

# Northern News

NORTHERN SECTION, CALIFORNIA CHAPTER, AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

## The Urban Fringe: Two World Truths

By Allan B. Jacobs

SEPTEMBER 1999

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DUNCAN & JONES

In our business one of the things we're supposed to do is discover truths. World truths are best. On some days I discover two or three of them. There are also days when I discard them, two or three at a time. Over the years, a few have remained and it's important, I think, that they be shared. Two world truths follow.

### Traffic is Not a Problem

Cities that are obsessed with the movement of cars and spend a lot of time and money trying to avoid or solve traffic problems are invariably less livable than cities that don't.

The traffic in Rome is really screwed up and it doesn't seem that the Romans spend a lot of time trying to solve the problems. Certainly they don't widen streets or build new bridges or freeways or anything like that.

It's a terrific city. In an hour a stranger knows that he's perfectly safe on the streets. You just walk wherever you want to, purposefully, directly, being careful not to pay attention to the cars, and you know you'll be perfectly safe. They'll miss you. But don't confuse them by trying to figure out what they're going to do because they don't know what you might do and you could get hit. The drivers know about traffic jams. They know the rules will change daily as to where they can and cannot go; they find new ways to get places, ways that work for about two days. They complain a lot. They adjust. Everyone adjusts. They know that there's no real way to solve the problem unless you want to do that at the expense of something really important, less countable than traffic, like say the Coliseum, or the Piazza Navona, so they adjust. Mussolini, I'm told, wanted

to put a road through the Piazza Navona, and look what happened to him.

Life takes place on the streets and in the piazzas and it's possible to talk over an espresso at the bar about the rotten traffic mess and how it's getting worse. The traffic jams make it livable. People get where they're going, roughly on time. What else do you want?

The French worry a bit more about traffic than the Italians. They still have pretensions of world power and leadership and associate that with being up to date, so Paris, though a really classy city, isn't as full of life as Rome. They'd have done better not to have screwed up part of the Seine with that speedway.

San Francisco, where they stopped building freeways in the nick of time, is more livable than Los Angeles. They worry like crazy about moving cars in Los Angeles, and they spend a lot of money. What has it gotten them? More problems. Cleveland was once a real city until they spent money on traffic instead of on the city. There are freeways all over San Diego and they widen streets at the first sign of a traffic jam. I've never seen such wide streets. Sidewalks are narrow. Every person I've ever met there has one of those Thomas Map guides because they'd be lost without one. They spend their time figuring out where the street is that they want to get to and how to get from here to there, instead of actually being wherever there is. Phoenix has lots of roads but it's not a city anymore. It's a developed area.

The guys who call themselves real thinkers on this subject admit privately, and maybe in small seminars where regular people aren't allowed, that traffic congestion can't be solved. It's like parking. So they talk about management.

*...you find a way, you adjust, everybody adjusts, even the system adjusts.*

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## The Urban Fringe... (continued from page 1)

I was driving on a freeway outside of Rome yesterday, a Sunday, and there was clearly too much traffic for the two lanes painted on the concrete. All of a sudden the cars created three lanes, and then four. People had turned a two-lane highway into a four-lane highway until the traffic thinned out. They adapted. In Los Angeles they would have widened the freeway and it would still be jammed.

How come whenever I find a city or a street where the traffic works, like in Rome, or those really nice boulevards in Paris, like Avenue Montaigne, where it's tough to figure out how things work at an intersection, or the narrow streets of downtown Philadelphia, or the really steep streets in San Francisco, how come whenever I find a place like that some traffic engineer tells me it doesn't work?

If you're into worrying then it's okay to worry about traffic. But just don't do anything about it or you'll make where you live worse. Better yet, just come to understand that traffic isn't a problem and you'll see, your city will be better.

### Parking is Not a Problem

If you frequently go to a very crowded, congested area you always find a parking space with ease. If you seldom go to that same area you will rarely find a parking space when you do.

This truth was revealed to me in the North Beach section of San Francisco. I used to go there often, to have coffee, to meet friends, to shop at the Florence Ravioli Company, to eat at Tomasso's, the North Beach Res-

taurant, the Washington Square Bar and Grille, some other eateries no longer there, and just to walk around. North Beach is a crowded area and there aren't very many places to park if you have to get there by car. But that never stopped me from going and I always found a spot. If I was supposed to meet someone I'd rarely be more than five minutes late.

Then I left the City for about four months. When I returned, I couldn't find a place to park in North Beach and I was damned if I'd use a garage on Vallejo—a matter of pride. At first I concluded that a lot more people must be driving there; more cars and fewer places. But it wasn't long, maybe a week or two, before I was finding parking spaces again with ease. Even today it's no problem.

