



# NORTHERN NEWS



American Planning Association  
California Chapter  
Northern  
*Making Great Communities Happen*

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

## MAY 2011

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## California Court of Appeal gives sustainable infill development an important victory

By Mark Rhoades, AICP

On March 11, 2011, the California Court of Appeal, First Appellate District, Division Four, handed Citycentric Investments and all of California an important victory in support of an infill project approved by the Berkeley City Council in July 2010. The Alameda County Superior Court ruled in favor of the entitlements granted by the city for Ashby Arts, which is owned by RB Tech Center LP and Citycentric.

Ashby Arts was approved as either a 98-unit market rate (with 15 affordable units) condominium project with ground floor retail space, or a 98-unit affordable senior citizen housing project over retail. The city awarded project-based Section 8 vouchers for the affordable senior project. This sustainable, transit-oriented project has numerous resident and public amenities. It will also provide a new architectural anchor for the southwest gateway to Berkeley at Ashby and San Pablo avenues.



Proposed Ashby Arts infill project  
Source: Citycentric

*(continued on next page)*

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## California Court of Appeal gives sustainable infill development an important victory *(continued from previous page)*

The lawsuit, filed by Steven Wollmer, alleged numerous violations of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), state density bonus law, and City of Berkeley zoning procedures. Wollmer argued that Section 8 vouchers could not be used by a density bonus project because the developer would actually receive more money than what a tenant would pay, and that the city erroneously calculated the number of density bonus units to which the project was entitled based on Berkeley's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

Wollmer's CEQA argument alleged that the project could not be a Class 32 Urban Infill Exemption for several reasons. First, he argued that an offer of land dedication that would allow the city to rectify an existing traffic problem amounted to a de facto mitigation measure that should have been studied under CEQA. Second, that the location of the project at two major crossroads was an exceptional circumstance that eliminated the ability to use an exemption. Third, the traffic study methodology for the project was flawed. Finally, Wollmer argued that because the project received development standard waivers to accommodate the density bonus, it was no longer consistent with Berkeley's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. Therefore, it could not be exempt from CEQA.

In a growing number of communities across the state, CEQA became a tool of choice by anti-infill groups to challenge new housing in urban areas. This has resulted in spending more time and money in developing housing and further increased of the already high cost of housing in California. In apparent frustration with the manner in which Wollmer—and perhaps NIMBYs in general—have taken to using CEQA to delay appropriate infill development, the Court of Appeal sharply worded its decision disagreeing with Wollmer on all counts.

In a move that will help implement SB 375 and clear CEQA obstacles statewide for sustainable infill development, the California Court of Appeal granted the petition to publish the decision of *Wollmer v. City of Berkeley/R.B. Tech Center L.P.* on March 30, 2011. The court decision is available at their website. <http://1.usa.gov/ePOz8H>

The decision is an important land use case for infill development. In Berkeley, these lawsuits have increased the costs of an already difficult and expensive development process. They have discouraged the development of new housing along transit corridors and in the downtown, working counter to the goals set by local, regional, and state voter-approved climate action and planning initiatives.

The two most significant points of publication are cities' ability to grant Project-Based Section 8 Certificates in conjunction with a project receiving a density bonus. The court affirmed the determination

*(continued on next page)*

## NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

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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* 10 times each year in PDF for the exchange of planning ideas and information. Current and back issues are available for download at <http://bit.ly/9YpPxS/>. Entirely the effort of volunteers, the *News* is written and produced by and for urban planners in Northern California. Circulation (downloads per issue) averages 6,000.

*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.

Deadlines for submitting materials for inclusion in *Northern News* range from the 12th to the 16th of the month prior to publication. The 2011 schedule can be viewed at <http://bit.ly/dHlgyM>

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## California Court of Appeal gives sustainable infill development an important victory *(continued from previous page)*

that what a low-income tenant is required to pay in rent is not the same as the rent compensation received by the developer. In addition, court affirmed that the use of a Class 32 Categorical Exemption in conjunction with a density bonus project is appropriate and that aspects of a project requiring waivers and modifications are not "applicable standards" for zoning or general plan conformance.

Publication of the entire decision has even broader implications for local agencies' use of state density bonus law and CEQA exemptions in conjunction with appropriate infill development projects. These include that a proposed project, including its amenities and design features, are subject to the waivers and modifications of zoning standards pursuant to density bonus law. In addition, the decision clarifies that features proposed and studied as a part of a development project, which might also serve to reduce environmental impacts, are not considered mitigation measures requiring greater CEQA review.

The successful legal defense was prepared by the City of Berkeley City Attorney's Office and Cox, Castle, Nicholson of San Francisco, with assistance by Citycentric. For more information about Ashby Arts, please visit their website. [www.citycentric.net](http://www.citycentric.net)

*Northern News* featured a piece on this subject also by Mark Rhoades, AICP, as a lead article in the November 10, 2010 issue, see "*Sustainable infill development—a planner/developer's perspective*" at <http://bit.ly/fsJLkt>

Mark Rhoades has 20 years of experience as a land use planner in both public and private sectors. From 1998 until August 2007, he served as the Land Use Planning Manager for the City of Berkeley, overseeing the review and processing of development proposals. In 2007, he joined Citycentric Investments, LLC as partner. He can be reached at [mrhoades@citycentric.net](mailto:mrhoades@citycentric.net) ■

## JOB AD

### APA CALIFORNIA NORTHERN SECTION Web Designer

The APA California Northern Section requests proposals for on-going web design and maintenance services to support the [www.norcalapa.org](http://www.norcalapa.org) website. Individuals or firms with experience in web design, including graphic design, web site architecture, html, animated images and graphics, and PayPal features required. Site is currently updated using Dreamweaver. All Dreamweaver and Fireworks files will be available. Website information including calendar listings, sponsor information, job postings, newsletter postings and other information is frequently updated by the incumbent within a 4-day lead time. Web designer will provide Northern Section Board with updates on volume of visitor traffic and number of newsletter downloads.

