

NORTHERN NEWS



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



American Planning Association
California Chapter
Northern

Making Great Communities Happen

MARCH 2012

R.I.P., RDAs

By Alexandra Barnhill, Legislative Director

The deathwatch for redevelopment agencies has been ongoing since January 10, 2011, when Governor Brown unveiled his proposal to address California's massive budget deficit by eliminating RDAs statewide. His plan came in the form of two companion bills, AB x1 26 and AB x1 27. The former provided for dismantling the RDAs, while the latter authorized a "pay for play" scheme to keep RDAs alive. Both bills were signed into law last summer.

Within weeks, a petition for writ of mandate was filed in the California Supreme Court challenging their constitutionality. The suit, brought by the California Redevelopment Association against the California Department of Finance, was aimed at invalidating both AB x1 26 and 27. The litigation theory was that these bills were an elaborate scheme to do in two steps what Proposition 22 prohibits — taking funds from RDAs to balance the state's budget.

On December 29, the Court handed down its decision in *California Redevelopment Assn. v. Matosantos*. Its ruling was the "worst case scenario" for redevelopment. Substantially all of AB x1 26, the RDA death bill, was upheld, but AB x1 27, the ransom bill, was struck down as a violation of Prop 22. Having signed RDAs' death warrant, the Court set February 1, 2012, as the new statutory deadline for dissolution of redevelopment agencies statewide.

In an effort to obtain a last minute stay of execution, or at least a delay, the cities of Cerritos and Carlsbad each led a coalition of cities and agencies that filed separate lawsuits attempting to invalidate

AB x1 26 on grounds other than those raised by the CRA in *Matosantos*. However, the trial court denied both motions for preliminary injunction, indicating that neither suit was likely to prevail on the merits. As a result, the dissolution of redevelopment proceeded on February 1st, as ordered by the state Supreme Court.

Cities with RDAs have spent much of the new year undertaking the difficult process of laying their agencies to rest. This involves designating a successor agency to wind down the agency's affairs and establishing an oversight board to supervise those efforts. The process of doing so is legally complex and there are certainly more questions than answers as cities attempt to make sense of the murky provisions of AB X1 26. The Department of Finance has largely refused to offer any guidance on these matters and is referring bewildered staff of the former RDAs to their agency counsel for legal advice.

While cities scramble to comply with the law, some efforts are being made in the Legislature to resurrect RDAs, or at least certain aspects of them. An early effort, Senate Bill 659 (Padilla), which attempted to extend the deadlines to wind down RDAs, failed to gain traction. However, other efforts may be more promising. For example, Senate Bill 986 (Sutton) would allow successor agencies to enter into new enforceable obligations for use of bond proceeds through

December 14, 2014. Senate Bill 654 (Steinberg) is a narrow fix that would expand the definition of enforceable obligations and allow the transfer of low and moderate housing fund moneys to the successor housing agency.

(continued on page 4)



Source: tombstone-generator.com

WHAT'S INSIDE

R.I.P., RDAs

Legislative Director Alexandra Barnhill, Esq., reviews the RDA dissolution process along with Senate and Assembly bills designed to prolong some services.

[PAGE 1](#)

Director's note

In his monthly column, Section Director Hanson Hom, AICP, writes about the board's productive annual retreat and goal setting for 2012. [PAGE 3](#)

Planning in India: A year of insight

Kelsey Moldenke, AICP, shares some of his year-long urban planning experiences working in India. [PAGE 5](#)

Plan-it sustainably: Recommendations for APA's LA Conference

Katja Irvin, AICP, shares her sustainability picks for the upcoming conference offerings. [PAGE 10](#)

Local projects win national planning awards

APA National awards for Contra Costa Centre Transit Village and San Francisco's Candlestick Point-Hunters Point Shipyard Phase III EIR.

[PAGE 12](#)

Who's Where

Joe Kott, AICP; Andrew Waggoner.

[PAGE 15](#)

HSR notes

Compiled by Janet Palma, AICP: Governor Brown cheerleads. Public opposes. Spain's experience with high-speed rail. [PAGE 16](#)

Where in the world

Each month, we publish a photo of urban planning interest and ask you to guess the location. The answer is provided elsewhere in the same edition. [PAGE 18](#)

Norcal Roundup

Compiled by Erik Balsley, AICP: Some Marin County homeowners aren't thrilled that film maker George Lucas is planning to expand his empire. Pot dispensaries under scrutiny. Volunteers may keep Sonoma parks open. [PAGE 19](#)

What others are saying

Ten percent of federal levee systems are "unacceptable." State insurance commissioners require disclosure on preparations made for rising sea levels and other consequences of climate change. [PAGE 22](#)

Calendar

Through April 2012. [PAGE 24](#)

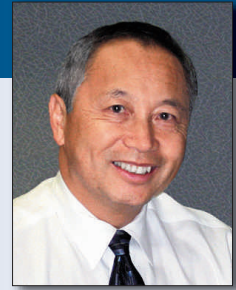
Board directory and newsletter information.

[PAGE 27](#)

"The big takeaway from the survey last year is that there is a high level of concern among insurers about the impacts of climate change that is not matched by concrete plans to deal with those impacts. There is a real gap between the risk that's been identified and plans to address it."

—Andrew Logan, director of Ceres's insurance program, responding to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners' Climate Disclosure Survey of 2011. (As reported by Felicity Barringer in "Three states tell insurers to disclose responses to climate change," The New York Times,

<http://nyti.ms/Ae2taf>)



Annual Section Board Retreat

The Board held a very productive all-day retreat on January 21, 2012, at the offices of **The Planning Center|DC&E** in Berkeley. Much thanks to **Joanna Jansen**, AICP, East Bay Regional Advisory Council Co-chair for hosting the retreat. It was a time to reflect on the successes of the previous year, but more importantly, to set goals and priorities for 2012. I wish to commend the Board for an excellent day of dialogue and strategic planning. While it was a great opportunity to gather and enjoy each other's company, it was a structured retreat with a full agenda. The Board tackled important issues for the upcoming year with forthright discussion and creative thinking. Despite budget challenges, at the end of the day, we established an ambitious work program for 2012. Future actions and assignments were defined and several subcommittees were established to pursue important initiatives.

We started the retreat by welcoming our newly elected Board members: **Jeff Baker**, Director-Elect, and **Laura Thompson**, Treasurer. The Board also welcomed **Ruth Miller** as the new Board Student Representative from U.C. Berkeley and formalized two Sustainability Committee Co-Chair positions filled by **Scott Edmondson**, AICP, and **Katja Irvin**, AICP.

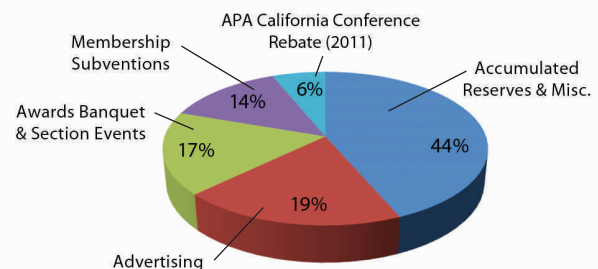
The Board quickly got down to business and developed its goals for 2012 which included the following:

- Develop a membership outreach program to expand membership and define additional services to meet the needs of members;
- Develop a comprehensive sponsorship and advertising program to diversify the Section's income base while offering more opportunities for firms to highlight their services;
- Continue to offer no-cost and low-cost professional development activities for AICP CM credits, including partnering with other organizations to sponsor events; investigate the feasibility of convenient webinars and podcasts;
- Continue to support the initiatives of each Regional Advisory Council Chair to offer geographically dispersed events throughout the Northern Section;
- Continue the excellent reputation of the *Northern News* in providing timely planning information in an easy-to-read and professional format;
- Launch a reformatted and more robust Northern Section website;

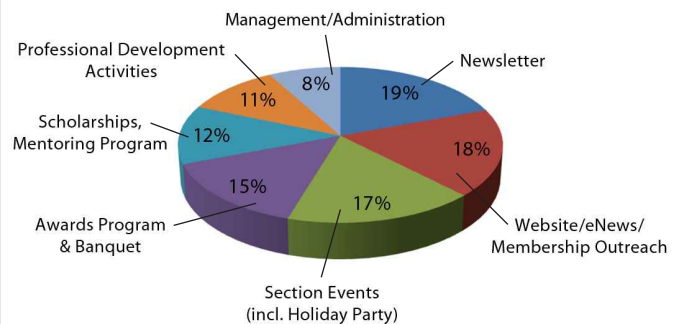
- Continue the Section's highly successful awards program for promoting Northern Section projects and plans for state and national recognition;
- Offer career development and networking events for planning students and young professionals organized by the Young Planners Group and university liaisons;
- Launch the second year of the Section's successful mentorship program; and
- Continue the initiative of the Section's Sustainability Committee to provide useful resources and informative workshops on sustainability planning.

