

March 1995

In a time when more and more attention is being placed on resource conservation and environmental sustainability, planners are placing more emphasis on compact urban development and downtown revitalization. The focus of this month's newsletter is on Community Development and Design.

Northern Section, California Chapter, American Planning Association Downtown Oakland — Febere-is

a There, There by Edward J. Blakely

The Good-Bad Old Days

owntown, in fact all of Oakland, has had image problems for more than three decades. Oakland's image problems did not begin with its record homicide rate in 1988 or its earthquake damaged buildings and destroyed freeways in 1989. Oakland's image began to deteriorate when its economic mission and its place in the East Bay economic system started to change in the 1960s. Oakland was, until the 1960s, one of the few real industrial - agricultural centers on the West Coast. Oakland was the home of many of the nation's leading food processors and the trans-shipment port for agricultural goods and related machinery to the world. During its heyday, Oakland's downtown bustled with industrial magnate enterprises like Kaiser Steel along with agricultural processors from Del Monte and Gerber Foods. These firms traded through Oakland's port and used the downtown as a major administrative center. In the late 1960s this began to change but civic leaders were not fully aware of the transformation because Oakland remained successful in other areas like professional sports and the containerization of the port. As the economy started to change Oakland's responses were to use redevelopment and highway building as the major tools for revitalization. The net result of Oakland's revitalization efforts was the removal of almost 20,000 housing units and the complete razing of the downtown core. Oakland's downtown was stripped bare and the city subdivided by highways and a BART system that made it easier to go to San Francisco than to travel a few miles to the downtown core area.

Strategy Finally DUNCAN & JONES

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After the 1989 earthquake the downtown lay in ruins but the opportunity to re-think its role was presented. A new Mayor, Elihu Harris, with several new Councilmembers provided the impetus to re-examine the role of downtown. A series of events including the development of a citywide strategic plan provided the stimulus to think boldly about what Oakland and its downtown future might be. After nearly two years, civic interest groups came up with a concept of the downtown as a neighborhood. A new plan drawn up under the auspices of the University-Metropolitan Forum articulated the downtown as a living, working, entertainment and administration center that felt like a neighborhood environment. The new plan called for more residential units in the downtown. These houses would be built as complete villages and fit in with the Victorian architecture of the remaining Old Town area.

As the last flames were put out in the Oakland hills, a new start was being envisioned for the civic heart. The new vision took into consideration the new economy for the city based on government, administration, and international trade. The new plan placed emphasis on the infrastructure for these new industries, such as restoring the oldest department store building (the Rotunda) as a higher education and technology center. This plan also presents the City of Oakland as an East Bay headquarters for major governmental, arts and athletics activities, along with regional tourism focusing on Jack London Square.

Rouse's ambitious plans for a retail mall failed to materialize for several reasons. First, the project was so long in developing that the price of surrounding land went beyond the city's capacity to purchase and assemble an adequate site. Second, retailers saw the new age of big

(continued on page 4)

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i**ăna** Pennington

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DIRECTORS COLUMN

As I was driving back to the Bay Area from the mountains on Presidents' Day, I started comparing the drive through the Central Valley to that of a recent drive from Milwaukee to Madison, Wisconsin. Putting aside the obvious differences of climate, what I noticed was the difference in land use patterns. In Wisconsin, there was a distinct boundary between urban and rural areas compared to California where the urban and rural landscapes are blending together to the point where it is hard to distinguish between one valley community and another. All of this thought led to the recent report, "Beyond Sprawl: New Patterns of Growth to Fit the New California," published jointly by the California Resources Agency, the Greenbelt Alliance, the Low Income Housing Fund and the Bank of America. The report calls for changing California's growth patterns of the last 40 years away from low density, single-family housing to more compact forms of new housing redirected toward existing urban areas Although the message of the report is not new, especially to the planning community, the participation and endorsement of the Bank of America, a major source of construction financing, places the issues of urban sprawl under a new spotlight. It is my hope that this report will foster debate and action at the local government level.

If you are interested in reading the report, fax your request to the State Resources Agency at (916) 653-8102.

