

Northern News

NORTHERN SECTION, CALIFORNIA CHAPTER, AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

An Integrated Transportation and Land Use Planning Process in the North Bay

by Elizabeth Caraker

OCTOBER 1997

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Marin and Sonoma Counties are at a cross roads that will determine their land use and transportation patterns for future generations. In Sonoma County especially, population growth rates have been above regional levels. Although local and state authorities have proposed various transportation improvements, traffic forecasts predict that these plans will fall short of satisfying the rapid growth in travel demands.

In response to the cars that continue to pack onto this limited stretch of roadway and the increasing frustration levels of commuters, the Sonoma County Transportation Authority, Marin Countywide Planning Agency and Caltrans sponsored a Joint Planning Team (JPT) effort to create a Sonoma/Marin Multi-Modal Transportation and Land Use Study. The \$400,000 study aimed at

- determining the most efficient way to spend public money on transportation improvements
- creating a pattern of land use that takes advantage of transportation options
- maintaining a high quality of life for Marin and Sonoma County residents.

In 1996 the JPT hired Calthorpe Associates to conduct a study and recommend a plan that would be acceptable to both counties and gain public support. Out of the consultant teams considered, Calthorpe was one of only two led by a land use-based firm. The first phase of the study analyzed existing conditions and planning documents for opportunities to create compact land use, pedestrian and transit oriented development. This preliminary land use and transportation assessment found that the existing 101 corridor has no additional capacity beyond

the proposed additions of HOV lanes, and much of their capacity would be used by existing travel demand. The study recommends a "Preferred Alternative" which uses a combination of transportation solutions which go beyond highway improvements and look to public transit for additional relief.

Sonoma and Marin Counties have now accepted this study to use as a basis for a reintroducing previously failed sales tax initiatives to pay for implementing projects designed to create a more efficient transportation network and urban form. The 1989 sales tax initiatives failed because at the time there was no comprehensive transportation plan to guide fund allocations and therefore the voters were unclear on how the money would be spent. There was also a perception that all the funding would go to light rail, which was seen as infeasible. City and County governments were concerned that a successful rail system would require general plan amendments, urban growth boundary adjustments and alterations to existing land use plans. A rift between the environmental and development communities derived from a perception that transportation projects would bring new development and therefore worsen congestion.

The preliminary assessment also found that many areas in Sonoma and Marin Counties had existing concentrated growth and transit oriented development as well as opportunity areas suitable for targeting more concentrated land use. Many towns along the 101 corridor historically grew around Northwestern Pacific Railroad train stations. As such, jobs and housing developed together and the resulting land use

(continued on page 4)

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by Wendy Cosin, AICP

In Steve Scholl's essay last month, "Planning, zoning, and chain stores", he uses the Berkeley example of Hollywood Video vs. Reel Video to examine the complexity of using the zoning process to address business ownership issues. I will continue discussion of this topic by providing more information about the video store controversy as well as other local examples.

After City Council approval of Hollywood Video, the neighborhood threatened a boycott of the business. A boycott would probably have compromised the business and would have projected an anti-business attitude in Berkeley at a time when the City is working to change that perception. The City's challenge was to assist in resolving this problem. Hollywood Video's agreement to sub-lease the property to Reel Video represented an extraordinary example of a win-win conclusion to a land use dispute.

First, it is important to recognize that the City and neighborhood support for Reel Video was based on more than the fact that it is not a national chain store. The idea for Reel Video grew out of the web site Reel.com which provides movie buffs anywhere in the country the opportunity to rent or purchase any movie ever released on video. Reel Video saw an opportunity in Berkeley to market to a sophisticated movie culture which would support a walk-in rental business that complemented their nationwide mail order business.

One of the main points in last month's essay was that, from a planning perspective, the two projects were essentially alike. Actually, the operating characteristics of Reel Video differ from a typical video outlet. Since Reel Video has approximately 35,000 older movies, customers are allowed to keep such films for five days. This minimizes neighborhood conflicts by spreading traffic and parking demand over a wider period of time, rather than the usual Friday and Saturday evening rush.

