

NORTHERN NEWS



American Planning Association
California Chapter
Northern
Making Great Communities Happen

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

DECEMBER 2015/JANUARY 2016

Regulate economic rents to build diverse and equitable communities

Alex Lantsberg, AICP, Page 1



San Francisco, looking north on Hyde Street
to Russian Hill. Photo: Fay Darmawi



NORTHERN NEWS



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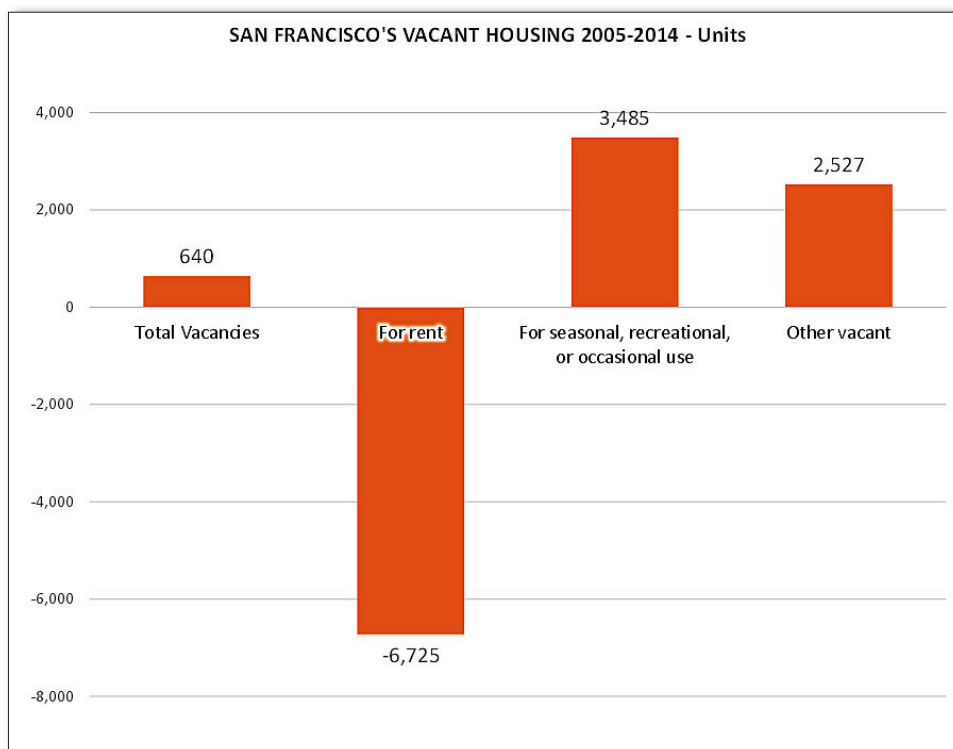
A Publication of the Northern Section of the California Chapter of APA
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Regulate economic rents to build economically diverse and equitable communities

By Alex Lantsberg, AICP

There is little doubt that a fundamental mismatch between housing supply and surging demand is at the core of San Francisco’s housing woes — and indeed, the region’s. That said, Dr. Claude Gruen’s arguments against the market interventions critical to protecting and expanding San Francisco’s affordable housing supply (November *Northern News*, <http://bit.ly/1Nc4Kfi>), namely rent control and inclusionary zoning, are contradicted by evidence.

With regard to San Francisco’s rent stabilization ordinance, Dr. Gruen argues from a misleading figure that masks the complexity of San Francisco’s housing market. He is correct that over 33,000 units were vacant in San Francisco in 2014. Yet, according to the American Community Survey, only about 13,000 units were being held from the rental market for a reason other than the unit’s being under construction, for sale, for rent, or use as a pied-a-terre. Those 13,000 units comprise approximately 3.3 percent of the city’s housing stock, and their number is surprisingly sensitive to market shifts. During the depths of the recession, this number increased to more than 18,500, then dropped to just over 9,000 during the real estate boom of the mid-aughts. Of greater concern is the Airbnb effect that has contributed to taking more than 6,000 units from the rental market.



Source: Census Bureau ACS one-year samples, 2005-2014

San Francisco is not unique. Oakland, right across the Bay and with a far weaker rent control ordinance than San Francisco’s, has more than 4 percent of its units off the market for no particular reason — suggesting that rent control’s impact on existing supply is uncertain at best. It’s not hard to see why. An average two bedroom apartment in San Francisco now rents for more than \$3,500 per month (<http://bit.ly/1NmnskC>), bringing its owner at least \$42,000 in rental income per year. For an owner to

(continued on [page 21](#))

WHAT'S INSIDE

Regulate rents to build equitable communities

Alex Lantsberg, AICP. Rent control's impact on existing housing supply is uncertain. Of greater concern is the Airbnb effect.

[Page 1](#)

For Christmas: a bunch of guidelines

Brian Grattidge. Four sets of new environmental and land use planning guidelines are in the works, with more to come.

[Page 3](#)

50% renewable energy in California by 2030

Josh Hohn, AICP, and Ethan Elkind, CLEE. Three likely scenarios for meeting the new Renewable Portfolio Standard target set by SB 350. [Page 4](#)

Students win poster competition at state conference

Mariaclara Zazzaro. Photos and links to the winning and second place posters. [Page 5](#)

Q&A: AB 52 and Tribal Cultural Resources under CEQA

Stephen Velyvis. New CEQA provisions require formal consultation with interested tribes and the mutual development of mitigation measures for impacts. [Page 6](#)

SJSU grad students assess South University Neighborhood

Amisha Shah, Amelia Kolokihakaufisi, William Lindsey, Stivinson Rojas, Hailey Lang, Micah Hilt, and Matthew Quevedo. The assessment is the first step in a multi-year neighborhood planning effort that will lead to identifying the community's top improvement priorities. [Page 7](#)

The making of the APA California conference in Oakland

Brynn McKiernan. It took over two years and more than 90 volunteers to plan what became the best-attended APA California conference in the past eight years. [Page 8](#)

Norcal roundup

Excerpts from around our Northern Section, linked to the original articles: Marijuana cultivation and local ordinances
• Back-in angle parking helps cyclists • Connecting BART to the South Bay, and more. [Page 9](#)

California roundup

Excerpts from around the state, linked to the original articles: State Supreme Court sets new CEQA analysis requirements for GHG • California's population will be one-quarter elderly by 2050 • A video look at the future of LA's Union Station, and more. [Page 10](#)

Pathways to affordable housing in Silicon Valley

Mariaclara Zazzaro with Bill Chapin. The San Jose State UPC fall symposium tackled affordable housing, a sensitive issue affecting Silicon Valley. [Page 11](#)

Newsroom changes at Northern News. [Page 12](#)

Northern Section's Sustainability Committee looks to 2016.

[Page 13](#)

Meet a local planner

Siân Llewellyn, AICP, interviews *Vivian Kahn, FAICP,* a principal at Kahn/Mortimer/Associates and an associate principal at Dyett & Bhatia. [Page 15](#)

Who's where

Shannon Fiala, Sharon Grewal, AICP, April Gunderson, Graham Pugh, Melissa Ruhl, Jonathan Schuppert, AICP, Bryce Ternet, Eric Tucker, Aydee Zielke. [Page 18](#)

Where in the world

Zachary Bloom, [Page 19](#)

Activities around the Northern Section

Five summaries prepared by board members and assembled by our associate editors. [Page 20](#)

AICP exam results; next exam and workshops

Who passed National APA's November exam? How can you prepare to take the next exam in May 2016? [Page 28](#)

U.S. roundup

Excerpts from around the country, linked to the original articles: A transpo holiday present from the feds • 'Planners should worry about neighborhood decline' • 'Our houses don't fit us anymore' • Harvard adds office for applied project-based design research, and more. [Page 33](#)

World roundup

Excerpts from around the world, linked to the original article: Berlin will keep public housing affordable • \$30 billion private city rises in India • Jerusalem Light Rail reintegrates parts of Old City. [Page 36](#)

Board member directory and publication information

[Page 37](#) ■

Germany transitions to renewables. "Germany gets roughly half as much sunshine as California or Texas. But it's able to generate electricity at similar prices to those in Texas and California. The secret is what's called 'soft costs' — financing, permitting, installation, and grid access — which are lower in parts of Europe than they are here." —Ben Schiller, <http://flip.it/efNCP>

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All I want for Christmas is . . . a bunch of guidelines?

Brian Grattidge

2015 will not go down as a banner year for planning legislation, but new guidelines for environmental and land use planning are being prepared by the bushel. The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) has four sets of guidelines in the works, with more to come. Not to be outdone by OPR, the Department of Water Resources is developing ground-water sustainability planning regulations. The following runs down the status of these efforts, what is driving them, and how planners can get involved.

SB 743 guidelines – transportation impacts

This is the first of three separate updates to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines. As with all updates to the CEQA guidelines, OPR researches and develops the draft guidelines, and the Secretary for Natural Resources takes the guidelines through the formal rulemaking process. CEQA guidelines, unlike some other guidelines discussed below, become a part of the California Code of Regulations, and thus carry administrative authority in the implementation of California statutes.

Senate Bill 743 (Steinberg, 2013) requires OPR to prepare revisions to the CEQA guidelines that establish criteria for determining the significance of transportation impacts within transit priority areas. (SB 743 also includes new CEQA streamlining tools for transit-oriented infill projects and some specific provisions related to the approval of the Sacramento Downtown Arena.)

Additionally, the legislation permitted OPR to establish alternative metrics outside transit priority areas. OPR released a discussion draft in August 2014 that took the latter route — establishing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the preferred transportation metric both inside and outside of transit priority areas.

OPR received hundreds of comment letters from a range of organizations. A summary of the feedback was published in May 2015. Many commenters expressed support for the guidelines that would aid infill development and support transit and other alternative transportation modes. Others raised concerns, including VMT modeling issues, public perceptions of congestion, and implementation for suburban and rural areas.

OPR is currently revising the proposed amendments, which will be released “relatively soon.” While OPR may choose not to release another “discussion” draft, the

proposed guidelines will have a public review period as part of the rulemaking process. To stay informed on this, and other CEQA guidelines issues, subscribe to OPR's list serve. Visit <http://bit.ly/21DK06K>.

AB 52 guidelines – Native American consultation

Assembly Bill 52 (Gatto, 2014) creates a new category of resources in CEQA, “tribal cultural resources,” and provides for a consultation process with California Native American Tribes in the CEQA process. The statute requires OPR to prepare revisions to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (the “Initial Study Checklist”) to separate paleontological resources from tribal cultural resources, and to add consideration of tribal cultural resources. These guidelines must be adopted by July 1, 2016. While that is a short timeline, the actual change to the guidelines is fairly limited.

A discussion draft is currently available. The draft includes three alternative ways to incorporate tribal cultural resources into the checklist. The comment period closes December 18, 2015.

(Read more about responsible agency obligations under AB 52 in a short Q&A by Steven Velyvis, [page 6](#) in this issue. —Ed.)

General CEQA guidelines update

In addition to the two legislatively driven updates, OPR has begun a general, comprehensive update of the CEQA Guidelines — the first of its kind since the (ill-fated) 1998 guidelines update. OPR began soliciting input for potential topics at the end of 2013. A preliminary discussion draft was released in August 2015. A public workshop video and PowerPoint presentation are available on the OPR website. The objectives of the update are to increase efficiency, reflect adopted policy priorities, and to conform to statutory changes and CEQA case law.

OPR received over one hundred comments. Efforts to clarify EIR tiering and streamlining (among other things) were generally well received, while the planned rearrangement of the Initial Study Checklist (Appendix G) drew some criticism. Stay tuned on this one — there is no statutory deadline, but the planning community and OPR share an interest in seeing through a comprehensive update. To access OPR's workshop video and PowerPoint visit <http://bit.ly/1INH4IQ>.

(continued on [page 22](#))

50% renewable energy in California by 2030

Three scenarios for the built environment

Josh Hohn, AICP, and Ethan Elkind, CLEE

This past October, Governor Jerry Brown signed into law Senate Bill 350 (De León) which raised the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) target in California from 33 percent by 2020 to 50 percent by 2030. With the California Energy Commission reporting that by 2014, 22.5 percent of California's in-state power generation came from renewable sources (wind, geothermal, solar, small hydro-electric, and biomass), we are on pace to reach the 2020 RPS goal. SB 350, however, requires us to approximately double the amount of renewable energy generated in-state and delivered by utilities in the next 15 years. Behind-the-meter rooftop solar placed on residential, commercial, or industrial structures does not count toward the RPS, so we are talking about additional facilities on the transmission side of the electrical grid — power generated and fed through a substation before it is distributed to users, as opposed to power generated and consumed on a single site.

So how might we set about doing this? And where is it all going to go? We see three likely scenarios for meeting the new RPS target set by SB 350:

1. A continued emphasis on development of large, utility-scale projects, mostly solar and wind, built in the Mojave Desert, the Central Valley, and other locations, extending the central-station model of power generation and transmission;
2. An increase in the distributed generation of renewable power, mostly solar, with smaller facilities installed at a neighborhood scale, closer to, or even within, existing cities and suburbs; and
3. A combination of larger and smaller-scale projects, with efficiency and output enhanced by energy storage.