Please submit all enquiries to Pierce MacDonald, [piercemac@hotmail.com](mailto:piercemac@hotmail.com)



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## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

By *Hanson Hom, AICP*



Our section was proud to co-sponsor the **Tsunami Relief Wine and Cheese Fundraiser** on April 13 to benefit the Japanese and local victims of the catastrophic Japan earthquake and tsunami that devastated a country and also impacted several California communities. This event, also sponsored by the Association of Environmental Professional (AEP) San Francisco Chapter, was held at Il Fornaio Restaurant in San Francisco. All proceeds will be donated to the relief effort. Thank you to **Brain Soland**, San Francisco Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) chair, for assisting in organizing this event and especially to everyone who attended this worthwhile fundraiser.

Join me in welcoming two new board directors and extending my best wishes to several departing directors. First, much appreciation to **Ladd Miyasaki** and **Jane Wardani** for their excellent contributions to the Northern Section as the North Bay RAC chair and East Bay RAC co-chair, respectively. Thank you for organizing fun and informative events for North Bay and East Bay planners. Please welcome **Kristine Gaspar**, new North Bay RAC chair, and **Andy Waggoner**, new East Bay RAC co-chair, who also spearheaded the section's recently launched mentorship program. Welcome back **Joanna Jansen, AICP**, our other East Bay RAC co-chair, who took a short hiatus to enjoy being a new mom. Please contact them to make suggestions or help out on future events.

The section once again received a large number of competitive nominations for this year's APA Northern Section Planning Awards. Awardees will be announced shortly and will be recognized at our **Annual Awards Banquet** on May 20 at Scott's Seafood Restaurant in Oakland. Reserve online via PayPal, <http://bit.ly/i7fgUM>. Please attend the event to acknowledge the excellent planning work occurring in our section. Awardees can continue on for consideration of an APA California Chapter award. Chapter awards will be highlighted at the state conference in September, and Northern Section projects and plans have always been well represented.

Finally, many of you are following the regional planning efforts being led by the metropolitan planning organizations to prepare a **Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)** to comply with SB 375 and to meet 2035 statutory targets for reducing greenhouse gas

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

emissions from vehicles and accommodating projected housing needs. The SCS will influence the next eight-year Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) and funding priorities for metropolitan and regional transportation plans. For the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area, the Association of Bay Area Governments and Metropolitan Transportation Commission are leading the effort. For Monterey Bay, Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties, the Association of Monterey Bay Governments will prepare the SCS based on its just released draft blueprint. These planning efforts will influence the future of land use and transportation planning in California, and planners can stay informed and help shape the SCS for these two regions. See [www.OneBayArea.org](http://www.OneBayArea.org) and [www.ambag.org](http://www.ambag.org) for more information. ■

## Where in the world?



Photo by Juan Borrelli, AICP (Answer on page 9)

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## Plan-it sustainably *By Sustainability Committee*

Considering the overload of material available about sustainability planning, The Sustainability Committee decided to highlight a few new and innovative resources and programs available on the Web, to help you focus your reading. These touch on various subjects, indicating the breadth of collaboration communities need to engage in to achieve sustainability. We hope you find something of interest in the list below.

### Earth Policy Institute

*World on the Edge: How to Prevent Environmental and Economic Collapse* by Lester R. Brown. Go to <http://bit.ly/905tPk> to download a free PDF copy.

Also read Brown's earlier book, *Plan B—Mobilizing to Save Civilization*, OR watch new PBS documentary airing in April as one episode of the new series *Journey to Planet Earth*. Local show times are posted about two weeks ahead of airing, <http://to.pbs.org/hovpXn> and watch the full show via streaming online at <http://to.pbs.org/fk8mPR/> Web streaming is free during April.

### Urban Leaders Adaptation Initiative

- Lessons Learned on Local Climate Adaptation from The Urban Leaders Adaptation Initiative <http://bit.ly/eBJr12>
- The Value of Green Infrastructure for Urban Climate Adaptation <http://bit.ly/gcvEEx>

### Architecture 2030

"2030's mission is to rapidly transform the U.S. and global Building Sector from the major contributor of greenhouse gas emissions to a central part of the solution to the climate change, energy consumption, and economic crises."