Using the above goals and priorities as budget objectives, the Board adopted a budget totaling \$51,671 to fund a wide variety of programs and activities. The following pie charts break down the projected fund sources and expenditures for the Northern Section. While accumulated reserve funds are being allocated to fund activities for 2012, the remaining reserve funds will be sufficient to comply with a financial reserves policy adopted by the Section last year.

Projected 2012 Fund Sources



Projected 2012 Expenditures



Thank you to all Board members for their hard work and commitment to make 2012 another stellar year! As always, we welcome comments and suggestions from members throughout the year on how we can better serve you. ■

R.I.P., RDAs

(continued from page 1)

Assembly Bill 1585 (Perez) is a broad clean-up bill that addresses many of the financial aspects of AB x1 26, including retention of low and moderate housing fund moneys.

Regardless of the fate of these bills, the end of redevelopment will not be the end of economic development at the local level in California. Economic development corporations and business improvement districts remain a possibility for some communities. In addition, Senate Bill 214 (Wolk), would, if adopted, radically change the infrastructure financing district law (Government Code 53395 *et seq.*) to create a “mini-redevelopment” concept. The bill would set up the possibility of tax-increment financing for infrastructure improvements based on a vote of the legislative body, not the now-required two-thirds majority vote of property owners.

Local governments can and will move beyond the death of redevelopment; they just have to be able to adapt to the changed landscape.



Alexandra Barnhill is a partner at Burke, Williams and Sorensen in their Oakland office. She acts as legal counsel and trusted advisor to cities, special districts, and joint powers agencies across California. She advises clients and conducts educational seminars on the full spectrum of municipal law issues, including open meeting (Brown Act), transparency (Public Records Act), conflict of interest (Political Reform Act) and ethics laws. Ms. Barnhill currently serves as the Assistant City Attorney in Rohnert Park and Pacifica.



AB x1 26 Timeline as modified by *California Redevelopment Association v. Matosantos**

By January 13	If city does not want to serve as the “successor agency” to its redevelopment agency, then it must submit a resolution to that effect to the County Auditor-Controller by this date. If a city wishes to serve as the “successor agency,” no action is required.
February 1	Redevelopment agencies are dissolved.
On or after February 1	Successor agency must create Redevelopment Obligation Retirement Fund.
By February 1	The City must decide whether to retain affordable housing function of the redevelopment agency. If successor agency does not elect to retain this function, it is transferred to the housing authority or, if no housing authority exists, to the State Housing and Community Development Agency.
By February 1	Successor agency must review the enforceable obligation payment schedule (EOPS) adopted by the redevelopment agency last fall, modify it if necessary, and readopt. The EOPS is subject to review and approval by the Oversight Board once that board has been formed. The successor agency may only make payments for those obligations identified in the EOPS until a Recognized Obligation Payment Schedule (ROPS) is approved.
By March 1	Successor agency must adopt a Recognized Obligation Payment Schedule (ROPS). This is a permanent schedule of obligations that replaces the interim EOPS once the ROPS has been approved. The County Auditor-Controller will allocate property tax increment to successor agencies to pay debts listed on ROPS.
By April 1	Successor agency reports to the County Auditor-Controller whether the total amount of property tax available to the agency will be sufficient to fund its ROPS obligations over the next six-month fiscal period.
By April 15	Successor agency must send the adopted ROPS to the State Controller and the State Department of Finance for approval. The ROPS is also subject to approval by the Oversight Board.
By May 1	Oversight Boards begin operations, files report of membership with State Department of Finance.
Starting May 1	Successor agency may only pay those obligations listed in the approved ROPS. The approved ROPS replaces the EOPS.
By May 16 and continuing thereafter as specified	The County Auditor-Controller transfers property tax to the successor agency in an amount equal to the cost of the obligations specified in the ROPS. This amount is transferred into the successor agency’s Redevelopment Obligation Retirement Fund, and payments from this fund are used to satisfy the obligations identified in the ROPS.

* This timeline does not represent a complete list of deadlines imposed by AB x1 26 as modified, but rather, it is list of the most relevant and time-sensitive deadlines and milestones for cities that will be opting to become the successor agency to their redevelopment agency. Please consult with your city attorney or your redevelopment agency counsel for more information.

v. 1.1 January 9, 2012

Source: League of California Cities, <http://bit.ly/y4Wygk> ■

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Planning in India: A year of insight

By Kelsey Moldenke, AICP



In September 2010, I left for Ahmedabad, India, to fill a position at HCP Design and Project Management Limited, an architecture and planning firm. This position had been created for a member of APA Northern California as the result of a visit to HCP during a 2009 study tour organized by the section. In the 11 months I was there, I was exposed to many facets of planning in India and many other elements of Indian culture. I learned far too much to be covered in a short article such as this, but have been requested to share with you a brief description of my experiences and planning in the Indian context.

Ahmedabad is located in central Gujarat state, not far from the Arabian Sea, approximately 300 miles east of the Pakistan border and 350 miles north of Mumbai. According to *Forbes*, it is the third fastest growing city in the world and is projected to reach 20 million residents in 20 years. Currently Ahmedabad is a city of more than six million people, bisected by the Sabarmati River. The east side of the city is the “Old City,” generally having narrow streets and few sidewalks. Some of the 600-year-old walls and city gates still remain, as do smokestacks from its later role as the textile center of India.

The west side is characterized by wider roads, higher buildings, and more trees. Most of the universities, as well as buildings by Louis Kahn and Le Corbusier, are located on the west side. Although the west side was subject to more planning than the Old City, land uses are still less segregated than one would find in the US. In one small area, one can find commercial mid-rise buildings adjacent to large



Teen Darwaza, Old City, Ahmedabad

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Planning in India: A year of insight

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Typical street, Old City, Ahmedabad



Many modes of transport along main commercial street, Ahmedabad

single-family residences, apartment towers, and even slums. Sidewalks are generally absent on the west side also, requiring people to walk in the streets. Transportation is usually by motorcycle, auto rickshaw, auto, bus, trucks, and the occasional camel for goods. To deal with the current congestion and expected growth, Ahmedabad also has invested in a Bus Rapid Transit System.

At HCP, I worked on a variety of projects: preliminary engineering for a township, some architectural design for a clubhouse for a master-planned community, layout of a dairy complex, management of the preliminary construction drawings for a mixed-use development, a preliminary campus plan and various other projects. One of my first undertakings was to compare the studio's recent projects with other projects in the city to ascertain how the other projects were being marketed and what, if any, features were lacking from our projects.

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Planning in India: A year of insight

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Gandhi Ashram, Ahmedabad

Most marketing materials emphasized five selling points for the new developments: status, modern infrastructure, green space, quiet, and security. The themes of peace and quiet, green space, status and security appear in American marketing for residences, but in India, status and security were more strongly and overtly emphasized. In fact, many of the new residential developments within the city were self-contained, walled communities.

Such developments might include a mix of housing types, a sewage treatment plant, developer-provided schools, and recreational facilities, all contained within a high wall with secured entrances. Large retail buildings and occasionally a hospital are often constructed outside the walls. To me, this was a bit surprising, as I am not used to many gated communities in a city, let alone at such a scale, with both single-family detached and multifamily units. But it is consistent with the cultural context; single-family homes in India have traditionally been surrounded on all sides by compound walls.

I briefly contributed to the firm's largest project, the Sabarmati Riverfront Development, an 11-kilometer-long ribbon of park through the city. Where residents once washed clothes in the river in the summer when the river was low, and dodged floodwaters during monsoon, there will soon be promenades on both sides of the now-dammed river.

High floodwalls have been built, with promenades both at the river level and at the top of the walls. Large pipes have been installed along the length of the project to intercept runoff that would otherwise pollute the river. Slum dwellers living on the marginal land next to the river were relocated to new public housing, and land was reclaimed for development near the center of the city. This project will provide

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Planning in India: A year of insight

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the city with a much-needed central open space in which to gather, turn the city's focus towards the river, and help clean up the river.

