

# NORTHERN NEWS



American Planning Association  
California Chapter  
Northern  
Making Great Communities Happen

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

APRIL 2016



Planning tour to SE Asia

Alex Hinds; Hing Wong, AICP

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# NORTHERN NEWS



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California Chapter  
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**APRIL 2016**

## Planning tour to Southeast Asia shapes up

*Alex Hinds and Hing Wong, AICP*

**N**orthern Section has sponsored five comfortable, well-organized, educational planning tours abroad since 2003. Planning is well along for our sixth tour, in February 2017, to Southeast Asia. Those interested in planning and taking the tour have met twice and will meet again on Thursday, April 21, to narrow down the cities and locations.

The tours are designed so we can meet and exchange planning ideas with counterpart planners and architects in foreign cities, chat with and learn from university academics about their urban planning programs, talk with municipal officials about their planning practices, and learn how culture, social fabric, history, and economy have shaped the cities' physical form. Along the way, we enjoy impressive architecture, arts and culture, and culinary delights through self-directed and guided tours, and we establish continuing relationships for future exchange opportunities with our host countries.

If you are interested in the February 2017 tour to Southeast Asia, please contact Hing Wong at [hingw@abag.ca.gov](mailto:hingw@abag.ca.gov).

### **International planning collaboration program**

Our current collaboration is a pilot project with the Municipality of São Paulo, Brazil, Mackenzie Presbyterian University in São Paulo, and the American Planning Association.

The program with São Paulo was built on the contacts we made during our planning tour to Brazil in 2012. We are being assisted financially by an APA National Chapter Presidents Council micro-grant, a fund match from the Northern Section, and pro bono contributions from planners here and in São Paulo.



Hanoi, School children and teachers, Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum.  
Photo: Naphtali H. Knox, FAICP



Sao Paulo. Photo: Hing Wong, AICP

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Find JOBS and EVENTS CALENDAR at [norcalapa.org](http://norcalapa.org)



## Director's note

By Andrea Ouse, AICP

**Spring is here!** As we enjoy a few days of spring temperatures between days of much-appreciated rain, let's reflect on a future of sunshine, new growth, and new possibilities.

The Northern Section is enjoying growth in membership at a steady pace. New members give our Section new life, new perspectives, and the added energy to keep us moving forward. It is especially rewarding to see new members seeking opportunities to serve our profession by getting involved in APA — in particular, serving you on our Section Board.

**Board departures and openings.** We currently have three openings on the Board: Planning Commissioner Representative, Webmaster, and Mentorship Director. Serving on the Board is a great way to meet other planning professionals while providing our Section with new, dynamic, and inspiring events and professional development opportunities.

I'd like to acknowledge outgoing Webmaster **Ronny Kraft, AICP**, and Mentorship Director **Thalia Leng, AICP**, for their extraordinary efforts while serving on the Board. Ronny was the primary force in developing our current Section website and has been instrumental in coordinating and streamlining our outreach efforts. Thalia has been actively involved in the development of our Mentorship Program, a tremendously successful effort whose objective is to inspire the careers of young planners. Mentors share their knowledge and talents with emerging professionals to help fledging careers blossom. The program is a wonderful way to exchange professional ideas and guidance among experienced planners and young planning professionals. Thank you, Ronny and Thalia, for your years of dedication to the Northern Section Board!

**South Bay Acronym Happy Hour.** Socialize and network with your fellow planners on March 30 from 5 to 7 p.m. at

the Firehouse Grill and Brewery, 111 S. Murphy Avenue, Sunnyvale. Our APA California–Northern Section is sponsoring the event along with the Association of Environmental Professionals (AEP), Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP), Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI), and WTS International (women in transportation). Admission is free! Buy your own drinks; appetizers provided.

**APA conference and CM videos.** APA California has now posted 1-click free previews of its entire on-demand video catalog — including videos from the 2014 Anaheim Conference and six new titles from the 2015 Oakland Conference. If you were unable to attend the conferences, or had to choose between attending two or three concurrent sessions, these videos offer quick, convenient, informative, and inexpensive access to new and exciting efforts in our planning world. Examples of video-on-demand include the 2015 Diversity Summit, “Gentrification Mosaic – conversations on displacement of economic and social capital”; the “General Plan Update – keeping it real, current and relevant”; and “Manifest Density – a reality check for the Sustainable Communities Strategy.” **AICP members**, these videos are a great way to obtain those vital CM credits!

**Northern Section Awards coming up soon.** Finally, the date and location of the 2016 APA California Northern Section Awards Gala: The annual event will be held at the Marriott Marquis, 780 Mission Street, San Francisco, on Friday, June 3. Stay tuned for details. The submittal deadline has passed, and our Awards Co-Directors, **Carmela Campbell, AICP**, and **Florentina Craciun, AICP**, are hard at work coordinating the jury process that will lead to that wonderful night when we acknowledge the best and brightest planning professionals and projects in our Section. Plan to be there!

## In memoriam

### Joe Horwedel, former planning director of San Jose, tenth largest U.S. city

Joseph “Joe” Horwedel, a long-time city planner for the City of San Jose, California, died on February 22nd in San Jose after a short battle with cancer. He was 56. Mr. Horwedel — a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners — received his BS in city and regional planning from California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo, in 1983. That fall, he began what would be a more than 30-year employment with the San Jose Department of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement. He retired from that department in March 2014, after more than seven years as its director. That Fall, the California Planner’s Emeritus Network recognized Mr. Horwedel for his contributions to city planning and his service to the profession.



He also authored planning articles for the division’s newsletter and APA’s Planning Advisory Service. Mr. Horwedel served as a mentor and advisory committee member to San Jose State University’s Urban and Regional Planning Department and assisted with their recent restructuring and Planning Accreditation Board re-accreditation.

In a 2014 interview, *Northern News* asked Mr. Horwedel whether directing the planning of a big

city required him to apply different approaches based on political situations. He responded, “Planning values reflect what the community is about. Every city is different. Even within San Jose, every community is different,” and yes, “Land-use planning is political. My guiding principle is ‘Be politically astute but apolitical.’”

He characterized his leadership style this way: “In a large organization, 300 people, you’ve got to let go and trust your staff; let people do their work. On projects, I let the staff celebrate their successes, and if something got screwed up, that was my responsibility. I let them know they’re not going to be left hanging out there.”

“Mr. Horwedel was more than a planning wonk,” wrote Nathan Donato-Weinstein in the *Silicon Valley Business Journal*. “He was funny, kind, and generous. He loved Hawaiian shirts. And he had been to Disneyland ‘probably 15 or 20’ times, and Disney World about five times.”

Joseph Allen Horwedel was born on August 23, 1959, at Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina, where his father was stationed. The family later moved to Travis AFB, California, and he grew up in Vacaville. Mr. Horwedel is survived by his wife of 25 years, Linda, his daughter, Maggie, his parents, two brothers, and a sister, all of California. A funeral mass was held on March 4. Burial was at Oak Hill Memorial Park. ■

Mr. Horwedel was committed to facilitating San Jose’s economic and future growth while preserving its diverse community. He led and managed an array of comprehensive planning programs and projects in San Jose. They included several of the city’s housing elements and general plans (including the recently adopted “Envision San Jose 2040 General Plan”), the city’s Habitat Conservation Plan, a number of urban village plans (including Santana Row), and master plans for high-tech headquarters (including Adobe, Hitachi, and Samsung Semiconductor). He also oversaw the regulation of landfills, solid waste, and recycling facilities. Mr. Horwedel led significant technology initiatives, negotiated complex new development and redevelopment projects, and collaborated with countless stakeholders to garner consensus and achieve major policy initiatives.

Active in the American Planning Association, Mr. Horwedel at the time of his death was serving his second two-year term as chair of APA’s City Planning and Management Division of 400-plus members.

# Norcal roundup

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

## Ukiah: New Mendocino County courthouse gets state funding

*Press Democrat*, March 13, 2016

**Glenda Anderson**, <http://bit.ly/1pkAm9S> • “State officials have approved the purchase of land for a new Ukiah courthouse, paving the way for construction to begin on a \$95 million project with the potential to transform the city’s downtown corridor.

“The State Public Works Board approved a \$3.65 million payment to buy and prepare 4.1 acres of surplus railroad property on Perkins Street east of downtown Ukiah for future construction.