*The 2030 Challenge for Planning—A Carbon Neutral Built Environment by 2030!* <http://bit.ly/i1BqH0>

### Fact Sheets for Geeks

- How 38 Local Governments Fund Sustainability Staff and Operations, ICLEI <http://bit.ly/gUUjs6>
- Sustainability and Operations, National Transportation Operations Coalition <http://bit.ly/htrqH2>

The sustainability website for APA California—Northern is under development. Look for more resources soon. Please feel free to send questions, comments, or ideas to [katja.irvin@sbcglobal.net](mailto:katja.irvin@sbcglobal.net) ■





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## Northern California roundup

### Pilot program encourages walking and biking in Marin County.

Marin County was one of four communities selected to be part of a federally funded, Nonmotorized Transportation Program. The goal of the program is to assess whether making it easier and safer for people to get around on bikes or on foot would actually get them out of their cars.

The \$25 million grant has financed physical improvements as well as planning activities for the future. The program already contributed paying for reopening Cal Park tunnel, bike paths along Alameda del Prado in Novato and Los Ranchitos Road in San Rafael.

“A recent survey of the project’s impact reflects a 46 percent increase in people riding their bikes since 2007, when the project of bike lane construction and pedestrian improvements got its start. Between 2009 and 2010, there was a 29 percent increase in the count of weekday bike trips. Marin’s impressive survey results reflect a trend of more people riding their bikes to their jobs, to school or to run errands instead of using their cars.

“Marin’s survey results show that such improvements—and a growing green awareness—are encouraging Marin residents to get out of their cars and walk or pedal. That’s a choice that is healthier for them, and for our environment.” —*Marin Independent Journal Editorial*, April 11, 2011. <http://bit.ly/ekRfpl>

**U.S. Army agrees to land swap deal in Dublin.** “The Army agreed to transfer 180 acres off Dublin Boulevard, the largest land exchange in Army Reserve history. In return, SunCal, a developer, will build \$80 million in new facilities and upgrade infrastructure at the base that dates back to the 1940s.

“Talks for the land transfer date back to 2002 with the Army looking for ways to upgrade its facilities without the use of taxpayer dollars. Federal law prohibits the Army from selling its land to raise money for improvements.

“SunCal agreed to construct a new main gate, base police administrative building, maintenance support building, medical training facility, Army Reserve training facility and a public works/logistics warehouse, and to make various road and utility improvements. In exchange for building the facilities, portions of the land will be turned over to SunCal for it to develop a residential, commercial and retail community.

“Each of five phases is expected to take up to two years to complete and the upgrades to the base are expected to help the Army house and train thousands of military personnel, including the relocation of the Non Commissioned Officers Academy that is relocating from Fort Lewis in Washington to Camp Parks in October.” —*Contra Costa Times*, Robert Jordan, April 7, 2011. <http://bit.ly/g7P1HX>

### Contra Costa County clears a barrier for new wind turbines.

“The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors cleared a barrier to new wind turbines by easing a setback restriction that could have

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## Northern California roundup *(continued from previous page)*

blocked some of the big new machines proposed along Vasco Road south of Brentwood.

“In revamping the county’s wind power ordinance for the first time since 1985, the board agreed to provide flexibility to a strict setback requirement dictating the size of safety buffer zones to separate turbines and public roads.

“Under a rule passed in an era of smaller turbines, the wind machines must be placed away from roads a distance at least three times the height of the turbine. Under the new rule approved 5–0, the county can allow exceptions if the variance doesn’t endanger public safety, and if the exception increases power generating capacity or reduces risks that hawks and eagles would be hit by whirling turbine blades.

“County planners said the old, strict rule could unnecessarily restrict wind industry plans to replace smaller, less efficient turbines with larger, modern machines in the wind-swept corridor along Vasco Road.”

With the change in setback requirements, wind turbine operators are ready to replace old turbines with new ones. NextEra, which supplies renewable energy to PG&E, plans to replace 438 turbines with 34 new ones and to go before the county Planning Commission in May. “Tres Vaqueros proposes removing 91 old turbines and replacing them with 21 modern ones.

“Brad Olson, environmental programs manager for the East Bay Regional Park District, asked supervisors to postpone their vote so his agency could determine if the proposed new wind turbines would have visual or noise impacts on the Vasco Caves Regional Preserve, where guided tours are held to view ancient Indian cave drawings. County officials said those concerns can be considered when the wind farm projects are reviewed.” —*Contra Costa Times*, Denis Cuff, April 6, 2011.

<http://bit.ly/eyJTqH>

**Regional tax measure for wetland restoration?** The San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority (Authority), created in 2008, is a regional government agency charged with raising and allocating resources for the restoration, enhancement, protection, and enjoyment of wetlands and wildlife habitat in the San Francisco Bay and along its shoreline.

One of the ways to fund restoration of the San Francisco Bay is through special assessments or taxes, and the Authority is considering a parcel tax in the eight counties in the Bay Area. The tax will likely be in the range of \$20 to \$80 on each parcel depending on polling results. Dick Spotswood says that “it’s a poorly timed plan to fund a worthy goal, and the measure should be delayed indefinitely.”

The measure could be on a ballot as early as 2012 in each of eight counties in the Bay Area. An aggregate majority vote in the eight counties is required for passage. If this measure is passed, it will be the third such regional measure. And, it will be the first region-wide parcel tax. —*Marin Independent Journal*, Dick Spotswood, March 29, 2011.

