

NORTHERN NEWS



American Planning Association
California Chapter
Northern
Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the Northern Section of the California Chapter of APA

APRIL 2012

Participation: New ways
to engage Page 1

Bay Area cities after
Redevelopment Page 1

Alcatraz and Coit Tower
Photo: Chandler Lee





NORTHERN NEWS



A Publication of the Northern Section of the California Chapter of APA

APRIL 2012



American Planning Association
California Chapter
Northern

Making Great Communities Happen

Crowdsourcing and virtual town halls: New ways to engage

By Kara Vuicich, with Phil Olmstead, Elizabeth Romero, and Valerie Taylor

Public participation is vital and necessary to planning and decision-making. It helps planners, decision-makers, and the public process their concerns and engage in effective and meaningful discourse.

However, legally mandated hearings and council and commission meetings provide few opportunities for innovative, collaborative approaches. Their formalized structure presents a number of challenges, including one-way communication instead of dialogue; constrained or ineffective feedback loops that hinder staff's ability to integrate public input; and participation by a self-selected or limited few with the ability and interest to attend public meetings.¹

While less formalized working groups, workshops, and charrettes have overcome many of these challenges, they can be resource intensive or prohibitively expensive.

So why not broaden participation and reduce costs by bringing key elements of these collaborative methods onto computers, tablets, and smart phones? More people than ever have access to the Internet. According to the Pew Research Center, roughly 78 percent of adult Americans were using the Internet in 2011, up from 14 percent in 1995. Youth are even more likely to be "connected" — 95 percent of those between ages 14 and 17 use the Internet. Smartphone use is growing the fastest: 46 percent of adults owned a smartphone in 2012 (up from 35 percent a year earlier). The digital (age) divide remains a concern, but Internet trends indicate the gap is closing.

Fortunately, several exciting new web-based applications are providing cost-effective tools that agencies and organization can use to facilitate collaborative planning and broaden participation. Recent research on Internet-based tools and applications shows they can be effective for fostering collective intelligence, engaging in two-way sharing of information and ideas, tapping into local knowledge, developing and incorporating public preferences into decisions about priorities, empowering citizens, and expanding and diversifying participation.²

(continued on page 4)

Bay Area cities adjust to life after Redevelopment

By Sarah Karlinsky, Tomiquia Moss, and Leah Toeniskoetter

This article was originally published by SPUR on February 23, 2012, and can be viewed at <http://bit.ly/wJ74UI>

Redevelopment agencies across the state closed their doors on February 1, marking the end of an era for planning in California. SPUR has written previously about what the end of redevelopment means for the state. But how are the Bay Area's central cities — San Francisco, Oakland and San Jose — dismantling their agencies? What's going to happen to the ongoing projects and existing assets held by redevelopment agencies? Is this the last word — or will we witness the creation of other planning tools to do some of the work that was previously done by redevelopment agencies?

San Francisco

San Francisco is, in many ways, the city least likely to be impacted by the end of redevelopment — and the one in the best position to develop tools and strategies to replace it. As both a city and a county, San Francisco will not need to send its redevelopment funding to a separate county government, where it would become one of many jurisdictions fighting for remaining funds. In contrast, Oakland is one of 14 cities in Alameda County (not including unincorporated Alameda County) and San Jose is one of 15 cities in Santa Clara County (not including unincorporated Santa Clara County). Despite this, San Francisco will not emerge unscathed.

San Francisco has developed three main priorities to guide its actions in the face of redevelopment's dissolution: first, that the three large redevelopment projects (Mission Bay, Hunter's Point and Transbay) that qualify as enforceable obligations under Assembly Bill 26 (the state law that dissolved redevelopment) continue uninterrupted; second, that the community development functions of redevelopment — including affordable housing production, workforce development programs, and neighborhood strengthening and investment initiatives — be protected; and third, that that programs that receive state

(continued on page 14)

WHAT'S INSIDE

Clicking a [blue PAGE link](#) under Section A below will take you to the article.
Clicking on [SECTION B](#) will download that PDF.

SECTION A

Crowdsourcing and virtual town halls: New ways to engage

by Nelson Nygaard's Kara Vuicich, Phil Olmstead, Elizabeth Romero, and Valerie Taylor

Four examples show how agencies and organizations used web-based tools to enhance or provide an alternative to in-person meetings. [PAGE 1](#)

Bay Area cities adjust to life after Redevelopment

by Sarah Karlinsky, Tomiquia Moss, and Leah Toeniskoetter, SPUR

How will the Bay Area's central cities fare in the wake of redevelopment's disappearance? What is happening, and now that redevelopment is gone, what should be done next? [PAGE 1](#)

Director's note

In his monthly column, Section Director Hanson Hom, AICP, updates us on changes in the board and recent and upcoming events. [PAGE 3](#)

What others are saying

A brief look at — and links to — what news sources around the country are reporting about real estate, pollution, earmarks, climate change, and demographic trends. [PAGE 6](#)

Norcal roundup

Compiled by Erik Balsley, AICP

A brief look at — and links to — planning news from around Northern California. [PAGE 9](#)

Plan-it sustainably

Katja Irvin, AICP, shares her views on the state of Bay Area climate change planning. [PAGE 12](#)

Quotations from Chairman Richard

This month's substitute for our monthly "HSR notes" column. [PAGE 13](#)

Where in the world

This month we have two similar photos of urban planning interest and ask you to guess their locations. [PAGE 13](#). Answers on page 16.