Congratulations to Diana Elrod, a housing specialist with the City of San Jose, who was appointed by the NSCCAPA Executive Board as the Legislative Review Liaison for the Northern Section. As the Policy Administrator of the Department of Housing in San Jose, Diana represents the City on legislative matters related to housing at the federal and state levels. In addition, she served on the Cal Chapter legislative review team for three years. She also maintains a private consulting practice providing legislative advocacy services for a broad range of clients including non-profit organizations, cities and developers.

Thanks to the efforts of Michael Bethke, Director Pro-Tem, and Jim Walsh, University Liaison, we are talking to University Extension representatives at Berkeley and Davis about land use and environmental planning extension courses in the Bay Area beginning in the Fall of this year. Look for a survey on curriculum ideas in the in the April or May edition of Northern News.

NEWSLETTER INFO

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Deadline

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

MEMBERSHIP INFO

For membership, subscription information and changes of address please contact:

Membership Department APA National Hqtrs. 1313 East 60th Street Chicago, IL 60637 312/955-9100

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AWARDS

Just a reminder... the deadline for submitting application materials for the Northern Section Awards Program is **April 14**. For more information, contact Wayne Goldberg at (707) 543-3220.

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 510/ 227-3214.

BULLETIN BOARD North Bay RAC

The North Bay Regional Advisory Committee now has a full committee membership. The Chairman is Malcolm Drummond of Harland Bartholomew and Associates. Malcolm was previously the President of the Missouri Chapter of the APA. David Woltering, Planning Director of the City of Windsor, and Pat Collins, Principal Planner with LSA will also serve on the Committee.

Annual Spring Forum and Job Fair at UC Berkeley

This years UC Berkeley Department of City and Regional Planning Spring Forum and Job Fair will be held on April 22. The topic will be the role of city and regional planning in the new political order attending the ascendancy of the Republican Party and its "Contract with America". A keynote address and four panel discussions comprise the pre-lunch session. Job Fair, the post-lunch event, provides graduating and continuing students from planning schools in Northern California an opportunity for interviews with firms and agencies offering summer employment, internships, entrylevel recruitment, and unpaid traineeships. Firms and agencies unlikely to hire in the immediate future may introduce themselves to other members of the planning profession by conducting information sessions.

Agencies or firms interested in attending or participating may contact Kaye Bock on voicemail (510) 643-9440, or by fax at (510) 642-1641 as soon as possible. Interested students should call the number above, or Sourav Sen at (510) 653-5577, or Kaori Tokunga at (510) 664-2850.

Northern Cal Liaison to the International Division

The Northern Section is in the process of revitalizing its relationship to the International Division. APA members and related professionals in the area are invited to join the effort if they wish to participate in the formation of groups to meet with colleagues interested in or involved with work abroad, hosting or arranging contacts for foreign planners visiting the area, and other activities. A few copies of the December '94 issue of **INTERPLAN** (APA International Division Newsletter) are available from Irwin Mussen. Those who wish to participate should contact: Irwin Mussen (510) 559-9280 @ home 2540 Marin Avenue (415) 928-8560 @ work Berkeley, CA 94708 E-mail, im@merkle.baaqmd.gov

Multimedia Package for Planners and Urban Designers

What is a pedestrian pocket, and how does it work? Those questions are among the subjects of ON THE GROUND, a new compact multimedia information source for planners, urban designers, planning commissioners and citizens. The quarterly package consists of a magazine, a one-half hour video cassette, and a set of slides. Created and published by Ann Thorpe of Berkeley, each package addresses areas of interest to planning and design practitioners, and supplies them with educational and outreach tools. The first package deals with infill development. Its focus is on urban infrastructure and curtailing urban sprawl. The magazine features articles by Tom Sargent of Equity Community Builders, and Kevin Kasowski of A Thousand Friends of Oregon, and interviews with Witold Rybczynski and Douglas Kelbaugh. The video shows its human dimension, including successful urban design solutions, and interviews with planning and design practitioners and involved citizens. Subsequent packages will deal with Ecosystems and the Built Environment, followed by Transportation/Land Use Linkages, and Public Spaces. Full subscription packages: \$100-\$125/yr. Magazine only: \$32/yr. ON THE GROUND, P.O. Box 9034, Berkeley, CA 94709. ph. (510) 883-0433

New Book by the SLRC

The Shared Living Resource Center has just released its new book entitled Rebuilding Community in America: Housing for Ecological Living, Personal Empowerment, and the New Extended Family, by Ken Norwood, AICP and Kathleen Smith. This 452 page book has 250 illustrations and is full of resources for planning, organizing, and designing rural and urban communities and it provides examples of ecologically designed community housing. For more information, contact Ken Norwood, AICP of the Shared Living Resource Center at (510) 548-6608. Look for a review of this book in an upcoming issue of the Northern News.

