

# NORTHERN NEWS



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

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

**November 2016**

## Artist gives citizens simple tools to design their public spaces

Jen Kinney, via *Next City*

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## Meet a local planner

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San Francisco, San Bruno Mountains,  
Colma (green), and South San  
Francisco. Photo: Linton Atlas







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APA  
CA  
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NOVEMBER 2016

## Artist gives citizens simple tools to design their public spaces Planning-related art by Cupertino artist/arts educator

Jen Kinney via Next City

WHILE THE CITY OF SAN JOSE is in the midst of a makeover competition for downtown St. James Park, artist Corinne Okada Takara is inviting the public to create their own designs — using popsicle sticks, pipe cleaners, and cardboard tubes. The city has funding to completely rebuild the underused park in the next five years, and in the meantime is using the tax revenue from a special parks district to fund temporary activations. Takara’s Prototyping Public Spaces workshop (<http://bit.ly/2dFCKX2>) is part of that effort and aims to engage everyday citizens in public space design.

As an artist who often creates public works, “I was noticing that our community meetings were scheduled often at a time when we weren’t getting a full representation of our community’s demographics,” says Takara. She started to design projects that would get more people in on the conversation.

For the first one, which took place as part of the Zero1 Biennial in 2012 (<http://bit.ly/2dFDETV>), Takada visited San Jose schools to hear children’s ideas for creatively reimagining bus shelter design. She incorporated their input into a full-size model, which included a hanging garden and a tin-can phone that allowed visitors to listen to and record more design ideas using a clever hookup to her iPhone. Visitors could either make physical small-scale models of their own, or learn to design one on available computers using CAD software. That project ended up laying the groundwork for public art installations on bus shelters (<http://bit.ly/2dFDnzH>).

In 2015, Takara worked with the San Jose Public Library on a series of pop-up maker studios in underused public



**St. James Park, San Jose.** Photo: Jason Su. The Park Design Competition Jury made its recommendation to city council October 15.

spaces. She installed temporary furniture, 3D printers, and modeling supplies in the spaces, and for three weeks in a row, asked the public to “reimagine the very dead spaces they were in,” she says.

Now, that furniture is being used at the St. James Park pop-up, a collaboration with the Alum Rock Educational Foundation, whose main purpose is to improve education opportunities in the Alum Rock neighborhood of San Jose. Takara teaches at an art and design thinking camp for middle-schoolers there, and Kim Mesa of Alum Rock is deeply involved in local neighborhood organizations and in keeping the community informed about city actions.

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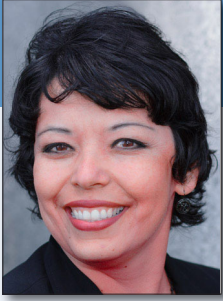
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Find JOBS and EVENTS CALENDAR at [norcalapa.org](http://norcalapa.org)



## Director's note

By Andrea Ouse, AICP

### Riding a rocket ship to the end of 2016

As I write this penultimate Director's Note — my term ends at the end of 2016 — I can't help but reflect on all that the Northern Section members have accomplished in the past two years. Truly, I am humbled by the dedication and efforts of our members throughout my term as Section Director, and no doubt I will continue to be amazed at our collective accomplishments in the future. Here's what's happening between now and January 1:

**Board elections.** We are looking forward to Board elections through most of November! Check your email around November 1 for a link to the ballot for **Director-Elect** and **Administrative Director** positions. The Nominations Committee is currently receiving nominations for the ballot, but hurry: The deadline for a complete nomination petition is October 19. A complete nomination includes name, address of membership, email, work or daytime phone number, signatures of support from at least five current Northern Section members, and a brief statement of candidacy (not to exceed 500 words) sent to the APA California Northern Nomination Committee. I strongly encourage you to consider submitting a nomination, or to actively get involved in the Board by submitting a letter of interest and resume for any of the following appointed positions (**Professional Development Officer, East Bay RAC** [two positions], and **Planning Commissioner Representative**) by submitting your letter of interest and résumé, or completed nomination petition, to Nomination Committee Chair, Andrea Ouse, AICP, at [andrea.ouse@cityofvallejo.net](mailto:andrea.ouse@cityofvallejo.net).

**Mentorship Program.** Northern Section's 2016–2017 Mentorship Program is heating up. Thanks to the enthusiastic leadership of new Mentorship Director **Liz Probst, AICP**, kickoff events will orient program

participants and allow mentors and mentees to meet initially in a social setting. Three of the four upcoming and geographically dispersed events will be co-sponsored by the RACs, giving all a healthy mix of program participants and other members. Go to the Mentorship Program website at <http://bit.ly/2ak3LPd> for the events schedule. The first event will be held on **October 19** from **6–8 pm** at Spats, 1974 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley. (Spats is owned by planner and former Section Director **Mark Rhodes, AICP**.) Stop by and enjoy the social aspects of APA membership! Subsequent Mentorship Program/social events will be held in Santa Rosa, San Francisco, and San Jose. I hope to see you there!

**APA California Conference.** In just a few days (October 22–25), many of us will be attending the 2016 APA California Conference at the Pasadena Conference Center. Check out the conference page at [www.apacalifornia-conference.org](http://www.apacalifornia-conference.org). If you are attending, be sure to participate in the annual California Planning Foundation (CPF) Scholarship Auction, led by Northern Section Historian and CPF President **Juan Borrelli, AICP**. CPF is devoting the auction to Virginia Viado and Ted Holzem, two bright stars of the planning profession who were taken from us far too soon. Traditionally, each of APA California's eight sections competes each year for the largest CPF donations during the auction, and I expect Northern Section will continue to be a strong competitor for the 'winning' section! I encourage you to consider bidding on items and activities at the CPF 2016 Scholarship Auction. For more information about CPF, go to <http://bit.ly/2cF8NFX>.

Onward and upward! See you in Pasadena. ■

# Norcal roundup

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

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## Tiny homes for the homeless coming to San Jose

*The Mercury News*, October 7, 2016

**Ramona Giwargis**, <http://bayareane.ws/2dNT204>

• “A new law will allow San Jose to become the first California city to create tiny homes for the homeless, bypassing the state’s confining building codes. “Assembly Bill 2176 by Assemblywoman Nora Campos, D-San Jose, and signed by Gov. Jerry Brown, takes effect in January and sunsets in five years. It allows the city to temporarily suspend state building, safety, and health codes to build ‘unconventional’ housing — everything from wood-framed sheds to tiny homes — which must be at least 70 square-foot for individuals and 120 square-foot for couples. A half-acre piece of land, according to city documents, could house up to 25 people in 20 units.

“No matter the size of the homes, San Jose resident Monica Fuentes says anything is better than life on the

streets. The former accountant ended up outdoors after a divorce and brain tumor. She moves from one downtown park to another, her belongings in a small plastic cart.

“To come up with creative designs for the tiny homes, the city is launching a design competition. The goal is to focus on innovative features, cost effectiveness, and replicability.

“Michael Lane, policy director of the Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California, said tackling homelessness starts with providing immediate housing solutions while cities build permanent housing. ‘First get people into a safe and decent place,’ he said. ‘It’s a humanitarian crisis. We think we can create a pilot and model here that would be transferable to other jurisdictions.’”

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## Tech companies look to redirect housing policy

*The New York Times*, *California Today*, October 6, 2016

**Conor Dougherty**, <http://nyti.ms/2dL67qP> • “Silicon Valley tech companies — often blamed for the Bay Area’s crushing rise in rent and home prices — have started to throw political support behind the growing fight over how to build more housing in California.

“The tech industry, which has long complained about the Bay Area’s housing shortage, is starting to galvanize around the issue in the form of donations to politicians and advocacy groups.

“One of the higher profile efforts is RiseSF, <http://bit.ly/2dL6wth>, a nonprofit backed by Facebook, labor unions, and developers, formed to support housing construction in San Francisco. Y Combinator, the San Francisco-based ‘accelerator,’ has redirected political efforts from issues like United States immigration policy to housing.

“Until recently, the tech industry has mostly steered clear of Bay Area housing politics. That started to change a year ago, [as] rents soared so fast that even well paid tech workers found themselves struggling with rising costs.

“Laura Clark, the founder of GrowSF, <http://bit.ly/2dL5YDQ>, a nonprofit that promotes affordable housing in Bay Area communities, is trying to turn the hundreds of thousands of engineers and product managers into a voting bloc. Ms. Clark is leading an effort to enlist tech workers to participate in phone banking and distributing pamphlets to guide tech workers on how to vote for various propositions and candidates.

“Her group plans to hand out material at the various tech shuttle stops around San Francisco.”

(Norcal continues on [page 14](#))



# California roundup

Excerpts from around the state, linked to the original articles

## SLO County to encourage affordable housing

*Pacific Coast Business Times*, September 9, 2016

**Alex Kacik**, <http://bit.ly/2dSd9KF> • “The San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors is moving forward with a plan that aims to facilitate more affordable housing development.

“Policy recommendations included streamlining the permitting process, expanding multifamily residential zoning, reducing fees for affordable housing developments and scaling them to unit sizes rather than number of units, allowing secondary dwelling units in more zones, and easing farmworker housing limitations.

