

NORTHERN NEWS



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California Chapter
Northern

Making Great Communities Happen

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MARCH 2019

Joseph Kott, AICP, dead at 71
Page 1

Meet a local planner, Shannon Fiala
Page 9



**Fog-pokers, including Salesforce Tower,
from Folsom and Beale Streets, San Francisco**
Photo: Hing Wong, AICP



In memoriam

Joseph Kott, PhD, AICP, researched benefits of 'green streets'



Photo: Lifetouch

Transportation planning and management expert and scholar Joseph Kott died unexpectedly and suddenly at his home after suffering heart failure February 14. He was 71.

Dr. Kott was well known at public agencies, private consultancies, and universities in Australia and the United States, and especially in California, where he was

an instructor and researcher in the University of California Institute of Transportation Studies Technology Transfer Program at Berkeley. He had been scheduled to teach two of their online courses in July and August — “Bus Rapid Transit: Planning, Design, and Operations” and “Transit-Oriented Development: Putting it all Together.”

He was a founding principal of the non-profit Transportation Choices for Sustainable Communities in Oakland, and held senior positions as a transportation planner with San Mateo County, Wilbur Smith Associates and Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates in San Francisco, and as chief transportation official for the city of Palo Alto.

Dr. Kott also had been a lecturer at Stanford University's Program on Urban Studies — where he was a visiting scholar in 2012–2013 — and at Sonoma State University and the Presidio Graduate School. He was a longtime lecturer at San Jose State University, and was in the midst of teaching two courses, “Introduction to Local Transportation” and “Sustainable Transportation Planning,” when the department sent a notice of his death to the school's planning students.

Dr. Kott was a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) and held Professional Transportation Planner (PTP) certification from the Transportation Professional Certification Board.

Joseph Kott was born and raised in Michigan and attended Wayne State University in Detroit. There he met his future wife, Katherine Kitto, and earned a bachelor

of arts in political science in 1976. Degree in hand and peripatetic, Mr. Kott enrolled in a graduate degree course at the Department of City and Regional Planning, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. While studying for his master of city planning (MCP) at UNC, he interned with the Town of Chapel Hill planning department, where he wrote a guidebook on town planning in Chapel Hill.

Mr. Kott's first job after receiving his MCP was as a planner for Orange County, Hillsborough, NC. After a year, he went to work in systems planning for the North Carolina Department of Transportation in Raleigh.

In 1984, Mr. Kott moved to Springfield, Illinois. He worked for three years with the Illinois Commerce Commission in the Transportation Division, and in 1986 became the planning coordinator for Southern Illinois University School of Medicine.

In 1988, Mr. Kott and his family moved to Maine, where he was a planning consultant in urban/regional planning, economics, and transportation in Auburn, and an adjunct professor at the University of Southern Maine, in Portland, teaching graduate courses in both community transportation planning and community planning until 1997. From 1992–1998, Mr. Kott was the transportation planning and programs manager for the Greater Portland Council of Governments.

In 1998, Mr. Kott moved to California to be the transportation coordinator for Marin County in San Rafael. But the next year, he was recruited by Palo Alto to be that city's chief transportation official, a position he held for nearly seven years. Palo Alto city council member Yoriko Kishimoto said of Kott's departure in 2005, “We're all devastated by his leaving,” saying Kott was an “out of the box” thinker and “willing to stick his neck out.”

While working in California, Mr. Kott was pursuing advanced degrees through universities in Australia. He received a Master of Transport (Planning) in 2002 and a Master of Traffic (Engineering) in 2004, both from Monash University, Melbourne, Australia. He was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy in January 2012 from Curtin University, Perth, Western Australia.

(continues on [page 14](#))

WHAT'S INSIDE

In memoriam, Joseph Kott, AICP, 71

Over three decades on both coasts, Joe Kott made well-researched and effective recommendations on transportation issues. [Page 1](#)

Director's note

James Castañeda, AICP. Northern News will soon be mobile responsive. Plus:

- Online distance education opportunities
- New Board members
- Be our treasurer. [Page 3](#)

NPC19 exhibit booths available now. [Page 4](#)

Meet our five newest Board members. [Page 5](#)

Ouro Preto in photos

Three Northern Section members and 10 San Jose State graduate students traveled to Brazil in January for a service-learning project. [Pages 6, 15, 16](#)

Planning news roundup

Aggressive push against local housing development restrictions • Caltrain projects are a go despite HSR confusion • Approval process isn't only obstacle to SF housing goals • BART begins strengthening Transbay Tube • How California voters view affordability, climate change, and forest fires • San Diego joins SF and Oakland in dropping parking requirements • Local housing policies across California: survey findings • SB 100 is moving Oakland toward a zero-emissions future • Chicago buildings combine libraries and mixed-income housing.

