



# Northern News

NORTHERN SECTION, CALIFORNIA CHAPTER, AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

## BEYOND SPRAWL: New Patterns of Growth to fit the New California

*excerpted, with an introduction by Mark Rhoades*

The following is the Executive Summary of a report co-sponsored by the California Resources Agency, Bank of America, Greenbelt Alliance, and the Low Income Housing Fund. The report is an effort to examine the pattern of growth and land use development that California has fostered in the last several decades. Chief among the questions that the report addresses is, "whether California can afford to support the pattern of urban and suburban development, often referred to as "sprawl," that has characterized its growth since World War II." The acknowledgments of the report state that, "All of the report's conclusions may not be endorsed in their entirety by each of the four sponsors." Regardless of which organization endorses any particular aspect of the report, an important foundation has been set for the public debate to continue regarding the future growth of the State of California.

### Executive Summary

California is at a unique and unprecedented point in its history—a point at which we face profound questions about our future growth that will determine the state's economic vitality and quality of life for the next generation and beyond. One of the most fundamental questions we face is whether California can afford to support the pattern of development, often referred to as "sprawl," that has characterized its growth since World War II.

There is no question that this pattern of growth has helped fuel California's unparalleled economic and population boom, and that it has enabled millions of Californians to realize the enduring dream of home ownership. But as we approach the 21st century, it is clear that sprawl has created enormous costs that California can no longer afford. Ironically, unchecked sprawl

has shifted from an engine of California's growth to a force that now threatens to inhibit growth and degrade the quality of life.

This report, sponsored by a diverse coalition of organizations, is meant to serve as a call for California to move beyond sprawl and rethink the way we will grow in the future. This is not a new idea, but it is one that has never been more critical or urgent.

Despite dramatic changes in California over the last decade, traditional development patterns have accelerated. Urban job centers have decentralized to the suburbs. New housing tracts have moved even deeper into agricultural and environmentally sensitive areas. Private auto use continues to rise.

This acceleration of sprawl has surfaced enormous social, environmental and economic costs, which until now have been hidden, ignored, or quietly borne by society. The burden of these costs is becoming very clear. Businesses suffer from higher costs, a loss in worker productivity, and underutilized investments in older communities.

California's business climate becomes less attractive than surrounding states. Suburban residents pay a heavy price in taxation and automobile expenses, while residents of older cities and suburbs lose access to jobs, social stability, and political power. Agriculture and ecosystems also suffer.

There is a fundamental dynamic to growth, whether it be the growth of a community or a corporation, that evolves from expansion to maturity. The early stages of growth are often exuberant and unchecked—that has certainly been the case in post-World War II California. But unchecked growth cannot be sustained forever. At some point this initial surge must mature into more managed, strategic growth.

*(continued on page 4)*

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**This month's newsletter examines some of the issues centered around the pattern of land development that has become prevalent since the mid-1940's. The feature article is one which was co-sponsored by the Bank of America, California's largest real-estate lending institution.**

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	415/281-0195
<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	
Mark Rhoades	510/227-3214
<b>Advertising Coordinator</b>	
Chuck Lerable	408/758-7206
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## DIRECTORS CORNER

by Steve Noack

As is typical with voluntary organizations such as the Northern Section Board, the turn over on Board positions is a constant. While I have refrained from calling for volunteers in every Director's Corner, this month I will once again request that individuals who are interested in working on the Board give me a call. We currently are in need of a University Liaison to replace Jim Walsh who is leaving Alameda County to take an extended European vacation, and then relocate to New England. The position involves establishing a linkage between the Board and each of the universities and colleges which offer planning programs within the Northern Section. During his tenure, Jim was involved in the accreditation process for UC Berkeley and San Jose State University. He also represented Northern Section at the annual Spring Forum and Job Fair which was held at UC Berkeley. We are also looking for an individual interested in the International Liaison position, long held by Steve Wanat who is currently working in Asia. The key responsibilities of this position include planning special events (such as the ones announced in this newsletter) for planners from other countries. Membership in the International Division of APA is desirable.

Congratulations to Sourav Sen, APA Student Representative from UC Berkeley, and Jared Eigerman, the Coordinator of the 1995 Spring Forum and Job Fair, for the excellent work they did in organizing the annual event. Although this was my first time attending the event I was impressed by the number of students who attended from UC Berkeley and as far away as San Luis Obispo. I was also impressed by the number of public agencies and private firms that were represented at the event.