SECTION B

VOTE

Two Californian planners are running for national APA office. Can we get West Coast representation? Have your say! Exercise your **vote no later than Thursday, March 29**. [PAGE 16](#)

Who's where

New professor coming to San Jose State this fall. [PAGE 16](#)

SPUR comes to San Jose

by Theresa Alster

The San Francisco Urban Planning and Research association makes the Bay Area's largest city its second home. [PAGE 17](#)

FAICP inducts three from Northern California

Juan Borrelli, AICP, provides short bios of Linda Dalton, Ellen Greenberg, and Barry Miller. Photos. [PAGE 19](#)

2012 APA California Northern Section Awards dinner

May 11. Information and reservation instructions. [PAGE 20](#)

Planning Commissioner workshops

April 7 and May 5. Information and registration instructions. [PAGE 21](#)

Events calendar

Through May 2012. [PAGE 22](#)

Newsletter and Board information

[PAGE 25](#) ■

"The Bay Area is a magnetic procession of layered sensations, one after the next. The bay holds the center, gives us a shared visual marker, while ridges and hills define the horizon and serve as orientation points. Geography also shapes our cities and towns so that we know edges and limits, rather than the indiscriminate ooze of other metropolitan agglomerations." —John King, <http://bit.ly/wuzASA>



National APA Conference April 14–17

The APA National Conference is just around the corner and is being held in Los Angeles this year — convenient for California planners. Over 5,000 planners from around the nation will converge on the Los Angeles Convention Center in the downtown core next to the Staples Center to dialogue on the latest planning issues, trends, and practices. The theme for this year's conference is **ReIMAGINE The City, ReIMAGINE Your Career, ReIMAGINE The Possibilities**. The conference planning committee has planned a packed program with over 100 educational sessions and mobile workshops. Of course planners are not all business, so fun social and networking activities are also planned for de-stressing and unwinding. It is not too late to register. For more information, please go to <http://www.planning.org/conference/>. See you there!

Northern Section 2012 FAICP inductees

The Northern Section is very pleased that three accomplished planners from our Section will be inducted into the 2012 Class of Fellows (FAICP) at the National APA Conference. Congratulations to **Linda C. Dalton, AICP**, who will be inducted under the Community Service and Leadership category, and to **Ellen J. Greenberg, AICP**, and **Barry J. Miller, AICP**, who will be inducted under the Professional Practice category. A one-paragraph synopsis of each of their careers is included in this issue of *Northern News* (see [page 19](#)). They join a distinguished list of FAICP members from the Northern Section.

SPUR launch party

The Northern Section enthusiastically welcomes the opening of the SPUR San Jose office in the City of San Jose. This momentous occasion was recognized at a “launch party” on March 8 at San Pedro Market Square in downtown San Jose where several hundred guests celebrated the expansion of SPUR to the South Bay. Establishing a SPUR office in the South Bay is a logical step for the Bay Area as the subregion is projected to receive a large share of the future employment,

housing, and population growth in the Bay Area by 2040. Similar to its role in San Francisco, SPUR will be influential in shaping land use policies in Silicon Valley. Its advocacy of smart urban planning and policy-making is a welcome addition in a region that is tackling very challenging land use, transportation, and fiscal issues. The Northern Section Board very much looks forward to working with Leah Toeniskoetter, SPUR San Jose Director, on common partnership and sponsorship opportunities. An article by Toeniskoetter and two SPUR colleagues appears on [page 1](#). Our associate editor Theresa Alster has written a short article about the launch event ([page 17](#)) with photos provided by SPUR.

Board transitions

Several Board members are moving on and have resigned from the Northern Section Board. **Pierce MacDonald** served on the Board as newsletter editor for two years, 2001–2003, and for seven years as the Section's Webmaster since the position was created in February 2005. Pierce has indicated it is time to step down. She was largely responsible for launching our newly designed website in 2005 and has capably managed it since. She is leaving the website in capable hands as **Ronny Kraft**, who served over the past year as Co-webmaster with Pierce, will solely assume this role. Ronny is leading an effort with our full Board and a new web designer to launch an upgraded website that will take advantage of the latest technological capabilities to offer more robust content and a more user-friendly experience for members and visitors. Look for an announcement of the new website, which will be launched soon.

We wish the best to **Kay Cheng**, Planning Diversity Co-director, who also recently resigned. She worked with **Miroo Desai, AICP**, on diversity outreach to high schools to promote planning as a profession. Miroo will continue as the Planning Diversity Director, but welcomes anyone interested in working with her on diversity issues. If you are interested, please contact her at mdesai@ci.emeryville.ca.us. ■

Following are four examples of how these tools are being used in California planning.

You Choose Bay Area

The Silicon Valley Community Foundation, as part of the regional Plan Bay Area process — and in partnership with the Knight Foundation, Greenbelt Alliance, TransForm, Calthorpe Associates, and Northern California Public Broadcasting — led a two-year strategic initiative to encourage public participation. A key component of the effort was You Choose Bay Area (www.youchoosebayarea.org), an interactive, web-based simulation tool developed by MetroQuest (www.metroquest.com) that allowed citizens to outline priorities, choose different growth options, and see future consequences.

MetroQuest's digital engagement software can be used on a computer, kiosk, or mobile tablet independently or as a part of public meetings. It enables users to obtain information about a project through text or video, provide information through written or map-based comments, identify priorities, and rate different scenarios. The tool designed for You Choose Bay Area enabled users to see the links between future growth scenarios and open space preservation, clean air, water consumption, public health, energy use, affordable housing, greenhouse gas emissions, and access to mass transit.

The tool can track ISP addresses, so the number and general location of users can be identified. It records and tabulates participants' responses and feedback and can generate multiple reports on user inputs.

One of the initiative's goals was to engage people who don't normally participate, and this appears to have been met. Both in-meeting polling and additional surveys indicated this was the first experience in a public planning process (either online or in person) for 20 percent of respondents.

The initiative is complete, but Silicon Valley Foundation is continuing to utilize the tool. Foundation staff visited an economics class at Palo Alto High School and used the site to demonstrate interdependency and trade-offs in a real economy. Staff is currently exploring additional potential uses in local contexts.

The North Bayshore Precise Plan, Mountain View

As one of the implementation measures of its recently completed 2030 draft general plan, the City of Mountain View is developing the North Bayshore specific plan. Objectives include diversifying land uses, revitalizing North Shoreline Boulevard, incentivizing sustainable development, and improving mobility for all transportation modes. Because the area is primarily a high-tech employment center, the city was eager to explore online alternatives in addition to public meetings.

The consulting team and the city chose to use MindMixer's "virtual town hall" (www.mindmixer.com). The web-based platform (www.northbayshorepreciseplan.org) provides project information and resources and — more importantly — enables the community to submit ideas on specific topics, to "second" ideas, and to suggest ways to improve ideas already submitted. Users follow the discussion by reviewing all ideas by topic, or the most popular and recent ideas, or — where there is a geographic component like transportation — review ideas in map view.

