



NORTHERN NEWS



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American Planning Association
California Chapter
Northern
Making Great Communities Happen

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Links to articles in this issue:

DEPARTMENTS

5 Director's Note

12 Job ad

14 HSR notes

16 Where in the world?

17 What others are saying
about houses and housing

18 Northern California roundup

20 From the Redwood Coast

23 Calendar

OUR PROFESSION

6 2010 APA California – Northern
award winner profiles

13 Call for nominations

19 Will we build by the Bay?

21 Lessons learned from Prop 16 for
California's Clean Energy future

22 When there are no planning jobs

22 Networking to the hidden job market

Building a foolproof land use planning process

By Al Savay, AICP, and Naphtali H. Knox, FAICP

Now is a good time to adopt or update your land use plan so that your city is poised to take advantage of the coming economic upturn when it arrives. With planning staffs spending less time on development and building applications, many California cities are making time for long range planning.

But the planning *process* itself needs careful planning. A land use plan can be a highly visible project with periods of intensive community interest. Creating the process for updating the plan is arguably the most important step toward success. The process can be critical to whether the plan is completed within a reasonable time and budget.

Where to begin. Once you start, you will encounter unforeseen forks in the road and face prickly decision-making and resource choices. Yet—as a planner, appointed, or elected official—you will find the journey to be one of the most fulfilling and enlightening (albeit frustrating) professional efforts you will ever experience.

Put a lot of thought into the process to update or create a land use plan. Every city is different, and approaches will vary. While there are many experienced consultants to lead or assist you in the work, city staff must play a key role in assuring that the undertaking reflects the community's unique political, social, and business environment. And since staff will be charged with implementing the plan over the next decade or more, they need to buy into the process and participate in it fully.

Whether you call it a roadmap, blueprint, or “the city's constitution for development,” the plan will be the long-term guide to city land use, development policy, and programs for many years to come. So “get the bones of it right” before you start.

Illustrate the process up front. Start on the back of a napkin. Prepare a simple, readable, and attractive flow chart. Dates and times may be useful but aren't necessary. The graphic image will lead to insights into setting a course of action. Show where meetings should be added or removed, where potential procedural problems lie, and where and when documents will need to be produced. Formalize and present the chart as early as possible.

(continued on next page)

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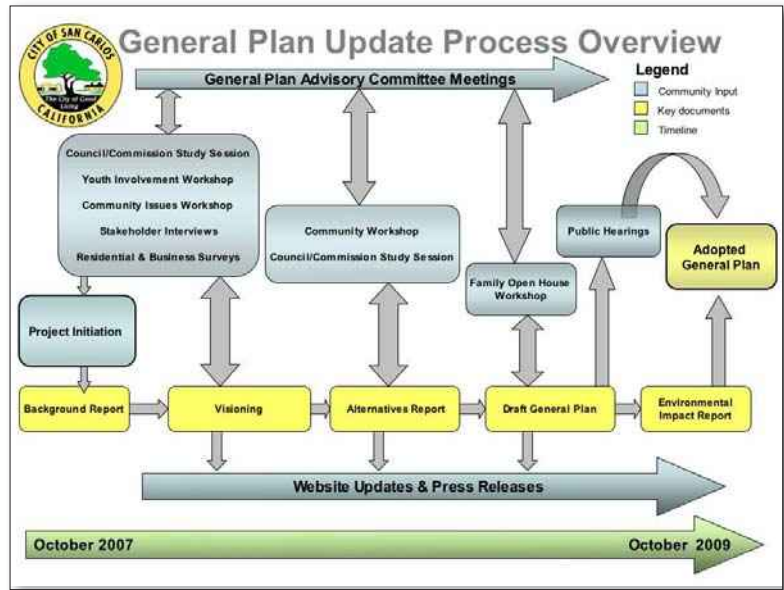
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(Directory continues, next page)

Building a foolproof land use planning process

(continued from previous page)



General Plan process, San Carlos

Start with the long term in mind. That may be harder than you think, given the precarious nature of predicting the future—especially if you are working with a large and varied group or many committees. On the other hand, you have flexibility at the beginning of the process: The visionary nature of land use plans lets you open people’s minds to possibilities that may not unfold for 20 or more years and won’t be perceived as immediate threats to their lifestyles. To move the participants beyond a here-and-now mindset, ask a few simple questions: What type of computer were you using 20 years ago? How did you connect to the Internet? How old were your children 20 years ago? How old will they be in 20 years?

Be flexible. Updating a land use plan is like a snowball rolling downhill: it gets bigger, moves more quickly, and things stick to it. City staff will be under increasing pressure to manage the snowball and make sure no one gets run over. If the ball or an issue gets stuck, you will need a way to get the ball rolling again quickly. This often means accelerated staff and committee work on short notice and more late nights than you bargained for.

Start with a list of community issues to be grappled with, but expect additions and surprises, some of which will elicit your strong personal and professional reaction, and all of which will take time to work through. You can bring down everyone’s stress level by preparing yourself, your staff, and the public for potential difficulties down the road. Promise to be understanding and flexible, and ask others to do the same.

Backup teams for smooth performance. If a staff member or consulting project manager is suddenly unavailable, will there be an experienced backup person who can step in quickly? Have backup people and plans that will allow you to adapt to and accommodate community pressures. Identify those among your staff with the expertise to work with a hastily formed subcommittee on short notice. Build a contingency into the consulting contract to handle labor- or resource-intensive surprises.

(continued on next page)

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The American Planning Association, California Chapter Northern, offers membership to city and regional planners and associated professionals primarily living or working in California, from Monterey County to Del Norte County, including the nine county San Francisco Bay Area and Lake and San Benito Counties. APA California Northern promotes planning-related continuing education and social functions in order to:

- Provide an arena for communication and exchange of information about planning related activities;
- Raise member awareness and involvement in APA affairs;
- Increase public awareness of the importance of planning;
- Encourage professionalism in the conduct of its members; and
- Foster a sense of community among the members.

APA California Northern publishes *Northern News* online in PDF 10 times each year as a medium for the exchange of ideas and information among its members. Circulation (complete web downloads per issue) is 8,500.

Northern News welcomes 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). All letters are subject to editing. Letters over 250 words are not considered.

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

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Building a foolproof land use planning process

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Design an open and adaptable process. No one person or thing is indispensable. You may need to swap critical pieces in or out in midstream. For example, you might need to replace unique staff expertise, add a subcommittee or change its role, or create a new community educational or outreach program. Think of these as plug and play modules that will allow nimble handling of unforeseen and pressing issues. But don't plug and play too hastily. Sometimes waiting for the pressure to build around a new issue will clarify it and allow you to avoid unnecessary time sinks.

Make no big plans without a Steering Committee. You probably have active community, neighborhood, or business groups that play (or would like) a role in community decisions. If so, ask the city council to appoint a broad-based advisory committee, steering committee, or task force with stakeholders from various segments of the community. Technically, there are differences: steering committees steer, while advisory committees advise and someone else steers. But the objective is the same—to create a group of primarily non-elected and non-appointed officials who will bring a cross-section of community and professional interests to the task.

Such a committee can take the time—often through a dialogue facilitated by staff or a consultant—to delve into issues and consider pros and cons. The committee can offer constructive help and support to the staff, planning commission, or city council. While committees of 18–25 are not uncommon, aim for a committee with no more than a dozen members. Larger committees discuss more issues, take more staff and consultant time, and add to the length and cost of the update.

Some issues will require more time-intensive review and analysis than can be handled by a single large committee. Those are best handled by one or more subcommittees. The subcommittee deliberations and recommendations will have to keep to the parent committee's schedule. Try to identify the more troubling or complicated issues up front, and alert the larger committee that they may need to appoint subcommittees from their ranks.

In some communities, the city council or planning commission may want to take the lead. The city council may create from its own ranks a steering committee to drive the process and meet with stakeholder groups. Or the planning commission might host the community workshops or meet more frequently in limited-agenda meetings to become the community sounding board.

Anticipate an initial learning and adjustment period for the committee.

At the beginning, many committee members will be skeptical of staff and consultant motives—suspecting that you intend to direct the outcomes. It is critical, therefore, that meeting facilitation materials and handouts do not lead to pre-ordained conclusions. Ask committee members in their first meeting to identify what brings them to the table, what they love about the community, and what they hope the plan will achieve.

Take advantage of the educational phase. Look beyond your consultants. Bring in experts in various fields (such as housing or transit) and staff from local or regional agencies who will talk to the committee without charging a fee.

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Building a foolproof land use planning process

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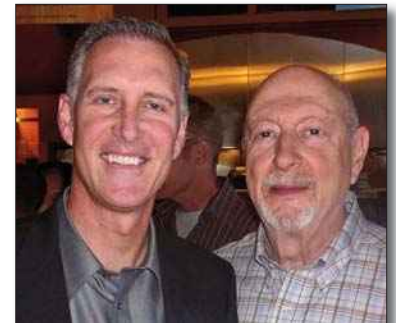
Expect interest from City commissions, committees, and staff. How do the city's various commissions and committees fit in? How will their work be affected by the planning process and the plan? Organize a way to tap their knowledge and expertise and address their policy development concerns and needs. For example, representatives of the parks and recreation commission or the transportation commission can offer valuable insights and provide concurrence for specific content. It is critical to engage them early in the process to keep it moving forward.