Reel Video also recognized the need to work with the neighborhood right from the beginning. For example, they agreed to close an hour earlier than had been planned, they worked with the City to close a driveway onto a residential street and to improve access with a new median cut and left turn lane, and they will soon be installing video drop-off boxes in other locations in the city.

A story with a happy ending — the consequence of an active citizen effort and government assistance is that nearby residents live with a compatible business, Hollywood Video avoided a variety of potential problems, Reel.com successfully opened a retail outlet, and the City of Berkeley will realize significant sales tax benefits from Reel.com's nationwide business. In other situations, Berkeley has also utilized land use regulations and findings protect important neighborhood uses, such as grocery stores and local theaters.

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The deadline for submitting materials for inclusion in the **Northern News** is the 16th day of the month prior to publication.

BALSA names five UCSF Mission Bay master plan finalists

BALSA, the Bay Area Life Sciences Alliance, has named five finalists in the UCSF Mission Bay Master Plan Competition. The firms will compete for selection to develop a master plan for the Mission Bay site of the University of California San Francisco (UCSF). The winner of the competition will be commissioned by BALSA to prepare the detailed Master Plan documents required to guide the phased development of the new UCSF site. In addition, BALSA's intention is to commission the competition winner to design a "signature" building for the new site. The Master Plan and all building plans will be submitted to the UC Regents.

BALSA was established in late 1996 as a San Francisco-based, privately funded non-profit corporation to promote life sciences in the Bay Area. Its initial effort has been focused on devising an economically-competitive option for the development of UCSF's major new site in Mission Bay.

All five finalist teams include a San Francisco based architecture firm to help ensure local involvement and knowledge of the site and the city. The firms heading the finalist teams are Machado and Silvetti Associates, Shin Takamatsu Architect & Associates, Solomon Architecture and Urban Design, Steven Holl Architects, and STUDIOS Architecture.

"The five finalists are recognized internationally for excellence in planning and design experience in working to develop community-based designs," said Clifford Graves, president of BALSA. "We're looking forward to seeing their proposals and three-dimensional design models in October."

"We're very appreciate of the efforts put forth by BALSA to facilitate the design of a dynamic environment for UCSF's Mission Bay site," said Bruce Spaulding, UCSF vice chancellor. "Our hope is that the selected plan not only will meet our growth requirements, but provide interactive spaces where people can meet and exchange information and offer opportunities for program expansion and linkage." This kind of interaction

among researchers has contributed to UCSF's preeminent standing in health science research.

The Competition Committee, comprised of representatives from UCSF, Catellus, the Mayor's Office, San Francisco Partnership, SPUR, SF Heritage Foundation, and neighborhood and community groups, as well as design professionals in architecture, landscape architecture, and engineering, selected the five teams based on interviews and their Statements of Qualifications.

A public exhibit and series of community workshops in October will provide opportunities for public comments regarding the five competing Master Plan visions. The following events have been scheduled:

1. **An Exhibition of Visions** – an exhibit of the five architectural and planning firm finalists' visions for the new 43-acre UCSF site at Mission Bay
October 21-30 Mon., Wed., Fri.,
9:00 AM to 5:00 PM and Tues., Thurs.,
9:00 AM to 6:00 PM.
Location: American Institute of
Architects, 130 Sutter Street, 6th Floor,
San Francisco
2. **A Community Voice** – a workshop for public comment on the visions for UCSF's new site at Mission Bay
Wednesday, October 22, 5:30 to 7:30 PM
Location: American Institute of
Architects, 130 Sutter Street, 6th Floor,
San Francisco
3. **A Day of Presentations** – a day of presentations to the Competition Jury by the five architectural and planning firm finalists
Saturday, November 1,
9:30 AM to 6:30 PM
Location: San Francisco Museum of
Modern Art, Schwab Room, 151 Third
Street, San Francisco

The public is welcome to all events and admission is free. For more information, call BALSA at 415-393-1411.

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) 540-0655.

... North Bay *(continued from page 1)*

patterns established still remain. The fact that the rail corridor is already publicly owned increases the feasibility of the plan.