“A recent report from MagnifyMoney found that Santa Barbara and SLO counties had some of the least affordable housing markets in the entire country. For residents ages 25

to 44, Santa Barbara was ranked the second most difficult place to afford a home out of 380 surveyed regions while SLO was ranked sixth. Only 26 percent of SLO County residents can afford the median home price, compared to 34 percent statewide, according to the California Association of Realtors Housing Affordability Index.

“Melissa James of the Economic Vitality Corp. of San Luis Obispo County, which helped craft the recommendations, said, ‘We need to take a look at all the barriers to creating a housing stock that is affordable to our workforce and what we can change to facilitate the housing stock we need.’”

## Century City starts to make good on old promise

*Los Angeles Times*, October 6, 2016

**Scott Garner**, <http://lat.ms/2dQFQaU> • “In the late 1950s, execs at 20th Century Fox were fighting a ferocious battle against television, and in 1961 the cash-poor studio sold its expansive back lot to Alcoa for \$50 million. The new owners of the 260-acre tract hired modernist architects including Welton Becket, I.M. Pei, and Minoru Yamaskai to create what would become Century City. They were to design a downtown of the future, an upscale mixed-use development convenient to Beverly Hills but free from the height restrictions that kept that city low-rise.

“Century City was brilliantly successful at eliciting beautiful modernist designs but far less so in creating a thriving 24-hour downtown. Now Century City is trying to develop a more dynamic mix of uses as the neighborhood prepares for the Purple Line subway extension.

“Westfield Century City is in the midst of a massive mall makeover that includes street-level retail and a pedestrian plaza; the Century Plaza Hotel is undergoing its own transformation; and hundreds of high-rise housing units are under construction or in various stages of planning. It seems Century City might be on the cusp of becoming a real urban neighborhood.

“Irene Arathoon, a real estate agent with Coldwell Banker, calls Century City ‘one of the best secrets in town.’ And because the neighborhood skews heavily toward condos, it’s become a magnet for young professionals as well as older homeowners who have downsized.”



Century City in 2009. Photo: Basil D Soufi (CC BY-SA 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons), <http://bit.ly/2dpNEg1>

(California continues on [page 17](#))

# Meet a local planner

By Siân Llewellyn, AICP

**Jesse Schofield, AICP,** is an associate transportation planner with Caltrans District 4.

## Tell us how you came to planning

I discovered planning as an undergrad in engineering at the University of Virginia. I had played Sim Cities as a game but I didn't know you could actually do planning as a job. Unfortunately, I discovered planning too late to switch to a planning degree, so I adjusted my engineering studies. I have an Engineering Science design-your-own-course-of-study degree.

That allowed me to focus on technical courses like GIS, which had me sharing classrooms with planners and getting to understand their work. I graduated in 2009.

## Tell us more about your career

My experience includes AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps Vista. I did direct environmental restoration work, with elements of environmental justice as well as capacity building, on a project in Seattle.

I focused on the community aspect of planning, capacity building, and volunteering. I liked the idea of the bottom-up approach, guiding the voices of the marginalized community. At the time, the Seattle development scene was hyper hot, and our work allowed me to help serve the interest of these communities. Promoting good development doesn't always mean doing everything the developer wants.

I wanted to get a graduate degree in planning and applied to five programs. Florida State University gave me the best offer and a job. The academic community at FSU was very close, almost like a family. Even though Tallahassee was not the urban laboratory that Seattle had been, the chance to learn about planning in a non-urban context was interesting, and I enjoyed getting to know



Photo: JOSHUA

the natural side of the Florida panhandle — a very distinct environment.

It was 2012, deep into the recession, when I graduated from FSU, and impossible to get a planning job. After a year of searching, I decided if I could not do planning, maybe I should consider something completely different and fun. I applied for and got a job as a flight attendant. For 18 months I was flying for United Air Lines based out of San Francisco. I was hesitant about moving to the Bay Area because of the cost of living, but I commuted to the airport from

the East Bay on BART and fell in love with the area.

While scratching my travel itch, I kept my eyes on the planning job market. In December 2014, I started with Caltrans as a planner in District 1 out of Eureka. I moved to District 4 (Oakland) in March of this year.

## Tell us about some projects of interest

In addition to AmeriCorps, I have twice served in the Peace Corps, first with U.S. and foreign aid agencies, particularly in the field of water security (Lesotho 2010–2011), then as a consultant in land use planning and disaster mitigation (Philippines 2014).

My project with Peace Corps Lesotho included installing a completely new urban water infrastructure system. It was unusual for a Peace Corps project because we had a \$7 million budget funded by the US Millennium Challenge Corporation. I was assigned to a special government agency in the capital city, not your typical Peace Corps assignment. The town was evolving from rural to urban, and water security was badly needed to support the transition. The project taught me a lot about the international aid community and that personalities can make a big difference in the success of a project. I also learned to respect local values — cultural

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**"Seeking Shelter" installation at Zero1 Biennial, 2012.**  
Photo, Corinne Okada Takara



**Tin can iPhone at Zero1 Biennial.** Photo, Corinne Okada Takara

"The city has a downtown but it also has very siloed communities, with really great organizations and activists and arts, but until recently there hasn't been a really good effort to connect everybody," says Takara. Students from the design summer camp are helping to lead the workshops, so "it's kind of cross-pollination through the youth, through maker activities, through activating underused civic spaces," she says.

St. James Park, one of the city's oldest and most significant, has become one of those spaces. "[It] used to be the central part of San Jose, it was always vibrant," says Mesa. But as the city has grown and spread out around it, the outer neighborhoods became centers of activity "and downtown sort of fell into disuse." The city has been trying to revive interest through yoga, concerts, and other pop-up activities that seek to include, not alienate, the park's main users — homeless men and women. But the park still needs physical upgrades too.

At the Prototyping Public Spaces workshop, which took place during the city's second open streets Viva Calle event, children used cardboard tubes, markers, and more to design play areas. They answered the questions, "what is your design, what need does it serve, and how does it address that need?"

Takara has found with her other workshops that those questions are much easier to answer when there's

Play-Doh handy. "If you ask the question how do we invigorate a public park, you can get blank stares at a public meeting, but if you're sitting there at a table and you're asked to make something, it's much friendlier, and you'll get more conversation happening there between people who are participating," she says. Even the mayor showed up to see the workshop.

Those who didn't want to create a model could also fill out a card with their desires. Most people's wants were pretty simple: clean, working bathrooms, water fountains.



**Local middle school student design patterns on concrete median dividers near Tully Road/Hwy 101 overpass, San Jose.** Photo, Lisa Harris, HMM Landscape Architects.

*(continued on next page)*



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Artist gives citizens simple tools to design their public spaces  
(continued from page 7)

Takara also posted information for another project she and university students are doing with the city to design assets like shower structures for the city’s homeless. Often, different city agencies are asking the public the same questions at the same time, she says, and it’s good to try to bring them together in one place.

Through all of her projects, Takara is perfecting ways to creatively engage. She places a ring of benches a little farther away from the action, so the hesitant can feel included without feeling pressured. She found people are genuinely excited to speak into a tin-can connection to her iPhone, much more so than into the iPhone itself. When trying to gather public input, “it can never just be a clipboard,” she says. “People will run away. It has to be multiple visits, different levels of engagement, and ways to participate.”

Indeed, when Mesa and Takara wrote the grant for the St. James pop-up, it was for three visits to the park, but the city funded just one as a pilot. They’re hoping the city will have them back to continue the process, and possibly expand to other spaces. Mesa says it’s especially important for young people to feel involved in the political process, and to have the opportunity to learn from people across neighborhoods.

“If they learn at a young age that they have a voice, and they learn how to express that voice, they’ll grow up wanting to do that always. It gives them more of a sense of community,” she says.

*Jen Kinney is a freelance writer and documentary photographer. Her work has also appeared in Satellite Magazine, High Country News online, and the Anchorage Press. See her work at [www.jakinney.com](http://www.jakinney.com).*

A version of this article appeared in *Next City*, Sept. 20, 2016:  
<http://bit.ly/2dcUVjf>



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## Meet a local planner *(continued from page 6)*

differences are important. That experience was transferable when I moved to Eureka, where it was again important to respect the values of the regions in which you work.

With Peace Corps Philippines, I served in a land use planning role helping with the recovery from the devastation of Typhoon Yolanda. Typhoon Yolanda struck in November 2013. It was one of the strongest tropical cyclones ever recorded and the deadliest Philippine typhoon on record, killing at least 6,300 in that country alone. I came to the coastal community of Giporlos a year after the storm and worked to incorporate disaster mitigation and climate change adaptations into the municipal comprehensive land use plan. I learned a new GIS suite (Manifold 8), and used it to develop a 'heat map' of the riskiest locations for infrastructure investment. I also developed training materials for municipal staff to use the software to produce maps and plans, and provided interpretation and guidance on national policies regarding development in the coastal zone, similar to regulations set by the California Coastal Commission.

At Caltrans District 4, my role is coordinating CEQA review for projects in Alameda and San Francisco counties. I also coordinate review for select regional projects, such as Plan Bay Area 2040, the update to the first integrated Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area.