Consult with various City departments and key staff members along the way. That will help to ensure that technical issues—traffic, police and fire services, or public infrastructure requirements—are addressed appropriately and in a timely manner. Be sure to loop back and inform them how their input was presented or incorporated. With the committee's concurrence, invite City department representatives to sit at the table with the advisory committee. Doing so will add integrity to the process and buy-in all around.

Conclusion. Whether the process is simple or complex, there are certain to be unforeseen challenges along the way. The design of the planning process will set the stage for critical community interaction and the creation of a land use vision, principles, policies, and actions. A well designed and thoughtful process will raise the quality of the final plan. A community-based collaborative process will handle the big issues early and leave fewer issues to grapple with at the conclusion. As a result, you will have a plan that can be implemented and one that you and the community can be proud of.

As a planner, or elected or appointed official, you know as well or better than anyone your community's culture and its desire for public involvement. It's incumbent upon you to play a major role in setting up a process that will have the best chance for a successful outcome.

Albert Savay, AICP, has practiced planning for more than 20 years and is the Community Development Director of San Carlos, California. The city's recently completed "Envision 2030 General Plan Update" received APA Northern's Award of Merit for "Comprehensive Planning – Small Jurisdiction." You can reach him at asavay@cityofsancarlos.org.



Al Savay and Naphtali Knox

Naphtali H. Knox, FAICP, has concentrated on general and specific plans in his more than 50 years as a planner and has been the editor of Northern News since 2005. He received National APA's 2005 Award for "Distinguished Leadership by a Professional Planner." You can reach him at knoxnaph@gmail.com. ■



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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

By Darcy Kremin, AICP



Fall is here again and that means we have started planning our 2010 Holiday Party. It will be held on **Friday, December 3**, in the East Bay. Stay tuned for more details in the next *Northern News*. We also have quite a few professional development and social networking events throughout our Section over the next three months (see calendar, [page 23](#)). We hope you can attend at least one event and obtain your CM credits, make good networking connections, or just have a good time. If you have an idea for an event, please contact me and we'll make it happen. The Section is your resource.

If you are unemployed, membership in APA California can be your strongest link to future opportunities. Reports state that 80 percent of all jobs are attained through networking. APA California wants to help you maintain those networking opportunities. Therefore, the APA California Board has renewed its commitment to members who are struggling financially by continuing its **Membership Financial Support Program** for the second year. The board committed \$15,000 towards a membership and conference support program. If you are unemployed or if your household income has dropped substantially, this program is designed for you. Go to <http://bit.ly/9KI2Ee> for more information. Very few members took advantage of the program last year; please don't let your membership lapse when help is available.

The APA California Northern Section Board is soliciting nominations for the elected positions of **Director Elect** and **Administrative Director**. Interested Northern Section members in good standing (including incumbent Board Members) must submit a complete nomination petition by **September 30, 2010**. These positions present a great opportunity to join the board, contribute to the planning profession, and meet new people, and I hope you consider them carefully. For more information see [page 13](#), or contact Director Elect Hanson Hom at hhom@ci.sunnyvale.ca.us or (408) 730-7450.

Enjoy your autumn.

Darcy Kremin



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2010 APA California – Northern award winner profiles, Part 2

by Mika Miyasato, AICP, and Caroline Teng

On May 14th, APA California Northern presented its 2010 honor and merit awards. The complete list of award winners appeared on pages 5–7 of the June issue of *Northern News* and is also accessible on the Northern Section webpage (<http://bit.ly/bTWiq7>). Recognition was awarded in 15 categories. *Northern News* profiles six award winners each month.



Northern Section Award Co-coordinator Andrea Ouse, AICP; Jury Moderator Alex Hinds; Jurors Dayana Salazar, Rob Eastwood, AICP, Charlie Knox, AICP, Stephanie Reyes, and Jim Chappell; Northern Section Award Co-coordinator Eileen Whitty, AICP. (Not shown: Juror Sally Barros, AICP)

Media Award

Trail Planning for California Communities

The **Media Award** honors outstanding coverage of a planning topic through a medium other than journalism. The award recipients were Judith H. Malamut of LSA Associates, Inc; Julie Bondurant, AICP, and Jim Townsend of the East Bay Regional Park District; and Laura Thompson of the San Francisco Bay Trail Project. Special recognition was also given to Patrick Tormay Miller and Jane Elizabeth Miller of 2M Associates; Richard Taylor and Winter King of Shute Mihaly & Weinberger LLP; Michelle DeRobertis of Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority; Joe LaClair of

the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission; and Bill Long of the Marin County Park and Open Space Trust and the Marin Open Space Trust.



Judith Malamut, AICP (Principal, LSA Associates), Darcy Kremin, AICP (Northern Section Director), Charlie Knox, AICP (juror)

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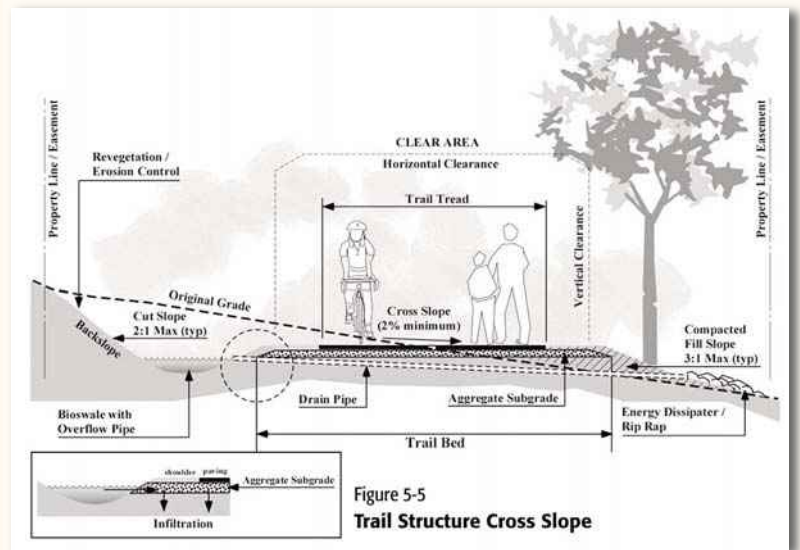
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2010 APA California – Northern award winner profiles, Part 2
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Trail Planning for California Communities (Solano Press 2009, ISBN 978-0-923956-81-3) fills a void in planning literature by giving planning professionals the first comprehensive resource under one cover that provides guidance on creating and managing trails in California. The book's step-by-step format—organized by the various phases of a project, including land acquisition, planning, design, and management of trails and pedestrian and bike facilities—lets practitioners easily apply the guidelines to a wide range of land uses. In addition to technical information and best practices, the book describes how to cultivate partnerships, volunteer help, and relationships with stakeholders to achieve public support for a project. The book also provides guidance on ways to fund projects and develop interagency agreements for the continued maintenance of complex, multi-jurisdictional trails after project completion.



Trail structure cross slope

Having a collaborative team of planning professional co-authors adds to the comprehensiveness of the publication and benefits all those interested in incorporating public access into their communities, whether urban, suburban, or rural. Steven Ross, outdoor recreation planner for the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, writes in his letter of support for the award that he recommends this publication “to trail staff throughout the country because it has many universal planning tools that can be applied nationwide.” *Trail Planning for California Communities* also won a Focused Issue Planning Award of Merit from APA California and will be honored at the state conference in Carlsbad this November.

**Neighborhood Planning Award
 West Broadway Urban Village Specific Plan**

The *Neighborhood Planning Award* is given each year to a neighborhood plan, program, design, or related effort that demonstrates innovative planning principles and measures that create sustainable neighborhoods that have lasting value. Receiving the award on behalf of Seaside's *West Broadway Urban Village Specific Plan* were David Early of Design, Community & Environment, and Ray Corpuz of the City of Seaside. Diana Hurlbert was the City's project manager.

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2010 APA California – Northern award winner profiles, Part 2 (continued from previous page)



David Early, AICP, and Melissa Erikson (DC&E); Ray Corpuz (Seaside City Manager); Darcy Kremin (Northern Section Director); Sally Barros, AICP (juror)

The Plan provides a framework for creating a smart growth “urban village” centered on West Broadway Avenue that will serve as Seaside’s downtown—a goal that eluded the city for years. The planning process involved extensive public input from a Community Advisory Committee, stakeholder interviews, a developer panel, and several community workshops. This public process directly informed the Plan’s concepts for catalyst projects (including a public library/mixed-use project) meant to anchor and spur further development conceptualized in the document.