“Most of the state payment — including the \$1.96 million paid for the property — will be spent on preparing the site and adding infrastructure for a new courthouse. Seven acres of surrounding property remain under the ownership of the North Coast Railroad Authority.

“Ukiah’s courthouse was among 41 court facility projects — including ones in Sonoma and Lake counties — approved for funding shortly after the 2008 passage of a state Senate bill that authorized construction through bonds financed by court-related fees and fines.



Marks Building, South State Street, Ukiah, 1889.

“As of August, the [Administrative Office of the Courts] had completed 21 courthouse projects, according to the California Judicial Council website.”

## Morgan Hill: LAFCO rejects annexation of rural land

*Silicon Valley Business Journal*, March 11, 2016

**Nathan Donato-Weinstein**, <http://bit.ly/1S5kFx1>

“Santa Clara County’s Local Agency Formation Commission has quashed a plan to annex 229 acres of largely rural county land that the city said would help preserve farmland, but critics said would just encourage sprawl.

“The outcome sends a clear signal that LAFCO is not in an expansionary mood just as Gilroy is contemplating a 721-acre expansion.

“The Morgan Hill proposal would have opened up about 180 acres of agricultural land in ‘the southeast quadrant’ to sports-themed retail, recreation-related businesses, and hotels. Such projects are not possible if the land remains in the county.

“In return, developers building there would pay a fee to buy agricultural easements from landowners elsewhere — in essence, paying farmers to permanently give up the possibility of developing their property.

“City officials said the plan was designed to save farmland from being gobbled up for McMansions while also allowing development that would boost the city’s economy.

“But LAFCO, which oversees city boundaries, said the plan would have encouraged sprawl without any guarantee of saving farmland. LAFCO’s executive director, Neelima Palacherla, described how the Morgan Hill proposal was at odds with every aspect of LAFCO’s mission, which includes ensuring orderly development, discouraging sprawl, promoting the preservation of farmland, and encouraging the efficient delivery of services. She also cited a history of ‘misguided’ annexations and said the city already had a nearly 100-year supply of vacant land to develop.”

(Norcal roundup *continues on page 13*)

# California roundup

Excerpts from around the state, linked to the original articles

## Test: Paying for roads by VMT

*The Sacramento Bee*, March 13, 2016

**Tony Bizjak**, <http://bit.ly/1UgjMoz> • “The state of California is looking for 5,000 volunteers this summer [to test] the ‘California Road Charge pilot program.’

“The Legislature has instructed Caltrans to set up a nine-month test to see what it would be like if drivers paid for state road repairs based on how many miles they drive rather than how many gallons they buy at the pump.

“For nearly a century, the state of California has financed most of its road repairs through an excise tax, now 18 cents per gallon. The tax hasn’t been raised since 1994, despite inflation. And as cars become more fuel efficient, drivers buy less gas and the state collects less money for ever more costly road work. That funding imbalance will worsen as more drivers turn to hybrid or all-electric vehicles.

“California is one of a handful of states around the country experimenting with user-based systems. Advocates argue that a ‘road user’ fee is a fairer way to go. Carrie Pourvahidi, the Caltrans road charge program manager, said the state wants a broad group, including rural and urban residents, to participate in the test.

“Volunteers won’t actually pay road-use fees. They’ll continue to pay the pump tax like everyone else. But they’ll get simulated monthly statements telling them how much they would pay if there were a pay-by-mile fee system.

“State officials want to launch the nine-month program in July. They have 4,300 potential volunteers so far.”

## Los Angeles: Neighborhood Integrity Initiative moved to spring ballot

*City Watch*, March 15, 2016

**Tim Deegan**, <http://bit.ly/1RkGiWT>

“Citing ‘an overcrowded November election with a least 20 ballot measures,’ the Coalition to Preserve LA has announced they are pushing back their Neighborhood Integrity Initiative from November to the Spring 2017 City election.

“[Initiative leaders] said, ‘The November ballot is very crowded, with many state issues and the Presidential race. The Neighborhood Integrity Initiative is a city issue, better suited for a city election, which we will have in March 2017.’

“The Mayor and some city councilmembers will be on the same ballot, and that will amplify the debate about development in Los Angeles. It will also force [those running] into declaring how they stand on development.

“The resubmitted petition to the city clerk is now ‘eight pages ... down from 23 ... which makes it easier for the



Los Angeles from Brentwood. Photo: H. Pike Oliver

public to understand.’ Once approved for circulation by the city clerk, the initiative will need 61,486 signatures by the end of August to qualify for the Spring 2017 City election.”

(California continues on [page 17](#))

**Multifamily demand usurps office in LA.** “I would not say the market is demanding office-to-multifamily conversions; the market is simply demanding multifamily. A significant volume of office space is generating rental income far below what can be achieved with multifamily, and building owners are responding with conversions where they make sense under LA’s Adaptive Re-use Ordinance (ARO). If conversion is not cost-prohibitive, the payback period is usually short enough to warrant the switch.”  
—Joe Wathen, CEO of Wilshire Construction, <http://bit.ly/1Z1Pvtk>

# Connecting California's climate change fight to affordable housing

Jen Kinney, Next City

Californians now have a better tool to track where the billions of dollars being collected through the state's cap-and-trade program are being invested in their communities. An updated online map from TransForm, a transportation and walkability advocacy group, tallies projects receiving funding through the program, and their estimated greenhouse gas reductions.

California sets a legally enforceable limit on the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> industry can emit, requiring businesses releasing more than 25,000 tons a year to get permits from the state. The state's revenues from the permits are then invested in the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF), which supports projects to further reduce carbon emissions and mitigate the effects of climate change.

The new TransForm map (<http://bit.ly/1QVN6df>) tracks these projects — 412 so far, representing over \$1.5 billion in investment, and just over 3 million megatons of greenhouse gas reduction. Money has gone to the state's high-speed rail project, wetland restoration, more efficient farmland irrigation, the expansion of urban canopy and more.

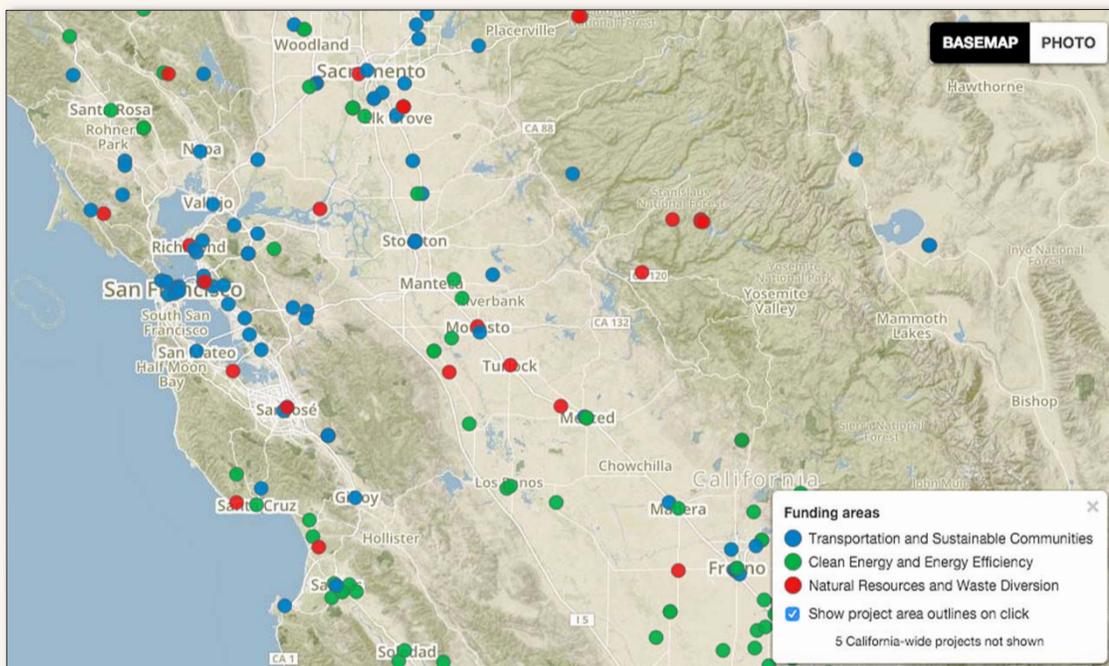
A less obvious use of the funds with immediate benefits for individuals and communities is the construction of affordable housing close to public transportation. These projects both reduce households' reliance on private vehicles and help more individuals weather California's affordability crisis.