Please mark your calendar for Tuesday, May 16, for an informal get together with members of the Royal Australian Planning Institute. We will meet at the Twenty Tank Brewery in San Francisco, upstairs, at 6:00 p.m. The Twenty Tank is located at 316 Eleventh Street (Folsom/Harrison). Frank Arangio, the tour coordinator from Perth, Australia has offered to buy the first round, so get there early! Please contact Jim Walsh at (510) 670-6509 if you have questions. Reservations are not necessary.

Individuals interested in the positions of Treasurer or Director should contact either Michael Bethke at (707) 586-3650, or Steve Noack at (510) 283-3771. Elections for these positions will be held in June, and the installation of new officers will be held at the Awards Banquet. The position of Director requires two years of prior Board experience.



## BOARD MEMBER BIO

Jim Walsh is the University Liaison for the Northern Section Board. As mentioned in the Director's Corner, he is responsible for establishing and maintaining contacts among the Universities and Colleges within the Northern Section that have planning curricula. For the last five years Jim has been employed with the Alameda County Planning Department where he has worked primarily with advanced planning issues such as the East County GPA, the development of a county-wide commute alternatives program, and as staff to the County's Airport Land Use Commission. Prior to his work with the County, Jim was the first Town Planner in Westerly, Rhode Island. Jim received a B.A. in Geography with a concentration in Planning from Framingham State College in Massachusetts, and a M.C.P. from the University of Rhode Island.

As University Liaison, Jim feels that in the Northern Section young planners are entering the profession in an area that has a wealth of

## NEWSLETTER INFO

Mark Rhoades, *Editor*  
1152 Portland Avenue  
Albany, CA 94706  
Phone: 510/227-3214  
Fax: 510/227-3280

Chuck Lerable, *Advertising  
Coordinator*: 408/758-7206

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planning or planning related programs. In such an environment it is important to have a solid connection with the professional organization for mentoring and internships, and for providing guidance for research and curriculum decisions.

Jim's immediate goals include an extended trip to Europe where he will observe some of the traditional development patterns that are found there. His desire is to become more familiar with those land use relationships, and to bring that knowledge back to the United States. He would like to focus more on the concept of Sustainable Communities which includes concentrating resources, and improving and upgrading the infrastructure in developed areas. Jim states that one of the most important elements of upgrading infrastructure is improving the schools, because that is one of the major elements that attracts people to areas where they will settle.

Jim's other interests include photography and volleyball.

## International Cultural Exchange

International Cultural Exchange (ICE) is seeking host families for French High School students who will be visiting the Bay Area in summer 1995. Students will stay with host families for four weeks. Students are involved with group activities such as educational and sightseeing excursions, three days per week. Evenings and weekends are spent participating in activities with the host family. Host families will receive a \$100 stipend per student to help defray the cost of meals and other expenses, and students provide their own spending money. For more information regarding the host family program, please contact Jim Walsh at (510) 814-0735, or ICE at 1(800) 930-4253.

## The State of Planners, Planning, and California

Hartmut Gerdes, Communications Director, and Mark Rhoades, Newsletter Editor, would like to extend the debate regarding the role and the relevancy of planners, and what direction, if any, they will provide in shaping the future of growth policy in California. If you are interested in taking part in this debate please contact Mark at (510) 559-8759, Hartmut at (415) 398-7044 or leave a message on the Northern Section Voicemail at (415) 281-0195. An effort will be made to establish an informal discussion group if interest is expressed by enough people.

## Managing Environmental Conflicts

The National Association of Professional Environmental Communicators (NAPEC) is sponsoring a one day seminar that will be hosted by Lawrence E. Susskind, head of MIT's Environmental Policy Group. The seminar, "Managing Environmental Conflicts," has never been held in California before. The focus will be on the Mutual Gains Approach, an innovative crisis avoidance and conflict resolution strategy that can dramatically improve your ability to achieve productive results.

When: May 25th, 8:30-5:30

Where: The Golden Gate Club, at the Presidio of San Francisco

Cost: \$255 for NAPEC members, \$300 for non-members

RSVP: (415) 399-0976

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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.