Implementing the Plan will take 15 to 20 years and will emphasize long-term sustainability through these anchor projects and good design, but also near-term community involvement and change. Near-term goals and tactics address the organization, design, promotion, economic restructuring, cleanliness, and security of the area, emphasizing a comprehensive community-driven strategy rather than a piecemeal approach that depends exclusively on government action.

The *West Broadway Urban Village Specific Plan* (<http://bit.ly/95appl>) reduces car dependence by providing a walkable, bikeable community gathering space. Debra Hale, Executive Director of the Transportation Agency for Monterey County, lauded the City’s exceptional effort to incorporate transit-oriented elements in the Plan, commenting, “With the planned Monterey Branch Line light rail project running from Castroville through Seaside to Monterey, the station planned for downtown Seaside will be a vital hub for those traveling along this very busy corridor.”



Revitalized West Broadway as it might appear

(continued on next page)



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Education Project Award Great Communities Collaborative

The *Education Project Award* honors an individual, project, or program that uses information and education about the value of planning (and how planning improves a community's quality of life) to create greater awareness among citizens or specific segments of the population. The *Great Communities Collaborative (GCC)* received the award this year, with Jeff Hobson of TransForm and Connie Galambos Malloy of Urban Habitat accepting the award on behalf of GCC's Core Partners: TransForm, Greenbelt Alliance, Urban Habitat, Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California, Reconnecting America, The San Francisco Foundation, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, and East Bay Community Foundation.



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The Great Communities Collaborative is a unique partnership among nonprofits and community organizations that are interested in educating residents about transit-oriented development best practices and reaching out to neighborhoods (especially underrepresented communities) to ensure that local plans reflect community needs. Compared to a traditional approach where several disjointed groups react independently to individual planning efforts, the partnership approach encourages a regional response to planning. GCC's goal is for all people in the Bay Area to live in complete, affordable communities with access to nearby, quality transit by 2030. To accomplish this goal, the collaborative provides tools and resources to assess local community needs, education about the opportunities and benefits of locating growth near transit, and technical assistance and training enabling residents to have a voice in shaping the future of their communities. The GCC also hosts regular convenings of local and regional decision-makers and elected leaders.

GCC is a model of how nonprofit and community groups can work together with planners to engage residents in multiple regional planning efforts. This collaboration is especially pertinent as regions discuss how to implement SB 375, to help California achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals by integrating land use, regional transportation, and housing planning. GCC's successes include plans for Santa Rosa and

(continued on next page)

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2010 APA California – Northern award winner profiles, Part 2 (continued from previous page)

San Leandro, which both received 2008 APA California Northern Awards and are often cited by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Association of Bay Area Governments as some of the most successful examples of MTC's Station Area Planning Grant Program.



From cover of Great Communities Toolkit (<http://bit.ly/9Alfz8>)

Best Practices Award

Envision San José 2040: Phase I & II Community Engagement Program

The Envision San José 2040 Team, City of San José Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, won the **Best Practices Award**. The *Envision San José 2040 General Plan Update* used traditional techniques and innovative technology to reach a wide range of residents. The public outreach activities included community workshops, task force meetings, a public and taskforce citywide bus tour, and online engagement campaigns. Online tools included Facebook, surveys through SurveyMonkey, and a Wikiplanning site where participants contributed comments and exchanged information.



Michael Brilliot; Perihan Ozdemir; John W. Baty, AICP; Joe Horwedel, AICP; Laurel Prevetti; Lee Butler, AICP

One of the challenges was to engage higher numbers of youth and young adults in the process, as these groups traditionally do not always attend workshops. Technology has interested these groups and more diverse members of the community and allowed them to participate in the General Plan update process.

(continued on next page)

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2010 APA California – Northern award winner profiles, Part 2 (continued from previous page)

In the three-year planning period, over 1,000 people attended community workshops. In addition, nearly 4,500 registered users logged in to the online Wikiplanning site, providing input through nearly 2,800 completed surveys.

Wikiplanning Activity Menu

The Draft Envision San José General Plan and opportunities for continued involvement can be accessed at <http://bit.ly/9sBHMj>.

Innovation in Green Community Planning Award

City of Berkeley Climate Action Plan

The Berkeley Climate Action Plan (<http://bit.ly/bkfgSE>) received Northern Section's 2010 *Innovation in Green Community Planning Award*. The award honors the City's excellence and leadership in planning and its commitment to turn the Plan into action.



Daniel Marks, AICP; Melanie Beasley; and Timothy Burroughs
(all with the City of Berkeley)

(continued on next page)

JOB AD

MARIN TRANSIT, San Rafael, CA Senior Transit Planner

Salary range: \$75,000 to \$90,000

Marin Transit has a full-time opportunity for an experienced professional to perform complex transit planning and program analysis, manage program implementation, and coordinate all aspects of transit operations. The Senior Transit Planner plays a critical role in Marin Transit's mission of delivering public transit services within Marin County.

Major Responsibilities

Coordinates major program and project planning activity with other governmental and private groups, and makes presentations and recommendations on complex projects before boards, commissions, community groups, and stakeholder agencies involved with transportation or transit planning and operations.

Participates in regional and multi-jurisdictional cooperative transportation planning and coordinates with other agencies and operators that serve the County.

Performs transit service planning and scheduling and reviews performance data to identify, develop, and implement improvements for cost-effective and responsive provision of services.

Requirements

If you possess technical expertise in transit planning and management, are team-oriented and self-motivated, have outstanding interpersonal and leadership skills, and communicate effectively both orally and in writing, we'd like to hear from you. Three years of professional experience in transit planning is required. Desirable experiences include transit policy analysis, transit service planning and operations, transit capital project planning, and program management. A Bachelor's degree in transit/transportation management or city/regional transit/transportation planning is also required.

A Master's degree in urban or transportation planning or public policy is highly desirable.

Salary

Pay ranges from \$75,000-\$90,000 annually, depending on qualifications. Outstanding benefits package provided! Marin Transit is responsible for finance, planning, and management of all public transit services operating within Marin County. If you would like more information about Marin Transit, please visit <http://www.marintransit.org/about.html>

How to Apply

To apply, please follow the link below to our detailed job posting on CalOpps.org, where you can apply online. <https://www.calopps.org/ViewAgencyJob.cfm?ID=8874>

2010 APA California – Northern award winner profiles, Part 2 (continued from previous page)

The Climate Action Plan established a roadmap for reducing Berkeley's greenhouse gas emissions by 33 percent from 2000 levels by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050. Approved by the City Council in 2009, the Plan identified the main sources of local greenhouse gas emissions and recommended specific actions and timelines for slashing energy consumption and solid waste citywide. It is the foundation for several recently launched City programs, including the Money for Energy Efficiency rebate program (<http://bit.ly/9tfodg>) and new Rainwater Harvesting Guidelines (<http://bit.ly/aBab4M>). The City tracks and reports on over 30 progress indicators related to the Plan's goals. These metrics are published at <http://bit.ly/9MAq2M>.

The Plan emphasizes reducing the emissions associated with transportation as nearly half of Berkeley's greenhouse gas emissions are from this sector. As part of the action planning process, land use planners developed content, recommendations, and analysis that illustrate the connection between land use and transportation; communicated the co-benefits of compact development; and presented recommendations for increasing mixed-use density along transit corridors. In addition to planning department staff, several professional planners from the community engaged in developing the Plan. Since the Plan's adoption, revisions to the zoning ordinance and Area Plans have incorporated ideas and analysis from the Plan.



Solar on University Avenue

To learn more about the Berkeley Climate Action Plan and to review progress toward Berkeley's greenhouse gas reduction goals, visit www.cityofberkeley.info/climate.

Planning Landmark Award The East Bay Regional Park District

The East Bay Regional Park District won the *Planning Landmark Award* for protecting the natural environment and providing public access to outdoor recreation for more than 75 years. The Park District is the first regional park agency in the U.S. and the nation's largest, encompassing over 104,000 acres (more than 160 square miles) of parklands and over 1,100 miles of regional trails in Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

(continued on next page)

Call for nominations:

Director Elect and Administrative Director

The APA California Northern Section Board is soliciting nominations for the elected positions of **Director Elect** and **Administrative Director**. Interested Northern Section members in good standing (including incumbent Board Members) must submit by **September 30, 2010**, a complete nomination petition that includes name, address of membership, email, work or daytime phone number, signatures of support from at least five current Northern Section members, and a brief statement of candidacy (not to exceed 500 words) to the APA California Northern Nomination Committee. Please submit complete nomination petitions to the Nomination Committee Chair: Director Elect Hanson Hom at hhom@ci.sunnyvale.ca.us.

Elections will be held in November. The Nomination Committee will publish qualifying candidate statements in the *Northern News* and will include on the election ballot all candidates who meet the minimum qualifications as described in the APA California Northern Bylaws (Section 4.6.2 for Director Elect, and Section 4.6.4 for Administrative Director.) Section 4.2.2 requires that "candidates running for Director Elect shall have served on the Section Board for at least one year in the past." The Bylaws are online for your review at <http://bit.ly/cljlyS>. ■

2010 APA California – Northern award winner profiles, Part 2 (continued from previous page)



Larry Tong (East Bay Regional Park District), Darcy Kremin, AICP (Northern Section Director), Alex Hinds (juror)

Created by public vote during the Great Depression in 1934, the Park District embraced the advice of Frederick Law Olmsted to build scenic lanes in the East Bay hills. Olmsted reasoned that providing compatible public access into the East Bay hills would allow the public to see the beauty of the natural environment and to understand the value of conserving the hills. (Olmsted, Vaux and Company, "Report upon a projected improvement of the estate of the College of California, at Berkeley," 1866.)