To date, over \$150 million from the GGRF has been utilized to build affordable, transit-oriented development. A 2014 report estimated that developing 15,000 such units could prevent 105,000,000 miles of vehicle travel every year.

According to the report (<http://bit.ly/1QVNkBS>), lower-income households living within a half mile of transit drove 25 to 30 percent fewer miles than those living in non-transit-oriented development; those living a quarter mile or less from transit drove almost 50 percent less.

By contrast, higher-income households drove more than twice as many miles and owned more than twice as many vehicles as extremely low-income households

*(continued on next page)*



Climate benefits for California. A screen capture of the TransForm map showing projects funded by cap-and-trade.

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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Connecting California's climate change fight to affordable housing *(continued from previous page)*

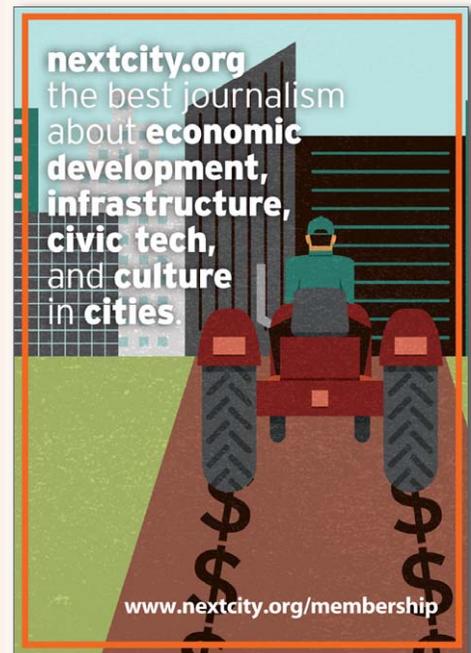
living within a quarter mile of transit. The report suggests that while demand is booming for luxury condos close to public transportation, carbon reduction goals will be best met by preserving some of that housing as affordable.

In addition to the mapping tool, Transform released a video (<https://youtu.be/P5BuyM8ZoGE>), co-produced with the Greenlining Institute, that tells the story of one resident in a new GGRF development. Esther Robert and her children live close to transit in West Sacramento. Without it, she says in the video, "I would probably be living with all of us in a studio apartment in some place I don't want to be, just because that's the only place I could afford to keep something over my head."

Greenlining Institute Environmental Equity Director Alvaro Sanchez said in a statement, "California's climate investments are improving people's lives. ... We're not just tackling climate change, we're bringing real help to communities that have historically been left out of economic prosperity or saddled with the worst pollution: affordable homes like Esther's, better transportation choices, cost-cutting home weatherization, and much more."

A version of this article appeared in *Next City*, March 3, 2016. Republished with permission.

Jen Kinney is a freelance writer and documentary photographer. Her work has also appeared in *Satellite Magazine*, *High Country News online*, and the Anchorage Press. See her work at [www.jakinney.com](http://www.jakinney.com).



**"BART to offer rewards program.** BART riders will soon get the chance to win small cash rewards and help reduce crowding by participating in a research pilot program being offered by the San Francisco County Transportation Authority and BART to incentivize riders to shift travel times away from the peak morning hours." <http://bit.ly/1Qzj5US>



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Work we need to complete for the micro-grant includes preparing a tool kit for potential use by other APA chapters who may wish to start their own foreign exchange programs, entering into one or more additional planning collaboration agreements, and completing and disseminating a final report and toolkit.

Our next step is to meet with colleagues in São Paulo in June. In July, we will present a paper on “Purposeful Travel: A model for initiating international planning collaboration” at the World Planning Schools Congress in Rio de Janeiro. We are expanding the program and looking into possibilities for new collaborations in China, Estonia, and India — places we have already toured.

If you are interested in participating in the international planning collaboration program, please contact Alex Hinds at [AlexHinds47@gmail.com](mailto:AlexHinds47@gmail.com). ■

## Where in the world



Photo: Chandler Lee (Answer on page 12.)

**Balancing jobs and residents.** “As the city has added more jobs and residents, San Francisco has slowly started to realize it needs more units. (San Francisco Supervisor Scott Wiener, mixing his metaphors, put it to me this way: ‘Once we started to grow again, the chickens came home to roost, and we were caught with our pants down. We’re trying to play catch up.’) Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) were a way for them to do so by asking homeowners to pitch in, and earn additional rent by doing so.” —Alana Semuels, <http://theatlantic.com/1R6aBRt>

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## Who's where



**Juan F. Borrelli, AICP**, is the new president of the California Planning Foundation (CPF). Founded in 1970, CPF is a charitable corporation whose primary focus is to further the professional practice of planning in California by providing scholarships and awards to university students in financial need. Borrelli is the development services small business ally with the city of San Jose, where he has worked on

planning programs and projects since 2003. He was the director of Northern Section from 2007 to 2008 and is currently the section historian. Borrelli holds a master of city planning from the Georgia Institute of Technology and a bachelor of design and architecture from the University of Florida.



**Stefanie Heinz** has joined M-Group's Mountain View office as assistant planner and outreach coordinator. Previously, she worked as a city planner for the State Government of Baden Württemberg, home of Stuttgart, and as an urban designer in Sydney, Australia. Heinz loves to spend time with her family exploring the U.S. She holds a master of city and regional planning from the Technical University of Brandenburg, Germany.



**Fahteen Khan** is now an assistant planner at M-Group's Mountain View office, and will be working with the city of Santa Clara. Before M-Group, she worked with the cities of Emeryville and San Jose and the county of Santa Clara. Khan holds a master of urban and regional planning from San Jose State University, and a bachelor of architecture from BRAC University in Bangladesh.



**Matt Kawashima** is now an environmental planner with LSA Associates in their Berkeley office. He had previously been an assistant environmental planner with Denise Duffy & Associates, Monterey. A GIS expert and avid photographer, Kawashima holds a BS in city and regional planning from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and received their city and regional planning Alumni Award in 2013.

(continued on next page)



A collage of employee photos surrounding the M-Group logo. A yellow circle with '10 YEARS' is positioned above the logo. Below the logo, the text 'POLICY PLANNING ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW STAFFING SOLUTIONS URBAN DESIGN HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT' is listed, followed by the website 'www.m-group.us'.

Who's where (continued from previous page)



**Milan Nevajda** has joined M-Group's North Bay team as an associate planner, working with the city of Sausalito and on various policy projects. He holds a master of urban planning from McGill University and a bachelor's degree from the University of Toronto, and has broad experience in policy and municipal planning in New England. Nevajda loves cycle touring and recently completed a two-month trek from Croatia to the UK. He is an avid hiker and outdoor enthusiast and is eagerly exploring all that California has to offer.



**Laurel O'Halloran** was honored by the Pacific Grove Chamber of Commerce as 'City Employee of the Year' for 2015. She joined Pacific Grove in 2008 as a part-time housing program assistant, rose to assistant planner, and was promoted last fall to associate planner. In addition to being well versed in technical matters, O'Halloran is known for her friendly and approachable service style — deciding factors in her selection as City Employee of the Year. She holds a BS in political science with a concentration in public administration from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.



**Janice Stern, AICP**, has joined M-Group's Hayward team as a principal planner. She has over 30 years' experience working with the public and private sectors. Before M-Group, Stern was planning manager for the City of Pleasanton and also worked with the cities of Walnut Creek and Fremont. She holds a master of city planning from UC Berkeley and a bachelor's degree in urban studies from San Francisco State University. When not working, Stern enjoys exploring cities, country walks, and cooking and eating with friends and family. ■



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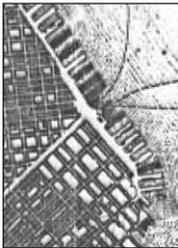
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## Upcoming for young planners and emerging professionals

Northern Section's Young Planners Group and ASLA's Emerging Professionals will tour an award winning planning and design firm's Berkeley office March 29 followed by a no-host happy hour at a local establishment. Details at <http://bit.ly/1U6eg7W>.

