



NORTHERN NEWS

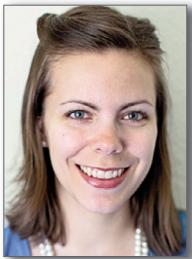


American Planning Association
California Chapter
Northern
Making Great Communities Happen

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

DECEMBER 2013/JANUARY 2014

Exurban and super-high density Turkey's hills are alive with the sound of building



By Jennifer Piozet, associate editor

This past November, I attended a meeting of the Santa Clara County Housing Action Coalition (HAC) where specific Turkish housing developments and problems were discussed. Presenters included Shiloh

Ballard of the HAC and Peter Hamilton, City of San Jose (both visited Turkey in July); Cigdem Cogur, an Istanbul native and Oakland-based architect for Cogur Design + Construction; and Yelda Kizildag, a Turkish planner who is focusing her PhD dissertation on urban renewal in Istanbul.

The following is my summary of the presentation and discussion. But first, a definition:

ge•ce•kon•du (gih•zee•kawn' duh) *Turkish, n.*

1. literal: was made at night. **2.** a makeshift, uncomfortable hut erected overnight on land owned by the state, municipality, or individuals in defiance of building codes and property rights. **3.** a large unplanned community of such dwellings, of various degrees of permanence (cf. favelas, Brazil). [*The Genesis of the Gecekondu: Rural Migration and Urbanization* (1976), Kemal H. Karpat.]

New and super-high density, exurban, hillside housing is pushing out the working classes who have lived in squatter housing outside of Istanbul and Ankara since the 1950s. The high-rise, gated communities have no connection to the community or street, but the older, squatter housing is feeling the pressure of rising land prices.

This squatter housing — illegal, informal, unauthorized housing usually located in landslide and earthquake zones — is called gecekondu, and the communities are at risk

for redevelopment as the land is sold by the government to private investors.

"Drive through a suburb out to the hills beyond Ankara, and all of a sudden there are 10 high-rise buildings," said Shiloh Ballard. You see "an island of really super high density residential in the middle of nowhere." Ballard, head of the Silicon Valley Housing Action Coalition



Older housing in Beyoğlu in central (European) Istanbul.

Photo: Shiloh Ballard ■

(continued on page 13)

WHAT'S INSIDE

Governmental planning and development in Turkey has been making news these past months. Associate editor Jennifer Piozet leads this issue of *Northern News* with a discussion of the ever-expanding, super-high density high-rise in the Turkish hillsides and its impacts on the squatter housing that has occupied the same or nearby lands since the 1960s. *From the editor*, [page 12](#), summarizes a November 24th article from *Today's Zaman*, Turkey's largest English-language daily, on the "unstoppable and government-backed urbanization adventure for the past decade." And on [page 25](#), we summarize an October *Future Cities* article on the battle over an eight-lane motorway bulldozed through a previously protected forest on the edge of Ankara.

Also in this issue:

Director's note. Kudos to APA Northern's Holiday party planners and sponsors; to Laura Thompson on her re-election as Northern Section treasurer; and to Hing Wong, AICP, who will become President-elect of APA California on January 1. [Page 3](#)

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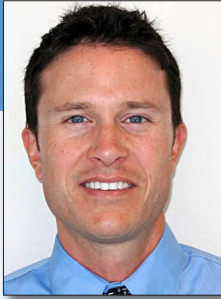
Eight holiday party photos. A look at District (Oakland) and some of your colleagues who were there. [Page 15](#)

Norcal roundup, assembled by associate editor Jennifer Piozet. [Page 17](#)

State, national, global. Assembled by Naphtali H. Knox, FAICP. Formerly "Other top stories," this regular feature is renamed and divided among **California** (six abstracts), **National** (seven), and **Global** (five). These are short. Flip through the headlines, find what interests you, and take the link to the original article. [Page 20](#)

Board member directory and newsletter information. [Page 26](#)

Find JOBS and EVENTS CALENDAR at norcalapa.org



Director's note

By Jeff Baker

Happy New Year!

It's hard to believe that 2013 is already behind us. It was another great year filled with training and networking events in the Northern Section.

The Northern Section annual Holiday Party, held November 22nd at District in Oakland, was a great success! (See photos on [page 15](#).) The nearly 100 attendees enjoyed the festivity and the opportunity to catch up with colleagues and celebrate their 2013 accomplishments. I would like to thank our generous sponsors for providing raffle prizes that raised over \$400 for the California Planning Foundation: **Winzler & Kelly | GHD, LSA, HNTB, Eisen/Letunic, Juan Borrelli, AICP, and URS**. And a special thank you goes out to the Holiday Party planning committee led by **Florentina Craciun: Tania Sheyner, AICP; Darcy Kremin, AICP; Ronny Kraft, AICP; and Hanson Hom, AICP**; as well as the **student volunteers** who assisted during the event. The party would not have been such an outstanding success without the hard work and dedication of the firms and individuals who helped plan and sponsor the event.

The Northern Section Board will meet in January to review the Board's and Section's accomplishments in 2013, set and prioritize goals for 2014, adopt the annual budget, and kick off the New Year. Please drop me a line if you have suggestions regarding Northern Section goals that you would like to see accomplished in 2014.

2014 promises to be another exciting and busy year here in the Northern Section. Major events that will be a focus this year include an International Planning Trip to eastern Europe and planning for the 2015 APA California conference to be hosted by Northern Section in Oakland. A number of committees have been formed to help plan and host the conference. Please let me know if you would like to volunteer your time to serve on a committee and help to make this a successful event.

Please join me in congratulating **Laura Thompson** on her election to a second two-year term as Northern Section Treasurer beginning January 1st. Laura has done a great job, and we are thrilled to have her continue on as Treasurer as we launch into 2014.

There are always plenty of opportunities to get involved with the Northern Section. We are currently recruiting members for two Board positions: Young Planner's Group Director, and Peninsula Regional Activity Coordinator. To find out more and review the description of these positions, see the Northern Section By-Laws at <http://bit.ly/OOdLMo>. You'll find the duties for the YPG director on page 13 in Section 4.7.16, and for the Regional Advisory Council (RAC) Directors in Section 4.7.17. To learn more about the Young Planners Group, go to <http://bit.ly/18doFld>, and visit the group on www.facebook.com/YPGNorCal. Interested candidates should contact me at Jeff.Baker@dublin.ca.gov.

Last but not least, congratulations to **Hing Wong, AICP**, on his election as President Elect of APA California. His one-year term as President Elect starts January 1, 2014. His two-year term as Chapter President will commence January 1, 2015. ■

Seeing a forest for the trees. Palo Alto's "draft Urban Forest Master Plan envisions a future forest that can meet the challenges of a changing environment and a rapidly developing city. Ironically, development has increased the number of trees in the city. The urban canopy cover was 32.8 percent in 1982, but 37.6 percent in 2010. Neighborhoods averaged 36.6 percent in 1982 and 41.1 percent in 2010" according to a 2011 analysis. —Sue Dremann, <http://bit.ly/HVwAyn>

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FREE Traffic, Pedestrian, and Bicycle Safety assistance for California communities

By Eduardo C. Serafin, PE, AICP

The Technology Transfer Program (Tech Transfer) of the UC Berkeley Institute of Transportation Studies offers free technical assistance services designed for California communities, cities, and counties. Tech Transfer can bring their safety experts to your community to help improve safety and accessibility for all roadway users. Tech Transfer will review applications as they are received, and will likely have to run a waiting list due to high demand for the popular service. To improve your chances of getting a slot this year, request a free Traffic Safety Assessment or Pedestrian Safety Assessment today.

Tech Transfer added a Bicycle Safety Assessment (BSA) service this year. BSA slots are already full, so act now to place your community on the wait list for next year.

To inquire or apply, email pedsafety@techtransfer.berkeley.edu

Funding for Tech Transfer is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. For more information on this free technical assistance program for California communities, see <http://www.techtransfer.berkeley.edu/services/> ■

Where in the world?

