Welcome to the Bay Area
Andrea Ouse, AICP, Page 3

Why planners make good hackers
James Castañeda, AICP, Page 5
New green infrastructure planning requirements coming to San Francisco Bay Area

Laura Prickett, AICP

Growing numbers of “green street” projects provide a glimpse into how the Bay Area’s existing “gray infrastructure” (subsurface storm drains) can be converted to “green infrastructure.” Green infrastructure for stormwater management directs rainwater runoff to rain gardens and other specially designed landscaped areas that remove pollutants from the runoff as it filters through the soil and is taken up by plants. This approach to roadway drainage is sometimes referred to as “green streets.” In addition to cleaning up stormwater runoff, green infrastructure can support urban greening, streetscape enhancement, and multimodal transportation goals.

Planners have grown accustomed to incorporating green infrastructure in plans for new development and redevelopment projects, but new regional permit requirements would require the incremental retrofitting of existing roadways, parking lots, and other impervious surfaces to drain to newly designed green infrastructure facilities.

**Green infrastructure vision.** The vision for incorporating green infrastructure into areas of existing development is outlined in Provision C.3.j of the second Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit (MRP 2) Tentative Order, which was circulated for public comment in May 2015. The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board will likely adopt the MRP 2 Final Order in October 2015. It will supersede the first Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit (MRP 1) and apply to 76 municipalities and flood control agencies in Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Solano counties. (San Francisco is subject to separate regulations.) The Tentative Order is available at [http://bit.ly/1QfrY30](http://bit.ly/1QfrY30).

**Overview.** The Final Order is expected to require each of the 76 jurisdictions to adopt green infrastructure plans in 2019. These plans will show how each jurisdiction will implement green infrastructure facilities to receive stormwater runoff from roadways, sidewalks, building roofs, and other impervious surfaces. The plans will include targets, at various planning intervals, for the amount of area of impervious surface (square feet or acres) from which stormwater runoff would drain to future green infrastructure facilities.

**What is green infrastructure?** Green infrastructure uses vegetation, soils, and natural processes to manage water, including stormwater management systems that mimic nature by soaking up and storing water. Rain gardens — concave landscaped areas with fast-draining, engineered soil — are one of several common types of green infrastructure.

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**WANTED:** Associate Editor, Northern News

Would you like to help ready the APA California Northern News for publication? The job requires bursts of effort 10 times a year, in the first two weeks of the month. Some background in journalism or writing is desirable, as is familiarity with the rules of grammar. Assist the editor in reviewing and editing all incoming material. Source and summarize planning-related articles from other news media. This is strictly a volunteer opportunity; there is no remuneration. Work from anywhere at the time of day most convenient to you. Your work will benefit the planning community and your résumé. Your application will be submitted to the Northern Section Board for review and action. Upon appointment, the associate editor becomes a member of the Northern Section Board.

If interested contact the editor, Naphtali H. Knox, FAICP, knoxnaph@gmail.com, or the current associate editor, Jennifer Piozet, at jenniferpiozet@gmail.com, with a letter of interest and a brief, focused résumé.
New green infrastructure planning requirements for Bay Area
Laura Prickett, AICP. The Regional Water Quality Control Board Final Order, expected to be adopted in October 2015, will require each of the Bay Area’s 76 jurisdictions — except San Francisco — to adopt green infrastructure plans in 2019. Page 1

Meet a local planner
Siân Llewellyn, AICP, interviews Erik S. Balsley, AICP. Page 11

Santa Clara Valley Transportation ‘Priorities Survey’
The Authority is encouraging people to take its ‘Priorities Survey’ to help the public and VTA think through the trade-offs of where to invest limited resources to improve the transportation system. Page 13

Second annual SF film fest offers urbanophile fare
Leah Nichols. Page 14

Call for nominations for Northern Section Treasurer
Contact Eric Balsley by October 21 latest. Page 15

Where in the world?
Photo by Barry J. Miller, FAICP. Page 15

APA California 2015 Oakland
Important updates as of September 19. Page 16

Who’s where
Nisha Chauhan, AICP; Sanhita Ghosal, AICP; Dana McCarthy; Laura Prickett, AICP; and Nicholas R. Stewart. Page 19

California roundup
Excerpts from around the state, linked to the original articles: HUD case study features SLO mixed-income affordable housing • Lawsuit says new L.A. streets plan creates more air pollution • We can do all we want to with less water • ’9 views of the LA River today and before it was paved in 1938’ • Perhaps a quarter of the drought is due to climate change. Page 26

U.S. roundup
Excerpts from around the country, linked to the original articles: New Orleans: Some moved on, some moved in • Houston sort of has zoning, but no plan • “Census Flows Mapper” displays county-to-county migration • Utah succeeds and saves with homes for the homeless • Fair housing, cities, and segregation • Public sector no longer a reliable source of jobs for black Americans • Urban walkability and convenience in the Rockies. Page 29

World roundup
Excerpts from around the world, linked to the original articles: The world’s largest urban area • Moving toward the poles • BRT now runs in 402 cities • Paris’s elegant historic signs • A warmer Arctic may remove, not add, methane • No relationship between access to green space and well-being? • ‘Walk this way.’ Page 32

Board member directory and newsletter information
Page 35
On behalf of APA California Northern Section, welcome to Oakland! After more than two years of meeting, planning, creating, and collaborating, we are ready to host our fellow planners at the 2015 APA California Conference October 3-6. The Conference Host Committee has worked tirelessly to create an exquisite experience.

This conference promises to live up to its theme, Rooted in AuthentiCITY. Three cheers in advance to our incredibly dedicated and talented Conference Host Committee.

- The Programs and Mobile Workshops Committees have designed diverse and expansive professional development opportunities throughout the conference to engage and inspire.
- The Planner’s Guide Committee has produced an amazing compendium of incredible experiences that visitors to the area can enjoy.
- The Diversity Committee has worked hard to produce a fascinating Diversity Summit, “Gentrification Mosaic: Conversations on Displacement of Economic and Social Capital,” on Saturday, October 3.
- Our amazing Fundraising Committee has provided our sponsors with a wonderful platform and has consistently exceeded expectations.
- The Hospitality Committee has planned an Opening Reception at the Oakland Museum of California that will capture the magic of a great city on what will be a memorable evening.
- Thanks to the Merchandise Committee, we’ll be in style long past the conference.
- Our Publicity/PR Committee did a great job broadcasting updates and information about the conference. Make sure to follow the event on Twitter (@APA2015CA).
- And our Volunteers Committee assembled a team of dedicated students that ensure our conference experience will be seamless and enjoyable.

On the conference webpage, http://bit.ly/1pRDDeFe, you’ll find extensive information to assist you in making this year’s conference your most valuable professional development experience of the year. In particular, you’ll find the “conference-at-a-glance” as well as the full Conference Program with session titles and times. Don’t forget to take a look at the special Conference Issue of CalPlanner at http://bit.ly/1LhBwuT. In addition to the exceptional content, the issue is visually stunning!

A final note: Remember to download the conference app. Just go to the app store and search for APA California 2015 Conference. You’ll need to request a password. After that, you’ll have in an instant all the information you need to get through the conference!

And locally, even though our members have already given thousands of hour to create a wonderful conference, they continue their busy pace developing Section-focused efforts. Northern Section members, this year is an election year for the Board. The position of Section Board Treasurer will be on the ballot. If you are interested in learning more about the Board and want to help us find strong candidates, check out the Call for Nominations on page 15 in this edition of Northern News. And please consider joining the Elections Committee. Just contact Section Director-Elect Erik Balsley at balsley@alum.mit.edu.

In addition to electing a new Treasurer, we currently have vacancies in the following board positions:

- Communications Director
- Associate Newsletter Editor (see ad, page 1)
- Planning Commissioner Representative
- San Francisco Regional Activity Coordinator (RAC)

The Northern Section Bylaws (https://bit.ly/1mVz1BI, pages 6–11) provide a description for each position. If interested in any of these, please contact Erik S. Balsley, AICP, Section Director-Elect, at balsley@alum.mit.edu by October 21, 2015.

My sincere and heartfelt thanks go out to all of you who have worked so hard to create an incredible conference for our planning community. As we open our doors to our California Chapter colleagues, let’s continue to do our best to assure that they and we will have a superb experience “Rooted in AuthentiCITY”!
Eighty-five years ago, Ansel F. Hall and Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. prepared the 1930 report Proposed Park Reservations for East Bay Cities, now referred to as the Olmsted-Hall Report. If you have had the opportunity to enjoy the spectacular scenic vistas along Grizzly Peak Boulevard in Oakland between Fish Ranch Road and Skyline Boulevard, it is due, in large part, to the visionary planning of Hall and Olmsted.

Ansel F. Hall of the National Park Service was the first Chief Naturalist and Chief Forester of Yosemite National Park. During 1929 and early 1930, he conducted a preliminary survey that showed that surplus lands of the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) that were not needed for water catchment or storage, were “admirably suited to recreational purposes.” His preliminary work demonstrated the need for further study.

In order to secure an impartial and expert appraisal of the situation, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., was hired. (Frederick Law Olmsted senior had designed New York City’s Central Park.) The younger Olmsted was a renowned landscape architect in his own right and a founding member of the American Society of Landscape Architects. He and Daniel Burnham had prepared the McMillan Plan, a comprehensive plan for Washington DC. Olmsted Jr. prepared comprehensive planning reports for Boulder, Pittsburgh, New Haven, Detroit, Rochester, and other cities.

In mid-1930, Olmsted Jr. and Hall jointly prepared the Olmsted-Hall Report. Their report investigated the use of surplus East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) lands in the East Bay cities of Richmond, El Cerrito, Albany, Berkeley, Oakland, Piedmont, Emeryville, Alameda, and San Leandro for park purposes. The report identified the vital need for an adequate park system for the regional metropolis: “The charm of the region as a place in which to live will depend largely upon natural conditions that are destined to disappear unless properly protected for the public in general.”

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In the latter half of the 1800s, America’s cities flourished with industrial activity. As the Civil War came to an end and railroads began to usher in a new era of prosperity, the urban regions of the country grew at a tremendous rate. Waterways, harbors, and rail hubs fueled the Industrial Revolution that led to piecemeal and unregulated urban growth.

In 1889, journalist Jacob Riis exposed harsh living conditions in the slums of New York City. Armed with the latest flash-bulb technology for his camera, he ventured out to the cramped and dark corridors that the working class and poor called home. The following year, his photojournalism would lead to the publication of “How the Other Half Lives: Studies among the Tenements of New York” (http://bit.ly/1Qf78l4). This sparked reforms in sanitation and public health, and ultimately would contribute to the rise of Modern Urban Planning to improve the health, safety, and welfare of people through planned development.

