

# NORTHERN NEWS



APA  
CA

American Planning Association  
California Chapter  
Northern  
*Making Great Communities Happen*

A Publication of the Northern Section of the California Chapter of APA

**October 2016**

## Habitat III and the New Urban Agenda: Global negotiations, local implications

Holly R. Pearson, AICP

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## Purpose Travel: Why it's important to planners

Alex Hinds and Hing Wong, AICP

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Lick Observatory, Mount Hamilton;  
Shane 120-inch telescope at center.  
Elev. 4,209 ft.  
Photo: Juan Borrelli, AICP



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## Habitat III and the New Urban Agenda: Global negotiations, local implications

*Holly R. Pearson, AICP*

Leaders from cities around the world will convene in Quito, Ecuador, October 17–20 for the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development. This watershed event is also known as Habitat III — the third summit of UN-Habitat, the United Nations program that oversees work related to housing, human settlements, and urban issues. The main outcome of Habitat III will be an international policy and action framework known as the New Urban Agenda that will guide efforts to promote sustainable development in cities worldwide for the next two decades.

The New Urban Agenda (NUA) calls for local and national governments to take a broad approach to sustainable urban development. The NUA is rooted in the historical mission of UN-Habitat, which was established in 1978 with a mandate to “promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and the achievement of adequate shelter for all.” The NUA is also informed by recent international negotiations and agreements aimed at responding to global challenges, most notably the Sustainable Development Goals (the centerpiece of the United Nations’ *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*) and the work of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The NUA recognizes the key role that cities play in the global movement for sustainability, and the critical need to address the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of urban growth worldwide.

### **Background and context**

The first United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, Habitat I, was held in Vancouver, British Columbia, in 1976. At that time governments were

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Quito, Ecuador. Photo by author.

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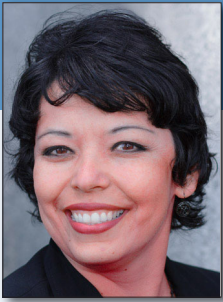
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Find JOBS and EVENTS CALENDAR at [norcalapa.org](http://norcalapa.org)



## Director's note

By Andrea Ouse, AICP

### Ch-Ch-Changes....

Greetings, colleagues! As summer turns to autumn, the excitement and activity in our Northern Section is rising. I'm thrilled to bring you some highlights of what's happening.

First, at the September 7 Northern Section Board meeting, the Board unanimously voted to confirm the Director's appointment of **Sharon Grewal, AICP**, as the Interim Section Director-Elect. You may recall that previous Director Elect **Erik Balsley, AICP**, left the Board earlier this year when he took a position as Senior Institutional Planner for the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Center. While Erik is missed, we are excited to welcome Sharon to the leadership role. As Interim Director Elect, she will become the Section Director this coming January 1, as my term as Immediate Past Director begins.

Sharon's a Planner III with the Alameda County Community Development Agency; her professional background is in environmental and policy planning. Prior to moving to the Bay Area, she served as the Professional Development Officer (PDO) for the Sacramento Valley Section. Since January, Sharon has been the Northern Section Board PDO, facilitating AICP | CM continuing education activities for our Section and assisting in the Section's AICP Exam workshops. She will be a great leader, and I look forward to working closely with her during her upcoming term. The Board is seeking nominations for the now-vacant Professional Development Officer position.

In addition, we have seen many other leadership changes. Those who have stepped down from the Board include Co-Membership Director **Geoff Bradley, AICP**, long-time East Bay RAC Co-Chair **Dahlia Chazan, AICP**, and San Jose State University Student Representative **Mariaclara Zazzaro**. We thank each of them for their dedication to Northern Section and service to our profession.

New faces on the Board include Webmaster **Eric Tuvel, AICP**, Mentorship Director **Liz Probst, AICP**, and San Jose State University Student Representative **Ali Skapyak**. These new Board members have hit the

ground running, and have exhibited great motivation in providing the best for our members. You can see photos of all of our board members at <http://bit.ly/1wxmXaI>.

Second, and of particular note, our newly revamped Mentorship Program has launched! The program's mission is to foster professional development through an exchange of ideas, networking, and guidance among multi-generational planning professionals. I strongly encourage *everyone* to consider participating in what is sure to be a thoroughly rewarding Mentorship Program this year! I'm looking forward to being a mentor this year. It's time for you to sign up now. Please see [page 4](#).

Third, it's time to register for the 2016 APA California Conference, October 22–25 at the Pasadena Conference Center. Please see [page 8](#). The program promises to provide exciting and innovative professional development and networking opportunities.

Also at the conference this year, the scholarship arm of APA, the California Planning Foundation (CPF), led by Northern Section Historian and CPF President **Juan Borrelli, AICP**, will devote its annual Scholarship Auction to two leaders in the planning community who recently passed away, Virginia Viado and Ted Holzem. Traditionally, APA California's eight sections compete each year for the highest amount raised during the auction by their sections' CPF donations. I encourage you to become a CPF Sponsor and to consider donating items, activities, or anything of value to the CPF 2016 Scholarship Auction. For more information about CPF, please go to <http://bit.ly/2cF8NFX>.

Fourth, we have formed a Nominations Committee and have opened nominations for the Director Elect and Administrative Director positions in preparation for a November ballot. We are also accepting nominations for the Planning Commission Representative on the Board and the East Bay RAC Co-Chair (with a focus on the eastern areas of Contra Costa and Alameda Counties). I urge you to get involved in our activities by joining the Northern Section Board. **You** can make a difference.

Hope to see you in Pasadena! ■



APA California Chapter – Northern Section

# MENTORSHIP

# PROGRAM

2016 - 2017 Mentorship Class

# JOIN

**By September 30, 2016**

[www.norcalapa.org/mentorship](http://www.norcalapa.org/mentorship)

We're recruiting for the 2016-2017 Mentorship Class. This career development initiative offers one-on-one mentorship matching between young planners and experienced professionals. The program aims to improve the professional practice of planning by benefiting individual practitioners.



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### Questions?

Liz Probst, AICP  
[mentorship@norcalapa.org](mailto:mentorship@norcalapa.org)  
(510) 935-3201

# Norcal roundup

Excerpts from around our Northern Section, linked to the original articles

## Rent control spreading to Bay Area suburbs

*San Francisco Chronicle*, September 10, 2016

**Kathleen Pender**, <http://bit.ly/2cgXy30> • “The concept of rent control is spreading to the Bay Area’s suburbs, even though virtually every economist thinks it’s a bad idea. Six Bay Area cities have measures on the November ballot that would protect existing tenants from the stratospheric rent increases that are a result of job growth far outstripping housing creation. In San Mateo, Burlingame, Mountain View, Alameda, and Richmond, voter initiatives would establish rent and eviction controls. In Oakland, the City Council placed a measure on the ballot to make its existing Rent Adjustment Program more favorable for tenants.

“In 2013, Peter Tatian of the Urban Institute reviewed academic research on rent control (<http://urbn.is/2cGe8wJ>) and found ‘very little evidence that rent control is a good policy.’

“Rent control ‘puts the burden of housing affordability on the backs of a few people,’ said Christopher Palmer, assistant professor of real estate at UC Berkeley’s Haas School of Business. It’s not clear they should be the ones having to pay for the affordability mess we are in,’ he said.

“Whether the rent-control measures on the November ballot can get the simple majority needed to pass could depend on the percentage of households that rent in each city, Palmer said. According to 2014 U.S. Census Bureau data, renter percentages were about 45 percent in San Mateo, 52 percent in Burlingame, 53 percent in Alameda, 55 percent in Richmond, 60 percent in Mountain View, and 61 percent in Oakland.”

## Rising seas could resolve Bay Area housing crisis

*FastCoExist.com*, September 9, 2016

**Adele Peters**, <http://bit.ly/2cIOIBu> • “When a massive earthquake and fire leveled San Francisco neighborhoods in 1906, developers used the disaster to circumvent red tape and build much denser housing than before. Now a team of designers thinks that an impending sea level rise can help the Bay Area solve its current housing crisis in a similar way.

“In Sausalito, residents are already seeing the signs of rising sea levels during the winter as bike paths, bridges, and parking lots flood frequently.

“The sight inspired Emily Schlickman and Anya Domlesky of XL, an innovation lab of Bay Area-based design firm SWA, to create a plan for buffering San Francisco’s coastline property — and building more housing.

“In a new speculative design called ‘Mega Margin,’ they map out how neighborhoods bordering the waterfront could retreat from rising water, with new parks at the water’s edge. A ring of new buildings, safely set back, would be built to house many more people than a typical block in San Francisco, Berkeley, or San Mateo currently holds.

“The designers modeled how much denser such a ring of new housing could be. In San Francisco, where some existing neighborhoods have 12 housing units per acre, the Mega Margin would have 120. In Marin, density would move from 7 units an acre to 35. In the South Bay, where sprawling suburban homes are the norm, the new ring of development would be 100 times denser than a typical neighborhood.”

(Norcal continues on [page 19](#))

**Planning director is leaving Oakland.** “Rachel Flynn, director of Oakland’s planning and building department, is leaving city government to lead the \$6 billion redevelopment of the Concord Naval Base.” She earlier held planning director positions in Lynchburg and Richmond, Virginia. “Flynn will become vice president of planning at naval base developer FivePoint, whose majority owner is Lennar Corp., one of the country’s largest homebuilders, a company spokesman confirmed. She starts on Oct. 3. Flynn was named Oakland planning director in March 2013, when market-rate development was virtually frozen in Oakland. The past three years have seen historic levels of price growth in the city, a surge in development plans, and major real estate investment.” —*Roland Li, San Francisco Business Times*, <http://bit.ly/2cRS2EZ>

# California roundup

Excerpts from around the state, linked to the original articles

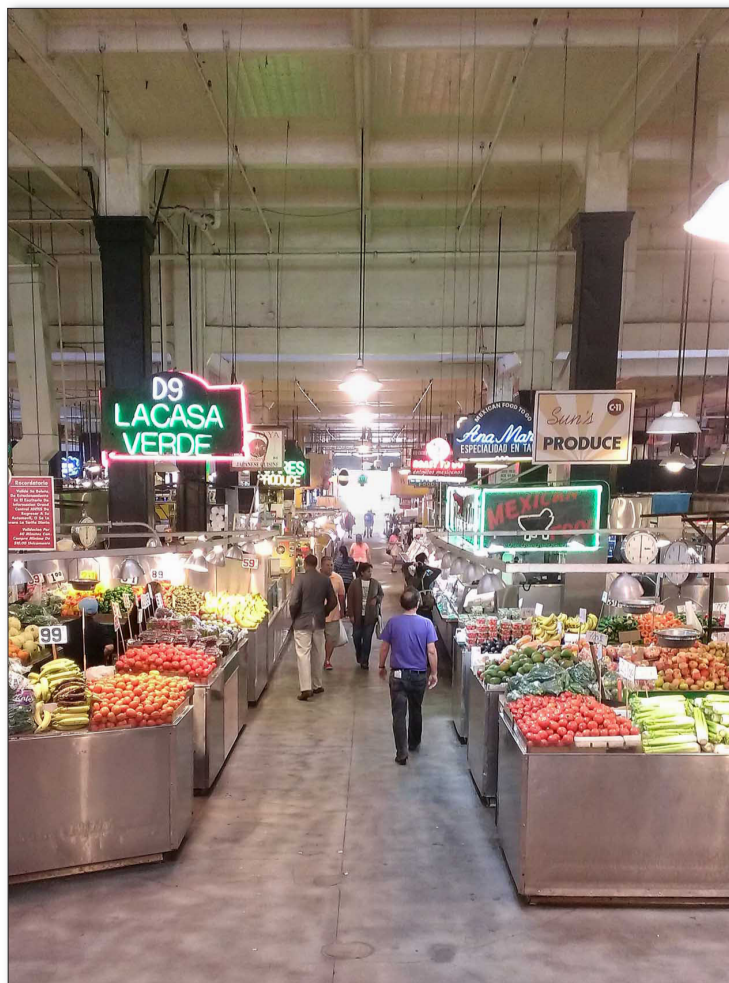
## The gentrification of Grand Central Market

*Los Angeles Magazine*, September 9, 2016

**Jesse Katz**, <http://bit.ly/2czQuSF> • “The ‘legacy vendors’ are a dwindling tribe, the survivors of a makeover so thorough that what just a few years ago was a struggling discount bazaar now ranks among the most celebrated eating destinations in Los Angeles. Since 2013, the market has recruited 23 new vendors to the open-air concourse between Hill and Broadway — 60 percent of the 38 stalls.