Let's look at each in more detail.

Scenario 1: A continued emphasis large utility-scale projects

We will surpass the 2020 RPS target due primarily to deployment of wind and solar power projects at a relatively massive scale. Developments such as the 377-megawatt (MW) Ivanpah concentrating solar power plant (on 3,500 acres), the ongoing re-powering of the 50,000-acre Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area and buildout of the 232,000-acre Tehachapi Wind Resource Area, and the

conversion of thousands of acres of agricultural land to solar photovoltaic (PV) uses in the San Joaquin Valley, Imperial Valley, and other regions have allowed large incremental steps toward attaining the 2020 RPS target.



Utility-scale solar. The Ivanpah Solar Electricity Generating Station in the Mojave Desert. Photo courtesy of Brightsource Energy.

And there is room for more. The recently completed first phase of the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) — a joint planning effort by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Energy Commission, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife — identified Development Focus Areas (DFAs) for wind, solar, and geothermal development on public lands. While developers may be discouraged that only 388,000 of the 22.5 million acres of public land within the DRECP area are initially available under the plan, applications for development within DFAs will benefit from “a streamlined permitting process with predictable survey requirements and simplified mitigation measures” (<http://bit.ly/1IFxPdP>).

(continued on page 23)

Student poster competition winners announced at state conference in Oakland

Mariaclara Zazzaro

On the evening of October 3rd, seven student teams presented their posters at the opening reception of the 2015 APA California Conference in Oakland. Topics centered on exploring emerging planning trends in California and ranged from bike sharing to community development to green advertising. The students produced excellent material, resulting in a very tight competition: at final tally, all teams scored within five points of each other. But by night's end, two teams emerged to take first and second place.

The runner-up prize went to Hannah Kornfeld, research assistant at Cal Poly – San Luis Obispo for her poster, “Using California’s Electric Vehicle Incentives and Policies in the Green Mountain State,” <http://bit.ly/1Nmgr3p>. The poster examines how California’s Electric Vehicle policies have been motivating other states to follow suit. Kornfeld writes, “Vermont is one of those states that looks to California as a model of best practices, particularly when it comes to Electric Vehicle marketing. By incentivizing EVs and boosting the market in the Northeast, Vermont can lessen its carbon footprint, rely less on fossil fuels, and save Vermonters money on maintenance and gas.”

The first place prize was awarded to Jasmine Williams, Dylan Stevenson, and Cassandra Cogreve, USC, for their poster “CoHousing: A Sustainable Solution to the Housing Crisis and Changing Demographic Makeup of California,” <http://bit.ly/1NmgoK>. The visually striking poster examines

cohousing as a means to address changing demographics and soaring rents in California. According to Williams, “Privatization of space has left aging and diversifying communities without neighborhood identity, vital amenities, and fundamental social services. Through cohousing, planners can enhance cross-cultural and intergenerational neighborhoods, integrate sustainable initiatives, and fill a void in the provision of affordable housing.”

Congratulations to the winners for their outstanding work, and a big thank you to everyone who voted in the student poster competition!

Mariaclara Zazzaro is the SJSU Student Representative on the APA California–Northern Board and communications manager for CommUniverCity San Jose. She expects to receive her Master of Urban Planning in spring 2016. ■



Hannah Kornfeld (second from right) poses with her poster and planning students from Cal Poly - San Luis Obispo. Photo Verducci Event Productions.



Poster competition winners (from the left): Jasmine Williams, Dylan Stevenson, and Cassandra Cogreve at the conference's opening reception. Photo courtesy Cassandra Cogreve.

Q & A: AB 52 and Tribal Cultural Resources under CEQA

Stephen Velyvis

As city and county planners begin to implement new legislation regarding tribal cultural resources, many questions have arisen concerning the legislation and its integration into the environmental review process under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). AB 52 (Gatto, 2014, which amended/created Pub. Res. Code §§ 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21082.3, 21083.09, 21084.2, and 5097.94), became effective July 1, 2015, and introduced new procedural and substantive provisions into CEQA that require formal consultation with interested California Native American tribes and urge the mutual development of mitigation measures for impacts to AB 52's newly recognized "tribal cultural resources." I share some of those questions and answers below in an effort to help planners understand and apply the law's new provisions.

Q: Per AB 52, a Tribe has requested notice of projects be sent by Certified Mail. Is this required?

A: No, CEQA lead agencies are not legally required to send notice of projects by way of Certified Mail to Tribes who have submitted written requests per AB 52. Most written requests submitted by Tribes will ask that notices be sent by Certified Mail because the request is contained in the sample letter provided to Tribes by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The applicable statute, however, only requires the lead agency to provide formal notification of projects to Tribes who previously submitted written requests for such notices "by means of at least one written notification . . ." (Pub. Res. Code § 21080.3.1(d).) That said, both the NAHC and the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) recommend sending notices via Certified Mail as a best practice so agencies have a clear record of when the notice was both sent *and received*. They so recommend because if a Tribe does not respond to the notice by requesting consultation on a project within 30 days, the lead agency's AB 52 process ends and consultation is not required. In sum, sending Tribes AB 52 notices via Certified Mail is not legally required but a recommended best practice.

Related recommendations:

OPR has provided a handy AB 52 timeline and flowchart that addresses all of Section 21080.3.1(d)'s notice content requirements (i.e., project description

and location, name of lead agency contact for the project, and notice that Tribe has 30 days to request consultation) as well as a sample letter for lead agencies to use when providing AB 52 notices to Tribes who have requested them in writing. The timeline/flowchart PDF is available at <http://bit.ly/1LTTfnE>. The sample letter PDF is available at <http://bit.ly/1NwtdMA>.

Agency staff should create, maintain, and regularly update a formal list of all Tribes who have submitted written requests for AB 52 notices and revise their internal CEQA policies and timelines to accommodate these new AB 52 tasks as they will likely impact the traditional ND/MND and EIR processes.

Q: Will the AB 52 Tribal consultation process impact the CEQA process timeline? How?

A: Yes, CEQA delays are possible if not likely.

Two related aspects of the new consultation process are at the root of the potential delays. Specifically, AB 52 mandates that the proposed CEQA document (i.e., ND, MND or EIR) *cannot be released* until consultation has been *initiated* with Tribes who have sent notification and consultation requests, and such CEQA documents *cannot be approved/certified* until tribal consultation has been completed. (Pub. Res. Code §§ 21080.3.1(b) and 21082.3(d).) The lead agency has 14 days from deciding to carry out a project/determining a project application is complete to send the requesting Tribe the AB 52 project notice. Thereafter, Tribes have 30 days to request formal consultation, and the lead agency has another 30 days thereafter to initiate the consultation. Accordingly, there is the potential for a 74-day period within which the proposed ND, MND or EIR cannot be released. Previously no such process/wait time was required. Further, if a project may or does have a potential impact on a tribal cultural resource, OPR recommends that you further delay release of the ND/MND/EIR until the consultation process has officially ended so that mitigation measures agreed upon with the Tribe or otherwise developed can be incorporated into the CEQA document. The AB 52 consultation process has no set timeline and is an ongoing process subject to project-specific issues. So it likely will impact — if not drive — the CEQA process timeline, especially for projects that have potentially significant adverse impacts to a tribal cultural resource requiring mitigation.

(continued on [page 25](#))

SJSU grad students assess South University Neighborhood

Amisha Shah, Amelia Kolokihakaufisi, William Lindsey, Stivinson Rojas, Hailey Lang, Micah Hilt, and Matthew Quevedo

This past fall, graduate students from San Jose State's Urban and Regional Planning Department conducted a community assessment of the South University Neighborhood (SUN), as part of the CommUniverCity multi-sector partnership that unites a local community, SJSU, and city representatives. The assessment is the first step in a multi-year neighborhood planning effort that will lead to identifying the community's top improvement priorities.

The project had three objectives. First, to assess conditions related to six facets of SUN: Community History, Land Use and Transportation, People and Partnerships, Character and Identity, Urban Form and Streetscapes, and the William Street corridor. The second objective was to synthesize and present findings related to each of these topics at a Community Open House on November 21, 2015. This offered an opportunity to engage residents and other stakeholders about the preliminary findings. The students are now in the process of taking what they learned at the Open House and are preparing a comprehensive Community Assessment Report, the third objective. The finished report will provide a new team of graduate students in 2016 with background as they continue to work collaboratively with SUN residents.

Assessment methods

To kick off the fall 2015 assessment, the students joined a walking tour of SUN led by community residents. To discuss what was learned, the students created cognitive maps capturing prominent elements of the neighborhood. They also administered more than 200 door-to-door surveys to gather input from SUN residents about their perceptions of the neighborhood and any changes they wanted to see. After gaining familiarity with the neighborhood, students were divided into six teams, and each team was charged with accurately "telling the story" of SUN. Their main findings are summarized next.

Community history

The Community History team researched the historical context of SUN by examining historical documents, images, and maps. The students took oral histories from local residents, and historians helped the assessment team understand how the neighborhood developed over time.

All findings were grouped into four "lenses" through which to view the founding and growth of SUN: original settlement patterns, evolution of the neighborhood's urban form, demographic composition, and economic activity. The team found that SUN was first developed as

an affluent single-family residential area in the late 1860s and that construction of a railroad connecting San Francisco to San Jose was a major impetus for early growth. The Reed Street School (now Lowell Elementary School) and the relocation of the Normal School (now San Jose State University) from San Francisco to San Jose in the 1870s spurred more residential development in SUN. After San Jose State was formally established in 1935, many of the single-family residences were converted to fraternity and sorority homes, boarding houses, or multifamily apartments to serve the increasing student population. The completion of Interstate 280 in 1972 was the next significant alteration to SUN:

(continued on page 26)



The South University Neighborhood. Base map: Google Maps

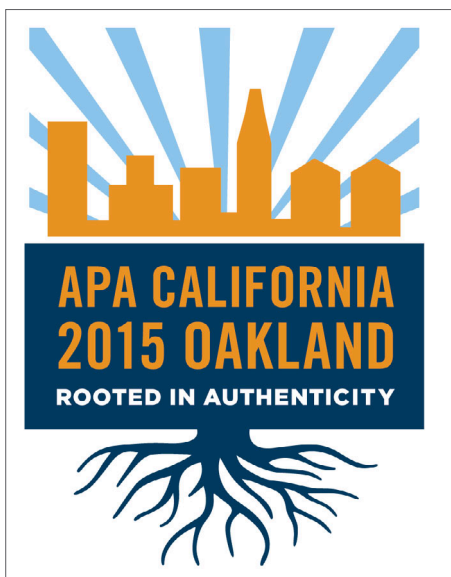
Secrets behind the making of the APA California conference in Oakland

Brynn McKiernan

The APA California Conference Oakland was an outstanding success. It boasted the highest APA California conference attendance in the past eight years (1900 registrants) and four days of sessions, events, and networking opportunities. But success did not happen overnight. It took over two years, more than 90 volunteers, and countless hours to pull together the annual conference.

Planning the 2015 conference began with the selection of three conference co-chairs (Erik Balsley, AICP, Hansen Hom, AICP, and Darcy Kremin, AICP). Volunteers made up the bulk of the Conference Host Committee (CHC) which was divided into nine subcommittees.

The CHC met 13 times from September 2013 to September 2015 to coordinate multiple efforts that involved branding the conference, marketing it at the 2014 California conference in Anaheim, selecting the conference sessions and programming, and making final arrangements. The branding included initial scoping meetings, the branding of Oakland, logo design, and selecting a conference theme — Rooted in AuthenticITY. The logo was selected through a competition, with committee members voting on 10 logos before selecting a winner. The official 2015 Conference logo highlights Oakland's skyline while emphasizing the city's solid roots. Colors communicate the city's pride, and rays symbolize the community's potential and growth.



Official Logo of the 2015 CA-APA Conference. Design by Amie Krager, senior graphic designer, Circlepoint, Oakland

Next came marketing. The theme “Rooted in AuthenticITY” was first revealed at the 2014 APA California Conference in Anaheim. Volunteers took Disney’s historic pin trading to a new level and distributed Rooted in AuthenticITY’s very own lapel pin. Marketing continued with the call for sponsors, volunteers, and session proposals.



Aaron Welch speaking at Placemaking on a Suburban Corridor. Photo: Brynn McKiernan

The Rooted in AuthenticITY theme comprised six branches to create a comprehensive, fresh, and Oakland-relevant set of discussion topics for the conference. The six branches became the core tracks around which the conference was organized. The Programs Subcommittee reviewed a record 319 session proposals and 49 mobile workshop proposals, weeding them down to the final 100 conference sessions and 12 mobile workshops distributed among the six core tracks. Throughout the winnowing, the Program Committee tried to ensure the maximum number of speakers given the venue capacity — not an easy task.