As a profession in the United States, urban planning has spent the last century trying to figure out what makes cities tick, and how and why people interact within their environments the way they do. We spend countless hours trying to find solutions to current problems and trying to anticipate future issues, constantly refining and updating as we go. We challenge conventional methods, envision new ways to interact with the environment, and respond to trends — sometimes successfully, sometimes not. In the face of numerous variables and constraints, we learn what works and what doesn’t as we tirelessly take on challenges through risk-taking and trial and error. Because we do all that, planners are, in my eyes, excellent hackers.

In her TED talk, Code for America’s Catherine Bracy presented a compelling case why civic hackers make good citizens, and explained that we all have what it takes to get involved to solve problems by empowering citizens (http://bit.ly/1Qf7o3h). She described hacking as a deeply democratic innovation on an existing way of doing things — the idea that if you see a problem, you work to fix it, not just complain about it. The talk was inspiring. It prodded me to respond to her rallying call, and also to get my fellow planners to proudly join in and proclaim that much of what we do is “hacking.” I felt it my duty to make the case to not only those in tech, but to planners and the government leaders they serve.

Today, civic hackers have jumped in to help solve the problems we face in society and government. The hackers have provided new ways to interact with complex information and regulations — to engage meaningfully with city governments and provide them with better information to address their citizens’ concerns. In almost every way, civic hackers and technologists working in this field share the goals urban planners have. I couldn’t be more excited about their energy and enthusiasm, and for the common cause of building better, participatory communities and governments.

Urban planning as a discipline has evolved over decades, expanding to a wide range of sub-disciplines — from land use planning that shapes the developed world, to transportation planning that solves mobility issues, to environmental planning that protects resources, and all at various scales from the neighborhood level to the region. Beyond the various alcoves in which we plan, we wear other hats — advocate, economist, cartographer, strategist, statistician, negotiator, economist, ruralist, urbanist, visionary, community organizer, facilitator, data collector, translator of regulations, and listener — sometimes all in the course of a day!

Planners — with our education and the expertise we have gained — offer a wealth of knowledge and resources that can benefit the civic hacking community. In planners, civic hackers gain a partner in navigating the bureaucratic landscape, and gain insight into the challenges and opportunities that exist. Planners can help technologists understand the community fabric, history of place, implications for equity, and the diversity of citizens — knowledge they will need to overcome hurdles. Planners — already engaged heavily with the public — would excel in providing feedback for the development of successful toolsets and applications. Between the enthusiasm that Civic Tech has when it comes to engagement, and planners’ willingness to tackle problems, a partnership like this seems like a no-brainer.

Civic hackers aren’t the only ones who stand to benefit from working with planners. The planning profession has its own challenges in solving the problems we face. The profession can gain much from ongoing modernization, streamlining, and embracing technological advancements as they happen. Despite the bureaucratic baggage in many
Dear MTC Chair Cortese and ABAG President Pierce:

The Bay Area Planning Directors Association (BAPDA) Steering Committee is concerned about the proposal to move the Planning and Research function from the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). The BAPDA Steering Committee provides professional development opportunities for Planning Directors throughout the Bay Region and participates in implementing sound regional planning principles at the local level. We urge you to carefully evaluate the implications and consequences of this proposal, and provide an opportunity for the ABAG General Assembly to comment and participate in this important decision.

ABAG’s governance as a Council of Governments facilitates the participation and involvement of all 109 jurisdictions within the Bay Region. With a General Assembly that includes a representative from every jurisdiction, ABAG is accountable to each of our communities. ABAG’s Planning and Research staff demonstrates this accountability by meeting with local planning officials to listen and understand the local context before creating land use recommendations that integrate local objectives into a regional vision. This direct approach supports local control, which is a critical issue for the update of Plan Bay Area.

MTC has unique strengths related primarily to transportation planning. A consolidated planning function within MTC is likely to distance local jurisdictions due to its historic reliance on Congestion Management Agencies, as an intermediary for input regarding cities and counties. This distance will challenge the ABAG General Assembly and Executive Board to support the land use recommendations coming from MTC. In addition, the distance will also impede localities from participating in essential regional planning and implementation of housing, economic development, disaster preparedness, and other topics.

On a related note, we are concerned that a rushed merger would not create a government structure that is conducive to a healthy dialog between land use and transportation. Specifically, we are concerned that the land use component of Plan Bay Area will not be based on local information and instead be driven by desired top-down transportation investments. While it may not occur in this Sustainable Communities Strategy cycle, the likelihood is high over time. This will

(continued on page 22)
Plan for Success — Take a course from UC Davis Extension this Fall

APA Members: Get a 10 percent discount on UC Davis Extension courses

APA California members receive a 10 percent discount on most Land Use and Natural Resources courses at UC Davis Extension. You can earn AICP | CM credits, stay up to date on the new policies, laws, and practices, and learn from experts in the field. If you are registering online please use code: APA2016.

EIR/EIS Preparation and Review
Learn how to increase efficiency and reduce redundancy by addressing the requirements of both CEQA and NEPA with a combined EIR/EIS document in this hands-on course. Examine the key content requirements and standards for a combined EIR/EIS document, and discover real-world case studies of successful EIR/EIS integration. Instructors: Antero Rivasplata and Megan Smith. AICP | CM 6.0

Held in San Francisco: Land Use Planning for Non-planners – An Introduction to Planning in California
Drawing on years of experience, instructors cover the intricacies of planning, translate the jargon, and explain how state and local planning practices and policies are developed and impact our lives. Learn how to more effectively participate in planning processes and how to understand the impacts of the complex legal issues associated with both land use and environmental planning. Instructors: Vivian Kahn, FAICP, and Thomas Jacobson, FAICP.

Planning in California – An Overview
Demonstrates concepts, structures, and processes of land use planning and development decisions. This course delivers an overview of general plans, zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, permit processes, property rights, environmental review, public finance, natural resources, and urban design. Instructor: Peter Detwiler. AICP | CM 28.0

Rethinking Development Finance – Financing Development in a Post Redevelopment World
Held in partnership with California Debt and Investment Advisory Commission (CDIAC), this seminar examines the current programs and strategies available for development finance in post-redevelopment California. It will address how communities can achieve the goals of redevelopment with available authorities and financing opportunities. Moderators: Peter Detwiler, Dean Misczynski, Fred Silva, and Alan Gordon. AICP | CM 6.0

Updating Transportation Analysis in CEQA – How to Effectively Implement SB 743
Materials presented will explain the key differences between VMT and LOS, provide an overview of VMT calculation methodologies, and give examples of the factors to consider in developing significance thresholds. Instructors: Chris Ganson, Christopher Calfee, and Ron Milam. AICP | CM 6.0

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

Urban affordability and suburban diversity. “The resulting affordability crisis is forcing out existing neighbors who are often low-income people of color. Those vulnerable people who manage to remain, end up living as hunkered-down barnacles to keep their irreplaceable current housing. In places like San Francisco’s Bayview and Mission Districts, in my own South of Market neighborhood, in Palo Alto’s last mobile home park, or in West Oakland, preserving a tenancy or house title can be a fair housing victory — because if a low-income resident has to move, it will likely be to a poorer, more segregated suburb.”
Northern News recognizes its content providers for 2014

Each year, we list the names of those who wrote articles or provided photos or images during the preceding calendar year. The editors are grateful to the 75 people listed below for their contributions to the planning profession and to this publication.

Authors

Baker, Jeff. Director’s note. (Sept, Oct, Nov, Dec.)

Berlin, Jonathan. Around the Bay in 500 miles: Regional and local planning for the San Francisco Bay Trail. (Sept.)

Borrelli, Juan, AICP. Art box redux. (Article plus photos, March)

Bradley, Bill, Next City. What happened when my small-town, 50-something parents moved to the city. (Sept.)

Bradley, Donald W., Ph.D., AICP. Planners, public health, and healthy cities. (April)

Bradley, Donald W., Ph.D., AICP. Get ready for the November AICP exam. (Sept.)

Clark, Anna, Next City. 10 Great Novels every urbanist should read. (Dec. 2014/Jan. 2015)

Costa, Peter, AICP, PTP. Bay Area cities honored for complete streets and connectedness. (May)

Davidson, Scott, AICP. Single, employed, public agency planner, seeking same for long seminars on local issues in the East Bay. (Feb.)

Dovey, Rachel, Next City. Is the cost of Sacramento’s downtown makeover too high? (July/August)

Dovey, Rachel, Next City. How California can kick fossil fuels by 2050 (Nov.)

Goodyear, Sarah, Next City. Two thirds of California’s developed land is under extreme stress. (May)

Hakimizadeh, Leila, and Matthew VanOosten. Urban Villages to reshape San Jose. (Nov.)

Hikida, Lyn. Old meets new as mixed-use campus opens in Oakland. (July/August)

Knox, Naphtali H., FAICP. Jobs, housing, and rent: The three-layer cake (June)

Knox, Naphtali H., FAICP. Alameda and Solano counties top racial diversity list. (June)

Lefaver, Scott, AICP; Chair, Santa Clara County Planning Commission. Modernizing the development permit system — A Santa Clara County example (June)

Livingstone, John F., AICP. FARs and height limits can’t do everything. No one should expect them to guarantee good design. (July/August)

McKay, Scott, AICP. Deconstructing and salvaging the past to build a more sustainable future. (Feb.)

McKean, Cameron Allan, Next City. Japan’s Bullet Train, the World’s first (and still best) high-speed rail network, turns 50 (Oct.)

Mendoza, Emý. ‘Do-It-Yourself’ Toolkit enhances community sustainability while residents lower their utility bills. (May)

Miller, Barry, FAICP. Report from the National Conference. (June)

Rojas, James. Latino vernacular: Latino spatial and cultural values transform the American single-family house and street. (Nov.)


Taecker, Matt, AICP, and Tony Lashbrook. Capital of Silicon Valley? More than a slogan, downtown San Jose is becoming a vibrant urban center (Sept.)

Torney, Lola, and Marco Arguelles. Greening Silicon Valley roofs. (July/August)

Turréy, Adam, and Dana Turréy. Pollution in paradise: The consequences of rapid development and lax environmental regulation in Thailand (March)

Velyvis, Stephen E., and Amy E. Hoyt. Big changes on horizon for traffic impact analysis under CEQA. (Oct.)

Williams, Curtis, AICP. So you want to be a Planning Director. (March)

Wong, Hing, AICP, and Alex Hinds. International Planning Tour (July/August)

Meet a local planner (column)

Knox, Naphtali H., FAICP. (May)

Llewellyn, Sián, AICP. (June, July/August, Sept., Nov.)