Answer to Where in the world (Page 9)  
Bergen, Norway. Photo: Chandler Lee

**Heritage Conservation.** "This year, two important milestones were reached in the history of heritage conservation in the United States: the centenary of the National Park Service and the 50th anniversary of the Historic Preservation Act. These anniversaries offer us the opportunity to reflect on past accomplishments; they also beg the question of what the next 50 years of heritage preservation activity might look like and the environment it will create. The past now appears closer as we glance backwards to recent times increasingly and disturbingly divorced from a world undergoing rapid environmental and social changes."  
— Frank G. Matero, <http://bit.ly/1TnsKjC>

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**"The greatest challenge to social equity in American cities today.** The dominance of the gentrification narrative may actually be harmful to the cause of creating more just, equitable cities. That's because it may both mischaracterize how neighborhood change works in communities seeing growth in higher income residents, and hide the fact that America's low income neighborhoods are much more likely to be suffering from the opposite problem: growing poverty." —Daniel Kay Hertz in *Planning* magazine, March 2016, page 52.

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**Changing the world by changing street design.** "People aren't motivated to move to cities out of some environmental altruism. They only come if cities offer a better quality of life and opportunities and culture, and cities are competing for the best and brightest. One way to do that is to create a city where you don't need to own a car and pay the costs associated with that to get around. ... People really understand that to change the world you really need to change your streets."  
— Janette Sadik-Khan, interviewed by Josh Cohen, <http://bit.ly/1R7Aa48>

## Mountain View: Council OKs 10,000 new homes in North Bayshore

*Mountain View Voice*, March 3, 2016

**Mark Noack**, <http://bit.ly/1nPfdV> • “The City Council on March 1 agreed to add as many as 10,250 new homes just a short walk from the local tech behemoths. The council gave thumbs-up to rapidly transform the area, signaling the city is eager to speedily create a dense new neighborhood unlike any other in the region, gradually transforming a corporate office park into a mixed-use residential neighborhood.

“Mountain View finished updating the North Bayshore precise plan in 2014, but that version focused on keeping the area as a job center. But three council members elected in late 2014 made it a top priority to bring housing to the area. By early 2015, city staff were directed to bring the plan back with an emphasis on residential.

“New housing projects in Mountain View must devote about 8 percent of their total housing to subsidized units, or pay an equivalent in-lieu sum. The city’s vision for North Bayshore looks to increase affordable units to as high as 20 percent for new projects. If developers go along, the result could be more than 2,000 new affordable housing units.

“As an incentive, city officials said they would offer developers a sizable density bonus for residential units.



North Bayshore, Mountain View, via *Maps*

In the ‘central core’ near Shoreline Boulevard and Plymouth Street, new apartment buildings could be allowed to go as high as 12 stories.

“The North Bayshore plan will come back for another review in April.”

## San Francisco: Blame zoning, not tech, for city’s housing crisis

*The Atlantic*, March 11, 2016

**Kriston Capps**, <http://bit.ly/1QMIX3d> • “The housing crisis is both a regional and local problem. From a regional perspective, any and every city in a metro area could be building more. Any and every new housing unit adds to the supply and lets out some pressure.

“But from a [local] perspective, neighborhoods that build less than others are sometimes given a pass because they are beautiful, historic, wealthy, or powerful (or all of those). The lack of new construction in wealthier neighborhoods puts pressure on less wealthy neighborhoods. (‘You can build new things in other places.’) This pressure builds up until it explodes in distressed neighborhoods. (See: the Mission.)

“Look at what San Francisco has built. Not very much! Between 2005 and 2015, San Francisco added 26,770 new

units, according to Trulia. That’s one-quarter of the housing units built in the San Francisco metro area, one-half of what was built in the San Jose metro area, and just 17 percent of the total units across the entire Bay Area.

“Since the residents of high-cost, high-demand neighborhoods tend to have mobility, money, and access to information and power, they are hugely successful in leveraging land-use policies to exclude newcomers. They protect what is theirs and shut the gate behind them. So the high-margin development that really should go into the high-end neighborhood winds up replacing cheaper, older, and abandoned housing in low-end neighborhoods.”

(Norcal continues on next page)

### Castro Valley: East Bay Regional Park District to shut gun club

KQED News, March 2, 2016

**Tiffany Camhi**, <http://bit.ly/1QNFmdp> • After a marathon meeting that saw hundreds of club backers and critics, and citing concerns over lead contamination, the East Bay Regional Parks board has voted unanimously to shut down the Chabot Gun Club.

“Supporters of the club, which has operated a shooting range in Chabot Regional Park since 1963, called on the board to give the organization a chance to implement a plan to deal with lead that has accumulated at the site. But district officials say the contamination poses a health hazard to park users and wildlife. Park district General Manager Robert Doyle said it’s time to take on the costly task of cleaning up the site.

“The club has proposed an environmental stewardship plan, but park officials say cleanup efforts are unaffordable.

The park estimates lead cleanup could cost anywhere from \$6.5 million to \$20 million.

“Other Bay Area gun clubs have run into similar problems. Last year, the Pacific Rod and Gun Club in San Francisco shuttered to clean up 80 years’ worth of shotgun pellets and clay pigeons at Lake Merced. The cost for the cleanup, paid for with public funds, was more than \$22 million.

“Park district spokeswoman Carolyn Jones says the call to close down the gun club is not a judgment on shooting as a recreational activity. She says the club has a perfect safety record, and its relationship with the park district has been good.”

### Menlo Park: Facebook puts \$1.7 million into Dumbarton and bike trail studies

San Jose Mercury News, March 3, 2016

**Kevin Kelly**, <http://bayareane.ws/21e5Fze> • “Facebook is funding a \$1 million study on potential solutions to traffic gridlock on the Dumbarton Bridge and connecting roadways. Among other things, the study will resurrect the possibility of rehabilitating and repurposing the old rail bridge south of the Dumbarton, which could be used by buses. The study is being conducted in conjunction with AC Transit, San Mateo County Transportation Authority, and Alameda County Transportation Commission.

“A tool that could be implemented in the near term would be improved traffic-light timing. Longer-term solutions, such as a building a bus rapid transit system on the corridor or installing dedicated HOV lanes, could take 10 to 15 years.

“Facebook also is funding a \$700,000 SamTrans environmental study of a planned 4.5-mile bicycle/pedestrian trail

along the rail corridor from Facebook’s offices next to Bayfront Expressway in Menlo Park to the North Fair Oaks area near Redwood City.

“The trail would be fenced off from the train tracks and connect with Middlefield Road, which is undergoing improvements in North Fair Oaks and Redwood City. The trail design could be ready as soon as October, and construction is set for 2018–19.

“Lauren Swezey, Facebook’s sustainability and community outreach manager, said in an email, ‘Connections are at the core of everything we do at Facebook, and we’re pleased to partner with SamTrans to explore a study that could have positive impact on our neighbors.’”

(Norcal continues on next page)

**The long goodbye for LA’s Sixth Street Bridge.** “Demolition crews are making slow but steady progress breaking up and tearing down the Sixth Street Bridge. Officials estimate it will take about nine months to tear down the structure linking Boyle Heights and Downtown L.A. Photographer Kevin Break took new shots the first week of March, including an image of the intact bridge that still crosses over the L.A. River — for now.” —*The Eastsider*. See the images at <http://bit.ly/1TtRmY7>

## Peninsula: Modified BRT better than nothing

SPUR, February 26, 2016

SPUR supports and prefers “a fully featured, center running Bus Rapid Transit Line on El Camino Real Boulevard. However, we recognize that it is challenging to integrate a rapid bus service onto El Camino through multiple cities with varying degrees of support for a dedicated lane. We would rather see this project move forward in a right-lane configuration than come to a halt.” The organization “draws on examples from San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Seattle” to offer “recommendations on how the right-lane configuration might be piloted and implemented in Santa Clara County.”

In a Feb. 26 letter to the VTA Board (<http://bit.ly/1UGhWwq>), SPUR explains the benefit and importance of the following steps toward a workable solution:

- “The pilot should attempt to include all the features of the full project.”
- “Intersection improvements should be included in the pilot, even if they are designed to be temporary.”
- “The pilot should test which rules and signage work best to manage vehicle access and flow.”
- “Station stops should be located and spaced appropriately to support rapid service and transit oriented development during the pilot and at full buildout.”
- Goals should be clear and measurable.
- “Cities should dedicate appropriate resources to enforcement to see real results. The benefit of transit-only lanes is that buses can bypass traffic jams. But when bus lanes are not physically separated, it is easy for unauthorized vehicles to intrude and delay buses.”