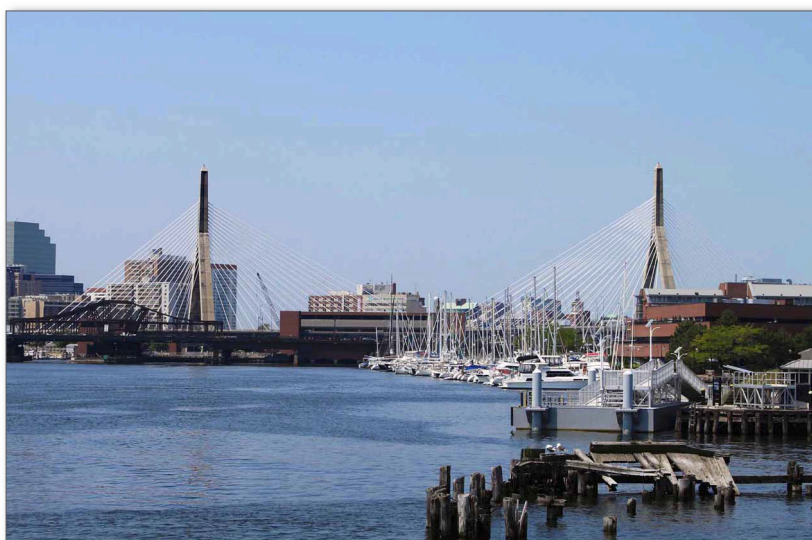


Photo by Elizabeth Rynecki. (Answer on [page 11.](#))



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Meet a local planner

Seventh in a series of interviews by Tania Sheyner, AICP



For the past year, Viktoriya Wise, AICP, has been the Deputy Director of Environmental Planning/Deputy Environmental Review Officer at the San Francisco Planning Department, where she has been for nine years.

How did you become interested in the planning as a profession?

I became interested at a young age, having been brought up in Moscow. It was a densely populated, dynamic, and very intense urban environment, and that made me interested in physical planning and environmental issues as a whole. I studied environmental economics in college, and since then, I have worked mostly in environmental and transportation planning. When I was appointed to the planning commission in San Rafael, my interests broadened to urban planning and design and, currently, to how our physical surroundings affect health.

Tell me about the recent changes in local and State CEQA legislation that will affect how environmental review is conducted in San Francisco.

There have been two changes this year. The first was to Chapter 31 of our Administrative Code — the section of the code that directs how we implement CEQA. Among other things, the changes set an appeal timeline for CEQA exemptions. The planning department issues thousands of exemptions each year. This change provides a more robust notification and outreach to the public while also limiting the timeline for how long a decision to issue an exemption can be appealed — thus offering greater certainty to the development review process.

The other change was at the State level. With the passage of Senate Bill 743, infill development in areas well served by public transportation no longer need to consider aesthetic and parking impacts as significant. SB 743 also directs the Governor's Office of Planning and Research to come up with criteria and metrics other than Level of Service to assess project impacts on the transportation system.

What do you find most fulfilling about your job?

Two things. One is that I work with amazing, innovative people who are forward thinking and visionary in implementing projects and programs that facilitate urban living. These projects often lead

(continued on next page)

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Meet a local planner *(continued from previous page)*

to densification of communities, but also enhance their livability through creation of urban spaces, public amenities, etc. This is thrilling to see. The other thing is the projects themselves, which are exciting and unique and span the gamut of small infill projects to large developments like the Exploratorium, the Transbay Tower, California Pacific Medical Center, and the Moscone Expansion. Just the variety and uniqueness of projects that we work on in the Department — in terms of issues, designs, politics — keeps things very exciting.

What are the most important qualities you look for in your staff?

Attention to detail while understanding the larger context and vision for the City. Interpersonal communication skills are also key. It's critical to be able to communicate complex ideas and concepts to different audiences — the public, politicians, colleagues, your boss — and tailor your message to audiences in a way they can understand and let them participate in the planning process.

What is your advice to planners starting out?

Work hard, keep abreast of planning news, and find a mentor — someone you connect with and who is doing something exciting or important in a field that you're really passionate about.



Interviewer Tania Sheyner, AICP, is Northern Section's Professional Development Director. You can reach her at tsheyner@gmail.com ■

When climate change hits home. "When choosing a house in Rotterdam, one part of the decision-making process is how high off the ground to live. Ninety percent of the city's inhabitants live below sea level, and Rotterdam is exposed to flooding from the North Sea, the Rhine River, and heavy rainfall. Left unchallenged, rising sea levels would mean the end of the city. That has led city leaders to take an active stance against the potential devastation of climate change." —Rachel Keeton, <http://bit.ly/1aErvkj>



Who's where



Dave Javid, AICP, LEED AP, has recently joined M-Group as a Principal Planner + Urban Designer in the San Rafael office. He is leading the firm's Policy Planning and Urban Design team. Prior to M-Group, Dave was a Senior Planner with PMC in Oakland, and before that, worked at MIG in Berkeley. He holds a Master of City and Regional Planning from Cal Poly SLO and a BA in Urban Studies from UC San Diego. Dave is the Co-director of the Northern Section's Sustainability Committee.



Kerry Rohrmeier, PhD AICP, is now the Director of Urban Research at Metropolitan Planning Group in Mountain View. She will be working on policy projects and a variety of new applied case studies spotlighting Bay Area best planning practices. Kerry had been in Northern Nevada for 10 years, representing private development interests. She holds a PhD in Urban Geography from the University of Nevada, Reno; an MS in Biological Sciences (focused on GIS) from Cal Poly SLO; and a Technology BA from Sierra Nevada College. Kerry was the Northern Nevada APA Treasurer from 2006–2009. ■

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Facebook: going with the wind. A new Facebook data center will open in 2014 just outside Des Moines, Iowa, accompanied by a new wind farm 70 miles away that will produce enough energy to completely power the complex. The data center will be powered from the grid until the wind farm launches in 2015. The center also will utilize a range of energy efficiency strategies to reduce its environmental footprint. —Lori Zimmer, <http://bit.ly/1bL4KOa>

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Call for nominations — Several new categories!

Do you know a great project, planner, firm, or agency? The Northern Section is officially opening a call for nominations for Section Awards.

If you've been following the awards program, you'll note that this year we have many new categories, along with plenty of old favorites. The new categories are intended to reflect greater cohesion with awards at the state and national levels and enable us to recognize a wider spectrum of projects and people.

Last year, winners from the Northern Section went on to garner several State Awards. Let's keep up the tradition and recognize the best in planning.

The Section Awards Categories for 2014 are:

Project Awards

Opportunity and Empowerment **NEW**
Comprehensive Plan – Large and Small Jurisdictions (2 awards)
Implementation – Large and Small Jurisdictions (2 awards)
Innovation in Green Community Planning
Economic Planning and Development **NEW**
Transportation Planning **NEW**
Best Practices
Grassroots Initiative
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Urban Design **NEW**
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Advancing Diversity and Social Change
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Emerging Planning and Design Firm **NEW**
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Planning Pioneer
Distinguished Service
Distinguished Contribution
Section Activity
Planning Emeritus Network (PEN)

Get all the details, rules, and applications at:

<http://norcalapa.org/programs/awards/>

The deadline for nominations is Thursday, March 20, 2014

Mark your calendars: Join our annual Awards Gala dinner to learn more about the best in Northern Section planning. It's happening **Friday, May 16, 2014**, at the Parc 55 Hotel near Union Square in San Francisco. AICP I CM Credit is pending for this event.

For more information, please contact Awards Co-Directors Eileen Whitty at ejpwhitty@gmail.com or John Cook at j.cook@circlepoint.com ■

“Biophilic urbanism” on the rise

Excerpted by Scott T. Edmondson, AICP, from a post by Timothy Beatley, October 2, 2013.
(See links at end of article.)

“Too often,” notes University of Virginia Professor Timothy Beatley, “urban greening efforts focus on everything except nature, emphasizing such elements as public transit, renewable energy production, and energy efficient building systems.” But as the human environment becomes increasingly urban — 3.5 billion in 2008, 7.6 billion by 2050 — we need nature in cities even more.

Researchers are finding that nature in the city remedies many environmental, economic, and social-psychological urban challenges. In response to those challenges, new approaches are emerging — “biophilic” urbanism and biophilic design, along with the larger arena of regenerative urban planning and design. A key principle of these approaches is that contact with nature and the natural world is absolutely essential to a healthy modern urban life. Accumulating research indicates that we are happier, more relaxed, productive, resilient, generous, and creative when we live and work in the presence of nature.