## CESA Legislation Update *by Eric Parfrey*

On April 18th the State Assembly committee took the first actions on CESA reform bills. The committee took no testimony but simply voted AB 350 (Bustamante) and AB 137 (Olberg) out of committee, thereby killing two other CESA Assembly bills introduced by liberal Democrats (AB 1086 by Richard Katz and AB 874 by Bob Campbell). APA members should understand what type of "reform" to the CESA Assembly members are thinking about. For example, AB 137 (sponsored by freshman Keith Olberg from San Bernardino) would require that all future listings of endangered and threatened species be by vote of the

Legislature. The bill would also mandate that the documented "benefits" of saving a species would have to outweigh the costs. The bill, similar to other Senate measures, also includes a very vague "takings" clause that would require compensation for regulatory takings.

More significantly, on April 18th a decision was made to sponsor joint hearings between Senator Tom Hayden's Natural Resource Committee and the Assembly committee. The joint hearings are expected to begin sometime later in April and last through May 1995. Former

*(continued on page 4)*

**BEYOND SPRAWL** *(continued from page 1)*

This is the point where we now stand in California.

We can no longer afford the luxury of sprawl. Our demographics are shifting in dynamic ways. Our economy is restructuring. Our environment is under increasing stress. We cannot shape California's future successfully unless we move beyond sprawl.

This is not a call for limiting growth, but a call for California to be smarter about how it grows—to invent ways we can create compact and efficient growth patterns that are responsive to the needs of people at all income levels, and also help maintain California's quality of life and economic competitiveness.

It is a tall order—one that calls for us to rise above our occasional isolation as individuals and interest groups, and address these profound challenges as a community. All of us—government agencies, businesses, community organizations and citizens—play a role. Our actions should be guided by the following goals:

- To provide more certainty in determining where new development should and should not occur.
- To make more efficient use of land that has already been developed, including a strong focus on job creation and housing in established urban areas.
- To establish a legal and procedural framework that will create the desired certainty and send the right economic signals to investors.

**CESA** *(continued from page 3)*

Assemblyman and State Land Commission head Charlie Warren has been hired by the Senate Committee to organize the joint hearings.

APA lobbyist Sande George in Sacramento is on top of the quickly moving situation, but she needs our help! With the help of Al Herson and other legislative committee members, letters have been drafted to express APA's opposition to the worst of the bills. But it is now important to begin a more refined process of agreeing what type of legislative reform to the existing CESA that APA members will support. Concerned planners in both the American Planning Association and the Associa-

- To build a broad-based constituency to combat sprawl that includes environmentalists, community organizations, businesses, farmers, government leaders and others.

Californians are already taking some of these steps. We have attempted in this report not only to point out the obstacles to sustained growth, but also to highlight the positive actions that are occurring to better manage growth. Our fundamental message is that we must build on these early successes and take more comprehensive and decisive steps over the next few years to meet this challenge. To build a strong, vibrant economy and ensure a high quality of life for the 21st century, we must move beyond sprawl in the few remaining years of the 20th century.

The ACKNOWLEDGMENTS of the report contain the following:

The sponsors are grateful for the support provided by Steven Moss and his associates at the consulting firm of M. Cubed for developing much of the basic research behind this paper. We are also indebted to William Fulton for conceptualizing and drafting the paper ... If you would like to comment on the paper, or obtain additional copies, please contact any of the following sponsors:

- Bank of America, Environmental Policies and Programs, (415) 622-8144
- California Resources Agency, (916) 653-5656
- Greenbelt Alliance, (415) 543-4291
- The Low Income Housing Fund, (415) 777-9804

tion of Environmental Professionals began meeting in the Bay Area in April to discuss these destructive bills and formulate an action program to make our voices heard in the coming Legislative battles.

For further information on the CESA bills and upcoming meetings of concerned APA/AEP members, contact: Eric Parfrey, BASELINE Environmental Consulting @ (510) 420-8686 or through e-mail at [baseline@crl.com](mailto:baseline@crl.com). A nine page summary of the CESA bills prepared by Eric may be accessed through the Internet at [ftp.crl.com/users/ro/baseline/esa.art](ftp:crl.com/users/ro/baseline/esa.art).

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## 1995 NSCCAPA Awards Banquet

For the past few years approximately eighty planners have gathered to view the ceremonies and learn about some of the exciting planning efforts receiving recognition. Jury panelists and award winners summarize their experiences and give helpful advice. Last year, Northern Section award winners were particularly successful, going on to win awards at both the state and national levels. This evening presents an excellent opportunity to acknowledge the significant professional achievements of our colleagues and recognize programs which have been particularly innovative, effective, or unique. The event will be hosted by Section Director Steve Noack, and Awards Chairman Wayne Goldberg.