(continued on [page 29](#))

Norcal roundup

Excerpts from around our Northern Section, linked to the original articles

Yountville opposes marijuana cultivation as state law nears

Napa Valley Register, December 5, 2015

Howard Yune, <http://bit.ly/11OnJYb> • “Looming over Yountville and other governments is the Medical Marijuana Regulation and Safety Act, a package of three bills Gov. Brown signed Oct. 9. The laws, which take force on New Year’s Day, create a Bureau of Medical Marijuana Regulation, give the Department of Food and Agriculture oversight on cultivation, and enable the state to set rules on manufacture, pesticide use, water quality, and product labeling.

“Yountville has taken a stance against growing cannabis within its boundaries. An ordinance supported by the Town Council bars cultivation of the plant, enabling the Upvalley community to beat a state deadline to put a local growing ban in place. Without the law, Yountville faces the possible loss of authority over marijuana growing starting March 1, when new state regulations on cultivation take effect for cities and counties with no prohibitions of their own.

“The Calistoga City Council reaffirmed its own ban on the same night. The mayor said the move was not a stance on medical marijuana as such, but a necessary step to preserve Calistoga’s freedom to decide whether cultivation should be allowed in the future.”

700 acres of Sonoma coast will be returned to native tribe

NBC Bay Area, October 20, 2015

Joe Rosato, Jr., <http://bit.ly/1Msd78j> • Indians who once lived near the coast — and from the ocean — cheered “a groundbreaking land sale [to return a strip of coast] to the control of the Kashia band of Pomo Indians for the first time in 200 years.” In mid-October, “Sonoma County leaders pledged more than \$2 million to a coalition of groups which raised \$6 million to purchase the one mile strip of coastal land from a private family.”

“The land north of Salt Point State Park includes groves of old redwoods, Native American archaeological sites, and precipitous cliffs along the Pacific Ocean. The site will be preserved as open space while giving the control to the Kashia who plan to return the forests to resiliency. ‘We’re going to manage this forest to become an old growth forest,’ said Kashia Tribal Chairman Reno Keoni Franklin. ‘I will see that in my lifetime.’

“The land has been in Bill Richardson’s family since 1925. The original house and barn date to 1885. Richardson, who still resides in the house, felt the time had come to return the land to the Kashia. The sales agreement reached with the coalition allows Richardson to live out the rest of his life in the family home — and eventually be buried on the hilltop overlooking the sea, not far from the graves of his parents.”

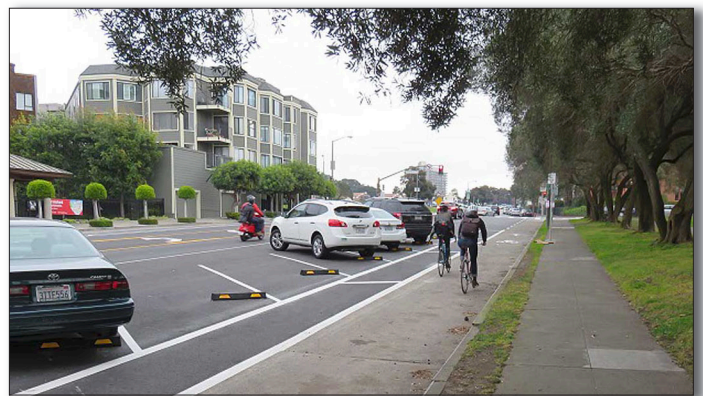
Back-in parking protects bike lane

Moving SF, SFMTA, December 4, 2015

Ben Jose, <http://bit.ly/1ONuZYI> • “If you’ve been on John F. Kennedy Drive in Golden Gate Park or 13th Street in SoMa, you’ve seen that a bike lane doesn’t always have to be on the side of the driver’s door. In the right places (as along Bay Street, pictured), a bike lane can run alongside the curb, using parked cars as a form of protection and separation from vehicle traffic.

“Back-in angled parking might be new to some, but it’s a standard design used across the United States, from Honolulu to Washington, D.C. It’s a safer type of angled parking that allows people to make better eye contact with oncoming traffic when entering and exiting the parking space.

“The SFMTA installed the first back-in angled parking on Townsend Street in 2010. Soon after, SFMTA implemented back-in angled parking on other streets



including John Muir, Baker between Oak and Fell, and Polk across from City Hall. Benefits include improved visibility and increased field of vision, decreased number of collisions, improved loading and unloading, increased space for parking spaces or additional room for sidewalks, and traffic calming.”

(Norcal roundup continues on [page 31](#))

California roundup

Excerpts from around the state, linked to the original articles

Supreme Court sets new CEQA analysis requirements for GHG

California Land Use & Development Law Report, December 4, 2015

Christopher Chou, <http://bit.ly/1R4q9tB> • “Newhall Ranch, a proposed mega-development in Los Angeles County, can’t seem to catch a break: besieged by setbacks since Newhall Land first filed an application to develop the land in 1994, the project has been the subject of over 21 public hearings and several law suits over its more than 20-year history. In *Center for Biological Diversity v. California Department of Fish and Wildlife*, (<http://bit.ly/1R4qdJG>), the California Supreme Court dealt the project yet another blow, finding that the Department of Fish and Wildlife’s environmental impact report on two natural resource plans for the development violated CEQA.

“While the County had already approved the land use plan for the development in 2003, DFW approval of

resource plans and permits was still required, necessitating further environmental review. DFW and the Army Corps of Engineers prepared a new environmental document, a joint EIS/EIR, for the resource plans.

“The California Supreme Court invalidated DFW’s CEQA review, deciding that the EIS/EIR’s analysis of Greenhouse Gas emissions was not supported by sufficient evidence and that mitigation measures calling for capture and relocation of a fully protected species were invalid. The Court’s ruling, especially its treatment of goals for statewide emissions reductions that were developed to implement A.B. 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, will likely have a major long-term impact on environmental reviews for proposed projects throughout California.”

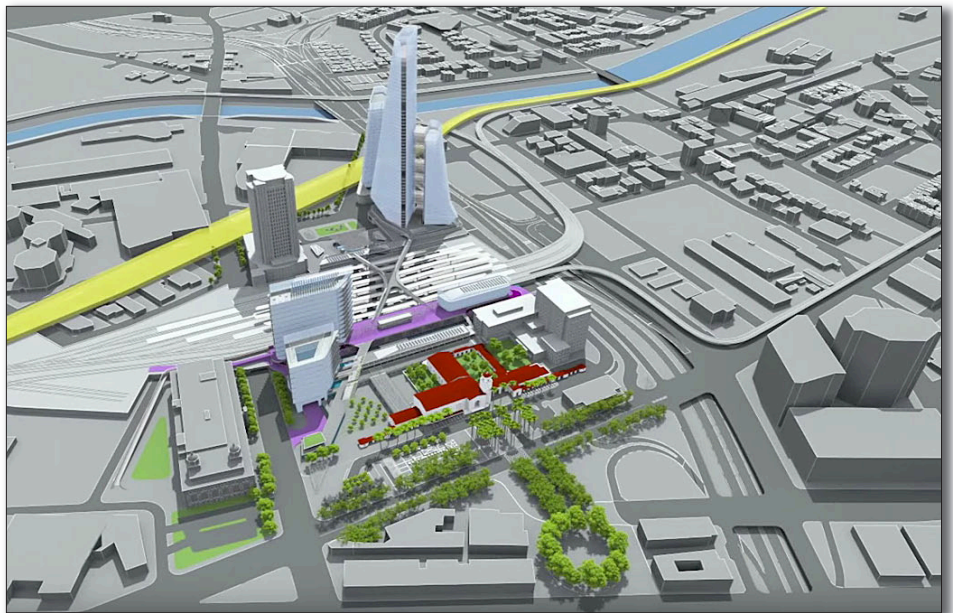
A look at the future of LA Union Station

LAist, November 3, 2015

Danny Jensen, <http://bit.ly/1QtG3fW>

• The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) purchased the iconic downtown LA station in 2011 and shortly thereafter began preparing a Union Station Master Plan. “Metro has been gradually unveiling portions of the Union Station Master Plan, which will overhaul and improve L.A.’s historic station. Now we’re getting an updated look at what those plans might look like, thanks to a new video that uses animation to show the improvements. The plan hopefully will make travel easier. It includes a 3.25 million-square-foot development and lots of open space and greenery.”

<https://youtu.be/-7Sj-QRvXOo> (2:25)



(California continues on [page 32](#))

Employment is up. “You can’t walk down the street in San Mateo County without tripping over a job opening.” —Marc Andreessen, [@pmarca](#)

UPC Fall Symposium: Pathways to affordable housing in Silicon Valley

By Mariaclara Zazzaro with Bill Chapin

On November 7, 2015, planners, policy-makers, and community members filed into San Jose State's new Student Union Theater to attend the Urban Planning Coalition's fall Symposium, "Pathways to Affordable Housing in Silicon Valley." The fall symposium is a time-honored tradition for the UPC, and this year the Coalition decided to tackle a sensitive yet unignorable important issue affecting Silicon Valley: affordable housing.

Silicon Valley's housing crisis is well documented. According to Richard Scheinin of *The Mercury News*, (<http://bayareane.ws/1NRMA4Y>), 60 percent of households in San Jose are unable to afford the average rent of over \$2,900 for a two-bedroom apartment, let alone afford the median home price of \$925,000.

The symposium brought together some of the region's top housing experts for a day focused on pathways to affordability. In the keynote address, San Jose's Director of Housing, Jacky Morales-Ferrand, described the scope of the problem, noting that San Jose is currently home to over 4,000 unsheltered individuals, two thirds of whom live on the street. "The statistics are heartbreaking," she said, but "they are more than statistics; they are people who look just like you and me."

Her keynote was followed by "Housing for vulnerable communities: solutions for the displaced and the homeless," in which San Jose District 3 Councilmember Raul Peralez and homeless advocate Robert Aguirre joined panelists Ky Le and Colleen Haley and moderator Shishir Mathur, Ph.D. The panelists said the two most daunting obstacles for policymakers are funding and NIMBY-ism, and urged cities to move from merely managing homelessness to addressing its root causes.

The second panel addressed creative design solutions for livable and affordable housing. Ginette Wessel, Ph.D., moderated and Daniel Krause, Patrick Heisinger, Tung Tran, and Wayne Chen discussed how urban design can influence the affordability and sustainability of a community. Increased density, flexible units, and relaxed rental regulations, they agreed, could help make communities more resilient to social and economic change.

The third and final panel was "Bridging the gap: how tech companies influence the housing market in Silicon valley." Richard Kos, AICP, moderated, and Ralph McLaughlin, Ph.D., Zoe Mullendore, Duane Bay, and Kelly Snider discussed the disparity between the wealth generated by the tech sector and the people who are

rapidly being displaced from the area. The overwhelming consensus among the four panelists was that the only way to truly mitigate the crisis is to build more housing. Real Estate Consultant Kelly Snider implored the audience, "We have a problem, and we *have* to talk about it!"

(continued on next page)



From the left, San Jose Councilmember Raul Peralez, Colleen Haley of Destination Home, and Ky Le of the Santa Clara County Office of Housing and Homeless Support Services discuss homelessness and displacement. Photo: Rucha Dande.

UPC Fall Symposium: Pathways to affordable housing in Silicon Valley

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Kelly Snider believes planners and politicians need to prioritize the housing crisis.

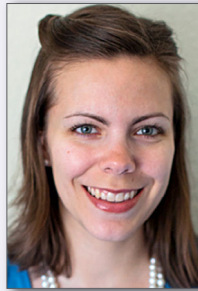
Photo: Rucha Dande.

Ms. Snider got her wish. The symposium sparked heated debate that underscored the urgency of the housing crisis. Although many solutions were proposed, the point made, repeated by nearly all the panelists, was that the crisis could only be solved by actions taken through discussion and collaboration. As Morales-Ferrand put it, “We need your community support. We can solve this with the commitment, dedication, and efforts of all the people in this room.”

Mariaclara Zazzaro is the SJSU Student Representative on the APA California – Northern Section Board and communications manager for CommUniverCity San Jose. She expects to receive her Master of Urban Planning in spring 2016. Bill Chapin is a graduate student in the Urban and Regional Planning program at SJSU and currently interns at Michael Baker International. ■

Newsroom changes at *Northern News*

Our news magazine is saying goodbye to **Jennifer Piozet** who has served as associate editor since July 2013. During that time she pulled together the “Who’s where” feature, the content description for “What’s inside,” article condensations for the Norcal and California roundups, and three interviews for “Meet a local planner.” Thanks, Jennifer, for your excellent work and your contributions to the magazine and the planning community.



Joining *Northern News* are two new associate editors.

Catarina Kidd, AICP, recently joined the City of Cupertino as senior planner. Previously, she was an urban planning consultant in land use planning, economic development, and historic preservation for several cities in Contra Costa County. She has been associated with the Town of Danville since October 2001 as an assistant planner, associate planner, and contract planner. Kidd attended Smith College and received her BA in cultural anthropology from Temple University. She lives in Danville with her husband and six-year-old twin girls.