Output from the web site is delivered in two formats — a database and a tabulated PDF. The tool generates a complex set of data with ideas, seconded ideas, and conversations about those ideas. Planners take the data and organize it by topic, idea, or popularity. As questions become more specific, the reports quantify ideas by rankings or priority. Required registration to the site provides demographic data on users.

Although the project is still in its early phases, the project team is pleased with the results. Approximately 150 people have registered on the site, and some novel, interesting ideas have been shared. As the project progresses, the team will run more rounds either to ask additional questions, or establish a feedback loop to pare down ideas. The ultimate goal is to arrive at and rank the top priorities.

Generating traffic to the website has been a challenge, however. Although MindMixer is designed to be a word-of-mouth social networking tool that spreads virally, the project has not had that experience thus far. However, according to project consultant Kevin Gardiner with Metropolitan Planning Group, both Google and Microsoft (who have offices in the planning area) requested presentations on the general plan and its impact on the area, and afterward there was a noticeable spike in site traffic. Participants have been most responsive to topics to which they can relate directly, such as transportation.

California Economic Summit: California Stewardship Network and California Forward

The California Stewardship Network, an alliance promoting economic vitality, and California Forward, a bipartisan good-government reform effort to improve performance and democracy, are sponsoring 13 regional economic forums leading to a statewide California Economic Summit May 11, 2012. (www.caeconomy.org) The effort includes 18 regional partnering organizations — universities, leadership networks, nonprofits, and corporations. For the statewide meeting, the project will incorporate the use of a "virtual forum" via Crowdbrite, www.crowdbrite.com.

(continued on next page)

Crowdbrite is a visual “crowd sourcing” web-based platform or mobile application. Its primary function is to enable users to generate ideas and get feedback by commenting on, voting, ranking, and prioritizing ideas. Users can post virtual sticky notes on plans, drawings, poster boards, white boards, visual simulations, architectural drawings, and regional plans.

The virtual forum will facilitate the in-person meeting and allow remote users to participate. Stakeholders can voice their preferences on state-level economic strategies that support their regional priorities. Users will be able to indicate their preferences across topics such as workforce, infrastructure, innovation, and the regulatory process; contribute their own ideas for state actions; and rank priorities.

The Crowdbrite canvas will provide a visual backdrop for the summit’s proceedings, enhance stakeholders’ experiences, efficiently collect input, direct the meeting, and generate live findings.

California Forward selected Crowdbrite because they needed a collaboration platform to make the statewide forum “really sing and coalesce everything into place,” according to California Forward Digital Director Vance Hickin. More specifically, they

sought a digital tool that would help break down bigger issues into their component parts and enable participant findings to be quantified and presented in real-time. The interactive, visual, canvas-based platform seemed like a natural metaphor for the town hall meeting, but with additional functionality. Whereas traditional town hall meeting sticky notes “can get to be a bit of a mess,” the Crowdbrite platform aggregates all the data in real time, so agencies can quickly gauge priorities.

Envision 2050, San Diego County

As part of its 2050 Regional Transportation Plan’s public engagement effort, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) wanted a new kind of online tool that would not only report on its plans but also engage citizens more deeply in thinking about priorities, impacts, and quality of life in the region. SANDAG engaged Placeways, LLC, and Fireant Studios to help build the tool, Envision 2050, envision2050sd.com.

The interactive web site provided information about transportation planning issues and challenges through a highly visual experience. A central step-by-step application allowed visitors to select priorities by dragging them from an animated wheel of options. Based on their choices, users could learn more about transit, accessibility, air quality, and safety, with dynamic chart icons showing how the RTP will perform on “good walking and biking connections” or “reduced greenhouse gas emissions.” The site included a 3-D representation of the San Diego region and the transportation infrastructure projects planned. The tool received very positive feedback from the media, the public, and elected officials.

Summary

These four examples show that agencies and organizations can use web-based tools in a variety of ways either to enhance or provide an alternative to in-person meetings. Generally, project sponsors have found that using these tools resulted in broader and more diverse public participation, more meaningful participation, and responsive feedback loops that enabled project sponsors to collect, analyze, and incorporate public ideas and feedback quickly and easily. ■

The authors all work at Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, a multimodal transportation planning firm focused on building and supporting vibrant, sustainable communities.



Crowdbrite in use at Tahoe Regional Transportation Workshop, November 2, 2011. Photo: Valerie Taylor

¹ Innes, Judith E., and David E. Booher. “Reframing Public Participation: Strategies for the 21st Century.” *Planning Theory & Practice* 5, no. 4 (December 2004): 419-436.

² Brabham, Daren C. “Crowdsourcing the Public Participation Process for Planning Projects.” *Planning Theory* 8, no. 3 (2009): 242-262.
Levy, Pierre. *Collective Intelligence: Mankind’s Emerging World in Cyberspace*. Translated by Robert Bononno. Cambridge: Perseus Books, 1997.

The display of calling cards from firms offering professional services appears in every issue of *Northern News*. Fees paid by the firms for this service help defray the costs of this newsletter.

innovative solutions | stronger communities



www.migcom.com

Lorraine Weiss

DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW



1800 WASHINGTON ST. NO. 218 SAN FRANCISCO CA 94109
415 921-5344



EMC PLANNING GROUP INC.
A LAND USE PLANNING & DESIGN FIRM

Monterey, CA 831.649.1799 www.emcplanning.com

PMC[®]

- AGENCY STAFFING
- CONSERVATION PLANNING AND BIOLOGICAL SERVICES
- ENVIRONMENTAL
- PUBLIC FINANCE
- HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
- URBAN PLANNING
- SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE
- CREATIVE SERVICES

COMPREHENSIVE MUNICIPAL SERVICES

(866) 828-6PMC
WWW.PMCWORLD.COM

What others are saying

Highlights from news sources around the country

Compiled by the editors

Cities burned, Legislature fiddles

<http://www.cp-dr.com/node/3146>

“Even as the redevelopment wind-down continues, the Legislature is beginning to play around with ways to bring it back in a more limited form. Most of the discussions have to do with tax-increment financing (TIF). The most obvious possibility would be to permit cities and successor agencies to receive TIF on all property tax revenue except revenue that goes for schools. This would still drain property tax from counties and special districts. Meanwhile, Senate president pro tem Darrell Steinberg has been proposing that cities and successor agencies be permitted to keep former RDA assets even if TIF revenues are redistributed. Steinberg noted that RDA’s cash assets [were] at least \$2 billion on February 1. In addition, RDAs were sitting on about \$1.3 billion in unencumbered funds earmarked for affordable housing. Bills are likely to include protections for the \$1.3 billion as well as language to avoid a ‘fire sale’ of former RDA assets. Quick sale of assets is encouraged by AB 1x 26, the law that eliminated redevelopment.” —Bill Fulton, “TIF revival on the table in Sacramento,” *CP&DR Report*, March 8, 2012.