Beatley’s two-year Biophilic Cities Project at the University of Virginia’s School of Architecture has been exploring the many creative ways in which cities have been planning for and integrating nature. Partner cities around the world include Singapore, San Francisco, Milwaukee, Vitoria-Gasteiz (Spain), Portland, OR, Birmingham (UK), and Wellington (NZ). Much of the work explores what a biophilic city is, or could be — what it looks and feels like. The project has been developing metrics, assembling data and GIS layers, and producing video stories.

Creative approaches include —

- Designing nature into denser vertical urban environments through a mix of regulations, subsidies, and R&D;
- Green walls and rooftops;
- Networks of urban trail “park connectors”;
- Urban waterway restoration;
- Schoolyard gardens;
- Green streets that collect and treat stormwater;
- Urban forest master plans;
- “Parklet” creation in on-street parking spaces;
- Urban biodiversity planning for natural areas and urban spaces;
- Investments in large regional networks of urban forests and green spaces, including marine “blue belts”; and
- “Natural capital” programs to create climate-secure “markets” (i.e., climate-proofed cities) for and through investment in biophilic city assets (investment pool estimated at 21 trillion dollars in 2014).

These approaches are key to shifting from traditional open space provision, natural area restoration, and ornamental landscaping to local ecosystem and habitat creation in urban spaces — from the balcony to the block, and to larger districts, the city, and the region. Green elements at every scale deliver emotional value, but they will also help to mitigate and adapt to climate change, shade and cool urban environments, conserve water and energy, and produce some of our food.

The challenge to planners is to envision and innovate policies, zoning, and design guidelines to generate the added prosperity, health, and beauty of biophilic cities. Mexico City has been investing in large green walls and financially supporting the installation of rooftop gardens to improve air quality and food security. Rio de Janeiro’s Tijuca forest (the world’s largest urban forest) protects the city’s water supply. Manila and Mumbai are protecting and restoring mangrove forests as an adaptation to storm surges and sea level rise.

Biophilic cities involve more than the presence of nature in our city planning and design. They include how and in what ways residents engage that nature, and how much they know and care. How to foster a culture of curiosity about nature is key. Creative ideas include summer camping in urban parks, free kayaking on river trails, school-based initiatives that cultivate a love of nature in children at an early age, and urban-based citizen science efforts that involve hands-on enjoyment, recreation, and restoration work.

Other dimensions of a biophilic city include public institutional support in municipal decisions, investments, and annual operational budgets, and incorporating

(continued on next page)

Plan-it sustainably (continued from previous page)

ecosystem services and principles, such as circular material flows and renewable energy, into the urban economy.

Although existing initiatives are impressive, important questions remain.

- How much and what kind of nature is needed in cities?
- What combination of these natural experiences will deliver the greater health and psychological benefits?
- What is the minimum daily requirement of nature?
- Which urban planning tools, techniques, and strategies will be most effective at ensuring this nature exists in our urban future?
- Can cities become engines for the conservation of biodiversity, where planners guide urban development to restore and enhance global biodiversity?

To mark the next chapter — expanding the learning/practicing community of interested and engaged planners, designers, public officials, citizens, and cities — Professor Beatley held a Biophilic Cities Network Launch for the international partner cities and academic pioneers this past October, <http://bit.ly/1giPxtr>. To see the agenda, summaries, videos, and other content, or to join the innovation, take the Biophilic Cities Pledge, engage, and begin or continue the work, visit <http://bit.ly/1bhIjIG>

Timothy Beatley, PhD, is the Teresa Heinz Professor of Sustainable Communities and Chair of the Department of Urban & Environmental Planning at the University of Virginia School of Architecture. Read his original post at <http://bit.ly/1g7TEZj>

Read a review of Beatley's book "Biophilic Cities: Integrating Nature into Urban Design and Planning," at <http://bit.ly/1hHsDwc>
Visit Northern Section's Sustainability Committee at <http://bit.ly/1kdkNr8> ■

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CEQA Update, Issues, and Trends: Explore recent legislative, regulatory, and judicial developments, related to the environmental review process. Instructors: Kenneth Bogdan, James Moose. **AICP | CM 6.0**

Annual Land Use Law Review and Update: Learn about recent developments in California law affecting land use, planning, and environmental compliance through analyses of recent case law. Instructors: William Abbot, Mathew Gray, Cecily Talbert Barclay. **AICP | CM 6.0**

Planning and Environmental Law: Gain an understanding of planning and environmental law policy at micro and macro levels. Get the knowledge and practical skills to successfully navigate the legal framework in your chosen career. Instructor: Albert Herson. **AICP | CM 30.0**

Understanding GIS Modeling for Sustainable Communities: This GIS centered, lecture-based course will provide an overview of common land use and transportation models for sustainable communities. Instructors: Raef Porter, Nathaniel Roth. **AICP | CM 6.0**

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Using Master Plans, Specific Plans, and Community Plans to Create Great Places: Learn about legal requirements for specific plans, community involvement strategies, and relevant CEQA issues. Instructors: David Early, Jonathan Stern. **AICP | CM 6.0**

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For course details and to enroll, visit extension.ucdavis.edu/land ■

Planning students make an impact with Fall events

By Mark Young and Amanda Becker

This past September, the San José State University (SJSU) Urban Planning Coalition (UPC) hosted three significant events that helped to educate and motivate planning students and members of the public: a planning symposium, a PARK(ing) Day event, and the California County Planning Commissioners Association's (CCPCA) annual conference.

The UPC's Fall Symposium — which focused on Planning for Healthy Communities — comprised multiple panels: Planning for Different Demographics, Local Food Access, and Active Transportation.

The UPC identified, contacted, and hosted a number of experts in disciplines ranging from agriculture and public health to geography and transportation engineering. To provide information about public health, the UPC hosted Dr. Elizabeth Baca of the Governor's Office of Planning and Research as the Symposium's keynote speaker. To engage the Symposium's audience, the UPC utilized an innovative Twitter-based mechanism to allow audience members to directly ask panel members their questions. Despite inclement weather, the Symposium was well attended by students, planning professionals, and the public.

For PARK(ing) Day, the UPC joined the larger PARK(ing) Day festivities in Downtown San José, building a miniature golf course and providing planning-related information in parking spaces by the SJSU campus. We transformed two parking spaces in front of the Martin Luther King Jr. Library into a sitting area, a miniature golf course, and an urban planning craft station. The craft station consisted of two projects, one involving a San José land use map, and the other a collage of a large urban transect zone. On tracing paper over the San José land use map, people were invited to draw or write the improvements they would like to see, and what they

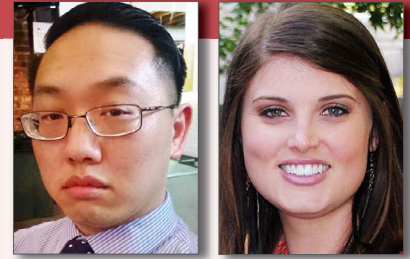
liked and did not like about the city. For the urban transect zone collage, people were asked to cut pictures out of

old APA Planning magazines and paste them in the transect zone in which they felt the images belonged.

Many students and members of the public visited the miniature golf course, where UPC members educated them about the planning profession and the purpose of PARK(ing) Day. In conjunction with the many other parklets throughout Downtown San José, the UPC's efforts helped educate the public and pose the question of what could be done with parking spaces besides car storage.

The UPC also was involved in the planning and successful execution of the California County Planning Commissioners Association's Annual Conference, which in 2013 focused on Water and Innovative Land Use. Working closely with the CCPCA, UPC members helped facilitate the conference, secured the facilities for the Conference's activities, and served as tour guides to CCPCA members. By directly working with planning professionals, UPC members gained valuable experience in planning and executing large events. At the same time, UPC members were able to learn from the panel discussions on varied subjects ranging from future accessibility to potable water to the effects of sea level rise.

While these events may have been quite challenging for the students to plan and execute while simultaneously completing Masters of Urban Planning coursework, UPC members appreciated the opportunity to plan and participate in the conference events, further developing their professional skills and abilities. ■



Answer to "Where in the world?" (Page 4)

Leonard P. Zakim Bunker Hill Bridge, Boston

This I-95 bridge across the Charles River — opened in 2003 — is the widest cable-stayed bridge in the world, designed to carry 10 lanes of traffic. It is named after both civil rights activist Leonard P. Zakim and the Battle of Bunker Hill. **Photo: Elizabeth Rynecki.**

"Sharing two wheels is becoming ever more popular.