During the next phase, the consultant team assembled and evaluated five transportation and two land use scenarios. The transportation scenarios included a wide range of potential improvements such as High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes, reconfigured freeway interchanges, improvements to state highways, local roads and pedestrian and bicycle paths, the introduction of commuter rail service and improvements to the existing bus transit system. The study also explored the effects of focusing new mixed-use development in locations with good access to transit.

The consultant team then incorporated the most effective components of each proposed scenario into a Preferred Scenario, which addresses both short and long term transportation needs over a 20 year period. This multi-modal approach recommends immediate improvements to Highway 101 between Healdsburg and Larkspur Landing and other roads, as well as planning and implementation of commuter rail service and compact and mixed-use land use patterns, thus satisfying the range of public interest groups.

The plan presents an economically feasible light rail system that would be complemented by an bus feeder system to enhance access to the 19 proposed primary and secondary rail stations.

The proposed light rail is cost effective because it uses the existing rail right-of-way which is already in public ownership, and self-propelled diesel or natural gas light rail vehicles which are cost and energy efficient and also provide a high level of comfort.

The study also dispels early perceptions that high density development would be necessary in order to provide adequate rail system ridership. This study has minimized any need for such development by illustrating that a high density population already exists within one mile of the rail corridor. As such, changes to the land use and general plans of city and counties are not necessary, but could certainly enhance the benefits of transit-oriented development. Indeed, the study identifies several sites for future compact and mixed-use development.

The Preferred Scenario also incorporates both counties' long-range trail plans and pedestrian and bicycle improvements. A multi-use path along the Northwestern Pacific rail line would be linked with bicycle routes and trails within the North Bay's cities.

A half-cent sales tax in both counties implemented over two nine year phases would fund approximately 60% of the \$1 billion projected costs. The counties would then require additional federal, state and regional contributions to fully fund this program.

The Joint Executive Committee (JEC) and the consultant presented a list of recommended land use policies to the

public during a series of public meetings. The JEC dealt with a fair amount of skepticism until people began to realize the logic behind balancing highway improvements with public transit projects and land use policies. New tax initiatives will likely appear on the November 1998 ballots for both counties. With a publicly accepted transportation plan to guide spending, the Counties hope the voters will feel confident that the 1/2 cent tax will prove to be effective in solving congestion problems while preserving the rural and small community nature of this region.

Elizabeth Caraker is a planner with the Napa County Conservation, Development and Planning Department.

Northern Section CCAPA

Holiday Party

Friday, December 5, 1997

Bellino Bar & Grill

95 So. Market Street
(at San Fernando Street)
Downtown San Jose

6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.

No host bar begins at 6 p.m.

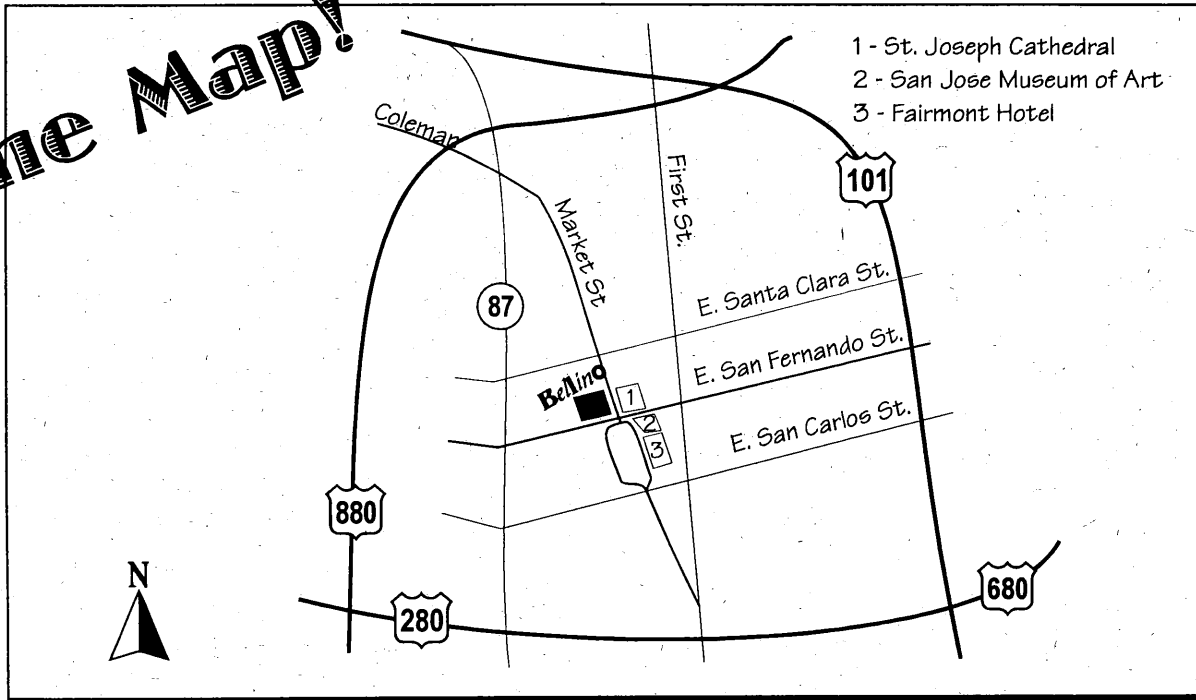
Dinner will be served at 7:30 p.m.

