnership Corporation, 4 June 2012.
- ¹⁰ City and County Board of Appeals. 2009. "[Notice of Appeal No. 08-183](#)." Accessed 15 July 2012.
- ¹¹ Internal award submission documents provided by David Baker and Partners.
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁴ California Housing Partnership Corporation. 2012; e-mail correspondence with Sheela Jivan, project developer, Mercy Housing, 11 June 2012.
- ¹⁵ California Housing Partnership Corporation. 2012.
- ¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁸ Interview with Amit Price Patel, project architect, David Baker and Partners, 31 May 2012.
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ San Francisco Department of Public Health. "[Development Summary Form: MHSA Housing Program, Parcel G](#)," B, D.3. Accessed 25 July 2012.
- ²¹ Internal award submission documents provided by David Baker and Partners.
- ²² Ibid.
- ²³ San Francisco Department of Public Health, D.3.
- ²⁴ Email correspondence with Margot Antonetty, director of programs, housing, and urban health, San Francisco Department of Public Health, 28 June 2012.
- ²⁵ Elina Bravve, Megan Bolton, Linda Couch, and Sheila Crowley. 2012. "[Out of Reach 2012: America's Forgotten Housing Crisis](#)," prepared for National Low Income Housing Coalition, 8. Accessed 25 July 2012.
- ²⁶ Interview with Dr. Joshua Bamberger, medical director, Housing and Urban Health, San Francisco Department of Public Health, 11 June 2012; California Housing Partnership Corporation. 2012. ■

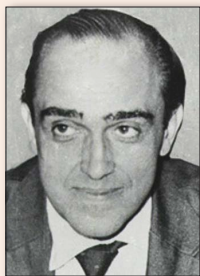
What others are saying

Condos may replace rentals in mixed-use projects <http://nyti.ms/V4SCxp>

"Thanks to a recent Federal Housing Administration rule change aimed at supporting mixed-use properties, condos are getting more serious consideration [from developers]. Enacted in September, the rule change opens the door to government-insured mortgages for condos in mixed-use buildings with commercial footprints of up to 35 percent, up from the previous 25 percent limit. Exceptions may be granted for projects in which as much as half of the space is commercial. Developers hope this, along with other F.H.A. changes, will help revive condo sales just as the overall housing market is improving. Fannie Mae will not certify a condo project until 70 percent of the units are sold." —Joe Gose, Regulatory Break for Mixed-Use Projects, *The New York Times*, Nov. 28, 2012.

Oscar Niemeyer, Dec. 5, 2012 <http://youtu.be/aqkgA7Yy1nY>

Oscar Ribeiro de Almeida Niemeyer Soares Filho (born Dec. 15, 1907), known as Oscar Niemeyer, was a prominent Brazilian architect. In a two-minute clip provided by James Castañeda, AICP (from the documentary "Urbanized" by Gary Hustwit), Niemeyer highlights his work in Brasília and ascribes competence and heart to Lucio Costa, the city's master planner. The subtitled video was



Source: Public Archive of the Distrito Federal



Oscar Niemeyer's Congresso Nacional do Brasil in Brasília.
Photo: James A. Castañeda, AICP

filmed in May 2011, when Niemeyer was 103. See *The New York Times* of Dec. 5 for a comprehensive obituary by Nicolai Ouroussof, who was the newspaper's architecture critic from 2004 until June 2011. <http://nyti.ms/UGLPxM>

Sic transit <http://1.usa.gov/TKAQ34>

The \$53 billion in flexible funding issued by the highway administration from 2007 to 2011 — money intended for highways that can be moved into transit projects — represents about 29 percent of all federal highway aid. Less than 10 percent of that, about \$5 billion, was used for urban public transit. Only Oregon, Vermont, New Jersey, and Virginia flexed more than 25 percent of their eligible funds to transit projects during the five-year period. From 1992 to 2006, California transferred nearly 40 percent of its apportioned flexible funding for transit projects." —USGAO, "Flexible funding continues to play a role in supporting state and local transportation priorities," Nov. 15, 2102.