Piozet, Jennifer. (Feb., March, April)

(continued on page 18)
Norcal roundup
Excerpts from around our Northern Section, linked to the original articles

New Patent Office readied in San Jose
Silicon Valley will soon celebrate the opening of a permanent location in San Jose for the only West Coast office of the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). Now temporarily located in Menlo Park, the regional office will move to San Jose City Hall within the month “after renovations and technical infrastructure updates are completed to accommodate USPTO business."

“This landmark building, built in 2005, reflects the city’s stature in the valley and stands as a symbol of the area’s cultural roots and technological savvy,” according to USPTO, http://1.usa.gov/1POC2Qj.

USPTO adds: “The Silicon Valley, known as one of the most prodigious and innovative entrepreneurial communities in the country, was selected as our west coast presence to assist the USPTO in fostering and protecting innovation. USPTO services will be readily accessible to all applicants and the office will serve as a hub of education and outreach. The office will benefit from hiring local talent for both examiners and Patent Trial and Appeal Board (PTAB) judges within the intellectual property and technical fields. The office will help entrepreneurs market their products quickly and provide resources tailored to local start-ups.”

The regional patent and trademark office is one of only four regional offices across the country.

55,000 DU in SF pipeline (map)
SocketSite, September 2, 2015
http://bit.ly/1QmPEDi • “According to our survey of the Planning Department’s data, there are roughly 8,100 net-new units of housing currently under construction in San Francisco and 5,600 units for which the building permits have been issued, approved, or requested, and construction could soon begin.

“Another 28,300 units of housing have been approved to be developed, but that includes the 10,500 units by Candlestick, 7,800 units on Treasure Island, and 5,680 units at Parkmerced, projects which have overall timelines measured in decades, not years.

“And with proposals for an additional 12,600 units of housing currently being reviewed by the City’s Planning Department, San Francisco’s overall Housing Pipeline currently totals roughly 55,000 units, up from 50,000 at the end of last year.

“For context, roughly 3,000 units of housing wrapped-up construction in San Francisco last year and a total of 13,000 units were added from 2007 through 2014 (27,000 units since the year 2000).”

HSR back in local news
Palo Alto Weekly, September 9, 2015

“The California High Speed Rail Authority is preparing to launch its environmental reviews for the two northern segments between San Francisco and San Jose and between San Jose and Merced. The authority plans to complete the environmental analyses by late 2017 and begin construction shortly thereafter.

“The re-launch began September 8 with a community meeting in San Francisco. Some things have changed since 2009. No one, for example, is talking any more about building a four-track system with Caltrain on the outer tracks and high-speed rail on the inside — the preferred alternative five years ago. “The deeply unpopular plan to elevate the tracks is also off the table. Now, the only alternative being considered is the ‘blended’ approach in which high-speed shares the rail corridor with Caltrain on existing tracks — a proposal deemed palatable by local communities.

“While the project has been a tough sell on the Peninsula, rail officials pointed to signs of success elsewhere in the state. San Francisco is well on its way to building the new Transbay Center, which will serve as the northern terminus of the proposed line.

“Construction in the Central Valley began last year. And on the Peninsula, Caltrain is now preparing to begin the long-awaited electrification of the rail corridor, a project that will both boost the capacity of the commuter service and set the stage for high-speed rail. The rail authority is providing $705 million for the Caltrain project.”

(Norcal roundup continues on page 23)
Twenty-eight sessions at the 2015 APA California Conference will present best practices in sustainability planning. Topics include water reuse, urban food, greenhouse gas, cap and trade, green infrastructure, spaces for makers, health, affordability, equity, innovation economics, ecological city design, district-scale initiatives, turn-key integrated utility systems, “wicked” problem conflict resolution, and resilience (the “new” sustainability).

Taken together, the sessions suggest an emerging sustainability planning “pivot” — the shift from net-negative, “do-less-harm” mitigation to the net-positive, “do-good,” regenerative-city approach required for ultimate success.

The Bay Area has been an innovation hub for sustainability since before the 1987 Brundtland Commission Report (http://bit.ly/1M4pdUh) which first advanced the concept. And what more appropriate place to hold this year’s conference than Oakland, a sustainability innovator since the 1997 launch of Sustainable Oakland?

This year’s conference continues APA California’s tradition of innovation. The chapter has supported sustainability through its annual conference and local Section initiatives. Northern Section formed a Sustainability Committee in January 2011, one of five such APA committees nationally. Recently, the California Chapter has begun to accelerate and deepen sustainability planning in California.

Three conference sessions are of special interest, as they will present key ideas in making the sustainability planning “pivot.” Two of the sessions are about an ecosystems approach to restorative and regenerative city planning that promises to deliver higher value and multiple benefits compared to traditional “silo” approaches. The third session will focus on methods capable of addressing the “wicked” problems of sustainability, i.e., those that represent conflicting values over the greater good:

- The Ecological City: A Design Workshop, Sunday 1:15 pm.
- Bay Area Sustainability: Wicked Planning and Conflict Identification at Local and Regional Scales, Sunday 1:15 pm.
- Utilizing Integrated Utility Systems to Deliver Restorative City Goals, Monday 1:15 pm.

In addition, all are welcome at Northern Section’s Sustainability Committee social from 5:30 pm on Friday. Enjoy complimentary wine and appetizers at this pre-conference event, then tour Swan’s Market and Co-housing, followed by dinner at Swan’s Market. Details and registration at http://bit.ly/1M4s5Al.

For a complete list of the conference’s 28 sustainability sessions, see http://bit.ly/1M4s1kh.

Scott T. Edmondson, AICP, is a strategic sustainability planner-economist with the San Francisco Planning Department and a Sustainable Communities Division Sustainability Champion. You can reach him at scott.edmondson22@gmail.com.

“Governance by app. A more apt understanding of Uber’s ambitions is that the company wants to be involved in city governance — fashioning the new administrative capacities of urban environments. Rather than follow government rules like any other utility, Uber wants a visible hand in creating urban policy, determining how cities develop and grow, eventually making the city itself a platform for the proliferation of ‘smart’ data-based systems.”
Tell us a little about yourself
I live in Oakland, but I grew up in a small suburban town on Long Island. The first time I came to the Bay Area was on a consulting assignment in Marin County. It was an eye opening experience. I really loved it. It took me a while to get here, but I’m glad I did.

How did you become interested in planning as a profession?
I chose to go to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for a number of reasons, but mainly because I didn't have to choose a major until the spring of my freshman year. It didn’t matter — I knew I was going to be an architect — then it turned out I couldn’t draw! This prompted a period of soul searching. I flipped through the course catalogue and stumbled upon a course that was cross-registered with city planning. That was it! I signed up for the class, and after I finished it, I declared city planning as my major. I ended up with a bachelor’s and a master’s in planning from MIT four years later.

From my very first introductory course, I took an immediate liking to Geographic Information Systems (GIS). This was ‘old school’ GIS. My first big project was helping a PhD student by digitizing paper maps of Beirut, Lebanon (all by hand!). There was so much in the news then about Beirut, it made me realize planning had real-world applications.

After graduation, I decided to get more international experience with a research position in a GIS lab at the University of Tokyo, 1997–98. (Little known facts: I can make an origami octopus and I speak Japanese.)

After Tokyo, my first job was with the Boston Redevelopment Agency. I was a new planner and was assigned the task of digitizing the Big Dig project. That meant gathering digital data from different city departments. But next to nothing matched across the different departmental databases. So we had to realign street, block, park, and numerous other data across all 48 square miles of Boston.

It was an interesting technical challenge and to this day I strive to include GIS in my practice. One needs to be very careful to be the planner using GIS as an analytical tool and not to be just the GIS technician — it’s a balance.

In my next job, with Parsons Brinckerhoff, I took a step back from technical GIS and did some NEPA planning. The move into consulting provided more geographic diversity. For some reason they kept sending me, a Long Island boy with significant time in Boston, to the deep South, in the summer months. Still, I liked the work, and it was quite an experience.

It was during this time that I took that fateful trip to Marin. However, there weren’t a lot of jobs open in the Bay Area — it was the dot com bust and immediately post-9/11. So I moved to the Maryland Department of Planning in 2002, when Governor Parris Glendenning’s Smart Growth agenda took root. There was a change in Governor in 2003, but smart growth remained a state planning priority. I supported rural land use planning with the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation Task Force. Once again, I found myself in the South, only now I was dealing with tobacco and chickens. We were working out how to give farmers who had placed their land under easement some flexibility to develop other income producing opportunities (e.g., corn mazes, farm stands, craft services) to keep them going when crop sales were insufficient to support their operations and there were pressures to move the land out of ag and into other uses. We also worked to provide opportunities to construct secondary dwellings on site for farm family children.

This was a great learning environment. As we were not a regulatory agency, we had to beg and creatively borrow to get things done. We had to really work to make technical planning information accessible to politicians without having the ‘stick’ of regulation to rely on. I learned first-hand that in politics everything is local, and language is key. I once said “downzoning” in legislative testimony; it was nearly the end of me.

(continued on next page)
The display of calling cards from firms offering professional services appears in every issue of Northern News. Fees paid by the firms for this service help defray the costs of this newsletter.

Meet a local planner (continued from previous page)

After three years, I was ready for a change, moved to Philadelphia, and worked for a small women-owned planning firm. Another great learning environment! In a small firm, everyone works on everything: proposals, client engagement and negotiations, collections, project management. While there, I shifted from statewide planning to local planning projects.

In 2007, at the National Planning Conference in Philadelphia, I ran into a college friend who suggested this was the time to move to the bay area. Michael Baker International was hiring, so I made the switch. There I started doing FEMA work and military planning, and was then assigned with the Coast Guard on a long-term contract. I am now with Markon Solutions, and still on long-term assignment to the Coast Guard.

What do you do on your time away?
I love to travel to other cities, especially internationally, to see how other people live and experience life. In addition to basic cultural exploration —I ate a lot of raw things in Japan — I liked seeing how infrastructure works elsewhere. Transit is amazing. You can see how different it is in Tokyo, Paris, and Berlin. Not that the systems are so different, although they are to some extent, but they are used differently by the citizens and tourists in each country.

What is your advice to planners starting out?
Be flexible. Our profession is so broad, there are many aspects to try out. Ask questions. Volunteer (with APA, for example). Diversify your skill sets. If you stick to just one thing, you will find yourself too narrowly focused and that would be boring.

I do have pet peeves: don’t over-sell yourself; don’t act as if yours is the only way; be open; listen; understand that in many places you will be going you won’t know everything.

Your writing is key — be open to edits and suggestions from others. Don’t take criticism personally. Be aware of your audience, whether in job interviews or public meetings. And be kind: everyone out there is fighting a tough battle.

Interviewer Siân Llewellyn, AICP, lives in San Francisco and is a vice president at AECOM.