One of my final tasks at HCP was editing the preliminary Development Plan (DP) for the Ahmedabad Urban Development Authority. This document is very similar in scope and process to a General Plan in California. The DP includes elements such as infrastructure, parks and open space, and the environment. A development area including both the area of the city and an area of expected expansion around the city is analyzed (similar to planning within an Urban Growth Boundary) within the DP. A DP is revised every 10 years and is subject to public review and comments, with responses given to all public concerns. This, however, is where the Indian and American planning systems diverge.

In India, there are two systems for controlling when and how areas on the fringe of a city are developed. In both cases, a development authority decides which land to open for development (typically more than 250 acres, but it can be much smaller). The first system is similar to eminent domain, in which a development authority takes control of the land and compensates the landowners (typically farmers of small plots). The authority lays out the infrastructure and public amenities and then sells the remaining land to private developers.

In the other system, the development authority determines the location of infrastructure and public amenities and then reallocates the remaining land within the development by creating new private property boundaries proportional to the amount of land each landowner ceded for the infrastructure. The landowners thus largely retain their land — just slightly less and in a slightly different configuration. The development authority charges the landowners a fee for this process (to aid in construction of the infrastructure), but the value of the land increases as it is opened for urban development, so landowners gain. Landowners may comment on and appeal the development authority's reallocation of property.

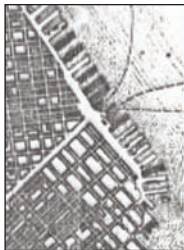
Recently, private interests have been granted the ability to submit township proposals, given certain minimal site criteria (size, contiguity, etc.). A developer of a private township is required to provide public amenities at a rate similar to the township plans established by the development authority. A township outside Ahmedabad that my studio worked on had the following breakdown of minimum areas dedicated to each land use: 10 percent of the first 40 hectares and 12 percent of the area over 40 hectares to crossover (arterial) infrastructure; 5 percent to public amenities, such as schools; and 5 percent to public greens. Of the remaining land, 5 percent has to be dedicated to Economically Weak Sector housing. The rest of the land is subject to floor area calculation. While these rules do ensure adequate infrastructure, their rigidity can lead to excess road construction solely to fulfill the required percentage.

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Planning in India: A year of insight

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It was encouraging to see that green practices, such as rainwater harvesting and using climate-appropriate construction methods, are widespread. Ahmedabad is hot — very hot — for much of the year: the high temperature can be over 100 degrees Fahrenheit each day for three straight months. Shading and wind are incorporated into the design of buildings. Broken white china mosaic tiles, which would otherwise be rubbish, are laid on the top of the roof terraces to reflect heat and reduce temperatures inside homes. Ahmedabad is also very dry for much of the year: rain falls generally only during the monsoon. Given these conditions and the facts that streets are prone to monsoon flooding and many of the new developments depend on wells, rainwater harvesting is essential and used as a selling point.

In fact, planning for the environment has been done since ancient times. Comparing many modern buildings to castles and tomb complexes from the Mughal period shows that designing for the heat and rainfall patterns clearly has been a historical practice. On several occasions, I created lotting plans for residential townships, much as I did in the US. I soon discovered one aspect of site design that is different between the US and India — the concept of *vastu*. *Vastu* is a doctrine that dictates site selection, house orientation, and the location of rooms within a house. While we did not design our units based on *vastu*, we did have to make sure that the front doors of our units did not face south. This requirement influenced street layout — we minimized east-west streets whenever possible.

Although the office environment (minus the monkeys and peacocks outside my office window) and software were equivalent to those in America, learning of the different approaches, seeing Bus Rapid Transit in action, and observing human interaction with the built environment as I walked around the city were enriching experiences. Even visits to ancient city ruins or mud hut villages on the edge of the salt flats of the Rann of Kutch provided insight into the history of planning. I am definitely grateful that APA California-Northern put this opportunity together, and I encourage them to pursue such partnerships in the future.

Kelsey Moldenke, AICP, LEED AP, reluctantly returned from India in late 2011. He is looking to resume his career in planning and urban design in the Bay Area. Any comments or questions on the article can be addressed to kelsey_moldenke@yahoo.com. ■

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Redevelopment agencies used many strategies. Some of them worked, and some of them didn't. The same agency that made Mission Bay happen also gave out money to community groups in other areas without as much to show for it.

—Gabriel Metcalf, SPUR, <http://s.tt/15759>

Plan-it sustainably

Recommendations for APA's LA Conference

April 14–17, 2012, <http://www.planning.org/conference/>

By Katja Irvin, AICP

To help plan your APA Conference, we're providing information on the sessions of interest relating to sustainability. A short description of each is provided as well as a web link to allow you to add a session to your online conference schedule.

To start, we've been all about STARS lately at Plan-it Sustainably. If you missed our workshop on December 8, here's your chance to hear about it in person, with specific focus on the Santa Cruz case study:

Sustainable Transportation Analysis and Rating System

<http://bit.ly/weCE2a>

Saturday, 2:30 PM – 3:45 PM

Hear about STARS' systematic approach to achieving transportation and livability goals. The STARS framework uses a triple bottom-line approach – accounting for environmental, economic and social-equity measures of success – as a way to integrate sustainability into transportation plans and projects. STARS uses life-cycle analysis to assess costs and benefits of project strategies and allows for increased accountability. (Speakers: George A. Dondero III; Sine Adams, AICP)

There are two good sessions in the Sunday 10:30 time slot. I was impressed by both Walker's and Matt's presentations at the California Conference so I think this will be a good one:

Green Urbanism and Sustainability

<http://bit.ly/Ag4X7h>

Sunday, 10:30 AM – 11:45 AM

Urban planning is experiencing a fundamental shift from creating cities that are safe and sanitary to cities that sustainable. This shift requires both new thinking and the creation of replicable examples. Hear leading practitioners exchange ideas, innovations, and implemented examples with each other, with the goal of defining how to best enable cities to make this needed shift in visions, form, and function. (Speakers: Walker Wells, AICP; Matthew David Raimi, AICP; Theodore M. Bardacke, AICP)

Life cycle assessment has got to be good, right? This seems like a powerhouse academic session and could be interesting:

Life Cycle Assessment of Transportation Options

<http://bit.ly/zZ7Ht4>

Sunday, 10:30 AM – 11:45 AM

Review the results of a study comparing the lifecycle energy use and air pollution emissions of a light rail line, bus rapid transit line, and a passenger car in Los Angeles. Hear the lessons learned from those involved and consider a newly developed methodology that planners can use to compare lifecycle assessments of transit projects in their regions. (Speakers: Stephanie S. Pincett; Daniel Patrick Gallagher, AICP; William Eisenstein; Mikhail Chester)

If you're really dedicated to sustainability and want to get involved:

Sustainable Community Planning Interest Group

<http://bit.ly/Au1T4y>

Sunday, 11:45 AM – 1:00 PM

(continued on next page)

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State lawmakers should consider selling more than \$2 billion in redevelopment agency assets and giving the money to cities and counties to use for economic development. —*Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg, D-Sacramento.*

<http://bit.ly/zOGvIM>

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

We all love Alex Hinds! Plus, this seems like a good opportunity to hear about the APA Sustaining Places Task Force:

Making Comprehensive Plans to Sustain Places

<http://bit.ly/yQ7HRw>

Sunday, 4:00 PM – 5:15 PM

Discover how to incorporate the lessons learned from the 2011 APA Task Force on Sustaining Places into your comprehensive plans. Learn how leading-edge planning practitioners are recasting plans to cut across old functional elements with new principles, formats and metrics that focus on sustainability. (Speakers: David R. Godschalk, FAICP; William R. Anderson, FAICP; Alex Hinds)

It's a little off the pure sustainability track, but I gotta love those New Urbanists and want to see what they're up to. This could be the best NU presentation of the conference with Daniel and Stephanos together on the same panel:

Scales of Urbanism on a Sustainable Platform

<http://bit.ly/zZ2DZ1>

Monday, 2:30 PM – 3:45 PM

Learn why intelligent planning and zoning reform at all land scales are essential for successful sustainability. Understand how the careful repair of existing places and wise infill can positively reduce vehicle miles travelled and greenhouse gas emissions to a greater extent than many "green gizmos." Discover tools being used nationwide to promote walkable, mixed use urbanism and reduce emissions. (Speakers: Kaizer R. Rangwala, AICP; Victor B. Dover, AICP; Daniel Parolek; Stefanos Polyzoides; Joseph A. Perez)

If you aren't completely brain-dead by 5:30 on Monday, you might want to check out this session with Daniel Lerch, lead editor of *The Post Carbon Reader* (2010). I bet he'll have some interesting stuff to say.