[Pages 7 and 17-20](#)

Where in the world

Two photographers, two photos from different hemispheres. [Page 8](#)

Meet a local planner

Catarina Kidd, AICP, interviews *Shannon Fiala*, BCDC planning manager. [Page 9](#)

Who's where

Aaron Akinin, AICP, and *Timothy Rood, AICP.* [Page 12](#)

Third Annual Summit on Livable Communities. [Page 13](#)

How the Green New Deal could retrofit suburbs

Condensed from a recent CityLab article by *Amanda Kolson Hurley*, author of *Radical Suburbs*. [Page 14](#)

APA has a new CEO

Joel Albizo starts on April 8. [Page 16](#)

Board directory. [Page 21](#)



Board Retreat at Arup, San Francisco, January 26, 2019

EDITORIAL INFORMATION

The American Planning Association, California Chapter Northern, offers membership to city and regional planners and associated professionals primarily living or working in California, from Monterey County to Del Norte County, including the nine county San Francisco Bay Area and Lake and San Benito Counties. APA California Northern promotes planning-related continuing education and social functions in order to:

- Provide an arena for communication and exchange of information about planning related activities;
- Raise member awareness and involvement in APA affairs;
- Increase public awareness of the importance of planning;
- Encourage professionalism in the conduct of its members; and
- Foster a sense of community among the members.

APA California Northern publishes *Northern News* 10 times each year for the exchange of planning ideas and information. Current and back issues are available for download at <http://bit.ly/2S1dUli>. Entirely the effort of volunteers, the News is written and produced by and for urban planners in Northern California. Circulation (downloads per issue) 4,000.

To update your email address or other information, go to <https://planning.org/myapa/> and login.

Northern News welcomes comments. Letters to the editor require the author's first and last name, home or work street address and phone number (neither of which will be published), and professional affiliation or title (which will be published only with the author's permission). All letters are subject to editing. Letters over 250 words are not considered.

Deadlines for submitting materials for inclusion in *Northern News* range from the 8th to the 23rd of the month prior to publication.

You can download the latest publication schedule at <http://bit.ly/2COctSg>.

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Director's note

James A. Castañeda, AICP

"Clarity and Focus"

That was the theme of our section board's retreat in January, or as I call it, "The KonMari" retreat. I wanted to impress on the board the importance of making many of our policies and procedures — those that help us work on your behalf — as effective and efficient as possible. Since the board is 100 percent volunteers, it's important to ensure that being on the board is time worth spending on giving back to the profession — and that we are passionate about doing it. I truly believe that what the section board does affects all of our 1,900 members and sparks joy in our profession.

I was excited to hear what board members at the retreat wanted to accomplish in their respective areas in the coming year, and I want to share a couple of the bigger takeaways here.

Northern News

The board took some time to discuss the future of our flagship *Northern News* and its value to our members. All who spoke on this matter at the retreat said the newsmagazine is iconic, and universally valued for its informative content, for its quality, and for bringing us locally based and locally authored articles and stories. We are moving toward a fully digital product this year (no more PDF), but the monthly publication schedule will remain — we agreed that was the right frequency for presenting curated articles and ICYMI planning news. So I'm lobbing you the same challenge I gave to your board members: embrace ownership in our publication by contributing to it. The *Northern News* has always been of, for, and by Northern Section planners, and we can continue that only if **you** contribute to the content.

Online Distance Education Opportunities

A topic that came up often at the retreat was offering webinar or video streaming services of some of the Northern Section events. Given the tremendous effort that goes into coordinating and hosting the many workshops, lectures, and training sessions we offer, we want to ensure that you can easily access them. That's the main reason we created a

Distance Education Coordinator position on the board last fall and appointed **Shannon Hake, AICP**. With the help of our immediate past director **Sharon Grewal, AICP** (who also serves on the Chapter board as Vice President–Professional Development), we'll be looking to make some of our programming available online beginning in the second half of 2019.