Black and white and read all over. Data from issuu.com, host for our virtual magazine, show that people from 10 countries read Northern News: United States, 1,481; Mexico, 49; Australia, 12; Israel, 11; United Kingdom, 7; India, Canada, and Czech Republic, 5 each; and Denmark and Côte d’Ivoire, 3 each.
Santa Clara Valley Transportation “Priorities Survey”

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority is encouraging people to take a “Priorities Survey” at http://envisionsv.org/register. The survey “is an exercise to help the public and VTA think through the trade-offs as we invest limited resources to improve our transportation system.” As of September 14th, 1,317 people had participated in the survey.

Below is a summary of the survey responses as of September 2nd. VTA notes it “will consider all of these Priorities, including those not in the Top 5, and the Goals approved by the VTA Board of Directors for the Envision Silicon Valley process,” which can be seen at http://bit.ly/1NOpNpp.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRENDING (Top 5 and all Priorities)</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. IMPROVE TRANSIT SERVICE AND TRAVEL TIMES.</td>
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<td>2. RELIEVE ROADWAY BOTTLENECKS.</td>
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<td>3. DELIVER BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PROJECTS THAT PROMOTE CONNECTIVITY.</td>
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<td>4. USE TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE THE TRANSPORTATION EXPERIENCE.</td>
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<td>5. INCREASE FUNDING FOR ROADWAY MAINTENANCE.</td>
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<td>6. INCREASE FUNDING FOR BICYCLE PROJECTS, SIDEWALKS, AND BUS STOPS.</td>
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<td>7. PRIORITIZE PROJECTS THAT ADDRESS SAFETY CONCERNS.</td>
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<td>8. PROMOTE HEALTHY COMMUNITIES AND A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE.</td>
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<td>9. PROVIDE AMENITIES TO ATTRACT TRANSIT RIDERS.</td>
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<td>10. SERVE SENIORS, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND TRANSIT-DEPENDENT AREAS.</td>
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<td>11. MINIMIZE TRAFFIC IN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS.</td>
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<td>12. MINIMIZE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.</td>
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What’s more important: transit near homes or offices? “In metro Denver, commuters who worked near light rail had much stronger transit commute habits than those who lived near it. Those with offices within a mile of transit had a 26 percent transit commute share; those with homes had a mere 11 percent—lower than the overall regional average.” —Eric Jaffe, http://bit.ly/1NGodWG
The SF Urban Film Fest is a unique film festival that focuses on cities and civic engagement with compelling stories that can help shape urbanist ideas, practice, and implementation.

Our approach to urban problems has resonated, and the film festival is growing quickly. Entering only our second year, we have added two new partners, the University of San Francisco and the Exploratorium. Our inaugural host, SPUR, has agreed to be our partner again this year.

This year’s festival is November 3–8, with the theme “Beyond Dystopia: Utopia, Resistance, and Reclamation.” Throughout the week, we will screen narrative fiction and documentary films that highlight utopian visions that guide us to resist dystopia and reclaim our environment. After each screening, we will convene expert panelists who will tie the themes in the films with relevant urban planning issues such as the role of artists in the urban fabric, the relationship between urban planning and economic inequality, and what are ideal cities.

There will be a special screening of the classic Blade Runner at the University of San Francisco's stately Presentation Hall. We are also offering family-centric programming at the Exploratorium’s high-tech Kanbar Forum theatre on the theme of reclaiming urban rivers. For those who want to go deeper, we will offer a full day guerrilla filmmaking workshop combining found footage of the Bayview and Hunter's Point communities and new footage filmed on your own iPhone.

For more information please visit www.sfurbanfilmfest.com.

Leah Nichols is a designer at SITELAB urban studio in San Francisco. She holds an MA in architecture from the California College of the Arts and a BS in interior design from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

“The University City. Six metros have leapt from college town status to a University City: Madison, Ann Arbor, Fort Collins, Durham-Chapel Hill, Lincoln, and Lexington. Those six are more similar to each other than to other cities. They share a naturally occurring constellation of characteristics that position them perfectly for the knowledge economy.” —Scott Shapiro, http://bit.ly/1sSopFF
Call for Nominations for Northern Section Treasurer

We are seeking nominations for the Section Treasurer position. The Treasurer prepares an annual budget, is accountable for all Section accounts and funds, submits financial reports to the Section Board, and submits a year-end financial report to the Chapter. Section members may submit their names and a candidate’s statement not to exceed 500 words to the Nomination Committee for consideration and inclusion on the ballot. If interested, please submit your information to: Erik S. Balsley, AICP, Section Director-Elect, at balsley@alum.mit.edu by October 21, 2015. Ballots will be distributed to the membership in November. For detailed information on the Treasurer position, go especially to page 6, §4.6.5 of the Northern Section By-Laws, http://bit.ly/1mVz1BI

Where in the world

Photo by Barry J. Miller, FAICP (Answer on page 16.)

“Don’t talk about transit agency consolidation!?” Remove the 20-something political transit fiefdoms and manage one consolidated agency based on where people are going, rather than treating San Francisco as THE hub for transportation. Picture going from your home in Danville to your job in Saratoga on transit: No matter how integrated the four agencies you’d need to navigate, it wouldn’t compare with an agency that has the flexibility to create regional transit lines. —Rob Bregoff, http://bit.ly/1NKVLSv
Calling card advertisements support the Northern News. For more information on placing a calling card announcement and to receive format specifications, contact:

Scott Davidson, AICP, Advertising Director
(510) 697-2280
scottdavidson2@comcast.net

The 2015 APA California Conference is close at hand

Don’t procrastinate; it’s time to register.
Go to the conference website for rates and to register online: http://bit.ly/1pRDeFe. Even if you are paying by check, please use the registration site and follow directions.

Student volunteers needed!
If you are a student interested in volunteering, please visit the conference website for more information: http://bit.ly/1P6XlfB. Volunteer for eight hours and receive a $50 refund on your student registration.

Attend a pre-conference session.
We are offering two professional training workshops on Saturday, before the official start of the conference: http://bit.ly/1NjhHnc. Note: The sustainability/natural hazard mitigation session is $75 for all attendees — conference and non-conference.

Participate in a Mobile Workshop.
Want to explore during the conference and earn CM credit? Sign up for a mobile workshop at http://bit.ly/1Nji1Cj. Some have sold but out many are still open. Whether you have an interest in innovative public transportation technologies or the impacts of murals on a community, you will find something of interest!

Answer to Where in the world (Page 15)
Riddarholmen is a small islet, part of Gamla Stan, Stockholm’s old town. The tall spire is Riddarholm Church, one of the oldest buildings in Stockholm and the burial place of the Swedish monarchs. In front are private palaces from the 17th century. At the left is the Norstedts Building (1882-91).

Photo: Barry J. Miller, FAICP.
When will these projects be built?
The Tentative Order requires implementing green infrastructure projects two years after the effective date of the Final Order, over a 50-year planning horizon.

How will this be funded?
The burden is on the municipalities and flood control agencies subject to MRP 2 to identify funding sources. Green infrastructure plans would evaluate and prioritize funding sources, which may include grant funding, taxes, and fee structures, such as development impact fees.

Laura Prickett, AICP, is a senior associate and stormwater practice leader, Horizon Water and Environment, Oakland. Kristin Hathaway (City of Oakland) and Josh Bradt (San Francisco Estuary Partnership) contributed to this article. The three will co-lead with others “Green Infrastructure Takes Root in the East Bay,” a Sunday mobile workshop at the APA California conference in Oakland.

Will the new plans help with water supply issues?
Because most soils in the Bay Area are clayey, green infrastructure facilities are usually designed to have an underdrain below the engineered soil. The underdrain allows the water that cannot infiltrate into the clay to, instead, enter the storm drain system and then flow to creeks, the Bay, the Pacific Ocean, or other receiving waters. The water that gets to the underdrain will be cleaner than when it entered the rain garden’s surface.

Rain gardens and other green infrastructure can be used to help recharge groundwater supplies, but there must be sufficient separation between the bottom of the green infrastructure facility and the top of the seasonally high groundwater table, so that natural processes in the soil remove pollutants, allowing only clean water to reach the groundwater.

Green infrastructure plans may also identify sites for facilities such as cisterns and water tanks that will harvest stormwater for non-potable uses, such as irrigation or toilet flushing.
My Oakland (column)

Balsley, Erik S., AICP. (Feb. and April)
Sawyer, Erika J., AICP. (July/August and Oct.)

Plan-it sustainably (column)

Acey, Charisma, Ph.D., and Scott T. Edmondson, MAAUP, AICP. Testing APA’s Sustainability Accreditation Criteria on 11 Bay Area cities. (July/August)
Edmondson, Scott T., AICP. Ecodistricts — from notions to actions. (May)
Edmonson, Scott T., AICP. Assessing the sustainability of Bay Area cities’ general plans. (May)
Edmondson, Scott T., AICP. A peek into the future of planning and sustainable urban development tools. (Sept.)

Where in the world (photo feature)

Borrelli, Juan, AICP. The Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Feb.)
Castañeda, James, AICP. Stockholm. (June)
Graham, Hugh. Denver. (Oct.)
Knox, Naphtali H., FAICP. Čertovka canal and Kampa Island, Prague. (Nov.)
Knox, Naphtali H., FAICP. Tour boat, Malacca, Malaysia. (Nov.)
Meek, Justin, AICP. Riverwalk, San Antonio, Texas. (Nov.)
Niv, Ella. Lake Atitlán and San Juan La Laguna, Guatemala. (Sept.)
Nixon, Hilary. Salzburg. (March)
Schuppert, Jonathan, AICP. Crystal Tower, Osaka Business Park. (May)
Wong, Hing, AICP. Fernsehturm and St. Mary’s Church, Berlin. (April)

Magazine covers

Enderby, Mike. Pedro Point, San Mateo County. (May)
Graham, Hugh. Sunset District, San Francisco. (July/August)

Knox, Naphtali H., FAICP. Cedar Gables Inn, Napa. (Oct.)
Knox, Leila. Aerial view, Alameda, Oakland, Emeryville, Bay Bridge. (Nov.)
Lee, Chandler W. Aerial view, Marina Green, San Francisco. (March)
Meek, Justin, AICP. Monterey Bay after the storm, Santa Cruz. (Dec. 2014/Jan. 2015)
Oliver, H. Pike, AICP. San Francisco sunrise from California and Powell Streets. (Feb.)
Schuppert, Jonathan, AICP. San Francisco SOMA. (June)
Schuppert, Jonathan, AICP. Downtown San Jose and East Bay Hills. (Sept.)
Soland, Brian, AICP. Lake Merritt and Alameda County Superior Court building. (April)

Other photos and images

April
Knox, Aliza. Ho Chi Minh City and Saigon River.