Christina Valerino is the economic development director at Economic Development on Third (EDoT), a community organization in Bayview, a San Francisco neighborhood. EDoT, supported by Bay Area LISC, is one site of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, the nation’s largest community development support organization. Valerino holds an MA in urban and environmental policy and planning from Tufts University, a JD from Boston College Law School, and a BA in special and elementary education from Syracuse University. She is a member of the California State Bar and lives in Oakland.



Welcome to *Northern News*, Catarina and Christina.

In addition to Jennifer, *Northern News* has had seven associate editors in the past 10 years: Ryoko Furuichi 2005–2006, Erin Dando 2006–2007, Lynn Melena 2007–2008, Mika Miyasato, AICP, 2008–2011, Caroline Teng 2009–2011, Theresa Alster 2011–2012, and Erik Balsley, AICP, 2011–2013. This is a good time to thank all of them for their hard work and editorial contributions. ■

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.

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Plan-it sustainably

Northern Section’s Sustainability Committee looks to 2016

The Sustainability Committee was founded in 2011 as an initiative of APA California – Northern Section to establish a learning network to promote the concept of sustainability in local planning practice. The committee’s recent activities included curating content on leading-edge sustainability for the annual APA California conference in October 2015, and hosting a social gathering and educational tour of the Swan’s Market in downtown Oakland, a mixed-use urban revitalization project that is a model for sustainable neighborhood development.

With the recent appointment of two new co-chairs, Alex Lantsberg, AICP, and Holly Pearson, AICP, the Sustainability Committee has new leadership and is planning a number of activities and offerings for 2016. Alex and Holly bring different and complementary perspectives on the concept of sustainability to the Northern Section’s programming.

Alex is a researcher, analyst, and organizer who works to ensure social justice, labor rights, and accountability in urban development throughout northern California. He has professional experience in environmental justice and labor issues as well as economic development and urban planning. Alex is currently working on a proposal for a design contest for quickly redeveloping existing surface parking lots into micro-housing, based on the premise that there is an over-supply of parking in the Bay Area and that this underutilized land can accommodate rapid transformation to help address the housing affordability crisis. Alex is interested in organizing events for the APA Northern Section on topics such as local manufacturing and construction of water-neutral developments.

Holly has worked for the past decade as a planner with local government agencies in the Bay Area, contributing to a wide range of land use planning and community development initiatives. She has a particular interest in long-range policy related to environmental sustainability and incorporating sustainability principles and practices into plans and zoning codes. Throughout her career, Holly has also been involved in the international movement for sustainable cities and is interested in strategies to promote urban sustainability in the global south. She has recently been working with an NGO to carry out community-led urban environmental research projects in three cities in Latin America. She would like to develop a library of sustainability-related resources for the APA Northern Section membership.

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Plan-it sustainably (continued from previous page)

The Committee's work program for 2016 includes:

- Offering a workshop on urban sustainability rating systems in early February with Eliot Allen, a Portland-based planner and consultant.
- Organizing a one-day "State of the Bay Area Sustainability" mini-summit in the early summer.
- Developing a research program on sustainability in urban planning with local universities (UC Berkeley, San Jose State, and San Francisco State).
- Establishing a collaboration between the Northern Section and the APA California Sustainability Champion program, which is a sustainability leadership pilot program developed by the national APA Sustainable Communities Division.

The Sustainability Committee meets quarterly, and all APA Northern Section members are welcome to participate. If you are interested in becoming involved, please contact the committee co-chairs at lantsberg@gmail.com or holly@hollypearson.net, and please visit our web page at <http://bit.ly/1NlgVaM> ■

Correction

The November issue of *Northern News* carried a photo of several members of the APA California 2015 Conference Host Committee wearing their conference volunteer shirts (page 5, <http://bit.ly/1ONuvCa>). Juan Borrelli, AICP, was not identified in the photo. The names in the last row should read (l-r): Dana Hoffman; Bob Zimmerer, AICP; Erik Balsley, AICP; **Juan Borrelli, AICP**; Brian Soland; Steven Spickard, AICP; and James Castañeda, AICP. *Northern News* regrets the error. ■

Fallingwater in 3D. "In 1935, architect Frank Lloyd Wright designed Fallingwater, a house atop a waterfall in Pennsylvania. Here's a 3D-rendered fly-through showing how the structure is put together. In this video, animator Cristóbal Vila shows how Fallingwater emerges from the landscape and builds up, plus how cantilevering allows the house to rest on a very unusual foundation. Have a look." —Chris Higgins, <http://bit.ly/1O4Sn3H>

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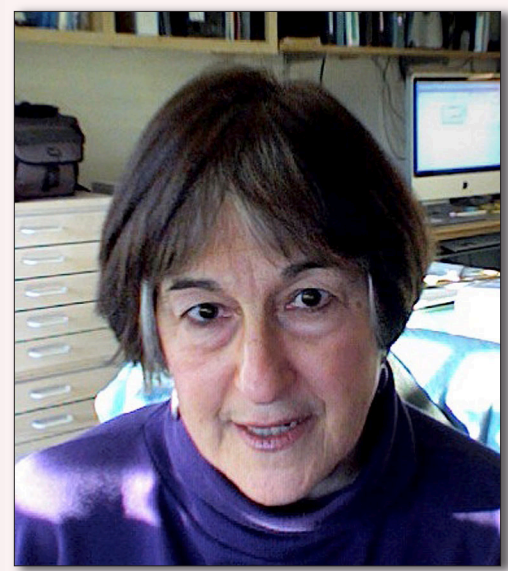
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Meet a local planner

By Siân Llewellyn, AICP

Vivian Kahn, FAICP, is a principal at Kahn/Mortimer/Associates and associate principal at Dyett & Bhatia. Before joining Dyett & Bhatia, she served in several lead capacities for Berkeley's Department of Planning and Development. Ms. Kahn served on the APA National Board of Directors from 1994 to 2002 and has been a member of the California Planning Roundtable since 1986.



Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I was born in Manhattan and raised in New Rochelle. I was taking the train into Manhattan alone by the time I was 12. I consider myself a New Yorker and I love cities.

How did you become interested in planning as a profession?

I came into city planning through journalism. I did my undergraduate work at City College of New York where I got involved in journalism and politics in the early 1960s. By the time I graduated, I was the editor of the City College newspaper. I started my master's at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism, but graduate school wasn't for me. The irony is, after I dropped out of the program, I started work as a reporter. My first exposure to planning came when I covered the planning commission meetings for a northern New Jersey paper.

In 1969, I moved to *The New York Times* where I worked for the famed editor Charlotte Curtis but was able to freelance for any department. My interest in politics made me aware of all the changes in the city. Peter Abeles, a New York planner, was feeding me stories. I wrote one about housing policy as a follow up to another big story, but an editor spiked it. This was a big disappointment because I thought by exposing issues we could effect change. Later on, I realized I could do that through planning.

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Meet a local planner (continued from previous page)

What happened next in your career?

Peter convinced me to join his firm Abeles Schwartz Associates, explaining that planning firms needed writers. I started my formal planning education at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, but my real education was the work. Our first big job was a master plan for the Lower East Side of Manhattan for the NYC Planning Department and Housing Development Administration. At Abeles Schwartz we did a lot of land use and housing work. At that time, several federally funded programs supported comprehensive planning. For example, HUD's Sec. 701 Comprehensive Planning grant funding program helped municipalities meet HUD's requirement for land use plans that were needed before cities could receive grants for water and sewer projects and open space.

We were also contract planners for the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), which funded our work as a consultant to the community agencies. This was the Paul Davidoff era, and planners were beginning to think of themselves as advocates for the communities they served.

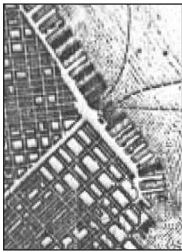
I visited San Francisco in 1968, took one look, and loved it. By 1971, I moved out here without a job and moved into a commune in the Haight! I joined the National Housing and Economic Development Law project, an OEO-funded agency housed in the Law School at UC Berkeley. Only two of us on the staff were non-lawyers. Most of what I did there was related to public housing, tenant management, and national legal services. In addition to Chester Hartman, the other non-lawyer, I met many of the luminaries of progressive planning.

In 1972, I went to work for the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), one of the first regional planning organizations in the country. One of our responsibilities was to implement Circular A-95, a federal effort to coordinate its funding to state and local agencies. With the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) just starting up, I asked every planning department in the Bay Area to start forwarding copies of their Environmental Impact Reports so we could create a library as a resource for Bay Area planners.

In 1976, I became chief of the Community Assistance Division at the California Office of Planning and Research, which brought the community planning approach to the state level under Governor Jerry Brown. Later that year I met Larry Mortimer, an architect with ROMA who was living in Berkeley. In August 1978, we moved to Seattle where we started our own architecture and planning firm, Kahn/Mortimer/Associates, in 1979.

We returned to Oakland in 1983, and in December 1985 we became parents. I went to work for the City of Berkeley, where I eventually became current planning manager and zoning officer. I took early retirement from the city in 1995 but returned in 2000

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

for what was supposed to be a six-month stint as deputy director while the director was on maternity leave. She never returned, and I stayed for two years.

What have you been doing since Berkeley?

I've been working again as a principal in the firm that my husband Larry and I launched in Seattle as well as working with Dyett & Bhatia as an associate principal since 2002. I primarily work on zoning, land use, and development regulations.

A good part of my early career was about housing and community advocacy; my later focus was on the regulatory side of planning. They are very related. When you are administering a set of zoning regulations you are trying to reflect or create the character of a place. My career has been about creating places where you can have the buzz of community, the required calm for housing, and a plan for creating good neighbors.

Do you have advice for planners starting out?

Planners need to understand planning law. I'm not a lawyer, and I don't think you need to be one to do your job well, but a thorough understanding of the statutory and case law that applies to what we do is essential to being an effective planner. California is at the leading edge of planning and the law. Take the time to learn enough of the law to understand the legal underpinning of what we are trying to do when we write policy, enact legislation, and review plans.

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

Are you ready for the next conference?

Registration is now open for the
APA National Planning Conference
in Phoenix, April 2–5, 2016

<http://bit.ly/1XUF7Xt>

Word to the wise:

Early bird registration ends **February 4**
Hotel special rates close **March 3**

Who's where



Shannon Fiala, a coastal planner with the California Coastal Commission, is one of Northern Section's two Regional Activity Coordinators for San Francisco. Fiala previously had been Ocean Beach assistant project manager for SPUR. She holds an MCP/MLA in urban and environmental planning from

UC Berkeley, and a BS in resource ecology and management from the University of Michigan. She previously served on the Northern Section board as co-Director of the Young Planners Group (YPG), 2014-2015.



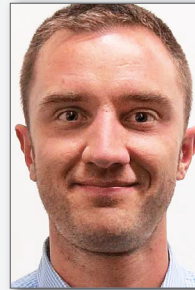
Sharon Grewal, AICP, is now a planner III at the Alameda County Community Development Agency. She previously held positions as environmental planner and associate environmental planner with the California Department of Conservation. Grewal has been the director of professional development for APA

California – Sacramento Valley Section. She holds a land use and environmental planning certificate from UC Davis Extension and a bachelor's degree in public administration (with a minor in urban studies) from California State University Fresno.



April Gunderson has joined Environmental Science Associates (ESA) in the Petaluma office as an associate, where she will support the preparation of environmental review documents for a wide range of development projects and plans. Gunderson previously interned with the Sonoma County Permit

and Resource Management Department. She holds a bachelor's degree in environmental studies and planning from Sonoma State University.



Graham Pugh, a transportation policy analyst with SPUR, is one of Northern Section's two Regional Activity Coordinators for San Francisco. Pugh holds an MA in urban and regional planning from UCLA, a BA in letters, arts, and sciences from Pennsylvania State University, and a certificate in inter-cultural studies and communication from Maastricht University.



Melissa Ruhl, a transportation planner with Arup, San Francisco, is the new Communications Director for APA California–Northern. She holds a master of urban planning from San Jose State University, an MA in history from the University of Oregon, and a BA in philosophy and history, also from the University of Oregon. Ruhl

previously served on the Northern Section board as the San Jose State University student representative to the Northern Section, 2014–2015.



Jonathan Schuppert, AICP, has been elected by the Northern Section membership as Treasurer of APA California – Northern, effective January 1, 2016. Schuppert is a planning associate with Alta Planning + Design. He currently is serving as Northern Section's professional development director through the end of December 2015. Schuppert

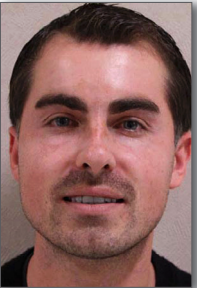
holds a BS in city and regional planning from California Polytechnic State University – San Luis Obispo.

(continued on the next page)



Bryce Ternet has joined EMC Planning Group (Monterey) as a senior planner. He previously was senior planner with Kimley-Horn and Associates and Rincon Consultants. Ternet is the published author of seven books (six fiction and one non-fiction) and has been a contributing author to *A Taste of*

Monterey for the past five years. He holds a master's degree in environmental policy, planning, and assessment from Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey and a bachelor's degree in political science and French from the University of Montana.