New Board Members

Your board has appointed four new members: **Danae Hall** will serve as YPG Co-director alongside **Veronica Flores. Della Acosta** takes over as University Liaison and is already coordinating with our student representatives from UC Berkeley and San Jose State. After a phenomenal reboot of our Mentorship Program, **Liz Probst, AICP**, has stepped down as Mentorship Director, and **Ellen Yau** has been appointed to pick up where Liz left off. **Mark Young** is stepping into the role of South Bay Regional Activity Coordinator. (**Cherise Orange** moved to Planning Diversity Co-director with **Cindy Ma, AICP**.) All of these folks bring enthusiasm and great ideas to their respective roles and to the board. Also new to the board is first year graduate student **Marta Polovin**, Student Representative from UC Berkeley. We're excited to have all of them on board. You can find more information about, and photos of, our new members on [page 5](#).

Onward We Serve

All of us on the board are excited about what we are planning for the section in the coming months. The retreat set the tone for a great year, so keep an eye on our event calendar for future events. And if you are (as I hope) motivated to join the board, we are large enough that we almost always have positions available. Right now, we are looking for a new San Francisco Regional Activity Coordinator, and a Treasurer to serve out the remaining 2019 term of **Jonathan Schuppert, AICP**, who is now our Section Director-elect. Make sure to check online for our latest positions at <http://bit.ly/2DYSdMQ>. ■

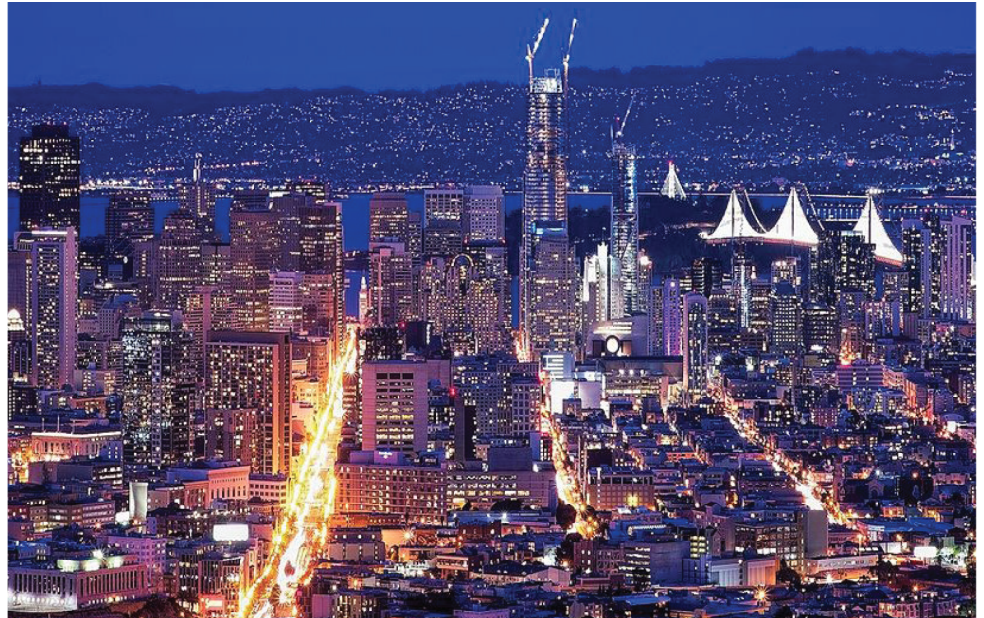


EXHIBIT BOOTHS AT NPC19!

Join the American Planning Association for the four-day National Planning Conference in San Francisco at the George R. Moscone Convention Center on April 13-16, 2019. Setting up an exhibit booth ensures that your company name and logo will be a familiar sight to more than 5,000 conference attendees. Raise your company's profile in the planning community and receive maximum exposure for your company by becoming an exhibitor today. This special offer is for local planning firms and non-profit agencies in Northern California.

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\$1,500 Exhibit booth for non-profit agency

Your exhibit booth includes placing a one-half page ad in the *Northern News*.

Note: Booth size is 10' X 10'. There are additional fees for carpeting and electrical set-up.