What do we get from representatives in powerful appropriations positions?

<http://bit.ly/z1d0y0>

Less than zero. “Researchers looking at federal government spending on states discover that having a powerful, long-tenured legislator in D.C. actually hurts the local economy. ‘There are all sorts of theories about government money, that it could stimulate the economy, that it could crowd out local investment,’ said Chris Malloy, an associate professor at the Harvard Business School and one of the study’s authors. ‘We have evidence it’s crowding out investment.’ And this means powerful politicians may actually be bad for business back home. The effect is particularly strong when unemployment is low and companies are operating near full capacity, when government projects may actually lure labor away from these firms and drive up the cost of business (as opposed to employing people who were out of work at the time).” —Emily Badger, “How incumbents in Washington hurt the economy,” *Miller-McCune*, March 1, 2012.

Europe and North America can expect more snow as Arctic sea ice dwindles

<http://bit.ly/yVHBGL>

“Arctic sea ice is continuing its seemingly interminable decline, and the loss could be contributing to the recent cold winters over northern Europe and North America. Researchers are still unsure how important

(continued on next page)

Winzler & Kelly is now GHD!

On 10.4.11 Winzler & Kelly joined forces with GHD to create a new leader in environmental planning and infrastructure engineering with over 6500 employees in more than 100 offices ready to serve you! As part of GHD we now offer more than 70 services to clients including CEQA/NEPA compliance, resource agency permitting, water resource planning, transportation planning, wetlands & biological services, habitat restoration, and hazardous materials & industrial hygiene. The merger will combine Winzler & Kelly's local technical capabilities with GHD's highly collaborative worldwide network of talented staff. Together we offer a strong, global platform of highly qualified environmental planning skills. Winzler & Kelly and GHD share the same vision and culture that will translate into immediate value to our clients through diverse and innovative solutions.

Contact us:
www.w-and-k.com
www.ghd.com



LAMPHIER • GREGORY
URBAN PLANNING & ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS
lamphier-gregory.com 510-535-6690



SOLOMON ★ E.T.C.
City + Regional Planning San Francisco
Urban Design 1328 Mission Street, 4th Fl.
Landscape Architecture San Francisco, CA 94103
Architecture 415.575.4722
www.wrtdesign.com



EXTANT ACOUSTICAL
CONSULTING LLC
adj (ek'stánt) - to stand out or above
ACOUSTICS • NOISE • VIBRATION • DESIGN
Serving Northern California And Beyond
T. 916.220.8173 | www.ExtantAcoustical.com

What others are saying *(continued from previous page)*

sea-ice loss is to winter weather ... many different factors are at play. [But] the dramatic loss of winter sea ice in the Arctic has caused it to feel global warming more sharply than the rest of the planet. Less ice means more exposed water, which — being darker than ice — absorbs more solar energy. [And] with less ice to insulate the warmer ocean from the air above, more of that energy is released back into the atmosphere as heat. The net result is that Arctic air is significantly warmer than before.” While three decades of data on ice and weather show a link between the extent of Arctic sea ice and cold, snowy winters in the regions immediately to the south, “there are other factors besides sea-ice anomalies that influence winter snowfall. They include the El Niño/La Niña cycle and the roughly decadal variations in the solar activity. ‘If you’re looking 30 years ahead, when the Arctic will be closer to 80 per cent ice-free rather than 30 or 40 per cent, we can expect to see colder winters,’ said James Overland of the Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory in Seattle.” —Catherine Brahic, “Melting sea ice could trigger colder winters,” *New Scientist*, Feb. 27 2012.

This article has two interesting graphics

<http://bit.ly/y6uQGF>

“The future is here, and it’s for lease. Two monster generational cohorts, Boomers (born 1946-1964) and Millennials (born 1981-2000), account for more than 150 million people. There are so many in the two age groups that even small slivers of the total will have multiplier effects on housing supply and demand. Both these age groups trend away from family norms of the past. Many more of them — at both ends of the age clusters — live alone or have no children, [and] the combination of economic realities and quality of life desires is pushing them toward rentals. Demand for rental housing is outstripping supply and driving up rents. And the debate is heating up among developers on how much to invest in this new direction: A gigantic demographic push towards flexible, close-in living; a demand for affordability on a broad scale; and an increasing desire for rental options.” —Ben Brown, “Dream home for the new era: Compact, connected, and mortgage-free,” *Better! Cities & Towns*, Feb. 27, 2012.

Action on climate change requires healthy economy

<http://bit.ly/xkUDa2>

“US public opinion about climate change has been riding a roller coaster over the past decade. After signs of growing acceptance and emphasis around 2006 and 2007, a precipitous decline brought us back to where we started, with fully a quarter of the public not even thinking that the planet has warmed up. A recent study published in *Climatic Change* evaluates the impact of several potential opinion drivers: extreme weather events, public access to scientific information, media coverage, advocacy efforts, and the influence of political leaders.