When I go to the symphony, pretty regularly, I can plan to arrive outside about five minutes before it starts. I know I'll find a place to park, even if there's an Opera that night across the street and a recital up the block, at the Museum. There are four particular spots that I know will be vacant and waiting for me—one of them at least. And there are more, a bit more chancy, but they're there.

Sure, a few, just a few of those spaces have colors painted along the curb: a red here, a yellow or a green there, or sometimes a white. I have never known what they mean. Some have the letters S.F.P.D. on them, and I figure that must mean "Saved for Planning Director," and I was once one of those. In any case, ticket-givers in any sane city don't give tickets at all the possible

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



## Planners to Celebrate Diversity, Tackle Growth, Hear Top Speakers

The California Chapter of the American Planning Association announced that its 1999 Conference, "Celebrating Diversity," (October 16-19, at the Bakersfield Convention Center), will hear from three top speakers on growth and diversity: Dr. Ed Blakely, Lusk Prof. of Planning & Development, UCLA, expert on smart growth, policy advisor to Oakland Mayor Jerry Brown, and Guggenheim Fellow; Ward Connerly, Chairman, American Institute for Civil Rights, proponent of

Prop. 209, repealing race-based preferences and similar ballot measures in Florida and Washington; and, Peter King, Sacramento Bee "California Notebook" columnist, and Central Valley native.

California planners will put forward their best ideas for improving our quality of life while accommodating the diversity of new residents at this annual conference. The Conference will also include presentation of the *1999 APA California Awards* for excellence and merit in planning.

## Public Information Tour: New livable high-density housing in Davis

Saturday, September 18, 8:15 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. \$60.00 includes lunch at the N Street Community in Davis.

For information and reservations, call Ken Norwood at 510-548-6608 or email [slrcnorwood@igc.org](mailto:slrcnorwood@igc.org)

## Awards 1999—On To the State

Fourteen outstanding planning projects and programs were presented awards at the annual Northern Section banquet at Fort Mason and nine were forwarded to the state awards program for consideration. The Section programs are allowed to submit one nominee in each award category to the State. Those receiving State awards are then forwarded to the National program for consideration.

Nominees for State consideration are:

San Jose Neighborhood Revitalization Program; Santa Cruz Beach and South of Laurel Comprehensive Area Plan; Fremont Design Guidelines for Small Lot Single Family Developments; Avenue of the Giants Community Action Plan; Hotel St. Matthews Rehabilitation (San Mateo); Rohnert Park City Center Design and Development Plan; Marin County Telecommunications Facilities Policy Plan; Berkeley Homeless Continuum of Care Plan; Distinguished Leadership—San Jose

Department of Building, Planning and Code Enforcement.

In addition, the following programs also won awards at the Section level:

Agnews West Mixed Use Concept Plan, Santa Clara; Fremont Development and Design Guidelines for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities; Mission Bay Community Visitors Center; Bay Meadows Specific Plan, San Mateo; Baby Environmental Impact Report (assesses impacts of childbirth and child rearing).

We wish success to all the State nominees from Northern Section. And don't forget, next years deadline for submitting your outstanding planning program for award consideration is April 14, 2000.

A special thanks to 1999 Northern Section Jury members Diane Henderson, Janet McBride and Greg Werner for their help in making this awards program a success.

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) 642-3258.

**Associate/Assistant Planner**

City of Half Moon Bay

Salary: Associate Planner \$4,329/mo (currently under review)

Assistant Planner \$3,700/mo (currently under review)

Half Moon Bay will hire at either the Assistant or Associate level depending on experience and qualifications.

The Associate Planner is responsible for performing a variety of routine to complex administrative, technical and professional work in the current and/or long range planning programs related to the development and implementation of land use and related municipal plans and policies. Three years of related experience and a Bachelors degree required

The Assistant Planner is responsible for performing a variety of entry level routine and sometimes complex administrative, technical and professional work in the current and/or long range planning programs related to the development and implementation of land use and related municipal plans and policies. Bachelor's degree required.

Submit a completed City of Half Moon Bay application and resume. Applications can be obtained by calling (650) 726-8270. Personnel Department, City of Half Moon Bay, 501 Main Street, Half Moon Bay, CA 94019. Filing Deadline: September 20, 1999. EOE

**Planning Director**

City of Half Moon Bay

Salary: \$75,420 (currently under review)

Looking for an experienced, energetic, and positive Planning official to organize, direct, and coordinate the activities of the Planning Department. The Planning Director's area of responsibility includes current and advanced planning resource management, code enforcement, and coastal zone planning. Land use is the community's current focus of attention. Our candidate must be sensitive to a wide variety of community interests and have a demonstrated ability to create harmonious working relationships between private industry, the community, special interest groups, political entities and governments at all levels. Half Moon Bay has a small, fast paced planning department and the Director is expected to be a "hands on" administrator, with the ability to turn out high quality work personally as well as supervise the work of others. The Director must have a thorough knowledge of California planning law and practices. Coastal Zone experience is desirable.

