



# NORTHERN NEWS



American Planning Association  
California Chapter  
Northern  
Making Great Communities Happen

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

## FEBRUARY 2009

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## SJSU students plan for zero waste

By Emy Mendoza

In a partnership between San José State University and the City of San José, an entire class of 13 urban planning graduate students worked on a project for the City's Environmental Services Department, related to the City's Zero Waste Strategic Plan. (Zero Waste describes a change in how we perceive consumption and waste, so that we reduce consumption at the outset, reuse products whenever possible, recycle our waste, and eventually do away with the need for landfills.) For more information about San Jose's Zero Waste Plan, go to <http://www.sjrecycles.org/zerowaste.asp>.

Many links exist between City Hall and SJSU. City Hall is a short walk from the campus, and the University library and a City public library are combined in one building. SJSU's urban planning department has long been active in CommUniverCity, a town-gown service-learning organization of community members, university students and professors, and City and Redevelopment Agency staff.

Recently, the City's Environmental Services Department (ESD) hired a number of urban planning students as interns and as permanent employees, for implementation of projects related to the City's Green Vision. Adopted in October 2007, San Jose's Green Vision established 10 long-range economic development goals to be accomplished by 2022 with positive environmental impacts. One goal calls for decreasing landfill use, i.e., increasing the amount of recycling in the city. Related to this goal, ESD is redesigning the system for waste collection for the city's business and commercial sector. ESD asked if urban planning students could help with analyzing current waste generation patterns.

For Fall 2008, an urban planning studio class at SJSU was assigned to work with ESD to study and analyze waste generation patterns for the commercial and business sectors of the city. Issues of land use designations for, and siting of, waste management infrastructure

*(continued on next page)*

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### JJSU students plan for zero waste *(continued from previous page)*

were to be part of the study. Although this project was a departure from the more common neighborhood plan study, the students were able to serve as informal consultants to the City to meet the real-life needs of ESD, and at the same time gain experience and expertise in environmental practices and applications.

With their GIS skills, and their understanding of how businesses are concentrated in the city, the students were able to provide an important service, and at the same time learn about waste infrastructure needs, the environmental impacts of waste, and the political sensitivities related to siting a facility. Students learned how landfills were developed, their impact on the land and neighboring populations, and related issues of environmental justice.

Using data provided by the City's Commercial Redesign staff, the urban planning students calculated yearly tonnages of organic, paper, and general waste for businesses. (San Jose's businesses are widely distributed over the city's 170 square miles, with concentrations in North San José and Downtown, and along major business corridors.) The students were able to quantify how much waste exists, and created maps to illustrate potential concentrations of each waste type—the first time ESD had seen the data presented geographically. The students' work confirmed what the Commercial Redesign staff had understood, and reinforced their understanding of areas of the city on which to focus.

Many cities in California and the Bay Area—and many countries—have established zero waste goals. San José recently published its Zero Waste Strategic Plan which includes the Commercial Redesign Process—a process that will provide businesses with better recycling services and contribute to the Zero Waste Green Vision goal. The Strategic Plan describes other programs which, together, will take the city from a 62 percent diversion (recycling) rate to a 75 percent diversion rate by 2013, and to 100 percent diversion (zero waste) by 2022.

In addition to managing waste collection services for San José, ESD oversees the wastewater processing plant, which is currently conducting its own Plant Master Plan planning process. Plant management staff must consider how best to use over 2,000 acres surrounding the plant and currently designated for industrial uses, to meet the city's future needs. The students learned the history of the plant and its surrounding industrial and residential uses.

In closing, I would note that many students are drawn to urban planning out of a desire to impact land use and development for

*(continued on next page)*

The deadline for submitting materials for inclusion in the *Northern News* is the 15th day of the month prior to publication.

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*Northern News* welcomes your comments. Letters to the editor require the author's first and last name, home or work street address and phone number (neither of which will be published), and professional affiliation or title (which will be published only with the author's permission). Letters over 250 words are not considered. All letters are subject to editing.

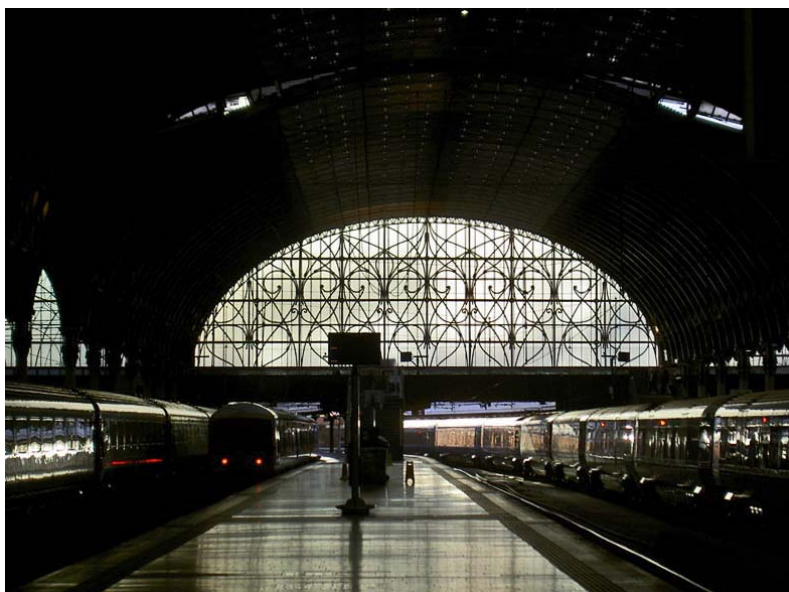
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## SJSU students plan for zero waste *(continued from previous page)*

positive environmental outcomes. For example, Smart Growth principles (such as development around transit) offer ways to ultimately reduce sprawl and protect our limited natural resources. How urban planners deal with waste is an important part of how we will resolve the problems and promises of urban density. To that end, urban planners must learn about waste management and the related land use, health, and social issues that come with density.

*Emy Mendoza is Environmental Services Specialist and Zero Waste Planner for the City of San José. She served for several years on the Northern Section Board of APA as the student representative from San José State University, and continues in an active role with the section and chapter. She is the 2009 recipient of the American Planning Association's Leadership Award for a Student Planner (see page 18). Along with Matt Krupp, Planner II with ESD, and in charge of the Plant Master Plan, Emy taught the class described in this article. Students in the class included Seth Adams, Rodrigo Carrasco, Natalie De Leon, Ryan Driscoll, Dennis Freeman, Winona Heyer-Soma, Misty Mersich, Valerie Negrete, Michael Nimon, Antoinette Price, Avalon Schultz, Richard Su, and Jason Tyree. ■*

## Where in the world?



*Photo by Chandler Lee, AICP  
(Answer on [page 17](#))*

## Onward and upward



**Tom Ford, AICP**, has opened The Office of Tom Ford to provide urban design and planning services for clients in California.