<http://bit.ly/eLWMit>

*(continued on next page)*



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## Northern California roundup *(continued from previous page)*

### Lessons learned from the Fruitvale transit-oriented development.

“Five years ago, more than 20 percent of our commercial office space was vacant, and 5,500 square feet of retail (four of the 23 retail spaces) were unoccupied according to Jeff Pace, chief operating officer of the Unity Council, the development’s prime driver. Retail is the Achilles’ heel of some transit-oriented developments (TODs), as New Urban Network reported in a December 2006 about Fruitvale Village.

“Between 2006 and 2009, the nonprofit Unity Council, through its Fruitvale Development Corporation, filled nearly all the vacant storefronts, Pace says. As of this February 94 percent of the retail space was occupied, and another 3 percent was on the verge of lease execution. Another component of the project—referred to by Pace as community service commercial space —has been largely filled by the Westcoast Children’s Clinic and ARISE High School, which together occupy 32,000 square feet.” The development’s 114,000 sq. ft. of community services also includes a library and a senior center. The residential component consists of 47 units of mixed-income housing. Phase II of the Village calls for constructing 275 mixed-income housing units on BART parking lots nearby.”

New Urban Network lists five keys for creating a successful TOD. First, “Retail needs to be where people are.” Second, “Retail needs to be supported by either dense housing or dense jobs, preferably both.” Third, “don’t build too much retail too soon.” Fourth, “mix retail and services.” Fifth, “Recruit quality retailers.” —*New Urban Network*, Robert Steuteville, March 23, 2011. <http://bit.ly/gLGLb4> ■

### Answer to “Where in the world?” *(Page 5)*

World Market Center, S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas (about two miles north of The Strip, which is to the lower left in this photo). The three buildings (one at 10 stories and two at 16) have over 5 million sq. ft. of space and 900 furniture and furnishings showrooms. The I-15 freeway runs north-south behind the center.

*Photo by Juan Borrelli, AICP*

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# RAC report: Land use and climate change panel discussion

By Surachita Bose, AICP

A clarion call to planners to address the climate change and land use connection has been sounding for a few years now. California has been leading the charge since the passage of SB 375 and the ongoing Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) efforts in regions across the state. At the local level, several cities and counties in the Bay Area are either starting or are already in the process of developing their climate action plans (CAP) and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) initiatives to address the challenge of reducing GHG emissions. However, the complex regulatory structure and policy guidelines have been evolving rapidly and it has been a 'learn as you go' ride for most planners.

On Wednesday evening, March 30, the Peninsula RAC hosted a panel discussion on this timely topic at Redwood City Downtown Public Library. Approximately 25 planners, sustainability professionals, and students gathered in the library's community room to network and learn from fellow professionals. The goals were to deconstruct climate action plans and associated CEQA guidelines and learn from experienced experts.

The panelists were Deborah Nelson, Michael McCormick, and Sigalle Michael (see bios below). Hanson Hom, community development director for the City of Sunnyvale, served as the moderator. The panelists shared their knowledge and understanding of this complex topic. The discussion that ensued shed light on key challenges faced by municipalities, lessons learned, and resources available to local agencies. The audience raised questions regarding the methodology for integrating a CAP into a General Plan, addressing emissions from existing development, monitoring tools for measuring success of CAP policies, and available sources of grant funding for CAP projects. The event sparked a lot of discussion regarding the need for clear guidelines and easy-to-use resources that simplify the CAP process.

The event was funded by APA California—Northern and was eligible for 1.5 CM credits. Thanks to *Sunnyvale Cool Cities* for providing their resources to record the event. A recorded version of the discussion will be made available on *YouTube* and in CD format.

### Panelists' bios:

**Deborah Nelson** serves as the planning manager at the City of San Carlos. Under Deborah's leadership, the City's 2009 General Plan and integrated Climate Action Plan were completed and have been recognized and awarded regionally for innovation and vision.

**Michael McCormick** serves as the climate change and sustainability services manager at PMC Consulting and is the Bay Area lead for the Climate Change Services Group at PMC. Michael has extensive experience working on climate action plans, greenhouse gas inventories, and energy related projects throughout California and is a well-recognized expert in the field.

**Sigalle Michael** serves as the senior environmental planner for the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). Sigalle is the lead staff on the Air District's CEQA guidelines and also works on a range of climate protection projects. ■

# HSR notes

Assembled and reported by Janet Palma, MS, AICP

*The latest news this week related to High-Speed Rail (HSR) relates to funding that Florida rejected, California applied for, but many other states want. With Congress slated to vote on the budget on April 13, \$38 billion in cuts may spell delays for California's HSR line and perhaps the BART extension into San Jose. Meanwhile travelers in China, Japan, France and several other countries can hop onto sleek bullet trains and race between cities at 150 to 220 miles per hour, zipping past clogged highways and bypassing airport problems.*

**March 24.** "The California High-Speed Rail Authority's east Gilroy station option will be studied despite protests from residents and a Santa Clara County agency dedicated to preserving agricultural land. Questions on whether the city of Gilroy should include the east station proposal along with the downtown option in a 'visioning process' study were raised ... When asked if LAFCO could do anything to stop the east Gilroy station from being considered, Gilroy's planning director, David Bischoff, said no. 'The High-Speed Rail Authority has the ability to place the station wherever they want,' he said. The city would review the visioning process once it's complete and send a recommendation to the rail authority. Still, the station location would be up in the air, he said. 'We don't get the final decision,' Bischoff said." —Mark Powell, "Plans to study east rail station still on track," *Morgan Hill Times*, March 24, 2011. <http://bit.ly/e210KJ>