(continued on next page)

LSA

- Environmental Sciences
- Planning
- Design

www.lsa-assoc.com

Berkeley
Carlsbad
Fresno
Irvine
Palm Springs
Point Richmond
Riverside
Rocklin
San Luis Obispo
South San Francisco

bae
urban economics for sustainable development
bae1.com

san francisco 510.547.9380
sacramento 530.750.2195
los angeles 213.471.2666
new york 212.683.4486
washington dc 202.588.8945

Hatch Mott MacDonald
Delivering Transportation Planning Solutions

1300-B First Street
Gilroy, CA 95020
T. 408.848.3122
F. 408.848.2202
www.hatchmott.com

BMS
DESIGN GROUP

URBAN DESIGN
CAMPUS PLANNING
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
LAND PLANNING

San Francisco (415) 249-0130
Nevada City (530) 264-7033
www.bmsdesigngroup.com

PLANNING URBAN DESIGN ARCHITECTURE
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE INTERIOR DESIGN

SASAKI
www.sasaki.com

San Francisco, CA Watertown, MA

What others are saying *(continued from previous page)*

The researchers counted up congressional press releases, hearings, and votes on bills related to climate change. They found that around the time when public acceptance of climate change reached its peak, political bipartisanship on the subject also hit a high point: John McCain was pushing for climate legislation, and Newt Gingrich filmed a commercial with Nancy Pelosi, urging action. And then things changed. The economy went pear-shaped and Republican rhetoric shifted into attack mode on climate science. Flipping this around, it suggests that serious action on climate change depends on a healthy economy and bipartisan agreement among politicians. Even on simple questions like ‘Is there solid evidence that the Earth has warmed?’ — it’s politicians that are driving public opinion, not scientists or the data they produce.” —Scott K. Johnson, “Americans listening to politicians, not climate scientists,” *Ars Technica*, Feb. 27, 2012.

Parking lots pollute all by themselves

<http://bit.ly/znZ7q1>

Researchers at the University of California Transportation Center “analyzed the environmental impact of U.S. Parking infrastructure [for] the total noxious emissions produced in building and maintaining parking lots. Their ‘life-cycle’ analysis showed that each parking space in the United States comes at an annual cost of \$6-\$23 in health and environmental damages to society caused by air pollution alone. For certain pollutants — such as sulfur dioxide and coarse particle pollution — the emissions caused by parking spaces were actually greater or equal to the amounts produced by driving. —Angie Schmitt, “Report: Pollution from U.S. parking spaces costs up to \$20 billion per year,” *DC.Streetsblog*, Feb. 23, 2012.

How will SF real estate do in 2012?

<http://bit.ly/yC4Xk3>

“The bad news is that the U.S. economy will continue to waver in the coming months. The flip side is the prospect of slow but steady growth. ... Cities such as Boston, New York, San Francisco, San Diego, and Seattle have a promising future. These are cities with walkable downtowns, exceptional workforces, and strong industry clusters (software, biotech, financial activities). They are attractive to visitors and empty nesters alike, and they are likely to benefit from an influx of capital from real estate investors seeking a safe harbor in the coming year.” —Aaron Gruen, “Six predictions for the New Year,” in *Viewpoint, Planning* magazine, January 2012. ■



- Planning
- Permitting
- CEQA/NEPA Compliance
- Biological Resources Assessment
- GIS/Cartographic Design

Certified WBE, founded in 1983

For more information, contact Dain Anderson, Director of Planning
4 West Fourth Avenue, Suite 303 • San Mateo, California 94402
voice (650) 373-1200 • fax (650) 373-1211 • www.mha-inc.com



Environmental and Planning Consultants

Los Angeles
Oakland
Olympia
Petaluma
Portland
Sacramento
San Diego
San Francisco
Seattle
Tampa
Woodland Hills
www.esassoc.com

METROPOLITAN PLANNING GROUP

a new design on urban planning

Staffing Solutions • Policy Planning
Urban Design • Sustainability Services
mplanninggroup.com
650.938.1111



Urban Design
General / Specific Plans
Community Visioning
Development Codes
Revitalization Programs
Environmental Assessment
Landscape Architecture
Entitlement
Natural Resources Management

Monterey Bay 831.883.8187
Sacramento 916.928.1113
San Jose 408.993.9224
Walnut Creek 925.906.1460



www.rbf.com

DYETT & BHATIA

Urban and Regional Planners

www.dyettandbhatia.com

SAN FRANCISCO

General Plans • Urban Design
Environmental Planning • Zoning
Community Participation • GIS

415. 956. 4300

info@dyettandbhatia.com

755 Sansome St., Suite 400, San Francisco, CA 94111

Norcal roundup

Compiled by Erik Balsley, AICP, associate editor

49ers' Stadium cost goes up

<http://bit.ly/wbN39G>

"The cost of the 49ers' new stadium in Santa Clara has increased by \$157 million to \$1.177 billion, in contrast with the \$1.02 billion estimate presented in December, according to a complex financing deal Santa Clara leaders approved 6-1 on March 13. However, the city's Stadium Authority, which will oversee stadium operations, is expected to take on less debt because fans appear to be buying seat packages faster than anticipated. The city's general fund, which pays for city services, is expected to receive a base rent of \$40 million over the 40-year lease and \$155 million from non-NFL events hosted in the facility during the offseason, such as concerts. Construction is slated to begin this summer and finish by fall 2014." —Stephanie M. Lee, "Cost of 49ers Santa Clara stadium now \$1.2 billion," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 14, 2012.

Murky future for offices in eastern San Francisco neighborhoods

<http://bit.ly/z1VBnd>

"Possibly 1,000 businesses in San Francisco's Mission, South of Market, and Potrero Hill neighborhoods are operating illegally after their landlords failed to complete an amnesty program created as part of the 2008 Eastern Neighborhoods Plan. The plan designated about 7,000 parcels where buildings could only house light industrial uses, or so-called PDR industries — production, distribution, and repair. At the same time, it created a three-year amnesty program, in which buildings that were made illegal by the new controls could become legal by paying an impact fee, but only 30 businesses applied. Representatives of impacted businesses are now calling for an extension and also a reduction in the fees." —Joshua Sabatini, "San Francisco offices now outlaws in zoning turf war," *The San Francisco Examiner*, March 12, 2012.

Maritime reserves balance competing concerns

<http://bit.ly/wdGP4W>

"After years of meetings, some protests, and what many are calling a rare consensus among sometimes-opposing factions, a draft proposal to establish a chain of ocean wilderness areas from Point Arena north to the Oregon border was unveiled last week by state officials. It would restrict or ban fishing in 19 marine areas encompassing about 136 square miles, or about 13 percent, of state waters along Mendocino, Humboldt, and Del Norte counties. Fishing interests saw a threat to their industry and sought to limit the reserves, while conservation supporters fought for more ocean wilderness, touting ecological benefits they said would boost fish stocks. All sides made significant concessions in the proposal, those involved said." —Brett Wilkison, "Conservation compromise", *The Press Democrat*, March 4, 2012.