According to a study by the Earth Policy Institute (EPI) in Washington, [the US] in 2012 had 21 [bike-sharing programs] with 8,500 bicycles. The EPI expects the fleet to more than quadruple by 2014, to 37,000." —*The Economist*,

<http://econ.st/19CLF3y>



From the editor *By Naphtali H. Knox, FAICP*

Housing in Turkey — planned and unplanned

In our lead article, associate editor Jennifer Piozet summarizes a presentation she heard on this subject at the November meeting of the Housing Action Coalition of Santa Clara County. *Today's Zaman*, the highest circulation English-only newspaper in Turkey, also had something to say about this very issue two weeks later:

“Quickly rising unsightly developments [and] dwindling parks and green spaces have been the hallmarks of Turkey’s unstoppable and government-backed — yet mostly under-regulated — urbanization adventure for the past decade.”

So begins an article in *Today's Zaman* by Bariş Altintaş, November 24, 2013, <http://bit.ly/1i4MFlr>. Altintaş concludes, “At the end of the day, the spirit of urban renewal [in Turkey] stems from a lack of democracy and a participatory approach to urban planning.”

Turkey’s population is exploding. It grew by 9,132,000 between 1990 and 2000, and by 8,751,000 between 2000 and 2010. In 2011 and 2012, it added an estimated total of 2,624,000, and currently has about 76 million people. Three-quarters of the people live in towns and cities, and a third of those live in just two cities, Istanbul and Ankara. Istanbul has about the same land area as the Bay Area, but it has a significantly larger population — between 13.7 and 13.9 million in December 2012.

According to a 2012 summary by the Association of European Schools of Planning (<http://bit.ly/17Yguj9>), economic crisis in the early 1980s adversely affected the

housing industry in Turkey. In 1984, the Turkish Housing Development Administration (TOKİ) was established to prevent unauthorized squatter settlements while meeting the housing needs of low and middle-income populations in more-resilient dwellings, in a planned urban environment. By 2000, however, TOKİ had revised its structure and began to produce luxury housing, ostensibly to subsidize social housing projects.

Altintaş writes:

“Traditionally, the development juggernaut in Turkey relied on empty lots and neighborhoods, [but when] the government in 2012 passed Law No. 6306 on the Transformation of Areas Under Disaster Risk, often called the Disaster Law, anything — including cemeteries and newly built apartment blocks — became a space to be transformed. Yaşar Adnan Adanalı, an urban planner, university instructor, and researcher, as well as a blogger on urban development issues, recalls that the head of [a major] real estate investors’ group openly referred to the Disaster Law as an ‘investment opportunity.’

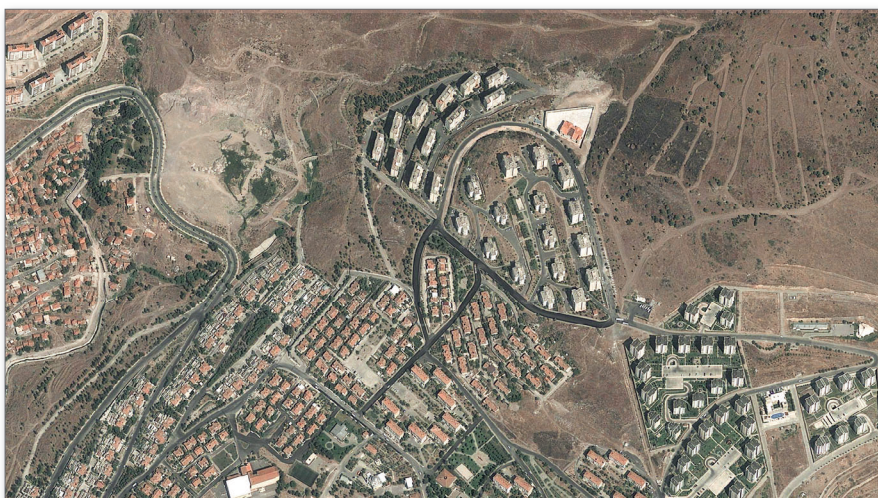
“According to the Chamber of City Planners (ŞPO), the Disaster Law ... makes it clear that even disaster-proof buildings can be demolished to ensure ‘project integrity.’ The law is ‘a disaster for protected historic sites and grasslands, as it overrides all laws protecting natural and cultural heritage.’”

If you haven’t already read Jennifer’s article, have a look now. ■

Ohio state senators propose LEED ban in public projects. “The challenge in Ohio, notes USGBC director of technical policy Jeremy Sigmon, is ‘a single industry’s attempt to tear down LEED when they disagree with one or two credits. Most industries innovate to contribute to LEED — the chemical industry is choosing to lobby.’ However, he notes, Ohio carries strong support for the rating system and revoking its use in public buildings would be ‘akin to California turning its back on green building leadership.’” —Katie Weeks, <http://bit.ly/1fp2lvc>



Hillside urban sprawl on the northern edge of Izmir rises above the Karşıyaka waterfront. Photo: Shiloh Ballard



Satellite view of hillside area in photo. Image: Google maps

(HAC), recently returned from a fact-finding visit to Turkey with Peter Hamilton, a Senior Policy Aide for San Jose Councilmember Don Rocha.

The 14 million people who live in Istanbul and the 5 million in Ankara together account for a quarter of Turkey's population of 76 million. And then there's the density. To put these statistics into perspective, Istanbul's 14 million people live in an area of 6,700 square miles — almost exactly the same land area as the San Francisco Bay Area, with a population of 8 million.

The gecekondu areas are a result of the mechanization of agriculture in the 1950s, when workers lost their jobs and migrated to the industrializing big cities. Once there, they were unable to afford costly housing, and gecekondu developments began to form. It was essential for these gecekondu developments to be located near the city core with access to transit and services, as the residents were typically poor, young, uneducated, and unemployed.

Transit access is especially important for residents. Bicycle lanes do not exist, so very few commute by bike. Owning and parking a car is challenging because of the internal road patterns and external connections. Many transit riders choose to take taxis for the last leg of their trip, which are very inexpensive, but still cost-prohibitive for gecekondu residents.

Today, Turkey's housing is a mix of old gecekondu developments (located on the urban periphery), new high-rise sprawl developments in the hills and near the city center (replacing the gecekondu developments), and high-density, traditional city-center mixed-use developments. As gecekondu settlements are removed to make way for safer and healthier developments, some gecekondu residents are unable to afford to continue to live in Istanbul and Ankara.

During the 1960s, gecekondu residents were viewed as a cheap labor force, but also seen as the source of social ills. The solution was the clearance of gecekondu settlements and the building of social housing. This trend continued through the 1990s, leading to gentrification of gecekondu areas and rising land prices. Since then, Turkey has struggled with

how to accommodate the gecekondu residents without unfairly pushing them out of the city.

Two models were employed to improve the gecekondu developments in an attempt to make them safer.

Model 1 allowed developers to upgrade the housing without paying for the land, and current occupants did not pay for the upgrades. This was a purely physical transformation, with a social transformation expected to follow. However, this model led to lower standards of construction, and the quality of life in the existing neighborhoods remained lower than surrounding neighborhoods. Also, the increased density of the redeveloped gecekondus left the residents feeling disconnected from society and their surroundings. Other issues were the rewarding of illegal housing behaviors and the allotment of free housing to gecekondu residents while middle class residents lived in unsubsidized, older housing. Model 1 demonstrated that cookie-cutter approaches were not effective and that flexibility is needed in order to meet the needs of different neighborhood populations.

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Exurban and super-high density

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Model 2 allowed the Turkey Housing Development Association to create roughly 500,000 units with 25 percent set aside for low income; however, many low income and former gecekondu residents could not afford the new rents and associated building fees. Also, these projects were left unfinished, without promised amenities like children's playgrounds and parks. And many of the projects were not contextually sensitive to the surrounding neighborhood, rising high above the existing housing. In general, the projects are located away from resources and the city center, are too expensive, and are not connected to public transit — leaving many gecekondu residents with a poor connection to the surrounding society.

Lessons learned

- Template planning does not work.
- Locating housing away from resources prices poorer people out. They are away from the city center and cannot access resources or public transit.
- Security of tenure allows people to invest in their housing and develop a sense of belonging.
- Income mix leads to better-integrated communities.
- Phased redevelopment is better than total clearance.
- Outdoor projects such as parks and playgrounds need to be finished as promised.
- More research is needed to understand where gecekondu residents go when displaced from their homes.
- For all the reasons discussed above, exurban, high density, high-rise development is problematic. ■

Correction

An article in the November issue — “New ‘zero-parking’ Berkeley development,” page 18, <http://bit.ly/1bgOFmY> — included an out-dated rendering from an earlier design for a residential development at 2201 Dwight Way, Berkeley.