**March 25.** "DesertXpress, a proposed \$6 billion high-speed rail line that would link Las Vegas with Victorville, Calif., cleared another major hurdle Friday with the Federal Railroad Administration's release of its final environmental report on the route. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood announced the completion of the environmental impact statement, a document that was reviewed by five federal agencies, during a press conference at UNLV's Science and Engineering Building. The project is important because of the jobs it would provide. Sen. Harry Reid said DesertXpress would bring 35,000 jobs to Clark County alone with construction, operation as well as suppliers and vendors for the project. Several thousand more jobs are expected to be created in Southern California once the project begins." —Richard N. Velotta, "DesertXpress high-speed rail project rolls forward," *Las Vegas Sun*, March 25, 2011. <http://bit.ly/hPCEJ2>

**March 28.** "High-speed rail may come to Merced sooner than expected, as the California High Speed Rail Authority will announce today it's asking for \$1.2 billion in funding that was rejected by Florida. If the request is approved, it would mean the first phase of track will run from Merced to Bakersfield. Also, instead of building a station just in downtown Fresno, stations will be built in Merced and Bakersfield. The authority is also looking at building a station in Tulare County. 'This is very good news for Merced,' said Mayor Bill Spriggs on Sunday afternoon. 'The City Council has always supported high-speed rail. We were disappointed when the Corcoran-to-Borden route

was announced.' 'If we get a portion of Florida's money, we'll be able to complete the entire backbone of the project,' Jeff Barker, deputy director of the rail authority, told the Sun-Star Friday." —Keith A. Jones, "High-speed rail: First phase could run to Merced after all," *Merced Sun-Star*, March 28, 2011. <http://bit.ly/gT6Ja6>

**April 7.** "Fresno and Tulare are among seven California cities with access to funding intended for development around high-speed rail station. Merced, Bakersfield, San Jose, Gilroy and Palmdale are also in the running for funding agreements that might help cities in their planning efforts for half-mile areas surrounding the proposed stations. 'The City of Fresno is pleased to apply for station-area planning funding,' said Fresno Mayor Ashley Swearingen in a press release. 'High-speed rail is a tremendous opportunity for the Central Valley and will create thousands of good jobs for Central Valley residents.'" —Business Journal Staff, "Rail authority calls to cities for station funding," *The Business Journal*, April 7, 2011. <http://bit.ly/helgWm>

**April 12.** "In another swift blow to California's \$43 billion high-speed rail plan, federal officials Tuesday stripped all funds for the mega-project this year—casting more doubt on the bullet train line's extension into the Bay Area and Southern California. Officials in Washington had said Monday that President Barack Obama and Congressional leaders had cut this year's high-speed rail budget from \$2.5 to \$1 billion during Friday's deal to avert a government shutdown. Tuesday, officials eliminated the final \$1 billion, erasing all subsidies for local high-speed rail projects, including California's 520-mile line from San Francisco to Los Angeles. The key question now: How will the state find the money to extend the project into the Bay Area—where the tracks would run along the Caltrain line between San Francisco and San Jose—and Southern California? Without extra money, a \$5 billion stretch of tracks will sit in the Central Valley, with no bullet trains or riders. California High-Speed Rail Authority officials said Tuesday they expect to get a chunk of the Florida money later this year to tide them over. A new project funding plan is due to the state Legislature this fall. 'It'll slow the project down, which doesn't make any sense,' said South Bay transportation expert Rod Diridon, former member of the California High-Speed Rail Authority board. 'It's going to cause the overall national system to be delayed, but I don't think it's a death knell by any means.'" —Mike Rosenberg, "Elimination of U.S. high-speed rail funds endangers California's project," *The Oakland Tribune*, April 12, 2011. <http://bit.ly/h6x2cw>

*Janet Palma, MS, AICP, works in Environmental Health Services for the San Francisco Department of Public Health and is Principal at J. Palma & Associates, an environmental planning concern. She currently serves on the City of San Leandro Board of Zoning Adjustments as the At-Large member. You can contact her at [janetpalma@comcast.net](mailto:janetpalma@comcast.net)* ■



## Onward and upward

**Andy Waggoner** was appointed to the Northern Section board as the new East Bay Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) Co-Chair for APA California—Northern. He replaces Jane Wardani.



Andy earned his bachelor's in Environmental Studies from the University of Colorado at Boulder and a master's degree in Urban Planning and Policy from the University of Illinois at Chicago. He recently spearheaded the Northern Section's pilot Mentorship Program, matching over 25 mentees with experienced planning mentors. His current work explores the nexus between land use planning, transportation policy, and greenhouse gas reduction strategies. He enjoys discovering the wilds of Oakland with his wife, daughter, and dog. ■

## LETTERS

Nice job on the *Northern News* and creating an on-line magazine out of a newsletter!

**Scott Edmondson, AICP**

As always, amazing job on the newsletter—the new format is so 21st century!