Tom was formerly a principal at Design,

Community & Environment. Before that he was a project manager and town planner at Calthorpe Associates. Tom has a master of architecture degree from UC Berkeley and an undergraduate degree from UC Davis. ■

## 2009 Conference presentations wanted

The APA California 2009 Conference Committee is now accepting presentations at [www.calapa.org](http://www.calapa.org) for the

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## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

*By Darcy Kremin, AICP*



### HAPPY NEW YEAR NEWS!

Please join me in a very big thank you to Immediate Past Director, **Juan Borrelli, AICP**. Juan served on the Northern Section board for the past seven years, was instrumental in organizing the National APA conference in San Francisco in 2005, and co-chaired the APA California Chapter conference in San José in 2007. He provided dedicated and outstanding leadership and professional service to the entire section, and will continue to be an invaluable member of our board.

A big thank you also to **Iris Starr, AICP**, who served as Professional Development Director for two years, including during the implementation of AICP's controversial Certification Maintenance (CM) program. Iris' tireless efforts on the section's behalf to receive accreditation for our numerous professional development events, including the 2007 China trips, went well beyond the call of duty.

Our 2008 Holiday Party was a huge success. Held at Oakland's historic Lake Merritt Hotel on December 5, it was attended by 115 planners. Many thanks to our extraordinary holiday party organizers—**Al Kostalas**, University Liaison, and **Allen Tai, AICP**, Administrative Director, and to all of their fantastic volunteers. Additional thanks go to the agencies and firms that so generously contributed to the event and provided prizes for the drawing that benefited the California Planning Foundation. See [page 19](#) for donor acknowledgments and party photos.

The Board discussed our 2009 goals and adopted this year's budget at our annual Board Retreat on Saturday, January 10, in Fremont. Although this year's goals closely mirror last year's, the 2008 goals are still relevant and the board committed to continue working on them.

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## DIRECTOR'S NOTE *(continued from previous page)*

Several themes came out of our breakout discussions:

- 1) Have more "fun" events;
- 2) Continue to provide significant professional development opportunities;
- 3) Improve section diversity; and
- 4) Expand our advertising and job postings.

To that end, we will be sending out a member survey in the near future to gauge your preferences for events, news, and workshops. If you have any ideas for programs, events, or other section activities, feel free to share them with me anytime.

We have an enthusiastic board that has many great ideas to contribute to the section this year. Please find a way to thank them for all their hard work. We could not do it without the commitment of these volunteers and their continued involvement in the section. If you would like to join this dynamic group, we currently have four appointed board positions open: Professional Development Director, AICP Ethics Director, Planning Commissioner, and Planning Diversity Co-Director. Check out our bylaws ([click here](#) to download a PDF) for full descriptions of and qualifications for these positions. If you are interested in one of these positions, or would simply like to get more involved with the section, please contact me at (925) 988-1278 or [dkremin@entrix.com](mailto:dkremin@entrix.com). ■



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## The realities of recession in California:

A statewide report by US Senator Barbara Boxer, December 2008

*Ed. Note. Those of us who live in the San Francisco Bay Area seldom hear or read about what's happening in the far reaches of APA's Northern Section. This past December, US Senator Barbara Boxer and her staff contacted local officials in all California counties (and 20 cities) to gather information about the effects of the economic recession on their communities, and the strain being placed on local governments and their budgets. Here are the Senator's reports from Northern Section's six outlying counties —NK*

### Del Norte County

*Local Contact: Jeannine Galatioto, County Administrator, Del Norte County. Boxer Staff Member: Megan Miller.*

*Date Contacted: December 2, 2008.*

A declining timber industry and poor fishing seasons for the past several years, combined with the recent downturn in the economy, have put substantial financial pressure on Del Norte County. A proposed increase in State sales tax might further increase losses to the local economy from residents crossing over into Oregon to purchase goods at lower prices.

To address budget shortfalls, the County cut 30 positions and laid off six (out of a workforce of 450). The County also curtailed its Healthy Families Program and closed a Boys & Girls Club located on an Indian reservation, but is fighting to keep its other Clubhouse open. The County is working with the community and nonprofit organizations in a coordinated effort to limit the negative impact of falling revenues.

Foreclosures have not been a major problem since the county is very rural and has seen relatively little housing construction over the past few years. The County has not yet witnessed a notable increase in crime rates.

### Humboldt County

*Local Contact: Phillip Smith-Hanes, Assistant CAO. Boxer Staff Member: Megan Miller. Date Contacted: December 1, 2008*

While Humboldt currently has a balanced budget, County officials are deeply concerned about the potential impact of

*(continued on next page)*



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## Realities of recession in CA *(continued from previous page)*

budget cuts at the State level. The County's policy is to cut programs if the State funding for them no longer exists. As a result of recent cuts at the State level, the County recently had to cut a crime deterrent program for adult mentally ill offenders. Humboldt County has not had to layoff any employees and does not anticipate doing so in the short term. In the early part of the decade the County restructured its budget, which has helped to keep the budget balanced in the current recession. The County has not needed to issue debt for day-to-day operations in nearly a decade.

While residential foreclosures have not had much of an impact on Humboldt, the County has experienced a huge loss of revenue due to the closure of commercial businesses. Evergreen Pulp Inc., for example, announced on October 8th that it would be temporarily shutting down operations at its plant outside Eureka, until the pulp market rebounds. It is unclear when or if the mill will reopen. This resulted in a loss of 200 jobs in Humboldt County.

### Mendocino County

*Local Contact: Jennifer Wyatt, Deputy CEO. Boxer Staff Member: Jenn Tang. Date Contacted: December 1, 2008.*

Mendocino County currently has a balanced budget, though future budgets will depend on many circumstances, such as budget cuts at the State level. To address budget shortfalls, Mendocino County may take several measures, including: possible furloughs for County employees; cutting employee benefits for FY 09; making continued cuts to health and human services programs funded by the State and administered by the County; and making cuts to other county departments.

There is a 125 percent increase over historic foreclosure rates in the County. The County has not yet compiled any hard numbers regarding the loss of tax revenue as a result of the record high foreclosure rate, but reported that it has not yet seen an increase in crime in areas with high foreclosures. As the economy has worsened, the local food bank has been overwhelmed and can't keep up with demand. Local homeless shelters are also having trouble keeping up with demand, and have reported having trouble purchasing enough beds.