A rendering based on the approved plans appears below. The new photo correctly shows the development with four stories along Fulton Street, not five as shown in the earlier photo.



Proposed Garden Village, Berkeley. Image: discovergardenvillage.com

In addition,

- The Berkeley Zoning Adjustments Board approved the project 8–0 with one absence, not 7–1 as previously stated.
- The parking waiver was granted as a concession under State density bonus law.
- The project has a rooftop farm. (A by-right use in residential districts allows farming and the sale of “non-processed edibles.”)
- The use of “zero parking” in the original headline may have been misleading. The project provides parking for four shared vehicles.

Northern News regrets any confusion that may have been caused. ■

Left coast leads on climate change. “British Columbia has joined California, Oregon, and Washington in the *Pacific Coast Action Plan on Climate and Energy*. The objective is to step up the adoption of clean energy and link carbon pricing plans. Together, the three states and British Columbia have an enormous economy, a population of more than 50 million, a history of economic and technological innovation, and front-row seats on the ocean, where climate change will have a profound effect. This regional coalition rightly sees the task of limiting climate change not as an economic threat but an economic opportunity.” —*The New York Times* Editorial Board, <http://nyti.ms/1ibnNWT>

Season's greetings!

APA California Northern's 2013 Holiday Party was very much a joyous — albeit early — seasonal event: A great party, held Friday, November 22, at District, Eighth and Washington Street, downtown Oakland. Northern Section thanks the many board members and volunteers who pitched in to organize the event and make it such a success. We especially thank our sponsors (see [page 3](#)) and those who contributed attractive gifts for the evening's raffle. The drawing raised money for the California Planning Foundation to be used for scholarships for students in planning throughout Northern California. (Photos: Naphtali H. Knox, FAICP.)



From the left, foreground: Miroo Desai, AICP; Janet Palma, AICP; Hanson Hom, AICP; Mike Rivera. Hing Wong, AICP (back to camera) talks with Lee Taubeneck.



The scene at District. Erik Balsley, AICP, center; eats; Josh Schiffer, AICP, right foreground.



Jeanette Dinwiddie-Moore, FAICP; Mika Miyasato, AICP; Darcy Kremin, AICP.



Josh Channell, AICP; Megan Wessel, AICP.

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Season's greetings!

(continued from previous page)



Veronica Flores; Jennifer Piozet, associate editor; Amanda Becker.



Juan Borrelli, AICP; Alice Daly, AICP; Hing Wong, AICP.



Jeff Baker, Northern Section Director; Janet Palma, AICP.



Charlie Bryant, AICP; Sean Moss, AICP; Hannah Young, AICP.



Norcal roundup

Assembled by Jennifer Piozet, associate editor

Death by pink mustache?

<http://bit.ly/1e2jvSk>

San Francisco's "taxi industry is pitted against ride services like Lyft, Sidecar, and UberX. In September, the California Public Utilities Commission approved regulations to oversee the ride-service startups, which allow passengers to hire private drivers through smartphone apps. 'They didn't have to go to cab school, didn't have to pay for an A-card,' Brad Newsham says. 'They didn't have to do all the stuff we have to do. I worked 20 years to get a medallion and these people walk in there and suddenly they've got everything I've got.' 'I believe that if we can make all taxis available through the smartphone applications then we will be able to provide the same kind of reliability and easy electronic access that has made Lyft and Sidecar attractive to consumers,' says Christiane Hayashi, the SFMTA's director of Taxis and Accessible Services. But some longtime taxi drivers who know the business inside and out think there is a serious risk that the ride-service drivers are overlooking. 'I wouldn't ever drive in one because of the insurance issue,' said Ed Healy." —Jon Brooks, "Will 'ride sharing' kill San Francisco's taxi industry?" *KQED News*, November 7, 2013.

The tech industry's suburban affair

<http://bit.ly/1hJHjuM>

"On [Nov. 5], the town's voters overturned the Palo Alto City Council's unanimous approval for a 72-unit project at 567 Maybell Avenue. The project Palo Alto rejected was to be built by a non-profit developer and would have had 60 apartments for low-income seniors and 12 market-rate townhouses to help support the subsidized units financially. San Carlos told a developer this week to scale back their plans for a mixed-use, mixed-income development near Caltrain's commuter rail station. Palo Alto also clawed back its parking minimum reform, instituting new rules that require developers to build more parking with their downtown projects. Cupertino was happy to accommodate the world's most expensive building, Apple's low density 'space ship' campus. Menlo Park's Facebook's new campus will feature a 394-unit apartment complex to rise nearby for workers. The one exception to Silicon Valley's anti-urban development attitudes is downtown San Jose. The apartment market there has been quite strong lately, with many new projects in the pipeline. So until the Valley either starts to accept urbanization in its traditional downtowns or loses the war entirely to San Francisco and San Jose, the Bay Area tech sector

will continue to be a predominantly suburban affair." —Stephen J. Smith, "NIMBY Palo Alto rejects senior housing complex," *Next City*, November 8, 2013.

Migrating cows good for soil and emissions

<http://nyti.ms/1aQGoAh>

Tom Steyer and Kat Taylor "did not set out to raise prime grass-fed beef at TomKat Ranch, 1,800 acres near the ocean off Highway 1. The plan was to create a model conservation project, demonstrating ways to improve soil health, use solar energy, and conserve water. 'This wasn't about cows,' Ms. Taylor said. But once cows became part of the plan to restore the land, it was not too long before TomKat also became an agricultural project, one that the couple hopes will help develop sustainable farming practices that can be put to use far beyond Pescadero. She said the ranch's goal was to help reverse the trend of lower levels of carbon in soil, a worldwide issue that coincides with the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in the air. In a book, 'Grass-Fed Cattle: How to Produce and Market Natural Beef,' the author Julius Ruechel theorized that soil was enriched as a result of the migration of giant herds of ruminants and other animals across the world's great plains. 'The conservation movement now largely says these large, migrating herds aren't so bad after all,' said Wendy Millet, the ranch director who formerly worked at the Nature Conservancy." —Stephanie Strom, "An accidental cattle ranch points the way in sustainable farming," *The New York Times*, November 11, 2013.

Cheer up; traffic will be lighter in December

<http://bit.ly/18IDKSX>

"Economic recovery looks like miles of brake lights on commutes so congested we're wasting hours a week inching to work and back. Commuters say trips that took 30 minutes a year ago now take 60 or more. It's happening on Highway 85 in the South Bay, Highway 101 along the Peninsula, Interstate 880 through the East Bay, and Interstate 680 from the Sunol Grade to the Benicia Bridge. The congestion is a testament to the growth [of] jobs in Silicon Valley, San Francisco, and the East Bay as the economy recovers from the Great Recession. [Other] factors: Truck traffic from the Port of Oakland to the Central Valley has turned I-80, I-580, and I-880 into big rig alleys. Thieves continue to steal copper wiring at metering lights, and when they don't work, highway traffic backs up. Road construction is underway seemingly everywhere. Gas prices

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have fallen 28 cents a gallon over the past year. And more traffic on the road means more crashes that make things even worse.”

—Gary Richards, “Traffic jams paralyzing Bay Area,” *Mercury News*, November 10, 2013.

Bends in the middle, doesn't smoke

<http://bit.ly/HOOP8c>

“When [the VTA's Bill] Capps watches one of the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority's 90 new computer-packed hybrid buses cruise silently, almost smokelessly, out of the bus yard, he knows it's no ordinary bus. It will take a long time before the vehicle, which alternates between diesel and electric power, returns for fuel — in this case, 25 percent longer than the diesel bus it replaced. VTA's buses carry nearly 5.5 million passengers a year, and the hybrids are built in Hayward by Gillig LLC, the last entirely U.S.-owned bus builder. VTA just ordered 35 more, plus 29 hybrids from Canada's New Flyer of America, for delivery by 2015. These buses are 60 feet long, bend in the middle — ‘articulated’ — and will be used on VTA's bus rapid transit corridor along El Camino Real, Silicon Valley's main north-south surface street corridor. The hybrids, which arrived in 2010 to replace diesel buses from 1997, produce 96 percent less smog-creating nitrogen oxides and 90 percent less particulate matter — otherwise known as smoke — than their predecessors.” —Jody Meacham, “Hybrid buses are Silicon Valley's newest technological marvel,” *Next City*, November 14, 2013.