Photo Credit: Dramatic San Francisco Skyline 2017 by Joshualeverburg1, CC BY-SA 4.0

To request an application for an exhibit booth or for questions:

Contact Hing Wong, AICP at npc19@norcalapa.org or (415) 778-6726



Meet our newest Northern Section Board members



Della Acosta, University Liaison, is a senior planner on the long-range planning team at Rincon Consultants, leading community planning, sustainability, and community engagement work. Acosta will be working to connect university programs to the APA through information and events. She holds a degree in city/urban, community and regional planning from Sonoma State University.



Danae Hall, Co-director, Young Planners Group, is a transportation and land use manager at Circlepoint. Hall has been an active member of YPG since late 2017, participating as a member of the South Bay steering committee. She holds an M.S. in environmental management from the University of San Francisco and a B.A. in environmental economics from California State University, Chico.



Marta Polovin, Student Representative, UC Berkeley, is a first year graduate student in the College of Environmental Design, working toward a master of city planning with a concentration in transportation. Before coming to Berkeley, Polovin was a legal assistant and land use analyst at Harding Larmore in Santa Monica. She holds a B.A. in human biology and society from UCLA, with a minor in urban and regional planning.



Ellen Yau, Mentorship Director, is an associate planner with the city of Cupertino. She is on the host committee for APA's 2019 National Planning Conference in San Francisco. Yau's professional interests include community art, public health, landscape and public space design, and organizational planning. She holds a master's in planning from USC and a bachelor's in landscape architecture from UC Davis.



Mark Young, South Bay Regional Activity Coordinator (RAC), is a transportation security inspector (aviation) with TSA. Young has been active with the Young Planners Group as a member of the South Bay Steering Committee. He holds a master of urban planning, a bachelor of science in civil engineering, and a graduate certificate in transportation security management, all from San Jose State. ■

Ouro Preto field trip

Northern Section Board members **Alex Hinds** and **Juan Borrelli, AICP**, traveled to Ouro Preto, Brazil — a historic former mining town and a UNESCO World Heritage site — in January 2019 with **Rick Kos, AICP**, and 10 of Rick's students from San Jose State University. One hundred kilometers north of Rio de Janeiro, Ouro Preto is a town of 70,227 (2010 Census) known for its Portuguese colonial city center dating from the 1700s.

The group spent five days in Ouro Preto on a service-learning project, partnering with community leaders in the Veloso neighborhood, cataloguing neighborhood amenities, and creating a website in Portuguese and English to help boost eco-tourism and economic development in Veloso.

"We hope the resulting website we're developing will draw people to this community," said Kos, "which is overlooked as tourists stick to the city's colonial-era city core."

Community leaders reacted very positively to the draft website, and the urban planning students gained invaluable experience in active listening, direct community engagement, and systematically cataloging neighborhood priorities.



Location in Brazil. Google Maps.

For more on the Northern Section-SJSU connection with Ouro Preto, see "Planners and students visit Brazil for collaborative service and learning," *Northern News*, March 2018, page 4, <http://bit.ly/2EPIRqg>.



Ouro Preto. Photo: Rosino – Flickr, CC BY-SA 2.0, <http://bit.ly/2DLkOFq>

(continues on [page 15](#))

Planning news roundup

Excerpts linked to the original articles

Aggressive push against local housing development restrictions

Los Angeles Times, February 20, 2019

Liam Dillon, <https://lat.ms/2tyRpcJ> • “Citing the increasing cost of housing across California, state Sen. Nancy Skinner (D-Berkeley) has introduced new legislation that would block high-cost regions from imposing new prohibitions on housing construction or decreasing the number of homes allowed on certain pieces of land.”

(According to the Legislative Counsel, the bill would prohibit a county or city, and its electorate through initiative or referendum, from enacting or amending a general plan or zoning ordinance that would reclassify property to a less intensive use below what was allowed under the general plan as of January 1, 2018. <http://bit.ly/2STswaK>)

“It would also prohibit local governments in those areas from enforcing requirements that developers install parking spots alongside buildings, among a number of other proposals.

“Her plan is among the most aggressive proposed by state lawmakers in dismantling city and county restrictions on development, which legislators have identified as a major contributor to housing cost increases.

“The legislation also would set deadlines for cities and counties to decide on housing developments that they have the discretion to approve.

“For low-income housing, Skinner’s bill goes further by eliminating local fees on development. Skinner’s plan also prohibits the demolition of rent-controlled apartments and those that offer Section 8 assistance in an effort to prevent displacement from new construction.”