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Oakland...

(continued from page 1)

box retailing as not conducive to a downtown location and they could not identify a local market for large scale retailing near the proposed central city site. The project was also marred by the continuing focus on retail as the lead industry rather than as the trailing industry and a service to other industrial growth. So while policymakers focused on a retail center the real leakage, in fact hemorrhage, was occurring in the manufacturing and other industries that serviced the city. As if this were not enough the project leader for the retail center died in a plane crash and in 1989 the proposed retail area was devastated by an earthquake.

This is not to say some good things were not happening in downtown Oakland. Glen Issacson as the Vice President of Bramaelea Pacific brought imagination to the restoration of the office environment in the civic center in the early 1980s. His astute direction led to a series of well developed buildings abutting the city hall and along Broadway. It was a tribute to his imagination and the political skill of Mayor Wilson that a new vision began to take shape in Oakland for its downtown that augmented the retail notion with government office development. These men recognized that downtown needs workers or no retail will survive.

In a sense, downtown Oakland was planned to death.

A New Broom

When Judge Lionel Wilson took office in the mid 70s he was faced with a deteriorating downtown and a declining economic base. The old industries that fed the downtown were going or gone. The multicultural middle class work force base was shrinking as people of all colors fled to the suburbs on the new highways built in the 1960s or BART. As a result, Oakland's downtown did not have a purpose. Mayor Wilson sought purpose in the old Oakland image as he and others knew it, a retail center. Oakland entered into an agreement with the Rouse Company to develop a major retail center at the civic center. This new center was destined in the proponent mind to re-establish the notion of the old core city for the entire East Bay. Demographic data indicated that Oakland was (and it remains) an underserved retail market with high income areas within a few minutes of downtown. These data did not reveal the fact that the community's economic position and its retail leadership were being undermined by nearby cities like Emeryville, San Leandro and Fremont. Nor did these data tell the full story on the barriers to access the freeways had created, or the lack of a large enough office base or housing to make a retail center work. In essence, this was to be an auto oriented mall environment in an old downtown area.

As this story is being written Oakland is still in a battle with its past. Kaiser Hospital has decided to relocate to Emeryville with the potential of further gutting Oakland's economic base and its downtown fabric. But Oakland has a plan with some exceptional features based on its past and its opportunities for the future. Downtown Oakland will begin to look more like it did at the turn of the century than in the 1950s. It will be smaller and better. It will be more traditional in architectural presentation. It will be more oriented to office and residential users. It will be a hometown based on a combination of residential, entertainment and administrative activities tied together with an education center. There will be something and somebody there in downtown Oakland.

Dr. Blakely, a former Oakland resident of 20 years, remains President of Oakland Sharing the Vision, the strategic planning civic organization even though he has relocated to Los Angeles. He was the Chair of the City Planning Department of UC Berkeley prior to assuming the position of Dean of the School of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Southern California.

Community Identity Through Urban Design

by Larry Cannon, AICP, AIA

rban design has shaped our communities whether they are world cities like Paris or small towns with a design tradition rather than a grand plan. Streets, outdoor spaces, buildings and the integration of unique physical assets have all been used to enhance community uniqueness. In recent years, much of the responsibility for urban design has been ceded to the private sector. While master plans are still prepared to address portions of the urban design framework, much of a community's appearance is now strongly related to the requirements of private development.

Some hope is presented by "The New Urbanism" which brings greater attention to the urban design aspects of new development. The movement's emphasis on development regulations which reach beyond zoning requirements to include shared open spaces and building fabric is one of its most attractive and transferable ideas. While the "new urbanism" may not be to every community's liking or special circumstances, its focus upon recapturing a sense of community through strong urban design vision and improved comprehensive development standards is surely applicable to every community.

Shouldn't we be doing more to enhance the unique physical settings and character of our communities? Yes! Community identity through urban design must again become an integral part of our Vision, General Plans, and Development Regulation.