“Grand Central Market [is] a private, for-profit business that Angelenos have come to regard as a public trust. Few civic spaces here are imbued with as much nostalgia and symbolism: perhaps Dodger Stadium, maybe Griffith Park or the Hollywood Bowl. Grand Central has been called the people’s market, L.A.’s crossroads, downtown’s living room, our belly button. For much of its history those labels have stood for the rhythms and textures of an immigrant city.

“Now Grand Central offers a window into a different, unlikelier chapter of the city’s evolution: the downtown throngs richer, hipper, and hungrier for things locally sourced and sustainably farmed. The market is not a sterile facsimile; it has not been airbrushed like San Francisco’s Ferry Building or ‘mallified’ like Boston’s Faneuil Hall. But its rediscovery speaks to the collision of commerce and community throughout central L.A. — cultural tug-of-wars that have jostled neighborhoods from Silver Lake to Highland Park to Boyle Heights — which is why Grand Central’s transformation continues to be both cheered and scrutinized, mimicked and lamented, and in a courthouse just blocks away, litigated.”



**Grand Central Market**, in the Homer Laughlin Building, downtown Los Angeles, 2014. Photo by Jay Walsh (own work) CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons, <http://bit.ly/2czSnib>.

(California continues on [page 22](#))

**SF controller’s report recommends affordable housing requirements.** “A report on Sept. 13 weighed in on what should be the maximum amount of affordable housing the city should require developers to sell and rent without jeopardizing overall housing construction. With the help of outside consultants and nonprofit and private developers, Controller Ben Rosenfield concluded San Francisco should require between 14 and 18 percent of new apartment units be rented at below-market prices. For condominiums, he recommended 17 to 20 percent. But state legislation now before the governor also seeks to maximize affordable housing construction through a 35 percent density bonus. It’s unclear how San Francisco’s requirements would interact with the density bonus program (AB 2501, <http://bit.ly/2cRYyvi>), which Brown is expected to sign into law.”

—Emily Green, *San Francisco Chronicle*, <http://bit.ly/2cRVDCZ>

# Expanding affordable senior housing and building community in Seattle

HUD USER



**Leschi House was recently renovated and expanded to provide 69 affordable units for seniors and includes accessibility features for residents to age-in-place.** Credit: Seattle Housing Authority

Leschi House, an affordable housing development in Seattle's Chinatown-International District, opened in March 2015 after a full renovation and expansion. The owner of the property, Seattle Housing Authority (SHA), doubled the number of units while also improving energy efficiency and accessibility, furthering the property's original goals of promoting independent living and building community for low-income seniors. Leschi House residents, most of whom are of Asian descent, can comfortably age in place, benefiting from the cultural opportunities in the predominantly Asian neighborhood and the walking and transit connections to Seattle's other amenities.

## Renovation and expansion

SHA constructed Leschi House in 1987 as a four-story, wood-framed building with 34 one- and two-bedroom apartments. After 25 years, Leschi House needed renovations; a leak in the building's roof caused water damage that left a number of units uninhabitable. SHA officials began planning for renovations in 2011, the same year that the city rezoned the Chinatown-International District to allow greater density and taller buildings, explains Ann-Marie Lindboe, director of housing finance and asset management at SHA. This zoning change allowed SHA officials to add 35 one- and two-bedroom units in a new five-story building that is attached to the renovated 34-unit building.

Construction began in August 2013 and was phased to allow residents to move directly from their apartments to the new building before renovations of the original building began.

To promote independent living, the renovation retained the original building's accessibility features, including no-step entries and wide doorways and hallways, and updated the community room and community kitchen to meet Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards, <http://bit.ly/2cspwfm>. The new building includes four units and common areas that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and an additional elevator that serves residents of both buildings. To further support residents' independence, SHA provides a case manager who helps create a sense of community among residents and connects them to services in the neighborhood and the city, such as Seattle's Aging and Disability Services Office, Full Life Care, and Providence Health and Services.



**Residents can stay connected to their heritage because of Leschi House's location in the Chinatown-International District.**

Credit: Seattle Housing Authority.

The individual units received extensive interior work, including new flooring, cabinet fronts, countertops, appliances, and plumbing fixtures. The remodeling also included new windows and insulation that resulted in quieter apartments. New siding and stucco were added to the exterior to eliminate water damage to the walls. Also added as part of the renovation and new construction were landscaping,

*(continued on page 11 )*



# Craft YOUR Future in Pasadena

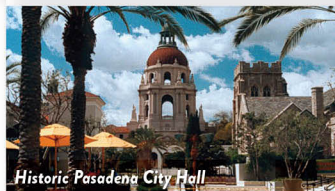
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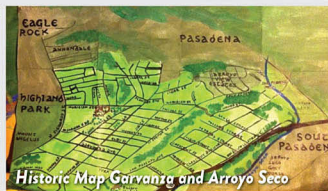
...Connect US (MW#2) and explore LA's iconic Union Station and its environs, travel the famous **Sunset Strip (MW#8)**, take the new **Expo Line Light Rail to the Beach (MW#9)**, learn about the pressing planning/historic preservation issues of the day in fast changing LA neighborhoods of **Boyle Heights (MW#11)**, **Highland Park in the Arroyo Seco (MW#22)**, and the **tiny enclaves of Herman and Garvanza (MW#17)**. Nearby Downtown Glendale has great character and urban design to soak in (**MW#18**), and **Dr. Donald Shoup** is not to be missed, sharing the story of parking's role in **Old Pasadena (MW#19)**.



Historic Pasadena City Hall



Westin Hotel, Pasadena



Historic Map Garvanza and Arroyo Seco

And don't forget the **Arroyos and Foothills Orientation Tour**, a first for an APA State conference. The local route has been crafted for planners, and the tour will be given by local planners. **Don't miss out!**

**Join your colleagues and explore all that our exhibitors have to offer.  
Hang out in the Tech Lounge and learn about cutting edge new tools.**

See this link for more information - [www.apacalifornia-conference.org](http://www.apacalifornia-conference.org)  
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# Meet a local planner

By Siân Llewellyn, AICP

**Kristen Hall, AICP**, is a senior urban designer and associate with Perkins+Will.

## Tell us how you came to planning

I went to Tulane in New Orleans, pre-Katrina, for undergraduate and studied urban sociology. I had two internships there — one with the Office of Economic Development and another with the City Planning Commission. During my internships, I worked on New Orleans zoning; surveyed the lower Ninth Ward businesses; and saw the challenges of a city divided by class and race, have and have-not. It was fertile ground for learning about urban sociology and power struggles among different groups and across space — the subtext for all we do in planning. So, if I wanted to affect the things we study in sociology, then planning is the practical application tool.

I graduated and left New Orleans in July 2005; Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans and the Gulf Coast the following month.

I moved to New York for a job with the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council. NYMTC's offices had been located in the World Trade Center on 9/11. They lost staff in the attacks, and also lost their entire work product, including their transportation model. Since then, they have been working on recovering from the personal and professional losses. After Katrina, the NYMTC reached out to the Gulf Regional Planning Commission to share their experiences on recovery after a devastating loss. The scale of the 9/11 loss was catastrophic for the community, with national significance, but in footprint was confined to several city blocks. The scale of Katrina was much larger, with the storm and flooding wiping out such a large area. They didn't know which roads still existed, let alone which ones needed repair. It was an extraordinary experience seeing the after-effects of two such tragedies and seeing how the planning process itself could be resilient.



## How did you move from transportation to urban design?

Transportation planning moved too slowly for me. I wanted to be able to make more of an impact, and sooner. So I went to graduate school at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and received my Master in City Planning with an Urban Design certificate. My graduate studies really brought into focus what I had begun to learn at Tulane about the many ways social power dynamics are played out in the

built environment. I was attracted to urban design as a way to help alleviate the disparity of access to resources in cities — both physical resources like transportation and intangible resources like social capital.

## Tell us about your urban design career so far

The Great Recession was winding up when I graduated in 2008 and there was very little work to be had in the United States, so I took the opportunity to move to Sydney, where the economy was still going strong. I went there on a working holiday visa, which is a wonderful tool for those under 31 years old to get international experience. I got work with the global design and consulting firm Woods Bagot and spent two years in their Sydney office, learning a new culture and enjoying an international perspective. When they opened a San Francisco office in 2010, I moved there to help start up their urban design practice, although our work was predominantly outside the US. For three years we did fast-paced competitions and other international work in China and the Middle East. It was quick and exciting work involving lots of travel — a sort of design boot camp where I learned many technical skills in a very short time.

After five years of international urban design work, I wanted to develop a more local practice. Karen Alschuler, FAICP, approached me to work at Perkins+Will on the Mission Rock project with the Giants.

*(continued on next page)*

The display of calling cards from firms offering professional services appears in every issue of *Northern News*. Fees paid by the firms for this service help defray the costs of this newsletter.

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Meet a local planner (continued from previous page)

**Do you have a favorite project?**

My biggest project is Mission Rock — a new district in San Francisco just south of AT&T Park at the north end of Mission Bay. I have worked on this project for the past three years as it made its way through San Francisco’s complicated development process.

The project started with a very clear vision that came out of a community process about eight years back, led by the Port of San Francisco and the San Francisco Giants. This vision has been, and will continue to be, an important part of the success of this project — the idea of Mission Rock as a livable neighborhood, opening up access to the Bayfront, with a commitment to a high quality of public realm that keeps people excited about moving the project forward.

Working on this project through entitlements has informed my approach to urban design. I now have a deeper understanding of what to do upstream on a project, because I have seen how to apply the lessons learned from the downstream part of the project. I have learned to anticipate the challenges that will come up in later phases and think about ways to avoid those issues. Sometimes it seems so obvious the way a design issue will be resolved, but other, non-design considerations don’t always play out the way you think they will.