Eric Tucker was recently appointed as Student Representative to the APA California Board, where he will engage urban planning students to increase their participation in the organization and the profession. He works at the City of Oakland as a bicycle facilities planning trainee in the Transportation Planning and

Funding Division. Tucker is a resident of San Francisco and a graduate student in urban and regional planning at San Jose State University where he focuses on sustainable transportation planning, data analysis, and GIS visualization. He previously worked for San Francisco's Department of the Environment Transportation Demand Management team, TransitScreen, and Marin Transit.



Aydee Zielke is now an environmental land planner consultant with Surf to Snow Environmental Resource Management (S2S ERM) in Danville. She has more than five years' experience with planning-related projects in state and federal agencies and private planning firms. Earlier positions include scientist/natural resource specialist consultant with Ocean Associates (Honolulu) and environmental planner for Caltrans (San Francisco). Zielke holds a master of urban and regional planning from the University of Hawaii at Manoa, a BS in environmental science from Humboldt State University, and an associate of arts in natural science and mathematics from Mt. San Antonio College, Walnut, California. ■

Where in the world

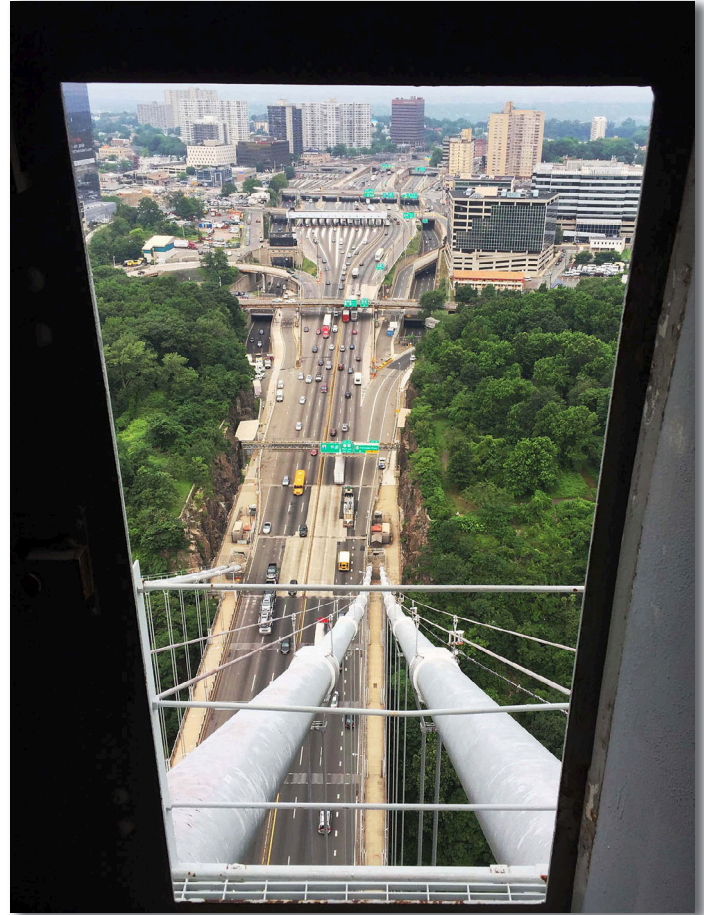


Photo: Zachary Bloom, Master of Urban Planning student, Hunter College (CUNY) (Answer on [page 25](#).)

"People don't give up their cars just because they live close together. While the politics of density are about housing, the benefits of density — at least in terms of transportation and the environment — have as much to do with where people work as with where people live. Metros with surprisingly high housing density but low transit usage don't have particularly high job density."
—Jed Kolko, <http://wapo.st/1NHqsqt>

Activities around the Northern Section

APA California – Northern’s International Directors, Hing Wong, AICP, and Alex Hinds

We have exciting plans for 2016 and beyond. Discussions are underway for our international planning collaboration pilot program and an upcoming international planning tour of Southeast Asia. Stay tuned for more information about future meetings and next steps. Interested in receiving more information in the future? Contact Alex Hinds at alexhindsmarin@icloud.com or Hing Wong at hingw@abag.ca.gov.

APA California – Northern’s Membership Directors, Sandra Hamlat and Geoff Bradley, AICP

As we head into the holiday season and end of the year festivities, the APA California – Northern Section board is planning its annual retreat to review and focus on our various initiatives, including adding and retaining members. APA membership is one of the best ways for professional planners to share best practices, keep their skills fresh, and network with leaders in the field. We need to share that value with local professional planners so that they better understand the return on their investment in APA membership. In the past, we have emphasized the affordability of a Chapter-only membership — only \$115. We look forward to the upcoming retreat to discover new ways to engage the membership.

Regional Activity Coordinator, Monterey Bay, Justin Meek, AICP

On October 29, we co-sponsored a happy hour and presentation with WTS (Women in Transportation) Monterey Bay. Over 40 planners and other professionals attended, enjoying wine and appetizers at the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History followed by a lively presentation and interactive discussion on the evolving use of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in transportation planning and practice. Susan Bransen, California Transportation Commission Chief Deputy Director, gave an overview of the state’s efforts to develop a Road Usage Charge Pilot Program (DeSaulnier, SB 1077, 2014). Chris Mitchell and Anais Schenk of Fehr & Peers discussed the new rules under state law for using VMT in place of LOS to measure traffic impacts (Steinberg, SB 743, 2013).

Separately, AEP and APA Monterey Bay jointly hosted a no-cost holiday party at the Rio Grill in Carmel for members and their guests. If you would like to attend

future events or connect with Monterey Bay Area planners, please contact Justin Meek at justin.meek@gmail.com or John Doughty at JDoughty@hmbcity.com.

Regional Activity Coordinator, Redwood Coast Region, Monterey Bay, Stephen Avis, AICP

The Redwood Coast Region coordinating committee organizes a monthly brown bag lunch program in conjunction with the Humboldt County Public Health Division. Featured topics include land use planning, transportation planning, environmental planning, planning for healthy communities, and related topics of interest. Our region also cosponsors an annual daylong environmental conference with the California Bar Association, offering several AICP/ICM credits. In 2016, these programs will be augmented with local workshops providing required AICP/ICM credits in law and ethics. In addition, committee members organize and host (at our homes) semiannual parties each January and August based on a theme. The most recent included a hay wagon tour of historic Ferndale with a guide discussing local architecture and history. Several of our region’s members recently passed the AICP exam. We’re rural but active.

Regional Activity Coordinator, South Bay, Gerri Caruso, AICP

The South Bay has had a fun and busy year. I’ve finally learned the nuts and bolts of my position as South Bay RAC and I’m looking forward to accomplishing more in 2016.

We hosted two cocktail mixers in the spring and fall at Billy Berk’s in San Jose. The first was co-hosted by the Association of Environmental Professionals (AEP) and the second was a cross-networking event co-hosted by the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP), American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), American Society of Civil Engineers Younger Member Forum (YMF SF), Women in Transportation (WTS), South Bay Transportation Officials Association (SBTOA), and Young Professionals in Transportation San Francisco (YPT SF Bay). More than 50 people came! To learn about these great professional groups, you’ll need to come to our next mixer. We hope to repeat with another event soon after the New Year.

The South Bay group, along with SPUR San Jose, sponsored a number of lunch time forums on a number of locally interesting planning topics, each session typically offering one AICP/ICM credit. Look for upcoming SPUR events on the calendar at www.norcalapa.org. It’s been a fun year. ■

leave this money “on the table” (say, for fear of a potential bad tenant) would be irrational and unlikely, particularly when even the most stringent rent stabilization ordinance allows for modest rent increases and capital improvement pass-throughs. Thus Dr. Gruen’s suggestion that a property owner would decide to keep existing rental units off the market and forego substantial income with minimal increase in costs is questionable.

An even more interesting data point arises with respect to new construction. Analysis by the UC Berkeley Urban Displacement Project of housing production numbers from 2007 to 2013 (Miriam Zuk, Ph.D., “Rent control: The key to neighborhood stabilization,” Sept. 2015, <http://bit.ly/1NmnFV3>) showed that the Bay Area’s rent-controlled cities actually produced more units per capita than those without rent control. One possible reason for this greater acceptance of new housing is an implicit recognition that any ripple effects of new construction arising from an area’s increased desirability to higher income households (e.g., gentrification) will be partially offset by protecting existing residents.

Dr. Gruen also attacked inclusionary zoning ordinances, which are prevalent throughout California and have risen in prominence as cities struggle to provide housing in the face of a massive affordability crisis. Empirical analysis of the effectiveness of inclusionary housing isn’t widespread, but the Lincoln Land Institute reports that research by the Furman Center at New York University (Schuetz, Meltzer, & Been 2009) found that the Bay Area’s inclusionary programs had no impact on production or prices.

A deeper consideration of what’s happening in the market can be found in the Lincoln Land Institute’s recent (Sept. 2015) Policy Focus Report on Inclusionary Housing, <http://bit.ly/1Gd5CcZ>: “The local real estate market sets the prices of market-rate units, and developers of one project can’t change the overall market price or rent. Therefore, the costs associated with construction of

inclusionary housing is either absorbed by modest declines in land prices or reductions in developer profits, or some combination of the two.”

Rent stabilization and inclusionary housing are distinct responses to the affordability crisis and share common features: regulating economic rents of property owners in order to build economically diverse and equitable communities.

In the case of rent control, rent hikes in boom times often have little to do with the property owner’s improvements or investments; rather, they are driven by increased demand for a scarce resource. With regard to inclusionary housing, reductions in land values primarily fall on property owners whose actions did not contribute to the desirability of a particular piece of land. Indeed, in those cases where land is rezoned to allow for added development intensity (and affordable units), the additional value created or enabled by the public action more than compensates for the “clawback” of the inclusionary policy.

As cities face continued pressure in retaining their middle and lower income residents, rent stabilization and inclusionary ordinances will continue to rise in prominence as practical market interventions. Their widespread enactment is crucial to protecting existing residents from a broken market.



Alex Lantsberg, AICP, is a planner, researcher, and advocate working on housing, labor, infrastructure, and sustainability issues throughout Northern California. He recently joined the Board of Directors of APA California – Northern as Co-chair of the Sustainability Committee. You can reach him at lantsberg@gmail.com ■

“MTC’s hostile takeover of ABAG planning. Heminger and Cortese (MTC director and chair, respectively) say taking over ABAG’s planners is a matter of ‘consolidation.’ This would be in the sense that Russia ‘consolidated’ Crimea from Ukraine. In response to questions, Heminger wrote, ‘these different organizational styles were more than a nuisance’ during recent drafting of the latest joint regional planning document. ‘MTC is more action-oriented and project-based,’ he wrote, ‘while ABAG is more discussion-focused and policy-based.’ ” —Mercury News editorial, <http://bayareane.ws/1H24rxG>

General Plan guidelines update

OPR prepares and updates the State's guidance to cities and counties for preparing and updating their general plans. While these guidelines are not regulatory (they are not part of the California Code of Regulations), they are considered the definitive guidance for developing local general plan policies and programs. Like the CEQA guidelines, several legislatively required updates to the guidelines have been prepared, but there has been no comprehensive update in over a decade. The last major revision of the general plan guidelines was published in 2003, followed by two supplements (one dealing with military facilities and land use compatibility, and one supplement on "complete streets").

In October 2015, OPR released a draft update of the guidelines. At 430 pages, it is much longer than the 2003 edition (and in the unformatted rough draft form, it is a bit of a read). The 2015 draft is updated with sections on visioning, community engagement, social equity, resilience, economic development, healthy communities, and climate change (topics which have mostly appeared in previous editions in different and sometimes limited form). Most interestingly, the new guidelines are paired with a GIS-based data mapping tool, currently in a beta version, which should give planners easy access to the State's large library of free data. OPR conducted a series of workshops on the update, wrapping up on December 9, 2015. The comment period ends December 18, 2015. See <http://bit.ly/21DKzx9> for more information.

Climate Change adaptation

Since the release of the draft general plan guidelines update, the governor signed two pieces of legislation on climate change adaptation. Senate Bill 246 (Wieckowski, 2015) requires OPR to coordinate regional and local efforts on state climate adaptation strategies. Senate Bill 379 (Jackson, 2015) requires cities and counties to review and

update their safety elements to address climate adaptation and resiliency strategies applicable to them. Expect guidance on this — either a technical advisory or (more logically) a revision to the current draft update.

Groundwater Sustainability Plan regulations

In addition to CEQA and general plan guidance, local planners can also expect regulations on groundwater management in the New Year. The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA, a compilation of three separate bills), requires the formation of Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (SGMAs) which must develop Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) for those groundwater basins or sub-basins that were designated by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) as medium or high priority. SGMA encourages similar planning and coordination for low priority basins.