**Michael McCormick, AICP** ■

## CPF sustainability walking tour: Sacramento

California Planning Foundation is organizing two walking tours, and one of them will be held in Northern California. Join this walking tour that explores the renaissance occurring in Downtown Sacramento featuring green buildings and mixed-use/adaptive reuse projects led by the planners, architects, and developers. The tour will be led by Tom Pace (City of Sacramento), Jim McDonald (City of Sacramento), Leslie Fritzsche (City of Sacramento), Greg Taylor (City of Sacramento), Architect Ron Vrillakas (Heller Pacific), Kristin Leon (Heller Pacific), and Mollie Nelson (Heller Pacific).

The tour meets at Sacramento Valley Amtrak Station, 401 "I" Street, Sacramento at 8:45 AM and concludes at 4:00 PM, followed by a planner mixer at L Wine Bar.

All funds collected from this program will be used for California Planning Foundation scholarships. Cost: \$100 for APA members and \$35 for students. Lunch is not included with your registration. 6 CM credits pending. Space is limited. Register today at <http://bit.ly/glu4lc> to guarantee your spot. For more information and full agenda, visit [www.californiaplanningfoundation.org](http://www.californiaplanningfoundation.org) or contact Linda F. Tatum at [ltatum@cityofinglewood.org](mailto:ltatum@cityofinglewood.org) ■

## High school diversity program needs your help

By Miroo Desai, AICP

Oakland International High School has started an internship program that seeks to provide an opportunity for their students (who are typically children of recent immigrants) to work alongside professionals and learn basic work skills. As a part of this, Rebecca Huang, a counselor and teacher, is starting a new, three-week course called *Reaching for Your American Dream* to take place from May 31–June 15.

Huang is soliciting business professionals to assist with this program by offering job shadowing and/or short internship experiences for one to three students at a time. Another option available is to host a site visit of approximately 25 students giving them a glimpse into the business world.

Last month Jillian Rich and I gave a talk at this school about planning and found the students to be extremely bright and enthusiastic. This is a great opportunity to participate and help out. If you are interested in inspiring these high school students or want to know more about this program, please contact Miroo Desai at [mdesai@ci.emeryville.ca.us](mailto:mdesai@ci.emeryville.ca.us) or (510) 596-3785. ■

## What others are saying

**National energy approach morphs.** “In just over two years in the White House, President Obama has seen the major elements of his energy and climate-change strategy demolished by a succession of economic, political, technical, and natural disasters. The plan depended on an expansion of offshore oil drilling and nuclear power generation, creation of a trillion-dollar market in carbon pollution credits, billions of dollars of new government spending on breakthrough technologies, and a tolerance for higher energy prices by consumers and businesses. [And the] Republican majority in the House [opposes] any energy policy that does not begin with a major expansion of domestic coal production and oil and gas exploration. What is left [is] a two-pronged strategy of discouraging dirty, old energy sources through regulation and encouraging clean, new technologies by heavy spending on innovation. Cap and trade has morphed into a ‘clean energy standard,’ under which 80 percent of electricity in the United States would be generated from clean sources by 2035.” —John Broder, “An Energy Plan Derailed by Events Is Being Retooled,” *The New York Times*, March 31, 2011. <http://nyti.ms/g5e12o>

**33% of energy from renewable sources by 2020.** “A proposal by Sen. Joe Simitian, D-Palo Alto, to require California utilities to obtain a greater share of their electricity from renewable sources is now one signature away from becoming the law of the land.

Simitian’s proposal, known as Senate Bill 2X, passed the Assembly on March 29 by 55–19 and is now heading to Gov. Jerry Brown for final approval. The bill cleared the state Senate in February. Simitian’s bill would require utilities to obtain 33 percent of their electricity from renewable energy sources such as solar, wind or geothermal technology by 2020. Currently, the utilities are required to meet a 20 percent target for renewable energy by 2020. ‘This bill establishes California as the national leader in clean energy, improving the environment and stimulating the economy, while protecting ratepayers from excessive costs,’ Simitian said in a prepared statement after the Assembly vote.

Simitian has tried to raise the renewable-energy standards in the past only to see his bill vetoed by former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. The new bill would also allow utilities to get exemptions from the California Public Utility Commission if the costs of acquiring renewable energy or plugging into the state’s power grid prove too steep.

The new law would apply to both investor-owned utilities such as PG&E and to municipal utilities like Palo Alto’s. The city already has a goal of getting 33 percent of its electric load from renewable sources by 2015. In his statement, Simitian expressed optimism that the rising costs of fossil fuels and the growing demand for energy would continue to make renewable sources more viable. He also said the new mandate will encourage green energy providers to come to California. ‘Senate Bill 2X sends a signal to renewable energy providers that California wants them here,’ Simitian said. ‘They will respond, as they have in the past, with billions of dollars in investments that will provide jobs and tax revenues.’ —Gennady Sheyner, “Simitian’s green-energy bill clears Legislature,” *Palo Alto Weekly* online, March 29, 2011. <http://bit.ly/iFrXpM>

### **RDA projects needed more than ever in vulnerable communities.**

“As an urban planning scholar who grew up in a blighted area, East Los Angeles’ Ramona Gardens housing project, I am against Gov. Jerry Brown’s plan to eliminate the California Redevelopment Agency and raid its coffers. If Brown prevails, we will also see the demise of Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles...