The Mission Rock concept has been continually refined, but the vision has held constant even as politics and the economy changed. We even had a ballot measure to approve a height change for the site, and the consistent communication about the project goals led to the measure passing with 73 percent in favor. The project is now going through the EIR process. When it gets certified, hopefully in 2017, Mission Rock will be San Francisco’s first Type I Eco District. That reflects San Francisco’s early adoption of state regulations like shifting transportation analysis from Level of Service (LOS) to Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), as well as significantly reducing energy and water use.

**What advice do you have for planners starting out?**

Don’t be afraid of shifting from public to private, from regulatory to design, from transportation to urban design. All interrelate, and as planners we are better if we have experience across these perceived borders.

Don’t be afraid to stand up for what you believe in. If you find yourself in a job where you feel that others don’t share your values, you should go work somewhere else. We got into this profession to do good, and it’s difficult to feel good about your work if you feel compromised.

And get out from behind your computer. Every problem is a people problem and your eyes and ears are your best tools. Listening and looking are fundamental skills for planners, and cities are our learning laboratory.

*Interviewer Siân Llewellyn, AICP, lives in San Francisco and recently joined Hatch as Director of Urban Development* ■



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## Expanding affordable senior housing and building community in Seattle *(continued from page 7)*

enhancements to the courtyard and community garden, and a camera and intercom system for resident safety. The two structures adhere to the Washington State Energy Code and meet the Evergreen Sustainable Development Standard to promote sustainable living and improve water and energy efficiency.

Leschi House's total redevelopment costs were \$17 million. Funding was provided by the Washington State Housing Finance Commission, Seattle Office of Housing, Bank of America Merrill Lynch, and Wells Fargo Affordable Housing Community Development Corporation.

### Meeting the city's affordable housing need

Leschi House's location in the Chinatown-International District is particularly attractive to the building's residents. Seniors can move about easily within the neighborhood and to other parts of the city; the neighborhood has a Walk Score® of 92 (<http://bit.ly/2csoVdT>), four bus routes, and a planned streetcar line. Also near Leschi House are three large parks, a grocery store, pharmacies, the International District Medical and Dental Clinic, and the International District/Chinatown Community Center. Lindboe notes that the neighborhood's cultural institutions are also critically important for helping the buildings' residents remain connected to their heritage. The Chinatown-International District is a melting pot for Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Filipino, and Thai immigrants and their descendants. The neighborhood boasts numerous Asian grocery stores, restaurants, and events such as the Buddhist Bon Odori festival, the Chinese Moon festival, and the Asian Lunar New Year celebration. By doubling the number of affordable units, Leschi House allows more seniors from different cultural backgrounds to age in place in a community that fosters independent living and a connection to their cultural roots.

*This article originally appeared in PD&R Edge, an online magazine of HUD USER, June 2016, <http://bit.ly/2csmqfR>. Republished with permission. ■*

**Local control is failing (or not).** "We'd be hard-pressed to find a better example of the failure of regional governance than what [Palo Alto] Mayor Pat Burt has described. Every Peninsula city has already enjoyed the benefits of job growth, but not one has accepted the attendant responsibility of increasing housing stock. This needs to change, and framing the issue as anything but a region-wide under-supply of housing is wrongheaded."

—Tony Albert and Jeff Fong in in 'Palo Alto: The Land of Too Many Jobs,' *Market Urbanism*, <http://bit.ly/2c6UeYz>

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## Three from Northern Section awarded CPF scholarships

*Juan Borrelli, AICP*

Each year, the California Planning Foundation invites planning students to compete for a number of scholarships. Scholarships are offered to students enrolled in eligible planning programs in California (see <http://bit.ly/2cnYypi>).

Scholarships are awarded to students seeking to enter the planning profession based on an application and selection process by the CPF Board. The scholarships are designed for continuing students entering their final year of an eligible undergraduate or master's degree program. Criteria for the scholarships include academic performance, financial need, increasing diversity in the planning profession, and a commitment to serve the planning profession in California after graduation. All scholarships include a one-year APA student membership.

### Here are this year's scholarship winners from Northern Section:

**Savannah Guinn, Sonoma State**, received the Paul Wack Sustainability Scholarship (\$1,000) and a Northern Section Scholarship (\$1,000).

**Karen Huynh, San Jose State**, received the California Planning Roundtable Memorial Scholarship (\$1,000) and a Northern Section Scholarship (\$1,000).

**Julieth Ortiz, UC Berkeley**, received a Northern Section Scholarship (\$1,000).

Congratulations and best wishes to all!

**"Think getting into Stanford is tough? Try renting a room in Silicon Valley.** When it comes to rental units, it's a seller's market in Silicon Valley. The San Jose metro area is the second-most competitive market for renters when compared to the 25 largest metros in terms of number of occupied rental units, according to a study from real estate company Trulia, <http://on.trulia.com/2cRUPhq>. San Jose's tight rental market is the norm in the Bay Area. Trulia determined that the San Francisco and Oakland metro areas are the most and second-most competitive markets in the country. San Jose's 0.4 percent vacancy was the lowest rate in the country." —Bryce Druzin, *Silicon Valley Business Journal*, <http://bit.ly/2cRU9IO>

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# Purpose Travel — Why it's important to planners

Alex Hinds and Hing Wong, AICP

Most planners enjoy travel, exploring interesting places, meeting new people, and tasting different food. Purposeful international travel provides planners with “new” knowledge and adds skills to their repertoire. Many of us also yearn to volunteer or work overseas. Planning professionals, professors, and students — whether on a study tour or working together on a project abroad — are well positioned to gain meaningful insights from international experiences.

### International Planning Tours

APA California–Northern began organizing international planning tours, primarily for local APA members and guests, in 2001. The first tour was to Cuba (2003), followed by China (2007), India (2009), Brazil (2012), and Eastern Europe (2014). These trips focused on countries different from the United States and the places many of us are less likely to visit on our own. All of the tours emphasized meetings with local colleagues and learning from each other. A sixth tour is being planned to Southeast Asia in February/March 2017. The next international planning meeting for the 2017 tour will be held Wednesday, September 28.

*If you are interested in participating in the upcoming Southeast Asia International Planning Tour, please contact Hing Wong, AICP, at [hingw@abag.ca.gov](mailto:hingw@abag.ca.gov).*

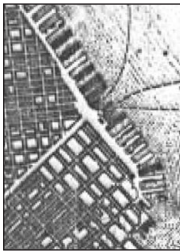
### International Planning Collaboration

As an outgrowth of the tours, APA California–Northern initiated an international collaboration that builds on prior experiences and contacts. In late 2014, the California Chapter was awarded a much-appreciated \$2,000 grant from the APA Chapter Presidents Council to launch a pilot collaboration in São Paulo, Brazil. The Northern Section also provided matching funds and volunteer assistance. To assist other APA Chapters interested in having their own international planning programs, a planners’ toolkit is currently being completed.

### Why is this important?

Globally, there are widespread disparities in income, accessible resources, and living conditions. This disparity hampers our ability to meet basic human needs regarding health, safety, housing, sustainable development, social equity, and other compelling concerns. The 2014–2015 *APA Development Plan* described our professional challenge under “Strategic Direction”:

*(continued on next page)*



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## Purpose Travel — Why it's important to planners

(continued from previous page)

*“Globally, communities are challenged by the lack of planning capacity. We seek national and international partnerships to advance the planning movement and exchange the best ideas in order to build communities of lasting value and to advance the principles of sustainable urbanization. . . . We must inspire our members to reach new heights of creativity, energy, and innovation in planning. A new era in planning is underway.”*

International experience also benefits the profession at large. It exposes planning students and professionals to a much richer palette of planning practice and is one of the quickest paths to innovative ideas. Promising planning practices may be gleaned from close observation in other countries, carefully adapted, and transferred to meet local needs. Bus rapid transit — pioneered in Curitiba, Brazil — is an excellent example of an innovative transportation practice now widely adopted in the United States and around the world.



**BRT in Curitiba, Brazil.** Photo: Jackie

We are currently working on a regional planning workshop (via Skype) in concert with planners from São Paulo. A second Brazilian project will involve exchanging information with staff from a historic former mining town (Ouro Preto). They are interested in exploring alternative planning law and code enforcement practices applicable to informal development on sensitive lands. We are seeking additional collaboration efforts in other countries as well.

*Alex Hinds is International Director (Collaboration), APA California–Northern Section. Hing Wong, AICP, is President, APA California, and International Director (Tours), Northern Section. If you are interested in assisting with upcoming International Planning Collaboration projects, please contact Alex Hinds at [alexhinds47@gmail.com](mailto:alexhinds47@gmail.com). ■*

## Who's where



**Jonathan Atkinson** is now an associate planner at the City of Fairfield. He previously worked for the City of Sebastopol as an assistant planner. Atkinson holds a master of city and regional planning from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, and a bachelor of arts in sociology from San Francisco State University.

He was recently involved with the Vallejo General Plan Update as a member of the General Plan Working Group. In his free time, he enjoys photography, hiking, exploring new places, and attending sporting events and festivals.



**Sarah Filipe** is the new assistant planner at M-Group's Hayward office. She was previously a planning intern with the City of Cupertino. Filipe's passion for planning emanates from her interests in local government, the environment, and cities. She hopes that, through thoughtful planning, she can make

positive impacts in cities throughout the Bay Area. Filipe holds a master's degree in urban and regional planning from San Jose State University and a bachelor of arts in political science from California State University, East Bay. She lives in San Jose with her husband Mark and their two children, Evan and Clara.



**Larry Tong**, a Bay Area planner for 43 years and a member of APA since 1982, has retired after 16 years of service with the East Bay Regional Park District, most recently as Chief of Planning/GIS and Interagency Planning Manager. His previous positions were City of Los Altos planning director, 1996–2000; City of Dublin planning director, 1982–1996; East Palo Alto Municipal Council Planner III, 1977–1982; City of San Mateo assistant planner, 1973–1977; and Sacramento Regional Area Planning Commission planning analyst, 1972–1973. Tong lists the top two highlights of his professional planning career as EBRPD's Eastshore State Park General Plan planning process and the East Dublin Specific Plan planning process. Tong holds a master of urban planning from San Jose State University and a bachelor of arts (major in architecture) from UC Berkeley.



**Matthew VanOosten, AICP**, is now a planning associate at Alta Planning + Design's San Jose office. Previously, he was a Planner III in citywide planning at the City of San Jose Department of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement where he worked on the Urban Village program. He holds a master of city planning degree from the University of Pennsylvania and a bachelor's degree in geography from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He lives in San Jose's Japantown neighborhood, enjoys walking and biking for most trips, and loves to find great places, both natural and urban. ■

**Regional cooperation? Unlikely to be popular.** "The job-rich communities of Silicon Valley need to come together to establish a simple common goal: We will do what we can to keep the jobs-housing imbalance from getting worse. That is, as employment continues to increase, we will plan for, and ensure, the development of housing in quantities that serve that growing workforce. We don't expect everyone to live and work in the same city, but we want to make it easier for people to live near where they work." —*Palo Alto, Mountain View, and Menlo Park council members Cory Wolbach, Lenny Siegel and Kirsten Keith, <http://bit.ly/2c4YkTY>*



# Working with wicked problems

David Booher (Center for Collaborative Policy, California State University, Sacramento) has shared “our most recent publication on using collaborative rationality as a strategy for wicked problems. It’s part of a special edition on wicked problems in *Landscape and Urban Planning*, Volume 154, October 2016, pages 8–10. Until October 20th, you can have free access to the article” by Booher and Judith E. Innes at <http://bit.ly/2coOxZa>.