When I looked for a planning job in California, everyone wanted CEQA experience, but that's hard to get if you weren't schooled here. I'm lucky to work at Caltrans, where they are willing to train and invest in their staff.

### Which three cities would you recommend our readers visit?

The first has to be Des Moines, Iowa. In my flight attendant days, where we overnighted in a downtown hotel, I was pleasantly surprised by the walkable downtown with plenty to do. They clearly care about their riverfront and have preserved a great collection of buildings, both civic and private. And a decent collection of bars and restaurants make for an enjoyable nighttime scene.

For a big American city, I choose Chicago. A truly great American city, it has a little bit of everything. The only thing missing is a mountain.

And Oakland! I arrived in the Bay Area three years ago and moved here. I love it, think it's great, and it's not trying to please anyone but Oakland. The city has a lot of pride.

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Meet a local planner (continued from previous page)

**Any advice for planners starting out?**

I read this somewhere and it is worth passing on: Don't be afraid to start out as a planner in a small community. You will get an opportunity to do a little bit of everything and the competition for a job can be less intense. Seems everyone wants to start off in a San Francisco, a Portland, or a Chicago, maybe because they think big cities equals big plans. As urban planners you want to work in an urban environment, but smaller communities have a lot to offer.

All interviews are lightly edited. Interviewer Siân Llewellyn, AICP, lives in San Francisco and is Director of Urban Development at Hatch. ■

**Where in the world**



Photo: Juan Borrelli, AICP. (Answer on page 12.)

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## State HCD announcement

After hosting a comment period and conducting three hearings, the Department of Housing and Community Development proposes additional changes to our **Uniform Multifamily Regulations (UMRs)**. There will be a written public comment period for both of these regulations, from **September 30, 2016** until **5:00 pm on November 14, 2016**. Any interested person or authorized representative may submit written comments relevant to the proposed action to HCD, preferably through the survey monkey site, <http://svy.mk/2d2yRYA>.

The UMRs govern certain aspects of a number of programs operated by HCD, including the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program, the Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention Program, and the Multifamily Housing Program.

Applicants may also submit comments to the Department via email and the postal service. For more information, please visit HCD's UMR webpage, <http://bit.ly/2d2zAZN>. ■

## Who's where



**Alexandra Barnhill** has joined Jarvis, Fay, Doporto & Gibson, LLP as a partner. Jarvis Fay is a boutique municipal law firm in Oakland. Barnhill had been a partner at Burke, Williams and Sorensen, Oakland, serving as legal counsel and advisor to cities, special districts, and joint powers agencies across California. She is looking forward to continuing her general and special counsel municipal law practice at Jarvis Fay. Her areas of expertise include land use, CEQA, municipal revenue, and conflicts of interest law. Barnhill served on the board of Northern Section as Legislative Director from 2012 to mid-2015.



**Jennifer Piozet** is now a Planner III in the City of San Jose's Planning Division, where she is focusing on development review. She had been with the city as a Planner II for two years. Piozet was an associate editor for *Northern News* from 2013–2015 and served on the APA California–Northern Section Board. She holds a master of urban planning and a bachelor's degree in art and design, both from San Jose State University. ■





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## Planning documents don't need to be long and boring

A climate action plan in 24 illustrated pages

Alex Hinds

You can now read or download a 24-page, contemporary “coffee table” version of Sonoma County’s new Regional Climate Action Plan. This summary educational document was prepared by Sonoma State’s Center for Sustainable Communities and See Shape graphic designers, under supervision of the Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Authority.

**Climate Action 2020 and Beyond – Highlights and Summary** boils down the 370-page regional climate action plan — which covers the county and its nine cities — into a concise, heavily illustrated, educational document, available for viewing or download at <http://bit.ly/2dMl2Rx> and in Spanish at <http://bit.ly/2dMj11d>. (A PDF of the full plan, adopted by the Sonoma County Regional Protection Authority July 11, 2016, is also available for viewing or download at <http://bit.ly/2dMkhrL>.)

**Climate Action 2020 and Beyond** focuses on measures that can be enacted and scaled up in the immediate and short term. We hope our abbreviated version will help elected officials, staff, the business community, and the general public more easily access the core information and action items in the plan.

My semi-obsession with advocating for shorter, easier-to-read, coffee table-like plans was made a whole lot easier when Pete Parkinson, AICP, former Sonoma County Director of Permit & Resource Management and incoming APA California Chapter President, was hired to edit the longer 370-page climate action plan.

Alex Hinds is Managing Consultant at Sonoma State University’s Center for Sustainable Communities and co-International Director of APA California–Northern Section. ■



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Answer to Where in the world (Page 10)  
Youghal, County Cork, Ireland. Clock Tower Gate, 1777.  
Photo: Juan Borrelli, AICP.

**“Short-term rental outfits like Airbnb** have become a disruptive force in parts of Woodside. A corporation of 10 employees is living and working next door, one resident of Woodside Heights told the Town Council Oct. 11. ‘Running a short-term rental place for parties is not what we want for our community,’ said Councilman Chris Shaw. Among ideas offered were no rentals for less than 30 days, no corporate leasing within residential areas, limiting the number of rentals in a calendar year, and requiring homeowners to live at the property. The problem, said Town Manager Kevin Bryant, would be in administering and enforcing the regulations. Bans tend not to work, he said. The sharing economy has a peer-to-peer structure, so a key issue is how a city or town might insert itself into that relationship.” —Dave Boyce, *The Almanac*, <http://bit.ly/2e1Pffj>

# Election of Northern Section Directors

Key dates are October 19, November 1, and November 21

The terms of two elected Board positions, **Director-Elect** and **Administrative Director**, end December 31, 2016. A nominating committee overseen by **Section Director Andrea Ouse** was formed to solicit and review applications, with the election scheduled for November 2016. Each Board position is for a two-year term, commencing January 1, 2017. The current Director-Elect will assume the Director position on January 1, 2017. As noted in the APA California–Northern Section Bylaws, Section 4.6.2 for Director-Elect and Section 4.6.4 for Administrative Director, the responsibilities for these positions include:

## Director-Elect

- Preside at all meetings and represent the Section in the absence of the Section Director;
- Act as Section Director should the Section Director be unable to serve, as authorized by the Section Board;
- Organize the annual Board Retreat;
- Be responsible for keeping the Bylaws in order, appointing the Nomination Committee, and organizing elections; and
- Other duties as assigned by the Section Director.

## Administrative Director

- Maintain the records of the Section, and make such records available for members;
- Conduct the correspondence of the Section under the direction of the Section Director and the Section Board;
- Prepare and distribute the records of actions resulting from Section Board meetings;

- Work with Board members to publicize professional development activities and networking events and maintain a calendar of section activities;
- Work closely with the Communications Director to prepare the eNews; and,
- Inform APA California of section activities of interest to other APA members.

Interested Northern Section members in good standing (including incumbent Board members) must submit a complete nomination petition by **October 19, 2016**, that includes the following: Name, address of membership, email, work or daytime phone number, signatures of support from at least five current Northern Section members, and a brief statement of candidacy (not to exceed 500 words) to the APA California Northern Nomination Committee.

Electronic ballots will be sent to the Northern Section membership on **November 1st** and will be due **November 21st**. The Nomination Committee will publish qualifying candidate statements in the November 1st edition of the *eNews* and will include on the election ballot all candidates who meet the minimum qualifications as described in the APA California–Northern Bylaws (Section 4.2.2). The Bylaws can be found on the Northern Section website at <http://bit.ly/O0dLMo>. Please submit completed nomination petitions to the Nomination Committee Chair, Andrea Ouse, AICP, at [andrea.ouse@cityofvallejo.net](mailto:andrea.ouse@cityofvallejo.net). ■

## LETTERS

You do such a great job with this newsletter!

**Larry Orman**

GreenInfo Network

I continue to be so impressed with the quality and truly valuable info that you manage to squeeze into every issue of the *Northern News*. Keep up the great work!

**Pete Parkinson**

President-elect, APA California ■

## Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee seeks members

The City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG) has four public member vacancies on its Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. Interested members of the public who are residents of San Mateo County are invited to join. You can find the C/CAG announcement and application at <http://bit.ly/2di23uN>. The deadline to apply is November 18, 2016. ■



## National Trust: Save the Embarcadero

Next City, October 5, 2016

**Kelsey E. Thomas**, <http://bit.ly/2dGC2sA> • “San Francisco’s Embarcadero District is one of eight urban landmarks in the U.S. deemed ‘endangered’ by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in its annual list of historic places in danger of disappearing.

“San Francisco’s Embarcadero is facing the threat of climate change-related sea level rise. The Port of San Francisco anticipates a sea level rise of up to 66 inches by 2100, and the area is at high risk of earthquakes. While the city has prioritized saving the district in the past — even pulling out a freeway in the early 90s and rehabbing a number of buildings — protecting the area from climate threats would require greater federal, state, and local collaboration.

According to the Trust, <http://bit.ly/2dGC17U>, “The National Register-listed district is a major economic

engine for the Bay Area, hosting a variety of maritime uses while also serving as the region’s ferry hub. Its historic character, enhanced by the rehabilitation of the iconic Ferry Building, has contributed to a remarkable urban waterfront renaissance in San Francisco.”