## Danville: Airbnb-type rentals banned

Contra Costa Times, February 17, 2016

**Sam Richards**, <http://bayareane.ws/1S108cU> • “In explaining their support for banning short-term residential rentals, town council members and those who addressed them on February 16 repeatedly mentioned Danville’s ‘small-town’ charm and the need to preserve it.

“More than 100 people were on hand for a discussion on the issue. Several said a ban would infringe on private property rights, and one called it a government overreach.

“Cities all over California and the United States have been having this discussion as the sharing economy of lodging has grown in popularity. While Oakland, San Jose, San Francisco, and other cities have started regulating and taxing rental hosts, Anaheim has limited the number of rental permits it issues. Other cities, including Monterey, Pacific Grove, Tiburon, Santa Monica, Ojai, Manhattan Beach, and now Danville, have banned them altogether.

“Although Town Attorney Rob Ewing said police don’t believe the 15 to 20 homes listing short-term rentals on a given day present a crime problem, others said they take money away from Danville’s only motel, which pays transient-occupancy taxes and maintains a business license — not the case with Airbnb hosts.

“Councilman Robert Storer said much of the trouble with short-term rentals has come from one neighborhood, where the issue first surfaced in June. He said he believes the problem stems from one unpopular house addition that towers over a neighbor’s backyard, and the related bitterness, [and not from] people renting a room at that house.”

(Norcal continues on next page)

**Will U.S. cities soon reach ‘peak Millennial’?** “For all the talk of city-loving Millennials, some surveys show that plenty of them actually prefer the suburbs overall, and still plan to move there eventually. USC urban planning professor Dowell Myers has ventured that cities have reached ‘peak Millennial,’ or the highest influx and presence of Millennials living in urban areas — and, he argues, it’s only going down from here. In 2015, those Millennials born in 1990 — the largest cohort born in any one year — turned 25. This group of Millennials, along with all the ones that came before, Myers says, have been flowing into cities and causing a spike in the urban population. But from now on, there will be fewer young people moving into cities, because there will simply be fewer of them period. Additionally, as the largest group of Millennials grows older, many will begin to make the shift into suburban family life. All this could create problems for cities that view the most recent shift toward urban living as a given. Many cities could suddenly find themselves scrambling to try to make up for population loss or attract people back into urban cores.” Among Myers’ recommendations: “Accept that the urban boom isn’t necessarily forever; make cities more family friendly; and build more, and more varied, housing.” —Natalie Delgadillo, *CityLab*, <http://bit.ly/1Mqlr27>

### East Palo Alto: Megadeal for affordable housing closes

*Silicon Valley Business Journal*, February 22, 2016

**Nathan Donato-Weinstein**, <http://bit.ly/1Q6Lcap> • “An affiliate of Sand Hill Property Co. has acquired East Palo Alto’s Woodland Park Apartments, a transaction that shifts control of some of the Peninsula’s most important workforce housing following years of controversy over rent hikes, evictions, and the future of the city’s Westside neighborhood under previous ownerships.

“Menlo Park-based Sand Hill paid Equity Residential roughly \$412.5 million for the 1,812 rent-stabilized units, according to people familiar with the transaction. That works out to roughly \$228,000 per unit — more than three times the amount Equity paid in 2011 when it bought Woodland Park out of bankruptcy.

“The blockbuster deal means the new owner will undoubtedly face scrutiny over its plans for the properties,

which total 101 buildings on 49 acres, just west of Highway 101 and adjacent to Palo Alto. City officials have always been uncomfortable with one owner controlling so much of East Palo Alto’s housing stock, which remains affordable compared to other Peninsula cities. But Sand Hill executives said they would fully comply with the city’s strict rent regulations and had no plans to aggressively hike rates or redevelop the land, which is considered some of the best located on the Peninsula.

“Performance is good as-is without significant change,” said Michael Kramer, chief investment officer for Sand Hill’s Woodland Park Communities. “We’re long-term owners, and over the long term we expect strong financial performance.” ■

**Waterfront development will have to address sea level rise.** “The San Francisco waterfront already grapples with coastal flooding and shoreline erosion, but such conditions will likely worsen. Mayor Ed Lee last year convened a Sea Level Rise Coordinating Committee to unite various city departments that have a stake in the city’s waterfront and infrastructure. The committee has now released its first step in addressing that challenge, the Sea Level Rise Action Plan, which serves as a call to action but doesn’t offer a particular solution. Instead, the report highlights various ways to tackle sea level rise, like raising or waterproofing infrastructure exposed to the waterfront; creating natural or engineered barriers to the waters; and relocating sensitive assets to low-risk areas. In short: accommodate, protect, or retreat. The city is looking to incorporate those approaches into the dozens of major projects planned along the waterfront in the coming years.”

—Laura Dudnick, *SF Examiner*, <http://bit.ly/1MqHDu4>

**Shipping container offices in SOMA?** “The former parking lot at 9 Freelon, just off Fourth Street in San Francisco, [now hosts a] a shipping container that’ll soon multiply and become home to a handful of creatives and retailers. ‘Land-sharing platform’ Campsyte plans to turn this site — and other underutilized lots around the city— into temporary workspaces for small companies and storefronts for small retailers. The company’s plans to construct three stories of office and meeting space on top of ground-floor retail with gently used shipping containers are still awaiting planning commission approval. But a one-story prototype is now available for tours.”

@britthopkins, *Hoodline*, <http://bit.ly/1XrC44q>

## Orange County: No-growth policies hurt millennials

*Orange County Register*, March 13, 2016

**David Mansdoerfer**, <http://bit.ly/1nPjpDs> • “There is no place better to live and raise a family than Orange County, with its access to beaches, Disneyland, and some of the nation’s most prestigious shopping venues. So it is ironic the county has become one of the least millennial/young family-friendly housing environments in the state. A housing shortage unlike any other is impacting Orange County families to the extreme — driving out future generations.

“Orange County has seen a substantive increase in no-growth initiatives and policies enacted by local governments and championed by some elected officials. The free market has been stifled, and the result is a severe shortage in housing stock. The 2015 Orange County Business Council Workforce Housing Scorecard placed the housing stock shortage between 50,000 to 62,000 units and growing upwards to 100,000 units by 2040.

“To be clear, local jurisdictions should have the ability to ensure that new development fits the needs and style of the community. However, denying construction of or requiring a public vote on moderate to high density housing development is a disservice to the residents of Orange County, and especially to young adults and families that would like to be residents of the county and live close to work.

“If no-growth policies and initiatives continue throughout Orange County, not only will the millennial dream of home ownership be gone, but the dream of living here will start to slip away too.”

## Ruling: HSR notches major legal win

*The Fresno Bee*, March 8, 2016

**Tim Sheehan**, <http://bit.ly/1U6dckl> • “In a major setback to foes of the California high-speed rail project, a Sacramento judge rejected claims by opponents in Kings County that plans for the bullet train system violate state law.

“The ruling by Sacramento County Superior Court Judge Michael Kenny is a major setback to efforts to stop the project, and boosts California’s \$64 billion plans to develop a system of high-speed electric trains to ultimately connect Los Angeles and San Francisco, but Kenny’s ruling is almost certain to be appealed to a state appellate court.

Throughout his ruling, Kenny noted that the rail agency has yet to seek Prop. 1A bond funds for construction that is now underway in the San Joaquin Valley, instead relying on about \$3 billion in federal transportation and stimulus funds as well as cap-and-trade money from the state’s greenhouse gas-reduction program.

He added that until the rail authority submits a new financing plan that meets the bond act’s requirements, none of it can be used for construction. ‘The key question at this time is whether the authority has taken any action that precludes compliance with the Bond Act,’ he wrote. ‘Plaintiffs have failed to provide evidence at this time that the authority has taken such an action. This is because, as of today, there are still too many unknown variables, and in the absence of a funding plan, too many assumptions that must be made as to what the authority’s final decisions will be.’”

## Housing: State policy relevant on affordable housing

*The Sacramento Bee, Soapbox*, March 8, 2016

**Ray Pearl**, <http://bit.ly/1Xddjsu> • “While market forces are responsible for a big chunk of California’s housing problem, state policy choices have hurt the lowest-income Californians even more. Since 2008, state and federal investment in affordable homes has plummeted by 68 percent. Without this investment, California stands to lose billions of dollars in federal and private financing and will miss critical opportunities to build affordable [housing].