High-speed rail ducks last-ditch legal effort <http://bit.ly/UKtZfj>

"California's \$69 billion bullet train will continue zooming toward a groundbreaking next year after a judge denied a last-ditch request from Central Valley opponents to halt all work on the state's high speed rail project. The long-shot request was filed by Madera County and local farmers who did not want the first 29-mile stretch of the high-speed railway to come through their Central California properties.

This case is the most important [of several] because it is the only one that sought an injunction and thus could have immediately blocked construction. With the injunction request out of the way, both sides will now battle over the actual lawsuit, with a hearing scheduled on April 19, though Judge Frawley said he was leaning toward ruling in favor of the state. Ultimately, Frawley ruled the rail authority did not need to be flawless in its plans largely because the project was so massive — requiring 15,000 pages of planning — and also because the law 'does not require perfection.'" Mike Rosenberg, "California bullet train moves forward, judge denies farmers' plea to halt project," *Mercury News*, Nov. 17, 2012.

(continued on next page)

“Project of the century”

<http://lat.ms/TxjZ4K>

“The sheer scale and scope of the bullet train’s push into Southern California, including traversing complex seismic hazards, would rival construction of the state’s massive freeway system, water transport networks, and its port complexes. It is likely to be viewed in future decades as an engineering marvel — or a costly folly. If nothing else, it is ambitious. The line would duck in and out of tunnels up to 500 feet below the rugged surface. It would cross more than half a dozen earthquake faults heading toward L.A. Tunneling machines as long as a football field will have to be jockeyed into mountain canyons to do the heavy, back-breaking work once left to Chinese laborers. New access roads and a corridor for high-voltage power lines will have to be carved through the Tehachapis to feed power-hungry trains. One measure of the topographic challenge: Over that 141 miles from Bakersfield to Los Angeles, up to 59 percent of the track would run in tunnels or on viaducts. If completed as planned, it would close a gap in the state’s rail network. Passenger service through the Tehachapis was discontinued in 1971. Today, Amtrak passengers have to take a bus from downtown Los Angeles to Bakersfield to catch northbound trains. Depending on the slope of the track, the tallest viaduct could be 200 to 330 feet off the ground. While large by Southern California standards, the planned structures and tunnels won’t set any world records. Switzerland is building a 35.4-mile rail tunnel under the Alps. And China has a highway bridge 1,627 feet high.” —Ralph Vartabedian, “Bullet-train planners face huge engineering challenge,” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 12, 2012.

As one might expect

<http://bit.ly/S9xTrR>

“Until recently, developments in Portland, Oregon, without resident parking were legal but rare. Now, more than two-dozen such apartment [projects] have been proposed or recently built. A city report released November 7 plays down the effect of no-parking apartment buildings on nearby residential neighborhoods, saying parking is available just a couple of blocks [away]. But it also found that 73 percent of 116 apartment households surveyed have cars, and two-thirds park on the street. Only 36 percent use a car for a daily commute, meaning the rest store their cars on the street for much of the week. And residents of no-parking apartment buildings aren’t any less likely to own a car than those who live in apartments with parking.” —Elliot Njus, “Changing attitudes by developers and lenders drive no-parking apartment surge in Portland,” *The Oregonian*, Nov. 12, 2012.

Flood program is incentive to rebuild

<http://nyti.ms/Txuk0z>

“The federal government’s flood insurance program is strapped as reconstruction from Hurricane Sandy gets under way. The program, established in 1968, is one of the world’s largest. Insurance is mandatory for homeowners with a federally backed mortgage if they live in an area subject to flooding at least once every 100 years. More than one million property owners who live in homes at least four decades old have historically paid only about 40 percent of the estimated true cost of the coverage the government provides. Only a tiny share of enrolled properties accounts for a giant share of the overall claims, as the properties are repeatedly flooded and rebuilt in low coastal regions and in hurricane flight paths. One Biloxi, Miss., property valued at \$183,000 flooded 15 times over a decade, costing the program \$1.47 million, according to federal data provided by the agency. The 20,000 communities that participate should also be adopting stronger building or flood prevention codes the way Florida has since Hurricane Andrew in 1992. ‘This program encourages unwise construction instead of discouraging it, and to me that means the program has failed,’ said Robert Hunter, an insurance administrator in the Ford and Carter administrations.” —Eric Lipton, Felicity Barringer, and Mary Williams Walsh, “Flood insurance, already fragile, faces new stress,” *The New York Times*, Nov. 12, 2012.