“At-risk assets generate \$2.1 billion in rents, business income, and wages annually, and are a major contributor to a tourism industry valued at over \$11 billion a year. ‘An all-hands-on-deck approach will be necessary to ensure that the historic Embarcadero continues to serve as the historic gateway and cultural, recreational, and economic hub for the City by the Bay into the next century,’ said Stephanie Meeks, National Trust President and CEO.”

## East Bay reacts to fifth year of drought in California

The Daily Californian, October 4, 2016

**Semira Sherief**, <http://bit.ly/2dGEeA3> • “Despite California lifting mandatory statewide water restrictions earlier this year, 60 percent of the state is still in a severe or extreme drought.

“Based on our water supply, we know that we have enough water for three years. We can confidently say we are out of the drought emergency,” said EBMUD spokesperson Nelsy Rodriguez. “However, conservation is a way of life in California. We ask (customers) to be mindful of their water use.” Meanwhile, EBMUD hopes to expand its recycled-water program — currently active in San Ramon and Emeryville — to Albany and Berkeley in a few years.

“UC Berkeley real estate spokesperson Christine Shaff said the campus is continuing efforts to reduce its water use.

“The Office of Sustainability (and Energy), in their latest report, noted that campus water use is down almost 20 percent from 2008 levels,” she said. “What’s significant about that number is that there are more campus buildings since then. The campus population has increased, but our water usage has decreased.”

“Since statewide water restrictions were lifted in May, several campus fountains have started running again. “The water used in the fountains recirculates, Shaff said, which is one of EBMUD’s guidelines for allowing water fountains to run.

“While CA-DWR spokesperson Doug Carlson hopes to see the drought end soon, he said the DWR cannot make predictions and urges people to conserve.”

(Norcal continues on next page)

**“The sharing economy is disrupting commercial real estate.** Uber has not only disrupted but is in the process of truly endangering the taxicab industry. And co-working sites are taking over more and more space in office buildings around the country. A new report by Newmark Grubb Knight Frank now confirms the suspicions that the sharing economy is having a disruptive effect on commercial real estate. The two sectors most affected are offices and hotels, it found. Retail and multifamily housing have yet to see a large impact, but the report authors say it is likely coming as well.”

—Erika Morphy, *GlobeSt.com*, <http://bit.ly/2dTUXVP>

**Bay Area’s worst commutes**

*KQED*, October 4, 2016

**Sonja Hutson**, <http://bit.ly/2dDt13v> • “Bay Area drivers spent 22 percent more time on congested freeways in 2015 than they did in 2014 and 70 percent more than in 2010. The Bay Bridge corridor is the worst offender.

“Drivers traveling northbound from Highway 101 — at the Interstate 280 interchange — and eastbound to the Yerba Buena Island Tunnel spent a collective total of 13,000 hours a day traveling at less than 35 mph, according to a report released by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

“MTC also notes that congestion on westbound I-80 is unprecedented: It typically lasts from 5:35 AM to 7:50 PM, unrelieved by a midday break.

“In 2015, employment in the Bay Area reached an all-time high of 3.7 million, almost half of it in San Francisco and Silicon Valley. Two out of three Bay Area commuters drive solo to work, according to the MTC. Both San Francisco and Silicon Valley are big job generators, and you see the traffic congestion as people seek to reach those job locations.”

**Bay Area’s top 10 most congested corridors, 2015**

1. 101/80 North/East: I-280 to Treasure Island Tunnel
2. 80 West: CA-4 to US-101
3. 680/280 South/North: S. Jackson Ave. to Foothill Expy.
4. 101 South: N. Fair Oaks Ave. to Oakland Road
5. 80 East: W. Grand Ave. to Gilman St.
6. 880 South: I-238/Washington Ave. exit to CA-237/W Calaveras Blvd.
7. 680 North: Mission Blvd./CA-262 to Calaveras Rd.
8. 101 North: Silver Creek Valley Rd. to N. Fair Oaks Ave.
9. 880 North: Mowry Ave. to A St.
10. 101 North: CA-84/Woodside Rd. to E. Hillsdale Blvd.

**Atherton loses lawsuit over Caltrain electrification project**

*The Almanac*, September 28, 2016

**Barbara Wood**, <http://bit.ly/2dIPX7a> • “A Superior Court judge has ruled against Atherton and other plaintiffs that had tried to stop progress on Caltrain’s electrification project by claiming the project’s environmental report was flawed.

“The lawsuit, filed in Feb. 2015 by Atherton, a transit advocacy nonprofit, and the Community Coalition on High-Speed Rail, argued that the electrification project and the state’s high-speed-rail project were so closely tied that any environmental report needed to look at the possible impacts of both projects on the Peninsula.

“The ruling by Contra Costa County Superior Court Judge Barry P. Goode said high-speed rail and the electrification are separate projects. The lawsuit had argued that the electrification project couldn’t take place without high-speed rail because funding that makes the electrification project possible comes from the California High Speed Rail Authority, and that the ultimate plan is for Caltrain and high-speed rail to share the rail tracks that run from San Francisco to San Jose.

“Caltrain spokeswoman Jayme Ackemann said the judge’s ‘ruling confirms [that] Caltrain’s project is independent of the High Speed Rail project and therefore we have a valid, approved EIR that has fully investigated all of the electrification impacts and alternatives.’

“Ms. Ackemann said [Caltrain] did not make any concessions to Atherton as a result of the lawsuit. She said construction activities for electrification will start in 2017 and electric train service should be in operation by 2020.”

*(Norcal continues on next page)*

**There will be lots of new housing in San Jose.** “San Jose has long had a commitment to building a lot of housing, including affordable. As part of our general plan, we’ve committed to building 120,000 new units by 2040 — which we will absolutely need because our population will grow by 40 percent, including 117,000 millennials. In the past three years, we issued nearly 10,000 building permits for new units. We’ve adopted new tools, like an impact fee to fund affordable housing. In the past three years, 93 percent of our new units were for multifamily housing. Going forward, our big goal is to build a wider variety of housing types in the right locations.” —*Kim Walesh, San Jose economic development director, as told to Richard Scheinin of The Mercury News, <http://hrlid.us/2djfg6u>*



### Dispute over Brisbane development

SFGate, September 30, 2016

**C.W. Nevius**, <http://bit.ly/2dIMj7m> • At a meeting on September 29, “The Brisbane City Council decided to postpone a vote on adding housing to a proposal to develop a 684-acre site known as Baylands. Instead, the council will hold a series of monthly hearings, with a vote expected in May.

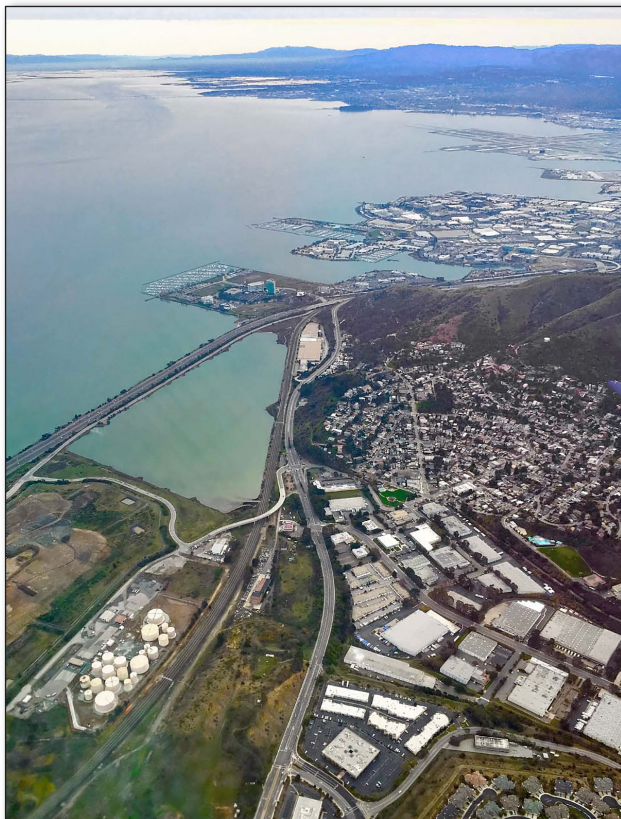
“The Bayshore Roundhouse — once a hub on the old Southern Pacific rail yard — now sits abandoned and decaying on open space land between Bayshore Boulevard and Highway 101 in Brisbane. The historic roundhouse will be restored as part of the planned Baylands mixed-use development project.

“Bay Area housing advocates attended the meeting, and one of them, the executive director of the San Francisco Housing Action Coalition, later said ‘there were more speakers in favor of housing than those saying *No, no, no.*’

“Many Brisbane residents favor a ‘community alternative’ plan that would create over 8 million square feet of commercial/industrial space, but no housing. A city-produced document on sustainability says that ‘there will be ample housing in the new developments planned across the border in San Francisco for those working in the Baylands who wish to live nearby.’

“The idea that Brisbane would consider this huge commercial project, but fail to provide living space has officials from both San Francisco and San Mateo Counties up in arms.