Resilience for a Changing Energy Future

<http://bit.ly/AnX0Ya>

Monday, 5:30 PM – 6:45 PM

Understand the drivers behind the changing global and national energy situations, and what this means for local governments and planning practice. Learn what cities are doing to prepare for and respond to the changing energy situation, particularly with regard to federally-supported energy resilience planning. Determine what "energy uncertainty" means for transportation, land use, and local and regional activity in the coming decades. (Speakers: Tricia R. Sears; Daniel C. Lerch)

And, last but not least, if you're still around on Tuesday this seems like pretty cool stuff – and it's the military! I'm curious and maybe you are too:

Planning Challenges for Net Zero Military Installations

<http://bit.ly/xwUJdm>

Tuesday, 10:30 AM – 11:45 AM

Hear how the U.S. Army is striving to achieve a Net Zero status for energy, water and the generation of waste. That means installations produce as much energy as they use, reuse and conserve water, and reuse all emissions and materials. Explore the problems and potential solutions for these multiple interacting human systems and their ecological context. (Speakers: Jerry Zekert; Andrea Wohlfeld Kuhn, AICP; Cynthia A. Skinner, AICP; William D. Goran; Elisabeth M. Jenicek, AICP; Matthew D. Hiett; Michael P. Case) ■

Local projects win national planning awards

National Planning Excellence Award for Implementation

Contra Costa Centre Transit Village

Contra Costa Centre Transit Village is a 140-acre area that focuses on merging work, social, and living environments. The County of Contra Costa and its former Redevelopment Agency Planners, working with the private sector, have been implementing this smart growth model for 25 years.

The project's goal was to connect residents, businesses and employees near the convergence of several regional transportation systems including rail systems, a major arterial, and a regional trail. The site is nearly 90 percent built out and features 2,700 housing units, 2.4 million square feet of office and commercial space, and 432 hotel rooms, and an array of public facilities and amenities. The transit village accommodates 7,000 employees, 6,000 residents, and 6,000 BART patrons on a daily basis. All uses in the village are within a quarter-mile of the BART fare gates.

Source: APA, <http://www.contracostacentre.com/>

RDA dissolution update:

Northern News contacted Redevelopment Program Manager Maureen Toms, AICP, regarding how the dissolution of Contra Costa County Redevelopment Agency would affect this project. Via email she said:

“All the existing agreements for ongoing assistance for affordable housing and the business agreements are on our EOPS, so we expect that to be secure. One residential block and an office block have not been built yet due to market conditions. The RDA would be unable to provide any financial assistance

to those components if needed. We continue to review other aspects of the dissolution act to determine if we are able to continue with three other infrastructure projects using bond funds. The dissolution act appears to have unclear language regarding the use of bond funds and contracts in the design phase that have not yet been awarded yet.

“We have four other project areas in CCC. We have completed a land assemblage for residential mixed-use near the Pittsburg Bay Point BART Station. Since the County will be the housing successor agency, we will be able to go out with an RFP for the development, but without the ability to contribute to the cost of infrastructure, it is unclear if a TOD development would pencil.”



(continued on next page)

The New York Times: [The January 27 editorial in *The Wall Street Journal*] “completely misrepresented my work. My work has long taken the view that policies to slow global warming would have net economic benefits, in the trillion of dollars of present value.” —William D. Nordhaus, Professor of Economics, Yale University. <http://nyti.ms/Af0sD5>

National Planning Achievement Award for a Hard-Won Victory

Candlestick Point-Hunters Point Shipyard Phase II EIR

The Candlestick Point-Hunters Point Shipyard Phase II Project goal is to revitalize the Bayview-Hunters Point community of San Francisco through multiple channels, including maximizing reuse of a naval shipyard (a Superfund site); increasing business and employment opportunities; providing housing options at a range of affordability levels; and integrating transportation.

After a 30-year public outreach and community planning process, it was imperative that the project produce tangible benefits for the community which was challenged by unemployment, extreme poverty, and high crime rates. Bayview was ranked by the Department of Justice as one of the 10 least advantaged locations in the U.S. To analyze the environmental impacts of the project, the team was confronted with a number of challenges including ongoing hazardous materials cleanup at a Superfund site; addressing sea level rise; assessing biological resources; and phasing of parkland and infrastructure improvements with project development. The result is a 10-volume environmental impact report that is now being used by the city as a “model environmental document.” The report also took into account the history of the community, the massive direct environmental impacts, and the prospect of creating a metropolitan neighborhood that must be assimilated into San Francisco.

Source: APA, Combined Candlestick Point – Hunters Point Shipyard Project, <http://bit.ly/ACcxw1>

RDA dissolution update:

Northern News contacted the Assistant Project Manager at the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency regarding the post RDA status of this project. Below is an excerpt of her response:

“It might be interesting to discuss the different ramifications that the court’s decision has on large projects like the Shipyard/Candlestick redevelopment and smaller economic development efforts like the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood development. For example, there was a gentlemen’s agreement between the community and the City/SFRA when the Shipyard/Candlestick project started that the existing community should not be left behind in the economic progress. Unfortunately, with the court’s RDA decision, the reuse project is able to proceed without neighborhood economic development, and the City no longer has the tool to make good on that promise. Such a same.”



“The state take-back of redevelopment money has forced the city to abandon plans for a waterfront ballpark — the linchpin of efforts to keep the A’s in Oakland. The A’s are eager to move to San Jose, where an EIR already has been completed on a proposed ballpark, but that project also faces hurdles.” *Mercury News*, <http://bit.ly/yiVITc>



Basic Planning 101 Workshop Series

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The American Planning Association, California Chapter-Northern is pleased to announce that we are offering a series of FREE Planning Commission training workshops. These trainings are geared to local government planning commissioners, elected officials, professional planners and/or interested parties in Northern California.

The Basic Planning 101 workshop series will be held in three different locations and dates throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. The sessions will be different each time, but you are free to attend any or all of them. Speakers are experienced planning professionals from the Northern California region; they will share basic planning concepts and go over practical situations commonly faced by planning commissioners and other elected officials. The schedule of workshops and descriptions are shown here, or visit the website at <http://www.norcalapa.org>.

WORKSHOP REGISTRATION

If you would like to attend, please register at <http://www.norcalapa.org> or contact Janet Palma, AICP, at janetpalma@comcast.net or (510) 390-3984 if you have further questions. Participants may also show up at the workshops unregistered, but seating will be limited to the capacity of the facility and priority will go to planning commissioners.

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The Basic Planning 101 workshop reviews planning fundamentals in three interactives sessions. A light breakfast will be provided.

Session #1

Topics: Role of officials and staff; Roberts Rules of Order; public hearing procedures; making an effective public record; basics of general plans and zoning.

Saturday, February 18

9:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

San Leandro Main Library

300 Estudillo Ave | **San Leandro**

Session #2

Topics: Land use legal principles and key cases; Basic CEQA and environmental review; defensible findings and project conditions; development project case study.

Saturday, April 7

9:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Arlington Clubhouse

1120 Arlington Blvd | **El Cerrito**

Session #3

Topics: Housing laws, elements, RHNA process; economic development; land use planning fiscal issues; design guidelines and design review; sustainable planning.

Saturday, May 5

9:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

Martin Luther King Jr. Library

150 E. San Fernando St | **San Jose**

LETTERS

Editor:

I just finished reading the February *Northern News* articles Janet Palma wrote on High Speed Rail. Thanks for putting together so many great articles on this subject. You are brave to do that!

Kathleen Livermore, AICP ■

APA California–Northern will be well represented at AICP's induction ceremony in Los Angeles for the 2012 Class of Fellows.

Name and Nomination Category

Linda C. Dalton, AICP,
Community Service and Leadership

Ellen J. Greenberg, AICP,
Professional Practice

Barry J. Miller, AICP,
Professional Practice

Please join the editors, on behalf of the entire Northern Section Board, in congratulating our members on their becoming FAICP. ■

Who's where



Joseph Kott, PhD, AICP, PTP, has opened Kott Planning Consultants, a firm focused on planning sustainable transportation for communities and companies. Kott currently is an adjunct lecturer at San Jose State University and at the Stanford University Program on Urban Studies. Previously, he had been transportation planning and programs manager at City and County Association of Governments

of San Mateo County (3 years), senior transportation projects manager at Wilbur Smith Associates (2007–08), and principal at Nelson Nygaard (2005–07). Among other positions held, Kott was chief transportation official, City of Palo Alto, 1999–2005.