(continued on next page)

PHOTOMONTAGES WALK-THROUGHS VIDEOS

SQUARE ONE

415.398.7044 www.squareoneproductions.com



Chandler W. Lee, AICP
Contract Planner

chandlerle@aol.com
940 Diamond Street
San Francisco, CA 94114
Phone: 415.282.4446



PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING

Environmental Assessment • CEQA / NEPA

Regulatory & Permit Assistance • GIS / Mapping

Community Planning • Water Resource Management

Natural Resource Planning • Habitat Restoration



DENISE DUFFY & ASSOCIATES, INC.

www.ddaplanning.com

MONTEREY • 831-373-4341 TRUCKEE • 530-582-8297 SAN JOSE • 408-451-8438

CDG
CANNON
DESIGN
GROUP

PLANNING URBAN DESIGN
ARCHITECTURE

Design Review Design Guidelines

180 Harbor Drive Suite 219
Sausalito, CA 94965
415.331.3795
e-mail: cdgplan@pacbell.net

Norcal roundup *(continued from previous page)*

Marin has highest total transportation and housing costs

<http://bit.ly/wMtyVm>

“Expensive housing in Marin combined with transportation costs means the average county household devotes 56.3 percent of its income to those necessities, according to an analysis by the Chicago-based Center for Neighborhood Technology. In Marin, housing accounts for 35.6 percent and transportation 20.7 percent of household income — the highest and fourth highest percentages among the nine Bay Area counties. The index — based on calculations using data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Communities Survey — was created in an effort to make the costs transparent so people and policy makers can make smart decisions about where they live and how they invest public dollars, said Scott Bernstein, founder and president of the Center.”
—Marc Prado, “Study: Marin has highest costs for housing and transportation in the Bay Area”, *The Marin Independent Journal*, February 29, 2012.

Lucas’ new facility gets approval

<http://bit.ly/wk7Lh5>

“Filmmaker George Lucas’ plan for a huge digital production studio won a unanimous vote of approval from Marin County planning commissioners who agreed it was in line with a decade-old master plan. The panel acted after considering the project and an environmental analysis for more than six hours, during which three dozen speakers rose to take stands pro and con. Neighborhood residents called the large commercial structure with a footprint bigger than two football fields an aberration in their quiet residential community. But advocates called Lucas a good neighbor who spared the valley from suburban sprawl and added the latest plan will generate jobs and tax revenue.”
—Nels Johnson, “George Lucas’ plans for huge digital studio gets OK from Marin planners,” *The Marin Independent Journal*, February 28, 2012.

Change in course for the America’s Cup

<http://huff.to/zFEhnu>

“After weeks of increasing tensions between the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and Larry Ellison’s representatives, an agreement was reached over the weekend [Feb. 25–26] to scrap plans to turn the little-used piers 30 and 32 near San Francisco’s downtown into the America’s Cup publicly accessible ‘pit row’ that would house racing teams challenging for the trophy. Instead, all competitors will be housed at Pier 80, which is about two miles from the proposed ‘racing village’ at Piers 27–29 that is expected to serve as the event’s hub. The city’s direct cost to host the event is expected to drop to around \$10 million after new estimates are calculated. The new plan will have to be resubmitted to the board’s three-member budget committee.” —Paul Elias, “America’s Cup Plans: San Francisco waterfront proposal dramatically scaled back,” *Associated Press*, February 27, 2012.

(continued on next page)

Integrated Environmental & Communication Solutions



CirclePoint®
The *whole* view.

- Environmental Analysis and Planning
- Strategic Communications
- Program Planning and Management
- Creative Services
- Emergency Management
- Public Involvement
- eLearning Tools
- Training Programs

www.circlepoint.com
San Francisco • 415.227.1100 Oakland • 510.268.8400
Sacramento • 916.658.0180

architecture
engineering
environmental review
landscape architecture
planning



rrm design group
creating environments people enjoy®

We have moved to Oakland!

414 13th St. 6th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612
P: (510) 830-3990, F: (510) 830-3997
www.rrmdesign.com

3d imaging services
before-and-after photo composites
animations
for
EIR visual analysis
city presentations




dis digital imaging studio
dahlin group
415.538.0933 www.disstudio.com



ROMA
www.roma.com • 415.616.9900

Q. How many workers are needed to test the wisdom of changing the light bulbs?
A. 300. <http://nyti.ms/zAm9RY>

Norcal roundup *(continued from previous page)*

Postal processing centers to close

<http://bit.ly/zYlaUl>

“The U.S. Postal service plans to close nearly half of the nation’s mail processing centers beginning May 15th. The move, which follows a five-month study of 264 of the country’s 461 centers, puts more than 35,000 workers’ jobs at stake. According to the plan, neighboring facilities will absorb the functions of the 223 targeted centers. Fourteen postal centers will be closed in California — more than any other state in the nation. California centers to be closed include Bakersfield, Industry, Long Beach, Pasadena, Stockton, Petaluma, and North Bay. Employees will be given the option to follow their jobs to the centers where the work will be moved.” —Michael B. Sauter, Charles B. Stockdale, and Ashley C. Allen, “Nine states closing the most mail centers,” *24/7 Wall St. Wire*, Feb. 27, 2012.

San Francisco tackles middle class housing affordability

<http://bit.ly/wDeDDG>

“Over the past decade, there has been a steady decline in lower-middle- and moderate-income earners while the percentage of wealthy and very low earners has increased in San Francisco, according to a joint report issued last week by Mayor Ed Lee’s office and the city controller. The mayor has convened a group of sometimes-oppositional figures in the housing realm to find ideas to create a \$50 million-per-year revenue stream to help make housing available to low- and middle-income workers. Whether the mayor can marshal the political backing to address affordable housing across much of the income spectrum remains to be seen.” —John Coté, “S.F. tries to make homes affordable to middle class,” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, February 23, 2012.