Larry Cannon, AICP, AIA, is a Principal with the Cannon Design Group, San Francisco.

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Housing in the City: Putting the New Urbanism to Work in the Bay Area

The Greenbelt Alliance will hold its 1995 Presentation and Discussion Series at the AIA offices in downtown Oakland, beginning on March 2. This presentation series is for people who want to know more about improving our cities' future and for those who might want to become more involved in making a bright future for the urban communities of the Bay Area

Thursday, March 2: How to Build Well in the Marketplace - and Get Financing Shelley Poticha, lead urban planner, Calthorpe Associates

Jean Driscoll, consultant specializing in banks and housing finance

Wednesday, April 5: Transit Villages, Trandominiums - Metropolitan Building Blocks?

Mike Bernick, BART Director, NTRAC cofounder

Jim Lightbody, Santa Clara County Transit Agency

Wednesday, May 10: Housing in the City -Where Do We Go From Here?

Bradley Inman, real estate columnist and writer

Donald MacDonald, architect and writer

Where: East Bay AIA Chapter Meeting Room at 499 - 14th Street, Suite 210 in downtown Oakland.

BART: 12th St./City Center station

RSVP: Greenbelt Alliance's voicemail : (415) 255-3233

Transit-Oriented Development

Encouraging mixed use development at new transit stations

Join APA, AIA, and SPUR members for a slide show presentation by BART Chairman Michael Bernick. Both local and nationwide examples of high-density mixed use transit villages will be showcased. Current BART issues and its direction in the future will also be addressed.

Michael Bernick, the new chairman of BART's Board of Directors, has advocated for transit village plans since his election to the Board in 1988. He helped establish the National Transit Access Center, a research center at the Institute of Urban and Regional Development at UC Berkeley and now codirects the Center. Mr. Bernick was also a partner in drafting the state's Transit Village Development Act which allows cities to designate quarter-mile radius transit redevelopment districts around stations, and to grant density bonuses and tax breaks in those areas. An article on BART's village vision to replace parking lots near transit stations with mixed use development was included in the January 1995 national APA magazine.

Come hear more and see examples of what could be happening in the future at transit stations throughout the Bay Area.

Date: Wednesday, March 29

5:30 - mingle/refreshments

6:15 - presentation

Where: AIA offices, 130 Sutter Street, San Francisco

Parking: Sutter/Stockton garage

BART/MUNI: Montgomery Station

Cost: \$5.00 - payable at the door

Info: Please help us plan the food and wine by calling (415) 281-0195



UC Berkeley Institute of Transportation Studies Extension

Airport Ground Transportation Planning and Operations. With Janice Gendreau of San Francisco International Airport and Geoffrey D. Gosling, PH.D., University of California Berkeley. April 19-21, 1995, San Francisco International Airport. \$525 47th University of California Transportation Symposium "Expanding Boundaries and Exploring Opportunities". May 10-12, 1995, San Diego, California. \$325 full-time & \$165 daily

Air Pollution Issues in Land Use and Transportation Planning. With Elizabeth A. Deakin, M.S., J.D., University of California, Berkeley. May 6 and 18, 19, 20, 1995, Richmond, California. \$375

Urban Growth and Transportation: Strategies and Solutions. With Gail Murray, M.P.A., Government and Transportation Consultant and Natalie Fay, M.A., City of Walnut Creek. May 31-June 1, San Ramon. \$225

Info: ITS Extension at (510) 231-9590

Greystone Cellars - One Century Later

Sponsored by Napa County Landmarks, this hard hat workshop will provide perspectives on adaptive re-use, seismic strengthening, planning issues, and a tour of the historic winery.