Mr. Kott's degrees include Doctor of Philosophy, Urban and Regional Transportation Planning, Curtin University of Technology, Perth; Master's in Transport Planning and Traffic Engineering, Monash University, Melbourne; Master's in Urban and Regional Planning, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; and a BA from Wayne State University.



*Joe Kott, on right, is presented with a framed award of his Ph.D. at the Chancellor's Reception on February 11 at Curtin University of Technology in Perth, Australia. The three new Ph.D. graduates from the **Curtin University Sustainability Policy Institute (CUSP)** are shown after the graduation ceremonies. Professor Peter Newman, CUSP director and world-renowned scholar, is on the left.*



Andrew Waggoner is now senior project manager, Generation Interconnection Services, Pacific Gas and Electric. He most recently served as SB 375 regional policy analyst at Greenbelt Alliance. Before heading off to Chicago to study for a master's degree, Andy was associate environmental planner, Christopher A. Joseph and Associates, 2006–2008. As East Bay Regional Advisory Council Co-Chair, Andy serves on the Board

of APA California–Northern. He holds a Master's in Urban Planning and Policy from the University of Illinois at Chicago and a BA in environmental studies and geography from the University of Colorado at Boulder. ■

Federal funds denied, but San Francisco pitches “fast start”

One would expect that the resignation of two key leaders at the CHSRA would put a damper on the venture. Instead it has resulted in both Governor Brown and U.S. Transportation Secretary LaHood pitching a new approach to the beleaguered project. Brown has proposed alternative means of financing the project, while LaHood has been visiting proponents and opponents in Los Angeles and the San Joaquin Valley.

As noted in last month’s review, Tim Sheehan’s article on Spain’s high-speed rail project, funded as a joint-venture, shed some light on how the trains have fared in a region similar to California. One big difference between the efforts is that economic conditions were far more favorable during the 1980s when Spain embarked on their HSR project than in California today.

California’s auditor has bashed the financial viability of the California HSR while Governor Brown insists that its higher price tag is incorrect and emphatically states that the cap-and-trade program will help save the fiscal day. Brown also seems to be taking a hands-on approach to force a redesign in the plans to start construction in the Central Valley simultaneously with urban sections in San Francisco and Los Angeles to provide additional cost savings. This is not so far-fetched. L.A. is on board with the project based on a positive press conference between the Mayor and LaHood, while the San Francisco County Transportation Authority has also proposed their own high-speed rail/Caltrain “fast start” program to its Board of Commissioners. <http://bit.ly/xdcvHT>

The New York Times asked such notable leaders as Peter Calthorpe, Emily Rusch, Rick Geddes and Shannon Tracey at the end of January to weigh the pros and cons of the project (<http://nyti.ms/zYrl2u>). In particular, Ms. Rusch of CalPIRG sides with rail as preferable to more road construction, but Mr. Geddes of Cornell University insists that California is not the right place for such a project.

In a press release on February 13, CHSRA Board Chair Dan Richard showed support for the Governor’s

commitment to a “blended” system that shared two tracks on the Peninsula with the HSR, essentially a “four-track” design. This announcement stunned the Palo Alto City Council Rail Committee which is now vehemently opposed to the project in any form. See www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov and summary below.

Governor Brown as CHSR cheerleader

<http://nyti.ms/AbS8dP>

“Governor Jerry Brown threw his unequivocal support behind a \$100 billion high-speed rail line that has come under fire here in California and across the country, embracing it in a strikingly optimistic State of the State speech in which he asserted that government should pursue ambitious ventures even during times of economic strife. Mr. Brown’s speech, coming after five economically tumultuous years here, was notable for its optimism.”

—Adam Montgomery, “Brown asks California to cheer rail project,” *The New York Times*, January 18, 2012.

More comparison to Spain’s HSR

<http://bit.ly/ybie8q>

“Without warning, a loud ‘swoosh’ briefly interrupts the couple’s conversation with a reporter. It’s one of Spain’s AVE high-speed trains rushing from Madrid to Seville on tracks about 100 feet from the rear of the couple’s modest home. The Spanish experience contrasts sharply with the loud and growing objections to California’s plans by some farmers in the San Joaquin Valley, where faith in both the state rail authority and the economy are in short supply. In the cities, high-speed trains are good for business because they drive tourism — the nation’s biggest industry — and business travel, the government says. Merchants near the train station mostly spoke favorably when asked about the high-speed network. ‘In California, nobody in San Francisco is going to travel to Fresno to buy things,’ [said Germá Bel, a professor of political economics at the University of Barcelona].” —Tim Sheehan, “Farms, cities have cooperative relationship with Spain’s high-speed rail,” *The Fresno Bee*, January 21, 2012.

(continued on next page)

Will the financial picture support CHSR?

<http://lat.ms/zNKFTO>

“California’s \$98.5 billion bullet train project has become ‘increasingly risky’ because of uncertainty about where the money will come from to finish even the first phase, the state auditor warned. ‘The success or failure of the program’ depends on obtaining up to \$105 billion in additional funding, which has not been identified, the report says. It further mentions that the cost estimates for the initial phase do not include operating or maintenance outlays, which the auditor estimates could total roughly \$97 billion between 2025 and 2060.” —Dan Weikel, “State auditor issues financial warning on California bullet train,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 25, 2012.

HSR will benefit communities

<http://nyti.ms/ydrHDE>

“More than a train ride is at stake; high speed rail would catalyze a new generation of growth — one more oriented to who we are, what we can afford and what we really need. It, along with innovative land use, will breed the growth we need — urban revitalization and more walkable, compact and affordable communities. Just as the ’56 highway bill helped spawn the modern suburb, high-speed rail would energize a new generation of community building — one that fits our current environmental and economic needs.” —Peter Calthorpe, “A catalyst for better development,” *The New York Times*, January 27, 2012.

Brown’s take on financing CHSR

<http://bit.ly/yG94uG>

“Gov. Jerry Brown said in an interview aired in Los Angeles that California’s high-speed rail project will cost far less than the state’s current estimate of nearly \$100 billion and that environmental fees paid by carbon producers will be a source of funding. ‘One way or the other, if we can’t get it through the Legislature,’ he said, ‘then there’s always the initiative route at some point.’” —David Siders, “Jerry Brown says cap-and-trade fees will fund high-speed rail,” *Capital Alert*, January 29, 2012.

Accelerate HSR to save the HSR and money

<http://bit.ly/AfMM2C>

“Gov. Jerry Brown is scaling back the state’s highly controversial bullet train project to keep it alive. He wants the

construction timetable accelerated to reduce the inflationary aspect of cost projections, perhaps by merging the high-speed system with standard-speed train service to sharply reduce right-of-way and construction costs. It’s not clear how he would use the cap-and-trade fees, but they could repay bullet train bonds to protect the general fund and perhaps service additional bond issues that would lower the need for federal and investor funds.” —Dan Walters, “Jerry Brown plans to cut back high-speed rail to save it,” *The Sacramento Bee*, February 1, 2012.

Government fights back

<http://bit.ly/y6OsXm>

“The [House Transportation and Infrastructure] committee voted as Thursday evening turned to Friday morning to approve an amendment from Rep. Jeff Denham (R-Calif.) to bar the proposed California railway, which has become a lightning rod for conservatives, from receiving any of the new transportation money. Denham, who is opposed to the California railway, said ‘highway bill money should be used on highways.’ About 20 percent of the money in the federal transportation bill, which has been dubbed the American Energy and Infrastructure Act (H.R. 7), traditionally goes to public transit projects.” —Keith Laing, “House blocks highway bill money from going to high-speed rail,” *The Hill’s Transportation*, February 3, 2012.

Modify and it might fly

<http://lat.ms/wY2HRi>

“Sensitive to growing public and political opposition, high-speed rail officials seem to be coming to a rational conclusion: It makes good sense to begin service ASAP in urban areas where people might actually ride the trains. Construction would start next fall in the rural San Joaquin Valley, the thinking goes. But simultaneously there’d be major upgrades to conventional lines in the Los Angeles and San Francisco regions. ‘If the authority and administration are nimble enough to put a carefully crafted proposal before the Legislature, we’re open to hearing it,’ [State Senator Joe] Simitian says, ‘But it’ll be tough.’ [Chairman Dan] Richard says there’s ‘a pretty big attitude change’ at the agency. Maybe he can turn a boondoggle into a boon.” —George Skelton, “A rational approach to rail,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 6, 2012.

