

# Northern News

NORTHERN SECTION, CALIFORNIA CHAPTER, AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

NOVEMBER 1994

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## UGBs: The Antidote to California's Growth Battles ?

by Jim Sayer

ere's a quick multiple choice quiz. UGBs are: (a) the gurgling sound a baby makes after drinking formula; (b) the groaning sound you make when you finish your tax return; or (c) the acronym for an old but new device to protect greenbelt lands and sustain livable communities in Northern California.

If you answered (a) or (b), you definitely need to read this article. If you answered (c), you're probably an experienced planner or consultant who's identified one tool that public officials, citizen activists, and planners are beginning to use to keep their Northern California communities from sprawling across the landscape.

So what is a UGB? Spelled out, it's an **urban growth boundary** — an official, long-term boundary at the edge of a community that determines where new development will go (inside the line) and where it won't go (outside the line).

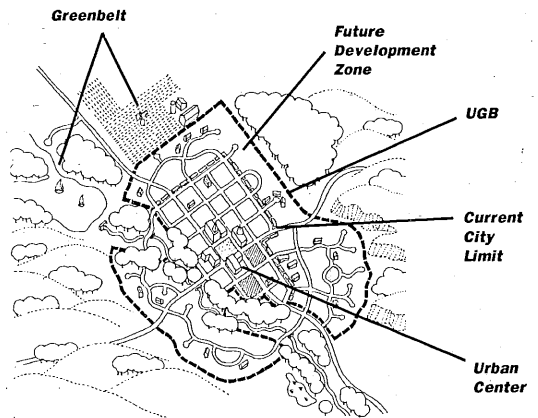
In many ways, it's an old concept. Probably the first UGB was established by England's Queen Elizabeth in the early 1500s, when she declared that no building should occur within three miles of city gates (to ward off the plague and keep an ample supply of farmland adjacent to cities). Since then, many European metropolitan areas and several North American communities have established fixed, long-term boundaries. For example, Portland, Oregon established a 20-year UGB in the early 1980s. Now it's completing a planning process that may lock in its UGB — with minimal changes — until the year 2040.

More recently, a number of California communities have established so-called boundaries — labeled everything from UGBs to urban limit lines to urban service boundaries — but none of them possess the firm, fixed character of Portland's UGB.

So while strong UGBs as a planning technique are nearly half-a-millennium old, they're essentially a new device in Northern California — and they're beginning to infiltrate planning efforts, especially in the San Francisco Bay Area.

In fact, enthusiasm for boundaries was highlighted at recent conferences on UGBs sponsored by Greenbelt Alliance, the Association of Bay Area Governments, and APA (Northern California). At the gatherings, experts from the Bay Area, Central Valley, Portland, and Vancouver, Canada highlighted six advantages of long-term UGBs:

- First, they **contain a community's outward sprawl** into prime farmlands or ecologically sensitive lands;
- Second, as they contain sprawl, UGBs **stop communities from merging into one another**, giving all of us distinct communities with clear identities. Moreover, they help preserve the identity of the surrounding landscape.



- Third, by focusing our attention inward, instead of on a bustling fringe, UGBs enable a community to **constantly revitalize** itself by investing in new infill development.
- Fourth, UGBs provide a community with a **sense of stability and certainty**. Once a long-term UGB is set and enforced, everyone — from environmentalists to land speculators — will know where development can go and

### The APA Holiday Party's December 15 ...

#### Mark Your Calendars Now!

The Northern Section CCAPA Holiday Party has been scheduled for 6:00 - 9:00 PM on Thursday evening, December 15.

The party is one of the section's most festive annual events and is not to be missed. Watch the next issue of Northern News for information on the location and further details on the event.