Palo Alto rejects projected growth

<http://bit.ly/yMbwRs>

“The Palo Alto City Council vehemently rejected a proposal to designate El Camino Real and University Avenue as ‘planned development areas,’ and acknowledged that it could be foregoing transportation grants from regional planning organizations whose ambitious strategy for reducing greenhouse gases includes significantly greater density of buildings near transit corridors. To accommodate the projections Palo Alto would have to accommodate as many as 25,000 new jobs and 12,500 new housing units by 2040. [The city had 28,216 housing units as of the 2010 census.] Such development would reduce greenhouse gas emissions from 7.9 percent to 9.4 percent and also lead to encroachment of dense housing complexes into single-family neighborhoods. Palo Alto’s battle against the regional housing projections is still in its embryonic phase, but the council agreed that the city should reach out to other cities and agencies and build alliances.” —Gennady Sheyner, “Cities look for allies against housing mandates,” *Palo Alto Weekly*, February 22, 2012. [Ed. note: A March 9 revision reduced Palo Alto’s projected new housing units to 7,130 by 2040.] ■

DESIGN, COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING ♦ URBAN DESIGN
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE ♦ ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW
TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING & DESIGN
TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ♦ SMART GROWTH
GIS ♦ GRAPHIC DESIGN

Offices in Berkeley and Ventura

DAVID EARLY

TEL: 510 848 3815
FAX: 510 848 4315

BILL FULTON

TEL: 805 643 7700
FAX: 805 643 7782

CONTACTDCE@DCEPLANNING.COM
WWW.DCEPLANNING.COM

Wagstaff/MIG

Environmental Planning/
CEQA Compliance

Urban and Land Planning

www.wagstaffassociates.com

phone (510) 845-7549

800 Hearst Avenue Berkeley, CA 94710

Calling card advertisements support the *Northern News*. For more information on placing a calling card announcement and to receive format specifications, contact:

Scott Davidson, AICP, Advertising Director
(510) 697-2280
scottdavidson2@comcast.net

Peter Hartlaub, pop culture critic at the *San Francisco Chronicle*, has added to his photo gallery of "Underrated landmarks of the Bay Area." Fifty 'don't miss' photos:

<http://bit.ly/wunDnE>

Plan-it sustainably

The state of Bay Area climate change planning

By Katja Irvin, AICP, Sustainability Committee Co-chair

Local agencies throughout the Bay Area are adopting climate action plans in an attempt to mitigate for and adapt to impacts from sea level rise, erratic weather, and decreased snowpack — impacts such as coastal erosion, flooding, saltwater intrusion, water shortages, heat waves, wildfires, exotic diseases, and changes to soils and wildlife habitats.

The problem is that climate change calls for regional solutions, and Bay Area regional planning efforts are going nowhere. According to *The New York Times* ("Bay Area climate change plans lack regional cooperation," February 17, 2012) local officials have been unwilling to approve the Joint Powers Authority designated by the State and BCDC to do regional climate change planning. <http://nyti.ms/yf0BQ8>

This state of affairs framed the context for a panel discussion on planning for sea level rise (SLR) held in San Jose on March 7. The following highlights from the panel emphasize the importance of the issue and the dire need for planning in the Bay Area region.

- Generally accepted values for SLR used by state agencies are 16 in. by 2050 and 55 in. by 2100. Therefore these are also the standard thresholds of significance used for CEQA analysis. A new study by the National Academy of Sciences may provide updated values later this year.
- Important infrastructure located near the Bay is vulnerable to flooding including airports, ports, other transportation infrastructure, wastewater treatment facilities, and power plants.
- SLR is the most well-understood climate change phenomenon and therefore planning for SLR is more advanced. (An exception is the Bay Delta Conservation Plan for conveyance facilities that will protect water supply from saltwater intrusion.)
- The East Bay subregion is in the second year of a two-year effort called Adapting to Rising Tides covering all bayside communities from Richmond to Hayward.
- Project-level planning for SLR is somewhat fruitless, but many projects such as the Treasure Island redevelopment plan, the South Bay wetlands restoration, and even the 49ers' new stadium are analyzing and "mitigating" for the predicted impacts.
- FEMA Flood Insurance elevations will continue to be updated to reflect SLR and will have a more dramatic impact on planning and building than CEQA requirements.
- The choice between *armoring* and *managed retreat* will be a difficult one with many considerations related to both the built and natural environment.

(continued on next page)

Quotations from Chairman Richard

Excerpts from comments by Dan Richard, Chairman, California High-Speed Rail Authority.

“I guess at this point, I have a one-line response: Change is coming to high-speed rail.”
<http://bit.ly/AEMYUS>

“For too long, high-speed rail has been viewed as a separate insular entity. It really should be viewed as an integral part of our total rail transportation system, tying in and working closely with BART, MUNI, Valley Transit, and other regional authorities.”
<http://bit.ly/wFQYko>

“The Valley is the right place to start. It’s the only place we can test the trains at their ultimate speeds. We can’t do that between San Francisco and San Jose. [Assuming] the shared use of tracks on the peninsula, we know the corridors and the rights of way. We don’t have any right of way in the Valley, a very fast-growing part of our state, and the longer we wait to acquire the land,” the more costly it will be. <http://bit.ly/wFQYko>

“There are important parallels between high-speed rail and BART. It came down to one vote of one Contra Costa County supervisor in the 60s; but for that, the Bay Area would look different than it does today. I was very involved in the construction of BART to SFO and getting the funds. We heard many of the same things: ‘Where are you going to get the money? Why don’t you do it this way or that way?’ It’s really important to have civic leaders come together and persevere to get things done.” <http://bit.ly/wFQYko> ■

Plan-it sustainably *(continued from previous page)*

I can safely say the state of regional planning for climate change is abysmal. It’s clear that other Bay Area sub-regions need planning efforts like Adapting to Rising Tides, and we need to start planning for impacts other than sea level rise.

From a *Plan-it Sustainably* standpoint, I hope we find the most sustainable ways to adapt — solutions that don’t extract material from the earth, increase toxins, degrade the environment, or create conditions that undermine people’s ability to meet their needs. ■

Contact Katja for copies of the March 7 panel presentations:
katja.irvin@sbcglobal.net.