Caltrain projects “a go” despite HSR confusion

Mountain View Voice, February 16, 2019

Mark Noack, <http://bit.ly/2E0PdQj> • “Caltrain officials said that funding remains secure for a \$2 billion project to upgrade the rail line to an electrified system. The state’s high-speed rail project is obligated to provide \$713 million toward the cost of the upgrades.

“That funding remains intact, and the state recently awarded an additional \$165 million to the project to purchase electric trains, said Caltrain spokesman Dan Lieberman.

“Mountain View Councilman John McAlister, who sits on the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) board of directors, expressed confidence that the recent setback for high-speed rail would not curtail the city’s plan to separate the local train crossings. Those projects include a \$60 million plan to close off Castro Street to road traffic and a \$120 million project to tunnel Rengstorff Avenue under the train tracks.

“Those expensive infrastructure projects already have funding secured, primarily from the 2016 Santa Clara County Measure B sales tax, which allocated \$750 million toward grade-separation efforts, McAlister said.”

(The news roundup continues on [page 17](#))

“Amazon decided to flee, not fight. Amazon certainly knows how to fight. Last year, it successfully lobbied to kill a proposed business tax in Seattle that would have raised about \$50 million a year for affordable housing and other programs. It could have mounted a similar campaign in New York. Or it could have taken a page out of the Uber and Airbnb playbook, urging Amazon Prime members in New York to contact their representatives and agitate for a deal. Instead, the company did its lobbying in private, preferring back-room negotiations to a noisy, public-facing campaign. This is a case of significant political malpractice, more than anything else,” said Bradley Tusk, a venture capitalist and former campaign manager for Mayor Michael Bloomberg. “Amazon did not understand the local politics on the ground at all,” he said. “They just took Cuomo’s word for it that everyone would be supportive.”

—Kevin Roose, *The New York Times*, <https://nyti.ms/2E0YNCF>

Where in the world



Photo by Aliza Knox. (Answer on [page 13](#))



Photo by Holly Pearson, AICP. (Answer on [page 13](#))

Meet a local planner

By Catarina Kidd, AICP

Shannon Fiala is Planning Manager at the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC). She served on the APA California Northern Section Board for three years, 2014–2016.



What brought you to planning?

I followed a somewhat unusual path to planning. As an undergraduate at the University of Michigan, I studied ecology, then moved to the west coast to work on habitat restoration projects in Marin and Napa counties. Through that work, I became interested in land use planning as a tool for habitat protection, which led me to graduate school at UC Berkeley. There I received a dual degree in city planning and landscape architecture with a focus on environmental planning.

What path led to your current role?

While in graduate school, I wrote two masters theses, one analyzing the regulatory process for restoration projects and a second in partnership with SPUR about implementing the Ocean Beach Master Plan. In the latter, I analyzed case studies of urban highway removal — including Paris and Boston — that could inform the removal of portions of San Francisco's Great Highway. Based on that thesis, I was offered a position with SPUR in implementing the Ocean Beach Master Plan through a series of technical studies involving transportation planning, open space design, and coastal engineering.

Then I moved to the California Coastal Commission, where I worked closely with Caltrans on planning for rising sea level and the managed retreat of Pacific Coast Highway at various locations. Now I'm in BCDC's planning division as their planning manager, where I supervise a team of planners who work on updates to the San Francisco Bay Plan and special area plans.

What was the biggest challenge in going from a project management role to supervision?

As a project planner, you take a deep dive on a particular topic or proposal. As a manager, I need to be more focused on assisting staff, listening to their synthesis of

the topic, and helping them by removing obstacles to their progress. Joining an organization as a manager has been a challenge, and in some cases I have had to learn side by side with my staff, tackling a broad range of topics together.

Tell us about BCDC.

The San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission is a California state planning and regulatory agency with regional authority over the San Francisco Bay, the Bay's shoreline band, and the Suisun Marsh. We are set up like a traditional planning department: there is a division that handles permits for shoreline development proposals, and my division handles long-range planning. Our mission is to protect and enhance San Francisco Bay and to encourage the responsible and productive use of the Bay for this and future generations. State law requires that development proposed in or adjacent to the Bay obtain a BCDC permit. In addition to lessening any fill and minimizing harm to Bay resources, BCDC is tasked with obtaining maximum feasible public access within the Bay's 100-foot shoreline band.