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## Realities of recession in CA *(continued from previous page)*

### Monterey County

*Local Contact: Lew Bauman, CAO. Boxer Staff Member: Jenn Tang. Date Contacted: December 1, 2008.*

After making budget cuts and implementing hiring freezes, Monterey County is looking at a \$25-35 million shortfall in its general fund. An anticipated significant decrease in assessed property values will add to the budget deficit. A hiring freeze was put in place in July 2007 and infrastructure programs and first responders (sheriffs, firefighters) will likely face budget cuts. The county also anticipates cuts in State-funded social services programs and access to health care. (Monterey County owns and operates Natividad Medical Center, a 172-bed acute care medical center.) Also, because the county invested approximately \$1 billion in both Washington Mutual and Lehman Brothers, 60 percent of which belonged to the K-12 school system, the County may have to lay off teachers. The County's Washington Mutual-Lehman investment has put pressure on its credit rating, and the County is anticipating problems securing short-term notes.

Foreclosures are at an all-time high in Monterey County. The Assessor is expecting a delinquency rate of approximately 5 percent, or \$28 million, from the \$563 million current tax roll. Prior year delinquent property taxes set an all time high record of \$43 million at the end of FY 07. The County has seen an increase in theft and vandalism, and it suspects other crimes are going unreported in and around Salinas.

### San Benito County

*Local Contact: Rich Inman, CAO. Boxer Staff Member: Hilary Pearson. Date Contacted: December 1, 2008.*

San Benito County is facing an uncertain budget. While the County has not yet delayed or canceled programs, it has imposed a hiring freeze, which it notes has put a great deal of pressure on social service programs, creating very high workloads for current employees. The County claims to have a prudent reserve to get through the near future, but things will be much more difficult in a long-lasting recession.

The County is experiencing an upswing in vector-borne diseases as a result of foreclosed homes with swimming pools. West Nile Virus was detected in the County two years ago, but none has been detected thus far in 2008.

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## Realities of recession in CA *(continued from previous page)*

### Santa Cruz County

*Local Contact: Susan Mauriello, CAO.*

*Date Contacted: December 1, 2008.*

The County currently has a balanced budget, though future budgets will depend on many circumstances, such as budget cuts at the State level and the county's heavy dependence on the real estate market for revenue.

To address budget shortfalls, the County is significantly reducing spending on facilities and technology; cutting health programs for the indigent population; imposing major reductions in mental health, substance abuse and treatment programs; and is implementing a 10 percent reduction in many community programs. In addition, the County cut 274 positions—approximately 10 percent of the workforce. Next year, it expects those cuts will be greater.

Foreclosures have been a problem. The County Assessor estimates that the assessed values for foreclosed properties this year will result in a reduction in assessed value between \$65 and \$70 million. The Assessor is projecting virtually no growth in property taxes next year.

Santa Cruz County has a good credit rating and has not had any real trouble securing credit, though it was more difficult to secure its most recent round of tax anticipation notes.

As the economy has worsened, the local food bank has been overwhelmed and is finding it difficult to provide enough resources for those who need it.

To download the complete 80-page report, [click here](#). ■

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## Local green building policies— advice and trends

By Katja Irvin

**G**reen building and sustainability were hot topics at APA California's annual conference in Hollywood last September. The session, "Green building showdown: Which green building program is right for your community," was especially relevant as Northern California cities and counties continue to develop green building programs and adopt green building ordinances. The session gave an overview of the three most popular green building certification processes, provided recommendations for how to develop a program, and compared different approaches.

The three most common certification processes used in California are the United States Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), Build It Green's GreenPoint Rated, and California Green Builder.

- **LEED** began with a pilot program in 1998. Over the years, LEED has expanded to include specialized certifications such as LEED for Existing Buildings, LEED for Homes, and LEED for Neighborhood Development. The level of LEED certification depends on the number of points earned, beginning with LEED certified and progressing to LEED Silver, Gold, and Platinum.
- **GreenPoint Rated** is the outgrowth of a public-private partnership among builders, green building experts, and local government staff in Alameda County. First developed in 2000 and updated in 2005, the program is now managed by Build It Green and serves the entire state. GreenPoint Rated requires 50 points for certification, but jurisdictions can enforce higher point requirements if desired.
- **California Green Builder**, developed and operated by the Building Industry Institute, is primarily used by production builders. Established in 2001, the program has been adopted in fast-growing areas such as Riverside and San Bernardino.

[Figure 1](#) compares the types of residential construction covered by each of these certification programs as well as the California Green Building Standards Code (CGBSC). LEED is the dominant program for nonresidential buildings (including tailored certifications for schools, retail, and healthcare).

(continued on next page)

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**Local green building policies** *(continued from previous page)*

Cities and counties trying to initiate green building programs often start with informational and voluntary programs. In Santa Clara County, the Silicon Valley Leadership Group (SVLG) recently initiated the Green Building Collaborative to help standardize green building policies among the 15 cities in the county. According to Shiloh Ballard, director of housing and community development for the SVLG, 14 cities in the county have committed to recognize the LEED and Build It Green rating systems; use a green checklist when reviewing planning applications; and make sure that all government capital construction greater than 5,000 square feet achieves LEED Silver standards. These commitments are a first step to green building standards and procedures, and lay the groundwork for future adoption of mandatory certification requirements.

**Figure 1. Certification and Residential Project Types**

Home/Project Types	LEED for Homes	GreenPoint Rated	CA Green Builder	CG BSC
New custom single-family	✓	✓		
New production single-family	✓	✓	✓	✓
New multi-family low- & mid-rise	✓	✓		✓
New multi-family high-rise	LEED-NC	✓		✓
Gut rehab	✓	✓		
Remodel	USGBC guidelines	✓		

Source: Val Alexeeff, AICP, Government Relations Manager, Build It Green

[Figure 2](#) highlights some of the Northern California green building policies that require mandatory certification. While the various ordinances have many levels of requirements depending on size and valuation of a project, this table is simplified to give a general idea of the requirements and thresholds used.

*(continued on next page)*

## REVIEWER WANTED

Northern News has received a copy of “Resilient Cities—Responding to Peak Oil and Climate Change,” by Peter Newman, Timothy Beatley, and Heather Boyer (Island Press, 2009, 166 pages). The book asks how cities can avoid collapse, learn from other cities, and face environmental and economic change with resilience. The authors explore four possible scenarios for cities: collapse; the “ruralized” city; the divided city; and the resilient city, which they put forth as the only positive option. Peter Newman is professor of sustainability at Curtin University, Western Australia; Timothy Beatley is professor of sustainable communities at the University of Virginia; and Heather Boyer is senior editor at Island Press.