The following excerpts represent about one-sixth of the article.

“**While classical modern planning** cannot solve wicked problems, collaborative rationality can successfully move beyond them and develop useful and innovative strategies.

“Not all collaborative efforts are equal, and most readers will be familiar with efforts that seemed to be a waste of time and money. We developed the idea of collaborative rationality on the basis of years of experience and first-hand research on many collaborative planning processes in a variety of contexts.

“A collaborative process can be rational to the degree it meets the following conditions:

- “1. Participants are diverse, representing the variety of points of view on the issues, [while not] allowing public officials to decide who will be in the group.
- “2. The focus is on a problem or task of interest to all.
- “3. Participants articulate their interests in the issue and are discouraged from position-taking until late in the process.

- “4. The group meets face to face for authentic dialogue, where all are equally empowered.
- “5. Expert as well as community knowledge are both part of the dialogue.
- “6. Everything is on the table.
- “7. The group works through the issues, seeking ways to satisfy significant concerns of each member.

“This process is rational because it considers a full range of views, depends on well-vetted information, and reaches conclusions that stand up to scrutiny from many perspectives.

“A few words on what planners’ roles can be in relation to collaborative practice.

“First, planners can seldom be actual facilitators, except in informal ways, on colleagues’ projects. They are implicated in any planning task and will not be seen as neutral. Planners have major roles however, in convening and supporting collaborative processes, as well as making sure they are rational. They make sure participants are diverse and that necessary information is provided and shared [and] they staff the processes.

“Convening and staff planners should be familiar with and knowledgeable on the issues, but if the process is to be collaboratively rational, they must hold back on offering their own solutions until the process is complete.” ■

**“Mountain View puts \$6.3 M toward 62 new affordable housing units.** Mountain View City Council members agreed Sept. 13 to set aside over \$6.3 million to expand the Shorebreeze Apartment complex, adding a net total of 50 new units to the affordable housing project. That uses up almost all of the city’s remaining affordable housing funds, and comes after the recent approvals of several projects to boost housing for low-income residents. Council member Lenny Siegel praised the project as a creative way of circumventing the high cost of land acquisition, which he called the major obstacle limiting affordable housing growth. While City Council members embraced the project plans, MidPen Housing has struggled to reach an agreement with the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, which owns a portion of the project site. Negotiations to extend the lease beyond 2031 and accommodate the expansion plans have been going on for over a year, and have reached an impasse. The City Council’s motion included sending a letter of support for the project from the mayor to the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission.”

—Kevin Forestieri, *Mountain View Voice*, <http://bit.ly/2cRV6AG>

beginning to grapple with the challenges associated with rapid urbanization around the world, especially the issue of informal settlements in many large urban areas in developing nations. Twenty years later, in 1996, the Habitat II conference in Istanbul, Turkey, resulted in a document known as the Habitat Agenda, which focused on “ensuring adequate shelter for all” and making human settlements safer, healthier, and more sustainable.

In the 20 years since the Habitat Agenda was adopted, much progress has been made on improving the quality of housing and living conditions for residents in cities around the world. But the trend toward urbanization is increasing — by 2030 it is predicted that 60 percent of the world’s population will live in cities — and problems associated with urban areas such as poverty, inequality, solid waste generation, and greenhouse gas emissions are becoming more evident and urgent. This year’s Habitat III conference will mark an important shift in the focus of the international movement for sustainable cities, as government leaders and urban advocates from around the world meet in Quito to adopt a broader, more comprehensive strategy to advance social equity and economic prosperity while reducing the environmental impacts of cities.

The NUA has drawn inspiration and rationale from the inclusion of an urban-focused goal in the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were adopted in September 2015. Goal 11 of the SDGs is to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable,” and it incorporates 10 targets that address issues such as affordable housing, public transportation, green and public spaces, disaster risk reduction, air quality, and waste management. The NUA also builds on recent global negotiations to combat climate change, acknowledging that cities are the world’s largest generators of greenhouse gas emissions and that reducing emissions from urban transportation and energy use in buildings is key to the solution to climate change.

The NUA is not a binding agreement; rather it will provide policy guidance in the areas of urban spatial planning and fiscal management. It calls for strengthening the linkages between national urban policy and local government planning, and encourages voluntary monitoring and reporting of progress by cities and national governments.

### **Preparations for Habitat III and the drafting of the New Urban Agenda**

The preparatory process for Habitat III began two years ago with the first of three official meetings convened by the Habitat III Secretariat. These sessions of the Preparatory Committee, commonly called the PrepCom, took place in

New York City in September 2014; in Nairobi, Kenya, in April 2015; and in Surabaya, Indonesia, in July 2016. In addition, national and city governments and civil society groups around the world, to provide input on the NUA from a variety of stakeholders, have hosted a number of semi-official events. Regional meetings have been convened in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Europe and North America; and thematic meetings have focused on a range of topics relevant to sustainable urban development, such as renewable energy, public spaces, informal settlements, and financing mechanisms.

The World Urban Campaign, a coalition of 136 organizations around the globe coordinated by UN-Habitat, convened 26 stakeholder forums called “Urban Thinkers Campuses.” These multi-day events, organized by non-governmental organizations and universities, were designed to gather broad public input on various themes related to the social, economic, and physical aspects of cities. Themes addressed in the Campuses included migration, women and gender issues, children and youth issues, public health, housing, urban slums, safety, technology, and art. Each Urban Thinkers Campus event produced a report to inform the development of the NUA. In addition, the World Urban Campaign compiled the recommendations of all 26 Campus events into a document titled “The City We Need 2.0.” This report sets forth a collective vision for a new urban paradigm, based on the contributions of more than 7,800 participants representing 124 countries and 2,137 organizations, according to the document’s preamble.

In addition to extensive participation in both formal and informal events leading up to Habitat III, stakeholder groups working in areas related to housing, urban planning, and sustainable development have provided comments on the outputs of the PrepCom meetings and evolving content of the NUA. Among the most actively involved organizations are United Cities and Local Governments, Slum Dwellers International, ICLEI, Local Governments for Sustainability, Habitat for Humanity International, and the International Organization of Migration. The American Planning Association, through its International Division, has also participated in the preparatory process, co-sponsoring side events to the PrepCom meetings and providing comments on the outcomes of the PrepCom sessions.

The NUA document itself is being drafted by representatives from a core group of United Nations member states (countries) known as the Habitat III Bureau. The member nations of the Bureau are Chad, Chile, Czech Republic, Ecuador, France, Germany, Indonesia, Senegal, Slovakia, and the United Arab Emirates. The initial version of the

*(continued on next page)*

document, known as the “zero draft,” was released in May 2016. After receiving comments from UN member nations, other UN agencies and interested stakeholder groups, the Bureau issued revisions of the document in June and July. Following the third and final PrepCom meeting in Surabaya, Indonesia, the Habitat III Bureau published the “Surabaya draft” of the New Urban Agenda on July 28. The final draft, which has been agreed on by UN member states and will be presented for discussion and adoption at the Habitat III conference in Quito in October, was released on September 10.

### Content of the Draft New Urban Agenda

The draft NUA seeks to transform “the way cities and human settlements are planned, financed, developed, governed, and managed.” It articulates a vision for a better urban future based on the concept of “cities for all.” Cities are envisioned as places where all inhabitants have the right to adequate housing, safe and clean water and sanitation, access to goods and public services, and freedom from discrimination. The NUA vision for the world’s cities addresses social inclusion and equality, civic engagement and political participation, economic prosperity and sustainable growth, efficient use of resources, sustainable consumption and production patterns, and conservation and restoration of natural ecosystems.

The draft document establishes a number of principles to guide work toward sustainable urban development, including poverty reduction, education, food security, health, affordable housing, and the elimination of violence. It emphasizes the role of national governments in defining and enacting policies for urban growth and management that are responsive to local conditions, and the importance of coordination between national, sub-national, and local governments.

The implementation section of the NUA seeks to strengthen urban governance, including legal and policy frameworks, administrative and management systems, and urban spatial planning. It also includes an emphasis on effective financing mechanisms, recognizing that cities will need to identify new means for financing improvements to municipal services as well as both existing infrastructure and new infrastructure to support sustainable transportation and renewable energy.

Lastly, the draft NUA calls for voluntary and participatory monitoring and tracking of progress in implementing the agenda’s goals and objectives, to be carried out by national governments in coordination with local and sub-national governments. UN member states are called upon to report to the UN General Assembly every four years on

progress in implementing the NUA. The final section of the document includes actions to strengthen the UN-Habitat program through increased financial resources and development of organizational capacity.

### Implications for the San Francisco Bay Area

Although UN-Habitat has historically focused on issues of rapid urbanization in developing countries — and while much of the background work for Habitat III has sought to address urban conditions and challenges in the world’s less affluent areas — many of the principles and goals articulated in the NUA are very relevant to, and timely for, the metropolitan Bay Area. While many cities of the greater San Francisco area have been successful in achieving progress toward sustainability on a number of different fronts, there is much that remains to be done.

In particular, affordable housing remains a major challenge for our region, and cities and towns must define new ways to deliver and finance housing in adequate supply to meet an increasing demand and at adequate levels of affordability for all segments of the population. Use of private vehicles and greenhouse gas emissions from transportation remain high and must be reduced in order to meet regional targets for halting climate change. Poverty, declining cultural diversity, and displacement of low-income residents are growing concerns for many Bay Area jurisdictions. The global mandate of the NUA requires that we continue to explore solutions to these challenges through policy and regulatory reform, public outreach and participation, and innovative financing strategies.

Everything considered, the potential is great for Bay Area cities to lead the charge for collaboration with our federal government on urban sustainability policy and strategy, as is called for in the NUA. Just as cities in the United States have taken a proactive role in addressing climate change in the absence of national commitments, those local governments that have been innovators in advancing sustainability could partner with the White House Office of Urban Affairs and the Department of Housing and Urban Development to promote a national urban policy framework.



**Holly R. Pearson, AICP**, is an urban planner who has worked with local government agencies and community organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area as well as in Canada and Latin America. She is one of Northern Section’s two Sustainability Committee Co-chairs. You can reach her at [holly@hollypearson.net](mailto:holly@hollypearson.net).