The Sustainability Committee welcomes your feedback and participation. Please contact Katja Irvin or Scott Edmondson scott-e@sustainability2030.com.

Where in the world?



Photo by Juan Borrelli, AICP (Answer on page 16)



Photo by Linton Atlas (Answer on page 16)

Bay Area cities adjust to life after Redevelopment *(continued from page 1)*

or federal matching funds continue to move forward so that matching funding is not lost.

In late January, the city adopted a resolution that laid out the plan for meeting these priorities. The resolution took four steps:

- It identified the city as the “successor agency” to the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, meaning that the city itself will control the former assets of the redevelopment agency.
- It transferred the redevelopment agency’s affordable housing funds to the Mayor’s Office of Housing and transferred all other assets to the City Administrator’s Office.
- It required payment and performance on “enforceable obligations,” or approved redevelopment projects that will be allowed to go forward. These include Mission Bay, Hunters Point Shipyard, portions of Bayview Hunters Point and Transbay.
- It created a new oversight board to oversee the management of these enforceable obligations.

In addition, the city rescinded the Treasure Island Development Authority as a redevelopment agency. The city has opted to convert the Treasure Island project into an Infrastructure Financing District (IFD) as opposed to a Redevelopment Area. The IFD will create a source of tax increment financing to support bonds necessary to pay for some of the infrastructure costs. By doing this, the city clarified that Treasure Island is not subject to any of the post-redevelopment constraints imposed by A.B. 26.



Treasure Island (proposed). Credit: SOM

The upshot for San Francisco is that some of its affordable housing funding and existing major redevelopment projects are well positioned to be protected. However, some of the other work of redevelopment not considered enforceable obligations

— such as economic development and project development in areas such as Visitation Valley — will require more creative approaches to move forward. Additionally, the future of the redevelopment agency’s roughly 100 employees remains unclear.

Oakland

In Oakland, the loss of redevelopment will be devastating to the capacity of the city to develop underutilized properties. Projects like the Broadway Auto Row project and the funds to build a new stadium for the A’s could be substantially reduced or eliminated. In addition, Oakland will not be able to rely on tax increment financing to fund affordable housing; roughly 25 percent of redevelopment funds in Oakland were used to fund affordable housing.

The loss of redevelopment has also taken its toll on other aspects of Oakland’s government: Redevelopment funds are deeply intertwined into more than 160 city positions in 11 departments. Rather than deliver pink slips to those employees whose jobs were funded by redevelopment, city leaders instead proposed overhauling all city operations to more efficiently provide services while retaining some redevelopment staff to help wind down current projects.

On January 31, the Oakland City Council approved an amended budget accounting for the \$28 million gap from the loss of redevelopment funding. The city will eliminate 105 positions, resulting in 80 layoffs. Consolidations include combining the Office of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Human Services.

Oakland also will move key administrative functions for several departments into a single Administrative Services Department, according to the city administrator. The Community and Economic Development Agency, which housed most of the city’s redevelopment activities, will be dissolved into four new offices: Planning and Neighborhood Preservation, Housing and Community Development, Economic and Workforce Development, and Neighborhood Investment. The City of Oakland has also identified itself as the successor agency and will prioritize projects like the Oakland Army Base that have enforceable obligations to move forward. The City administrator’s office will manage the remaining assets from the elimination of redevelopment.

San Jose

Established in 1956, the San Jose Redevelopment Agency (SJRA) invested billions of dollars in four program goals:

- Creating jobs and expanding business through investments in projects such as Cisco’s campus in North San Jose and Adobe’s headquarters in the downtown,

(continued on next page)

- Building public facilities such as the Repertory Theater and the 4th Street Parking Garage,
- Developing and preserving affordable and market rate housing, and
- Strengthening neighborhoods through the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative and Neighborhood Business Districts.

The agency used the tax increment from its roughly 19,000 acres of designated redevelopment areas to borrow against and reinvest in other areas. In doing so in an arguably overly robust way, they became the state's second largest redevelopment agency as measured by tax revenue, and the City of San Jose's "go to" for funding and approval of almost all major projects in the last several decades.

The SJRA began planning for its own shuttering a few years ago when the state began withdrawing funds from all redevelopment agencies. With the realization that it was overleveraged and would be unable to continue even if the option to "pay to play" was made available, the agency began reducing its workforce from 119 employees in 2009 to 10 employees today — just enough to manage its obligations on \$3.8 billion of remaining debt. The San Jose City Council took its final action to end the agency in late January by:

- Creating an official successor agency to manage the majority of the remaining debt,
- Naming the city manager as the executive officer of the successor agency, and
- Creating the Successor Agency Fund, which allows the city to take over the debts of the affordable housing assets and activities that had been funded by the SJRA.

Because of the SJRA's debt obligations, it will be decades before any tax increment is available to Santa Clara County or the state.

The end of redevelopment in San Jose will have far-reaching and likely yet unknown impacts, and there are many questions still to be answered. What happens to the Strong Neighborhood designations and areas of investment? How will the San Jose Department of Housing replace the 20 percent of its budget that came from SJRA affordable housing funds? How will the City of San Jose continue to provide the necessary infrastructure in downtown and offer incentives for future development?

Next steps

It remains unclear how cities in California will fare in the wake of redevelopment's disappearance. Some of the tools that might replace redevelopment, such as Infrastructure Financing Districts, are complicated to use and don't fund all of the things redevelopment used to do. SPUR is committed to figuring out what should be next now that redevelopment is gone. We are going to need new tools if our cities are to thrive. ■

Sarah Karlinsky is the deputy director of SPUR. She has authored essays on planning, including "What's next for Big Planning" and "The long road home: What has the Market and Octavia Plan taught us about community planning in San Francisco?" Tomiquia Moss, SPUR's community planning policy director, has been a social worker and community activist for more than a decade in communities around the country. She holds a masters degree in Public Administration from Golden Gate University. Leah Toeniskoetter is the director of SPUR San Jose. She has seven years of experience in real estate development in California, has traveled and studied extensively in cities worldwide, and graduated from the University of Notre Dame.



Karlinsky



Moss



Toeniskoetter