Date Friday, March 24, 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Where: Greystone Cellars, St. Helena Info: Marian Linder at (707) 226-2327 or DeeDee Thomas at (707) 255-1836

UC Davis Extension— Upcoming Courses

LAFCOs and Boundary Changes: An Introduction to Annexations, Incorporations and District Formations. Thursday, April 27 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Davis Campus. \$235

Cultural Resources: Federal, State and Local Procedures. Thursday, April 20, 8:30 a.m. -4:00 p.m., Davis campus. \$235

California Environmental Quality Act: An Update. Wednesday, May 3, 8:30 a.m. -5:00 p.m., Davis campus. \$235

Subdivision Map Act. Tuesday, May 4, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Davis campus. \$235

NEPA Process and Practice: A Step-By-Step Approach. Wednesday and Thursday, May 10 and 11, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Davis campus. \$450

Zoning and Code Enforcement. Friday, May 12, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Davis campus. \$235

EIR Project Management. Wednesday, May 17, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Davis campus. \$235

Info: (800) 752-0881

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COMMENTARY

THE NEW URBANISM / Toward An Architecture of Community

By Peter Katz

McGraw Hill, 1994, 245 pages, \$49.95

Reviewed by Hartmut H. Gerdes, AICP

eter Katz's THE NEW URBANISM/ Toward An Architecture of Community evokes memories of times past, most recently the 1960's Model Cities Program, which set out to solve communities' physical, social and economic problems in concert. Alas, it suffered an early demise. While many older cities declined, suburbs kept sprouting, promising Nirvana for a burgeoning middle class. Today, Todd W. Bressi, in the book's essay Planning The American Dream, sees "a metropolitan landscape whose physical character amounts to little more than the confluence of standard real estate development practices and real estate marketing strategies." Problems followed the exodus to suburbia in the form of congestion, environmental degradation, pollution, social segregation and isolation, even crime. An "anxious" middle class is now getting squeezed economically between the wealthy and the chronically poor, as Labor Secretary Robert Reich observes. And the big real estate lender Bank of America, in a just-released report, deplores our automobiledependent, sprawling regions, their vanishing open space and diminishing "sense of community"... Is it time to start over?

Katz's seminal documentation is a report from the frontlines of that effort. Notwithstanding its subtitle, the book is as much about urban design and planning as it is about architecture, with urban designers and architects leading the charge. (Katz himself is a design and marketing consultant.) They demonstrate convincingly that with imagination and political will, asphalt landscapes and strip downtowns can become liveable cityscapes, and that civic environments can give pedestrians a chance again to get places, and to rub elbows. Green pastures may become greenbelts instead of subdivisions. A small cadre of professionals nationwide are setting the pace, most prominently Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk and Peter Calthorpe. (Their manifesto is The Ahwahnee Principles of 1991. Their Third Congress for the New Urbanism was held in San Francisco, February 17-20, 1995.)

Katz's exquisitely photographed and illustrated selection of communities, downtowns and neighborhoods - built (such as Seaside), under construction (such as Laguna West), and on drawing boards (mostly) - is evidence that urban design has come to life again. Urban design at its best synthesizes politics and planning, building and ecology, economics and aesthetics. It grapples with what "community" means today, proposing a new balance of public and private realms, social diversity and economic opportunities, housing choices and affordability, and it serves today's stressed-out parents, be they couples or singles. (Generally, one wishes for a greater public reliance on transit and bikeways, and the absence of design fashion statements. Future community design concepts should expect to be held to more rigorous standards with regard to physical and ecological sustainability.)

Many of the communal characteristics - and much of the romance - proposed by New Urbanists, Neo-Traditionalists and others echo virtues and physical concepts not heeded for many decades. In his forward Peter Katz states that "despite the increasing sophistication of our physical and electronic networks, we remain today a fragmented society. Networks, alas, are no substitute for true community." While many of us grew up in such communities or neighborhoods, or fondly remember visiting them during our vacations, who can point to a memorable one that was built during the post-war era?

With Model Cities focused on older urban areas, is the seemingly more suburban emphasis of the "New Urbanism" a misnomer, as some critics have charged? While reflecting North Americans' shift of focus from cities to suburbs and small towns, the New Urbanism also speaks of the urban design opportunities at hand, and the need to rethink our regions from the "outside in" as well as from the "inside out". Peter Calthorpe concludes the programmatic essay he contributes to the book: "The New Urbanism is not just about the city or the suburb. It is about the way we conceive of community and how we form the region - its diversity, scale and public space in every context."

"This book has to be done." Peter Katz muses in his foreword. It is indeed a timely and inspiring documentation of a new beginning, for the benefit of professionals and citizens alike.

Hartmut H. Gerdes, AICP, is a principal with Square One Film + Video, a San Francisco computer simulation, video and animation firm. He is a former urban designer.