If you are interested in reading “Resilient Cities” and will commit to writing a review by March 13th for publication in the April issue of Northern News, please contact the editor, Naphtali H. Knox, FAICP, [knoxnaph@gmail.com](mailto:knoxnaph@gmail.com) or (415) 699-7333, so that we may send you the book to read and keep.

A suggested length for the review is 800 to 1,000 words. ■

## Local green building policies *(continued from previous page)*

Figure 2. Mandatory Green Building Ordinances in Northern California

City	Nonresidential buildings	Residential buildings
Albany	LEED Gold if over 5,000 sq. ft. including municipal buildings	50 GreenPoints for single-family (certification not required)
Berkeley	Energy audit required if construction totals more than \$50,000 LEED Silver for municipal buildings	Energy audit required if construction totals more than \$50,000
Brisbane	LEED Silver if over 10,000 sq. ft. 5,000 sq. ft. for municipal buildings	50 GreenPoints for more than 20 units
Cotati	90 GreenPoints	90 GreenPoints
Hayward		50 GreenPoints if over 500 sq. ft.
Los Altos	15 percent more efficient than Title 24 including municipal buildings	50 GreenPoints
Palo Alto	LEED Silver if over 5,000 sq. ft.	70 GreenPoints + 1 GreenPoint for every 70 sq. ft. over 2,550 sq. ft.
Rohnert Park	LEED Silver if over 50,000 sq. ft. 20,000 sq. ft. for municipal buildings	90-110 GreenPoints depending on density
San Francisco	LEED Gold if over 25,000 sq. ft (by 2012) LEED Silver for municipal buildings	75 GreenPoints or LEED Silver (by 2012)
San Jose	LEED Silver if over 25,000 sq. ft. 10,000 sq. ft. for municipal buildings	50 GreenPoints for more than 9 units
San Rafael	LEED Certified; LEED Silver if over 30,000 sq. ft. including municipal buildings	60 GreenPoints + Title 24 efficiency of 3,500 sq. ft. home if over 3,500 sq. ft.
San Mateo County	LEED Silver if over 3,000 sq. ft. 5,000 sq. ft. for municipal buildings	50 GreenPoints or LEED Certified
Santa Clara County		50 GreenPoints + 1 GreenPoint for every 100 sq. ft. over 3,000 sq. ft.
Santa Cruz		10 GreenPoints + 1.5 GreenPoints for every 100 sq. ft. over 350 sq. ft.
Santa Rosa		50 GreenPoints

Northern California cities and counties with established green building programs include San Francisco, San Mateo County, Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, and Santa Cruz. Larger cities with significant nonresidential development such as San Francisco and San José have adopted LEED-based standards, first for municipal projects and later as a requirement for most nonresidential building permits. Counties and smaller

*(continued on next page)*

# Call for 2009 Award Nominations

The 2009 Awards Program for APA California Northern is underway

*Now is the time to think about the plans, projects, and programs that you want to celebrate! We invite you to apply for an award in one of the categories listed below.*

**Applications are due March 13th, and the Northern Section Awards Gala is scheduled for May 15th.**

## Outstanding Planning Awards

- Comprehensive Planning
- Planning Implementation
- Planning Project
- Innovation in Green Community Planning
- Focused Issue
- Best Practices
- Grassroots Initiative
- Neighborhood Planning

## Distinguished Leadership and Service Awards

- Distinguished Leadership
- Distinguished Service

## Planning Achievement Awards

- Advocacy/Social Change/Diversity Planning
- Contribution to Women and Families
- Education Project
- Academic Award

## Journalism and Media Awards

### Environmental Awards

An application form is available at [www.norcalapa.org](http://www.norcalapa.org).

Or contact Awards Co-directors

Eileen Whitty at [ewhitty@ebmud.com](mailto:ewhitty@ebmud.com) or

Andrea Ouse at [Andrea.ouse@lsa-assoc.com](mailto:Andrea.ouse@lsa-assoc.com)

for more information. ■



## Local green building policies *(continued from previous page)*

jurisdictions with primarily residential development are adopting requirements based on GreenPoint Rated. Other cities have adopted energy efficiency performance standards exceeding Title 24 requirements.

At the Green Building Showdown, speakers recommended specific approaches for developing green building policies. Walker Wells from Global Green referred to a useful document from Global Green titled *Developing Green Building Programs: A Step-by-Step Guide for Local Governments*. Matt Burris from CTG Energetics suggested a process that includes: establishing priorities; evaluating existing programs and regulations; identifying gaps; choosing strategies to address those gaps; and determining how the program will be funded and administered. Burris also emphasized that green building programs are tools, and cities need to select the right tools for specific jobs.

The trends are clear. Green building certification programs and local green building policies are developing and maturing quickly throughout California and in Northern California in particular. With the kinds of examples and information offered at the APA California Conference, cities and counties have a strong foundation to build on. Go forth and develop your ordinances—the framework is there to support your efforts!

*Katja Irvin (MUP, San José State University) is a Planner II with Santa Clara County.*

## Resources for Green Building Programs

**Global Green: Developing Green Building Programs**  
[www.globalgreen.org/docs/publication-71-1.pdf](http://www.globalgreen.org/docs/publication-71-1.pdf)

**LEED Building Ordinances for Local Governments**  
[www.rivercenter.uga.edu/publications/pdf/luc\\_leed\\_2007\\_booth\\_et\\_al.pdf](http://www.rivercenter.uga.edu/publications/pdf/luc_leed_2007_booth_et_al.pdf)

**USGBC: Toolkit for State and Local Government**  
[https://www.usgbc.org/Docs/Member\\_Resource\\_Docs/toolkit\\_state\\_local.pdf](https://www.usgbc.org/Docs/Member_Resource_Docs/toolkit_state_local.pdf)

**Institute for Local Government: Green Building**  
<http://www.cacities.org/index.jsp?zone=ilsg&previewStory=26674>

**Build It Green: Government Policies & Incentives**  
<http://www.builditgreen.org/policies-incentives> ■

## Board members wanted

APA California Northern is governed by a volunteer Board of 35 members (five elected and 30 appointed). Four appointed board positions are now open: **Planning Commissioner**, **Professional Development Director**, **AICP Ethics Director**, and **Planning Diversity Co-Director**.

**Planning Commissioner** acts as liaison between the Section Board and planning commissioners in Northern Section cities and counties; advises the Board on planning commission issues; and increases awareness of APA and its membership benefits among planning commissioners.

Writes Debra March in "Engaging Public Officials" (APA *Interact*, Jan. 14, 2009), "At \$60 a year (plus chapter dues of \$30), APA planning official membership is a bargain.

Planning commission and board members not only receive *Planning* magazine but also *The Commissioner*, a quarterly publication devoted to the issues and concerns that confront decision makers."