By June 1, 2016, DWR is required to adopt emergency regulations for evaluating and implementing GSPs to achieve the legislative intent of the SGMA (Water Code Section 10720.1). GSP regulations will identify the necessary plan components, including land use considerations, as well as other information that will assist GSAs and local agencies in planning for groundwater sustainability. For more information on DWR's outreach process, and when the draft guidelines may be available, see their website at <http://bit.ly/21DKYzL>.



Brian Grattidge is an environmental land-use planner and senior project manager with Dudek in Sacramento. From 2000 to 2003 he worked for the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), updating the general plan guidelines. He holds a BA in international relations and an MA in political science, both from UC Davis. ■

2015 APA California conference session materials available. Presentations that were submitted by the presenters in Oakland have now been posted online. The complete list of presentation material is available (but to APA members only) at <http://bit.ly/1iGBHEg>. Note: Nonmembers may view up to five titles for the full conference. Single-day attendees may view up to five titles of sessions presented on the day they attended. Email Francine Farrell at ategoresources@live.com and provide the date, time, and session title and a copy of your emailed registration confirmation.

DRECP planning efforts include a conceptual transmission plan because, without interconnection to the electrical grid, a power-generation project in a remote location is not viable.

In the San Joaquin Valley, where interconnection can be easier, lands that are no longer arable are attractive for solar development, both to developers and to owners who still hope to profit from their land. Large tracts could be converted to renewable energy development. Westlands Water District (WWD), with more than 1,000 square miles of prime farmland in western Fresno and Kings Counties, has facilitated solar development on lands retired from farming activities due to lack of drainage and salt accumulation in the soil (<http://bit.ly/1yMd2c>).

A recent stakeholder-driven process, led by UC Berkeley Law's Center for Law, Energy, and Environment (CLEE), with representatives from the agricultural, range-land, conservation, and renewable developer communities, identified approximately 550,000 acres of "least-conflict" land within the San Joaquin Valley — much of that within WWD holdings. These are salt-affected or otherwise non-farmable lands where neither current agricultural production nor critical habitat would be significantly impacted. Putting the entire area into renewable energy development is unlikely, but a conservative assumption of 1 MW of solar PV per 5 acres equates to 110,000 MW of potential, if intermittent, capacity just on these lands. With historic peak electricity demand in the state at just over 60,000 MW, the generation capacity for solar PV in this portion of the San Joaquin Valley alone is theoretically more than enough to meet our 2030 goals (<http://bit.ly/1IFqpHt>).

Scenario 2: Expansion of distributed generation of renewable energy

Distributed generation (DG) differs from utility-scale generation in terms of its location (closer to the population centers or industrialized areas where there is greatest demand for power) and scale. Sited on smaller parcels of land, DG projects cannot generate as much power as large projects in the desert, mountains, or agricultural valleys. The typical capacity for DG projects that would apply to RPS targets is between 1 and 20 MW. DG can, however, ameliorate issues related to transmission, both in terms of accessible interconnection and reducing "line

loss" — the attrition of energy when transmitted over long distances. And while the megawatts produced by a single DG site cannot compare with that of a utility-scale project, the aggregated output from a number of distributed sites could do so. A 2015 study by Stanford and UC Berkeley (<http://stanford.io/1HuprAW>) found that solar equipment distributed on and around existing infrastructure in California, within the built environment, could generate five times the power needed in California.

This study also discussed the use of brownfields — polluted or otherwise undevelopable lands — as sites for DG-scale development. APA's SunShot Solar Outreach Partnership webpage (<http://bit.ly/1SyGeFy>) summarizes resources for brownfield conversion, and also provides general guidance on solar permitting. Local examples of solar development on lands adjacent to uses incompatible with anything else include a 10.5-MW community-scale solar project developed by MCE Energy on a former Chevron refinery brownfield in Richmond; large solar trackers (a total of 1 MW capacity) on 10 acres within the West Contra Costa County Wastewater District collection and treatment facility; and the 5-MW solar installation atop the San Francisco Public Utility Commission's Sunset Reservoir.



Distributed generation. Solar panels at the West County Wastewater District collection and treatment facility, Richmond. Photo: Josh Hohn.

Energy security is another advantage of DG. In catastrophic events that disrupt the electrical grid, local generation could provide hospitals, shelters, and other critical services with clean energy, supplanting diesel generators. Thus renewable DG is increasingly mentioned in the context of resiliency or disaster preparedness.

Cities and counties are making strides in developing ordinances that provide guidance for DG. (See, for example, the Solar Permitting Handbook by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research [spring 2015], which

(continued on next page)

also provides guidance on local renewable energy facility permitting: <http://bit.ly/1NqSdR9>.) Such projects may need no new transmission lines, reducing potential impacts to sensitive habitats. Thoughtful siting remains imperative, however; much like any other development, a multi-block “solar garden” could physically divide a community.



Distributed generation. San Francisco Public Utility Commission's 5 MW solar project at Sunset Reservoir. Photo courtesy of Recurrent Energy.

Scenario 3: A hybrid approach, augmented by energy storage

Conceptually, we could reach the 50 percent renewables target either by developing more utility-scale projects or through widespread DG development. Realistically, it is unlikely that all potential land available at either scale would be used entirely for power generation. More likely, we will hit the RPS target with an approach that includes both utility-scale and DG development, getting maximum

use of lands closest to grid interconnection and maximized efficiency through energy storage.

Energy storage is evolving rapidly. Viewed as a solution to the inherent intermittency of renewables — the sun doesn't always shine, the wind doesn't always blow — a variety of storage technologies are being developed to maximize output of renewable energy facilities while also balancing electrical loads on the grid. These include batteries (lithium-ion, chemical flow, lead acid, sodium, and zinc) and technologies like flywheels, compressed air energy systems, and pumped hydro-electric facilities.

Some view solar combined with storage as the holy grail of a renewable future. Battery and solar prices are generally trending downward, and storage is viewed as a way to limit air emissions associated with new renewables.

What does this mean for the built environment?

We will continue to see utility-scale developments, with solar, wind, and geothermal projects developed where geographically, politically, and economically feasible. Otherwise undevelopable lands in our urban and suburban areas will increasingly be put into use as DG sites, and we are likely to see warehouse-like structures, housing racks of batteries or other storage technologies, as part of these developments or within our communities, near substations. In addition, SB 350 allows for renewable energy resources within the western U.S. to comply with the RPS. This means that some amount of wind energy from Wyoming or solar energy from Arizona could be imported into California. Doing so may require new or upgraded transmission systems.

As we write this, the climate talks in Paris have begun, and initial indications are that a substantial investment in clean energy technology research and development may be one of the main outcomes. If so, our energy landscape will continue to change in the future as new, more efficient technologies emerge, along with their research and development incubators. Regardless, it is worth reiterating the near-term ambitiousness of SB 350: no other state has created for itself the task of installing so much renewable energy in so short a time. For the near future, as we work to incorporate a substantial amount of renewable energy into our built environment, let's be aware that we are leading siting and planning efforts that could serve as models far beyond California.

Josh Hohn, AICP, founded and coordinates APA California – Northern's Energy Initiative. Ethan Elkind is Associate Director of the Climate Change and Business Program at The Center for Law, Energy & the Environment (CLEE) at UC Berkeley Law. ■

Q: Does AB 52 apply to CEQA projects/documents currently in process or to exempt projects?

A: “Yes” to the first question, but the answer to the second question is unclear.

AB 52 became effective July 1, 2015, and applies to all projects subject to CEQA pursued or proposed thereafter. AB 52 does not apply to CEQA projects/documents pursued or proposed prior to July 1, 2015, if Notices of Preparation for EIRs or Notices of Intent to adopt NDs or MNDs were *published* before July 1.

Whether, and if so how, the AB 52 consultation process applies to projects determined to be exempt from CEQA, is unclear because the new and amended sections of the Public Resources Code created by AB 52 do not expressly indicate either way let alone even mention CEQA exemption determinations. Based primarily on this legislative silence, several CEQA practitioners believe AB 52 does not apply to exempt projects. However, because the courts have not ruled on any AB 52 issues yet, now is not the time to take an aggressive position to trigger the first test case. I recommend an approach that is equal parts practical and conservative until the courts or OPR provide some guidance (e.g., OPR is currently working on a written technical advisory re AB 52 and Tribal Cultural Resources in CEQA, as well as revisions to the initial study checklist found in Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines.)

In sum, despite good arguments that the AB 52 consultation process does not apply to projects deemed categorically exempt from CEQA, until further guidance is available, a practical and conservative approach seems best. Analysis based on technical studies and/or tribal consultation should be utilized to assess and document whether the project may impact tribal cultural resources as well as whether the historical resources or unusual circumstances exceptions apply to negate a claimed categorical exemption. Projects falling under a *statutory* exemption, however, can proceed without any such analysis or tribal consultation, as statutory exemptions are absolute and are not subject to the historical resources or unusual circumstances exceptions.



Stephen Velyvis is a respected land use and environmental law attorney with over 15 years of experience advising and representing public agencies and private clients in administrative proceedings and before state and federal trial and appellate courts. He is a partner at Burke, Williams & Sorensen, LLP, in their Oakland office.

Mr. Velyvis is also the acting Legislative Director on APA California – Northern’s Board of Directors and regularly reports to the Board and the members on legislative and legal issues pertaining to land use planning and environmental law. You can reach him at svelyvis@bwslaw.com.

Answer to Where in the world (Page 19)

Fort Lee, NJ, as seen from just below the top of the New Jersey tower of the George Washington Bridge. The door is used by painters and bridge maintainers to get onto the cables. Photo: Zachary Bloom, Master of Urban Planning student, Hunter College (CUNY).

Painting the Gentrification of Prospect Heights. When I catch myself complaining about the rate at which my neighborhood is changing, I remind myself that the makeover is happening at exactly the same speed that it always has in this town. Every new building robs someone of a view, and, at the same time, becomes the apple of somebody else’s eye.” —Andy Friedman, <http://bit.ly/1lx3iW>

four residential streets were converted to one-way “couplets” to speed traffic to and from the new freeway, a condition that remains today.



A Victorian home on 6th Street. Photo: Amisha Shah

Land use and transportation

In just about all respects, SUN is the opposite of a conventional suburban San Jose neighborhood. While it is predominantly residential, its historic roots, proximity to a major university, and widely varied housing stock have, over time, created a visually fascinating and organically-formed community — perfect for an urban planner to study. Beautifully preserved Victorian-era homes sit on the same block as drab, boxy 1950s apartment buildings that were shoehorned into the neighborhood to accommodate rising student enrollments. Interestingly, nearly 90 percent of SUN residents are renters, some of whom live in homes previously converted to fraternities and sororities. Small businesses are scattered along William Street, nominally the center of commercial activity in the area. O’Donnell Park (East William at South 6th St.) is the neighborhood’s only public open space.

The location of Highway 280 along SUN’s southern boundary creates safety concerns from speeding vehicles and high volumes of traffic. Lowell Elementary abuts the highway right-of-way.

Nearly 60 percent of SUN residents who commute to work drive alone, and another 7 percent carpool. SUN’s auto-dependency is exacerbated by the lack of dedicated

bicycle facilities in the area; close to half the neighborhood streets lack a bike lane. The good news is that the San Jose Bike Plan 2020 proposes to add bike paths and lanes in SUN.

(continued on next page)



O’Donnell Park, William and 6th Streets. Photo: Amisha Shah

People and partnerships

One student team assessed the various individuals and groups who live, work, and shape SUN. To date, they have cataloged 129 specific people, organizations, and trusted community “anchors” that are anticipated to play a role in subsequent planning efforts.

At the request of neighborhood leaders, the students convened focus group discussions with experts serving the homeless population of central San Jose as well as members of local fraternities and sororities. These discussions were fruitful in terms of sharing ongoing concerns raised by community leaders over the years. One especially valuable outcome was a set of preliminary ideas to improve ongoing problems with end-of-semester dumping as students leave campus.

Character and identity

Character and identity are the seen and unseen aspects, the visual and the social fabric of a neighborhood. They are the day-to-day happenings, the stories and moments, the large and small parts of being in a place that tell you that you have arrived someplace unique.

The Character and Identity team faced a special challenge that involved unearthing the main elements that make SUN a readily identifiable community. They established context by reviewing and recording neighborhood-related documents, historic and contemporary community assets, neighborhood signage, architectural styles of buildings, elements of pride in residential homes, and the area’s demography. From there, they completed a photographic essay and conducted one-on-one interviews with residents in order to understand their perspectives. Ultimately, the team identified a variety of themes unique to SUN: a rich historical built environment, an impressive diversity of social and cultural groups, and a strong sense of pride despite the highly transient nature of SUN’s population. In particular, the varied housing stock gives the neighborhood a sense of uniqueness not found in many neighborhoods in newer parts of San Jose. Also, the dynamic between students and long-term residents provides a special opportunity for the next group of planning students to forge increasingly positive working relationships.