When: Friday, June 16th; 6:15-7:15 Socializing and no-host bar, 7:15-9:30 Dinner and Awards Presentation

Where: UC Berkeley Faculty Club

Cost: \$25/person

RSVP: Reservation with check (payable to Northern Section CCAPA) must be received by June 9. Mail reservation to Wayne Goldberg, City of Santa Rosa Planning Department, P.O. Box 1678, Santa Rosa, CA 95402.

## A Night at the University Art Museum

Urban Visions-Current Projects for the Public Realm, now showing at the University Art Museum presents the contemporary city as envisioned by planners, architects and urban designers. The exhibit includes drawings, models, and video and computer programs that examine the physical and social space of the city. Come join us and share your own thoughts on this topic with your fellow planners. No guest speaker is scheduled for this event. This is an opportunity to see the exhibit before it closes July 16.

When: Thursday, June 8th; 5:30-8 Network/refreshments, 5 to 9 p.m. tour the museum

Where: University Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, UC Berkeley Campus at Bancroft and College Avenues. BART: Berkeley Station

Cost: Museum admission is free, \$5/person will be collected at the door for refreshments.

RSVP: (415) 281-0195

## Transportation Research Forum

The topic of this meeting will be the Yosemite Area Traveler Information System (YATI). We here increasingly about Intelligent Transportation Systems, which is the application of computing, communication and sensing technologies to transportation. YATI is a federally funded demonstration project that is intended to provide travel information and facilitate traffic management and public transportation. The concepts that are being developed for YATI will have far reaching effects on the concepts of urban transit and traffic management and to other situations of recurrent traffic congestion. Stephen C. Yang, Director of Intelligent Transportation Systems at CCS Engineering, will be the evening's speaker. Stephen has over 20 years experience and he is responsible for business development in applying advanced communications and electronics to the problems of traffic and transportation.

When: Tuesday, May 16th; Gather from 5:30-6, Dinner at 6, Program from 7 to 9 p.m.

Where: Mandarin Garden Restaurant, 2025 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley.

BART: Berkeley Station, exit station and walk north on the east side of Shattuck Avenue.

Cost: \$13 for TRF members, \$14 for non-members

RSVP: Steve Gregory, Port of Oakland (510) 272-1363

## Plodders or Planners-What Will Make City Planning Relevant Again?

Syndicated columnist Bradley Inman will discuss how and why the credibility of urban planning is being restored. From a shared vision of environmental limits and urban growth boundaries, planners need to focus on redirecting resources to sustain the quality of life of existing communities. Good and bad examples of the "liveability" of Bay Area communities will be described. It is expected that Mr. Inman will live up to his controversial and outspoken reputation-name tags will not be necessary!

When: Wednesday, May 17; 5:30 Network/refreshments, 6:15 Presentation

Where: AIA Offices @ 130 Sutter St., San Francisco

BART/Muni-Montgomery Station

Cost: \$5 at the door

RSVP: (415) 281-0195



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**Thursday, July 13 to Sunday, July 16**



Five Mobile Workshops have been planned for this year's Conference. The Workshops will run concurrently with sessions on both Friday and Saturday.

**Historical Restoration** - Historical restoration efforts in San Jose have involved the preservation of historic buildings. This tour will include visits to the recently restored Hayes Renaissance Conference Center in South San Jose, the Fallon House in Downtown San Jose and to an archaeological site on the Santa Clara University Campus.

**Santa Clara Valley Water District Restoration Projects** - A field trip to a number of restoration project sites along the Guadalupe River in Santa Clara and Downtown San Jose. The workshop will focus on restoration areas within an urbanized area and recent efforts to combine local improvements such as recreational facilities with a flood control project.

**Zero Waste House** - Over the past 11 years a San Jose State University instructor has committed his family to leading a non-garbage producing, energy saving life style. He has spent over \$23,000 since 1978 modifying his tract house for experiments in eco-correct living.

**Downtown Renaissance** - Downtown San Jose has enjoyed a significant downtown urban transformation. Through public and joint public/private efforts, redevelopment in Downtown San Jose has involved building renovations and new construction that has revitalized the city center. This tour highlights the San Jose Arena, the Convention Center, museums, hotels, parks, and historic landmarks.