June
Ise, Suzanne. Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail.

July/August
Cosin, Wendy, AICP. Grand Choral Synagogue, St. Petersburg.
Timoshuk, Tatiana. International Planning Tour participants.

September
Trails for Richmond Action Committee. Bruce Beyaert.

October
Knox, Naphtali H., FAICP. Tokyo bullet train at Shin-Kobe station.
Knox, Naphtali H., FAICP. Napa quake ‘before’ photos.
Knox, Naphtali H., FAICP. Between Hanoi and the Vietnam coast.

November
Balsley, Erik S., AICP. Fox Theatre, Oakland.
Barrera, José. The front fence offers a place to chat.
Harris, Eleri. Canberra, the Utopian city that wasn’t.
Hughes, Ryan. Bluestem interior, San Francisco.
Li, Janice. Bikes at peak hour on Market Street.

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**Northern News recognizes content providers for 2014** (continued from page 18)

**Linhares, Greg, City of Oakland.** Hing Wong, AICP. MIG. Design for South Bascom Urban Village.

**Roberts, Nancy.** Wind turbines, Solano County.

**Schwen, Daniel.** Concord Naval Weapons Station, 2006.

**ScottsdalePublicArt.org.** Wavelength shelters, Scottsdale.

**Von Worley, Stephen.** San Francisco peninsula, Redwood City to Mountain View.

**December/January 2015**

**Reager, J. T., NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology.** California’s ground water depletion over the last three years.

**Ratcliff, Trey.** Beijing and Forbidden City by drone.

**Hansraj, Kenneth K., MD.** The weight seen by the spine.

**Gagnon, Bernard.** The Queen’s Stepwell, India.

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## Who’s where

| **Nisha Chauhan, AICP,** is now principal of Nisha Chauhan Environmental Planning (NCEP) in Oakland. Previously, she was a senior project manager with Rincon Consultants, and before that, an environmental planner/project manager with URS. Chauhan holds a certificate of completion in land-use and environmental planning from UC Davis and a BA in environmental studies from UC Santa Cruz. |
| **Sanhita Ghosal, AICP,** has been promoted to Planner III in the department of planning, building and code enforcement, City of San Jose. Immediately prior, she worked in the city’s environmental services department on the Regional Wastewater Facility, managing adoption of the Plant Master Plan, certification of the Plant Master Plan EIR, and CEQA compliance for associated CIP projects. Ghosal has been with San Jose for 11 years. She holds a master of urban planning (San Jose State University); a master of architecture (University of Tokyo); and a bachelor of architecture (Bengal Engineering and Science University). |
| **Dana McCarthy** has joined EMC Planning Group as an assistant planner. Prior to EMC, McCarthy worked as a senior project manager for Leidos (Campbell) and was a project or staff geologist for three South Bay firms before that. In total, McCarthy has more than 15 years’ experience in environmental consulting. She holds a BS in earth sciences from UC Santa Cruz. |
| **Laura Prickett, AICP,** is now senior associate and stormwater practice leader at Horizon Water and Environment, Oakland. Prickett has 20 years’ experience in stormwater and environmental practice. Most recently she was environmental project manager and environmental team manager at Parsons, and before that, senior planner at Eisenberg Olivieri and Associates. She holds a master’s in community planning from University of Rhode Island and a BA in international relations from Boston University. (See her article on page 1.) |
| **Nicholas R. Stewart** has joined the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority as a transit service development specialist. Prior to VTA, he worked for a year at AC Transit as a transportation planning graduate intern. Stewart is a graduate planning student at San Jose State University, where he is a candidate for a master of urban planning. He holds a BA in history from San Francisco State University. |
The Olmsted-Hall Report proposed to use over 10,000 acres (more than 15 square miles) of surplus EBMUD lands to create a regional park system stretching through the nine East Bay cities: “We find that about ten or eleven thousand acres … can be used to create an adequate park system nearly 22 miles in length, easily accessible to serve the nine cities of the district.”

A new parkway to emphasize the finest views
The report also proposed a new Parkway over the top of the traffic tunnel: “The roadway should be located on easy lines and grades and should be designed in a way to emphasize some of the finest views.”

Conserving the wilderness, building scenic lanes
The Olmsted-Hall Report’s proposal to create a regional park system led directly to the formation of the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) in 1934. The newly formed district immediately embraced the recommendations of the Olmsted-Hall Report. The Park District acquired land rights to 3,220 acres (about 5 square miles) for its first four regional parks: Tilden Park (formerly Upper Wildcat Canyon), Temescal Regional Recreation Area, Sibley Volcanic Preserve (formerly Round Top), and Redwood Regional Park. The District then secured millions of federal dollars for the East Bay community and assistance from the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).

The Park District’s first concern was to build scenic lanes and boulevards. Under Park District direction, the WPA surgically carved Grizzly Peak Boulevard into the natural hillsides and forestlands to provide the general public with a scenic drive from Fish Ranch Road to Skyline Boulevard.

City of Oakland panoramic views and the City-owned Grizzly Peak Open Space
Oakland’s General Plan states that, as a scenic highway, Grizzly Peak Boulevard offers “the Oakland resident an exceptional opportunity to enjoy a scenic drive in a thoroughly rural setting just a few miles from an equally intense urban core.” The General Plan includes a policy to protect the character of existing scenic views in Oakland, “paying particular attention to panoramic views from Grizzly Peak Road and other hillside locations.”

The City of Oakland-owned Grizzly Peak Open Space is immediately adjacent to Grizzly Peak Boulevard. The City acquired the 58-acre hillside site in 1992 with Measure K open space preservation funds. The General Plan has recommendations for ongoing vegetation management in the open space area to reduce fire hazards and replace invasive vegetation with native species.

The General Plan recognizes that
- The Caldecott Tunnel is one of Oakland’s more dramatic and memorable gateways.
- Skyline Ridge, which includes the Grizzly Peak Open Space area, provides a clear edge that defines and forms and adds to the sense of the city as a unique and special place.
- The open space above the tunnel provides an important wildlife corridor and a connector between Tilden Regional Park, East Bay Municipal Utility District watershed lands, and Sibley (Round Top) Regional Park.

Implementing the Olmsted-Hall Report
Starting with the Olmsted-Hall planning vision of 10,000+ acres in a regional park system, the East Bay Regional Park District has expanded the vision and now manages over 118,000 acres (over 184 square miles) within Alameda and Contra Costa counties and their 33 cities.

When exploring in the footsteps of Hall and Olmsted, Jr., take extra care while parking in the very limited turnouts at the side of Grizzly Peak Boulevard. Share the panoramic views with all others, respect the environment, and leave only footprints.

Larry Tong is chief of planning/GIS, East Bay Regional Park District. Jerry Kent, former EBRPD assistant general manager, and Brenda Montano, EBRPD administrative analyst II, provided vital background information for this article. A reprint of the 1930 Olmsted-Hall Report is available at the East Bay Regional Park District website, www ebparks org, or from the author at ltong@ebparks.org.
planning departments, it’s clear that the planning profession has been waiting to be reinvigorated in the information age, especially as more and more digital natives come on board as planners, and Civic Tech continues its mission.

But for us to benefit from the planners’ hacking abilities, we all have work to do. Planners need to embrace our newfound allies and find new ways to engage, validate, and capture valuable citizen feedback to improve government. One of the planner’s many roles is to provide citizens with better platforms for engagement; collaboration will help us do that. Citizens need to be able to connect effectively with their government in our modern age of mobile devices and connectivity, and decision makers need better information to make informed decisions that affect their constituents. Planners have always been in the middle of the conversation between citizens and officials — analyzing, interpreting regulations, communicating concerns, and proposing solutions — and there’s a lot of room for improvement in those areas.

Planners also need to advocate for releasing as much data as possible. I sometimes struggle with seasoned planners’ reluctance to be more open with data for fear of citizens drawing misinformed conclusions. In my experience, most people who don’t understand the data will ask and will work with planners. It’s a challenge and an opportunity to make the information understandable — to give citizens the keys to understand the information they’re looking at.

We also need to remind our city and government officials not to forget their planning departments. They have staffs of eager problem solvers who relish the opportunity to help. Engage them, and partner them with the civic hackers knocking on their doors to help solve cities’ problems. We also need to encourage collaboration with other departments where possible. It benefits no one when departments are working in silos. Make no mistake — creating meaningful and productive, timely and tangible improvements to communities while empowering citizens must involve everyone. So, why not work together?

Urban planning is evolving, and right on the heels of the civic hacking movement. And as it evolves, planning will be challenged to adopt new ways of engaging citizens and developing solutions together. Envision the profession working hand-in-hand with Civic Tech: Planners and civic hackers working together to foster the empowerment of communities and make government better. As planners, as hackers.

**James Castañeda, AICP, wears two hats on APA California Northern Section’s Board: Administrative Director and Communications Director. You can reach him at apa@jamescastaneda.com**

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render the land use component of Plan Bay Area meaningless and move it further from the objectives of state law, exacerbating the land use-transportation disconnect in the Bay Region.

Finally, we are also concerned about the loss of valuable technical services beyond the land use component to Plan Bay Area. Specifically, local governments rely on the ABAG Planning and Research Department’s forecasting for local general plan and housing element updates, and research regarding hazard mitigation planning and best practices. The Department’s current economic research is foundational to the potential creation of Priority Industrial Areas to complement the successful Priority Development/Priority Conservation Areas framework for wise land use planning in the Bay Region. The ABAG Planning and Research Department also implements programs to enhance the quality of life through its Bay Trail and Farmland Preservation programs. It is unclear how a planning function within a transportation agency will continue to provide such services.

While some are urging quick action, we would caution that speedy action without thorough deliberation and involvement of the ABAG General Assembly may result in more cost overruns in the long-term. From a purely logistical standpoint, merging and hiring staff takes time and causes disruption — this alone may delay the update to Plan Bay Area. Further, we can likely all agree that the concept of integrated regional planning is laudable; however, as we are well aware, the structuring of agencies can greatly affect its success. Any merger should be well thought out so that not only government efficiency is valued; but also so that public involvement and government effectiveness are achieved. For these reasons, we urge both agencies to proceed thoughtfully and for MTC to continue funding for ABAG beyond the December timeline so that any planned merger may proceed in a purposeful manner and with benefit of input from the public and local jurisdictions.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. We ask that you provide this letter to your Board and Commission members. We welcome the opportunity to engage in further discussion.