The never-ending drive to grow the overall economy

<http://bit.ly/SRrsdX>

“Our economy is measured and guided by gross domestic product, and growth of GDP is considered central to our economic system. GDP is the value of all goods and services produced in any given time period. It counts the good (e.g., new iPhones, health care) and the bad (e.g., oil spills and frankenstorms) and the ugly (e.g., political campaign spending) all as increments to celebrate. But study after study reflects that even though a nation’s GDP might keep going up, the happiness of its citizens does not increase, once certain basic needs are met. Countries should look beyond GDP as the overarching gauge of economic success and adopt more efficient indicators that include human and environmental well-being. In developed countries, efforts should be taken to decrease unsustainable consumption. In developing nations, we need greater efforts to effectively reduce poverty and inequality. Policies based on exponential growth and consumption cannot be sustained indefinitely.” —Suzanne York, “Words never heard from Obama or Romney: ‘Let’s rethink economic growth,’” *6 Degrees of Population*, Nov. 7, 2012.

(continued on next page)

Transforming downtown Vegas

<http://nyti.ms/VckLDg>

“Tony Hsieh (pronounced shay), the 38-year-old chief executive of Zappos [is engaged in a] \$350 million urban experiment to build ‘the most community-focused large city in the world, in downtown Las Vegas. The Downtown Project got its unofficial start several years ago when Hsieh realized that Zappos would soon outgrow its offices in nearby Henderson, Nev. Around the same time, the Las Vegas city government was also about to move, and Hsieh saw his opportunity. He leased the former City Hall — smack in the middle of downtown Vegas — for 15 years. Then he got to thinking: If he was going to move at least 1,200 employees, why not make it possible for them to live nearby? And if they could live nearby, why not create an urban community aligned with the culture of Zappos? The only hitch was that

it would require transforming the derelict core of a major city. ... Downtown Las Vegas [comprises] a few blocks of mostly run-down casinos, cavernous gift stores and the enormous, glittering LED display overhead called, with hopefulness, the Fremont Street Experience. Nevertheless, the Downtown Project is hoping to draw 10,000 ‘upwardly mobile, innovative professionals’ to the area in the next five years. And according to Hsieh, he and his team receive requests for seed money from dozens of people every week.” —Timothy Pratt, “If you fix cities, you kind of fix the world,” *The New York Times [Magazine]*, Oct. 19, 2012.

Nine useful tips for anywhere urban

<http://bit.ly/QLsLcV>

“There may be no place in Southern Nevada that has the energetic vibe that currently exists in downtown [Las Vegas].

On any given day or night, you may meet musicians, developers, lawyers, casino workers, poets, writers, bloggers — all the people you know live here but who aren’t always easy to find. Downtown is becoming a locals’ central hub. So enjoy it, but don’t get carried away. An influx of new workers, sparked by Zappos’ and the Downtown Project’s downtown moves, have to remember: Downtown isn’t Henderson or Summerlin. ‘Be aware,’ one barista advised.” —Joe Schoenmann, “Nine tips for living, working, or hanging out in downtown Las Vegas,” *Las Vegas Sun*, Oct. 4, 2012. ■



Fremont Street, looking southeast from North Las Vegas Blvd.
The Ogden (Zappos HQ) is one block to the left.

Answer to “Where in the world?” (Page 12)

Hvar, Croatia, Sept 2012. Photo by Chandler Lee,
www.chandlerphotos.smugmug.com

“Had the cities been willing to accept a statewide cap and strict state oversight, redevelopment might exist today. But the leaders of the League of California Cities decided that no redevelopment at all would be better than that kind of redevelopment. And now we have no redevelopment.”

—Bill Fulton, Oct. 23, 2012. <http://bit.ly/S6KfRY>

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- Raise member awareness and involvement in APA affairs;
- Increase public awareness of the importance of planning;
- Encourage professionalism in the conduct of its members; and
- Foster a sense of community among the members.

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