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## DIRECTORS COLUMN

by Steve Noack, AICP


For the head of a volunteer organization where the success of its endeavors is based solely on individual initiative, the month of October is my favorite time of the year as it is the time for planning 1995 activities at the section and state levels. On Saturday, October 15, the Northern Section Board met in Orinda for the annual retreat. This being my fifth retreat, I am now used to the pattern of the event where we cast aside our administrative mantle and focus on planning for the next year. The day is filled with animated discussion and an overwhelming number of great ideas, and we all depart feeling inspired and motivated to fulfill our accepted responsibilities. As with all brainstorming sessions, the actual success is measured in the follow through in implementing the good ideas, and maintaining the high level of motivation throughout the year. This year, more so than others, your board has accepted the challenge to implement a number of good ideas throughout the coming year. For 1995, you can expect the following:

- **A larger number of events sponsored by Northern Section.** We hope that many of the events planned for the Central Bay Region will attract participation from other regions. We also plan to sponsor key events in the other regions as well as promote greater professional and social interaction at the regional levels.
- **Improved interaction with local universities.** We were fortunate to have student representatives from U.C. Berkeley, Sonoma State University, and San Jose State University at our retreat and we invited all three representatives to participate on the Board. In addition, we established a monthly reporting mechanism to exchange information on activities and events of interest to students, and to the general membership.
- **Continued improvements to the newsletter,** focusing on timely articles of interest which may even create some controversy and public debate. We are also committed to providing articles on Regional Advisory Council (RAC) activities, and follow-up articles on key events. The Board looks forward to providing better service to you through these steps, and welcomes your participation in what we think will be a great year for Northern Section.

## BOARD MEMBER BIO

**Bonnie Guttman, AICP,** is the Administration Director for the Northern Section of the CCAPA. Bonnie is originally from Ohio where she attended the Ohio State University and earned a B.A. in Political Science with a minor in City Planning, and a Master's Degree in City and Regional Planning. Bonnie worked for over two years as a planner with the City of Columbus, and with Downtown Columbus, Inc. While in Ohio, she served as Director of the Central Ohio Section of the APA. Since moving to the Bay Area in 1992 Bonnie has been employed as a planner for the City and County of San Francisco, the City of San Bruno, and the City of Oakland where she is currently employed.

Bonnie has been an officer with the Northern Section for three years, and she believes that direct involvement with the APA allows planners to make a real difference in the way the organization is presented to professional planners and to the public. Her intent as a board member is to get more people in the profession involved with Chapter activities. In addition, Bonnie hopes to help increase the public's awareness relative to planning issues by increasing the exposure of the profession. She is especially pleased with the Section's reorganization because it will get more people involved with smaller geographic areas.

In her spare time, Bonnie enjoys playing volleyball and working out, and travelling abroad. 

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*Deadline  
for submitting articles, news,  
artwork, advertising and  
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in the Northern News is  
the 16th day of the month  
prior to publication.*

## MEMBERSHIP INFO

*For membership, subscription  
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APA National Hqtrs.  
1313 East 60th Street  
Chicago, IL 60637  
312/955-9100

## Planning in Jakarta?

Jakarta, a city of about 10 million people, is the capital of Indonesia. From a population standpoint, Indonesia is the fourth largest country in the world. Jakarta is a city that has skipped the modern phase of city development and has gone from a pre-industrial (almost medieval) stage to a post-modern city. As a city of 10 million, Jakarta has no sewage collection or disposal system unless one accepts open drainage canals as a sewer system. The water is not generally drinkable and even bathing in it is sometimes questionable. The smog in Jakarta makes Los Angeles look good in comparison. In addition, vast numbers of people live in "informal" housing, which consists of shacks and sheds built where space permits.

On the other hand Jakarta contains more glitzy high-rise buildings than San Francisco. In this interesting environment, Steve Wanat, NSCCAPA International Liaison is working on a master plan for Jakarta's entire 20 mile long waterfront. The plan entails the reclamation of 6,250 new acres of waterfront land. A new Central Business District, residential districts, recreation facilities, and other uses are also planned along with the expansion of the principal port facility.

If you would like more information about this project you can contact Steve Wanat:

c/o Borobudur Intercontinental  
P.O. Box 1329  
Jakarta, Indonesia

## 1995 Chapter Grants Available

Each year the APA and AICP provide grants to APA chapters to implement innovative projects and provide continuing education and research assistance. In 1995, the Chapter Presidents Council will award over \$20,000 in grants to APA chapters on behalf of APA and AICP. Winning submissions will be innovative, transferable among chapters and members, and have broad appeal in terms of subject matter. High priority topics include the APA Agenda for America's Communities, Ethics, Takings Issues, and other topics listed in the application.

To receive a grant application, contact Steve Noack, Northern Section Director. For more information contact Al Salas, APA's Coordinator for Chapter and Student Services, (202) 872-0611.