Prefer advanced degree in City Planning, architecture, public administration, or closely related field. Must have at least 6 years of progressively responsible complex planning experience and supervision of professional staff.

Application Deadline: September 20, 1999 - Send resume and cover letter to City Manager, City of Half Moon Bay, 501 Main Street, Half Moon Bay, CA 94019. (650) 726-8270 EEO/ADA

**Planning Manager**

City of San Rafael

Salary: \$6,035 - 7,543/mo

Seeking highly motivated individual to serve as Planning Manager under the direction of the Community Development Director. Must be able to plan, organize and direct the staff and activities of the city's long range and current planning sections. Requires Bachelor's degree in planning or closely related field, and six years of progressively responsible planning experience including work in California and supervision of a professional level staff. A Master's degree in planning or related field may be substituted for one year of experience. Apply by Thursday, September 30, 1999. City application and supplement required. Apply to Human Resources, City of San Rafael, CA 94915-1560. (415) 485-3433. EOE.

**Freelance Graphic Artist/Technician**

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Salary: Hourly rate to be determined

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Long-term relationship with graphics consultant sought, preferably someone whose practice is located within a reasonable distance of our office. Please respond by mail, providing resume, hourly rate, and work samples, to Roberta Mundie, Mundie &amp; Associates, 3452 Sacramento Street, San Francisco, CA 94118.

**Commute Coordinator/Management Specialist**

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Salary DOQ

The City of Palo Alto has a temporary, F/T position for a personable individual to develop and manage the Travel Demand Management Program. Collaborating with the Chamber of Commerce, employers and transportation agencies, you will perform public outreach and provide research and marketing support for various initiatives. Requires a BA/BS in Urban Planning, Transportation, Public/Business Administration or related field or 3 years of increasingly responsible experience in a transportation planning or operating agency. Must be a flexible individual with proven success in transportation planning and promotional strategies, possess excellent writing, communication and project design/management skills and have a CA driver's license.

To learn more, visit our website at: [www.city.palo-alto.ca.us](http://www.city.palo-alto.ca.us). To apply, please send your resume to: J. Kott, Dept. of Planning/Transportation, City of Palo Alto, PO Box 10250, Palo Alto, CA 94303. Email: [joseph\\_kott@city.palo-alto.ca.us](mailto:joseph_kott@city.palo-alto.ca.us). EOE M/F/D/V**Senior Planner Associate Planner**

City of Berkeley

Salary: Senior Planner \$54,204 - 64,584

Associate Planner \$48,792 - 57,912 (both include 7% add'l comp &amp; full benefits)

Seeking highly qualified professional planners. Requires Bachelor's degree in city &amp; regional planning, urban planning, or related field, and two years of professional planning experience (four years' experience for Senior Planner level). City of Berkeley application materials accepted on a continuous basis. Call (510) 644-6122 or apply at Personnel Dept., 1947 Center St., Berkeley, CA 94704. EOE.

# 1999 FALL WETLANDS WORKSHOP SERIES



**AEP** proudly presents its 1999 Fall Workshops at five locations throughout California. This half-day workshop will provide tools to face the most challenging wetlands and CESA issues in the new century. In light of your demanding schedule and desire for efficiency, we have designed this workshop to be conducted in a half-day format, starting promptly at 8:00 AM and ending at 12:00 NOON. The workshop has been designed to meet the needs of a wide range of people from planners and public works officials to wildlife biologists to the general public. The class begins with a session on the basics of a wetland. The course transitions into the various agencies involved and their individual permit processes. The morning will end with a discussion on endangered species and their interrelationship to wetlands. To further enhance the program, registration includes Solano Press Books, *Wetlands Regulations*.

## Featured Speakers

- Chris Beale, California Department of Fish & Game
- John W. Belsher, Belsher & Becker, Attorneys at Law
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## For more information

For further information about the AEP Wetlands Workshop Series and/or sponsorship information, or if you are not on AEP's mailing list and would like to receive the Workshop Brochure, contact AEP c/o Stefan/George Associates, 1333 36th Street, Sacramento, CA 95816 or 916.737.2371.