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 510/ 227-3214.

The Commentary section of the

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Bob Sturdivant Retiring After 37 Years

ob Sturdivant, AICP, has been the Chief Planning Officer for the County of Santa Clara for the last 10 years. He will retire on March 3, 1995. Bob is one of the few public sector planners who has chosen to stay with the same jurisdiction for his entire career. He has been with the County for 37 years.

Bob has been active in many planning activities at the regional, local, state, and international levels. Bob is a member of the California County Planning Director's Association, and in 1989 Bob served as local coordinator for the CCAPA Conference in San Jose. At the international level his role as citizen-diplomat included leading several groups of California planners, architects, environmentalists, and engineers to the former Soviet Union during the mid-1980's (during the height of the cold war). There, professionals were able to meet with their (formerly Soviet) counterparts and study city planning in the USSR.

One of Bob's major professional accomplishments has been the development of Santa Clara County's Urban Development Policy in the mid-1970's, and getting that document adopted by LAFCo and all of the cities within the County. Bob is also very proud of the work that he and his staff have conducted over the last five years in producing the recently adopted 1995 update to the County General Plan, and the County's award winning Strategic Vision Plan.

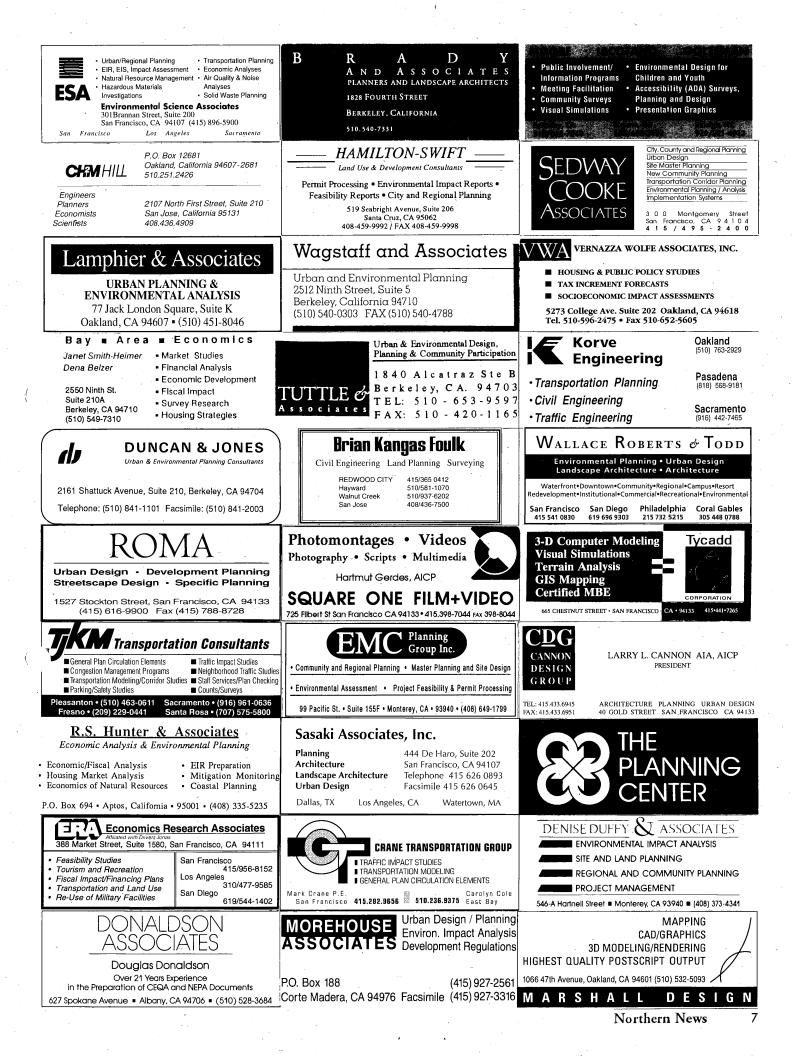
Bob's retirement party will be held on March 10. Those interested in attending should contact Jaunell Waldo at (408) 299-2521.

REARVIEW WHERE DO THEY HAVE PARADES?

Richard Hedman "Stop Me Before I Plan Again" APA Press, Chicago

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