The Bulletin Board section of the Northern News is intended to provide a forum for individuals to provide the membership with information about events or current topics. If you would like to submit an item for the Bulletin Board section, contact the Newsletter Editor at (408) 866-2140.

## University of California, Davis Extension, Upcoming Events

### Open House for Land Use and Environmental Planning Program

Date & Time: November 30, 1994,  
4:30 - 7:00 p.m.

Location: University Club, Old Davis Road,  
U.C. Davis Campus

Cost: Free

RSVP: (916) 757-8887

### Legislative Update on Land Use and Environmental Planning

Speaker: William Fulton, MA

Date & Time: December 7,  
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Location: Hilton Inn, Sacramento

Cost: \$170, includes lunch and  
conference materials

RSVP: (800) 752-0881

# UGBs...

(continued from page 1)

where it can't. Instead of constant squabbling over this piecemeal development or that annexation, residents can focus their energy on the quality of development and community life inside the UGB.

- Fifth, they're **collaborative** because the process of mapping out *effective* long-term UGBs requires the joint efforts of civic leaders, planners, business owners, conservationists, home builders, farmers and many others to sit down and identify the lands that need to be protected, as well as lands to be developed to meet a community's housing and business needs.

- Sixth, they're **popular** because a UGB is a simple, understandable planning technique that enables local residents to define their community's future. And in these cynical and fast-changing times, people welcome the certainty that UGBs provide. Even homebuilders in places like Portland, have fought to defend their UGBs, rather than risk a reprise of constant battles with NIMBY groups. Of course, you may be saying, these benefits are all well and good, but how can you make them happen? How do you keep a boundary in place? How do you stop a boundary from being undermined by constant modifications or development at the fringe by a neighboring jurisdiction?

The answer is simple: *good planning, referenda and joint agreements.*

- **Good planning:** Again, a durable UGB is a collaborative UGB. All interested parties need to work together to create a UGB that will protect important greenbelt lands and stimulate more compact, sustainable development in existing urban areas.

- **Referenda:** Once a solid UGB is drawn and incorporated into a community's general plan, the only way to lock it in is a public referendum to maintain the boundary for 20 years. Once the referendum is approved, the only way UGB changes can be made is by another vote of the people (not an easy proposition — and another good reason why the up-front planning should be far-sighted).

- **Joint Agreements:** Even if a city adopts an ideal UGB, there are very few obstacles stopping an adjacent city or surrounding county from developing at the edge of the boundary. That's why the final critical step is negotiating a joint land use agreement among all relevant jurisdictions which keeps greenbelt lands outside the UGB in greenbelt uses unless the jurisdictions agree *unanimously* that they'll change their general plans for development purposes.

With these three tools, Northern California communities can use UGBs to stop sprawl and reclaim their quality of life — and that's exactly what Bay Area cities are doing.

At the UGB conferences, speakers and workshops outlined the following projects:

- In Sonoma County, there are active citizen campaigns in all nine cities to establish boundaries. The town of Sebastopol has already adopted a 20 year UGB (with a referendum expected in 1996) and Santa Rosa is expected to adopt a long-term UGB during its 1995 general plan update. Already, four of the county's five supervisors have pledged to negotiate joint agreements with cities that establish UGBs.

- The City of Morgan Hill (in Santa Clara County) has approved a planning process for establishing a long-term UGB. Neighboring San Jose — after decades of sprawl — has indicated that it, too, would like to establish a permanent "greenline." In a complementary development, Santa Clara County's draft general plan (due for a vote on December 13) includes language calling for the county and cities to work jointly to establish UGBs and joint agreements.

- In Alameda and Solano counties, neighboring jurisdictions have adopted long-term, joint agreements to secure key greenbelt buffers and boundaries: the 13,000 acre Pleasanton Ridgeland (between Hayward and Pleasanton) and the 10,000 acre Tri-City Open Space Area (between Benicia, Fairfield, and Vallejo).