(continued on next page)

L.A Mayor meets with feds

<http://bit.ly/A71e97>

“In a somewhat rainy day in Southern California, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and United States Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood spread a little sunshine on California’s embattled High Speed Rail project with an upbeat press conference a Los Angeles’ Union Station. Later noting that the President’s vision was larger than just a rail plan for California, LaHood talked of the California project as a model for the nation.” —Damien Newton, “On a rainy day in Los Angeles, Villaraigosa and Ray LaHood spread sunshine for high speed rail,” *Los Angeles Streetsblog*, February 8, 2012.

More PR in the Valley

<http://bit.ly/AzHPjL>

“LaHood’s visit to the San Joaquin Valley comes one day after Kern County supervisors voted to oppose the state’s high-speed rail plans. That county joins Kings, Tulare and Madera counties and several cities. LaHood said he’s not bothered by the shifting opinions.” —Tim Sheehan, “Transportation Secretary LaHood in Fresno, defends high-speed rail,” *The Fresno Bee*, February 9, 2012.

Now for the four-track

<http://bit.ly/A4hPPM>

“A new analysis by the California High-Speed Rail Authority calling for a four-track rail system between the Bay Area and Central Valley has set off a fresh wave of criticism from Palo Alto and surrounding cities, with many calling the latest document a betrayal of the authority’s earlier promises. ‘We’re back where we were a year ago on this and we thought this thing was dead,’ [Palo Alto Councilman Pat] Burt said.” —Gennady Sheyner, “Four-track design back on the table for high-speed rail,” *Palo Alto Weekly*, February 10, 2012.

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 serves on the City of San Leandro Board of Zoning Adjustments as the At-Large member and on APA California–Northern’s Board of Directors as Planning Commissioner Representative. (Disclosure: The author is a sub-subcontractor to URS Corporation, working on visual resources for the Bakersfield-to-Palmdale section of the proposed high-speed rail line.) ■

Where in the world?



Photo by Aliza Knox (Answer on [page 21](#))

Norcal roundup

Compiled by Erik Balsley, AICP, associate editor

Lucas' expansion plans disturb neighborhood's tranquility <http://bit.ly/wwFqFc>

"A rebel alliance has formed in the hills north of San Francisco to fight a perceived Evil Empire. The alliance is a group of Marin County homeowners. Their phantom menace is George Lucas, the world-renowned filmmaker. Lucas wants to expand his filmmaking empire in the quiet valley that has been home to his Skywalker Ranch for three decades, building a 270,000-square-foot digital media production compound on historic farmland known as Grady Ranch. Lucas' properties comprise 6,100 acres of grassy knolls, valleys and steep hillsides. Yet 95 percent of the land remains undeveloped and protected. Neighbors say the massive structure will constrain their lifestyle with additional noise, traffic and harmful environmental impacts on the pristine countryside. Other neighbors say Lucas has been a stellar neighbor and a steward of the land who has protected massive swaths of agricultural acreage from housing developments, while bringing jobs and tax-paying residents to the community. It will all play out before what is likely to be a wide audience at the Marin County Planning Commission meeting on February 27." —Beth Duff-Brown, "Residents strike back at Lucas empire," *The Associated Press*, February 11, 2012.

Pot crackdown heads to San Francisco <http://bit.ly/zj3C2f>

"San Francisco was the first city in California to license and regulate medical marijuana dispensaries under its Medical Cannabis Act, which became law in 2005. On January 18 and again January 27, Special Agent David White of the Drug Enforcement Agency's financial investigative team sent emails to the health department asking for business licenses, health permits, ownership information and yearly inspection forms for the 12 dispensaries. Last year, White requested information on five other San Francisco dispensaries, issuing a subpoena to obtain private information not normally released via a records request. The landlords of those dispensaries then received letters from U.S. Attorney Melinda Haag, who warned of property forfeiture and 40-year prison terms unless the dispensaries shut down. All five dispensaries closed, though two have since become delivery-only services. After The City briefly suspended its permitting

process, the Planning Commission is scheduled to hear applications for two new dispensaries at its meeting next week." —Chris Roberts, "DEA digging into San Francisco's medical marijuana dispensaries," *The San Francisco Examiner*, February 10, 2012.

Sonoma parks may be kept open by volunteers <http://bit.ly/xpuoHC>

"The state is planning to close 67 of California's 278 parks by July 1 to save \$11 million this fiscal year and \$22 million in succeeding years. A non-profit group, Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods, is seeking to prevent closure this summer of Austin Creek State Recreation Area in Guerneville and also restore services at several beaches and campgrounds along the Sonoma County coast. Specifically, the organization is proposing to charge visitors for parking at day-use areas on the coast and to expand the paid parking area at Armstrong Woods State Reserve. The Stewards group is one of several non-profits that have submitted proposals to operate Sonoma County parks and keep them open. The Stewards plan is the most ambitious, as it encompasses not only 5,700-acre Austin Creek, but also Sonoma Coast State Park, which is not slated for closure but has experienced major service reductions. The group is hoping parking fees collected at day-use areas on the coast can be used to subsidize operations at Austin Creek." —Derek Moore, "Non-profit group seeks to run state beaches, campgrounds in Sonoma County," *The Sonoma County Press Democrat*, February 10, 2012.

Permanent state housing director named <http://bit.ly/wgkrYu>

Linn Warren, 59, of Davis, has been appointed director of the California Department of Housing and Community Development by Gov. Jerry Brown. Mr. Warren has been a program director at the California Housing Finance Agency since 2010, where he served in multiple positions from 2009 to 2010 and from 1995 to 2006. He was vice president at First Nationwide Bank from 1990 to 1995. Warren, a Democrat, succeeds Cathy Creswell, who was appointed acting director of the department in January 2011 as one of Mr. Brown's first moves to replace

(continued on next page)

appointees named by former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. Ms. Creswell replaced Lynn Jacobs, a Ventura County housing developer who was named to the state post in 2006. —“State gets permanent housing chief,” *Central Valley Business Times*, Feb. 10, 2012.

Facebook’s IPO enflames real estate market <http://nyti.ms/w9FAhg>

“It will be some time before the first Facebook shares are sold to the public, and even longer before Facebook’s employees are able to turn their paper wealth into cash and officially take their places as the newest members of the 1 percent. But the mere anticipation of the event may pour a little kerosene onto what is already a fairly hot local real estate market. In recent weeks, Ken DeLeon, a Silicon Valley real estate agent, said, there have been signs that the market has been heating up more: 10 homes in Palo Alto sold for more than their asking prices last month, some by large amounts. Now, with the long-expected Facebook public offering a step closer to reality, Mr. DeLeon said he expected to see several things happen: some sellers may keep their homes off the market until they judge the time is right, some speculators may snap up old houses to tear down and rebuild, and some buyers may feel pressure to make offers before the deluge hits.” —Michael Cooper, “If Silicon Valley costs a lot now, wait until the Facebook update”, *The New York Times*, February 8, 2012.

Challenge to Monterey’s view ordinance rebuffed <http://bit.ly/zwQjzB>

“A nearly completed house remodel that partially blocked a neighbor’s view was denied unanimously Tuesday by the Monterey City Council. Attorneys Myron ‘Doc’ Etienne and Christine Kemp, representing the neighbors, the Mercurios, contended that the city had deprived their clients of due process by failing to issue notices of the project and to set public hearings on it. The homeowners, the LaBontes, went ahead with construction on the strength of the building permits, and when the notification oversight came to light, hearings were held before the Architectural Review Committee and the city Planning Commission, both of which found unanimously that the project ‘unreasonably impaired’ the Mercurios’ view. Interim City Attorney Christine Davi advised the council that, while the city had a view policy developed in 1994 by the Planning Commission, it could not be used to enforce

building codes. Kemp said that if the view policy was abandoned, the council would put in jeopardy other guidelines involving building projects: single-family homes, buildings in historic districts and in Cannery Row, among others.” —Kevin Howe “Monterey City Council rejects house remodel project,” *The Monterey County Herald*, February 7, 2012.