The state budget, however, should not be balanced on the backs of the less fortunate—those who directly benefit from public redevelopment agencies to revitalize their communities. This includes racial minorities, immigrants and other working class people who live in blighted communities in desperate need of urban redevelopment efforts. In general terms, public redevelopment agencies exist to meet the needs of the public where the private markets fail. While individual entrepreneurs and corporations respond to profits and the bottom line, public redevelopment officials and agencies, in theory, respond to the public interest. Since it’s not in the self-interest of private-market actors to create public parks, community facilities and affordable housing units in America’s barrios and ghettos, there’s a great need for redevelopment agencies to meet the public’s needs...

Too often, unfortunately, the improvement of blighted communities translates into gentrification, where outsiders displace long-term residents, especially in areas where Latinos and African Americans reside. This needs to stop. We should find creative ways to improve the physical environment in poor communities without forcing out those individuals and families with the least resources to relocate... In short, the public should fully support redevelopment agencies at the local and statewide level under the condition that those in power serve in the public interest, instead of the status quo. —Alvaro Huerta, “Gov. Brown shouldn’t balance the state budget on the backs of California’s most vulnerable citizens by eliminating public redevelopment agencies,” *UCLA Daily Bruin*, March 27, 2011. (*Alvaro Huerta is a doctoral candidate at UC Berkeley and a visiting scholar in the Chicano/a Studies department at UCLA. He is a recent award winner at the Northern Section, California chapter, and national level, where he won the 2011 Advancing Diversity & Social Change in Honor of Paul Davidoff.*) <http://bit.ly/hsVi6k>

**Affordable housing quotas addressed in bill.** Some likely would have preferred that Assemblyman Jared Huffman propose legislation that would exempt Marin from state affordable housing quotas. They question why the county needs to make room for such housing, especially near where they live. But Huffman has taken a prudent approach, one that doesn’t let Marin off the hook for helping meet the Bay Area’s need for affordable housing. Instead, his legislation addresses the one-size-fits-all state formulas that make it difficult for local cities and towns to find ways to meet their quotas. AB 1103 is a much-needed step in the right direction, including toward more reasonable guidelines... In short, his bill seeks to help communities do their fair share by applying some much-needed common sense to the bureaucratic quotas and making them easier to attain.

—“Huffman’s affordable housing bill makes sense,” *Marin Independent Journal*, April 10, 2011. <http://bit.ly/gkmvQK> ■

# NORTHERN SECTION CALENDAR

To list an event in the Northern Section calendars (*Northern News*, monthly; *eNews*, every two weeks), go to <http://bit.ly/ed1Ekc> to see the required template (at top of page), the current listings, and where to send your formatted item.

## ONGOING

**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://bit.ly/ekrzEY>

**CM | 4.0 may be earned by viewing all four parts of the symposium video**

**Planning for Healthy Places with Health Impact Assessments.** Through examples and activities, this "how-to" guide explains the value of health impact assessments and outlines the steps involved in conducting one. The course was developed by the APA and the National Association of County & City Health Officials. See a video and earn CM credits. **Free.** The video is available through **December 31, 2011.**

<http://bit.ly/2ZH32W>

**CM | 6.0 may be earned by viewing all course materials and taking an exam**

## APRIL

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## APRIL

4/28

**Infilling California, Seminar 4: Creative Financial Tools and Techniques for Infill.** 6:30 PM–8:15 PM, Wurster Auditorium, UC Berkeley. **Free**, no registration necessary. Some infill sites lack sufficient road capacity or transit service. Infrastructure may be undersized or deteriorated. This seminar focuses on regional and local financial strategies used to support the installation of transit infrastructure, street and pedestrian improvements, utilities, and open-space facilities essential for successful infill development. Sponsored by the Center for a Sustainable California and IURD, and co-sponsored by the Urban Land Institute of San Francisco, the Association of Bay Area Governments, the California Infill Builders Association, and the Center for Law, Energy, and the Environment at Berkeley Law. More information at <http://bit.ly/hL85ER>

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4/28

**America's Cup and the San Francisco Waterfront.**

12:30–1:30 PM, SPUR, 654 Mission Street, San Francisco. City Hall and all of San Francisco came together in 2010 to land the 34th America's Cup. What will be the long-term economic and physical changes to the waterfront? Kyri McClellan from the Mayor's Office and Brad Benson and Jonathan Stern from the Port of San Francisco will lead a discussion on what the America's Cup will mean to San Francisco. **Free for APA and SPUR members**, \$5 for non-members. For more information, contact Gretchen Hilyard at [ghilyard@spur.org](mailto:ghilyard@spur.org) **CM | pending**

MAY

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MAY

5/3

**Infilling California, Seminar 5: Retrofitting Suburbia.**

4:30–6 PM, Wurster Auditorium, UC Berkeley. **Free**, no registration necessary. Infill need not be limited to cities. Suburban sites also can be creatively transformed and adaptively re-used. Hear how a mix of urban design, regulatory, fiscal, and organizational strategies can be used to re-inhabit, redevelop, and re-green auto-centric and mono-cultural suburbs. Sponsored by the Center for a Sustainable California and IURD, and co-sponsored by the Urban Land Institute of San Francisco, the Association of Bay Area Governments, the California Infill Builders Association, and the Center for Law, Energy, and the Environment at Berkeley Law. More information at <http://bit.ly/fnL8dC>