(continued on page 5)

### City Administrator/Planner

City of Orland

Salary: DOQ

City of Orland (pop. 5,500) located in the north Sacramento Valley with a diverse agricultural base, abundant outdoor activities and strong community pride is seeking a progressive oriented individual with a strong planning background to manage a small full service city. Desirable qualifications include a degree in public administration or planning with five years progressive experience, or combination of education and experience in local government. Benefits include paid PERS and medical plan. Deadline: November 30, 1994. Submit resume and inquiries to: H.M. Campbell, Interim City Manager, City of Orland, 8154th Street, Orland, CA 95963. Telephone: (916) 865-4741.

### Graphics Illustrator/ Planning Aide

Alameda County

\$2,150 - 2,568 / month

Responsible for designing, drafting, and producing maps and graphics for presentations, displays, reports and studies; coordinates and directs the reproduction of maps, graphics, and reports by printing vendors; performs data research including field verification and posting of public notices. Requires either completion of training program and one year experience in architectural and engineering drawing, graphics illustration or cartographics OR the equivalent of two years experience in same. Training or experience in free-hand drawing, printing and reproduction processes, photography, desktop publishing, GIS, CAD, or other PC-based computer graphics skills are highly desirable. Deadline: November 10, 1994. Send cover letter and resume to: Liz McElligott, AICP, Attn: Planning Aide position, Alameda County Planning Department, 399 Elmhurst Street, Room 136, Hayward, CA 94544.



## Traffic Calming - Livable Streets, Transportation Research Forum

Presentation by **Wolfgang S. Homburger** on the adverse impacts of heavy and fast traffic on the livability of neighborhoods. The presentation will include proper planning techniques to con-fine through traffic to major streets, and how residential streets can be modified to "calm" traffic by reducing both volumes and speeds. Mr. Homburger retired from research and teaching at the Institute of Transportation Studies at UC Berkeley in 1990.

Date & Time: Lunch Program, **November 10**  
12:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Location: Mandarin Garden Restaurant, 2025 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley.

Cost: \$10 for TRF members, \$12 for non-members.

RSVP: Steve Gregory, (510) 272-1363

## Great Streets and Beyond, by Allan Jacobs

**Great Streets and Beyond**, an after work booksigning and presentation by **Allan Jacobs**, author of the recently published *Great Streets*. Mr. Jacobs will discuss his past and current research on what brings streets and communities to life, including specific information on the physical qualities of the best streets in the world. Plan now to attend and learn more about what is essential to revitalize cities.

Date & Time: Thursday, **November 17**

5:30 p.m. Reception  
6:15 p.m. Presentation

Location: AIA Headquarters, 130 Sutter Street, San Francisco  
Montgomery BART/Muni Station

Registration Fee: \$5 at the door

RSVP: (415) 281-0195

## 11th Annual Planning Conference for Commissioners, Elected Officials, and Agency Staff Sonoma State University

Saturday, **December 3**

Stevenson Hall,  
Room 1002  
Sonoma State University

Registration and Coffee: 8:30 - 9:00 a.m.

Seminar: 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Lunch: 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Instructors: **Gary Binger**, Director of Planning Association of Bay Area Governments  
**Daniel Curtin, Jr.**, Attorney at Law  
McCutcheon, Doyle, Brown and Enerson

Subject: Land Use Law Update

Cost: \$45, lunch and course materials provided

Contact: (707) 664-4105 or  
(707) 664-2414,  
fax (707) 664-2505

# DESIGN STRATEGIES FOR INFILL DEVELOPMENT

## Presented by:

- *American Planning Association  
(Northern Section, California  
Chapter)*

## Co-Sponsors

- *American Institute of Architects,  
Santa Clara Valley Chapter*
- *City of Mountain View, Plan-  
ning and Community Develop-  
ment Department*
- *Greenbelt Alliance*
- *San Jose State Institute for  
Metropolitan Studies*
- *Santa Clara County Housing  
Action Coalition*
- *Santa Clara County Manufac-  
turing Group*
- *Sierra Club, Loma Prieta  
Chapter*

As the urbanized portions of the Bay Area near build-out, development of infill and under-utilized sites becomes more feasible and necessary. This seminar will address the challenges of developing small to moderate sized infill parcels. Development of infill and under-utilized parcels represents the best utilization of existing infrastructure, helps revitalize stagnant neighborhoods, curbs urban sprawl, improves air quality, and reduces traffic congestion.