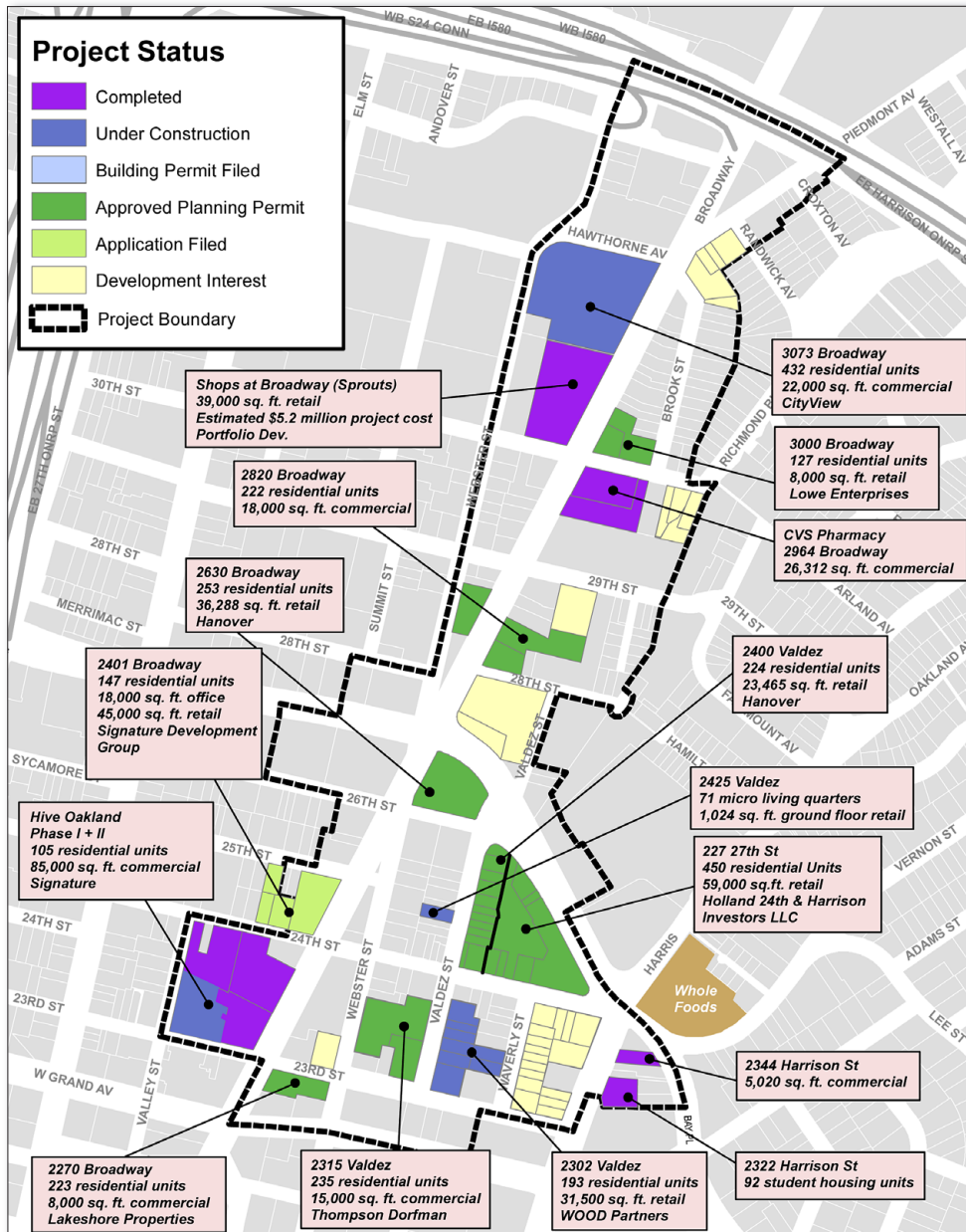
## Oakland: Broadway Valdez Specific Plan update

SocketSite, August 31, 2016

<http://bit.ly/2cjcdcr> • “Oakland’s Planning Department has updated its map of every project completed, under construction, in the works, or anticipated to rise within the city’s Broadway Valdez District and along Oakland’s burgeoning Auto Row.

“In total, over 800 units of housing are currently under construction (including 432 units at 3073 Broadway and 193 at 2302 Valdez); another 1,700 units have been

approved — including 450 units at 277 27th Street (<http://bit.ly/2cbcPWh>), 224 units at 2400 Valdez (<http://bit.ly/2cbdvej>), and 223 units at 2270 Broadway (<http://bit.ly/2cbcNhc>). And developers are either eyeing or have filed applications for at least another seven big development sites” as shown on the City’s accompanying status map. ■



Project status, Broadway Valdez Specific Plan, August 31, 2016. Source: City of Oakland, Planning and Building Department

## HUD delays decision on SF anti-gentrification plan

*KQED News Fix*, September 9, 2016

**Ted Goldberg**, <http://bit.ly/2czHzAG> • “The Obama administration needs more time to decide whether to allow San Francisco to move forward on a controversial effort to ease the effect of the housing crisis on some of its most vulnerable communities.

“Officials with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) had planned to tell city officials by today whether they would reverse a decision they made last month when they rejected San Francisco’s neighborhood preference plan. That program gives priority to low-income and minority residents for new subsidized housing in their own neighborhoods.

“HUD said the program violated the 1968 Fair Housing Act by limiting equal access to housing and perpetuating segregation. The rejection led to intense lobbying by Mayor Ed Lee, Sen. Dianne Feinstein, and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, who called on the federal agency to reconsider.

“The city’s program would have given black seniors in the Western Addition preference to move into a federally subsidized 98-unit affordable housing development this fall.

“But, given HUD’s extended deadline, the chances anyone would benefit from the preference plan to get into the Willie B. Kennedy development at Turk and Webster streets are extremely slim.”

## Berkeley: Calls for pedestrian-oriented Telegraph Avenue

*Berkeleyside*, September 7, 2016

**Max Cherney**, <http://bit.ly/2cpyV7J> • “The ‘Telegraph Public Realm Plan’ has a sweeping vision. Two demonstration projects will kick off the changes, with the aim of testing and refining design features.

“At the Bank of America building on the corner of Telegraph and Durant, planners hope to set up a small plaza that will showcase temporary art installations, as well as new sidewalks. New ‘modular stations’ will house street lighting and museum-like exhibits that will educate passers-by on Telegraph Avenue’s rich history and cultural significance.

“At the ‘Dwight Triangle,’ the pork chop-shaped concrete island where Dwight and Telegraph intersect, plans call for traffic-calming measures such as narrowing the vehicle travel lane and adding bollards to protect the bicycle lane. The most visible change is likely to be a plaza-like roadway where pedestrians and motorists would share the existing space. The plan suggests eliminating elevated sidewalks — food and road traffic would be at the same level — and installing bollards and rumble strips to slow traffic. The shared road would continue to give private vehicles access — to accommodate deliveries, for example — but also allow temporary closures for pedestrian-only events like street fairs.

“The Public Realm plan is just the beginning of the possibilities for the avenue. The near-term and demonstration projects, according to documents, could be completed in 2016 or 2017.”

## San Francisco: Groups sue to block 395-unit Potrero Hill housing

*San Francisco Business Times*, August 31, 2016

**Blanca Torres**, <http://bit.ly/2c4Jvkj> • “Two San Francisco community groups filed a lawsuit challenging the approval of a 395-unit housing development on 3.5 acres at 901 16th St. and 1200 17th St. The two buildings would also have 25,000 square feet of retail.

“The developers agreed to set aside 42 units for low-income residents and pay close to \$9 million to the Mayor’s Office of Housing for additional affordable housing, plus \$1.8 million to fund nearby Jackson Park.

“The suit claims that the city did not conduct proper environmental review because it relied on an environmental impact report that was part of the 2009 Eastern Neighborhoods Plan. That plan underestimated the number of new housing units and new residents who would move to

Potrero Hill, the suit claims, and therefore did not adequately address increased traffic, blocked views, and demolishing light industrial space.

“Grow Potrero Responsibly would like to see the project’s approval overturned and for the city to update the environmental review component of the Eastern Neighborhoods Plan.

“Save The Hill previously opposed Kaiser Permanente’s proposal for the same site to build a 700,000-square-foot medical office building, 189 units of housing, and about 27,000 square feet of retail.

“Kaiser dropped those plans in 2013 and chose a different development site.”

*(Norcal continues on next page)*

### Redwood City: Council votes to limit ground floor offices on Main Street

*The Daily Journal*, August 31, 2016

**Bill Silverfarb**, <http://bit.ly/2ccnWOb> • “A growing number of ground floor office spaces in downtown Redwood City prompted the Planning Commission to recently amend zoning laws to promote more active uses on a stretch of Main Street. With office spaces generating more rent and with downtown’s access to public transit, new ground floor office uses have become more prevalent, according to a staff report. The Planning Commission voted unanimously Aug. 16 to amend the city’s Downtown Precise Plan to expand the ‘active ground floor uses’ requirement to Main Street between Broadway and Middlefield Road.

“Active uses draw in more customers; inactive uses typically are not open to the general public, tend to have screened windows for privacy, and generate a lower volume of customer traffic, according to the report.

“The Downtown Precise Plan currently exempts all historic buildings from the active ground floor use requirement; however, this provision defeats the goal of activating Main Street since 50 percent of the existing developments are historic. Eight historic buildings line the stretch of Main Street between Broadway and Middlefield Road, and 12 of their 16 storefronts are occupied by active uses. Rather than exempt Main Street’s historic buildings from the requirement, they would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.”

[Ed. note: The city council on Sept. 12 “Adopted a resolution amending the Downtown Precise Plan to promote active uses in Downtown, including requiring active ground floor uses on Main Street between Broadway and Middlefield.” The vote was 6–0 with one recusal.] ■

## Where in the world



Photo: Kurt Christiansen, FAICP. (Answer on [page 28](#).)

## Governor signs new climate change laws

NPR, September 8, 2016

**Richard Gonzales**, <http://n.pr/2czjJEV> • “California is on track to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. Now, under legislation signed by Gov. Jerry Brown, the state is launching a campaign to scale back emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.

“The new plan, outlined in SB32 (text at <http://bit.ly/2czkCxcg>), involves increasing renewable energy use, putting more electric cars on the road, improving energy efficiency, and curbing emissions from key industries.

“Brown also signed AB197 which gives lawmakers more oversight of regulators and provides aid to low-income or minority communities located near polluting facilities (text at <http://bit.ly/2czjsSA>).

“California’s crusade against climate change started under former Republican Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, who signed AB32.

“‘Here we are, 10 years later, emissions have gone down and the economy has gone up,’ said State Sen. Fran Pavley (D-Agoura Hills), who wrote AB32 and SB32. ‘It’s a success story.’

“But not everyone agrees. The two new laws signed by Brown faced fierce opposition from the state’s business community, including the oil industry, as well as from Republicans. Brown noted at the signing ceremony that opponents are not going away. ‘These are real people with real bucks and real influence.’

“Meanwhile, revenue from the state’s cap-and-trade system is falling. That program allows companies to buy permits to pollute at auctions; the money is then spent to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. There are concerns about the program’s long-term viability.”

## Texas HSR could benefit California

September 8, 2016

**Ethan Elkind**, <http://bit.ly/2cIr9pE> • “Texas, of all places, appears to be beating California in the high-speed rail game. The proposed line between Dallas and Houston has all the right attributes for success, and it is on track (ahem) with private financing to be up and running by the early 2020s.