A mural on William Street. Photo: Hailey Lang

Urban form and streetscapes

The Urban Form and Streetscapes team focused on the physical attributes of SUN, from the density of neighborhood buildings to specific elements that define streetscapes. The team developed a 3D model of the neighborhood as it is situated within downtown San Jose. This model emphasized the neighborhood’s low-density quality in juxtaposition with the city’s central business district. The team’s streetscape analysis identified three primary street classifications and documented blight, vegetation, and sidewalk conditions. The analysis illustrated the diversity of street conditions in SUN, which led to informative and eye-catching displays at the Community Open House.

William Street

William Street hosts a variety of small businesses and eateries and is an evolving ‘main street’ within the SUN community. After documenting the corridor’s existing conditions and interviewing a number of small business owners, the William Street team created a video that captured stakeholders’ voices and highlighted their desire for improved streetscapes and more business development. The video, which was presented and extremely well received at the Open House, enabled SUN neighbors to see each other in a new and entertaining way.

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SJSU grad students assess South University Neighborhood *(continued from previous page)*



Community open house at St. Paul's Methodist Church.
Photo: Amelia Kolokihakauifisi

What was learned

The collaboration between the SJSU graduate planning students and the SUN community allowed students to complete a comprehensive assessment of the neighborhood. Over 40 stakeholders from throughout downtown San Jose (many of whom brought their families) attended the November Open House to view and comment on the work.

In his opening remarks, Councilmember Raul Peralez expressed appreciation for the students' work and pointed with pride to the direction SUN is heading. His presence at the event symbolized the full circle of collaboration that CommUniverCity represents.

Overall, the Open House achieved its main objectives: it engaged with SUN community members, shared findings, received feedback, and strengthened the relationship between the university and SUN for future collaborations. All input was carefully documented for inclusion in the upcoming Community Assessment Report that will be shared with a wide cross section of neighborhood leaders. The finished report will be available in January at <http://bit.ly/1RoPopz>.

The graduate planning students are confident that their assessment of the neighborhood will ultimately support an improvement plan that fully represents the community and moves SUN forward. ■

AICP examination results; next series of exam prep workshops

Northern Section AICP Director Dr. Donald Bradley, AICP, has sent us partial results of the national certification examination given this past November. From information we have at publication time, eight planners who took the most recent Northern Section AICP Exam Prep workshops passed the test. Congratulations to:

Lauren Armstrong, AICP, Marin County
Grace Bogdan, AICP, Monterey County
Bernice Gonzalez, AICP, Kitscoty, Alberta
Heidi Kuong, AICP, Sacramento
Cindy Ma, AICP, Oakland
David Mack, AICP, Monterey County
Holly Owen, AICP, Healdsburg
Kieulan Pham, AICP, San Jose

There may be others who passed who were not workshop members or who attended our sessions and passed but who have not yet notified Dr. Bradley.

For you or your professional colleagues who have not become AICP members, information about the next (May 2016) AICP exam is available from APA at <http://bit.ly/1PXcchf>. The testing window is **May 9–22, 2016**, and the application window closes **Dec. 31, 2015**.

APA California–Northern has been offering AICP Exam Prep workshops for 27 years. Our next Exam Prep workshops will be held on the UC Berkeley campus over the course of five Saturdays from 10 AM to 3 PM. The spring 2016 workshops will be given on January 30, February 20, March 12, April 2, and April 23.

Each session covers a different exam domain: planning history, theory, and law; planning and zoning law and court cases; planning process; plan implementation; and the ethics code. All necessary study materials are provided including the 2.0 and 3.0 CDs (\$500 value). Expert guest speakers and recent test takers provide their help. The fee including materials and sessions is \$100. If you are unemployed, a UC Berkeley employee, or a full time student, the fee is waived. To register for the AICP Exam Prep spring series at UC Berkeley, call Dr. Bradley at (650) 592-0915 or email Dr.DonBradley@comcast.net for more information. ■



Michael Caplan, City of Berkeley, discussing Art Districts on the 'Innovations in Downtown Planning' Mobile Workshop.
Photo: Troy Reinhalter

After selecting and confirming the sessions, the conference planners embarked on an intense logistical adventure to assure a smooth-running conference. The mobile workshops subcommittee was responsible for planning the schedules, routes, reservations, BART rides, bus tickets, and bike rentals before and during the conference.

A highlight in programming for the 2015 conference was the Diversity Subcommittee's Diversity Summit on Saturday afternoon. Moderator Cindy Chavez and four panelists engaged over 500 people in a discussion about gentrification and displacement.

Because conference costs exceed the revenue brought in by registrations, sponsorship and fundraising became a critical success determinant of the 2015 conference. In addition, any net revenue from the annual conference is returned to the chapter and its eight sections to help fund educational, professional development, and outreach programs. Thus fundraising began with a call for sponsors in 2014 and ramped up in early 2015. By October 2015, the sponsorship subcommittee had surpassed its goal of \$136,000, raising a total of \$141,500.

With so many coming from out of town to Oakland, the CHC Planner's Guide subcommittee developed a planner-friendly guide that was distributed in the conference swag bag given to each registrant. It took a large team to gather, organize, write, showcase, advertise, publish, and distribute the booklet. Though compact in size, this ultimate guide covered everything in and around Oakland, from Berkeley to San Leandro, with background

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Full house at the Plenary Luncheon. Photo: Brynn McKiernan

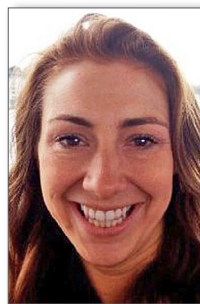


Opening reception at the Oakland Museum of California. Photo: Verducci Event Productions.

demographic information for the ‘plan-nerd,’ photos of and facts about the area’s landmarks, and highlights of each of Oakland’s 19 neighborhoods. The Oakland Planner’s Guide helped orient planners for four days, but it will remain a fantastic time-stamped reference of ever-changing Oakland.

Topping off the conference was the added layer of special events held throughout the four days. One of the most talked about events was the Opening Reception, held outdoors at the Oakland Museum of California. From the picturesque setting to the food, to the company, to the free shuttle, the reception made an amazing first impression on many attending the 2015 conference. The Hospitality Subcommittee planned this and several other events. They selected the venue and menu for the reception, negotiated the costs, and made sure everything went off smoothly.

After two years of planning a planning conference, the 2015 CHC and volunteers can now rest and be proud of making the Oakland conference great and memorable. The lessons learned, big wins, and other helpful tips from the 2015 CHC will now be passed along to the Pasadena Conference Host Committee for the 2016 APA California conference. We are all looking forward to a great conference in Pasadena! If only it weren’t so far in the future.



Brynn McKiernan is a planner and marketing coordinator at Raimi + Associates, Berkeley. She holds a BS in urban and regional planning from Cal Poly Pomona and a minor from the John T. Lyle Center for Regenerative studies. Brynn was on the conference Publicity Subcommittee and managed correspondence between each of the local section PR coordinators. You can reach her at brynn@raimiassociates.com ■

What it will take to connect BART to the South Bay?

SPUR, December 3, 2015

Laura Tolkoff, <http://bit.ly/1NcCi9V> • “The BART Silicon Valley extension is the largest transportation investment the South Bay will make for decades. The project will connect the East Bay and the South Bay with a 16-mile, six-station extension of the BART system. Once completed, the system will connect with Caltrain and form the ‘ring around the Bay’ that generations of civic and business leaders have aspired to build.

“Today, Bay Area highways have heavy traffic and delays throughout the day, not just during rush hour. Many workers commute long distances to get to their jobs. At the same time, the preference for better transit service and walkable communities is growing. For the south bay to continue enjoying economic success and a high quality of life, BART Silicon Valley is an essential investment.

“Although VTA is leading the efforts to deliver BART Silicon Valley, securing funding and creating a successful transit project require collaboration with cities, the county, regional, state, and federal agencies, other transit operators, and business and civic leaders.

“Santa Clara has repeatedly taxed itself to support transportation investments; this gave BART Silicon Valley Phase I a leg up for state and federal funding. A similar commitment to a transportation sales tax in November 2016 will be needed to secure federal funding for Phase II. While polling found that voters are likely to support a transportation sales tax next fall, it is always challenging to secure the necessary two-thirds vote.”

HUD showcases public-private mixed-income housing in Dublin

HUD User, November 17, 2015

<http://bit.ly/114iaiB> • “In the mid-2000s, the city of Dublin faced increasing complaints from the residents of Arroyo Vista, the city’s only public housing development. The 150 units at the 25-year-old development were in disrepair, but the cost of rehabilitation was prohibitive. Thanks to its partnership with the Housing Authority of the County of Alameda, affordable housing developer Eden Housing, and for-profit homebuilder KB Home, the city transformed the low-density, deteriorating property into Emerald Vista, an award-winning mixed-income, mixed-use development. The new development not only increased the number of affordable housing units on the site, but also added market-rate and affordable for-sale homes for a total of 378 residences at a density consistent with that of the surrounding area.

“Dublin (population 46,000+) needs more housing, including more affordable rental opportunities. The redevelopment of Arroyo Vista presented an opportunity to not only replace the rundown public housing but also diversify the development’s housing types for a broader mix of income levels.

“[As part of the] 378 housing units, Eden Housing developed and owns Carlow Court, a building with 49 one-bedroom units for seniors, and Wexford Way, several buildings containing 130 family apartments. Rents for the apartments are targeted to households earning 30 to 55 percent of the area median income.

“Out of more than \$135 million in total development costs, approximately \$55 million went to the development of the affordable rental housing. Emerald Vista has garnered national attention for its successful redevelopment of public housing and has won several awards, including the Urban Land Institute’s Jack Kemp Excellence in Affordable and Workforce Housing Award in 2014.” ■



Emerald Vista's 198 for-sale units include 128 townhouses and 70 single-family detached homes. Credit: Jeff Peters, Vantage Point Photography.

“Take the 10, and always avoid the 405”

KCET, November 10, 2015

Nathan Masters, <http://bit.ly/1IkVmvu> • Southern Californians created a “distinctive way of giving directions with the region’s early embrace of the freeway. Long before most U.S. cities had their first freeways, Los Angeles had built several, and most bore signs for multiple numbered highway routes. The Pasadena Freeway, for example, was Route 6, 66, and 99, all at once. But the freeways soon got easier-to-remember local names: *the* Cahuenga Pass Freeway, or *the* San Bernardino Freeway.

“Soon a shorthand emerged for describing a route through the city. Joan Didion captured this in ‘Play It As It Lays’ (1970), in which Maria ‘drove the San Diego to the Harbor, the Harbor up to the Hollywood, the Hollywood to the Golden State, the Santa Monica, the Santa Ana, the Pasadena, the Ventura.’

“How, then, did that morph into ‘the 405 to the 110, the 110 up to the 101, the 101 to the 5’?

“In 1964, the state simplified its highway numbering system. With few exceptions, each freeway had only one route number. And a flurry of new construction added unfamiliar freeway names. Drivers found it easier to learn numbers like the 605 or the 91 rather than the San Gabriel River Freeway or the Redondo Beach Freeway. As Southern Californians joined the rest of North America in referring to freeways by number, they retained their old habit of prefixing a definite article, *the*, a regional idiom that still confounds and amuses outsiders today.”

California’s youthful ambience is changing*The Sacramento Bee*, November 15, 2015

Dan Walters, <http://bit.ly/1HUSCtz> • “The aging of California’s huge post-World War II baby-boom generation, combined with plummeting birth and immigration rates, means the Golden State is quickly going gray.

“A huge growth in the over-65 population, from about 4.5 million today to more than 11 million by 2050 — nearly a quarter of the state’s residents then — will disrupt labor markets as it imposes major new costs on taxpayers for health care and other services.

“It could also alter the state’s politics as the elderly become a decisive voting bloc, not only because of rising numbers but because the propensity to vote increases with age.

“One state document puts it this way: ‘California will surpass the national average for age by 2040 even though it is currently the sixth youngest state in the nation with only 11 percent of its population 65 and older.’

“The most visible effect of these trends will be in California’s workplaces.

“The Public Policy Institute of California has repeatedly highlighted a growing shortage of college-educated workers due to the baby boomers’ exodus from the workforce. ... Rob Lapsley, who heads the California Business Roundtable, says employers are beginning to weigh the potential impact of baby-boomer retirements and a lack of educated replacements. Some, he says, are taking matters into their own hands. Rather than waiting for the education system to deliver job- and training-ready replacements, they are setting up their own education programs.” ■

The changing world of San Francisco. “People might think, ‘Oh, she’s just bitter about the future, the present, because she did this old work.’ And I don’t feel that way. I’m excited about a lot of the things that are happening in the city. It’s just a question of how you control the growth.” —San Francisco photographer Janet Delaney, quoted in *The New York Times* by Alistair Gee, <http://nyti.ms/1P8SsF9>; 18-slide show at <http://nyti.ms/1P8RMzk>

U.S. roundup

Excerpts from around the country, linked to the original articles

'Planners should worry about neighborhood decline'

Penn Institute for Urban Research, November 11, 2015

John D. Landis, <http://bit.ly/110aLkg> • "City living is back. After half a century of relentless population decline and several false starts at revitalization, residential investment in America's urban centers began to pick up in the mid-1990s. In the 10 years between the 2000 and 2010 decennial censuses, the housing stock in America's 50 largest central cities grew by 1.5 million dwelling units, or 8.3 percent. This includes the cities of Baltimore, Detroit, New Orleans, and St. Louis, all of which lost significant population during the 2000 to 2010 period.