Within two years of its establishment, the Park District acquired the land rights to over 3,000 acres for its first four regional parks: Tilden Park, Temescal Regional Recreation Area, Sibley Volcanic Preserve, and Redwood Regional Park.



Lake Temescal Recreation Area

Today the Park District hosts 14 million visitors annually on its 65 regional parks and trails. The District offers natural open space and healthy outdoor recreational opportunities within a 20-minute drive to all of the 2.6 million residents of Alameda and Contra Costa counties. For more than 25 years, the District has offered its Parks Express low-cost bus program to make all regional parks accessible to seniors, disabled people, and students from schools with reduced-rate lunch programs.

In 2008, in spite of the severe economic recession, voters reaffirmed their support for the Park District with 71 percent approval of a \$500 million regional park bond extension. With \$125 million going directly to local projects and \$375 million to regional projects, the bond will be used to fund high priority local and regional park and outdoor recreational opportunities.

For more information on the East Bay Regional Parks, please visit <http://www.ebparks.org>. ■

“From a journalistic perspective, today’s train debate is both a fascinating question as to what the outcome will be and a race to keep up with developments for and against the plan.” —Jay Thorwaldson, Editor, *Palo Alto Weekly*, August 13, 2010

Crawling ahead on nationwide high-speed rail: Late in July, “Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood indicated he has been in meetings with the Class I freight railroads—including Union Pacific—hashing out the issues with high speed rail. The meetings produced an agreement between the Illinois Department of Transportation and UP, and included discussion about California, with the intent of resolving disputes and addressing concerns so that HSR can move forward. LaHood indicated that the holdup on the Transportation Bill reauthorization is the issue of how to fund it. Congressman John Garamendi (CA-10) indicated that there is little appetite in Congress to increase the gas tax. Garamendi said that the House is investigating a proposal to levy a fee on each barrel of oil, which he said would ‘fully fund’ the Transportation Bill’s \$500 billion price tag. Congress would then eliminate—in its entirety—the federal gas tax. The Transportation Bill is still on the table for the ‘lame duck’ session between the November 2 election and the January 3 swearing in of the 112th Congress.” —Robert Cruickshank, “HSR News from Netroots Nation,” *California High Speed Rail Blog*, July 23, 2010.

<http://bit.ly/9SfKZe>

HSR in California reminds us of the *Perils of Pauline*, in which a damsel in distress is menaced by assorted villains over the course of 20 episodes. In spite of imminent death, she escapes danger at the end of each episode:

June 2010. CALPIRG (the California Public Interest Research Group) produced a 47-page report, “Next Stop: California. The benefits of high-speed rail around the world and what’s in store for California,” <http://bit.ly/d0y5MZ>. Among the report’s conclusions (page 34) are these:

- “The experiences of nations around the world show that California has much to gain from its investment in high-speed rail, but also that the impact of high-speed rail depends upon the many decisions that will be made in



Secretary LaHood (red tie) with Senator Barbara Boxer (right) and Mayor Gavin Newsom and Speaker Nancy Pelosi (left) and others, breaking ground at the Transbay Transit Center, August 11, 2010. (Photo: Fast lane, U.S. Secretary of Transportation blog)

upcoming months and years regarding the location of stations, the construction of local transit networks, policies to guide development around those stations, and other issues.”

- “Following through on California’s commitment to high-speed rail can create thousands of jobs in the near term while positioning the state to meet the economic, transportation, energy and environmental challenges of the 21st century. The cost of inaction is great—committing California to more expensive airport expansions, greater reliance on expensive, foreign oil, and dirtier air.”

July 5th. The Peninsula Cities Consortium (Atherton, Belmont, Burlingame, Menlo Park, and Palo Alto) “challenged the California High-Speed Rail Authority to ‘build it right or not at all.’ The cities issued a statement calling on the authority to ‘step back and resolve troublesome issues’ with the rail project days after an independent review uncovered flaws in the ridership projections for the proposed line.” —Gennady Sheyner, “Peninsula Cities Consortium issues high-speed rail challenge: ‘build it right or not at all,’” *The Almanac*, July 6, 2010. <http://bit.ly/aeFbkZ>

July 29th. Jim Wunderman, president of the Bay Area Council, wrote the mayors of the Peninsula Cities Consortium that their stance “that ‘high speed rail should be built right or not at all,’ and that cost analysis should play no role in determining

(continued on next page)

alignment,” was “obstructionist” and poses “grave danger for our state... A small handful of individuals in a small handful of neighborhoods in a small handful of communities raise a seemingly endless series of complaints and objections and threaten to halt the construction of a project of generational significance, and immediate economic survival, for this state and its residents.” (For a copy of the BAC letter, go to <http://bit.ly/a01DHn>)

August 3rd. “Assemblyman Jerry Hill, D-San Mateo, fired off a pointed response, saying the Bay Area Council note reinforced the perception that project supporters were trying to ram the project through without discussion. State Sen. Leland Yee, D-San Mateo, wants the high-speed rail project to be built as quickly as possible [but] took issue with the classification that the cities were obstructionists and noted they had legitimate concerns that need to be heard.” —Mike Rosenberg, “Legislator comes to aid of Peninsula cities targeted by Bay Area business group over high-speed rail opposition,” *San Mateo County Times*, August 3, 2010. <http://bit.ly/dtbo5u>

August 5th. In an all-day Board meeting held in San Francisco, the California High-Speed Rail Authority responded to community priorities for the Bay Area section of the planned rail line. “Based on feedback from more than 30 community meetings in the past four months, the California High-Speed Rail Authority Board agreed to focus its analysis of the San Francisco-to-San José section on alternatives that substantially narrow the right-of-way needed to build the project. The Supplemental Alternatives Analysis adopted by the Authority’s Board of Directors calls for more detailed study of three approaches to creating a four-track system along the Caltrain corridor through the Peninsula to be shared by the two rail systems... The three alternatives to be studied in the Draft Environmental Impact Report call for a combination of at-grade, aerial, trench, and—to a lesser degree—tunnels along different parts of the route... The supplemental alternatives analysis also calls for continued study of station locations in San Francisco (a joint terminal station at Transbay Transit Center and 4th and King), Millbrae, and San Jose, with a potential Mid-Peninsula station located at either Redwood City, Palo Alto or Mountain View.” (For a copy of the Authority’s press release, go to <http://bit.ly/9IvJ3h>)

In essence, “Tunneling was dropped as a Midpeninsula rail option.” (Gennady Sheyner, *Palo Alto Weekly*, August 5, 2010. <http://bit.ly/9iirwU>) The “staff report lists just two design options for the Peninsula segment: one relies on at-grade and aerial structures and another includes tunnels at several portions of the segment. Tunneling is still an option for a stretch in San Francisco, in the Burlingame/Millbrae area and in Santa Clara, where a major station is planned. But in Palo Alto, deep tunnels and covered trenches now appear to be off the table. The only design options recommended by staff engineers are at-grade trains, aerial viaducts, and open trenches, according to a staff summary made public at the meeting.”

August 6th. The California High Speed Rail Authority submitted an application for additional federal funding of \$1 billion for the San Francisco-San José section. The request for funds did not specify the design of the high-speed train project. Separately, representatives from four of the five members of the Peninsula Cities Consortium (Atherton, Belmont, Burlingame, and Menlo Park—Palo Alto was absent) met and agreed to write the Federal Railroad Administration and state and national legislators indicating their opposition to aerial tracks.

August 11th. The Peninsula Rail Program issued a press release clarifying that the High Speed Rail Authority’s funding “application has no bearing on the actual design options” that might be “selected for the project.” While “the application did establish the cost of building a usable section of the high-speed train network between San Francisco and San José” based on a “typical alignment including aerial configurations,” that was done “because such structures are neither the most expensive nor the least expensive. The function of the application is to capitalize on an opportunity to win needed federal dollars and bring this transportation project to the Peninsula.”

August 11th. Ground was broken for the Transbay Transit Center which, among other things, will be one of two northern termini of the CA HSR system. “Over the next several years, this area will be transformed into a modern transportation hub that connects eight Bay-area counties and eleven different transit systems across California. It will soon be possible to get almost anywhere in the Golden State via public transit—by streetcar to Embarcadero, by Muni bus to

(continued on next page)

Balboa Park, by BART up to Oakland, by Caltrain out to Silicon Valley, or by high speed rail to Southern California. And yes, the Transit Center will become home to a major stop on the future high speed rail line that connects San Francisco with Los Angeles and San Diego. The Transit Center is part of a larger redevelopment effort that will breathe new life into the Bay Area and provide people with better transportation, housing, and employment options. It's a true embodiment of the livability principles I talk about so often. To solve some of the biggest challenges facing us today, like urban gridlock, pollution, and inaccessibility ... requires true vision—seeing a town or city not just for what it is, but what it could be.” —*Fast Lane*, the official blog of the U.S. Secretary of Transportation.