"We planners must do more to help local decision makers understand the value of the planning process and the potential to help shape the future. As professionals, let's ensure that those who have a hand in the process also have some basic knowledge and a realistic understanding of what planning is and can accomplish." (To read the full article, [click here](#) and log in to continue. To download a planning board membership application, [click here](#).)

The **Professional Development Director**—who must be a member of AICP—works with the Section's AICP Director and Regional Advisory Councils to organize, schedule, and assist with arrangements and publicity for professional development programs for the continuing education of practicing planners. The Professional Development Director works with the event sponsors and National AICP to secure AICP Certification Maintenance (CM) credits for those courses and sessions that can qualify.

The **AICP Ethics Review Director**—who must be a member of AICP—promotes the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct; advises planners how to negotiate ethical and moral dilemmas; and organizes, schedules, and assists with arrangements and publicity for ethics and professional conduct programs for the continuing education of practicing planners.

The **Planning Diversity Co-director** will assist the current Diversity Director, whose duties include increasing diversity in the Section membership; educating APA Northern Section members on how to better serve diverse communities; coordinating Section activities to meet diversity goals; and coordinating with the APA California Chapter Membership Inclusion Director.

### Are you interested in one of these positions?

Please contact any Board member or **Darcy Kremin**, (925) 988-1278 or [dkremin@entrrix.com](mailto:dkremin@entrrix.com). ■

## Cultural Landscape Foundation announces 2008 "Landslide" awards

The Cultural Landscape Foundation, in partnership with Garden Design magazine, has announced its 2008 Landslide selections: *Marvels of Modernism*. The annual Landslide list seeks to highlight a thematic group of regionally or nationally significant cultural landscapes that are threatened. Included in the 2008 list are three Bay Area sites—*Kaiser Roof Garden* and *Estates Drive Reservoir* in Oakland, and *Parkmerced* in San Francisco.

**Kaiser Roof Garden.** Industrialist Henry Kaiser hired the landscape architecture firm of Osmundson & Staley to design a garden atop the parking garage next to his company's headquarters in downtown Oakland. The garden opened in 1960 as the first "true" post-World War II rooftop garden in the US. Today, many of the hardscape elements are aging. Further, the addition of taller adjacent buildings since the rooftop's completion, has altered the environmental conditions in which the garden was designed.

**Estates Drive Reservoir.** Since 1966, residents of Oakland's Montclair neighborhood have enjoyed the Robert Royston-designed Estates Drive Reservoir for its tranquility and recreational value. Royston combined functionality with an abstract Modernist aesthetic in his design of the technologically-innovative cover for an open-cut reservoir. Today, neighbors are fighting to preserve Royston's design in the face of plans to replace the existing reservoir with two large concrete water storage tanks.

**Parkmerced.** Designed as "a city within a city" by architect Leonard Schultze and Associates with planning and landscape architecture by Thomas Church with Robert Royston, it is one of this country's four remaining examples of large-scale, post-World War II residential developments. Unfortunately, there are numerous threats to the design, including plans to subdivide portions of the site and make changes to the property's pioneering landscape design.

*Landslide* is a yearly designation of significant landscapes at risk of being lost. The designees highlight current issues in landscape preservation and interpretation and are chosen from hundreds of nominations submitted from throughout the nation. The nine selected *Marvels* elsewhere in the US are:

- Boston City Hall Plaza
- Heritage Plaza, Heritage Park, Fort Worth
- Lake Elizabeth, Allegheny Commons, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- Manhattan Square Park, Rochester, New York
- Mill Creek Canyon Earthworks, Kent, Washington
- Miller Garden, Columbus, Indiana
- El Monte, Hato Rey, Puerto Rico
- Pacific Science Center Courtyard, Seattle, Washington
- Peavey Plaza, Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, Minnesota

For more information on the *Marvels of Modernism*, including exhibit and event venues, visit [www.tclf.org/landslide/2008](http://www.tclf.org/landslide/2008)

*The Cultural Landscape Foundation, established in 1998, is the only not-for-profit foundation in America dedicated to increasing the public's awareness of the important legacy of cultural landscapes and to help save them for future generations. In 2002, TCLF established the annual Landslide program ([www.tclf.org/landslide](http://www.tclf.org/landslide)) in an effort to focus attention on culturally significant landscapes and landscape features at risk of alteration or destruction.*

*Garden Design magazine is a champion of the exterior design movement, rooted in the fundamental values that recognize the integration of high style with social and environmental consciousness. ■*

# State of Housing: Understanding the housing downturn and its implications

*A presentation by McKinsey & Company, summarized by Steve Ross and Naphtali H. Knox*

*Ed. Note: Steve Ross and I attended a meeting of the Santa Clara County Housing Action Coalition January 9th to hear Kausik Rajgopal (Partner, [McKinsey & Company](#)) and his associate, Grace Hou, present their analysis of the state of the housing markets in the US. This is a brief summary from our notes. —NK*

## **House prices fell steeply and continue to decline.**

All major home price indices have been dropping over the past year. The housing outlook is a regional story and will differ by MSA (there are 360 MSAs) and by zip code. The degree of variance is striking. The [Case-Shiller Home Price Index](#), which measures repeat sale price changes for single family homes, dropped 17 percent nationally from November 2007 to November 2008. (The S&P/Case-Shiller Home Price Indices are calculated monthly using a three-month moving average and published with a two month lag.) Regionally, the Case-Shiller Index showed drops ranging from around 30 percent in Las Vegas and San Francisco to under 4 percent in Charlotte. The [OFHEO](#) index, which only tracks repeat sale prices of homes purchased with conforming mortgages, hasn't dropped nearly as far—around 4 percent nationally; 8 percent in the San Francisco MSA.

Referring to the indexes, Kausik Rajgopal advised us to “distrust aggregate methods and averages without also assessing underlying fundamentals and local variations.” “It’s easy to talk in hyperbole,” Grace Hou added, “but big chunks of the US are experiencing healthy housing markets.”

**The catalogue of woes is unending.** In addition to, and following on the heels of the bursting of the housing price bubble, access to credit has tightened. Net credit card losses are the highest they have ever been. Home equity loans no longer exist as a credit escape hatch for the American consumer. Even between banks, readiness to lend is low: The [TED spread](#) (the difference in short term rates between what banks charge each other for loans, and the rate they get from the federal government) has increased by an order of magnitude. (Normally 0.1 to 0.5 percent before 2007, the TED has been at 4.5 percent recently). There’s a solvency problem, both with banks and with households. There are “no more pure investment banks, as the remaining have formally become commercial

banks,” with a corresponding loss of jobs and GDP related to the sector. In the broader economy, nationwide unemployment is 7.2 percent “and could head to double digits in a downside scenario with continued credit market challenges and a broad recession.”