"As the urban population has grown over the past 25 years, the media has focused on the dangers of gentrification, particularly the displacement of long-time and usually poorer residents. However, behind the newspaper headlines large numbers of urban and suburban residents continued living in neighborhoods where public and private investment had failed to keep pace with the ravages of time, depopulation, or economic decline.

"The media's current fascination with gentrification notwithstanding, it is neighborhood decline — in both cities and suburbs — that remains the dominant form of neighborhood change, and the one that local urban development programs should continue to focus on.

"Center city planners seeking to reverse neighborhood decline and promote upgrading should focus their efforts on older and walkable neighborhoods with diverse and aspirational populations. Those hoping to anticipate and stem decline should keep a close eye on more distant neighborhoods, those with proportionately more multifamily housing, and those with large populations already in poverty."

A holiday present from the feds

Next City, December 8, 2015

Sandy Smith, <http://ow.ly/VDu2L> • "Just in time for the holidays, Congress has given cities, state highway departments, and transit systems an eagerly anticipated present in the form of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), the first true multi-year transportation bill since 2005. It's something of a Christmas tree, with baubles placed on it by various advocacy groups.

"*Transit-oriented development advocates* will appreciate a significant revision in the low-interest loan program known as the Transportation Infrastructure Financing and Innovation Act, or TIFIA. The FAST Act extends the scope of TIFIA to encompass transit-oriented development projects around transit stations and lowers the minimum threshold for TIFIA loans to \$10 million, enabling smaller projects to qualify.

"*City transportation officials*, who have parted company with their state counterparts over roadway design, have their positions affirmed by a provision allowing local governments to use alternative road and street design manuals in designing federally assisted construction and repair projects. This provision is a significant endorsement of the 'complete streets' approach codified in the design manual created by the National Association of City Transportation Officials.

"*Local governments* will get more money to spend as they wish on transportation projects they consider important, with a 55 percent rise in what's known as 'suballocated funds' over the five years. Metropolitan areas with populations under 200,000, however, still have to defer to their state's transportation department priorities."

(U.S. continues on next page)

New board game challenges players. "The Bay Area's housing market doesn't feel very playful. But a new board game aims to take the many variables contributing to the lack of affordable housing in the region and offer players the chance to work through a policymaking puzzle. Players are given different policy goals that must be achieved in each round of the game. All the players must agree on where to start building. There are 12 rounds, each representative of two years, and the game comes equipped with economic draw cards that could signal a recession, an economic boom, a bubble, or the standard economy. After each round, rent and commute times — numbers that are supposed to be true to reality — must be adjusted. The housing crisis is designed to be solved in two hours or less." —Marielle Mondon, <http://bit.ly/1OjltKd>

Seattle is 'teardown town'

The Seattle Times, November 27, 2015

Gene Balk, <http://bit.ly/1ONtIAZ> • “There’s been a lot of concern over the lack of affordable housing in Seattle recently. Turns out, we suffer from a shortage of unaffordable housing, too.

“In our increasingly affluent region, there’s growing demand for spacious, amenity-laden new houses, particularly in prime locations on the Eastside and in parts of Seattle. But the existing housing stock in these established neighborhoods is often characteristic of a more modest era — small prewar cottages and midcentury ramblers. These older structures are coming down fast, making way for new homes that satisfy the present-day demand for double-height great rooms, open kitchens, and walk-in closets.

“Data from the King County assessor shows that from 2012 through 2014, more than 1,500 houses were torn down and replaced with something larger — typically at least twice the size. On average, these teardowns are 1,546 square feet in size, while the new houses built in their place clock in at 3,219 square feet. More than 450 of the teardowns were replaced by a home at least three times larger. Many times, these new homes transform the streetscape by the sheer increase in size from not only their predecessors but also the surrounding older houses.

“But once the dust settles, it doesn’t take long for things to go back to normal. After people meet the new neighbor, they are more comfortable. Very quickly, they become part of the neighborhood.”

With dot map and eight before-after slider photos.

Portland leads in extreme weather preparedness among six U.S. cities

Next City, November 17, 2015

Marielle Mondon, <http://bit.ly/1MmW2t6>

• “The connection between ‘adaptiveness’ and politics is no coincidence, according to a new study, <http://bit.ly/1MmWffO>. Milken Institute School of Public Health researchers at George Washington University say a city’s political culture has a lot to do with its level of readiness for the effects of climate change. Of the six cities examined, the study found Portland, Boston, and Los Angeles in ‘advanced to middle stages’ of planning. Raleigh and Tucson followed in the early/middle stages, and Tampa lagged behind substantially — despite being the most vulnerable to hurricanes.

“The authors say politics is driving readiness in Portland. ‘Portland, a city with many liberal politicians and public concern about climate change, had the most advanced plans of all of the cities in the study. Tucson, Tampa, and Raleigh, cities that had more Conservative Democrats or Republicans, had many politicians who dismissed climate change and rarely made it part of their political platform.’”

It’s mic, not mike

The Washington Post, December 4, 2015

My lord, what’s next? Against all his ingrained feelings, the keeper of the style manual for *The Washington Post* since 1997 is giving up on *e-mail* and will use *email*, and he likewise has decided that *mike* is out and *mic* is in. The Post’s Bill Walsh writes, “Why did we wait so long to make the changes? As the keeper, more or less, of The Post’s style manual, I’ll tell you why: because the new spellings were wrong.

“Mic doesn’t exist in isolation. Some now-common phrases — *mic drop*, *hot mic* — would look downright anachronistic with the old spelling. That reality was what finally persuaded me to drop the *mike* from the Post stylebook.

“Still, *mic* is an aberration. Words like that aren’t pronounced like that. A bicycle is a *bike*, not a *bic*.

That’s how short forms work: They’re intended to be pronounced, and so they’re spelled phonetically. You don’t just start subtracting letters until you’re left with something approximate. A refrigerator is a *fridge*; *frig* is a mild curse word that rhymes with *pig*.

“While it’s true that commonly used two-word or hyphenated compounds often solidify into single words over time, that had never before happened with a compound based on a single letter. We had T-shirts and X-rays for a long time before electronic mail showed up, but we still aren’t writing about *tshirts* and *xrays*.

“For whatever reason, though, *e-mail* quickly became *email* as America went online.” Read more at <http://wapo.st/1NDT6FU>.

(U.S. continues on next page)

'Our houses don't fit us anymore'

Boston Globe, November 10, 2015

Mike Ross, <http://bit.ly/21nDOiU> • "Likewise, the lack of people getting married contributes to tenants doubling-up. According to Zillow, nationwide, 32 percent are living in homes where two or more working-aged adults live together but aren't married or with partners. This figure is up from 26.4 percent in 2000.

"So how are these unmarried, housing-poor, renters-in-old-housing living today? Like the snail, they've adapted. Roommate living used to be a stop-gap measure to get through the period from college to full economic independence. But now, adults are getting used to it as a way of life.

"We also must not let nostalgia lead us to mistake the cohabitating phenomena of friends living together well into their adulthood as some sort of new housing desire. Rather, it is indicative of mismatched housing with people making the best of a bad situation. Even the most beloved of housemates get tired of their roommate's dirty dishes."

Harvard adds office for applied project-based design research

The Crimson, November 25, 2015

Sruthi L. Muluk, <http://bit.ly/1X1zEZd> • "The Harvard Graduate School of Design has created a new office to study urbanization, and it will approach the issue from a design perspective, rather than through standard planning, policy, or social science lenses.

Three specific projects are the start of the new office's work.

- One goal is to study global urban challenges in a small-scale setting where the problem is extreme, such as analyzing the city of Miami Beach as a case study for rising sea levels around the world.
- The new office has also partnered with AECOM to study urban development in Chinese cities, specifically satellite cities or new towns.
- It will also collaborate with the Exumas, a district of islands in the Bahamas, where researchers will study 'territories of urbanization.'" ■

"Sue the suburbs' lawsuit. The pro-development San Francisco Bay Area Renters' Federation has filed suit against the East Bay suburb of Lafayette, an opening salvo in a multiyear campaign to pressure the Bay Area's small cities to shoulder more of the demand brought on by the region's jobs and population boom. The complaint, filed in the Superior Court of Contra Costa County, centers on an embattled parcel a mile and a half from Lafayette's BART station [in an effort] to see an old proposal for a 315-unit moderate-income apartment complex revived, and to block a less-dense development of 44 single-family homes, which the city council approved in its stead. The suit is a test case for a new strategy [to use] the Housing Accountability Act — a little-litigated 1982 state law that favors density when health and safety aren't at risk." —Lamar Anderson, <http://bit.ly/1HVNN8Z>

Our equity problem. "Minneapolis is in the midst of a building boom; cranes dot the sky as far as the eye can see. But growth alone can't solve our equity problem. It's not turning Minneapolis into a just city, because our current growth doesn't include everybody. Even though our overall unemployment rate has declined, the gap between white people and people of color remains the same. ... If your boat is leaky or you don't have one to begin with, the rising tide can't and won't lift you. —Betsy Hodges, mayor of Minneapolis, <http://bit.ly/1S1tcjO>

World roundup

Excerpts from around the world, linked to the original articles

Berlin will keep public housing affordable

CityLab, November 12, 2015

Feergus O’Sullivan, <http://bit.ly/1luVA3s> • “Beginning January 1, many Berlin housing project residents can expect a cut in their rent. The cost of public housing in the city is just too high, the Berlin Senate ruled in November, and from now on the rent tenants pay will be directly linked to how much they earn.

“In a city with high numbers of public housing residents, the effect of the new rule could be striking. Of Berlin’s current 3.5 million residents, about 250,000 people live in housing projects, spread across some 125,000 apartments. The city also has 280,000 apartments owned by four state property companies that will likewise be subject to the new rules.

“From now on, low-income tenants in these homes will have a guarantee that rent rises will not price them out. The number of these protected apartments will also go up. The ruling binds the Berlin Senate to build 30,000 new public housing units within the next 10 years, while the proportion of affordable housing owned by the state property companies will also be pushed up.

“It might seem odd that the city needs a new measure to enforce affordable rents in buildings it owns. This situation is possible because, in the past, Berlin allowed companies constructing social housing to charge high-ish rents that the state then subsidized. This subsidy was cut by 13 percent annually, and in time housing designed for poorer tenants steadily edged up in price.”

\$30 billion private city rises in India

The Guardian, November 19, 2015

Matt Kennard and **Claire Provost**, <http://bit.ly/1NSruDm>

• “Among the signature institutions of British imperial rule were ‘hill stations’ — conurbations built high in the hills for colonial officials tired of the mad hustle and bustle of Indian cities.

“Since independence in 1948, no new hill stations have been constructed — until Lavasa, the first city in India to be built whole cloth by a corporation. It is an ambitious and deeply controversial project to build an entire private city from scratch — two hours from IT hub Pune, and four hours from Mumbai.

“Hundreds of millions are expected to move into India’s overcrowded cities over the next 25 years. The success of Lavasa as a model will have a big impact on how the process of rapid urbanization in India, and further afield, plays out.

“When fully built, Lavasa intends to consume 100 sq. km (39 sq. miles) with a total population up to 300,000 in five ‘towns’ built on seven hills. It is supposed to be modeled on principles of New Urbanism, with walkable communities and much of the land set aside for green and open space. The corporation claims 80 percent of the population of the first town, Dasve, will be able to access the town center with a 15-minute walk.

“Lavasa was made possible by the state government of Maharashtra introducing ‘enabling legislation’ to encourage building of new hill stations as a strategy to boost tourism.”

Jerusalem Light Rail renews, reintegrates, parts of Old City

Cities of the Future, December 3, 2015

Ricardo Mota, <http://bit.ly/1NDVgFM> • “Inaugurated in 2011, the first light rail line in Israel has been a source of contention from the start. The construction caused major disruptions in the city’s traffic flow and generated elevated levels of air and sound pollution. And a 2009 report by the United Nations Human Rights Council described the new infrastructure as serving disputed settlements.

“Fast forward to 2015 and the light rail moves around 140,000 passengers a day and has become the heart of Jerusalem’s transportation network, connecting Muslim, Ultra-Orthodox, and Israeli communities.

“Before the light rail started operating, the heart of the city was slowing emptying out. Jerusalem’s old downtown

district, at the center of which are Jaffa Street and Ben Yehuda Street, had suffered for over a decade as businesses closed and residents moved out. Jaffa Street had terrible congestion, making it very unpleasant to drive to the area.”

“The light rail project has had a renewing effect on this part of Jerusalem, with new residents moving in on a daily basis and new businesses choosing to locate there.

“In a city of around 810,000, moving more than 17 percent of the population each day on a single line is a significant achievement. And the light rail has been helping residents along the line become more involved in the day-to-day life of the city.” ■

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