For reservations or information contact
Lori Neff (408) 227-4576 or
Deborah Ungo-McCormick (408) 920-0900

\$27.00 per person
(includes on-site parking).
RSVP before November 15 and you
will qualify to enter a drawing.
\$32.00 after November 15.
Space is limited, so please
call to confirm availability.



The Map!



The Menu!

FIRST COURSE: (Choice of One)

Mixed Sonoma Greens with Balsamic Vinaigrette and Garlic Croutons
or Soup of the Day

SECOND COURSE: (Choice of One)

- 1) Penne Milano with Eggplant in a Basil and Garlic Flavored Marinara
- 2) Breast of Chicken Saute with Mushrooms, Artichokes and Sun-dried Tomatoes
- 3) Salmon in Filo Pastry with Lemon, Ginger and Lemongrass Coulis.
- 4) Oak-Fired Posted Pork Chops with Mushrooms and Pancata in Cabernet Sauce

THIRD COURSE: (Choice of One - coffee included)

White Chocolate Mousse with Fresh Monterey Berries
or Bellino Tiramisu

Please send payment to: Lori Neff, Planning Division, 801 N. First St., Rm 400, San Jose, CA 95110-1795

Choice: (Please Circle)

First Course:

Salad or Soup

Second Course:

Penne Milano

Chicken

Salmon

Pork Chops

Third Course:

Mousse or Tiramisu

Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone Number: _____

(____) _____

Number of Persons: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Checks are payable to :

NORTHERN SECTION CCAPA

I would like more information on:

(Please circle all that apply)

Public Transportation/Parking Map

Hotels/Downtown Events

Night Clubs

Waste Management Planning Exchange

By Joanne Manson, AICP

In thinking about transitioning the focus of my planning experience from the local, regional, and state levels to national and international arenas, I developed a professional development plan for myself through my agency, the Alameda County Waste Management Authority. Part of this plan involved applying for the Planner Work Exchange Program organized through APA and the Royal Town Planning Institute, and by David Rafter, AICP, at the Minnesota State Colleges & Universities.

The program sought to match planners at similar level of expertise (mainly senior level and higher) and performing work in a similar arena. This program was only its second or third year of operation when I applied and had opportunities for exchange only in England and Ireland. As I was working as a planner in the waste management field, I was matched with a planner in England in the same field.

An aspect of this that I did not anticipate and discovered after I accepted being a part of the exchange was that I was to be nine months pregnant during the time that I was to host my British counterpart in July 1996 and have an eight month old infant accompany me at the time of my visit to England in June 1997. But that's another story.

I found that in England local plans must be consistent with national government policies. In the waste management arena this takes the form of the national "Making Waste Work" strategy produced by the central government. This policy concludes that a market-based approach combined with regulatory and data or accounting strategies will best facilitate achievement of waste management goals. I

observed that recycling, collection, and processing businesses, along with end-use manufacturers, together operated in a lively entrepreneurial manner, continually seeking new opportunities to capture and use recycled feedstock without government subsidy. One interesting government effort in this area is called the proximity principle, which encourages waste disposal self-sufficiency at a local level. This proximity principle simply states that waste disposal sites should be located within 30 miles of their service area. This is a key policy component that links the waste management strategy in the context of an overall environmental sustainability strategy. One may well argue, however, that the economic development around recycling activity is largely due to the United Kingdom's land constraints.