The intent of this seminar is to relate how transit and pedestrian oriented development concepts can be applied to small and moderate sized infill parcels. The seminar will focus on how to develop infill projects that respect and enhance existing neighborhood settings.

The seminar will be conducted by Shelley Poticha and Matt Taecker of Calthorpe Associates. Calthorpe Associates is known for its work in redefining the models of urban and suburban growth. Ms. Poticha and Mr. Taecker have been project managers for a number of planning and urban design projects in the Bay Area, such as the Jackson-Taylor Revitalization Strategy in San Jose, the Colma BART Specific Area Plan in Daly City, and Old Mill Project in Mountain View.

**When:** Friday, December 2, 1994  
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**Where:** Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts  
(Located at the corner of Castro St. and Mercy St. in  
Downtown Mountain View -- Cal Train Accessible)

**Cost:** \$60.00 (If postmarked by 11/25/94)  
\$80.00 at the door (space permitting)

Space is limited, so please fill out and send in your registration form and check today. If you have any questions, contact Curtis Banks or Mark Rhoades at (408) 866-2140.

Please clip along this line and mail with your registration check to NSCCAPA (according to the shaded box below)

## Register me for Design Strategies for Infill Development

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # (day) \_\_\_\_\_

Make out your check for seminar admission  
to NSCCAPA, postmarked by 11/25/94 and  
send to:

Curtis Banks or Mark Rhoades  
c/o Campbell Planning Department  
70 North First Street  
Campbell, CA 95008

**Senior Planner**

Town of Woodside

\$4,004 - \$5,015 / month

Primary responsibilities include supervision of the current planning operation. Job duties include performance of analyses of moderate to complex difficulty; preparation of reports and presentations for boards, committees, Planning Commission and Town Council; and extensive public contact. Requires: Bachelor's Degree in urban planning or a related field plus five years of relevant experience, including at least two years of supervisory experience; a Master's Degree is preferred and may be substituted for one year of experience. Deadline: December 2, 1994. Contact: Town of Woodside, 2955 Woodside Road, P.O. Box 620005, Woodside, CA 94062. Phone: (415) 851-6790.

## University and Student Resources

by Mark A. Rhoades

The Northern Section is fortunate in that there are several universities that have planning or planning related curricula in the Bay area. In addition, some of these programs have focused research based institutes such as the Institute of Urban and Regional Development at the University of California, Berkeley, the San Jose Institute of Metropolitan Studies at San Jose State University, and the Institute for Community Planning Assistance at Sonoma State University. Our local universities provide important resources relative to research, information, and facilities. Each of the universities within the Northern Section periodically sponsors and holds events that are of general planning interest. These events are usually free and include presentations by noted authorities or researchers in a given field, panel discussions on current topics, or student presentations on significant research findings or projects. In addition, university facilities can sometimes be used for events if they can be planned with the local planning student organization and are of general student interest.

As mentioned in the Director's Column, we were fortunate to have several students (see below) at the October retreat who are ambi-

### UGBs...

(continued from page 4)

- The City of Napa has extended the life of its Rural-Urban Line and essentially locked in its boundary for at least another 20 years (although it remains to be seen whether local leaders will put this to a popular vote).

This article is by no means a complete survey of all the UGB activity taking place around the Bay Area or Northern California. Nor is it a blanket endorsement of any and all UGBs (especially those that are not fixed for the long term, or accompanied by greenbelt protection and infill promotion policies). But it does reflect the strong sense that UGBs are shifting from a funny-sounding acronym to a major

force for change in planning Northern California's future.

rious, energetic, and ready to participate in Northern Section activities. As planners we need to know about and take advantage of the information that is available to the profession and one way to do that is by utilizing our educational resources. If you are interested in specific events (when possible they will be announced in this newsletter), or have questions about facilities or programs, you may contact the students listed below:

**Christina Ratcliffe**, APA Region 6 Student Rep.  
University of California, Berkeley  
(510) 528-2513  
e-mail: ratcliff@ced.berkeley.edu

**Heather Messier**  
Sonoma State University  
(707) 664-2505

**Sourav Sen**  
University of California, Berkeley  
(510) 653-5577  
e-mail: ssen@ced.berkeley.edu

**Joe Sordi**  
San Jose State University  
(415) 326-7327 (h)  
(415) 365-0412 (w)

The Commentary section of the newsletter is intended to provide a forum for members to express their views relative to planning related topics, or to express an opinion relative to articles printed in this newsletter. If you would like to submit an article, contact the Newsletter Editor at (408) 866-2140.

force for change in planning Northern California's future.