A global balance needs to be restored, and “governments will need to work together to ensure more coordinated global policies.” US consumers (whose purchases for the past 30 years have been subsidized to the tune of 2.5 percent by foreign government investments in US dollars) need to save more and spend less. Asian consumers need to spend more and save less.

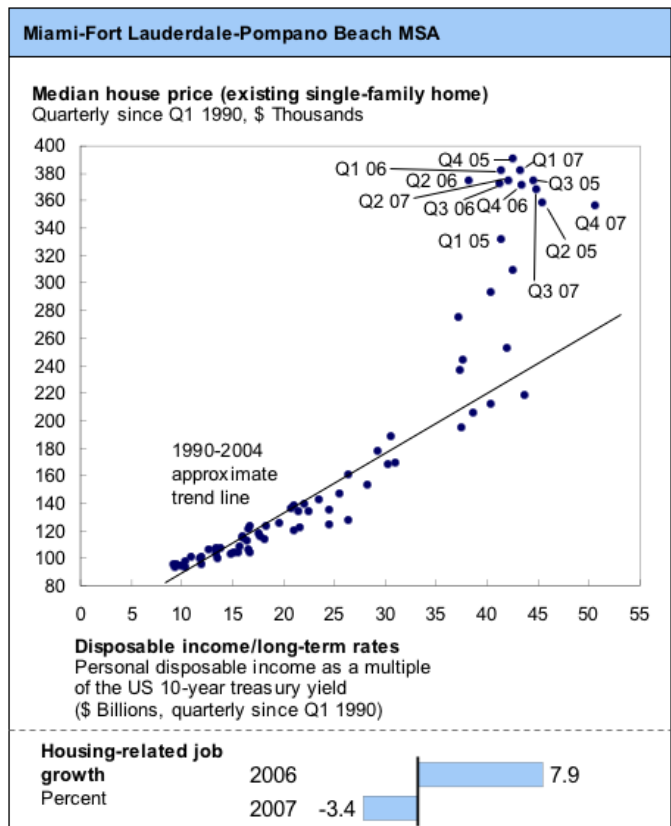
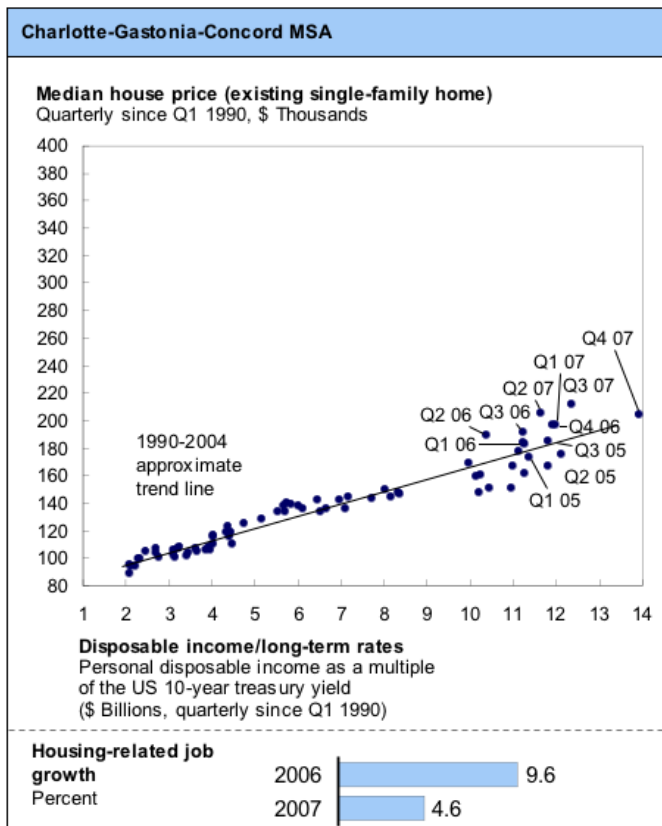
**Outlook for housing.** A telling relationship that helps explain the housing bubble and burst is the correlation between home prices, interest rates, and disposable income. Starting in 2003–2004, that linkage disappeared in many housing markets. The greater the deviation from the historical relationship—in markets like Miami, for example—the steeper the downturn. In Charlotte, where the correlation between housing prices and disposable incomes was mostly preserved, the housing downturn has been mild.

The near-term outlook for housing? “In a base case scenario with continued economic weakness, we are likely halfway to the bottom.” Because of housing supply constraints, a diverse economy, and higher worker productivity, the Bay Area may weather the downturn better than other housing markets. San Francisco Bay Area single-family dwellings are holding their value better than condominiums. In the more affluent (higher-priced) communities in the Bay Area, people are buying homes outright, without mortgages.

Rents will likely continue to rise, as many households no longer have the ownership option. Thus, renting as a way of occupancy will increase, and rents will rise as a result “unless large-scale economic weakness leads to broad-based deflation.” Efforts need to be made to expand the rental supply.

*(continued on next page)*

**Charts depicting significant housing exposure and recovery variation likely across local markets**



Source: *Economy.com*

**Implications for the broader economy.** Another statistic, the percentage of recent employment growth in industries related to housing, highlights the potential impact of the housing downturn on the broader economy. The greater the job growth in housing-related industries, the more likely that a slowdown in the housing market will lead to housing-related job losses, reduced consumer spending, further job losses in unrelated sectors of the broader economy, and so on. In well-diversified economies like the Bay Area's, the impact of the housing downturn on the broader economy should be low. In Fresno, the impact is significant.

From 2004–2007, San Francisco housing prices deviated from the historical relationship between prices and disposable income, but little more than 1 percent of recent job growth occurred in housing-related industries. Thus the MSA economy is not expected to be severely impacted by housing-related employment losses. Fresno housing prices, however, deviated significantly from their pre-2004 relationship, and the local economy is heavily dependent on and was much affected by the downturn in housing-related employment.

At a national scale, the US is not at the bottom of the housing downturn, and macroeconomic indicators are not positive. Home prices could potentially drop to somewhere between what Sweden saw in the 1990s (a 50 percent drop) and Japan's experience during the same period (minus 80 percent).

**Three things need to happen to reverse the downturn and recover:**

1. **Credit links need to unfreeze durably** (i.e., the TED needs to return to 0.3 percent).
2. **Housing—a huge component of US balance sheets—needs to stabilize to pre-2004 relationships to disposable income and long-term rates.** “At this point, we have partially but not fully corrected.”
3. **Growth must occur in some sectors.** Financial services is one sector that may continue to shrink. The semiconductor industry is in a cyclical downturn. Players exposed to advertising, both physical and online, could suffer further as carmakers and other big companies cut their advertising.