“I think all of us need to protest that,” said Adrienne Tissier, who represents Brisbane on the San Mateo Board of Supervisors. ‘It’s easy to take all the revenue and not take any responsibility for the people.’”



**Brisbane, looking south.** Industrial buildings occupy the flatlands, and residences nestle into the north side of the San Bruno Mountains (right). The Baylands project area is east (left) of Bayshore Boulevard, which curves upward in the center foreground. Photo: Juan Borrelli, AICP.

### Women build models of a safer Oakland

OaklandNorth, September 21, 2016

**Andrew Beale**, <http://bit.ly/2dfuDwR> • “Chris Hwang and Lisa Baskir of Walk Oakland Bike Oakland (WOBO) are at ‘Safe Passages for Women in Oakland,’ a workshop directed by James Rojas, an urban planner who studied at MIT and went on to found the group sponsoring tonight’s event, Place It!

“Place It! encourages greater community participation in city planning by having people build model cityscapes using everyday objects. At tonight’s workshop are women who had been invited to share their ideas of what a safer city might look like.

“Most participants in the Safe Passages event said they already feel safe in Oakland. According to statistics published by the Oakland Police Department, crime is in fact down across the board compared with 2014 and 2015, with

a 10 percent decrease in violent crime and an 11 percent decrease in crime overall.

“While many issues were raised by the participants, one consistent theme emerged by the end of the workshop. Ratna Amin, the transportation policy director for SPUR, summed it up after the workshop: ‘Something every single group talked about was not being afraid — not having to be afraid — of cars.’

“The workshop did not result in concrete policy proposals, but organizer Rojas said that wasn’t necessarily the point.

“‘One of the problems in urban planning is people don’t really engage in the process of planning. I developed this method using art-making, storytelling, and play as a way to get people engaged,’ he said.” ■

## Where do upzonings happen?

Market Urbanism, October 5, 2016

**Chris Bradford**, <http://bit.ly/2dpp5A3> • “What NIMBYs are really after is limiting access to neighborhood amenities. By limiting the quantity of housing, the value of neighborhood amenities is capitalized into home prices.

“Evidence in favor of this ‘club’ theory comes from L.A. planner C.J. Gabbe, <http://bit.ly/2dppUIR>.

Gabbe looked at how the zoning of each of L.A.’s 780,000 parcels changed between 2002 and 2014.

The first striking result was how few of the parcels were either upzoned or downzoned: less than two-tenths of one percent of L.A.’s land area each year.

“But Gabbe also documents that resistance to zoning does seem to depend on the quality of neighborhood amenities.

*‘[It] is clear that upzoning in Los Angeles follows the path of least political resistance and most development opportunity. Upzoning was most likely on well-located parcels near freeways, and on parcels previously zoned for low-intensity uses like manufacturing and parking. For every mile farther from a freeway ramp, the odds of a parcel being upzoned were nearly halved.’*

*‘Meanwhile, upzoning was about 96 percent less likely in neighborhoods with average or higher shares of homeowners coupled with desirable amenities such as proximity to the beach and high-performing schools.’*

“If the housing markets were at all efficient, a nice neighborhood would be upzoned as demand rises for its specific set of amenities. In reality, the opposite is true. A desirable amenity makes neighborhood owners more determined to fight off any sort of increase in the quantity of housing.”

## Bay Area-Sacramento megaregion?

Silicon Valley Business Journal, October 5, 2016

**Bryce Druzin**, <http://bit.ly/2dNvx7t> • “The Bay Area Council and the Greater Sacramento Area Economic Council have announced a campaign to integrate the Bay Area and Sacramento area. ‘Sacramento has the advantage of a lower cost structure,’ said Jim Wunderman, Bay Area Council CEO and president.

“The core mission of the campaign is to keep Bay Area companies that are considering moving or expanding out of state in California. Sacramento, with its low housing costs, educational institutions like U.C. Davis, and proximity to the Bay Area make it a more desirable location than Seattle or Austin.

“The two councils have been discussing the initiative for months, and a June report by the Bay Area Council titled ‘The Northern California Megaregion,’ (<http://bit.ly/2dOy2pK>) solidified a framework for the campaign. That report, published in June, identified 21 counties in four regions with 12.2 million people: Monterey Bay Area, Sacramento Area, San Francisco Bay Area, and Northern San Joaquin Valley.

“Matt Mahood, San Jose Silicon Valley Chamber President and CEO, said Silicon Valley has the educated workforce, universities, and venture capital to hold on to companies.

“Wunderman is not concerned about jobs in the larger Bay Area, given the incredible job growth the region has seen over the last six years, and physically uniting the two areas will open up a labor market for Bay Area companies. Improving the rail connection between Sacramento and the Livermore Tri-Valley area and BART, and improving the I-80 corridor connecting Sacramento to Oakland, are two key transit projects that would help unite the regions.”

(California continues on next page)

**“California keeps on farming, with or without water.** California’s chronic water-supply issues may be getting worse as climate change affects weather patterns and reduces the Sierra Nevada snowpack that has always acted as the state’s biggest reservoir. Agriculture accounts for about 80 percent of the state’s water use, and the consensus among those who think hard about these things (including farmers) is that this percentage will have to go down for the state to continue to survive and thrive. Improved efficiency can take care of some of this, but it also seems inevitable that there will have to be a bit less farming done. Low-value crops that could easily be grown in other states — alfalfa, say — are an obvious target for many observers.”

—Justin Fox, Bloomberg, <http://bloom.bg/2dPRbla>



## California now recognizes its watersheds as infrastructure

*American Rivers*, October 4, 2016

**Luke Hunt**, <http://bit.ly/2dSmHFj> • “California’s vast water infrastructure is likely the most extensive in the world. It includes the tallest dam in the nation (Oroville) and enormous state and federal water projects that tap rivers flowing from as far away as Wyoming.

“On September 27th, Governor Brown signed AB2480 which recognizes the state’s watersheds (meadows and forests) as part of its infrastructure. Just as the state’s canals and levees need maintenance and repair, so do rivers and watersheds. This bill opens the door to using modern infrastructure financing approaches to protect and repair them.

“Infrastructure bonds can now be used for restoration and protection. Likewise, it will be easier for utilities to justify investment in watershed restoration. Importantly, watershed degradation should now go on the books as value lost to deferred maintenance.

“The cost of deferred maintenance and asset condition will be two parts of the State Treasurer’s infrastructure inventory. This inventory should now value California’s watersheds as key water supply assets, on par with pipes and levees.

“The short bill (<http://bit.ly/2dSnwy9>) is a pleasure to read, beginning with: ‘It is hereby declared ... that source watersheds are recognized and defined as integral components of California’s water infrastructure.’ Eligible maintenance and repair activities include (§108.5(c)):

- ‘(1) Upland vegetation management to restore the watershed’s productivity and resiliency.
- ‘(2) Wet and dry meadow restoration.
- ‘(3) Road removal and repair.
- ‘(4) Stream channel restoration.’”

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## APA names Downtown Santa Ana ‘Great Neighborhood’

*Great Places in America*, October 3, 2016

<http://bit.ly/2dgudGu> • “Santa Ana is the fourth-densest city in the U.S. It is a gathering place for artists, entrepreneurs, and central to Orange County’s creative class. Downtown Santa Ana’s booming local businesses, restaurants, and long-time residents are committed to the creation of a tight-knit, thriving community that celebrates diversity through festivals and public celebrations.

“The area has a great mixture of land uses, ranging from government buildings to shops and offices, and all the way to a small industrial sector in the east. Downtown Santa Ana’s architecture is a unique blend of Beaux Art, Classic and Spanish Revival, Victorian, Craftsman, Brutalism, California Contemporary, and a dash of Art Deco that makes each walk an experience.

“Downtown Santa Ana is on the National Register of Historic Places. In a sea of Orange County tract housing, the neighborhood has a unique urban identity that is hard to find in Southern California. There are 99 historic structures that date from 1870 to the post-earthquake reconstructions of 1934.

“With a goal of further nurturing the growth of downtown Santa Ana into the future, an award-winning Transit Zoning Code was implemented within the neighborhood. It is currently the largest form-based code in the U.S. The plan has facilitated the design and construction of more than 170 affordable housing units, and a recently adopted adaptive reuse ordinance will facilitate the conversion of unused office and industrial space into residential units.”

*(California continues on next page)*

## California's housing shortage will hamper the economy

*Los Angeles Times*, September 28, 2016

**Natalie Kitroeff**, <http://lat.ms/2dSjtlo> • “The dearth of housing in California will put a drag on the state’s economic growth, according to two recent studies. California will continue to add jobs in 2017, but its advantage over the rest of the country will shrink in the future, say a report from UC Riverside and another from UCLA.

“The state cannot continue to grow as fast as it has in recent years, said economists who wrote the reports, unless it funnels more people into the workplace. But there aren’t enough homes in the state to accommodate a wave of new workers.

“Long-run growth is a function of the number of bodies in your economy,” said Chris Thornberg, an economist and the coauthor of a UC Riverside report, *Inland Empire 2035* (<http://bit.ly/2dSiT77>). “If we aren’t going to build new

housing to meet demand, we are going to limit population growth and economic growth.’