**Sunnyvale Materials Recovery Transfer Facility (SMART)** - This mobile workshop will focus on the operations at the new refuse SMART facility in the City of Sunnyvale. The workshop will include a brief presentation of the facility and an hour-long walking tour of the materials recovery sorting rooms, wood grinder, and refuse load out area.

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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 510/ 227-3214.

**Freeways Aren't Free**

by *John E. Hirten*

Editor's Note: Continuing the discussion of this month's newsletter subject on responsible growth, the following article focuses on the costs of improving one aspect of the infrastructure that is required to provide services to an ever expanding urban and suburban base.

In the November elections, the voters of this state turned down two propositions designed to improve transportation. One was Proposition 181 for rail bonds to improve transit and rail travel, and the other was Proposition 185, for an increase in the gas tax to help support transportation infrastructure and operational improvements. The reasoning was clear—"no new taxes," said voters. As a result, California and particularly the Bay Area face some serious questions about how to finance improvements in our transportation system, including not only freeways, but bridges, transit, carpool lanes and related programs. The problem is that while "no new taxes" may be an acceptable call to reduce the burden on tax payers to support general programs, it is not relevant to transportation, for which users of the system must pay their share.

California drivers have historically taken for granted the description of the state highway system as "freeways," with the emphasis on "free." The construction of major portions of the state system were federally funded, based on an arrangement where ninety percent of the cost came from federal gas taxes, and ten percent from gas taxes imposed by the state. Congress termed this arrangement "pay as you go," because money from the gas tax went directly into a highway trust fund. Although the concept of a gas tax was very close to a user fee, because the more you drove the more gas tax you paid, people nevertheless assumed that it was a one time tax.

As a result, for over 40 years, we have complacently expected that gas tax money would build, improve or enlarge our freeway systems when congestion appeared. With respect to our bridges, we were told that the tolls were only there to pay off the original bonds sold to finance construction, after which they would also be free. The result was unrealistic expectation on the part of California drivers that once built, use of the bridges and highways would be free.

Unfortunately this is incorrect. There are enormous hidden costs in the operation of the highway system in California. Because raising gas taxes continues to be politically unpopular, the current price of a gallon of gas is cheaper today in real dollars than it was in 1978. According to World Resources Institute, gasoline would cost several dollars a gallon if the gas tax was increased to reflect the true cost of driving automobiles.

Instead, U.S. gas prices now average just over \$1 a gallon; less than most Americans routinely pay for bottled water. As a result, gas taxes and other fees cover only about 60 percent of road construction and maintenance costs in the United States today. The remaining costs for services that keep the system running come from the state, county, and city general tax funds.

The World Resources Institute estimates that this total annual subsidy to our highway system is approximately \$300 billion a year. Expenses not covered by motorists include such items as police protection, traffic management, routine street maintenance, employer subsidized parking, congestion, and noise and vibration damage. The report also suggests that motorists pay an estimated \$50 billion, or half the cost of defending oil supplies in the Mideast.

Whether or not one agrees with the specific numbers, the bottom line is that drivers are not paying the true cost of using the system, as do the users of others transportation modes such as buses, trains, ferries or airlines. If the costs of these transit operations go up, the fare for use of the system increases. Why not the same for highways and bridges?

What does all this have to do with California and its future? Simply this: we can no longer build our way out of congestion. It's virtually impossible to build new bridges or add decks, or to add more lanes or double-deck the freeways. Therefore, we must improve the existing network, and implement more imaginative solutions to congestion, both of which will cost money. Instead of raising political ire by talking about "increasing the gas tax," we need to make clear that we are increasing user fees. We need to educate the public to understand that the freeways and bridges are not free, but in fact cost money to operate. We must face up to a regional gas tax if we really expect to maintain and improve our regional system.

*John E. Hirten is the Executive Director of RIDES for Bay Area Commuters, a private, non-profit corporation that uses a state of the art computerized ridematching system to provide free carpool and vanpool services to commuters throughout the ten county Bay Area.*



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

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# NORTHERN SECTION CALENDAR

## May

- 16 Transportation Research Forum
- 17 Bradley Inman, Plodders or Planners?
- 25 NAPEC, Managing Environmental Conflicts

MAY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	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	31			

## June

- 8 University Art Museum Event
- 16 NSCCAPA Awards Program

JUNE						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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