*(continued on next page)*



**Bottom line.** Mr. Rajgopal concluded that “employment, wages, housing prices, and rents are all likely to fall, but this will very much be a local story over the next five years”; and, he continued, if one is looking to buy a house in the Bay Area with the long-term intent of making a home instead of a profit, “this is as good a time to buy as any.”

Steve Ross is a Planner III in the County of Santa Clara Planning Office. Naphtali Knox, FAICP, is the editor of Northern News and was the housing bond and mortgage credit certificate coordinator for Santa Clara County from 1982 to 2002. Kausik Rajgopal is a Partner in McKinsey & Company, San Francisco. He can be reached at [Kausik\\_Rajgopal@mckinsey.com](mailto:Kausik_Rajgopal@mckinsey.com). ■

**Answer to “Where in the world?”** ([Page 3](#))

Paddington Station, London, on a freezing cold day in November 2008. The station is the railroad gateway for places west of London, including Oxford, Bath, and Cornwall.

Photo by Chandler Lee, AICP

## What others said in 2008

**Overcoming greenhouse gases—where to start?** “There’s the growing sense that slowing tropical forest losses is a must. Consider that chopping and burning of tropical forests releases more greenhouse gases than all the cars and trucks driving around the planet. And deforestation might be slowed down a lot quicker than changing the whole car industry.” —*Ingrid Lobet, “Living on Earth,” National Public Radio, Dec. 12, 2008, broadcasting at the UN Climate Change Conference in Poznan, Poland. For a text file, [click here](#). For an mp3 file (7:35), [click here](#).*

**“Climate change** is not the story of our time; it is a subset of the story of our time, which is that we are coming of age on a finite planet and only just now recognizing that it’s finite. How we mesh infinite aspirations with a species that’s been on this explosive trajectory—not just of population growth, but of consumptive appetite—how we can make a transition to a stabilized and still prosperous relationship with the earth and each other—that’s the story of our time.” —*Andrew C. Revkin, The New York Times’ Science Correspondent, winner of the 2008 John Chancellor Award for Excellence in Journalism to a science writer, in a discussion with students and faculty at the Columbia University School of Journalism, Nov. 17, 2008. Revkin won the Chancellor Award for his decades-long coverage of the science and politics of climate change. To watch a 50 minute video of the discussion, [click here](#).*

**More students homeless.** San Mateo County “public school districts are seeing a rise in the number of students deemed homeless [and] anticipate the numbers climbing in the new year. The students include youths who are sharing the housing of other people because of economic hardship or a similar reason.” —*Neil Gonzales, “More students in county listed as homeless, school officials say,” San Mateo County Times, December 13, 2008.*

**Eureka—affordable housing.** “The Humboldt County Community Development Services Department has secured \$4 million in state funding for an affordable housing project. The money comes from the HOME Investment Partnership (of HCD), and will be loaned to Danco Builders for a 56-unit multifamily housing project just north of the Eureka city limits.” Paula Mushrush is Humboldt County’s redevelopment and housing coordinator. —*“Humboldt County wins \$4 million for housing project,” The Times-Standard, Dec. 15, 2008.*

**Density in Scotts Valley?** “A proposal to build 46 three-story townhomes on an empty 2.5-acre lot behind the Kings Village Shopping

*(continued on next page)*

## Emy Mendoza wins national APA's Leadership Award for a Student Planner

In December, the American Planning Association announced the recipients of the 2009 National Planning Awards, honoring 2008's best projects, plans, and individual accomplishments in planning. Award recipients will be formally recognized at a special awards luncheon during the 2009 National Planning Conference in Minneapolis, and will be featured in an upcoming issue of *Planning* magazine.

Northern Section is represented among this year's winners by **Emy Mendoza**, who served for several years on the Northern Section Board as the student representative from San José State University, and who continues in an active role with the chapter. The Leadership Award reads:

*Ms. Emilia Mendoza has shown outstanding leadership in serving the planning profession, her fellow students, and the larger community while maintaining an excellent academic record as a graduate student in the Master of Urban Planning program at San Jose State University. During this time, she has served the larger community by participating on the Steering Committee of CommUniverCity San Jose—a partnership between the City of San Jose, San Jose State University (SJSU), and the Five Wounds/BrookWood Terrace (FWBT) Community in San Jose that plans and helps implement programs and policies for improving the quality of life in the FWBT neighborhood.*

*Mendoza's enthusiasm for serving the community was also evident when she, along with a team of 15 students, took the initiative to bring the urban planning process to the local high school students. The students built physical models of the proposed Alum Rock BART plaza, and brought the models to the high school students to brainstorm about potential BART plaza sites and configurations. She was able to teach the students how urban planners think about the built environment, and gave the students encouragement for pursuing urban planning professions. She also has served the planning students by advocating for student interests in her role as the Student Representative for the Northern Section, California Chapter of the American Planning Association.*

Congratulations Emy! ■

## What others said in 2008 *(continued from previous page)*

Center is what city leaders believe is a way to meet demand for more moderately priced homes in a city with little open space. The proposed townhomes' proximity to a grocery store, movie theater, post office, park-and-ride public transit center, and several restaurants makes it easier for residents to walk or bike from home. Mayor Randy Johnson said most cities would view this as smart planning." —*Shanna McCord, "Scotts Valley looks at getting denser," Santa Cruz Sentinel, Dec. 13, 2008.*

**Diversity—right here, right now.** "The percentage of foreign-born in California is higher than for any comparable-sized nation, and census data for 330 California cities show that by one measure of racial diversity, San José has inched ahead of San Francisco and Los Angeles. The most ethnically diverse big cities in California are Oakland, Sacramento, Stockton and San José. While San Jose's Asian and Latino populations are growing, and are on the verge of becoming the city's largest groups, Asians and Latinos are scarcely growing in San Francisco and Los Angeles; and both cities are losing African-Americans." —*Mike Swift, "San José now more diverse than San Francisco and Los Angeles," Mercury News, Dec. 15, 2008.*

### **A disturbing question for Emeryville-like communities.**

"A 1.8-square-mile sliver of a city wedged between Berkeley and Oakland, Emeryville is a retail mecca—one of many American cities that hitched its wagon to what seemed like the limitless ability of shoppers to spend money... Once a largely abandoned, polluted industrial wasteland, Emeryville today is almost all densely developed. Companies like Pixar, Peet's, Chiron, and a host of Internet and biotech start-ups call it home. That would seem to give the city a degree of shelter from a sharp drop-off in consumer spending—but perhaps not enough. Twenty-five percent of the city's revenue comes from sales taxes collected largely at four large retail centers. Did a city that worked so hard to clean up the mess left by abandoned steel mills and rubber plants ultimately trade one kind of urban blight for another, more modern variety?"