5/5

**APA California – Northern, Regular Board Meeting.**

6–9 PM, ESA office, 225 Bush Street, Suite 1700, San Francisco. RSVP to Hanson Hom at [hhom@ci.sunnyvale.ca.us](mailto:hhom@ci.sunnyvale.ca.us)

5/6

**Infilling California, Seminar 6: “Hidden” Density – the potential of small-scale infill development.**

6:30–8 PM, Wurster Auditorium, UC Berkeley. **Free**, no registration necessary. The construction of self-contained, smaller second units—either attached or free-standing on the lots of existing homes—can create infill without altering neighborhood character. The Institute of Urban & Regional Development's Center for Community Innovation is assessing social and individual benefits of second units and their potential to meet the East Bay's future housing needs. Sponsored by the Center for a Sustainable California and IURD, and co-sponsored by the Urban Land Institute of San Francisco, the Association of Bay Area Governments, the California Infill Builders Association, and the Center for Law, Energy, and the Environment at Berkeley Law. More information at <http://bit.ly/ftx7mV>

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**5/6** **Advanced CEQA Workshop in Eureka.** 8 AM–4:15 PM, Wharfinger Building Great Room, 1 Marina Way, Eureka. This full-day workshop will provide a summary of 2010 CEQA court decisions and cases, an update of recent legislation, and practical applications of new laws. CEQA experts will present current information in a panel format with time for audience questions. Co-sponsored by the APA and AEP. \$60. See <http://bit.ly/fsrC8o> for more information and to register. **CM | pending**

**5/13** **CPF Sustainability Walking Tour: Sacramento.** 8:45 AM–4 PM. Meet at Sacramento Valley Amtrak Station, 401 “I” Street, Sacramento. Join this walking tour to explore the renaissance in downtown Sacramento featuring green buildings and mixed-use/adaptive reuse projects. All funds collected from this program will be used for California Planning Foundation scholarships. Visit <http://bit.ly/glu4lc> to register. Visit <http://bit.ly/hRBVg3> or contact Linda F. Tatum at [ltatum@cityofinglewood.org](mailto:ltatum@cityofinglewood.org) for more information and a full agenda. **CM | 6.0 pending**

**5/14** **Components of Life: Community Design Day.** 11 AM– 2 PM, Granary Building, 17500 Depot Street, Morgan Hill. Closing event in a series exploring issues facing South Santa Clara County. Bring your ideas from the previous Greenbelt Alliance events to this community design day! Led by professional designers and land use planners using maps and visual imagery, participants will help create designs to inspire decision-makers of the region’s future. **Free** event cosponsored with Greenbelt Alliance and the Committee for Green Foothills. To RSVP, contact Erin McDaniel at [emcdaniel@greenbelt.org](mailto:emcdaniel@greenbelt.org) or (831) 345-4375 or go to [www.greenbelt.org](http://www.greenbelt.org)

**5/18–5/20** **WTS (Women’s Transportation Seminar) 2011 International Annual Conference.** Hyatt Embarcadero, San Francisco. With a theme of Building Bridges, the conference will span a host of technical transportation topics, bridge the professional development divide, and provide opportunities to connect with international transportation leaders. Go to [www.wtsinternational.org](http://www.wtsinternational.org) and click on the 2011 conference site under Annual Conference for updates. Sponsorship opportunities available. For more information, contact Jane Bierstedt at [j.bierstedt@fehrandpeers.com](mailto:j.bierstedt@fehrandpeers.com)

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**5/19** **Paying for Regional Transit: Transit Sustainability Project Update.** 12:30–1:30 PM, SPUR, 654 Mission Street, San Francisco. Costs for transit agencies are increasing while revenues are flat or declining. In 2010, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission launched a multi-year project to analyze the Bay Area’s transit system cost structure, explore significant financial challenges affecting its future, and propose major changes to put the system on a more sustainable financial footing. Get an update on this important regional project from Carolyn Clevenger (MTC) and Tony Bruzzone (Arup). **Free for APA and SPUR members**, \$5 for non-members. Contact, Gretchen Hilyard at [ghilyard@spur.org](mailto:ghilyard@spur.org) for more information. **CM | pending**

**5/20** **2011 Planning Awards Celebration, APA California – Northern.** 6:30 PM, Scott’s Seafood Restaurant, 2 Broadway (Jack London Square), Oakland. For more information, download an event flyer at <http://bit.ly/giXRMu>/ Reserve online through May 18. For more information, 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)

JUNE						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

**JUNE**  
**6/3** **Sustainable Communities Strategy: Building an Implementable Plan.** 8:30 AM–1:30 PM, Nile Hall, Preservation Park, 668 13th Street, Oakland. The Bay Area Planning Directors Association will host a half-day meeting for local planning and community development directors and congestion management agency planning directors to share their views on the recently released Initial Vision Scenario. Ken Kirkey, ABAG Planning Director, and Doug Kimsey, MTC Planning Director, will present next steps in the SCS, Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) and Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (RTIP) processes, and discuss critical implementation issues, such as infrastructure investments and environmental review. \$40, includes breakfast and lunch. Contact Ceil Scandone at [Ceils@abag.ca.gov](mailto:Ceils@abag.ca.gov) for more information. **CM | pending** ■