“California is nearing full employment, which means there are fewer people already in the state to recruit into the labor market. That will naturally tamp down on the economy, according to the UCLA Anderson Forecast, <http://bit.ly/2dSkCJC>. ‘The high cost of living in California discourages some migration to the state,’ said Jerry Nickelsburg, an economist and coauthor of the report.

“The rate the state will add jobs in 2016 is 2 percent, but that will slow to 1.7 percent in 2017 and 1.1 percent in 2018, the report said. ‘It’s actually a decision by Californians to restrict the rapidity of growth,’ Nickelsburg said. ‘Additional migration means more congestion and more pollution.’”

## Update: Klamath River dam owner applies to remove four dams

*KQED, The California Report*, September 27, 2016

(*Ed. Note:* When *Northern News* last covered the deal to remove four hydroelectric dams from the 236-mile Klamath River [from *Eureka Times-Standard*, <http://bit.ly/1SgZm8Y>, April 6, 2016], California Gov. Jerry Brown, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown, and other state, federal, power, irrigator, and environmental officials joined U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell to sign the new Klamath Hydroelectric Settlement Agreement [KHSA]. The KHSA proposes to remove four Klamath River dams currently owned by PacifiCorp by 2020 to improve river flows and benefit fisheries and river communities.)

**Molly Peterson** reports, <http://bit.ly/2dQzRCX> • “The owner of four dams on the Klamath River and the nonprofit corporation created to take responsibility for their destruction have filed long-awaited applications with federal regulators to remove the dams.

“Portland-based PacifiCorp submitted paperwork on Sept. 23, seeking permission from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to transfer ownership of the dams to the Klamath River Renewal Corp. KRRC joined that application, and is separately asking FERC to approve dam decommissioning.

“In 2011, the Klamath Hydroelectric Settlement Agreement and the Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement aimed to improve water quality and fish habitat as well as create a framework to share water and end bitter water rights battles. But Republicans in Congress blocked the deals until they expired last December.

“But even with the support of PacificCorp, dam removal remains unpopular in some circles. Political leaders, including county supervisors in Siskiyou County, are vowing to contest the FERC application.” ■

**“Make boulevards great again.** The boulevard is an important piece of public infrastructure. The bottom line is, cities need to be built for people first, and that includes great building frontages and streets, but also people-friendly boulevards. There is no one-size-fits-all; context is absolutely important. So yes, introduce some porosity where possible to catch rainwater runoff, and absolutely plant and care properly for street trees, and leave enough space for lighting, benches, bike racks, and newspaper boxes, but think of the movement of people first when planning and designing boulevards.”

—Sam Newborn, *Streets.mn*, <http://bit.ly/2dQhu0U>



# U.S. roundup

Excerpts from around the country, linked to the original articles

## U.S. cities with highest and lowest rents

24/7 Wall Street, October 10, 2016

**Paul Auskick**, <http://bit.ly/2dSeLnn> • “Demand for U.S. rental housing continues to rise, and rents have increased. The national average rent rose 4.7 percent year over year in September to \$1,219.

“Of the 20 cities where year-over-year rents have grown the most, eight are located in California, including the top two: **Sacramento**, where rents have risen 12.3 percent in the past 12 months, and **Oakland**, where rents are up 11.9 percent.

“The 10 U.S. cities with the highest rents are:

- New York City (Manhattan): \$4,083 per month
- **San Francisco**: \$3,472
- Boston: \$3,191
- Jersey City, New Jersey: \$2,779
- New York City (Brooklyn): \$2,550
- **Oakland**: \$2,528
- **San Jose**, California: \$2,526
- **Los Angeles**: \$2,132
- Washington, D.C.: \$2,019
- **San Diego**: \$1,964

“The 10 cities with the lowest rents are:

1. Wichita, Kansas: \$625 per month
2. Toledo, Ohio: \$659
3. Tulsa, Oklahoma: \$681
4. Oklahoma City: \$729
5. Memphis, Tennessee: \$736
6. El Paso, Texas: \$751
7. Tucson, Arizona: \$758
8. Indianapolis, Indiana: \$791
9. Albuquerque, New Mexico: \$814
10. Greensboro, North Carolina: \$824

“To compile the report, RENTCafé’s research team analyzed rent data across the 75 largest cities in the United States. The report is exclusively based on apartment data related to buildings containing 50 or more units. See the report on the RENTCafé website,” <http://bit.ly/2dSfTaW>.

## Austin plans affordable housing for teachers and government workers

Austin American-Statesman, October 7, 2016

**Melissa B. Taboada**, <http://atxne.ws/2dQErRG> • “City of Austin, Austin school district, and Travis County leaders have taken the first steps toward creating affordable housing on public land for teachers and low-wage government workers.

“Representatives from the three agencies unanimously approved a resolution that calls for at least one parcel of public land to be selected for the project by Dec. 1. The housing would be available for district, city, and county employees. The resolution details the properties should be located near:

- “Existing or planned high-capacity transit land or other public transportation, or within a half-mile from a transit stop.
- “A school, including those that are under-enrolled.
- “An Imagine Austin regional, town, or neighborhood center.
- “A hub for commercial services.

“Rebecca Giello, the city’s assistant director of neighborhood housing and community development, said a community land trust is an appropriate model to consider, as it allows for individual homeownership, includes fixed housing expenses, and would not levy property taxes.

“Under the model, resale prices would be restricted for the owners of the homes. But they would be able to get back the money they contributed as a down payment, the mortgage they’ve paid, and a fixed rate of appreciation.

“It achieves long term security of home ownership for low- and moderate-income households,” Giello said.

“The City Council will vote on the resolution on Oct. 13; commissioners will weigh the issue on Oct. 18; and the district will vote on it Oct. 24.”

(U.S. continues on next page)

## St. Paul debuts first elevated bikeway downtown

*Twin Cities Pioneer Press*, October 7, 2016

Frederick Melo, <http://bit.ly/2dpMzVs>

• “The Capital City Bikeway, a new two-way bike route elevated to be level with the sidewalk, debuted the first week of October in downtown St. Paul. It now runs for 2,000 feet along the west side of Jackson Street. By year’s end, the off-street path will extend from University Avenue on the north to the Sam Morgan Regional Trail along the Mississippi River.

“An elevated bikeway level with the sidewalk puts a cyclist in the same general camp as a pedestrian, reducing uncertainty. In addition to the curb itself, street furniture such as benches, streetlights, and public art will further separate cars from cyclists. New signs are on the way. The bikeway will reduce but not eliminate parking, which will vary block by block.

“Downtown St. Paul has long been the doughnut hole in the city’s cycling infrastructure. It’s too intimidating for all but the diehards, and regional trails just drop off without signs or clear links between them. Meanwhile, a growing number of downtown residents and visitors would like to feel safe exploring the area without their cars.

“Reuben Collins, a city transportation engineer, said ‘The design of these two-way bikeways at sidewalk level is beyond just moving people on bikes. It’s about economic development. We hope people will want to spend time on Jackson Street, whether it’s walking or biking, because of the level of amenities we’ve provided there.’”



(U.S. continues on next page)

**Housing Development Toolkit is fine; more is needed.** “In a sign that market solutions for the United States’ growing housing affordability crisis are beginning to earn bipartisan support, the White House unveiled its ‘Housing Development Toolkit’ (<http://bit.ly/2dTyKSP>) which encourages state and local policymakers to undertake a number of long-overdue reforms. ... Market-rate affordable housing reform rightly belongs at the local level. Unfortunately, current policy means that, even if they were deregulated, small-scale building efforts would too often die in the halls of the FHA and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. If the White House and federal policymakers are truly interested in encouraging market solutions to housing affordability, they can start by helping the feds get out of the way.”

—Jonathan Coppage, visiting senior fellow at the R Street Institute, <http://wapo.st/2dTxj6X>

## MPO consolidation reopened for comment

*Eno Transportation Weekly*, October 6, 2016

**Alexander Bond**, <http://bit.ly/2dSMnl9> • “The Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Administration proposed rule on Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform sparked quite a bit of interest over the summer. The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (<http://bit.ly/2dSMeOG>) would essentially force over 140 MPOs to consolidate with nearby MPOs that serve the same Census-defined urban area. Based on comments received and other feedback, FHWA and FTA have chosen to reopen the comment period **through October 24**.

“FHWA/FTA are principally interested in input on (a) under what circumstances would multiple MPOs be allowed to serve a single urban area; (b) the impact of requiring one set of plan documents; and (c) the forecasted cost of the proposed rule. Reopening of the comment period for these specific issues may foretell a softer line on the one-MPO-per-urban area standard that would spur mass consolidation.

“The final rule will have to be carefully written to pass legal muster. As the Metropolitan Transportation Commission’s Executive Director Steve Heminger pointed out, the NPRM’s process for MPO boundary drawing treads perilously close to the line between the administrative rulemaking role of USDOT and the legislative role of Congress.

“If USDOT allows urban areas to be split into multiple MPOs, it would represent a major win for suburban local governments and the dozens of MPOs that were targeted for consolidation. Although some MPO realignment might still occur, the scope of the national MPO shuffle would be far less than what was envisioned in this summer’s NPRM.