Be ready to pay for parking

<http://bit.ly/1iS0XpW>

“Walnut Creek downtown parking rates soon will shoot up to \$2 an hour, Sunday parking no longer will be free, and meter hours will stretch well into the night. The City Council passed the new parking ordinance [Nov. 19]. The changes will take effect in the spring and are expected to bump parking revenue, after expenses, from \$1 million to \$3.1 million annually. To help guide drivers into the underutilized downtown parking garages, the city will make the first hour free in its structures, but parking rates in the busy South Locust Street garage will rise from 50 cents to \$1 an hour. All the changes are aimed at reaching a standard parking occupancy rate of 85 percent — 15 percent availability — of parking at all times downtown. The plan does not deal with one of the biggest problems — employee parking downtown. The additional revenue from the parking changes will be spent on saving for future parking structures, downtown police officers, and other downtown programs, which could include the Leshner Center.” —Elisabeth Nardi, “Walnut Creek: Sunday parking no longer free, and rates will double,” *Contra Costa Times*, November 20, 2013.

Let San Jose digest your waste

<http://bit.ly/18yxc74>

“A facility that can turn people's food scraps and yard trimmings into energy and compost opened in north San Jose Nov. 22, and some Palo Alto leaders are hailing it as an encouraging sign that the city might be able to build one, too. The low-lying, concrete-and-steel structure sits atop 23 acres of San Jose's former landfill, next to the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge off Highway 237. It is the world's largest plant to employ a technology called ‘dry-fermentation anaerobic digestion,’ according to Zero Waste Energy Development Company, which built the plant. Unlike San Jose, Palo Alto has asked for plans to also treat the city's sewage sludge, or ‘biosolids.’ Handling that waste has been a point of contention between supporters and opponents of a Baylands facility, as has the desire to build a plant in Palo Alto rather than drive the organic waste to another city. San Jose's renewable-energy plant is undergoing final preparations and by Dec. 16 will launch its operations.” —Jocelyn Dong, “Renewable-energy plant debuts in north San Jose,” *Palo Alto Weekly*, November 25, 2013. **Ed. note.** The February 2013 *Northern News* reported on other waste and energy production efforts underway in San Jose: <http://bit.ly/1iQRU67>

Healthy food for Fort Bragg

<http://bit.ly/18jIgH4>

“The Fort Bragg City Council was supportive of a local movement that looked at the availability of, and how to make healthy foods more accessible to low income families. The study was conducted by local students as part of the state's CX3 (Communities of Excellence in Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Prevention) program, which offers the tools to look at local food quality and availability and use that data to promote healthier communities. ‘Lower income populations are disproportionately affected by environmental conditions that don't support healthy eating and physical activity,’ according to the state's CX3 website. ‘Indicators and assets pay special attention to low-income neighborhoods where people live, work, recreate, socialize, go to school, and shop for food. And, at the heart of CX3 concept is that people, residents, can change their communities to become healthier places to live.’ Petra Schulte, the school district's nutrition education coordinator, said 79 percent of the population in southeast Fort Bragg qualifies as being within the federal poverty level. She also noted that about 40 percent of the city's adults are overweight, while another 20 percent are obese.” —Tony Reed, “Council supports improving neighborhood access to healthy food,” *The Ukiah Daily Journal*, November 27, 2013.

(continued on next page)

Carmel Valley farm sold to Colo. milk company <http://bit.ly/18yull7>

"Myra Goodman said she and her husband, Drew, made \$10,000 their first year in business. From a small stand in front of their garage, the Goodmans started Earthbound Farm in 1984 by selling organic raspberries — long before consumers began to ask for organic products. 'We just wanted to make enough of a living to keep living on our farm in beautiful Carmel Valley,' Myra Goodman said. After nearly 30 years on top, the Goodmans and their shareholders announced they were selling their organic produce company for roughly \$600 million to WhiteWave, a Broomfield, Colo.-based milk producer. The couple still owns about 10 percent of the company — now the largest organic produce grower in the nation — until the deal is approved, likely in January. 'Organic agriculture is really one of the keys to improving our food system and the health of people and the planet,' said WhiteWave's Drew Goodman." —Phillip Molnar, "Earthbound Farm sold to Colorado company for \$600 million," *The Monterey Herald*, December 9, 2013.

Cold snap proved deadly <http://bit.ly/1byZHTi>

"After five days of freezing temperatures, Marin County health officials Monday conferenced by phone with municipal leaders and nonprofits serving the homeless to discuss steps to protect the vulnerable if the cold persists. On [Dec. 9] the temperature dipped to 29 degrees in San Rafael. The Marin Municipal Water District reported receiving calls Monday from 75 customers whose pipes had burst because of the cold. Elsewhere the cold snap proved deadly. Santa Clara County officials announced that four homeless men had died there over the previous eight days because of causes related to hypothermia." —Richard Halstead, "Marin County homeless endangered by record cold," *Marin Independent Journal*, December 9, 2013. ■



San Jose Repertory Theatre. Photo: Juan Borrelli, AICP.

"What rhymes with 'waterfront redevelopment plan'?" I wondered that after reading that the storyline of [a new] musical revolves around a 40-ish city planner moving to New York. The heroine got a PhD in city planning, married a grad school classmate, and moved to Phoenix. In her late 30s, unfulfilled in her career, she leaves that life behind to return to New York. Yes, you read that right: The main character in a Broadway-bound musical has a PhD in city planning." —Review by Liisa Ecola, <http://bit.ly/19XpFiy>

CALIFORNIA

The true cost of desalination

Planning magazine, November 2013

Robert Brown, AICP, <http://bit.ly/1eiRXVD> • APA's *Planning Magazine* (August/September 2013) ran an article by Lorelei Laird, "With a Grain of Salt: Pressed to find the water it needs, California gives desalination another try," <http://bit.ly/1auPHtz>. Bob Brown, Novato's community development director, responded in the November issue of *Planning* that the article "addresses the high dollar cost of desalination projects and touches on their environmental impact, but it ignores the more frightening costs: energy use and greenhouse gas generation. A desalinated gallon of drinking water takes five times more energy to produce than pumping and treating surface freshwater, and the Carlsbad plant described in the article will generate 57 million pounds of carbon dioxide each year. It's ironic that in our search for stable water sources in the face of climate change, we're exacerbating the problem with energy-intensive solutions."

SLO solar plant up and running

EarthTechling, November 1, 2013

Pete Danko, <http://bit.ly/1bQS2kY> • California Valley Solar Ranch in sunny San Luis Obispo County now produces enough energy to power more than 42,000 homes. In September 2011, the Department of Energy awarded a \$1.2 billion loan guarantee to support the construction of the 250-megawatt photovoltaic solar generating facility to produce clean, renewable electricity at the scale of traditional power plants. To win government approval, the developers first had to agree to protect and preserve species on 17,000 acres of land. As part of a separate, private settlement with environmental groups, more than 9,000 acres were added to the acreage to be permanently protected and preserved, and 30 miles of fencing has been or will be removed from the area. Other PV plants — the much larger 550-megawatt Topaz and the 579-megawatt Antelope Valley solar projects — are under construction in southern California.

Dengue and yellow fever push northward in California

The Atlantic Cities, November 4, 2013

Eric Wuestewald, <http://bit.ly/19v7pNe> • "This past summer, *Aedes aegypti* — the invasive African mosquito best known for carrying the potentially deadly diseases dengue and yellow fever — made its debut in California, squirming up from Madera to Clovis to Fresno and the Bay Area. Unfortunately, it is notoriously difficult to control. While *Aedes aegypti* has long resided in Texas and the southeastern United States, this is the first time it has reached California. News outlets have covered the story extensively, but few have mentioned climate change's role in the mosquito's spread. The CDC says it's likely that *Ae. aegypti* is continually responding or adapting to environmental change.' Climate change studies predict that dengue — which infects as many as 100 million people a year — will expose an additional 2 billion by 2080. In 2009, the mosquito kicked off a Florida outbreak of dengue in a state that hadn't seen the disease in more than 70 years. There is no vaccine for dengue."