Sincerely,

Brent A. Butler, AICP, CFM, Planning and Housing Manager, City of East Palo Alto
Christina Ratcliffe, AICP, Community Development Director, City of Benicia
Charlie Knox, AICP, Former Planning Director
Michele Rodriguez, AICP, Development Services Manager, City of San Pablo
Casey McCann, Community Development Director, City of Brentwood
Al Savay, AICP, Community and Economic Development Director, City of San Carlos
Colette Meunier, AICP, Former Planning Director
Larry Tong, Chief of Planning/GIS, East Bay Regional Park District
Vallejo project on ULI list of repurposed buildings
*Urban Land, August 31, 2015*

**Ron Nyren, http://on.uli.org/1JVLBJD** • “The rapid pace of change in the world, combined with increasing awareness of the cultural value and sustainable advantages of reusing historic structures, means that more of these [historic] buildings are being called upon to play new roles, sometimes radically different from the ones for which they were designed originally.”


“Built inside the former Masonic Temple (circa 1917) and the former City Hall (circa 1864) on the corner of Virginia and Marin streets, the development gives preference to working artists earning no more than 50 percent of the median income for the area. “The Lofts opened at the beginning of April [2013]. The architecturally rich historic buildings include the still-intact city jail and boast floor to ceiling windows, original hardwood flooring, and high ceilings. In addition to the lofts, the 55,000 square-foot structure holds 6,000 feet of ground-floor retail space, a magnificent performance hall for art openings and events, and a community workroom for use by the development’s residents.”

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Rush hour ferry service enhanced from SF to a few East Bay stops
*KQED News, August 24, 2015*

**Dan Brekke, http://bit.ly/1Lzepxa** • “The Water Emergency Transportation Authority overseeing San Francisco Bay Ferry operations extended through October a temporary 5:30 p.m. boat from the city’s Ferry Building to Vallejo.

“The additional trip has alleviated some of the demand that saw would-be passengers stranded on the docks. ‘The ferry service, like so many transit agencies in the region, is carrying more and more people,’ said Ernest Sanchez, marketing manager for San Francisco Bay Ferry. ‘The demand on the system is substantial, and what we’re trying to do is assign our 11 boats in the most affective manner.’

“Bay Ferry has also redirected routes to create a direct 4 p.m. trip from San Francisco’s Pier 41 to Alameda, then Oakland. But the changes will only make a small dent in demand that shows no sign of waning. “The new runs amount to a temporary fix while the system awaits longer-term expansions, like two new 400-passenger boats expected to hit the Bay next winter. ‘We are working hard to increase the capacity of this ferry system, but these things take a long time,’ Sanchez said. ‘Right now we need to get the carrying capability of the system — as it is — to our commuters at the time that they need it.’”

(Norcal roundup continues on next page)
Continuing gentrification and displacement are forecast for Bay Area

*Kathleen Maclay, [http://bit.ly/1Jx91IF](http://bit.ly/1Jx91IF)*  • “The San Francisco Bay Area’s transformation into a sprawling, exclusive, high-income community is just beginning, according to UC Berkeley researchers. The interactive Urban Displacement Project map, [http://bit.ly/1Jx9pqv](http://bit.ly/1Jx9pqv), released August 24, indicates the displacement crisis is not yet half over, as rising housing prices and pressure on low-income residents accelerate.

“The project, headed by UC Berkeley researcher Miriam Zuk and city and regional planning professor Karen Chapple, is the product of nearly two years of community-engaged research looking at gentrification and displacement. Key findings, which offer lessons for other regions across the country where housing prices are skyrocketing, include:

- “In 2013, more than 53 percent of low-income households lived in neighborhoods at risk of or already experiencing displacement and gentrification pressures, comprising 48 percent of the Bay Area’s census tracts.
- “Neighborhoods with rail stations, historic housing stock, an abundance of market-rate developments, and rising housing prices are especially in danger of losing low-income households.
- “Many neighborhoods that expected to be at risk of displacement — such as East Palo Alto, Marin City, and San Francisco’s Chinatown — have been surprisingly stable, at least until 2013, the most recent year with available data.

“Nine neighborhoods in six Bay Area counties were selected to represent the region’s diverse geographies and neighborhoods.” Among them:

- “Chinatown, which has survived decades of housing pressures, is managing to preserve affordable housing through strong community organizing and planning.
- “San Francisco’s Mission District, known locally as the epicenter of gentrification and displacement as industrial land is turning high-end residential.
- “Subsidized housing and tenant protections such as rent control and just-cause eviction ordinances are the most effective tools for stabilizing communities, say Zuk and Chapple, yet the regional nature of the housing and jobs markets has managed to render some local solutions ineffective. ‘Even if San Francisco, Berkeley and East Palo Alto protect their renters, that won’t ease displacement pressures on the communities next door, which are experiencing the same housing market dynamics,’ says Chapple.

“The researchers conducted their neighborhood case studies in collaboration with seven community-based organizations to ground the technical analysis in real-life experiences. Two technical advisory committees composed of local and statewide stakeholders provided oversight.”

Bay Area leads job growth

*Palo Alto Online, August 22, 2015*

*Steve Levy, [http://bit.ly/1Ku08Aq](http://bit.ly/1Ku08Aq)*  • “More than 80,000 jobs were added statewide in July and 490,000 over the previous 12 months. The average of over 40,000 added jobs per month has reduced the state’s unemployment rate to 6.2 percent, the lowest since February 2008 but still above the national rate of 5.3 percent.

“The Bay Area saw an increase of more than 25,000 jobs seasonally adjusted and a gain of over 140,000 jobs in the past 12 months including 60,000 in the San Jose metro area. San Jose metro had a year-over-year increase of 6 percent — nearly triple the national job growth rate of 2.1 percent.

“The gains have spread beyond the Bay Area with Southern California, San Diego, and (finally) the Sacramento region outpacing national job growth. But many challenges remain.

- “The state faces a housing shortage — and rent and home price increases — that far outpace income growth.
- “Infrastructure needs in transportation, water, and other areas remain far above current funding levels.

“Additional housing and infrastructure construction are the most immediate and effective ways to increase middle wage jobs.”

(Norcal roundup continues on next page)
‘Can West Oakland change and stay the same all at once?’

*KQED News Fix*, August 26, 2015

Devin Katayama, [http://bit.ly/1K56ozI](http://bit.ly/1K56ozI) • “At one time, people migrated from the South to live and work in West Oakland, a hub for World War II shipbuilding and manufacturing. At its height around 1950, 40,000 people lived in the neighborhood versus roughly 25,000 today.

“After the war, thousands of people and jobs left for the suburbs, and several public projects destroyed parts of West Oakland. Now West Oakland is experiencing an influx of new money and people, driven by the demand for space in the Bay Area. Rents and home prices have soared.

“Most of the redevelopment is focused on big projects with strong capital, leaving out a portion of the population that has been underserved for years. People who have been struggling in West Oakland for decades are being displaced by this new tide of money.

“Some have criticized the West Oakland Specific Plan, adopted in 2014, for not including enough direction on how to equal the playing field for current residents. The plan states that it’s important to retain and preserve West Oakland’s industrial land and the job base it supports, and asks how the city can court new industries while preserving ‘existing quality jobs that have provided generations of Oakland residents with a decent living wage.’

“The plan acknowledges a skills gap between residents and the kinds of jobs that are expected to grow in the region, such as tech, life sciences, and green energy. Still, some businesses moving into the area are providing good entry-level jobs for locals, one of the best things any business can do.”

Panelists list tough choices facing Napa Valley

*North Bay Business Journal*, August 24, 2015

Jeff Quackenbush, [http://bit.ly/1MMk8y8](http://bit.ly/1MMk8y8) • Community and business leaders at the “eighth annual Impact Napa conference on Aug. 19 focused on opportunities and challenges for the county between now and 2025.”

“Panelist Ken Frank, Napa Chamber of Commerce board chair, said the ag preserve acts like a huge thumb on the scale of the housing market. Community wisdom will be needed to figure out how to create 5,000 housing units estimated to be missing from the valley’s supply because of constraints on development in rural areas, he said. Part of that discussion will have to be looking at rezoning properties.

“Keith Rogal said density could be a hard sell [but] Napa Valley will have to seriously consider allowing more people on less land. By 2025, it is estimated the valley will have 16,000 more people, requiring 5,800 more homes.

“David Graves, co-founder of Saintsbury winery, said ‘Everybody knows that climate has a big impact on wine, because that’s how vintage years developed. If Napa were to warm, we may have to change the mix of what we’re growing.’ Not many of the warmer-climate-suited cultivars have yet been tried in the valley, he said.

“Laurel Marcus, executive director of California Land Stewardship Institute, said Napa Valley overall has weathered four years of drought because of its aquifers, but that could change with the climate. ‘It’s very likely the forest will shift to chaparral, and the chaparral will shift toward grassland,’ she said. That would potentially result in more out-of-control fires and less infiltration of rain into aquifers. ‘In the long run, it could start changing some of our water resources. We need to change policy from the last 100 years so it will work in the next 100 years,’ she said.”

Coming soon-ish: an east-west HSR.

“A China Railway Group-led consortium and XpressWest Enterprises LLC will form a joint venture to build a high-speed railway linking Las Vegas and Los Angeles, the first Chinese-made bullet-train project in the US. Construction of the 230-mile Southwest Rail Network will begin as soon as next September. The project comes after four years of negotiations and will be supported by $100 million in initial capital. The statement didn’t specify the project’s expected cost or completion date.” —Bloomberg News, [http://bloom.bg/1Jecozc](http://bloom.bg/1Jecozc)
HUD case study features SLO mixed-income affordable housing

*Moylan Terrace in San Luis Obispo is the first for-sale development of the city’s housing authority. With 36 units completed, the townhouse project will eventually provide 80 homeownership opportunities to the city’s very low-, low-, moderate-, and workforce-income populations. The development’s design not only minimizes the need for public subsidy but also exhibits smart growth attributes that align well with the city’s development goals for the South Broad Street area.

“San Luis Obispo designated the Moylan Terrace site as a planned development overlay zone, with flexible zoning standards that allow greater residential density in exchange for higher quality design. Lot lines were drawn in such a way that each homeowner purchases the unit and the land underneath. Unlike condominium projects, Moylan Terrace was designed so that the side walls, roofing, electrical systems, and other features are part of each unit rather than shared with adjacent units. The side walls between adjacent units are two walls separated by five inches of air space that is masked by building material.

By using the state’s density bonus law, which limits required parking, among other adjustments, to allow greater density for developments with affordable housing, the developers were able to cut the number of required parking spots for the development by 20 percent, further reducing housing costs.

HUD User publishes a series of case studies based on federal, state, and local strategies that increase affordable housing opportunities and support sustainable community development.

Lawsuit says new L.A. streets plan creates more air pollution

*A Westside-based nonprofit group has gone to court to overturn Los Angeles’ sweeping new 20-year mobility plan — the first major overhaul of the city’s transportation policies since 1999. The plan calls for 300 miles of protected bike lanes separated from traffic by curbs or other physical barriers, and 117 miles of bus-only lanes. An additional 120 miles of bus lanes would be created for rush-hour-only use.