“Some version of the rule is still very likely to be finalized before the end of the Obama Administration.”

## In defense of mobile homes

*Priceonomics*, October 5, 2016

**Alex Mayyasi**, <http://bit.ly/2dTDBkv> • “Millions of Americans struggle with rent payments, but still want a lawn. For them, mobile homes are the cheapest form of housing available. At the same time, it’s rare for someone to build a new mobile home park, because no homeowner wants a trailer park nearby.

“Trailer parks are an undervalued asset. But maximizing profits at a mobile home park means taking advantage of the lack of supply and the expense of moving a mobile home to raise rents every year. In pursuit of profit, mobile home park investors dramatically increased the stock of well-managed, affordable housing. And they’d create a lot more — at better prices — if America’s homeowners weren’t dead set against trailer parks.

“Many Americans cannot afford a house. Although the percentage of homeowners increased from 64 percent to a peak of 69 percent during the tenures of presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, the homeownership rate has returned to 64 percent.

“Could more people afford homes if we made them smaller and more efficiently? If we made them small as we did in the old days, could we slash the price?”

“Witold Rybczynski, an emeritus professor of architecture at the University of Pennsylvania, says no. The problem is almost wholly that land is too expensive. Reduce the size of a new, modern house by 50 percent, as Rybczynski noted in 2008 (<http://bit.ly/2dNn4Rr>), and houses in metropolitan areas would still cost over \$200,000.

“That’s the secret to the extreme affordability of mobile homes — they take land out of the equation.”

(U.S. continues on next page)

**“Seattle’s Mandatory Housing Affordability program is making its way through city council.** Seven-story apartment buildings in Crown Hill. Small apartment homes along Hillman City side streets. Duplexes and row houses throughout South Park. Those structures and others could be allowed under zoning changes proposed for Seattle’s urban villages. Officials have now released detailed maps (<http://st.news/2d4XGbu>) showing how some of the city’s densest neighborhoods could become denser.” —Daniel Beekman, *Seattle Times*, <http://bit.ly/2dAgqxW>



## Staten Island: Aerial gondola plan draws mixed reviews

*Next City*, September 28, 2016

**Sandy Smith**, <http://bit.ly/2dcSDRi> • “The latest effort to ease Staten Islanders’ journeys to Manhattan may take to the air if Bayonne, New Jersey, officials let it land where the Staten Islanders want it to.

“The Staten Island Economic Development Corporation, which announced a competition to design an aerial tramway connecting the island to points off it, would run over the Kill van Kull strait from the island to the Eighth Street station of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail line in New Jersey, paralleling the Bayonne Bridge.

“That route was chosen as the most efficient in terms of cost, length, and travel time — 33 minutes, including a 6-minute gondola ride (<http://bit.ly/2dcTnG2>).

“The \$60 million projected cost compares very favorably with a light-rail line across the bridge, which would cost \$1 billion to build (<http://bit.ly/2dcTSQi>). The line would be constructed without public funds and would tie in with a proposed light-rail line along Staten Island’s west shore.

“But Bayonne officials aren’t so hot on where the proposed line would touch down. On NJ.com (<http://bit.ly/2dcTEsy>), Bayonne Mayor Jimmy Davis said the line would have to travel too far to reach the Eighth Street station. And residents in the neighborhood between First and Eighth streets have complained about the ongoing project to raise the deck of the Bayonne Bridge so larger ships can pass beneath it.”

## Are U.S. cities growing or not?

*Governing*, October 2016

**William Fulton**, <http://bit.ly/2dKZfda> • “There is no one answer. Yonah Freemark, a Ph.D. student in urban planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, [argues that] central cities are losing population relative to their suburbs, and close-in neighborhoods are losing population relative to newer neighborhoods.

“His basic point is that urban neighborhoods that were already developed in 1960 generally have fewer residents now than they had back then, especially in younger Sun Belt cities.

“First, the urban revitalization patterns of the last decade aren’t really about the number of people but about changing demographics and the changing distribution of wealth. That’s because household sizes are smaller and few people actually lived downtown 50 years ago. And even though fewer people live close in today, the people that do have more money.

“Second, although this trend is true in some parts of the Sun Belt, it’s not true in Southwestern and Western cities. Freemark’s list of six cities with the highest population increase in close-in neighborhoods includes Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, and San Jose. What these cities have in common has nothing to do with downtown or close-in neighborhoods. All five are land-constrained on the periphery and therefore growth has nowhere else to go.

“As Freemark’s numbers show, even where the population has gone down, economic activity has gone up. And there is a relationship between what goes on at the center and what happens on the fringe.”

## Twin Cities: New development leaves low income renters behind

*Next City*, October 4, 2016

**Jen Kinney**, <http://bit.ly/2dDsgYd> • “When a new owner purchased a 698-unit, moderately priced apartment complex just south of Minneapolis, it could have been a good thing for the 2,300 residents. The new owner made upgrades and added amenities, but with those came a rent increase of 40 percent. Fewer than 20 percent of the original tenants were still in the building less than a year after the sale.

“As the number of higher-income renters in the Twin Cities has increased, so has the sale of apartments to investors looking to ‘upscale’ older properties to serve that population. Between 2010 and 2014, the number of Twin Cities renter households with incomes above \$50,000 increased by 31 percent, sales of multifamily rental housing increased by 165 percent, and the vacancy rate dropped from 5 to 2.6 percent.

“The new demand for luxury apartments also dramatically increased the sale price of apartment properties. And costs are rising in the suburbs too.

“What is clear is the need to preserve unsubsidized unaffordable housing. The Greater Minnesota Housing Fund has set aside funding to preserve 1,000 of the roughly 167,000 rental units in the Twin Cities region that are affordable to households earning less than 60 percent of area median income. GMHF purchased a 72-unit affordable complex in the New Brighton suburb with a management company that agreed to maintain affordable rents and accept Section 8. But the ‘upscaling’ of existing complexes is far outpacing both the preservation and creation of affordable stock.” ■

# World roundup

Excerpts from around the world, linked to the original articles

## Oslo issues 'climate budget'

Next City, October 6, 2016

**Jen Kinney**, <http://bit.ly/2dldy4M> • “Four days before American voters choose a presidential candidate, the landmark Paris climate agreement will enter into force on November 4. For the deal to take effect, 55 countries accounting for at least 55 percent of global emissions had to adopt it, a threshold reached October 5 when 73 of the 197 parties to the treaty did so.

“Meanwhile, Oslo is setting its own climate goals. The Norwegian city has issued its first ‘climate budget,’ which aims to halve greenhouse gas emissions within four years, <http://reut.rs/2dldHVA>. The plan sets annual goals to reduce emissions from cars, homes, and businesses by raising tolls for cars entering the city, eliminating parking spaces, building more bike lanes, shifting the bus fleet to renewable energy, and phasing out fossil-fuel heating for homes and offices.

“The Oslo council agreed earlier in the year to halve Oslo’s emissions from 1.2 million tons of carbon dioxide in 1990 to 600,000 by 2020. The ‘carbon budget’ is to outline how exactly the city will get there.

“According to Reuters, no country has cut emissions by more than about 5 percent a year, a rate France achieved when it switched from fossil fuels to nuclear power in the 1970s. The rich countries that have signed on to the Paris agreement expect it will take decades to halve their own, larger emissions. Other cities, including Austin, <http://bit.ly/2dletCe>, are setting climate goals that match or outpace national goals.”

## Draft architecture and design policy launched for New South Wales

ArchitectureAU, October 6, 2016

**Louisa Wright**, <http://bit.ly/2dJeGT4> • “The draft policy, titled Better Placed, has been prepared by the NSW Office of the Government Architect and was announced by NSW planning minister Rob Stokes.

“The strategic arm of the NSW Office of the Government Architect is now part of the NSW Department of Planning and Environment, having formerly been part of the state’s Public Works department. The move, announced in January 2016, shifted the focus of the office from a design and construct role to a strategic and advisory role.

“This draft policy lays the foundation for the design-led planning strategy being developed by the government architect’s office, one of the first strategic documents produced by GAO since restructure.

“The strategy will provide guidance to support good design outcomes and introduce new initiatives, including the establishment of a NSW State Design Advisory Panel for key state significant projects.

“Minister Stokes said good design and planning in Sydney was important to avoid ending up with ‘a big, disorganized, ugly city.’ Stokes also revealed changes to the 1979 *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act*, which will

undergo consultation later this year and will include a new objective promoting good design in the built environment. ‘Good design is critical to creating livable, productive, sustainable, and resilient communities, and we want to champion good design through a new policy and give it weight through legislative changes,’ said Stokes.”

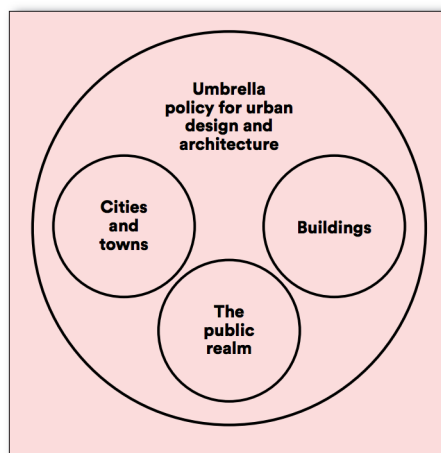


Image from “Better Placed,” page 27. The 69-page PDF can be viewed and downloaded at <http://bit.ly/2dJiaEY>.