“To meet the range of housing needs in our state, lawmakers must ease building restrictions and invest a

significant portion of the state’s multibillion-dollar surplus into proven, affordable home programs.

“Dan Walters (<http://bit.ly/1U3XkPu>) and other do-nothing critics have said California will never have enough money to house all people in need, so we shouldn’t try to build from the bottom up. Meanwhile, news headlines around the state show elderly people literally dying on our streets. The fairy dust of the ‘market forces’ they see as a fix-all will never float down to those in the most need. It’s time for our policymakers to step forward and lead.”

(California continues on next page)

## Report: California needs more housing

*Sacramento Business Journal*, March 3, 2016

**Ben van der Meer**, <http://bit.ly/1nvdSSf> • “Builders have said for years that California as a whole isn’t building enough new housing to meet demand. A new report released March 3 (<http://bit.ly/1U3Z1wo>) is now saying the same thing — and warns of consequences for the state’s economy if things don’t change.

“The report, from Bay Area think-tank *Next 10*, found only Alaska had fewer housing permits for every 100 new residents over the last decade. Between 2005 and 2015, there were only 21.5 permits issued in California for every 100 people new to the state.

“Noel Perry, founder of San Francisco-based *Next 10*, said the numbers appear to apply statewide, and include both rental and ownership housing.

“The report doesn’t list any policy prescriptions for addressing the issue. However, the report notes that in the state’s urban areas, 45 percent of developers cited costs, neighbor opposition, or both, as reasons they typically don’t proceed with infill projects.

“The result is a notable gap between who moves here and who leaves, Perry said. Of the 625,000 state residents who left between 2007 and 2014, *Next 10*’s report found 563,000 of them made less than \$50,000 a year. Roughly another 139,000 made \$50,000 to \$99,999. By comparison, during that time the state attracted more than 52,000 people with bachelor’s degrees, and more than 80,000 people who make \$150,000 a year or more.

“Because California’s income tax structure tends to fall more heavily on high-income residents than low-income residents, Perry said, the migration pattern suggests the standard of living, including housing costs, compels more people to leave than income taxes do.”

## Inclusionary Housing: Battle won, but maybe not the war

City officials are celebrating the decision (on February 29) by the United States Supreme Court not to hear a challenge to San Jose’s affordable housing law passed in 2010. In doing so, the Court let stand the California Supreme Court ruling in *California Building Industry Association v. City of San Jose* (<http://bit.ly/21AThPI>), leaving San Jose’s ordinance intact and verifying the legality of inclusionary housing in expanding the supply of affordable housing. Developers building for-sale multifamily housing in San Jose must now set aside 15 percent of the homes to be sold at affordable levels or pay in lieu fees.

The U.S. Supreme Court does not normally comment on a decision to pass on a case, but Justice Clarence Thomas, in his concurrence with the court’s decision (<http://bit.ly/1QN0fpV>), made clear that the exactions question raised remains unsettled:

“This case implicates an important and unsettled issue under the Takings Clause. ... Our precedents in *Nollan v. California Coastal Comm’n* and *Dolan v. City of Tigard* would have governed San Jose’s actions had it imposed those conditions through administrative action. ... For at least two decades, however, lower courts have divided over whether the *Nollan/Dolan* test applies in cases where the alleged taking arises from a legislatively imposed condition rather than an administrative one. ... Until we decide this issue, property owners and local governments are left uncertain about what legal standard governs legislative ordinances and whether cities can legislatively impose exactions that would not pass muster if done administratively. These factors present compelling reasons for resolving this conflict at the earliest practicable opportunity.”

That’s practically an invitation for a better case to be brought before the court. Also see “More cities may begin to adopt inclusionary housing laws,” <http://bit.ly/221eK44>. ■

# U.S. roundup

Excerpts from around the country, linked to the original articles

## LGBT: Plenty of reasons to move away from the coasts

*The Daily Beast*, March 8, 2016

**Samantha Allen**, <http://thebea.st/1REsGWR> • “LGBT people are flocking to cities in the center of the country that are becoming more accepting as traditional LGBT safe havens become prohibitively expensive.

“ConsumerAffairs.com analyzed U.S. Census data and Gallup polling information from the LGBT community from 1990 to 2014. The analysis ranks each city based on the percentage of residents who identified as LGBT in each year.

In 1990, the LGBT population was concentrated in coastal metropolitan areas and other safe havens. By 2014, LGBT hot spots cropped up in Salt Lake City, Louisville, Norfolk, Indianapolis, and other red state cities.

Meanwhile, many LGBT safe havens like Minneapolis and San Diego fell in the rankings. Longtime LGBT

bastions like Seattle, Los Angeles, New York, Boston, and D.C. saw increases in the percent of LGBT population. But despite the increases, those cities and other metro areas in blue states fell in the overall ConsumerAffairs ranking, as many LGBT people choose to live in affordable cities instead.

“‘The drivers are economic,’ said ConsumerAffairs content manager Ryan Daly. ‘Smaller cities have shorter commutes, cheaper rent, and less competition for good-paying jobs. And a lot of smaller cities are investing in the public transportation, walkability, and density near city centers that young people value.’

“San Francisco remains the undisputed LGBT capital of the country, but even there, the LGBT population fell by a few tenths of a percent over the last decade and a half.”

## Study: Transit agencies and Uber should cooperate

*WSJ Digits*, March 15, 2016

**Douglas Macmillan**, <http://on.wsj.com/22iRC1h>

“A report from the nonprofit American Public Transportation Association finds that many of the people who rely on public transportation are the same consumers who use ride-hailing and bike-sharing services.

“This overlap suggests more opportunity for ride-hailing companies to work alongside transit agencies, to, for example, map the areas most in need of buses and trains.

“The report’s authors recommended that ride-hailing companies share more of their data about pickups and drop-offs with transit agencies, who could use it to better understand the movements of commuters.

“Uber last year began providing the city of Boston with anonymized information about rides in the hopes the data will help ease traffic congestion and lead to smarter city planning (<http://on.wsj.com/22iSaUN>). But in New York, the company has resisted regulators who have asked for more access to its data.

“David Plouffe, chief advisor to Uber, said the company is willing to provide more anonymized, aggregated data to cities so long as it could not be used to find detailed, personal information about the movements of individual users.



“The APTA study identified nearly 10 percent of the respondents as ‘supersharers’ — people who use some combination of ride-hailing, car-sharing, and bike-sharing for at least three trips in a three-month period. These people were less likely to own a car and spent less on transportation than other respondents.

“The study’s funding came from the Transit Cooperative Research Program Project J-11, which is sponsored by the Federal Transit Administration.”

*(U.S. continues on next page)*

## Silicon Valley: First net loss of residents since 2011

*Wall Street Journal Digits*, March 3, 2016

**Georgia Wells**, <http://on.wsj.com/1Qz40kY>

“Not everyone wants to live in Silicon Valley. The region lost more than 7,500 residents to other parts of the U.S. last year according to the Silicon Valley Competitiveness and Innovation Project, <http://bit.ly/1Qz3zXM>.

“Although the pool of workers is still growing, the departure of homegrown talent points to weaknesses in the region’s ability to sustain its population.

“People are leaving for a mix of reasons, but some might be getting opportunities in other regions where they can pay less for housing,” said John Melville, co-chief executive of Collaborative Economics Inc., the firm that produced the study.

“The flow of people in and out of the region is significant because access to workers is one of the most critical ingredients in Silicon Valley’s economy.

“But the cost of living has become a critical issue. Silicon Valley home prices increased 13 percent to a median value of \$870,000 between August 2014 and August 2015, higher than all other regions the study looked at. Meanwhile, the average Silicon Valley commuter lost 67 hours in traffic congestion, an increase of 13.6 percent from 2010.

“Henry Cisneros, former Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, issued a warning to the region in February that the lack of affordable housing could hinder future economic development. He pointed to land restrictions that make building new housing ‘almost impossible,’ and said the region isn’t dedicating enough resources to the problem.”

## Oregon: Statewide ban on inclusionary housing ends

*OPB, Northwest News Network*, March 3, 2016

**Chris Lehman**, <http://bit.ly/21aYckA> • “One of the final items Oregon lawmakers approved before closing out their 2016 legislative session March 3rd was a measure that allows cities and counties to require developers to include low-income housing options in new developments.