Increase in high-end foreclosures shows depth of housing crisis <http://bit.ly/wImfCe>

“More than 1,500 Bay Area homes with mortgages of \$1 million or more were scheduled for auction last year, more than double the number in 2008, according to ForeclosureRadar, a foreclosure tracking service. Some homeowners are in default because they’ve stopped making payments while they try for a loan modification. Others simply may have decided to stop making payments, thinking the home will take years to return to its former value. A growing number of foreclosure proceedings end with a short sale — selling the home with the agreement of the bank for less than the value of the mortgage. There were nearly twice as many short sales last year of Contra Costa County homes whose initial price was at least \$1 million as there were in 2009, according to real estate information service DataQuick. Santa Clara County short sales increased nearly 20 percent in 2011. ‘In general, the wave of foreclosures is going more toward the higher-end properties,’ said short-sale specialist Joe Reichert, of Keller Williams in Danville, who was showing a home Thursday in Alamo that is listed for \$999,000 — which is less than is owed on it.” —Pete Carey, “Foreclosures at the high end increase across the Bay Area,” *The San Jose Mercury News*, February 6, 2012.

Challenges to new equestrian trail arise <http://bit.ly/yREYpL>

“California State Parks has started construction of a new equestrian trail at Little River State Beach which local horse enthusiasts have raised concerns about via an informal petition asking for more public input signed by roughly 200 people. A group of about 80 people gathered last month to protest the construction project and present the petition, which highlighted concerns over public safety and access over the trail, but State Park representatives did not attend and said the petition was not a qualified one.

(continued on next page)

Uri Driscoll, a member of Arcata's Open Space & Ag Committee and a longtime equestrian, said equestrians don't think the new trail — which mostly runs along U.S. Highway 101 — is necessary. Driscoll said he and several other equestrians want to make sure historically used trails in an area managed partially by the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management and partially by the nonprofit Friends of the Dunes are designated. He and representatives met with State Parks representatives recently to see if an amendment could be made to designate the traditional trails." —Donna Tam, "Equestrians raise concerns over public access to trails: Groups petition over Manila dunes, Little River State Beach," *The Times-Standard*, February 6, 2012.

Grape growers split on new water regulations

<http://bit.ly/wpeCUP>

"Two large groups representing North Coast grape growers said Friday they are likely to voluntarily comply with rules designed to protect endangered fish in the Russian River, even though a judge has put the controversial regulations on hold. But it's unclear whether other growers, who farm more than half of the 23,050 acres in the Russian River watershed, would follow their lead as they head into a critical time of year when water is commonly used to protect crops from frost. The rules prohibit growers from spraying their crops with water during frost season unless they have submitted plans that outline the steps they will take to protect the river. The state required growers to submit a water demand management plan, outlining among other things the names of growers and a governing body, and a schedule for completing frost inventory and a

stream monitoring program, which growers could submit individually or as a group. However, more than 100 water demand management plans were submitted to the state by the Feb. 1 deadline, said Jim Kassel, assistant deputy director of water rights." —Cathy Bussewitz "Many grape growers to voluntarily comply with water rules," *The Sonoma County Press Democrat*, February 3, 2012.

Benched benches may return to San Francisco

<http://s.tt/15r6d>

"All around the city, San Franciscans can be found seated on steps, curbs, retaining walls and on the grass — but not on benches. In a tacit surrender to the overwhelming problem of homelessness, the city has simply removed public seating over the last two decades. Benches in Civic Center Plaza were removed in the 1990s. Those in nearby United Nations Plaza were ripped out in the middle of the night in 2001, to discourage the homeless from congregating and camping there. Despite its problems, some people are now speaking out for public seating. In the last two years, a movement has been growing to create small, lively public spaces with places to sit. Inventive miniparks, called parklets, are popping up in parking spaces around the city, some of them with permanent seats, albeit uncomfortable ones — to discourage prolonged sitting. San Francisco city planners are now working on plans that could reintroduce some outdoor seating along Market Street, from Civic Center to the Embarcadero. This resurgence has reignited the debate over public space and homelessness."

—Zusha Elinson, "Nowhere to sit in San Francisco," *The Bay Citizen*, January 28, 2012. ■

Answer to "Where in the world?" (Page 18)

Civic Centre, Wellington, New Zealand. Photo by Aliza Knox.

"France and Italy have signed an agreement to build a high-speed rail link between Lyon and Turin, the largest such project in Europe, despite opposition on the Italian side of the border. 'A minority cannot upset a shared decision, along with a national and EU program,' said Italian Deputy Transport Minister Mario Ciaccia." *Expatica France*, <http://bit.ly/xKXny8>

What others are saying

Highlights from news sources around the country

Compiled by the editors

Climate change will bring great changes to coastal cities <http://bit.ly/rANV6a>

“A report from the UK’s Met Office Hadley Centre for Climate Change indicated that global warming has significantly increased the number of people at risk from flooding globally. The report, ‘Climate: Observations, projections and impacts,’ examined how climate change will modify the weather in 24 countries around the world. While findings vary from region to region, it forecasts an overall increase in this century of coastal and river floods, extreme weather events and a global temperature rise of between 3–5 degrees Celsius. Dr. David Dodman, senior researcher at the International Institute for Environment and Development, says that temperatures in the city will far exceed that, due to a phenomenon known as the ‘urban heat island effect.’ According to Dodman, the predicted rise in global sea levels pose a threat to city aquifers — underground wells that provide a source of fresh water for many urban settlements around the world. Simon Reddy, executive director of the C40 Cities network, which promotes sustainable development among local city authorities around the world, believes that urbanities of the future will be defined ‘not just by how they restrict their own contributions to climate change, but by the infrastructure and policies they employ to defend against the consequences of it.’” —George Webster, “Floods, heat, migration: How extreme weather will transform cities,” *CNN.com*, February 8, 2012.

Increased levee reporting leads to more unacceptable ratings <http://nyti.ms/wS552r>

“The Army Corps of Engineers has declared 10 percent of the levees in a new database of 2,200 federal levee systems ‘unacceptable,’ including those protecting people in Dallas, Sacramento, St. Paul and Tulsa, Okla. The battles are a result of a major effort by the corps to fully report the state of the nation’s levees. With stimulus money from the federal government, the agency increased the pace of its periodic inspections of the nation’s flood control systems and last fall unveiled the new national database, with ratings of each levee under federal jurisdiction. ‘Unacceptable’ does not

necessarily mean ‘unsafe’ under most conditions, but the designation signals a heightened risk of failure under extreme flooding. Col. Christopher G. Hall, the commander of the corps for the St. Louis district, said the corps had not changed its standards. Instead, he said, improved technologies for assessing risks help engineers get a more accurate picture of the condition of the soil in and underneath the levees. Local officials worry that the corps’s action will cause the Federal Emergency Management Agency to alter its flood maps in ways that would require businesses and residents to buy millions of dollars in flood insurance.” —John Schwartz, “With levees rated ‘unacceptable,’ officials along the Mississippi fight back,” *The New York Times*, February 4, 2012.

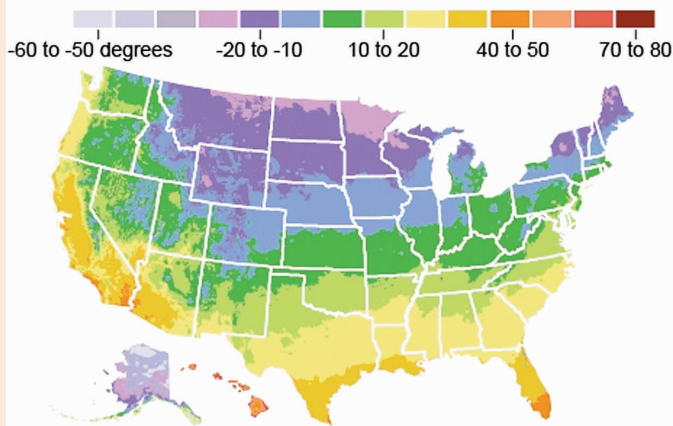
Insurers will report on their risks from climate change <http://nyti.ms/Ae2taf>

“Insurance commissioners in California, New York and Washington State will require that companies disclose how they intend to respond to the risks their businesses and customers face from increasingly severe storms and wildfires, rising sea levels and other consequences of climate change, California’s commissioner said. Many insurance companies, particularly large international reinsurance firms, have been grappling with the issue of assessing risks that are not reflected in the historical record of insurance payouts. These new state regulations will focus attention on the insurance industry’s role in mediating the country’s response to climate change. ‘We are asking insurers to share their views of the risk of climate change so that we can be sure that the industry and regulators are appropriately prepared,’ said Robert H. Easton, a lead insurance regulator in New York. The disclosure survey will be mandatory for companies writing policies worth more than \$300 million nationwide. It was created by Ceres, a Boston-based nonprofit group that leads a coalition of investors and environmental groups in gathering information about business responses to climate change, and prods them to do more.” —Felicity Barringer, “Three states tell insurers to disclose responses to climate change,” *The New York Times*, February 1, 2012.