<http://bit.ly/9ZMP5v>

August 17th. Redwood City's mayor sent "a scathing letter to the state High Speed Rail Authority board" saying the city had "lost confidence" in the authority's willingness to come to an acceptable solution as to how the tracks will run through the city." He went on to characterize "this past year's collaborative discussions between the authority and Redwood City as 'meaningless exercises'." The city is not one of the five members of the Peninsula Cities Consortium. Burlingame, which is a PCC member, wrote the Federal Railroad Administration "urging them to deny funding to the high-speed rail authority if it moves forward with an elevated track through the city." —*Daily Post*, August 18, 2010.

Stay tuned! ■

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Where in the world?



Photo by Chandler Lee

(Answer on [page 27](#))

What others are saying about houses and housing

“What’s outside the front door is at least as important as what’s behind it. When did ‘rm w/a vu’ turn into Viking range, cathedral ceiling, granite countertop and four-car garage? At what point did the house become more about the future tenant than the current resident? It’s hard to trace the moment, but let’s hope it’s passed. Because for too long, home design has been hijacked by the allure of resale value. Maybe now we can begin again to think of our houses not as investments but as homes.

“The concern for resale value was never more apparent to me than it was a few years ago when I spent nearly a year consulting for a developer of planned communities—like the ones in Phoenix or Orlando or Las Vegas with many foreclosed homes that you now see on the news. The company had asked our team of design consultants to “rethink the way we sell houses.” We interviewed numerous potential home buyers about how they made their purchasing decisions, and learned the extent to which resale concerns dictated people’s choices—about square footage, location, number and type of rooms, brand of appliances, even paint colors.

“What that developer should have asked us to rethink was not the way houses are sold but how they are designed. More than 1.6 million properties went into foreclosure in the first half of 2010. And the decades-long pattern of people moving to new, bigger houses as they got new, higher-paying jobs is in retreat. Now we need to think more sensibly about building houses that people want to stay in.” —Allison Arieff, “Home for Life,” *The New York Times*, August 5, 2010. <http://nyti.ms/9aJtMg>

Homeowners in limbo. “Tens of thousands of Bay Area homeowners are trapped in a bizarre real estate limbo, living in houses but no longer paying for them, waiting and wondering if someone will help them—or throw them out. Some are victims of their own economic circumstances, unable to afford their mortgage and expecting to lose their homes if they can’t get a break from their bank. Others are opportunists, choosing not to spend on a house worth less than they owe. Instead, they can live rent-free until their lender makes a move. It all adds up to lingering instability for the Bay Area housing market, as lenders slowly work through the backlog while homeowners endure uncertainty that could last months or even years. An estimated 40,283 homeowners across a seven-county region spanning the South Bay, East Bay and the San Francisco metro area were at least three months behind on their mortgages but not yet in foreclosure as of April—about 4.5 percent of total

mortgages in those areas. Part of the reason homeowners wind up staying in their homes so long lies with the lending industry. Many companies are overloaded with people who are behind in payments, and financial institutions are hesitant to process thousands of foreclosures at once, because dumping all those properties on the market would lower prices even more.” —Sue McAllister and Eve Mitchell, “Many Bay Area homeowners in real estate limbo,” *Mercury News*, July 25, 2010. <http://bit.ly/dCtPrC>

Chances of reform also in limbo. “Attaining genuine remedies for our housing finance system could actually be harder than rocket science. That’s because it would require an honest dialogue about the role the federal government should play in housing. It also requires a candid conversation about whether promoting home-ownership through tax policy and other federal efforts remains a good idea, given the economic disaster we’ve just lived through. Alas, honest dialogues on third-rail topics like housing have proved to be a bridge too far for many in Washington. So, what we may hear instead about Fannie and Freddie before the elections is a lot of sound and fury signifying a stealthy return to the status quo. Understanding how these companies operated is crucial if we want to avoid repeating the mistakes of our recent past. So, when you hear about Fannie and Freddie reform this fall, remember that we still don’t know the half of it.” —Gretchen Morgenson, “Housing Policy’s Third Rail,” *The New York Times*, August 8, 2010. <http://nyti.ms/ctxmgZ>

If you have a job, read this. If you don’t, read [page 22](#).

“Almost 45 percent of today’s unemployed workers have been without a job for at least 27 weeks. In no other downturn since World War II did the share exceed 26 percent. If anything, the slow-down of the recovery in the last few months ... has put off the day when the job market will be strong enough to re-employ many of the long-term jobless. But inflation has fallen to zero, which helps the purchasing power of everyone fortunate enough to have a job. Since this recession began in December 2007, real average hourly pay has risen nearly 5 percent. Some employers, especially state and local governments, have cut wages. But many more employers have continued to increase pay.” —David Leonhardt, “For those with jobs, a recession with some benefits,” *The New York Times*, August 10, 2010. <http://nyti.ms/bqQee7> ■

Northern California roundup

“Did Marin lose out on BART?” I found this August 7th article in the Marin IJ particularly interesting. I was a Mill Valley resident while this was happening in the early 1960s and served on the Marin Council for Civic Affairs, a citizen organization that concerned itself with—among other things—ameliorating traffic flow on the Golden Gate Bridge with flexible lanes and commuter bus service to San Francisco. I can attest to the article’s veracity (*Ed.*):

“Marin—along with San Francisco, Alameda, Contra Costa and San Mateo counties—was part of the planned service area as BART studies were launched in the 1950s. Maps were drawn for BART in Marin showing stations in Sausalito, Mill Valley, Corte Madera, and Santa Venetia with a possible extension to Ignacio. A 1956 poll found 87.7 percent of Marin residents wanted BART in the county. A 1955 study by the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit Commission found that the Golden Gate Bridge was capable of handling BART trains on a lower deck, and a second study in 1961 affirmed the conclusion. But behind the scenes, plans for BART over the Golden Gate Bridge didn’t sit well with some. Those who led the board were very much opposed to having BART cross the bridge. They hired one of bridge designer Joseph Strauss’ engineers to assess the feasibility of BART on the span. He concluded it would not work, saying the added weight would stress cables and cause the span to sag. Dreams of BART in Marin took another hit when San Mateo County pulled out of the plan, saying costs were too high. With San Mateo out, the tax base to support the BART plan was significantly weakened. Marin’s small population would not provide much tax base to support the project with San Mateo County no longer in the plan. There was a concern that Marin might vote it down, and BART directors asked the Marin County Board of Supervisors to vote the county out of the system. Marin withdrew in May 1962. Without BART, the bridge district later started bus and ferry service to serve Marin commuters.” Read the full article by Mark Prado at <http://bit.ly/c15Pfx>

Seemed like a win-win for Facebook, which moved from downtown Palo Alto to the Stanford Research Park in May. A number of residences face Research Park buildings along California Avenue, and fresh concerns were voiced by residents there and in nearby College Terrace about employee traffic and parking on residential streets. But “a fleet of sleek, black buses designed to cut down on the amount of traffic generated by Facebook’s 1,000 employees has some neighborhood residents begging for relief. The 40-passenger buses circulate most of the day at 2- to 5-minute intervals past

homes on their route to and from company buildings in the Research Park. Facebook added the shuttle service to address residents’ concerns about car-choked neighborhood streets. Now residents are saying the buses have become the very traffic nuisance they were supposed to help eliminate [and] neighbors want Facebook to eliminate the large- and medium-sized buses.” —Sue Dremman, “Neighbors don’t ‘like’ Facebook shuttles,” *Palo Alto Weekly*, July 19, 2010.

<http://bit.ly/cWvbMv>

Oakland uses YouTube to explain zoning. What’s the best way to tell 400,000 residents that their zoning is about to change? YouTube, of course. Oakland is in the final stages of a decade-long effort to overhaul the City’s 1965 zoning code. Faced with budget constraints, a complex subject, and light turnout at community meetings, the City prepared a series of informational videos to help Oaklanders understand the zoning proposals. The videos introduce the concept of zoning, describe the key differences between each district, and explain how to read the zoning maps. To view the videos, go to YouTube.com and type “Oakland Zoning” in the search engine; or follow this link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzJky8yENVU>

Alex Hinds has written to *Northern News* about a new **Sustainable Development and Climate Change Certificate Program** at Sonoma State University that complements the school’s existing certificates in green building and in sustainable landscaping. Classes will meet on the first Saturday of the month starting October 2 and continuing on Saturday November 6, December 4, February 5, March 5, and April 2. **Each one-day course offers 7 units of CM credit.** Classes will be held in the Environmental Technology Center (ETC); parking is available in lot “A” adjacent to the ETC. The parking fee is not enforced on Saturdays. Each course costs \$195, with one book required, for an approximate total cost of \$1,240 to complete the entire certificate program. (The required textbook is “The Sustainable Urban Development Reader,” 2nd Edition, Stephen Wheeler and Timothy Beatley, ISBN 978-0415453820, \$69.95 new; available at the SSU Bookstore and through online booksellers.) Students may register and pay now for those courses offered in the fall semester, or they may enroll and pay for individual sessions. Registration may be completed in-person, by mail, by phone at (707) 664-2394, by fax at (707) 664-2613, or online at www.sonoma.edu/exed. Students are asked to enroll by the Wednesday before the start of the course. Late registration is accepted only on a case-by-case basis. Further information at <http://bit.ly/9D8HhU>. ■

Will we build by the Bay?