## AEP 1999 FALL WORKSHOP SERIES

- Fax completed application to AEP at 916.456.1283 at least 3 days prior to event or
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VTA offers excellent working conditions and an extensive benefits package. For a job bulletin (includes more information and supplemental questions) and an application (required), please e-mail [personnel@vta.org](mailto:personnel@vta.org), call (408) 321-5575, or write VTA - Personnel Office, 3331 North First Street, Bldg. B, San Jose, CA 95134-1906. Please visit our web-site at [www.vta.org](http://www.vta.org)

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CSG Consultants is a multi-expertise municipal services consultant that provides high quality contract community development services to cities and counties throughout the San Francisco Bay area. The available position involves the provision of contract city planning services to existing and new clients. The Planner performs complex planning work requiring in-depth knowledge of planning principles and practices, as well as California planning/development laws and CEQA. Requires a combination of education and experience substantially equivalent to that obtained with graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelors degree in the fields of city or urban planning, environmental design or architecture, including four years of increasingly responsible project management experience. Computer proficiency with MSWord, Excel and Access is desirable. Experience in lead agency implementation of CEQA is preferable. Prepares and presents written reports and recommendations to the Planning Commission and City Council.

Provide resume and salary requirements to: Jon Bassman, CSG Consultants, 395 Oyster Point Boulevard, Suite 119, South San Francisco, CA 94080. Phone: (650) 794-2000 Fax: (650) 794-2009 Email: [jonb@csgengr.com](mailto:jonb@csgengr.com)

Four positions with the City of Richmond:

**Planning Manager**

Salary: \$6130 – 7450/mo

Oversees planning functions of the city. Responsible for implementing planning policy, goals and objectives; supervising division staff; administering the budget; making presentations before the City Council, community groups, and other public bodies; and coordinating complex planning projects. Bachelor's degree in urban planning or closely related field and five years of progressive professional experience, two years which involved the supervision of professional planning staff.

**Associate Planner (limited term)**

Salary: \$4474 – 5413/mo

Under general supervision, is responsible for complex or advanced planning projects. This is the lead level in the planning series and incumbents are expected to work on projects that require highly technical and specialized knowledge and skills. Bachelor's degree in city and regional planning or closely related field and four years of professional planning experience. Paraprofessional experience may be substituted for up to two years of the professional experience.

Application materials may be picked up in person or obtained by sending a SASE to City of Richmond, Human Resources Department, 2544 Barrett Avenue, Richmond, CA 94804. Deadline Monday, October 4, 5:30 p.m.

**Assistant Planner**

Salary: \$3739 – 4527/mo

Under supervision, conducts planning analysis and research on moderate to difficult projects. This is the journey level class in the professional planning series and incumbents prepare planning studies and work on short-range, well-defined assignments. Bachelor's degree in city and regional planning or closely related field and two years of professional planning experience. An advanced degree in planning may be substituted for the required experience.

**Planning Technician**

Salary: \$3000 – 3541/mo

Under supervision, performs a wide variety of technical, paraprofessional, and customer support duties. This is the journey level class in the paraprofessional series. Duties include the preparation of land use and zoning exhibits for use in reports, processing of approved subdivision maps and notifications to property owners and occupants of permits and changes in land use. Requires two years of paraprofessional experience in the processing and review of planning documents.

## The Urban Fringe... *(continued from page 2)*

places and it's only a matter of time before you understand where and when they do and don't. (Berkeley does not fit into any category. There, they have at least one parking patrol person for every two parking spaces, and that's reason enough not to want to live there.) But, most of the places where I park are unpainted.

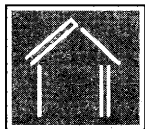
So what does this mean? It means that, regarding parking, if you want to go somewhere, or need to, you find a way, you adjust, everybody adjusts, even the system adjusts. It means that paying a lot of attention to parking is a waste of time and energy. It's one of those problems that takes care of itself. If you don't pay attention to it, it goes away and that's the best thing to do because if you think much about it, it's unsolvable and places with lots and lots of

parking are usually lousy places to go anyway. If absolutely no parking exists at a place you'd like to be, you'll find another way to get there. There is a lot of room to park in the desert or in the asphalt around most shopping malls that I see. There is not much in North Beach, and there are a lot of people there.

So don't worry about parking. It's really not a problem.

*Allan B. Jacobs is currently a Professor at the Department of City and Regional Planning at the University of California at Berkeley. He served as the Planning Director of San Francisco from 1967-75. Among his many publications, he is perhaps best known for his "Great Streets," published by MIT Press in 1993.*

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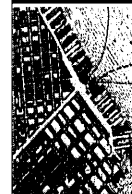
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**NORTHERN SECTION CALENDAR**

**September**

- 18 Public Information Tour, New Livable High Density Housing, Davis, Sponsored by Shared Living Resource Center
- 21 AEP Fall Wetlands Workshop, Sacramento
- 23 AEP Fall Wetlands Workshop, Oakland

SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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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	

**October**

- 16-19 CCAPA Conference, Bakersfield "Celebrating Diversity"

OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
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31						



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