"California 2050 greenhouse gas goal out of reach"

San Francisco Chronicle, November 4, 2013

David R. Baker, <http://bit.ly/1afsKcJ> • "California will need new policies, new technologies, or both to meet its greenhouse gas reduction goals by 2050, according to an analysis by Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. The California Air Resources Board commissioned the study. The state's programs to boost renewable power, encourage alternative fuels, and improve energy efficiency should lead to a substantial drop in greenhouse gas emissions through 2030, easily beating the emissions target set in AB32. But the study found that emissions will start to rebound after 2030, largely because of population growth. The study shows the need for California to plan ways to keep cutting emissions decades in the future. Also, the 80 percent reduction state officials want by 2050 comes from an executive order issued by then-Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2005 and can be easily overturned."

(Continued on next page)

CALIFORNIA

"High-speed rail project a threat to historic Chinatown?"*China Daily USA*, October 29, 2013

Chen Jia, <http://bit.ly/1iswiT> • "The back-hoes digging the first high-speed rail project in the US are telling the fate of a more than 100-year-old Chinatown in Fresno. The California High-Speed Rail Authority has begun digging at a parking lot in downtown Fresno, where tunnels and artifacts from an 1880s-era Chinatown were believed to lie buried. Preliminary research by the Authority indicates the area might have included a general store and other small businesses, a dance hall, several residences, a gambling hall, and possibly a network of tunnels. The authority also recently participated in face-to-face meetings with local community leaders called by Chinatown Revitalization Inc.

"Fresno's Chinatown was established about 1870. It has been divided many times, usually by transportation. The railroad was the first to divide the area, which cut off Chinatown from downtown. Then came the freeway, which cut off residential streets."

Is high-speed rail really a no-go?*Mercury News*, December 5, 2013

Jessica Calefati, <http://bit.ly/1iNQxHO> • "Critics and many political observers see California's bullet train as nearly dead, but state officials [say it] is still at full speed. Dan Richard, chairman of the state's High-Speed Rail Authority, said the state still plans to break ground as early as next month [despite] a Sacramento Superior Court [ruling] that nearly \$8.6 billion in bond money [is] off limits until the state proves it can pay for the \$68.4 billion project. Richard said the project is not in jeopardy and that the authority will comply with the [court's] orders. 'We see a pathway forward with this project.' The judge ruled that the state must draft a new funding plan and complete more environmental analysis before spending any state bond money. The judge also denied the state's request to 'validate' the sale of the bonds. 'We're directing staff to start a new validation action,' Richard said. [Separately] the federal Surface Transportation Board ruled that [the rail authority] must complete additional planning before work can begin in Fresno, where a multibillion-dollar construction contract has already been awarded."

San Diego raises housing linkage fee*San Diego Housing Federation*, November 5, 2013

Susan Riggs, <http://conta.cc/1fmxUG3> • "San Diego's low-income residents and communities experienced a significant and long-awaited victory November 4th with the passage of proposed changes to the Workforce Housing Offset. The City Council voted 5-4 to increase the 'linkage fee' to 1.5 percent of construction costs, phased in over a two-and-a-half year period." The Workforce Housing Offset is the fee the City of San Diego charges commercial developers to help subsidize low-income housing projects. Setting the fee at 1.5 percent of construction costs restores the fee to the same level as when it was first initiated in 1990. The fee was later cut in half, and had not been adjusted since 1996." "The business community argued that increasing the fee would amount to another tax that would kill jobs and encourage builders to take their projects to other regions in the county." —**Susan Murphy**, **KPBS**, <http://bit.ly/1hHzh4e>

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Smart Growth literature hits a cul-du-sac. Josh Stephens reviews *Happy City: Transforming our lives through Urban Design*, by Charles Montgomery. "All the famous innovations that planners are familiar with are, on the ground, few and far between. Most people have not experienced them firsthand, and most people, including Montgomery, have not spent their lives dreaming about nicer, happier cities." —California Planning and Development Report, <http://bit.ly/1g8giAH>

NATIONAL

Infographic: Jobs lost and gained, by race, 1995–2012

Next City, November 15, 2013

Bill Bradley, <http://bit.ly/1d2djG> • “There’s no denying that the middle and working class in this country is smaller than it was in the years after World War II, and that the recent recession only exacerbated this. Hard data confirms that the U.S. has lost a lot of jobs in agriculture, construction, and manufacturing, especially since 2007. Because of manufacturers fleeing the U.S. for cheaper labor costs and less overhead offshore, it can’t be understated just how brutally the recession hit manufacturing.” Bill Bradley has “combed through Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) employment surveys dating back to 1994 — as far back as data broken down by race is digitally available — to find exactly how many jobs were lost or gained year to year,” and has presented some interesting infographics by Andrew Janik. “These are estimates produced from survey data. There are bound to be outliers and what some might characterize as miscalculations. As Veronica Nigh, an economist at the American Farm Bureau Federation, told me, ‘Statistics are only so good at estimating what employment levels are.’”

McMansions are back

The New York Times, November 23, 2013

Anna Bernasek, <http://nyti.ms/19TjgAF> • “In 2010, homes starting growing again. By last year, the size of the median new single-family home hit a record high of 2,306 square feet, surpassing the peak of [2,277 square feet in] 2007. And new homes have been getting more expensive, too. The median price reached \$279,300 in April 2013, or about 6 percent higher than the pre-recession peak of \$262,600, set in March 2007. The numbers are not adjusted for inflation. Yet the economy remains weak. How can Americans keep buying bigger and more expensive homes? It turns out, of course, that not everyone can. It’s another sign that in today’s economy, prosperity is not universally shared.”

New Masters Degree in Urban Placemaking and Management

Project For Public Spaces, November 20, 2013

Matt Bradley, <http://bit.ly/1aHTm6x> • “Over the past few decades, Placemaking has grown as a practice, as a process, and as a subject of public discourse. Now Pratt Institute in Brooklyn is preparing to launch the nation’s first Masters program in Placemaking and public space management, a 40 credit, four-semester course [focused on] community-based development and design, parks and open-space, green infrastructure and transportation, and complete streets and main streets management.

“Placemaking is much broader than the main street, the plaza, the marketplace, and the waterfront. [It is] an essential support for a healthy society — not an architectural leftover. Placemaking is [not] object-based; it’s user-based and community-based, and more about problem solving than about design.

“Instead of looking at the big picture and where the roads should go, [instead of] thinking about planning and urban design — allowing places to be formed as an afterthought, Placemaking [turns] city planning upside down [and] approaches public space from a people perspective.

“There are jobs that are relevant to people who are Placemakers, but aren’t necessarily planners, architects, landscape designers, or urban designers. Imagine an architectural office with someone who really understands how to manage a place [and understands] what event-making means to a space adjacent to a building. That kind of sensitivity can change architecture significantly, and from the inside.”

(Continued on next page)

Latest new-fangled thing? The Japanese have a system for automatically parking your bicycle underground, protected from the weather and thieves. Just attach a chip to the front fork of your bike and carry a smart card. Each parking station can handle 200 bikes. Video in English and Japanese, with subtitles (4:16). *Hat tip to Douglas Duncan.*

<http://youtu.be/pcZSU40RBrg>

NATIONAL

10 best US cities for home sellers

Movoto Blog, November 18, 2013

Randy Nelson, <http://bit.ly/1dbjomW> • Movoto Real Estate, an online real estate brokerage based in San Mateo, analyzed America's 100 largest cities to ask which are best for home sellers. Six of the top 10 are on the west coast; the top three are in the Bay Area. Fremont, California, leads the list. In addition to **median list price**, the criteria Movoto used were:

"Total homes for sale per capita. A housing market with fewer properties available for sale will be more competitive, allowing sellers to set higher asking prices and increasing the likelihood that buyers will pay more.

"Median days on market. Having homes on the market for less time is generally an indication that there's high demand, but it also means buyers will be in a weaker position to negotiate the sale price.

"Crime rate. The less crime there is, the more appealing a city will be to buyers, making the price they're willing to pay to live there higher.

"School quality. Cities with better schools command a premium.

"Lower unemployment rate. Sellers can expect there to be more people who are actually capable of buying a home — getting approved for financing, potentially spending more, etc.

"Each city was ranked from one to 100 in each of these criteria. Those scores were then averaged to produce a final score for each location; the lower the score, the better. In general, the top 10 all had relatively low crime and good schools."