“Until now, Oregon law has prevented local governments from passing those kinds of laws, and this bill would overturn that ban. For the Democratic House Speaker, Rep. Tina Kotek, it’s been a long-time priority. ‘We must improve the supply of affordable housing in the state if we’re really going to level the playing field for all Oregonians so they can all have a chance at prosperity,’ she said.

“The state’s ban on inclusionary zoning laws was passed nearly two decades ago. The measure, SB1533, passed the House 39–21” and was signed by Gov. Kate Brown on March 15. For the bill’s legislative history, see <http://bit.ly/1QNAyJq>.

## Florida: Orlando suburb subsidizing Über fares

*Fortune*, March 3, 2016

**Reuters**, <http://for.tn/1W58vFw> • “Altamonte Springs, Florida, is testing whether it can save millions of dollars in road-building and other public transportation expenses by subsidizing the cost of rides with Über. On March 21, the Orlando suburb became the nation’s first city to pay a portion of the fare for all trips with Über within its limits.

“The goal is to integrate the on-demand ride service into the transportation network, get cars off the road, and induce people to use mass transit such as SunRail, the two-year-old regional commuter train, said city manager Frank Martz.

“Altamonte Springs has budgeted \$500,000, partly from local businesses, for a year-long study during which it will pick up 20 percent of all Über rides in city limits, and 25 percent for those to or from its SunRail station.

“‘It is infinitely cheaper than the alternatives,’ said Martz, whose city has a population of about 43,000 and median income of \$50,000. ‘A mile of road costs tens of millions of dollars. You can operate this for decades on \$10 million.’

“Martz said suburban sprawl in Florida has made transportation solutions like bus routes inefficient and unaffordable. He believes cheaper Über rides also will help those who need public transportation to reach available bus and rail services.

“Some economics and public policy experts disagree. Subsidies usually cause costs to increase because someone else is picking up part of the tab. The city’s budget also may not account for rider demand.”

(U.S. continues on next page)

## Housing: Places between cities and suburbs face implacable demand

*Governing*, March 2016

**Alan Ehrenhalt**, <http://bit.ly/1REtFGH> • “The demand in this country for an urban lifestyle is considerably greater than the supply of places that offer it. One way [to meet this demand] would be to promote the construction of massive amounts of new market-rate housing stock near the center of the nation’s most successful cities. This is the solution that Edward Glaeser and other market-oriented urban scholars have been advocating. But it’s far from clear how much new construction, especially high-rise construction, the current residents of these city centers will allow.

“Another idea is to retrofit the more affluent suburbs farther from the center with housing density and pedestrian-friendly, human-scale commerce. This is being considered or launched in more than a few places at the moment. But it

has not yet been accomplished anywhere in the country [and] there is reason to question how many places will be able to pull off a transformation of that magnitude.

“A third option is the reclamation of modest working-class suburbs on the edges of our largest cities. One good example is Somerville, Mass., just a few minutes from central Boston and equidistant from Harvard and Tufts universities. Thirty years ago, Somerville was a drab, working-class town with an alarming crime rate. Today its business district is a mecca of fine dining and entertainment, and some of the triple-deckers have become show-places. The town has one of the largest proportions of residents between the ages of 24 and 35 of any place in the country.”

## Federal rules deter neighborhood-scale mixed-use

*Keystone Crossroads*, March 1, 2016

**John Geeting**, <http://bit.ly/1Qz24cf> • “Efforts to promote neighborhood-scale mixed-use buildings [face] bigger obstacles than local zoning: the federal government.

“At a time when more Americans are voting with their feet for compact cities and older downtowns, a paper from the Regional Plan Association, ‘The Unintended Consequences of Housing Finance,’ <http://bit.ly/1Qz1Vp7>, sheds light on federal financing rules [that] discriminate against mixed-use infill development. Developers often allude to financing issues [when] requesting variances for height and density, but the particulars aren’t always understood by the public.

“In the name of limiting their exposure to risk, lenders like HUD and FHA, and government-sponsored enterprises like Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, place regulatory limits on the amount of nonresidential space a building can have, as a condition for receiving federal financing or loan guarantees. These standards also influence the private lending standards at private financial institutions.

“To qualify for federal financing, developers need to keep the amount of commercial space, or the amount of revenue from commercial space, [to less than] 10–25 percent, depending on the lender.

“The report argues that these caps are too low for neighborhood-scale commercial buildings to qualify, ‘effectively disallowing most buildings with fewer than five stories.’

“HUD recently proposed relaxing one of the non-residential limitations for one of its programs and also recommended giving regional administrators some limited flexibility to waive standards. The report’s authors doubt these changes would significantly increase the number of qualifying urban projects or influence the private lending market.”



Neighborhood-scale mixed use in Palo Alto.  
Photo: Naphtali H. Knox, FAICP

# World roundup

Excerpts from around the world, linked to the original articles

## Climate action: U.S. makes down payment to Green Climate Fund

RAC, March 11, 2016

**Rachel Landman**, <http://bit.ly/1P7sopQ> • “On March 7, the United States deposited its first payment toward its \$3 billion pledge to the Green Climate Fund announced in November 2014. Funding for the Green Climate Fund faced many challenges in Congress.

“The Green Climate Fund is an international fund established to help vulnerable communities — those facing the undue burden of climate change — adapt to effects of climate change and mitigate carbon emissions through sustainable development. This first payment of \$500 million shows U.S. commitment to international climate action. The United States pledged \$3 billion to the fund by 2020 to help the fund meet its goal of \$100 billion in climate financing. So far over 30 countries have pledged \$10.3 billion to the fund.

“The fund aims to spend \$2.5 billion on projects in 2016, including projects approved last November (see list at <http://bit.ly/1P7shKQ>). Projects range from energy efficiency in Latin America, to ecosystem and community resiliency in Senegal, to water supply and wastewater management in Fiji.”

**Toronto Star editorial calls for inclusionary zoning legislation:** A “transformational change, the power to require developers to build more low-income housing. Had Toronto had it, the city could have seen 12,000 new affordable units built in the past five years instead of the fewer than 3,700 that were put in place. Cities across Ontario are poised to receive precisely such power, sought for more than a decade by urban advocates and anti-poverty activists. The system is widely used in the United States and works best in cities where a thriving real estate market assures developers of a strong return.” <http://on.thestar.com/22iQMl9>

## England: 45,000 homes planned in Black Country

BBC News, March 13, 2016

<http://bbc.in/1U6psSA> • (The Black Country is a significant economic subregion in central England, about 130 miles northwest of London. The 140-square-mile area comprises 1 million people and 400,000 jobs in the boroughs of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall, and the city of Wolverhampton.)

(The Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership facilitates and coordinates private and public organizations toward stimulating economic development, education and skills development, and infrastructure and environmental enhancements.)

“The Black Country Garden City will be the biggest regeneration of 31 brownfield sites in the country. The Black Country LEP identified spaces for 45,000 new homes to be built along garden city principles in pockets across the four boroughs.

“Garden cities are characterized by their layout, which includes a lot of green space. But this is not a single new town with green spaces, parks, and waterways, nor is it like the garden cities of the last century: It is about the regeneration of the 30 or so existing towns in the four Black Country authorities.

“Development will begin this year and is due to be completed by 2025. The garden city is part of the region’s wider housing plan to build 85,000 new homes in the next 15 years.”

## Cyprus: Nouvel’s novel tower is a perforated plant paradise

*Inhabit* (via *Dezeen*), March 14, 2015

**Cat DiStasio**, <http://bit.ly/22nDccO> • “French architect Jean Nouvel loves adding a pop of greenery to his designs, and his white-and-green tower block in Cyprus’ capital city of Nicosia is a fine example of that passion. The tower is a blend of modern design and adds a little something extra that only nature can provide. The multi-use building contains 10 stories of apartments, six stories of office space, and a two-story retail area, resulting in a bustling center for activity near the city’s busy Eleftheria Square, which in itself is an incredible design project.”

(World continues on next page)

**Moving out of the country this year?** Mercer’s 2016 list of cities ranked by quality of living is out, <http://bit.ly/1QYXiGp>. “Vienna continues its reign in the top spot for overall quality of living, followed by Zurich (2), Auckland (3), and Munich (4). Vancouver (5) is North America’s highest ranking city.”