(continued on next page)

New planting zones

The USDA is changing its planting zone map because the country is warmer and data and map-making technology are better. Average low temperatures for various regions:



USDA zone map reflects warming, but not climate change <http://usat.ly/xhjhGJ>

“Long-awaited changes in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s climate zone guide show northward warming trends, while also targeting a few colder areas in the mountains. Each zone is based on 10 degrees Fahrenheit. Two new zones were added in hotter climates this year for a total of 13 zones. The new map, located on the USDA website, uses 30 years of weather data gathered from 1976 to 2005 and is more precise than the 1990 version, showing smaller areas and accounting for higher elevations and bodies of water that can influence temperature. ‘Across the country, people will be seeing where there are some changes,’ says Catherine Woteki, Agriculture undersecretary for research, education and economics. But she says the changes don’t indicate permanent climate change. As the USDA website notes:

‘Climate changes are usually based on trends in overall average temperatures recorded over 50-100 years. Because the (new map) represents 30-year averages of what are essentially extreme weather events (the coldest temperature of the year), changes in zones are not reliable evidence of whether there has been global warming.’ —Janice Lloyd, “New USDA climate zone map reflects northward warming trends”, *USA TODAY*, January 28, 2012.

New forest rules set to take effect <http://wapo.st/zmnfpZ>

“The Obama administration finalized a rule Thursday governing the management of 193 million acres of national forests and grasslands, establishing a new blueprint to guide everything from logging to recreation and renewable energy development. The guidelines — which will take effect in early March and apply to all 155 national forests, 20 grasslands and one prairie — represent the first meaningful overhaul of forest rules in 30 years. The debate over how best to manage forests — especially in regions such as the Pacific Northwest — has pitted timber companies against environmentalists and some scientists for decades. In announcing the new procedures, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said they were crafted to enhance the nation’s water supplies while maintaining woodlands for wildlife, recreation and timber operations. The lands provide 20 percent of the nation’s drinking water, according to the U.S. Forest Service, an agency of the Agriculture Department. The rule will serve as the guiding document for individual forest plans, which spell out exactly how these lands can be used. While these plans are updated periodically, Vilsack noted that half are more than 15 years old.” —Juliet Eilperin, “Obama administration issues major rewrite of national forest rules”, *The Washington Post*, January 26, 2012. ■

Developers of the Saltworks proposed for the east side of U.S. 101 in Redwood City, have “asked the city to hold off on reviewing the proposal further until they make some determinations on their end, as to how they want to proceed with the project,” said Blake Lyon, acting planning manager for Redwood City. “We’re awaiting further direction from the applicant.” *Peninsula Press*, <http://bit.ly/zDJ6zL>

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

ONLINE VIDEO. 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

FEBRUARY

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FEBRUARY

- 2/23 Sustainable Mobility & Cities: Marrying Technology and Policy.** 8 AM–5:15 PM, David Brower Center, 2150 Allston Way, **BERKELEY**. Breakfast and lunch provided; reception from 5:15 to 6:15 PM. This is the third of three UC Berkeley-sponsored events in the 2011-2012 Conference Series on Urban Sustainability. Advanced registration required. \$75 for private, \$50 for nonprofits. For more information and to register, go to <http://bit.ly/z1ycRY>
- 2/25 Advanced CEQA Workshop.** 10 AM–4 PM, **San José State University**, Pacheco Room, 2nd floor, Student Union Building. To register, contact Don Bradley, dr.donbradley@comcast.net or (650) 592-0915. Do not buy any other materials.
- 2/28 Advanced CEQA Workshop.** 8 AM–4 PM, Nile Hall, Preservation, **OAKLAND**. The workshop topics include case law updates, streamlining and infill development, greenhouse gasses, cumulative impacts, and legislative updates. This information will be presented by Lynette Dias of Urban Planning Partners, Curtis Alling of Ascent Environmental, and Kate Hart of Abbott & Kindermann. Early registration ends on February 20th. Register online at <http://bit.ly/y3OcF5>. For more information, contact Nisha Chauhan, AICP, nishac77@gmail.com **CM | pending**

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MARCH

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MARCH

- 3/1** **APA Peninsula Regional Advisory Council, Happy Hour Mixer.** 5:30–7:30 PM, City Pup, 2620 Broadway Street, **REDWOOD CITY.** **Free.** Join and meet other peninsula planners for an evening of networking and catching up with your colleagues. For more information and to RSVP, contact James Castañeda at james.castaneda@me.com.
- 3/7** **APA California – Northern, Regular Board Meeting.** 6–9 PM, URS Corporation, 1333 Broadway, Suite 800, **OAKLAND.** RSVP to Hanson Hom at hansonapa@gmail.com
- 3/7** **Climate Change, Water, and Planning.** 6:30–8:30 PM, San José City Hall, W118/119, 200 East Santa Clara Street, **SAN JOSÉ.** Registration, networking, and refreshments start at 6 PM. Learn what researchers and practitioners are saying about climate change impacts on sea-level, water supply, and extreme weather events. A panel of experts will discuss plans and potential impacts at the local, regional, and state level, leaving time for comments and questions. Co-sponsored by the Sierra Club. RSVP to katja.irvin@sbcglobal.net or (408) 569-8214. **CM | pending**
- 3/8** **APA North Bay RAC Brown Bag: Middle Green Valley Specific Plan.** Noon–1 PM, Solano County Administrative Building, 6th Floor, Conference Room 6004, 675 Texas Street, **FAIRFIELD.** **Free.** Bring your lunch. The Specific Plan for Middle Green Valley is built upon the fundamental concepts of conservation, sustainability and community, utilizing tools such as development rights transfers and conservation easements to enable rural settlement patterns that honor the area’s agricultural legacy. Challenges adopting the plan and innovated programs associated with it will be discussed. RSVP by March 6th to Kristine Gaspar at kristine.gaspar@ghd.com or (707) 523-1010. For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/zwSfAF>. **CM | 1.0 pending**
- 3/8** **Launch Party: SPUR San Jose.** 5:30 PM–7:30 PM, San Pedro Square Market, **SAN JOSE.** **Free.** SPUR is expanding to the South Bay. Join in celebrating the launch of its new office in the biggest city in Northern California. RSVP at <http://bit.ly/yhcgLH>. For more information about SPUR’s decision to expand, go to <http://bit.ly/xzFf1P>.
- 3/16** **Deadline for APA California Northern Planning Awards submittals: 5 PM.** Nominations and application materials for the APA California Northern Planning Awards are available online at <http://goo.gl/Wpex8>. Materials received after this date and after 5 PM will not be accepted and will not be returned. **No exceptions!**

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MARCH

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3/24 AICP Exam Prep Workshop. 10 AM–4 PM, **San José State University**, Pacheco Room, 2nd floor, Student Union Building. To register, contact Don Bradley, dr.donbradley@comcast.net or (650) 592-0915. Do not buy any other materials. Future meeting dates are April 21 and May 12.

APRIL

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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APRIL

4/7 Planning Commissioner Workshop. 9 AM–12:15 PM, Arlington Clubhouse, 1120 Arlington Boulevard, **EL CERRITO**. **Free.** A light breakfast will be provided. This is the second of three APA California–Northern planning commissioner workshops that will be offered from February to May 2012. This workshop covers land use legal principles and key cases; basic CEQA and environmental review; defensible findings and project conditions; and development project case study. For information, contact Janet Palma, AICP, janetpalma@comcast.net

4/14–4/17 The 2012 APA National Conference will be held April 14–17 at the Los Angeles Convention Center, 1201 South Figueroa Street. Conference information is available at <http://bit.ly/oFYmzB>

4/21 AICP Exam Prep Workshop. 10 AM–4 PM, **San José State University**, Pacheco Room, 2nd floor, Student Union Building. To register, contact Don Bradley, dr.donbradley@comcast.net or (650) 592-0915. Do not buy any other materials. Next and final meeting before the Spring 2011 national APA exam is May 12. ■

“Think about urban, political best practices beyond the mayoral level. Mayors work together through the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group. But we need to do a better job of getting folks like state senators and those serving on city council to be more in tune with urban best practices from around the country.”

— *Diana Lind, editor in chief, Next American City.* <http://bit.ly/yvnP6j>

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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 4,000.

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 2012 schedule can be viewed at <http://bit.ly/wSH355>.

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