(World continues on next page)

## Vancouver is ripe for change

*The Globe and Mail*, October 5, 2016

**Frances Bula**, <http://bit.ly/2doIMrs> • Vancouver, beset by homelessness, growth, development, and the soaring price of housing, is in a prime position to reset itself, says the city's new chief planner, Gil Kelley. He said Vancouver is suffering from a bewildering dilemma common among attractive 21st-century cities: The better it becomes, the worse it is for some residents.

"Like most global cities, Vancouver is dealing with this conundrum of being highly livable and prosperous, but also, everybody wants to be here. It's our obligation to reconcile these twin forces and deal with the social effects of gentrification and displacement."



**Gil Kelly**

"Mr. Kelley, 63, worked in Portland, Ore., for 10 years as director of planning before becoming director of citywide planning in San Francisco and in Berkeley for 10 years before that. He said that change, along with Vancouver's historic willingness to set bold new directions, puts it in a better position than San Francisco to grapple with the challenges of 21st-century cities.

"San Francisco is virtually a city in crisis," Mr. Kelley said. He noted that San Francisco gains 70,000 people every year — mostly wealthy and childless — and loses 60,000, mostly low-income and with families.

"San Francisco has been so resistant to development that it is now far behind Vancouver and would need 100,000 new housing units instantly to meet demand. But Vancouver needs to have a collective conversation about where to go next — a vision for the future."

## Will sponge 'cities' solve China's urban flooding?

*The Guardian*, October 3, 2016

**Anna Leach**, <http://bit.ly/2doMz8h> • "Flooding causes more economic, social, and humanitarian damage than any other natural disaster and has affected 2.3 billion people over the past 20 years. China this year saw the worst floods in the country since 1998.

"There's been very serious flooding for four or five years each summer," says Michael Zhao, an expert in water management in the Shanghai office of Arup. "As urbanization brings more people to cities, the problem becomes worse and worse."

"In December 2013, President Xi Jinping announced a national plan to combat flooding in China's cities, 'to retain valuable water resources, to utilize the natural system to achieve drainage, and to establish natural retention, natural infiltration, and natural purification — like a sponge city,' says Zhao.

"Initially 16 cities were selected for the 'sponge cities' program, but eventually it will be rolled out nationally. Funding the project are the central government (15–20 percent), local government, and the private sector. Nothing at this scale has been attempted before.

"It's two years since the program began, but it's too early to tell if it will be successful. The program faces great challenges due to the ever-increasing urban population.

"*The Economist* recently reported that investors are 'not interested' in the sponge city program (<http://econ.st/2doMrpe>), indicating a slowdown of the Chinese economy. But if the majority of China's densely populated cities are submerged every summer, the economy and the residents will suffer even more."

(World continues on next page)

**More than just 'bearing witness to a global phenomenon.'** "It is imperative that communities and their planning efforts get serious about providing a livable environment that is supportive of people at all life stages. Aging should be a dominant consideration in the comprehensive planning process to ensure that this perspective is embedded in all aspects of planning and that implementation is not an ancillary consideration. This focus would also be educational, raising awareness for consumers as they make important long-term decisions such as housing purchases."  
—Deborah Howe, PhD, FAICP, president of the Oregon College of Oriental Medicine, in *Planning*, October 2016, page 44.



## China is serious about combating climate change

*Grist*, September 29, 2016

**Ben Adler**, <http://bit.ly/2dAhv9b> • “Two years after President Obama and Chinese President Xi Jinping announced that their countries would work together to combat climate change, China’s coal use and carbon emissions have dropped.

“If China continues to cut its emissions, or just keeps them at current levels, it will be way ahead of its goal of peaking emissions by around 2030, a goal it recommitted to during the Paris climate talks.

“In part, China’s emissions are dropping because the country is undergoing a dramatic shift in the nature of its economy. China is becoming more fully industrialized, its growth driven more by service industries, like technology, that are much less carbon intensive. And the government is spurring this shift by reducing indirect subsidies for coal and other carbon-heavy industries.

“We can’t know whether Chinese emissions will continue dropping every year, but China is committed to improving the energy efficiency of its economy and the cleanliness of its energy sources.

“Here are seven things China is doing to curb its climate-warming emissions:

- “Limiting coal use.
- “Carbon trading. Next year, China will launch a nation wide carbon market.
- “Cleaning up cars and trucks, and enforcing stricter fuel-efficiency standards for new cars.
- “Making buildings more energy efficient.
- “Building renewable capacity. In Paris, China promised that at least 20 percent of its energy portfolio will come from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030.
- “Building nuclear reactors — at least 60 within a decade.
- “Building high-speed rail.”

## Cities are eliminating parking lots

*The Guardian*, September 27, 2016

**Nate Berg**, <http://bit.ly/2dAih62> • “Parking lots tend to be big, flat, and not fully occupied. Often their size eclipses the buildings they serve.

“The US has long been the world leader in building parking spaces, with zoning requiring most developments to include parking. A 2011 study by the University of California, <http://bit.ly/2dJkJHi>, estimated there are 800 million parking spaces in the US, covering 25,000 square miles.

“Increasingly, cities across the world are prioritizing walkable urban development. Many are adjusting zoning [requirements downward]. Others are actively preventing new parking spaces from being built.

“After San Francisco implemented a parking system [based on] real-time data on parking availability and dynamic pricing for spaces, an evaluation found that the amount of time people spent looking for parking fell by 43 percent.

“Copenhagen has been reducing the amount of parking in the central city, pedestrianizing shopping streets, raising parking prices, and developing underground facilities on the outskirts. City-center parking spaces shrank and the proportion of people driving to work fell from 22 percent to 16 percent.

“Paris began eliminating on-street parking in 2003 and replacing it with underground facilities. Roughly 15,000 surface parking spaces have been eliminated since.

“São Paulo got rid of minimum parking requirements and implemented a maximum for specific projects. Beijing, Shenzhen, and Guangzhou are hoping to emulate San Francisco’s dynamic pricing approach.

“As cities think more carefully about how parking relates to urban development, density, and transit accessibility, it’s likely that parking spaces will continue to decline around the world.”

*(World continues on next page)*

## São Paulo street design headlines mayoral election

*Next City*, September 29, 2016

**Ignacio Amigo**, <http://bit.ly/2dDsxKG> • “São Paulo, Brazil, has some of the worst traffic in the world. Now, important improvements made under Mayor Fernando Haddad are in the spotlight. More than 200 miles of bike lanes have been constructed since 2013. The speed limit for some main roads was cut to 30 mph, and the traffic death toll in 2015 was the lowest since 1979. The city also rolled out exclusive bus lanes. But a mayoral election is underway, and candidates favored to win are promising to steer away from Haddad’s policies.

“Daniel Caetano, a transport engineer at the University of São Paulo, says that while Haddad’s mobility policies pointed in the right direction, they were enacted without public engagement.

“There has been a great advance in terms of social organization and legal tools, he says. The National Urban Mobility Plan, <http://bit.ly/2dLoDiK>, 2012, enforces cities’ ability to prioritize public transit and non-motorized transport. Also, São Paulo’s directive plan, <http://bit.ly/2dLpIay>, 2014, specifies that bike lanes, public transport, and pedestrian infrastructure should prevail.

“The three leading mayoral candidates say they support bike lanes and will maintain them, but argue that the expansion of the network was done without adequate planning and denounce the low quality of some lanes.

“In the likely event that none of the candidates obtains more than 50 percent of the vote on Oct. 2, the two top vote-getters will move on to an Oct. 30 runoff.” ■

**Trump schooled on Inner Cities.** “‘Inner city’ is imprecise in describing today’s urban reality. It captures neither the true geography of poverty or black America, nor the quality of life in many communities in central cities. But politically, its 1970s-era meaning lingers. ‘It’s useful as a synonym for black [and] conjures a narrative about what happened in America during and after the 1960s,’ said N. D. B. Connolly, a historian at Johns Hopkins University who never uses the phrase himself. It doesn’t matter, he says, that the term as Mr. Trump uses it is no longer demographically accurate: In reality, the central neighborhoods of many major American cities are thriving. Home values have risen faster in the heart of big cities over the last 25 years, a sign of their turnaround and a trend Mr. Trump, as a real estate developer, is likely to be aware of.”  
—Emily Badger in *The New York Times’ The Upshot*, <http://nyti.ms/2dYjlv3>

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The American Planning Association, California Chapter Northern, offers membership to city and regional planners and associated professionals primarily living or working in California, from Monterey County to Del Norte County, including the nine county San Francisco Bay Area and Lake and San Benito Counties. APA California Northern promotes planning-related continuing education and social functions in order to:

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

APA California Northern publishes *Northern News* 10 times each year in PDF for the exchange of planning ideas and information. Current and back issues are available for download at <http://bit.ly/JOV1Kn>. Entirely the effort of volunteers, the *News* is written and produced by and for urban planners in Northern California. Circulation (downloads per issue) 4,000.

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