Given England's waste management policies being integrated within its overall national environmental sustainability policies, revenues from the national landfill tax are used on behalf of the environment as a whole and not constrained to use for individual landfill diversion activities.

By contrast, here in California and throughout the U.S., waste reduction efforts have been more locally driven and/or dependent upon individual businesses adopting green practices. Landfill taxes here are used in much more limited and targeted ways, usually with the stipulation that the expenditures of such taxes must be directly tied to measurable waste reduction. There are, of course, ways for funds to be employed to have farther reaching positive environmental effects without the need for national policy. However, without

consistent national policies that assure and support investments in sustainable practices, businesses operate in less certain environments to invest in sustainable practices.

I believe that a national landfill tax such as England's would not work in the U.S. without a strong national government policy or endorsement encouraging and providing for sustainable resource management and development practices, giving economic interests a clear indication of how they can develop consistent with such standards.

This experience clarified opportunities in sustainable development policy. It also offered different perspectives on how goals might be achieved through policy development. It is my view that this documented and shared experience and others like it will prove useful in focusing on development of unified environmental standards to facilitate improved environments in the global economy for present and future generations.

Joanne Manson is a planner with the Alameda County Waste Management Authority. For more information regarding this exchange, Joanne can be contacted at jmanson@stopwaste.org.

For more information on the Planners' Exchange Program, contact David Rafter, AICP Coordinator, APA Planner's International Exchange Program, 4004 Aldrich Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55409; (612) 824-8936.

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) 540-0655.

Last month's essay raised the question of whether zoning can be used to regulate business ownership. I don't know of any way that the issue can be addressed directly, however, there are a variety of ways to look at the issue. Berkeley dealt with concerns about fast food restaurants by developing regulations that call for additional findings to be made prior to approval. Adverse impacts from fast food restaurants were identified (including increased traffic, litter, odors and noise) and, in certain areas, findings are required to address these impacts. The regulations recognize that a primary concern is design and they call for the design of new buildings to provide pedestrian scale and siting; to incorporate continuity in street facades, and to provide intensity of development which does not under utilize the property, especially at or near intersections of major streets.

Chain stores do raise a number of important community issues. Many neighborhoods, and even cities, are blurring together with the same chains locating everywhere. Most important, however, is that independent bookstores are very seriously threatened by chains who previously undercut prices by receiving illegal discounts from publishers. A current tactic is to establish new chains next door or across the street from independent bookstores. While the chains tend to mimic nearby independent stores in the beginning, they eventually revert to their standard book selection. This presents a serious threat to the availability of diverse work. The entire publishing business is changing to accommodate chains, including use of the term "product", rather than books. Publishers present books to chains first and, if the buyers are not interested, they drop the books from publication. This makes it harder for alternative voices to be published or distributed. Any zoning ideas about how to address this?



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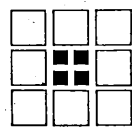


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NORTHERN SECTION CALENDAR

October

- 2 NSCCAPA Board Meeting, Berkeley
- 12-15 CCAPA Conference, Monterey (916) 361-8384
- 22 Public Comment on UCSF Mission Bay master plan, San Francisco
(415) 393-1411

November

- 1 Presentation of finalist plans for UCSF Mission Bay, San Francisco
- 6 NSCCAPA Board Meeting, Berkeley

December

- 4 NSCCAPA Board Meeting, Berkeley
- 5 NSCCAPA Holiday Party, San Jose
See insert for details

| OCTOBER | | | | | | |
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| | | | | | | 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 | | | | | | |

| DECEMBER | | | | | | |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 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 | | | |

NSCCAPA Board Meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month at the Berkeley Permit Services Center, 2118 Milvia Street, one block west of the Berkeley BART. The Board welcomes your attendance and encourages your participation in the organization. For more information, contact Wendy Cosin at (510) 705-8108; (wec1@ci.berkeley.ca.us)

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