—*Brad Stone, "A city that shopped till it dropped," The New York Times (Sunday Business), Dec. 21, 2008.*

### **Is your career the best—or overrated?** *US News and World Report*

(Dec. 20, 2008) is out with its end-of-the-year article on the best careers for 2009 ([click here](#)). Urban and regional planner is a highly prestigious job that ranks 14th in median salary among the 30 best careers listed ([click here](#) for the list and a report card). Be sure to read the description of urban and regional planner and the many comments of praise and scorn from practicing and erstwhile planners ([click here](#)). *US News* also lists architect, attorney, and professor—but as overrated careers ([click here](#)). ■

# 2008 Northern Section's Holiday Party

Terrace Room, Lake Merritt Hotel, Oakland—December 5, 2008

All photos by Northern News Associate Editor Mika Miyasato, AICP

(All listings are left to right)



Chad Rich and Licinia McMorrow



Ryan Driscoll, Marian Duran, Misty Mersich, and Stevie Heath



Olga and William Lieberman



Rodrigo Orduña and Jennifer Andersen



Mark Rhoades, Jordan Harrison, and Jillian Rich



Pierce Macdonald and Ann Welsh



Hannah Young and Juan Borrelli



Scott Sjulin, Hing Wong, Jason Burke, and Alexa Lawrence



Wendy Cosin wins at the auction



Jeff Williams and Connie Galambos Malloy



Colette Meunier, Margaret Kavanaugh-Lynch, Wendy Cosin, Janet Palma, Christina Ratcliffe



Juan Borrelli and Alexandra Kostalas

**Thanks to the following firms for sponsoring this event:**

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# NORTHERN SECTION CALENDAR

## JANUARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				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	<b>31</b>

## JANUARY

**1/31** **AICP Test Preparation**, 10 AM–3 PM, San José State University, Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, Room 525, Cultural Heritage Center, 4th and San Fernando, San José. Materials charge is \$100. Free parking across the street on Saturdays. Remaining sessions will be held Feb. 28, March 28, April 18, and May 2, 2009. Dates and location are somewhat tentative, so call Dr. Don Bradley, AICP Director, (650) 592-0915 or email [dr.donbradley@comcast.net](mailto:dr.donbradley@comcast.net) for more information on applications and reservations. Provide your name, email, and phone numbers.

**1/31** **Water—California's New Gold**, 9 AM–2 PM, MetroCenter Auditorium, 101 Eighth Street, Oakland. The session covers water related issues ranging from levee maintenance to irrigation and fishery. Registration fee is \$25 (\$15 without lunch) before January 23rd, and \$30 (\$20 without lunch) after that. Register online at [www.lwvbayarea.org](http://www.lwvbayarea.org). For details, call (510) 839-1608 or e-mail to [editor@bayareamonitor.org](mailto:editor@bayareamonitor.org).

## FEBRUARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	<b>12</b>	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	<b>26</b>	27	<b>28</b>

## FEBRUARY

**2/12** **FOCUS Forum—Incorporating child care in our communities**, 9:30–11:30 AM, Pier 1, Bayside Rooms, San Francisco. Guest speaker is Kristen Anderson, child care coordinator, Local Investment in Child Care. RSVP to JoAnna Bullock at (510) 464-7968 or [joannab@abag.ca.gov](mailto:joannab@abag.ca.gov).

**2/26** **Deadline for APA's 2009 Great Places in America program.** Suggestions for Great Places in America will be accepted through February 26 for designation during National Community Planning Month in 2009. To learn more about the Great Places and to suggest your Great Place, go to <http://planning.org/greatplaces/suggestion/suggestiondetails.htm>.

**2/28** **AICP Test Preparation**, 10 AM–3 PM, San José State University, Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, Room 525, Cultural Heritage Center, 4th and San Fernando, San José. Materials charge is \$100. Free parking across the street on Saturdays. Remaining sessions will be held March 28, April 18, and May 2, 2009. Dates and location are somewhat tentative, so call Dr. Don Bradley, AICP Director, (650) 592-0915 or email [dr.donbradley@comcast.net](mailto:dr.donbradley@comcast.net) for more information on applications and reservations. Provide your name, email, and phone numbers.

*(continued on next page)*

MARCH

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	<b>4</b>	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	<b>13</b>	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	<b>28</b>
29	30	31				

**MARCH**

- 3/4 Northern Section Board Meeting**, 6:30–8:30 PM, ENTRIX, Inc., 2300 Clayton Road, Suite 200, Concord. RSVP to Hanson Hom at [hhom@ci.sunnyvale.ca.us](mailto:hhom@ci.sunnyvale.ca.us) or (408) 730-7450.
- 3/13 Deadline for 2009 Northern Section Awards Program nominations.** See the website ([www.norcalapa.org](http://www.norcalapa.org)) for application materials. For details, see [page 13](#) of this issue.
- 3/28 AICP Test Preparation**, 10 AM–3 PM, San José State University, Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, Room 525, Cultural Heritage Center, 4th and San Fernando, San José. Materials charge is \$100. Free parking across the street on Saturdays. Remaining sessions will be held April 18 and May 2, 2009. Dates and location are somewhat tentative, so call Dr. Don Bradley, AICP Director, (650) 592-0915 or email [dr.donbradley@comcast.net](mailto:dr.donbradley@comcast.net) for more information on applications and reservations. Provide your name, email, and phone numbers.

APRIL

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	<b>9</b>	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	<b>18</b>
19	20	21	22	23	24	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	30		

**APRIL**

- 4/9 FOCUS Forum—Cities and schools: Solutions and best practices for urban areas**, 9:30–11:30 AM, Pier 1, Bayside Rooms, San Francisco. Guest speakers are Deborah McKoy, executive director, Jeffrey Vincent, deputy director, and Ariel Bierbaum, program director, the Center for Cities & Schools, UC Berkeley. RSVP to JoAnna Bullock at (510) 464-7968 or [joannab@abag.ca.gov](mailto:joannab@abag.ca.gov).
- 4/18 AICP Test Preparation**, 10 AM–3 PM, San José State University, Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, Room 525, Cultural Heritage Center, 4th and San Fernando, San José. Materials charge is \$100. Free parking across the street on Saturdays. The final session will be held May 2, 2009. Dates and location are somewhat tentative, so call Dr. Don Bradley, AICP Director, (650) 592-0915 or email [dr.donbradley@comcast.net](mailto:dr.donbradley@comcast.net) for more information on applications and reservations. Provide your name, email, and phone numbers.
- 4/25–4/29 APA National Planning Conference, Minneapolis.** <http://planning.org/nationalconference/>. ■