In a recent *New York Times* article, Jonathan Weber, editor in chief of *The Bay Citizen*, commented on Peter Calthorpe's newest book:

"He talks of 'whole systems design' and 'climate responsive buildings,' and issues dire warnings about global warming and peak oil and the dangers of our car-based lifestyle. He rejects 'bigger is better' consumerism and advocates nothing less than a 'new configuration for the American Dream.' Yet while his message in 'Urbanism in the Age of Climate Change,' to be published in September by Island Press, might seem tailor-made for the environmentally conscious Bay Area, the real-world developments that Mr. Calthorpe has championed here have hardly met with a warm embrace.

"That's because his version of green development favors megaprojects that create the density needed for efficient mass transit. But these huge developments are anathema to many environmentalists and community activists—and the divisions reflect a growing split among people usually thought to be on the same side.

"The most heated argument surrounds the **Saltworks project in Redwood City**, which involves building some 12,000 housing units on San Francisco Bay salt ponds owned by Cargill... **Alameda Point**, also designed by Mr. Calthorpe, would bring around 4,500 housing units to a decommissioned naval base on the island of Alameda. For Mr. Calthorpe, it's a green, 'transit-oriented' development. For local voters who rejected the plan overwhelmingly earlier this year, it is too big and too damaging to the existing community.

"The Treasure Island project, which would place 8,000 housing units and other development on another former military base in the bay, and the **Hunters Point** development, which would transform the naval shipyard into a large mixed-use community, have also drawn fire."

—Jonathan Weber, "Green developments, and tension aplenty," *The New York Times*, July 2, 2010.

<http://nyti.ms/cDRHhB>

Let's look at what's been happening with each of these developments.

Alameda Point.

Not three weeks after Weber's *New York Times* article, we read:

"Alameda will begin a new search this fall for a developer to transform its former Navy base.

"The city council voted 4-0 to sever its four-year relationship with SunCal, an Orange County developer that had hoped to build 4,800 homes, a 60-acre sports complex,

offices, parks, schools, and a ferry terminal at the former Alameda Naval Air Station, which covers one-third of the island city.

"City staff had recommended parting ways with SunCal because of doubts about the number of jobs the project would bring to Alameda, potential congestion, and the developer's overall financial commitment to the project." —Carolyn Jones, "Alameda to seek new developer for ex-Navy base," *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 22, 2010.

<http://bit.ly/9LLdq4>

"SunCal, which spent nearly \$15 million on planning and community outreach before the plan fell through," sued the city for breach of contract August 4th, "accusing officials of killing the project so they could develop the land themselves." SunCal is asking the court to allow it to go ahead with the plans, but does not ask for monetary damages.

"Despite its breathtaking views of San Francisco and the East Bay hills, Alameda Point is not an easy property to develop. It's a toxic Superfund site due to decades of air-plane and ship repairs performed there, and is in danger of flooding with sea-level rise. It's also home to the California east tern, an endangered species." —Carolyn Jones, "Developer sues to develop Alameda base," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 5, 2010. <http://bit.ly/9IB0cZ>

Redwood City.

"The developer behind plans to build thousands of homes on the Cargill salt flats in Redwood City released partial poll results [August 4th] that show strong support among San Mateo County voters for its project. Here is one of the two survey questions released regarding the Saltworks project:

'The developer of the Industrial Saltworks site has filed a plan with Redwood City to redevelop this 1,400 acre industrial site. The plan is called the 50/50 Balanced Plan. It dedicates 50 percent of the 1,400 acre site for new parks and recreation uses, open space and restored tidal marsh areas. The remaining 50 percent would become a transit oriented community with a range of housing, new schools and businesses. The plan would pay for itself with no new costs to taxpayers.'

- Support: 62 percent
- Oppose: 29 percent
- Undecided: 9 percent

"Unlike a previous survey in April of only Redwood City voters, developer DMB Associates polled residents throughout the county. David Lewis, executive director of Save the Bay, which opposes the project, said the question

(continued on next page)

included ‘a false and incomplete description of the site’ because it did not say it’s on salt ponds or near the Bay. The survey of 600 San Mateo County voters was conducted by Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates between July 10 and 13 and has a margin of error of 4.1 percent.” —Shaun Bishop, “Developer: Poll shows countywide support for Saltworks project in Redwood City,” *Mercury News*, August 5, 2010. <http://bit.ly/aO61uV>

Hunters Point.

San Francisco’s Board of Supervisors this July “overwhelmingly approved a project to turn the abandoned Hunters Point Naval Shipyard into a bustling 700-acre residential and commercial center on the southeast shoreline of San Francisco Bay. Developer Lennar Corp. is in the process of negotiating with lenders to finance the initial home

construction, which could begin later this year. But critics have raised concerns that portions of the federal Superfund site are a long way from being environmentally sound. They also fear the disappearance of the city’s last predominantly black community, citing the displacement of poor black residents during the earlier redevelopment of San Francisco’s Western Addition neighborhood. The 936-acre base, which was closed in 1974, is one of 20 former military sites in California whose high levels of pollution have earned them a spot on the EPA’s National Priorities List. Only one 88-acre parcel of land has been fully transferred to the city, while the rest is still undergoing decontamination work.” —Robin Hindery, “San Francisco approves giant redevelopment project,” *Associated Press*, August 1, 2010. <http://bit.ly/cR7Bkq> ■

From the Redwood Coast

Stephen Avis, AICP, reports on four events attended by APA’s Redwood Coast planners in June and July. On June 8th, five (including Stephen) assembled with brown bags to do what planners do best: plan future events.

On June 24th, a small group toured the historic Eureka Theater, led by members of the all-volunteer group responsible for restoring the 1939 movie house. Restoration of seats, chandeliers, and the main exterior sign is underway. Interior walls built to accommodate two additional screens “during the triplex era” have been removed and the theater now holds over 1,000 seats.

On July 13th, Sara Mosser, a planner at Planwest Partners, spoke about her opportunity to work in the Lower Ninth Ward and Holy Cross neighborhood of New Orleans during her final year in graduate school at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Her work in New Orleans focused on water resources and land use planning following Hurricane Katrina. She showed photographs of her colleagues in different locales, meeting with different groups, and studying the adjacent Bayou Bienvenue in relationship to surrounding neighborhoods. Sara returned to New Orleans this year

to attend the National APA conference. She commented on the differences she saw since her earlier visit.

“Thursday, July 15,” reports Stephen, “was one of the finest weather days ever experienced in Eureka. Our group gathered after work on the Eureka Boardwalk where we were met by

architect Philippe Lapotre, Kneeland, California. He discussed the genesis, planning, and development of the Eureka Boardwalk (a 20-year long process). We walked the Boardwalk to C Street where a new plaza is under construction adjacent to a new Fisherman’s Terminal (also under construction). Both were designed by Mr. Lapotre. The new plaza will be the site of a farmers’ market and can accommodate a large tent for musical and special events. The plaza will open to the public soon, possibly by the time this article goes online. The Fisherman’s Terminal will include unloading and processing facilities for fish, market stalls for the sale of fresh fish, and a café overlooking the harbor. Construction will continue into 2011.”

For information on future Redwood Coast events, see the calendar (9/14; 9/16), [page 24](#), or contact Stephen Avis at savis@ci.fortuna.ca.us ■



The Eureka Theater, 612 F Street, was added to the National Register of Historic Places on January 9, 2010. Credit: EurekaTheater.org

Lessons learned from Prop 16 for California's Clean Energy future

Caroline Teng, Associate Editor

Note: The June 2010 issue of Northern News (<http://bit.ly/aSExj1>) featured an editorial that recommended a “no” vote on Proposition 16 in the June 8th Statewide Direct Primary Election. After the proposition failed, Northern News also ran a news excerpt about the defeat on page 16 of the July/August issue: <http://bit.ly/ayMZl2>

To celebrate the momentous defeat of Proposition 16, which would have imposed a new two-thirds vote requirement for local public electricity providers had it passed on the June ballot, campaign organizers hosted a statewide victory workshop and celebration on August 5, 2010, in San Francisco. The event was sponsored by the No on 16 Campaign Committee, the California Municipal Utility Association (CMUA), the Northern California Power Authority, South San Joaquin Irrigation District, The Utility Reform Network (TURN), the San Francisco Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo), and San Francisco Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi.