“Meanwhile, California’s progress is much slower (to be completed sometime in the 2030s at best), while the funding picture grows ever murkier. The financing has recently been undermined by poor cap-and-trade auction proceeds that Governor Brown is using to backstop the lack of available federal and private dollars.

“But Texas’ early success could benefit California in key ways. First, it could improve the funding and economics of California’s system. A Texas system could encourage high-speed rail manufacturing in the United States.

“Texas’ success could also improve the politics for California. Having high-speed rail in red state Texas could change congressional attitudes and achieve more bipartisan support for high-speed rail in general.

“Finally, Texas’ experience could potentially inspire some improvements to California’s system design. Because California’s is primarily a government-funded system, the route has to satisfy various political constituencies. But with a privately funded system, the Texas train is all about the economics, in terms of speed and service between the most populated areas.”

(California continues on next page)

**Jobs, housing, and transportation are all layers of the same cake.** “Job growth increases housing demand, and if housing supply increases more slowly than housing demand, housing prices rise to make up the difference. Mayor [Pat] Burt is willing to admit that housing prices are too high, but actively rejects the idea that Palo Alto needs to significantly intensify land use with town homes or multifamily apartments. This leaves him backed into the absurd corner of addressing high housing costs by trying to make Palo Alto less accessible, to reduce demand instead of increasing supply and making more room.”—Tony Albert and Jeff Fong in ‘Palo Alto: The Land of Too Many Jobs,’ *Market Urbanism*, <http://bit.ly/2c6UeYz>

## Coastal Commission rejects Newport Banning Ranch development

*Los Angeles Times*, September 7, 2016

**Bettina Boxall and Dan Weikel,**

<http://lat.ms/2cv0cmw>

“The California Coastal Commission has voted to deny a proposal to develop one of the largest open private parcels of land on the Southern California coast.

“The 9-1 vote came more than 10 hours after the hearing started. The proposed development called for construction of 895 homes, a hotel, and shops on an Orange County oilfield overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

“The project intensified public outrage over the commission’s dismissal of Executive Director Charles Lester this year — and perceptions that a leading reason for the ouster was Lester’s unwillingness to cave in to pro-development pressure.

“Last fall, the commission’s staff experts recommended denial of Banning Ranch’s proposal for a 1,375-home and hotel project on the grounds that the site, though disturbed by nearly 70 years of oil production, remained a crucial ecological refuge for plants and animals all but gone from coastal Southern California.

“Embracing the developers’ arguments that the land was a blighted industrial site in need of restoration, commission Chairman Steve Kinsey and others on the panel pressured the staff in emails and during hearings to reevaluate its environmental assessments.



Base map: Google Maps

“Staffers backpedaled this spring. The latest staff recommendations would have permitted roughly 480 multifamily and single-family homes on the property’s east-central edge and a 329-acre nature preserve in the tract’s northern wetlands, minus the hotel, a road from Pacific Coast Highway, and about 400 residences planned for the southern half.”

## National City adds much needed affordable housing

*Our City San Diego*, September 6, 2016

**Erik Pisor**, <http://bit.ly/2clufdo> • “Known for its density, walkability, and Mile of Cars, National City also ranks first among San Diego County’s 18 cities in affordable housing, currently more than 17 percent. While San Diego continues to lose young families, National City is leading the way in adding affordable units, and a recent project, Paradise Creek, is seen as a catalyst for future projects.

“Located adjacent to the 24th Street transit station, the project will increase the city’s stock of affordable units, begin the revitalization of a neighborhood, and set a benchmark for transit-oriented, low-income properties in the county.

“The 201-unit, low-income project is a public-private partnership between the city; Community HousingWorks (CHW), a nonprofit that builds affordable housing; and

Related California, a private development company. ‘It’s the first real investment in the area,’ said Stephen Russell, executive director of the nonprofit San Diego Housing Federation, ‘and will be the finest building in the community.’

“The project will add to National City’s density, already the highest in the county at 6,400 people per square mile. National City recently was named the county’s most walkable city by Circulate San Diego for the third year in a row. Beyond Paradise Park, a balanced mix of market-rate and affordable rentals will be key to attracting new businesses to the area and to the city’s transition. More than half of National City households earn \$40,000 or less.”

*(California continues on next page)*



## Granny flats: Governor expected to sign SB 1069

*Sacramento Business Journal*, August 31, 2016

**Allen Young**, <http://bit.ly/2c4DTXk> • “Lawmakers have handed the governor an encouraging bill for homeowners that would lift some regulatory barriers to building secondary housing units constructed in a backyard.

“Touted as one way to ease California’s housing crisis, Senate Bill 1069 (<http://bit.ly/2c4Ep7F>) would stop local governments from demanding that secondary units provide additional parking and an uncovered pathway to the street. The bill, approved August 30 by the Senate, would make an array of other streamlining changes, such as lowering fees for connecting the small dwelling units to water and sewer lines. The bill was enrolled and presented to the Governor Sept. 8.

“Many local governments have restrictions on accessory housing units. A 2012 study by the University of California

Berkeley found that strict parking rules, accessory dwelling size, and setback restrictions in some California cities make it more difficult to build the units.

“If signed by the Governor as expected, SB 1069 will limit a city or county’s ability to reject the accessory units if they meet certain thresholds. It increases the allowable size of accessory units to 50 percent of a lot’s primary dwelling when attached to the existing residence, instead of 30 percent. The legislation also would streamline permitting deadlines, eliminate some fees, and limit an agency’s ability to impose parking standards on accessory dwellings if they meet other standards.

“The legislation wouldn’t change a local government’s ability to regulate lot size.”

## California’s 70 million dead trees are matchsticks

*The New York Times Science*, August 29, 2016

**Cynthia H. Craft**, <http://nyti.ms/2c6UQxD> • “California’s Sierra Nevada and North Coast forests are choked with tens of millions of dead and dying trees, tinderboxes of highly combustible debris. The devastation and danger are greatest in the central and southern Sierra Nevada, where the estimated number of dead trees since 2010 is a staggering 66 million.

“Destruction on such a broad scale is nearly always the result of a complex convergence of threats to forest ecosystems.

“Chief among them is a severe, sustained drought in the Sierra Nevada that is stressing trees and disabling their natural defenses. Climate change is raising temperatures, making for warmer winters. No longer kept in check by winter’s freeze, bark beetle populations are growing. Separately, a

nonnative, potent plant pathogen is thriving in the moist areas of the North Coast, introduced to California soil by global trade. Opportunistic fungi are standing by, ready to finish the kill.

“Factor in human shortcomings — poor or absent forest management, a failure to clear out ignitable dead wood, the darker temptation of arson, unchecked carelessness — and you have a lethal recipe.

“Neither of the two enormous die-offs seems to be ending anytime soon, and the Big Sur blaze is still burning — with more than 90,000 acres destroyed. When hit with fire like this, many forests return only as scrubland, with trees no bigger than shrubs.

“Gov. Jerry Brown called for a task force to devise strategies to clear the forests of deadwood.” ■

**Land use in the context of climate change.** “This document was developed with the recognition that land use decisions are inherently difficult decisions that require consideration of many conflicts and trade-offs, and balancing the needs of many constituencies ... [but it] is not intended to reconcile these issues or to remove them from the domain of local governments. Rather, this document is intended to consider land use in the context of California’s climate change policy and how the State can support actions, at all levels of government, to facilitate development and conservation patterns that help to achieve the State’s climate goals.

—*Vibrant Communities and Landscapes: a Vision for California in 2050*,” <http://bit.ly/2cSmGOW>

# U.S. roundup

Excerpts from around the country, linked to the original articles

## Seattle CDC pairs affordable rent with transit discounts

Next City, September 12, 2016

**Josh Cohen**, <http://bit.ly/2cIzJ7H> • “Capitol Hill Housing is an affordable housing provider with 48 buildings throughout Seattle. The average household income for its tenants is \$17,000, less than 30 percent of area median income. Now, Capitol Hill is trying to subsidize its tenants’ second-biggest household expense: transportation.

“Earlier this year, Seattle’s community development corporation (CDC) launched a pilot to offer residents deeply discounted ORCA cards — the smart card that riders use on buses, light rail, streetcars, and ferries in the Seattle region. The discount allows building managers to buy ORCA cards for their tenants at the same deeply discounted rates an employer or university does.

“Thanks to a grant from the Seattle Department of Transportation, Capitol Hill Housing is running a one-year pilot program (now in its fourth month) in three buildings

in the Capitol Hill neighborhood to offer riders an unlimited monthly pass. The SDOT grant covers half the cost of the passes. Residents pay \$10, \$16, or \$17 per month to cover the other half. Over half of the 122 households in the three pilot buildings have signed up for the program so far.

“Though their goal is primarily to serve residents, part of the CDC’s motivation is to save money by reducing residents’ car dependence.

“The pilot is in line with Capitol Hill Housing’s broader sustainability goals. A program they call the Capitol Hill Eco District (<http://bit.ly/2cRmfE0>) provides a framework for all the community development work they do beyond housing, from community building to health, equity, culture, energy, transportation, waste, and more.”

## California metros rank high for percentage of minority-owned firms

Next City, September 2, 2016

**Johnny Magdaleno**, <http://bit.ly/2cjsCzt> • California accounts for five of the 10 U.S. metros with the highest percentage of minority-owned firms. Coming in first is the San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara Metropolitan area. No. 3 is Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, No. 4 is Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, No. 5 is San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward, and No. 10 is Sacramento-Roseville-Arden-Arcade.

Nationwide, “Black entrepreneurs have a higher percentage of new businesses than other minority and white entrepreneurs, and women owned nearly 20 percent of all employer firms in United States.”

“That’s according to the U.S. Census Bureau’s brand-new Annual Survey of Entrepreneurs, a look at 290,000 U.S. businesses with workers on contract, which was unveiled September 1. The bureau solicited the help of the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, an entrepreneur and educa-

tion nonprofit, and the Minority Business Development Agency to launch the new data-gathering effort, which will now be done annually.”

“To Arnobio Morelix, a senior researcher at the Kauffman Foundation, the most surprising findings were drawn across gender lines. The fact that 64.5 percent of employer firms are male-owned, versus nearly 20 percent that are female-owned, highlights an ownership gap that he and his colleagues didn’t quite expect. What underscored it were findings that, despite owning nearly three-fifths of the businesses surveyed, male employers took home four-fifths of the total revenue.”

In addition, “Up-and-coming entrepreneurs are key drivers of economic growth, an observation (<http://bit.ly/2cjtgd>) that materialized because of census reports like the Survey of Business Owners.”