“In its lawsuit, the advocacy group ‘Fix the City’ said Mobility Plan 2035 will lead to increased tailpipe emissions as drivers confront fewer car lanes and greater traffic congestion. Fix the City contends the city relied on outdated data on population, traffic, and municipal services when analyzing the mobility plan. The group also questioned a key finding of the environmental review — that greenhouse gas emissions would decrease as Angelenos get out of their cars and turn to walking, bicycling, and public transit.

“The plan, approved by the city council in August, puts a major emphasis on safety, calling for key streets to be redesigned in ways that rein in traffic speeds. Fix the City contends that public safety would instead be threatened, with emergency responders struggling to make their way through traffic.

“Backers of the mobility plan say L.A. lacks the space and money to continue widening streets or adding freeways. The plan’s projects are expected to increase walking by 38 percent, transit use by 56 percent, and bicycling by 170 percent, if completed by 2035.”

(California continues on next page)
We can do all we want to with less water

*Los Angeles Times, September 6, 2015*

Peter H. King, [http://lat.ms/1K2r1X0](http://lat.ms/1K2r1X0) • “California has been racking up water conservation numbers — a 27 percent reduction in June, followed by 31.3 percent in July. Perhaps more impressive is the actual volume of water saved over two months: 414,800 acre-feet.

“That’s more than twice the amount projected to be available annually from two proposed storage facilities that would cost a combined $3.5 billion: the Temperance Flat Dam on the San Joaquin River and an expansion of Shasta Dam.

“Some experts see an approach following the lead of the energy sector in California. In the last quarter century, a ‘soft path’ to energy reliability — one built on conservation, innovation, and mutual incentives for buyers and sellers alike — has replaced the brute strategy of building all the generation plants needed to power all of the state all of the time.

“Approaches that might be borrowed from the energy sector include incentives for appliance stores to stock only the most water-efficient products, fostering ‘robust and diverse’ markets that would place a tradeable value on conserved water, and finding ways for water providers to balance their books even as they sell less water.

“The Oakland-based Pacific Institute last year published with the Natural Resources Defense Council a report that identified a host of measures that could generate 10 million to 14 million acre-feet of water a year in California without major crimps in lifestyle or dents in the economy.”

‘9 views of the LA River today and before it was paved in 1938’

*Curbed Los Angeles, August 19, 2015*

Adrian Glick Kudler, [http://bit.ly/1JCnul9](http://bit.ly/1JCnul9) • “The Los Angeles River is on the verge of a new era. A $1-billion-plus plan to restore 11 miles north of Downtown LA has been working its way through federal approvals, Frank Gehry has taken on a revitalization project for the full length of the river, LA will host an art biennial centered on the river, the river is a main selling point in the city’s bid for the 2024 Olympics, and developers are now clamoring to build along the river’s banks.

“In the late 1930s, at some points, the river was just a trickle; in other parts, it was uncontrollably wild, and flooded frequently and devastatingly. After a terrible flood in March 1938, the US Army Corps of Engineers began work to lower the riverbed, widen the channel, and choke the whole thing in a continuous concrete channel from Elysian Park to Long Beach.

“Two years ago, we looked at 25 photos from the LA Public Library’s collection showing just how unrecognizable [the river] was before it was paved. Peter Bennett, who runs the Los Angeles River Photos blog, found [the places] where nine of those photos were taken, and, using his iPad to match up with the originals, took the same shots of the river as it is today. Here we’ve matched the two versions together (with Bennett’s notes), so you can take the trip yourself.”

(California continues on next page)
Perhaps a quarter of the drought is due to climate change

*Climate Central, August 20, 2015*

Brian Kahn, [http://bit.ly/1Kgsoq6](http://bit.ly/1Kgsoq6) • “One question that’s lingered as long as the drought [has been answered]: up to 27 percent of the drought is due to climate change. And climate change has made the odds of severe droughts like this one twice as likely.

“The sobering numbers come from researchers at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, NASA, and University of Idaho who analyzed temperature, precipitation, wind speed, and other data to tease out the role climate change has played in the drought (study published August 20th in Geophysical Research Letters, [http://bit.ly/1KgsGgp](http://bit.ly/1KgsGgp)).

“The general consensus from a string of studies is that heat has played a role in exacerbating the drought, and some of that heat is part of the larger pattern of global warming.

“Park Williams, a tree ring researcher at Lamont, led the latest round of research that [assembled] the state’s drought data into a grid of 23,955 boxes: Averaged across the state, this hasn’t been California’s worst drought on record, but it is the worst on record in the places that matter the most. The lack of rain obviously started the drought, but heat has ensured its lasting impacts. ‘Knowing how much climate change has affected this drought is important to help Californians understand that while natural climate variability is still important, over the long term, we have a trend underway,’ Williams said. The odds of severe drought in California have doubled since the early 20th century.

“California and other parts of the Southwest are basically guaranteed to deal with a serious drought lasting a decade — and an 80 percent chance of a drought that lasts multiple decades — by 2100.”

![Changing drought patterns across the U.S. at the start of each decade through 2095. Source: NASA](image)

*Caveat planner in 140 characters.* “We constantly risk oversimplifying the complexity of cities while at the same time over-complicating the conversation about cities.” — @BrentToderian
**U.S. roundup**
Excerpts from around the country, linked to the original articles

**New Orleans: Some moved on, some moved in**
*KQED, August 26, 2015*

**Greg Allen, http://bit.ly/1K58xeR** • “Ten years after Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans is smaller than when the storm hit, with 110,000 fewer people than the nearly half-million who had lived there.

“With new residents, a different mix of people now calls the city home. Proportionately, the number of whites has risen while the number of black residents has gone down. There are 100,000 fewer black residents in New Orleans than before Katrina, down from two thirds of the population to less than 60 percent.

“But Hispanics began arriving immediately after the storm and literally rebuilt the city. The Hispanic population in New Orleans has grown by almost a quarter since Katrina and even more in surrounding parishes.

“And that has changed the culture of the city. ‘You can’t even hear the same dialect. The New Orleans drag? It’s hard to find,’ says Stan Norwood of the Freret neighborhood.

“Many elderly were unable to return to flooded homes. Because the schools were in disarray, some families with children moved to other cities and decided to stay. Others found, even with federal assistance, they didn’t have enough to return and rebuild. And now, Norwood says, those who still want to return to the old neighborhood find houses have been priced out of reach.

“A small but growing tech sector is attracting whites to the city, many young and educated. New Orleans has always been a place that blended cultures. Now, as the city grows, newcomers are adding flavors to the gumbo.”

**Houston sort of has zoning, but no plan**
*Kinder Institute, September 8, 2015*

**Ryan Holywell, http://bit.ly/1KDej7C** • “Houston is the only major American city that lacks zoning. That makes it a unique footnote in legal and urban planning textbooks. But Matthew Festa, a land use professor at South Texas College of Law, said [Houston’s] reputation isn’t deserved or even accurate.

“Houston has what Festa calls ‘de facto zoning,’ which closely resembles the real thing. ‘We’ve got a lot of regulations that in other cities would be in the zoning code,’ Festa said. ‘We just don’t use the ‘z’ word.’

“Regardless, Houston doesn’t look that different from other major urban centers in the American Sunbelt. If Houston really lacked zoning, one would assume the effects would be more dramatic. ‘We don’t have brothels next to churches,’ Festa said. Houston regulates building sizes and heights, the percentage of a lot that can be occupied, and the density of communities, things which fall under zoning’s banner.

“More important is to have a discussion about whether the de facto zoning system is working for all residents. That doesn’t seem to be happening. The problem, Festa said, ‘is there’s no comprehensive plan.’ Decisions about building are often not done in a way that examines how they positively or negatively affect each neighborhood.

“What Houston might have is the worst of both worlds: all the burdens of regulation and none of the foresight to use it effectively. ‘It works like zoning,’ Festa said, ‘but it’s not the product of a comprehensive plan.’”

(U.S. continues on next page)
'Census Flows Mapper’ displays county-to-county migration


Census.gov, [http://1.usa.gov/1LBPbyb](http://1.usa.gov/1LBPbyb)

- “The Census Flows Mapper ([http://1.usa.gov/1Ejyc0T](http://1.usa.gov/1Ejyc0T)) is an interactive mapping application for the public to visualize and print, as well as download, county-to-county flows for five-year periods. In the application, users select a county either by scrolling over it and clicking on the map or via drop-down menus. By default, the map will display net county-to-county flows into and out of the selected county. [In-migration and out-migration flows can also be selected.] County-to-county flows may also be crossed by characteristics such as sex, race, Hispanic origin, and age. A PowerPoint Tutorial for the tables and Census Flows Mapper is available.”

Utah succeeds and saves with homes for the homeless (illustrated)

*Aeon*, August 28, 2015


- “More than 3 million Americans experience an episode of homelessness each year. But in a few US cities, a new ideology has taken hold that seeks not just to address homelessness, but to solve it.

  “The Housing First philosophy — first piloted in Los Angeles in 1988 — is predicated on the notion that housing is a right. Instead of first demanding that the homeless get jobs and enroll in treatment programs, or that they live in a shelter before they can apply for apartments, government and aid groups simply give the homeless homes.

  “The approach has been successful in Utah, where chronic homelessness is down 91 per cent over the past decade, and where rapid rehousing programs have housed thousands of newly homeless veterans and families quickly and cheaply.

  “The programs are available only to those with disabling conditions such as mental illness, alcoholism, and drug addiction, whose lives and habits place the biggest financial burden on the state.

  “By 2010, Utah’s Housing First pilot program had proved successful: 17 of Salt Lake City’s most troubled and most expensive homeless people were given their own apartments.

  “Among a daisy chain of partnerships, the nonprofit Housing Opportunities develops and manages dedicated permanent supportive housing facilities across the greater Salt Lake County area. Their apartment buildings are located away from the downtown business district and closer to residential areas. They feel more like college dorms than institutions with amenities that are safe to brag about [because they are] cheaper than the alternative.

  “The rent is, at minimum, $25 per month, or one-third of a resident’s income if there is any, which some earn by working janitorial, clerical, or landscaping jobs at the facility. The rest of the cost is subsidized by pre-existing HUD funding and special grants.”

  (U.S. continues on next page)
Fair housing, cities, and segregation

**CP&DR, August 30, 2015**


• “About 80 years too late, the federal government has put real regulatory authority behind the duty of publicly funded agencies to ‘affirmatively further fair housing.’ It’s being discussed as a genuine chance to desegregate the suburbs.