Based on the above criteria, Movoto determined the top 10 best home-seller cities in the country:

1. Fremont, CA
2. San Francisco, CA
3. San Jose, CA
4. Honolulu, HI
5. San Diego, CA
6. Plano, TX
7. Chula Vista, CA
8. Seattle, WA
9. Chandler, AZ
10. Gilbert, AZ

The blog has a two-paragraph synopsis for each city in the top 10, and a spreadsheet showing the top 50 home seller cities and their ranks for each criterion:

<http://bit.ly/18ROdWq>

Throw some wood on the power plant fire

The New York Times, November 3, 2013

Matthew Wald, <http://nyti.ms/Hy1k8E> • "To cut their carbon dioxide output, some utilities have started to use a decidedly low-tech additive that accomplishes that goal: wood. Wood does release carbon when burned, as nearly all fuels do. But taking woody material from forests or farms leaves space for new growth, which will absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere as it grows. Although some opponents of using wood say that disrupting forests means added carbon dioxide in the atmosphere for generations, regulators usually count its use as zero carbon.

"Coal plants are finely engineered, designed to burn one particular kind of coal, and adding wood can be tricky.

But their carbon output, like their overall efficiency — that is, the amount of coal burned compared with the amount of electricity generated — has grown worse in many cases in recent years. In the long term, experts say, to reach carbon goals, power companies will have to capture the carbon from all the coal they use, and probably most of the natural gas, too. But in the meantime, said David L. Nicholls, a forest products technologist at the United States Forest Service and a specialist on co-firing, "You could look at co-firing as a bridge strategy."

(Continued on next page)

NATIONAL

“Inextricable link between neighborhoods and health”

HUD USER, PD&R Edge

Steven H. Woolf, M.D., M.P.H.; Emily Zimmerman, Ph.D.; Sarah Simon, M.S., <http://bit.ly/1cbxRc9> • “To better understand the connection between neighborhood health and life expectancy, the Virginia Commonwealth University Center on Society and Health created a new series of maps for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) Commission to Build a Healthier America. By displaying life expectancy alongside common landmarks such as subway stops and highway exits, these maps illustrate the vastly different health outcomes experienced by Americans living just a few miles apart.

“The maps, which depict life expectancy data for neighborhoods in the metropolitan areas of New Orleans; Washington, DC; and Kansas City, Missouri, as well as the San Joaquin Valley in California, were developed using vital statistics obtained from state and local health agencies and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“The Commission’s forthcoming recommendations, which will be released in January 2014, will provide specific steps on how to make these connections stronger.” For more information about the Commission and its upcoming recommendations, visit www.rwjf.org/goto/commission.

Red states produce more methane than previously thought

Nature World News, November 26, 2013

James A. Foley, <http://bit.ly/18m4RmD> • “US government calculations of methane emissions could underestimate the true total value of methane emissions by 50 percent, according to new comprehensive research by several leading institutions. Researchers from Harvard University, the Carnegie Institute for Science, and five other institutions report in the ‘Proceedings of the National Academy of the Sciences’ that the US Environmental Protection Agency’s move to downscale its methane emissions estimate may be ill considered. Methane is a potent heat-trapping gas, able to trap significantly more heat than carbon dioxide, the most abundant global warming gas, despite not staying in the air as long. The researchers report that nearly 25 percent of the methane emissions in the US comes from Texas, Kansas, and Oklahoma. Texas and Oklahoma have many refineries that turn oil into gasoline, while Kansas is a large cow-producing state. Cows’ manure, as well as their flatulence, contributes notably to methane levels. US methane emissions trapped about as much heat as all the carbon dioxide pollution coming from cars, trucks, and planes in the country in half a year’s time.”

GLOBAL

Rare Mideast water project

The New York Times, December 9, 2013

Isabel Kershner, <http://nyti.ms/1cwXgRj> • “Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian Authority have signed an agreement to build a Red Sea-Dead Sea water project meant to benefit all three parties. Under the agreement, Israel will also provide Amman, the Jordanian capital, with 8 billion to 13 billion gallons of fresh water from the Sea of Galilee in northern Israel, and the Palestinians expect to be able to buy up to 8 billion gallons of additional fresh water from Israel at preferential prices.

“The water level in the Dead Sea has been dropping by more than three feet a year, mainly because most of the water in the Jordan River, its main feeder, has been diverted by Israel, Jordan, or Syria for domestic use and irrigation.

Proposals will soon be solicited internationally from private companies to build and operate a desalination plant in Aqaba, which is meant to operate on a commercial basis, selling the potable water to Jordan and Israel.

“A brine pipeline to the Dead Sea, financed by donor countries and organizations, will run through Jordanian territory, because the planning process in Jordan is quicker and less liable to be slowed by the objections of environmentalists and other opponents. The brine from the plant will be taken north to the Dead Sea because draining it back into the Red Sea would upset Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Israeli officials said that the added brine’s effects on the Dead Sea would be carefully monitored.”

(Continued on next page)

GLOBAL

How will the world replace fossil fuels?*The New York Times*, November 19, 2013

Eduardo Porter, <http://nyti.ms/1bDEEuY> • “Can it be done fast enough, cheaply enough, and on a sufficient scale without nuclear energy? For all the optimism about the prospects of wind, sun, and tides to power our future, the evidence suggests the answer is no. Everybody is promising to fill the gap with renewables. So far, however, coal and natural gas have won out. Between 2010 and 2012, worldwide consumption of nuclear energy shrank 7 percent. Over the same period, the consumption of coal, the dirtiest fuel and the worst global warming offender, rose 4.5 percent. Data released by the Global Carbon Project, <http://bit.ly/18QARtr>, confirmed that coal accounted for over half the growth in fossil fuel emissions in 2012. With energy consumption expected to grow by more than half over the next 30 years, the odds seem low that the world can avoid catastrophic warming without carbon-free nuclear power. The good news is that the sun and the wind are not the world’s only alternative to fossil fuels. There are risks associated with nuclear power, but it looks a lot better than the energy we’ve got.”

“This is what Earth will look like if all the ice melts”*BuzzFeed*, November 4, 2013

Donna Dickens, <http://bit.ly/17I1Iet> • “National Geographic shows how most coastal cities will be decimated and the population exodus will put a strain on midland resources. On the upside, Antarctica will make a great seaside resort.” (See below for original.)

“If all the ice melted”*National Geographic*, November 2013

<http://bit.ly/1ecXiAU> • “Explore the world’s new coastlines if sea level rises 216 feet. The maps show the world as it is now, with only one difference: All the ice on land has melted and drained into the sea, raising it 216 feet and creating new shorelines for our continents and inland seas. There are more than five million cubic miles of ice on Earth, and some scientists say it would take more than 5,000 years to melt it all. If we continue adding carbon to the atmosphere, we’ll very likely create an ice-free planet, with an average temperature of perhaps 80 degrees Fahrenheit instead of the current 58.”

Turkey: 8-lane motorway planned through forest*UBM’s Future Cities*, October 24, 2013

Rich Heap, <http://bit.ly/1aM6t7i> • “In August, students from Turkey’s Middle East Technical University started protesting the decision by Ankara Metropolitan Municipality to build a motorway through a 7,500-acre university forest. The municipality inflamed the battle by sending bulldozers and riot squads into the forest at midnight [October 18] to start demolishing trees.” Students took to Istiklal Street in Istanbul October 25 and also planted more than 3,000 new trees in the cleared forest area in Ankara.

“The arguments about green spaces in Turkey — both Gezi Park and the Middle East Technical University — follow a concerted effort by the country’s politicians to remove protection for natural spaces in the name of rapid urbanization. First, the ‘2B Law’ passed in April 2012 reclassifies some forests as no longer being forests, and therefore not in need of environmental protection. This means the government can build infrastructure on the land or sell it to private firms. Second is the proposed Law on Protection of Nature and Biological Diversity, which would remove protection for 12,000 natural sites in Turkey and open them up for development for infrastructure, tourism, factories, or power plants.” ■

Smoking and climate change. “Climate experts now say with virtual certainty that the planet is warming due mainly to human activities which have increased the amount of carbon pollution in our air. The level of scientific certainty on man-made climate change is about the same as the consensus among top scientists that cigarettes are deadly.” —Senator Barbara Boxer, <http://1.usa.gov/17O0JeL>

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