(U.S. continues on next page)

**Iowa City: Climate Action at a crossroads.** “In spring 2016, new Mayor Jim Throgmorton passed a ‘Regenerative City Day’ proclamation, declaring that Iowa City ‘must take decisive action’ to ‘significantly reduce community-based greenhouse gas emissions.’ But Throgmorton is cautious. ‘We’ve taken on a lot and I don’t think there would be support on our council to state that we’re explicitly going to achieve regenerative city goals,’ he says. Getting economic and political leaders to move in a more sustainable direction? ‘That cannot be a fast process. We cannot snap our fingers and make that happen.’” —Jen Kinney, Next City, <http://bit.ly/2cqpfXT>

## What does it mean for a land grant university to be engaged with the community?

*Minnesota Alumni Magazine*, September 1, 2016

**Meleah Maynard**, <http://bit.ly/2cqWo5I> • “There’s a difference between being a university with community engagement programs and being an engaged university, says University of Minnesota Associate Vice President for Public Engagement Andrew Furco. The difference lies in these five factors.

**“Engagement differs from outreach.** Traditionally, universities’ missions have entailed research, teaching, and outreach, and community engagement has been equated with fulfilling the outreach mission. In contrast, the 21st century model sees engagement also as a means to produce research and conduct teaching.

**“Engagement is at the heart of the university’s identity.** Public engagement must go beyond fulfilling the land grant mission. It must be viewed as integral to the university’s identity as an institution that builds and implements research agendas, shapes classroom experiences, promotes educational opportunities, and influences broader society.

**“Engagement focuses on partnerships.** Historically, the biggest complaint from community members is that researchers come in, do their work, and then leave when the project or grant ends. The 21st century model moves away from implementing short-term projects to building long-term partnerships.

**“Engagement is with, not to, for, or in communities.** It honors knowledge and experience within communities in ways that allow the university and community to co-develop, co-discover, co-construct, and coproduce.

**“Engagement is about institutional transformation.** For engagement to flourish, a university must implement a comprehensive institutional plan that refines and reimagines the existing culture, policies, and infrastructure.”

## New York: The man who put classrooms in high-rises

*The New York Times Obituaries*, August 29, 2016

**Sam Roberts**, <http://nyti.ms/2c6XtiI> • “Daniel Z. Nelson, who as a New York City housing official presided over an innovative financing agency that created thousands of public school classrooms in partnership with private developers at relatively little cost to taxpayers, died August 23 in Manhattan. He was 86.

“Mr. Nelson was the first executive director of the New York City Educational Construction Fund, a public benefit corporation created by the New York State Legislature. Since it began, the fund has helped finance 15 new schools and added more than 18,000 classroom seats while facilitating the construction of 4,500 apartments and 1.2 million square feet of office space.

“The fund issues tax-exempt bonds to pay for school construction on the lower floors of high-rise residential or commercial buildings being constructed by private builders. Instead of paying property taxes, the builder makes regular lease payments for the air rights, or development rights, over a school. The fund uses the payments to pay off the bonds.

“The arrangement allows the fund to borrow beyond the city’s regular legal debt limit, and it provides more sites for housing. When the bonds are paid off, usually after several decades, the city takes title to the property, collects the remaining lease payments, and begins collecting real estate taxes from the developer.

“The agency helped finance a high school at Park Avenue and 34th Street in Manhattan, beneath an office tower, and Public School 124, which is topped by a 762-apartment residential building in Chinatown.”

*(U.S. continues on next page)*

**East Coast experiences sharp increase in sunny day flooding.** “For decades, as the global warming created by human emissions caused land ice to melt and ocean water to expand, scientists warned that the accelerating rise of the sea would eventually imperil the United States’ coastline. Those warnings are no longer theoretical: The inundation of the coast has begun. The sea has crept up to the point that a high tide and a brisk wind are all it takes to send water pouring into streets and homes. Federal scientists have documented a sharp jump in this nuisance flooding — often called ‘sunny-day flooding’ — along both the East Coast and the Gulf Coast in recent years.”

—Justin Gillis, <http://nyti.ms/2ccVht3>. Graphic of complete coastline by Jonathan Corum, <http://nyti.ms/2ciqLLF>

## Nashville is positioning itself as health IT leader (San Jose take note)

Brookings, September 1, 2016

Allison Courtin, <http://brook.gs/2c4ycJ7> • “Among U.S. advanced industries, significant attention has begun to focus on the promise for local economic development of a number of regional ‘health IT’ (HIT) or ‘digital health’ clusters. Given their promise, several regions have begun to implement strategies to strengthen local HIT clusters. One metropolitan area that concentrates singular HIT assets is Nashville, Tennessee.

“A national center of hospital management, the Nashville area possesses important expertise relevant to HIT, including in clinical care, disease management, behavioral health and wellness, diagnostic testing, data management, and the management of physician transactions. At the same time, the region’s university-based medical research lacks a heavy focus on IT, its solid medical and health business workforce remains thin on software competencies, and the area’s emerging tech ecosystem has not fully integrated efforts to sustain small-firm growth in HIT.

“Given that, this report finds that metropolitan Nashville possesses a unique opportunity to leverage its strengths in health management in developing a unique HIT cluster. To that end, the report assesses Nashville’s current positioning on HIT and recommends three actions by which Nashville (and other metros) can strengthen their HIT ecosystem:

- “Expand the region’s innovation infrastructure.
- “Build the HIT skills base.
- “Deepen the HIT ecosystem.”

View or download the 44-page report at <http://brook.gs/2c4yoYI>.

**Table 1. HIT sector employment and growth in Nashville and peer metros 2010-2014**

Peer Metropolitan Areas	Total Jobs, 2014	HIT Sector Jobs, 2014	HIT Sector Job Growth, 2010-2014
Austin, Texas	790,800	73,870	39.6%
San Jose, Calif.	872,470	135,100	33.4%
Raleigh, N.C.	504,650	51,960	29.4%
Atlanta, Ga.	2,288,060	252,670	16.9%
Charlotte, S.C.	963,510	70,420	16.7%
Dallas, Texas	2,953,970	289,860	15.8%
Nashville, Tenn.	779,720	91,680	15.4%
Indianapolis, Ind.	919,710	92,300	10.5%
Boston, Mass.	2,423,700	330,530	10.4%
Kansas City, Mo.-Kan.	978,970	104,290	10%
Birmingham, Ala.	496,850	48,750	2.8%

Source: Brookings’s analysis of Moody’s Analytics data.

## Two of three Americans rent

The Street, August 24, 2016

Ellen Chang, <http://bit.ly/2bqvIX2> •

“Potential homeowners, including both Gen X-ers and Millennials, are influenced by the decisions made by their parents. Consumers are nearly three times as likely to purchase a house if their parents were homeowners compared to parents who rented, said Felipe Chacon, a housing data analyst at Trulia, a San Francisco-based real estate website, which analyzed over four decades of data from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

“What the analysis in the report suggests is that people who grew up in rented homes are less likely to own their own home, even after you exclude those who have gotten financial help from their folks or their spouse’s folks,” he said.

“Research conducted by Torsten Slok, a Deutsche Bank international economist, shows that Millennials attained less debt in 2015 than their counterparts did in 2003. ‘It is an urban myth that the young generation today is more indebted; it is the older generations that have higher debt levels,’ said Slok in a research note. ‘The reason is that since 2009 it has been difficult for Millennials to get a loan.’

“Although Millennials have expressed the desire to own a home in the future, they are keen to keep renting, in part because many of them switch jobs frequently, have not amassed the down payment, or do not want the financial commitment.

“The U.S. Census Bureau’s fourth quarter 2014 estimate showed 64 percent of Americans are renters.”

(U.S. continues on next page)

## El Paso: Earn in dollars but spend in pesos

CityLab, July 18, 2016

**Luis Chaparro**, <http://bit.ly/2ccQXtH> • “U.S. immigration authorities in Texas reported that 110,228 Ciudad Juarez residents work in El Paso and earn an average of \$2,000 per month. And while life may be less expensive on the Mexican side of the border, residents on both sides have a lot in common, ‘speaking the same mixed-up language.’

“Rodrigo Ostos, a 32-year-old U.S. citizen, plans to move from El Paso to Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, keeping his job as a U.S. accountant. He’ll commute every day across the border until he can buy a place in Ciudad Juarez. ‘With the dollar where it is today,’ says Ostos, I can save and pay less than half the rent than I’m paying [in El Paso].’

“[The cities] are divided by a now nearly dry Rio Grande (Rio Bravo in Mexico), a huge metal fence, a string of security cameras, armed guards, and motion-detecting radars.

“The border area that includes Juarez and El Paso is home to 1.4 million people on the Mexican side of the border; more than 800,000 live on the U.S. side. With a weak Mexican peso (a dollar is now worth 18 pesos), hundreds of U.S. citizens like Ostos are choosing to live in Mexico and work in the United States.”

### Cost differences across the border

Common expense	Ciudad Juarez	El Paso
Meal at a cheap restaurant	\$3.80	\$10
A bottle of beer	\$1	\$3.50
A liter of milk	\$0.60	\$1
A bottle of water	\$0.70	\$2.30
Monthly rent, centrally located one-bedroom apartment	\$130	\$630

## Answer to Where in the world (Page 21)

**Medellín, third largest city in Columbia.** Photo: Kurt Christiansen, FAICP.

**Inclusionary Zoning? Still worthwhile for developers to build.** “The thing about the effect of IZ on the production of units and prices [is that] it really depends on the market. ... [E]ven within a single city, sub-markets can be very different in how they respond to a program like that. [I]f I had to draw a general conclusion from all the work I’ve done, that’s definitely a consistent one: that it all depends on the markets. But what we do find is in stronger markets, and generally markets that are appreciating, you are more likely to have some of these negative side effects, whether it’s pushing prices up or reducing supply, the latter of which is very small or non-existent. [Where] there’s just enough energy or tightness in the market to require inclusionary zoning, developers can pass some of its cost onto market buyers in these kinds of ‘hot’ markets. Therefore, even with that requirement, it still pencils out for the developer. It’s still worthwhile for them.” —Rachel Meltzer, Assistant Professor of Urban Policy at the Milano School of International Affairs, Management, and Urban Policy, The New School, as told to Owen Pickford at The Urbanist, <http://bit.ly/2civcbP>

# World roundup

Excerpts from around the world, linked to the original articles

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## The case for wooden skyscrapers

*The Economist*, September 10, 2016

<http://econ.st/2c8niB1> • “A 1400-year-old five-story pagoda in Japan is one of the world’s oldest wooden buildings. The rings in the central pillar suggest the wood was felled in 594, and construction is thought to have begun soon after (<http://bit.ly/2cwTJu2>).

“The 14-story Treet block of flats in Bergen, Norway, is currently the world’s tallest wood building. Brock Commons, an 18-story wooden dormitory at the University of British Columbia is to be completed in 2017. That is when construction is expected to begin in Amsterdam on the 21-story Haut building (<http://slate.me/2cwU4wT>) using sustainable European pine.

“There are two main concerns about using wood to build high. The first is whether wood is strong enough.

“A recent experiment by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill and Oregon State University [stressed] a 36-foot-wide

cross-laminated timber (CLT) section with a thin layer of reinforced concrete spread across the surface. It finally began to crack when the load reached 82,000 pounds, around eight times what it was designed to support.