Placed on the ballot by Pacific Gas & Electric Co. (PG&E), Prop 16 would have limited the ability of local governments to enter the electricity business and compete with PG&E and other large investor-owned utilities. Despite the fact that PG&E spent approximately \$46 million on its campaign, California voters couldn't be fooled and rejected Prop 16.

The August 5th event convened those from around the State who helped campaign against Prop 16 for a rare opportunity to meet and celebrate in perhaps the most appropriate location: PG&E's hometown, San Francisco, which voted 67.8 percent against the measure.

The two-part event featured an afternoon workshop followed by a victory celebration. Approximately 150 people attended, representing a diverse cross-section of those who worked to defeat Prop 16. The workshop's four panels examined the response to Prop 16 in California and strategies for building a renewable, clean energy infrastructure throughout the state. Notable speakers included San Francisco Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi, Marin County Supervisor Charles McGlashan, former California Energy Commissioner and current Co-Chair of the American Council on Renewable Energy (ACORE) John Geesman, Northern California Power Agency (NCPA) General Manager Jim Pope, and several other leading clean energy advocates from around California.

Considerable discussion centered around the remarkable effectiveness of the grassroots forces and the extraordinary amount of press coverage that helped the cause and distinguished it from other campaigns. At the same time, panelists advocated a regional approach to renewable energy, noting that difficult battles loom for the upcoming November election.

Next steps and common ground projects suggested by the panel discussions included:

- **Support local community choice aggregation (CCA) efforts** (e.g., Marin County and San Francisco).
- **Tackle common barriers.** Demand that PG&E respond to customers, local governments, shareholders, and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) regarding issues raised during the June election about campaign spending; and take a new look at the current rate-setting process among utilities, possibly setting performance-based targets rather than cost-based targets.
- **Coordinate statewide**, but establish greenhouse gas reduction targets locally rather than waiting for the State to set targets. Fight Proposition 23 in the November election.
- **Share lessons learned.**
- **Pool resources.** Use creative methods to share funding, lobbyists, etc.

Panelists concurred that the most challenging next steps will be to establish leadership and secure funding to coordinate regionally.

The closing celebration included an awards ceremony honoring volunteers who played significant roles in the campaign at all levels, including those who mobilized local support, campaign consultants who labored long hours for free, and key political spokespersons such as Senator Mark Leno, who came out strongly against Prop 16. Several San Francisco Board of Supervisor members and representatives from all over California attended the celebration.

Overall, the event not only served as a welcome finale to a hard-won battle, but also helped focus participants' attentions on the important next steps needed to secure a cleaner energy future for the state.

Caroline Teng is community development coordinator for the City and County of San Francisco Local Agency Formation Commission (SF LAFCo) and has been working on the city's community choice aggregation renewable energy program. She can be reached at carolineteng@gmail.com ■

When there are no planning jobs

Christina Ratcliffe, AICP

In these recessionary times, many planners have found themselves without a job as a planner.

Traditionally, planners have relied on their job level (Planner 1, 2, 3, etc.) within a government agency or a consulting firm as proof of their experience and skills, and this has helped them advance in an orderly fashion up the professional ladder.

With budget cuts and stalled development, planning jobs in California are few and far between. Competition for the few jobs available is intense. A recent advertisement for an Associate Planner had over 500 applicants.

Our current situation has changed both the way we look for jobs and what types of jobs we seek. Networking has become more important than ever, as has flexibility in the type of job you are seeking. That requires a focus on the skills you bring, rather than the job title.

Although we cover a wide variety of specializations, as a profession we have many transferable skills. In general, we are good writers and can interpret policy. We have experience dealing with the public and communicating information to a wide range of individuals. We are skilled in different software programs. We know how to read and interpret maps and plans. Are there other jobs (fields) that can use our skills?

I spoke to planners who are in transition to get some ideas to share. We also scanned ads online to find fields and job titles that fit planners' skills. Those fields include government (other than planning), nonprofit organizations, business management, office administration, education, real estate, and writing/editing.

Job titles we found that call for a planner's skill set include political/campaign aide, property/community association manager, real estate appraiser, leasing consultant, public outreach assistant, program/project manager, researcher, analyst, project coordinator, tutor, environmental health specialist, training coordinator, climate information management assistant, and proposal/grant writer.

In transitioning to another career—temporarily or permanently—the important things to remember are—

- focus on your skills;
- be flexible;
- look for positions where you can use your skills;
- be open to looking for something new.

For more tips on finding work in a tight economy, see "Networking to the hidden job market," by career consultant Steve Piazzale (on this page.)

Christina Ratcliffe, AICP, is Northern Section's Co-Professional Development Director. If this was helpful, or if you have other ideas, please contact her at Christina@Ratcliffe.net ■

Networking to the hidden job market

Steve Piazzale, Ph.D.

"It's *who you know*." You've heard that one before, right?

Research tells us that 80 percent of jobs are obtained through personal contacts, yet most job hunters spend 80 percent of their time answering computer job board ads. So what can you do to get that job you want and deserve?

All job seekers or changers need to get out and meet people. Start by making a list of everybody you know who might even remotely help you find out about a job or career in which you're interested. This includes former co-workers, employers, family members, friends, customers, suppliers, vendors, professionals (such as your doctor, lawyer, or accountant), members of your church and alumni—the list is almost infinite.

Once you've made this list and are clear about the kind of work you're pursuing, start contacting these folks and clearly and succinctly tell them what you're looking for. Ask them if they have some time to chat about what they do and your search strategy. It's best not to directly ask for a job because most likely they'll just say they have no openings. Instead ask for information—how to improve your résumé, any additional training you need, specifics about current industry trends, other people you could contact, what meetings you should attend, and what you should be keeping up to date with.

Not everyone will give you new contacts, but slowly and surely you'll build a large network of folks with whom you can stay in touch. The beauty of this is that none of your calls will be cold calls—you're always contacting people using the name of someone they know. This network then becomes your eyes to the "hidden" or emerging job market. By staying in touch with these new contacts, you'll hear about opportunities as they emerge and before they're listed on job boards, giving you first crack at them! Plus your contacts are now beginning to know you and can speak to your qualifications, in essence serving as a reference.

Bottom-line, get out and interact with people, attend professional association and alumni functions as well as other get-togethers. This might be a bit outside your comfort zone, but give it a try even if it's a bit at a time. I think you'll find it's well worth the effort. And remember as Woody Allen once said: "80 percent of success is just showing up."

"Being able to do the job well will not necessarily get you hired; the person who gets hired is often the one who knows the most about how to get hired." —Richard Lathrop, author of "Who's Hiring Who?" (1989, Ten Speed Press)

Steve Piazzale has a Stanford University Ph.D. in sociology with extensive training in psychology, and is a career/life coach. If you are in need of career counseling services, Steve is offering California APA members one hour of coaching at a 50 percent discount. Contact him at

Steve@BayAreaCareerCoach.com.

His website is www.BayAreaCareerCoach.com ■

NORTHERN SECTION CALENDAR

To list an event in the Northern Section calendars (*Northern News*, monthly; *eNews*, every two weeks), go to <https://docs.google.com/Doc?docid=0AexaSG3Vebr9ZGR3Z216d3dfMjNoZjZqcjhrbQ&hl=en> to see the required template (at top of page), the current listings, and where to send your formatted item.

ONGOING

Planning for Healthy Places with Health Impact Assessments. Now through December 31, 2011. A how-to guide for conducting health impact assessments (HIAs), developed by the American Planning Association and the National Association of County & City Health Officials. This online course—available free through a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—will explain the value of and the steps involved in conducting an HIA. To participate, please visit <http://professional.captus.com/Planning/hia/default.aspx>
CM | up to 6.0

Symposium, 1909–2109: Sustaining the Lasting Value of American Planning. This four-hour symposium on May 21, 2009, brought together federal officials, planners, academics, and grassroots advocates to focus on the achievements of America’s first 100 years of planning. See a video of the symposium (free) and earn CM credits. Visit <http://www.planning.org/centennial/symposium/>
CM | 4.0 may be earned by viewing all four parts of the symposium video.