### Britain: New towns to tackle obesity

*Mashable*, March 1, 2016

**Rachel Thompson**, <http://on.mash.to/21UhFz> • “Ten new ‘healthy towns’ designed to get people to exercising more, eating healthily, and living independently during old age are to be built across the country, NHS England announced.

“The towns — comprising more than 76,000 affordable homes — will include fast-food-free zones near schools, safe green spaces, ‘dementia-friendly’ streets, and accessible GP services.

“Designed to tackle obesity and dementia, the towns will have a potential capacity for approximately 170,000 residents.

“While some developments are already being built, others will not be completed until 2030.

“Research associate Dr. Jemima Stockton, at UCL Epidemiology and Public Health, said she welcomes the development. ‘Urban design shapes health behaviors,’ she told *Mashable*. ‘It is vital that experts across public health, transport, and urban planning work with communities to design more livable neighborhoods.’

“Stockton says towns that are easy to get around help people incorporate physical activity into everyday life without needing to spend money on gym memberships.”

### Queensland: 10,000-apartment ‘new city’ will take 15 years to build

*ArchitectureAU*, March 1, 2016

**Linda Cheng**, <http://bit.ly/1SjoEba> • “A plan to build 10,000 apartments in southeast Queensland’s Greater Springfield, the first privately developed, self-proclaimed ‘city’ in Australia, has been unveiled. The US\$4.5 billion undertaking follows the area’s first high-density development, the US\$150 million Park Avenue Apartments, announced in 2014.

“The Greater Springfield Land Corporation purchased the 7,000-acre parcel for \$7.6 million in 1992. The corporation then spent years lobbying the Queensland state government to support its proposal for a city, envisioned as an alternative to the Brisbane CBD. Planning permission for the project required an act of parliament, and the enabling legislation, the Local Government (Springfield Zoning) Act, passed in 1997 with the support of all 89 MPs of the Queensland parliament.

“Greater Springfield now has a population of around 32,000 and the developer estimates a projected residential population of 86,000 (a total population of 138,000 including workers) by 2030.”

### London: Skyline will change with 436 buildings over 20 stories in pipeline

*The Guardian*, March 9, 2016

**Nick Mead**, <http://bit.ly/1XgJYgZ> • “London’s skyline is changing dramatically, with almost double the number of tall buildings in the pipeline compared to two years ago, and only three planning applications rejected over the past 12 months. Of 436 in the pipeline, 89 are under construction, 233 have approval but work is yet to start, and 114 are at the planning or pre-application stage. This is almost double the 230 in the pipeline two years ago.

“Of the 94 tall buildings submitted for planning approval over the past year, 43 were approved and only three refused. Most of the 43 form part of the Greenwich Peninsula scheme.”

(In one of the before-after visualizations, you won’t be able to see the “gherkin” any more, but the “walkie-talkie” still stands out.)

*(World continues on next page)*

**“The smallest architectural details shape the character of a city.** Windows, the Portuguese photographer André Vicente Gonçalves discovered, have a claim on the soul of a city. During a year in Trento, Italy, Gonçalves spent a good deal of time traveling around the region and noticed how different the windows are from city to city. He looked for ‘windows that are more consistent and that communicate the feeling of a given city.’ A city’s windows can range from very humble to flashy and opulent, even as they serve the same function. His project, *Windows of the World*, didn’t take shape until he began experimenting with placing the images next to each other. The resulting collages are mesmerizing, and organized instinctually. He’s now photographed in around 20 countries. He hopes his collages show people another way to travel in their own cities.” —Eillie Anzilotti, *CityLab*, <http://bit.ly/1MqGhiQ>. Gonçalves window collages can be seen on his webpage, <http://bit.ly/1MqGKBJ>

### Seoul: The fully three-dimensional city

*Los Angeles Review of Books*, January 12, 2016

**Colin Marshall**, <http://bit.ly/1QyZXVP> • “The notion that bad things happen in tall buildings, or that tall buildings cause bad things to happen, enjoys a special prevalence in the Anglo-American mind.

“Why do so many of us Westerners fear and loathe the vertical life? I don’t, but every few weeks I meet someone who has the same memory as I about when they first arrived in Seoul: My first apartment building had more people in it than my entire hometown. You can still find a place to live



Seoul high-rise housing, 2006. Photo: yarra64 (Flickr) CC BY 2.0 (<http://bit.ly/1R6bPQL>) via Wikimedia Commons

in a structure under 10 stories, but I wonder how long that will last, given the number of cranes hard at work on the skyline.

“They’re building, for better or for worse, Seoul’s architectural signature: forests of 10, 20, 30 almost identical 600-foot-ish towers, differentiated mainly by the three-digit numbers stamped on their outer walls. Often these complexes lack aesthetic distinction, to put it mildly. [Yet] Seoul has only grown more desirable with time, resulting in its metro-

politan area now hosting half the population of the entire country.

“To meet this desire, Seoul has grown and continues to grow outward, but much more so upward. [Here’s] the appeal of the vertical life in Asia: just as you pass all manner of shops, cafés, bars, and services as you walk down the street, you do the same as you ascend from one floor to the next in a building. Japanese cities have realized that concept to perfection.”

### Sri Lanka: Monorail plan shelved for light rail

*The Sunday Business Times*, February 28, 2016

**Bandula Sirimanna**, <http://bit.ly/1R7xgws> • “The Government has abandoned the widely anticipated monorail system for Sri Lanka and instead opted for light rail in the short run as a remedy to heavy traffic congestion in Colombo, official sources revealed.

“Minister of Megapolis and Western Development Patali Champika Ranawaka informed the country’s Economic Management Committee that light rail is cheaper in maintenance when compared with monorail. A Japan International Corporation Agency study suggested an overhead

light rail system was more cost-effective than either monorail or a standard size mass rapid transit rail. A decision has been taken by the committee to go for light rail instead of monorail, as traffic at each of seven corridors in Colombo is not sufficient for monorail.

“Airport Express – Air & Rail Company of Malaysia (AEARC) is spending around \$5 million to carry out a detailed feasibility report” on building an electrified passenger rail line between Negombo, a suburb northeast of the Colombo airport, and central Colombo.

*(World continues on next page)*

## Saigon: Residents mourn loss of colonial architecture

*The New York Times*, February 25, 2016

**Mike Ives**, <http://nyti.ms/1TExoIG> • “When Ho Chi Minh City’s property market perked up after a slump that followed the 2008 financial crisis, dozens of prewar buildings were razed to make room for new ones. The buildings along the Rue Catinat, now Dong Khoi Street (<http://bit.ly/1TExyzL>), helped this sprawling city of about eight million, formerly called Saigon, earn the nickname ‘the Pearl of the Orient.’ Colonial-era travel writing describes tree-lined boulevards flanked by grand hotels with wide verandas.

“Tearing these old buildings down rips holes in the city’s social fabric, said Hoanh Tran, design principal at HTA+Pizzini Architects here and a former historic preservation consultant in New York City.

“The historic downtown already presents a striking contrast to its former self. Its colonial-era cathedral, post office, and opera house now sit near glittering malls, apartments, and office towers. A handful of 35-plus-story skyscrapers have appeared since 2010.

“The public outcry here has largely focused on a plan to overhaul the Saigon Tax Trade Center, a 1924 department store (now the Majestic Hotel) that was drastically transformed over the decades, but whose interior still has wrought-iron balustrades, an intricately tiled floor and grand staircase, and other original design features. The hotel, on Dong Khoi Street, ranked five stars in 2007. Work on two new towers on the Nguyen Hue Boulevard side (rear) of the hotel started in July 2011.” ■

**Medellín, Colombia, has won the 2016 Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize** for outstanding contributions towards creating livable and sustainable urban communities around the world. “Having overcome challenges of uncontrolled urban expansion and years of violence due to social inequalities, Medellín has undergone a remarkable transformation over the past two decades. Through bold leadership, long-term plans, and social innovation, the city’s leaders have tackled its most pressing issues and improved the economy, as well as its citizens’ employability and quality of life.” 2016 special mentions went to Auckland, Sydney, Toronto, and Vienna. <http://bit.ly/22nFmsR>



**Ho Chi Minh City.** Notre-Dame Cathedral Basilica downtown, completed 1880. Photo: Naphtali H. Knox, FAICP



**Ho Chi Minh City.** 1897 Opera House on Lam Son Square. Photo: Naphtali H. Knox, FAICP

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