“The second worry: fire. The concrete adds a layer of fire protection between floors. Along with other fire-resistant layers and modern sprinkler systems, tall wooden buildings can exceed existing fire standards, reckons Benton Johnson of Skidmore. He thinks the appeal of wood — visually and as a sustainable material — will make it commercially attractive to property developers.

“One big obstacle to this wooden renaissance is regulation. In America, cities can restrict wooden buildings to five or six stories (about the height of a fire engine’s ladder).”

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## Manchester: The city feels alive

*The New York Times*, September 10, 2016

**Rory Smith**, <http://nyti.ms/2cuZZmb> • As Manchester United and Manchester City gathered for their match September 10, few paid attention to the city’s history. “To Victorians, Manchester was ‘famed and feared’ as the world’s first great industrial city. In the 1960s, it was a place of cloth caps and cobbled streets. By the late 1970s, the city’s industries disappeared and bands like the Smiths documented the bleakness.

“During the past 20 years, the city’s authorities have led a physical regeneration, symbolized by the canopy of glass towers that sprang up after a bomb destroyed much of the city center in 1996.

“The revival of the city’s spirit, though, came from the so-called Madchester music of the late 1980s. Abandoned buildings became nightclubs and bars, and record shops and independent labels flourished.

“[Now, with] Hotel Football — an upscale football-themed hotel opened 18 months ago overlooking Old Trafford, the home of Manchester United [southwest of the city center] — and Britain’s National Football Museum, which moved to the Urbis building in Manchester city center in 2012, sports is Manchester’s driving cultural force.

“It is around Etihad Stadium, Manchester City’s home east of the city center [opened 2002, expanded 2015] that the difference soccer has made is most visible. The area was heavily polluted. There were wireworks, steelworks, dye makers, chemical plants. Soccer — and hundreds of millions of dollars from Abu Dhabi — changed all that.”

The score? City beat United, at United, 2-1.

*(World continues on next page)*

## As the world ages

*Data is Beautiful*, September 8, 2016

**Duc-Quang Nguyen**, <http://bit.ly/2coTDo4> • Check out this chart of eight animated population pyramids for the period 1990–2050, for Morocco, Brazil, China, Russia, United States, France, Japan, and Switzerland. The pyramids are grouped in a single gif. Source: US Census Bureau IDB, idbr package; swissinfo.ch; Duc-Quang Nguyen.

## Amsterdam revisited

*The New York Times*, September 4, 2016

**Russell Shorto**, <http://nyti.ms/2cdhtmA> • “I had been hearing that Amsterdam had changed dramatically in the three years since I left my home of 23 years. The population is growing, the city has plans to build 50,000 homes over the next 10 years, and the largest group of newcomers — those between age 20 and 34 — are putting down roots and reshaping the urban landscape.

“Real estate prices are spiking, partly because housing costs in London and Paris have moved into the stratosphere, while the Netherlands is one of the few places where it is possible to obtain a mortgage with no money down.

“Unchanged, thankfully, was the canal zone, but as it turned out, the antique facade of the neighborhood belied vigorous change. Wealthy foreigners were buying up many of the houses, driving up prices. The sense of community was eroding as neighbors left, and many buildings now stood mostly empty, pied-à-terres.

“An acquaintance who works for the city confirmed the rapid change. In his opinion the community now had the right mix of new and traditional elements, but he hoped the influx of tourists and new residents would slow down.

“There has been talk of Amsterdam, with its long history as a financial center, eventually replacing London as the unofficial economic capital of the European Union. No one I met with looked forward to such a thing. What everyone frets over these days is how to balance growth and change against tradition and quality of life.”

## Europe’s housing by age and affordability

*CityLab*, September 9, 2016

**Feargus O’Sullivan**, <http://bit.ly/2cwYsM9> • “If you want to live in a European city where affordable housing is easy to come by, avoid London and head for Ljubljana. That’s one of the possible conclusions to draw from a massive new report on European cities published by the E.U.

“According to Eurostat’s 2015 Urban Europe report (PDF, 286 pp., 53 MB, <http://bit.ly/2cx0uvO>), most European big city residents feel that decent housing they can afford is increasingly hard to find — Athens and Greater Manchester [being the exceptions]. In slightly smaller cities of between 600,000 and 1.2 million inhabitants, more than half of respondents in Ljubljana, Naples, Palermo, and Diyarbakir, Turkey, agreed that affordable housing was easy to find.

“But when it comes to the realities of housing affordability, how much credence can we give to this one measure based on public opinion? [For example:]

“Even though residents of Vienna and Munich expressed doubts about whether they can find affordable housing with ease, they are also among the happiest with their incomes in all of Europe, with over 83 percent of citizens in those cities responding that they were satisfied with their financial situations.

“Map [10.1 in the linked article] also reveals some interesting reflections of Europe’s recent history. The effect of two world wars and the global depression is still writ large in Europe’s housing map. In only two small regions does housing stock built between 1919 and 1945 predominate. By contrast, Great Britain’s and Sweden’s largely green coloring, which denotes housing built between 1946 and 1970, shows how vast those countries’ public housing construction programs were in the years following World War II.”

*(World continues on next page)*

### Turkey: Tigris dam will soon flood ancient city of 12,000

*The New York Times*, September 2, 2016

**Tim Arango**, <http://nyti.ms/2c7s4zz> • “Hasankeyf, an ancient town on the Tigris River in southeast Turkey, will soon be lost, along with thousands of years of history. A hydroelectric dam, a project that dates back to the 1950s, is more than 80 percent complete, but the filling of a reservoir that will cover much of the city awaits.

(The article includes 10 striking photos.)

“Hasankeyf (pronounced has-AN-kayf) has 12,000 years of history. In the Neolithic period, it was the site of one of the world’s first organized human settlements. The empires that came later all left their imprints: Byzantines, Romans, Seljuks, Ottomans. The archaeological highlight is a citadel on high ground that will stay above the water, but scientists worry that over time, its porous limestone base will erode and ultimately collapse.

“Turkey’s control of the headwaters of the Euphrates and Tigris, rivers that feed Syria and Iraq, has long been controversial in the Middle East, with critics saying decisions made by Turkey have led to water shortages in both other countries that have contributed to instability and wars.

“To accommodate [the thousands who will] be forced from their homes, the Turkish government is building a new Hasankeyf and buying up homes in the old city, even though, given so many delays, no one can say for sure when the reservoir will be filled.”

Also see video, “An inside look at the Ilisu Dam,” <https://youtu.be/0HOwtokWRTg>.

### Mexico City: Miles ahead in walkability

*Market Urbanism*, August 29, 2016

**Nolan Gray and Katarina Hall**, <http://bit.ly/2c6UXcr> •

“To many, the mental image of Mexico City is unending traffic, unbearable smog, and unrestrained horizontal expansion. Yet it is a city of wide sidewalks and integrated bike lanes, lush parks and cool street-tree canopies, and dense, mixed-use urban neighborhoods.

“Nearly every neighborhood within Mexico City’s giant ring road — the Circuito Interior — has a walkscore above 95. Many major U.S. cities lack even one neighborhood with such a high score. What makes Mexico City so walkable?

“The first thing an American might notice is just how busy are the city’s spacious sidewalks. Wide medians along major boulevards offer both refuge for crossing pedestrians and a public space in which people are encouraged to meet and relax. Many of the city’s busiest downtown areas have been closed to automobile traffic.

“The ample space for pedestrians attracts not only foot traffic but also the people watchers who come to enjoy the vitality, in turn keeping many downtown neighborhoods safe well into the night.

“U.S. cities could learn from Mexico City that walkability isn’t impossible in the age of automobiles. Like many cities that boomed in the post-war era, Mexico City rapidly burst outward and residents grew more and more car-dependent from the 1960s through the 1990s. But the city’s policymakers, civic groups, and businesses embraced the natural walkability that survived this boom and developed new urban innovations — including bus rapid transit — needed to keep the city both urban and mobile.”

### London: Underground swells and beats in visualization

*HERE.com*, August 24, 2016

**Ian Delaney**, <http://bit.ly/2ccWrVj> • “People have compared large cities to the human body since their foundations. Their roads and rail lines are their metaphorical blood vessels, bearing people and fresh resources to their major organs and transporting them away at the end of the day. Perhaps nowhere is this truer than London.

“In a commission from HERE, Oliver O’Brien, a senior research associate at University College London, has taken data published by Transport for London (TfL) to visualize the heartbeat of the city’s tube system. The lines grow and pulse according to the volume of passengers that they are carrying, showing very clearly the morning and evening rush hours.

“The visualization is based upon an extensive dataset published by TfL that includes the volumes of people at each station at 15-minute intervals and their origins and destinations. This goes right down to the platform level, the number of entrances and exits, and even the number of people aboard each tube train.

“You can zoom into individual stations to see the extra oddities of London’s circulation, generated by the peculiarities of the network and its geography.

“View the full interactive visualization at [www.tubeheartbeat.com](http://www.tubeheartbeat.com) and let HERE know whether you notice anything that surprises you.”

(World continues on next page)



## Helsinki: Automated minibuses start trials

*The Guardian*, August 8, 2016

**Samuel Gibbs**, <http://bit.ly/2canihT>

- “Automated minibuses are carrying people on open public roads in the southern district of the Finnish capital during a month-long trial. Two self-driving buses have rolled out on the public roads, alongside traffic and commuters, in one of the first trials of its kind.

“The Easymile EZ-10 electric mini-buses, capable of carrying up to 12 people, are negotiating traffic for the first time. (EasyMile is a joint venture between French vehicle manufacturer Ligier Group and India’s Robosoft.)

“Rather than replacing all human-driven buses, the automated buses are seen as a possible extension of Finland’s public transport system, moving commuters to higher-volume transport systems where costs of alternative transport have proved prohibitive.

“Self-driving vehicle trials are also set to go ahead on public roads of the UK, including automated lorries on the M6 (<http://bit.ly/2canDBe>) and small public transport pods (<http://bit.ly/2camWYJ>) in London.”



**EasyMile EZ-10 automated bus.** Photo by SOHJOA-6Aika, a Finnish cities’ collaborative funded by the European Structural Fund, <http://bit.ly/2caxLko>

## Meanwhile, in Perth: Bot my ride

*ABC News (AU)*, September 1, 2016

**Charlotte Hamlin**, <http://ab.co/2caoy4J>

- “Australia’s first driverless shuttle bus is being trialled along the foreshore in South Perth.

“On the scale of automation, the vehicle is considered level four, which means it can perform all safety-critical driving functions without anyone behind the wheel, but only in a few environments.

“The bus, worth \$250,000, was built by Mobility Lab Sion Valais (Switzerland) and imported by the Royal Automobile Club of Western Australia. It can carry 11 passengers and travel at up to 45km per hour (28 mph), although its average speed will be 25kph (15 mph). The bus will travel down a pre-programmed route, but it has the ability to detect other vehicles and read traffic lights.

“The trial is the first for the driverless bus in Australia, but before shuttles become common on Australian roads, a number of changes would need to be made to the road network to accommodate the cars, and legislation would have to be amended to remove the responsibility on a driver to be in control of a vehicle.”



**Navya RAC Intellibus.** Photo: Royal Automobile Club of Western Australia, <http://intellibus.rac.com.au>

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