  “Some serious urban policy writers are talking about suburban desegregation as if it were the only fair housing goal. Meanwhile, there are separate conversations going about urban gentrification and displacement. Really the two issues belong together.

  “Disadvantaged people are caught in a pincer between old-fashioned suburban snobbery and new urban pricing-out. They are running out of places to go between the two. That’s what unites this summer’s terrible headlines about homelessness in rich downtowns and about police violence in segregated inner suburbs. That’s why fair housing has to mean both urban affordability and suburban diversity.

  “The new HUD … rules are ambitious enough to make bigots nervous, and they might genuinely help poor families.”

Public sector no longer a reliable source of jobs for black Americans

**Next City, August 24, 2015**


• “The public sector has had a long history of providing economic opportunity for historically underrepresented groups in the U.S. labor market. Since 1960, the percentage of black workers in the public sector has been higher than their percentage of the general population. Despite some remaining limitations, the public sector has been a reliable source of economic opportunity for black Americans. Until recently.

  “That’s the finding of a study by Jennifer Laird, a University of Washington sociologist (see [http://bit.ly/1MMhLLW](http://bit.ly/1MMhLLW)). Laird analyzed federal employment data from 2003-2013, including gender, race, and public versus private sector status. Black public sector workers, she found, were more likely to become unemployed than their white or Hispanic counterparts during that time period.

  “Laird considers two broad forces that led to especially deep and long-lasting effects: the sudden drop in tax revenues due to the Great Recession, and the rise of the Tea Party, particularly at the state level. Roughly 40 percent of state and local governments reported layoffs in 2011 alone, she cites in the study.

  “Laird likens the public sector restructuring of the Great Recession to the industrial restructuring of post 1970s, as documented by renowned sociologist William Julius Wilson. Just as Wilson contends that the U.S. economy’s shift away from manufacturing had a uniquely pernicious effect on black households, Laird is contending that it is possible the economy is experiencing a different shift but with the same or similar effect on black families.”

Urban walkability and convenience in the Rockies

**CityLab, August 20, 2015**


• “Colorado, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming are grappling with how to build a diverse, 21st-century economy that will provide good jobs and affordable housing for the people who live there and those who want to move there.

  “Community Builders, an initiative of the nonprofit Sonoran Institute, surveyed business owners and community members to find out what attracted them to the region and what they value most in choosing where to live and do business.

  “The survey ([http://bit.ly/1hB3sP1](http://bit.ly/1hB3sP1)) found that trying to entice big employers through tax incentives might be less effective than creating desirable communities:

• “About 70 percent of business owners did not move to a community specifically to start a business, but rather picked a community where they wanted to live and then decided to start a business.

• “Business owners’ top criterion was ‘overall quality of the community’ — defined by respondents as including ‘people and overall friendliness, sense of community, sense of safety, access to activities, and access to outdoor recreation.’

• “83 percent of employees said they were willing to accept a smaller salary to live in a community they considered ideal.

• “75 percent favored a smaller home close to services and amenities over a larger home with a longer commute.

• “71 percent preferred to be able to bike or walk to work and errands rather than driving.

• “And 71 percent preferred to live in a mixed-use neighborhood rather than a purely residential neighborhood.” #
The world’s largest urban area

*Earth Observatory, NASA*

[http://1.usa.gov/1NyLuZb](http://1.usa.gov/1NyLuZb) • “If taken as one entity, the Pearl River Delta region in China has overtaken Tokyo as the world’s largest urban area — by size and population — according to an analysis of satellite and demographic data published by the World Bank ([http://bit.ly/1NyLND9](http://bit.ly/1NyLND9)). Between 2000 and 2010, the Pearl River Delta’s urban spaces — defined as areas where the built environment covered more than 50 percent of the landscape in a given pixel — had expanded from 4,500 square kilometers to 7,000 square kilometers. (In 2010, Tokyo had a population of about 32 million people and covered about 5,600 square kilometers.)

“The Pearl River Delta region has a very different pattern of growth compared to other fast-growing cities in China. ‘Vast and multinucleate with no clear center, its form arose from its unique economic origins in the 1980s and 1990s, as the geographic center of the market reforms that subsequently transformed the Chinese economy, particularly the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone,’ the World Bank authors noted. ‘This region thus has a very different, and more recent, urban growth trajectory than those of Beijing and Shanghai, which, despite their explosive recent growth, have grown around well-defined historic urban centers.’

Satellite images illustrate the dramatic growth between 1988 and 2014. Use the image comparison slider to view the transformation.

Moving toward the poles


Carl Zimmer, [http://nyti.ms/1JRLfWI](http://nyti.ms/1JRLfWI) • “Up in Maine, lobsters are thriving. In southern New England, lobster stocks have plummeted to the lowest levels ever recorded. According to a 2013 study, marine species are pushing their range boundaries poleward, away from the Equator, at an average speed of 4.5 miles a year. That’s 10 times as fast as the speed at which species on land are moving.

‘Dr. Malin L. Pinsky, a marine biologist at Rutgers University who was not involved in the studies, sees ominous signs for humanity in the research. ‘Many species are moving away from the tropics, and that quite likely has food security implications,’ he said. ‘Seafood in many of these countries is a very important source of nutrition. Climate change could leave a gaping hole in the oceans.’”

BRT now runs in 402 cities

*The City Fix, August 31, 2015*

Ryan Winstead, [http://bit.ly/1MadvaC](http://bit.ly/1MadvaC) • “The number of mapped Bus Rapid Transit corridors and systems in BRTData.org’s database has passed 400. The figure, a reflection of the vast amount of free and accessible data that exists online to support BRT, shows that many cities worldwide are increasingly interested in sustainable transport: 48 cities are currently expanding their BRT systems, while 141 more are constructing or planning new BRT projects.

‘BRT isn’t perfect — but for some urban areas, BRT is decreasing congestion, improving air quality, and moving people through cities faster than ever. One of the largest barriers BRT has had to overcome is the uncertainty cities face when attempting to implement it. For example, BRT has encountered major resistance from car owners, fierce competition with metro systems for funding, and lackluster public relations exacerbated by local media.

‘However, these difficulties are being recorded in online databases and BRT’s triumphs are being shared. Online data is key for ensuring greater success for this new transport mode.”

(World continues on next page)
Paris’s elegant historic signs
*Slate.com*, August 30, 2015


Starting in the 1970s “in her early 20s,” writes Teicher, “Louise Fili spent years wandering the streets of Paris, photographing the beautiful old signs she saw along the way. She was beginning to discover graphic design at the time, and her documentation of the vernacular signs was for her own reference and enjoyment.”

“Over the years, however, Fili noticed that many of the signs she loved were starting to disappear. That’s when she started thinking about cataloguing her favorites in a more permanent way to preserve their memory for future generations.”

**Paris Metro station.** Photo: Andrew Krakos, copyright American Planning Association.

“When Fili started working on her book, she was determined to find as many undiscovered signs as possible, so between trips to Paris, she roamed the streets virtually from her desk in New York using Google Street View.”

Teicher’s article includes nine photos, with captions, by Fili.

A warmer Arctic may remove, not add, methane
*Princeton Journal Watch (ISME Journal)*, August 14, 2015

**Morgan Kelly**, [http://bit.ly/1F5lIF9](http://bit.ly/1F5lIF9) • “A significant concern among scientists is that higher Arctic temperatures brought about by climate change could result in the release of massive amounts of carbon locked in the region’s frozen soil in the form of carbon dioxide and methane. Arctic permafrost is estimated to contain about a trillion tons of carbon, which would potentially accelerate global warming. Carbon emissions in the form of methane have been of particular concern because on a 100-year scale, methane is about 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide at trapping heat.

“New research led by Princeton University researchers and published in *The ISME Journal* in August suggests that, thanks to methane-hungry bacteria, the majority of Arctic soil might actually be able to absorb methane from the atmosphere rather than release it. Furthermore, that ability seems to become greater as temperatures rise.

“The researchers found that this ability stems from an as-yet unknown species of bacteria in carbon-poor Arctic soil that consume methane in the atmosphere. The bacteria the researchers studied remove the carbon from methane to produce methanol, a simple alcohol the bacteria process immediately. The researchers project that should Arctic temperatures rise by 5 to 15 degrees Celsius over the next 100 years, the methane-absorbing capacity of “carbon-poor” soil could increase by five to 30 times.”

(World continues on next page)
Maybe there’s no relationship between access to green space and well-being

*CityLab*, August 14, 2015


“Scientists at the National University of Singapore surveyed students across the island state to determine the relationship between their use of natural parks and their self-reported well-being. Researchers mapped the proximity of respondents to four types of green spaces and asked respondents to rate their subjective life satisfaction and their positive and negative affect.

“The researchers found that neither access to nor use of Singapore’s green spaces had a significant impact on the respondents’ well-being. The most significant influence on well-being was the underlying emotional stability and personality of the respondent — which doesn’t necessarily have anything to do with nature.

“Numerous studies extol the benefits of green space on human health. The research in Singapore doesn’t invalidate those studies, but it complicates the conventional wisdom. Singaporeans may derive less enjoyment from the outdoors than their European counterparts simply because it’s so damn hot outside.

“Or the very ubiquity of green spaces in Singapore may make their effect on well-being difficult to detect. Singaporeans may see so much plant and animal life that they take it for granted.

“Perhaps the most important takeaway is that we need to look beyond the Western world to understand the effects of green space on health and well-being.”

‘Walk this way’

*Globe and Mail*, August 26, 2015

**Robert Everett-Green, [http://bit.ly/1KugV6e](http://bit.ly/1KugV6e)** • “The Buenos Aires transportation authority believes pedestrian streets are the way of the future. It has installed 80 blocks of them in the downtown in the past five years, with another 20 blocks to follow. But one lane of strictly local traffic is permitted, with a speed limit of 10 km per hour.

“The pedestrianized blocks are part of a comprehensive strategy for managing the flow of people through the densest parts of the city. Buenos Aires’s Sustainable Mobility plan (2009) gives a starring role to pedestrians and cyclists, but also includes a dramatic shift in public transport.

“Cars are allowed on the pedestrianized routes if they have permits for local residence or work. The 10-km speed limit is based on the first speed limit for cars in London. The limit is easy to enforce during the day, less so at night, says Guillermo Dietrich, the head of transport for Buenos Aires, especially in parts of the financial district that are quiet after business hours. He says the city was not swayed by the conventional wisdom that pedestrian zones only work in strong retail and nightlife zones. The greater concentration of pedestrians through the whole area is already starting to increase restaurant and residential development, he says, as parking lots are rededicated to other purposes.

“Most North American attempts at pedestrianization are too narrowly focused on a few blocks of one street, with little thought given to the broader ecology of public space and transport.”
BOARD MEMBER DIRECTORY

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