*Jim Sayer is the Research and Communications Director for Greenbelt Alliance, the Bay Area's regional land conservation and non-profit organization. If you would like more information about UGBs, call him at the Greenbelt Alliance office, 415/543-4291 (or e-mail him at jsayer@igc.apc.org).*

Mr. Sayer's views are not necessarily a reflection of the opinions of the NSCCAPA Board. The Newsletter editor welcomes any comments individuals may have concerning this subject.

# THE ANCIENT ORDER OF PLANNING DIRECTORS

It happened at every APA reception: my old planning professor would ask me with a scowl.

"You should be a Planning Director by now."

He was right, of course, from a strict, professional timetable perspective: I was staying too long in a "Number Two" public sector planning role. Professional development requires that at some point public planners must bite the bullet and find a director's chair to sit in, no matter how uncomfortable.

"But," I would whine, "to find a directorship, I'd have to move my family, take a pay cut, give up my benefits, get a haircut, lower my quality of life, struggle with less staff, et cetera, et cetera."

"Too bad," he would say. "The longer you wait, the harder it will be." How prophetic.

As each year passed, it became harder to justify my case. So I did what I felt I must do. I went out of my way to avoid him at APA receptions. But I stayed on as second fiddle for the City of Gilroy for five years, then ten, then fifteen.

I was addicted to job security. I had never quit a job in my life: Prop 13 had cost me my last job, and all of the others had been temporary. And when I finally left Gilroy for small town life in the Sierra Foothills this summer, it was to follow my wife's career, not my own.

Yet in practically no time at all, I found myself signing "Planning Director" under my name.

Please don't be impressed. The City which has "retained" my services is hanging to the last threads of incorporation. Its Council is riddled with recalls and overhauls. Its new City Administrator was recently greeted with the simultaneous resignations of the entire City staff. Its cash flow is at a standstill. The community holds bake sales to buy a police car. Its claustrophobic City Hall is the size of a studio apartment. The Planning Commission disbanded.

But what the hey, I'm the Planning Director.

It sort of reminds me of the pamphlet of advice that Ann Landers once wrote to horny teenagers ("anyone can have sex if you lower your standards far enough").

So wish me well. I have finally made it into the ancient order. But I'm outside of the Northern Section now, so "Planlines" will disappear, at least in its present form. I have enjoyed sharing tidbits from "The Far Side of the City Hall" for these last seven years, and I apologize if I've offended anyone with the irreverent writing style I adopted (e.g., the previous paragraph). For those who have enjoyed "Planlines", I want to give credit to Marlene Stevenson, former Section president, who first suggested the idea to me in the mid-80s. If you want to see humor pieces continue in your APA publications, I urge you to let your APA representatives know your feelings. (For info on a book of reprints of my columns, you can contact me at P.O. Box 1017, Colfax, CA 95713).

Besides Ms. Stevenson, I would like to thank a lot of other Steves: my editor Steven Buckley; Steve Noack and the Section Board; Stephen Brothers and my "competition" Steve Matarazzo for the support, Steve Alward for inspiration, Dr. Steven Orlick, my "old" professor, for his professional and grammatical advice. Also Anna Powell, Barry Miller, Ted Kreines, and Maureen Morton; and, for their camaraderie, all of the members of the (ancient order of) Santa Clara County Association of Planning Officials (SCCAPO) — now that I'm a Planning Director in Yuba County I think I'll start a YAPO.

Adios.



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## Robert Schubert, AICP

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## November

- 10 Traffic Calming – Livable Streets, Transportation Research Forum
- 17 Great Streets and Beyond, with Allan Jacobs
- 30 UC Davis Extension, Land Use and Environmental Planning Open House

NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

## December

- 2 In-Fill Development and Transit Oriented Design Seminar, City of Mountain View
- 3 Eleventh Annual Planning Seminar for Commissioners, Elected Officials and Agency Staff, Sonoma State University
- 7 UC Davis Extension, Legislative Update
- 15 NSCCAPA Holiday Party

DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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