SEPTEMBER

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SEPTEMBER

- 9/7** **Understanding the Salinas Storm Water Development Standards.** 1–5 PM, City Hall Rotunda, 200 Lincoln Avenue, Salinas. A half-day seminar for design professionals. Salinas is a regional leader in developing specific standards that meet new state guidelines for stormwater. Topics include hydromodification, low impact design techniques, best management practices, and their specific application for conformance with the City’s Storm Water Development Standards. To reserve, contact Walter Grant at howardg@ci.salinas.ca.us by September 7, 2010.
CM | 4.0 pending
- 9/9** **APA-AEP mixer.** 5:30–9:30 PM, Jupiter Restaurant, 2181 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, across from Downtown Berkeley BART. Co-sponsors APA and AEP will supply the first few rounds of pizza, you supply the networking. Look for us on the back patio. No reservations needed. For more information, contact Christina Ratcliffe, AICP, Christina@Ratcliffe.net

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SEPTEMBER

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SEPTEMBER *(continued)*

- 9/11 AICP Exam Prep Workshop.** 10 AM–4 PM, San José State University. To register, contact Don Bradley, dr.donbradley@comcast.net or (650) 592-0915.
- 9/14 Redwood Coast Region’s Brown Bag Lunch Series: Humboldt County Regional Trails Master Plan and the Humboldt Coastal Trail Implementation Strategy.** Noon–1 PM, RCAA, 904 G Street, Eureka. Speakers include Kevin Wright, Emily Sinkhorn (NRS/RCAA) and Colette Metz (Planwest Partners). For more information, contact Stephen Avis at (707) 725-1407 or savis@ci.fortuna.ca.us
- 9/16 APA California – Northern, Regular Board Meeting.** 6–9 PM, Sheppard Mullin, Four Embarcadero Center, 17th Floor, San Francisco. RSVP to Hanson Hom at hhom@ci.sunnyvale.ca.us
- 9/16 Redwood Coast RAC Social Mixer.** 5:15 PM. Meet under the statue of President McKinley at Arcata Plaza, Arcata. Socialize with fellow planners at Robert Goodman Wines Tasting Room in Arcata preceded by a walking tour of public art and low-impact development improvements. For more information, contact Stephen Avis at (707) 725-1407 or savis@ci.fortuna.ca.us
- 9/16 Healthy Rural Communities Regional Forum.** 8:30 AM–4:30 PM, River Lodge, 1800 Riverwalk Drive, Fortuna. Learn how rural northern counties are making a difference in creating healthy communities with successes in transportation, food systems, Safe Routes to Schools, and healthy rural development tools. Lunch provided. Sponsored by Humboldt County Health and Human Services, The California Endowment, and the California Center for Rural Policy. RSVP by September 10 to DHHS_TES@co.humboldt.ca.us, or Rebecca Wissing at (707) 441-5520

OCTOBER

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OCTOBER

- 10/1 Presentation on Coastal Water Projects.** 9:30 AM–3:30 PM, Monterey. Addressing the water needs of the Monterey Bay Area is essential to plan for growth and development and resource conservation. This is the 3rd in a series of three panels on water issues in the Monterey Bay Area, and will address the topic of Coastal Water Projects. The panel will be followed by a tour of the Sand City DSAL facility. Series cost: \$80; single event: \$30. Lunch will be provided. To reserve, go to <http://ambag.org/amber/signup.php>. For information, contact Linda Meckel, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments at (831) 883-3750 x304. **CM | 6.0 Pending**

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OCTOBER *(continued)*

- 10/1 Bay Area Planning Directors' Fall Meeting: Best Practices for Greener Site Development.** Low impact development tools to conserve water, protect watersheds, prevent flooding, become more sustainable, and beautify communities. 8:30 AM–1:30 PM at StopWaste.org, 1537 Webster St., Oakland <http://bit.ly/cV3Szo>. \$35 (includes breakfast and lunch). Speakers: Teresa Eade, Bay-Friendly Landscaping; Keith Lichten, SF Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board; and Lynn Simon, FAIA, Simon & Associates. Plus a panel moderated by Charlie Knox, AICP, Benicia, with David Cropper, TMG Partners; Ed Reiskin, Director of Public Works, San Francisco; Peter Schulze-Allen, Emeryville; Scott Taylor, CA Stormwater Quality Association; and Paul Lettieri, The Guzzardo Partnership. Registration deadline: September 27. To reserve, go to www.abag.ca.gov/abag/events/BAPDA/. Cosponsored by APA California Northern, San Francisco Estuary Partnership, and StopWaste.Org. Questions? Contact Dayle Farina, Association of Bay Area Governments, at daylef@abag.ca.gov or (510) 464-7993, or Ceil Scandone at ceils@abag.ca.gov or (510) 464-7961. **CM | 3.0 Pending**
- 10/2 AICP Exam Prep Workshop.** 10 AM–4 PM, San José State University. To register, contact Don Bradley at (650) 592-0915 or dr.donbradley@comcast.net
- 10/2 Global Sustainable Development in the Age of Climate Change.** First of six sessions in a Sustainable Development and Climate Change Certificate Program. 8:30 AM–4:30 PM, Environmental Technology Center, Sonoma State University. \$195 per one-day session. Faculty include Alex Hinds, Valentin Alexeeff, FAICP, and Tom Jacobson, AICP. Registration may be completed in-person, by mail, by phone at (707) 664-2394, by fax at (707) 664-2613, or online at www.sonoma.edu/exed. Students are asked to enroll by the Wednesday before the start of the course. Late registration is accepted only on a case-by-case basis. Further information on [page 18](#) or at <http://bit.ly/9D8HhU>. **CM | 7.0 per one-day session**
- 10/6 San Francisco APA, Walking Tour of Visitacion Valley.** 5:30–7 PM. Meet at Bayshore Boulevard and Blanken Avenue in front of the Schlage Lock Historic Building (walkable from MUNI T-line Arleta Station and Caltrain Bayshore Station). We will visit San Francisco's Redevelopment Area, including the Leland Avenue Street Improvement Project and the award-winning Visitacion Valley Greenway. The tour will be led by San Francisco RDA/Planning/DPW, the Visitacion Valley Greenway Project, and Universal Paragon Corporation. Free to APA members. **Space is limited.** RSVP to Danny Serrano at serranochile@hotmail.com **CM | 1.5 Pending**

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OCTOBER *(continued)*

10/7 YPG presents “Public Engagement in the 21st Century.” 6–8:30 PM, ABAG, MetroCenter, 101 Eighth Street, Oakland. Light appetizers, beer, and wine provided. Do Facebook, Twitter, and Wikipanning only ignite feelings of confusion? YPG will showcase several social media outlets as tools for public engagement in a social atmosphere with opportunities for networking. \$10 APA members, \$15 non-members. **RSVP information to follow.** Contact Natalie de Leon (408) 313-2662 or Lindsey Virdeh (650) 235-5004 for more information.
CM | Pending

10/14 Hold the date for a brown bag session on Sustainable Land Use and Transportation. Co-sponsored by APA and ITE. Confirmed speakers include Ann Cheng of TransForm. Details to follow. Contact Christina Ratcliffe, AICP, Christina@Ratcliffe.net **CM | Pending**

10/23 AICP Exam Prep Workshop. 10 AM–4 PM, San José State University. To register, contact Don Bradley, (650) 592-0915 or dr.donbradley@comcast.net

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NOVEMBER

11/1–11/4 APA California 2010 Conference. La Costa Hotel in Carlsbad. Reservations up to September 10 receive the early registration rate of \$450, which includes all meals throughout the conference. Go to www.calapa.org and click on the conference site for On-line Registration, On-line Room Reservations, Sponsor/Exhibitor opportunities, and the 2010 Exhibitor floor plan. For additional assistance, contact Lynne C. Bynder, CMP, at lbynder@meetingsxceptional.com **CM | up to 32**

11/6 Natural Systems & Environmental Sustainability. Second of six sessions in a Sustainable Development and Climate Change Certificate Program. 8:30 AM–4:30 PM, Environmental Technology Center, Sonoma State University. \$195 per one-day session. Faculty include Alex Hinds, Valentin Alexeeff, FAICP, and Tom Jacobson, AICP. Registration may be completed in-person, by mail, by phone at (707) 664-2394, by fax at (707) 664-2613, or online at www.sonoma.edu/exed. Students are asked to enroll by the Wednesday before the start of the course. Late registration is accepted only on a case-by-case basis. Further information on [page 18](#) or at <http://bit.ly/9D8HhU>.
CM | 7.0 per one-day session

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NOVEMBER *(continued)*

11/9 **APA California – Northern, Regular Board Meeting.** 6–9 PM, ABAG. MetroCenter, 101 Eighth Street, Oakland. RSVP to Hanson Hom at hhom@ci.sunnyvale.ca.us

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DECEMBER

12/3 **APA California Northern’s 2010 Holiday Party.** 6:30–10 PM, East Bay location TBD. Save the date!

12/4 **The Built Environment: Sustainable, Climate Friendly Design.** Third of six sessions in a Sustainable Development and Climate Change Certificate Program. 8:30 AM–4:30 PM, Environmental Technology Center, Sonoma State University. \$195 per one-day session. Faculty include Alex Hinds, Valentin Alexeeff, FAICP, and Tom Jacobson, AICP. Registration may be completed in-person, by mail, by phone at (707) 664-2394, by fax at (707) 664-2613, or online at www.sonoma.edu/exed. Students are asked to enroll by the Wednesday before the start of the course. Late registration is accepted only on a case-by-case basis. Further information on [page 18](#) or at <http://bit.ly/9D8HhU>. **CM | 7.0 per one-day session** ■

Answer to “Where in the world?” ([Page 16](#))

Photo by Chandler Lee

The Thames from St. Paul’s, London, February 2008. You can see more of Chandler Lee’s photos at www.chandlerphotos.smugmug.com