Has the commission's role changed over the years?

BCDC was created in 1965 to address a San Francisco Bay that was shrinking due to haphazard filling, and to increase shoreline public access. Today, as a result of sea level rise, the Bay is growing larger. That presents new challenges. We are currently amending the San Francisco Bay Plan to rethink our permitting process — particularly for habitat restoration projects, to allow increasing amounts of Bay fill to preclude wetland vegetation from drowning over time — and to incorporate findings and policies on environmental justice and social equity.

How does this relate to local government planners?

As a state agency, we work closely with local governments. The infrequent city and county General Plan updates are resource-intensive. Each update is an opportunity to consider the public safety risks presented by rising sea level. Planners from local governments on the

(continues on next page)

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

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

coast or bay shoreline: please urge your city or county to integrate consideration of rising sea level into your land use plans and zoning! This is what keeps me up at night.

What projects stand out based on your passion for coastal planning?

I am now working on two Bay Plan Amendments and the San Francisco Waterfront Special Area Plan. The waterfront plan hasn't been amended for 20 years and will guide future development along the Port of San Francisco (<http://bit.ly/2T0epRm>). When I was at the Coastal Commission, I inherited a project with Marin County (<http://bit.ly/2UwskuI>) updating its Local Coastal Program. We were integrating sea level rise considerations into zoning — something that has not been done in many places.

What advice would you give to mid-career planners making a change?

Explore what avenues you have within your organization. Maybe take on a new project or assist a different unit. Ideally, we would all have supervisors interested in our career development, but that is not always the case. Attend APA happy hours and conferences. Reach out to colleagues, classmates, and your alumni network. Use volunteer work — or get yourself appointed to a local board or commission — as a way to try something new related to your core interests.

How do you as a manager see your role in mentoring? Is that different from basic supervision?

I currently supervise three and enjoy the mentorship aspect of my position. I learn about their career goals and connect them to opportunities as they come up. While most entry-level planners would like to advance, not everyone is suited to a management role. Some planners have incredible technical skills, and some have people or conceptual skills. The most important thing is to care about your employees, be interested in their professional goals, and be courageous enough to give them the constructive feedback that will help them grow.

You mentioned "the spectrum of leadership."

As a new manager, I read a book called *Radical Candor*, which lays out a spectrum of leadership. At one end, a manager may be too hands-off, saying, "I hire intelligent people and then get out of their way." At the other end is the micromanager, who hires great people but then tells them what to do and how to do it.

(continues on next page)



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Meet a local planner (continued from previous page)

But intelligent and capable people still need guidance and mentoring. My goal is to strike a balance between the two ends of the leadership spectrum through “thought partnership” — listening to your team and helping to remove obstacles, perceived or real, to their progress. Maybe they need training to build new skills, or maybe they need help building and maintaining relationships with external partners.


Beyond the successful completion of a project, my biggest reward is to help emerging planners advance in their careers, and to contribute to their professional success.



*Interviewer Catarina Kidd, AICP,
is Northern News' associate editor.
All interviews are edited. ■*

New Zealand PM resets plan to build 100,000 homes.

“With just 47 of the 1,000 homes it had promised by July built so far, the government said it would scrap its initial targets for “KiwiBuild.” Hugh Pavletich, one of the authors of the annual Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey (<http://bit.ly/2Dvqwwa>), said the government had been focusing too much on the hotly debated plan to build 100,000 houses instead of freeing up more land for construction. The construction industry and buyers had not warmed to the program. Neither the building nor purchasing of KiwiBuild houses is subsidized by the government, which only acts as a guarantor to facilitate the building of affordable properties. ‘The government is telling builders to use exactly the same processes we have in place now, but build cheaper houses,’ said Shamubeel Eaqub, a housing economist in Auckland, so ‘very few builders participate.’ —Charlotte Graham-McLay, *The New York Times*, <https://nyti.ms/2S2kFHR>



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Who's where



Aaron Aknin, AICP, is now the principal and co-owner of Good City Company, a Bay Area-based land use and local government consultant firm based in San Carlos, offering staffing, policy, strategy, and environmental review. For the past five years, Aknin was Redwood City's community development director and assistant city manager, as well as interim city manager for five months. Prior to Redwood City, he was assistant director of planning and community environment in Palo Alto (two years) and community development director for San Bruno (10 years). Aknin holds a master's in public policy from California State University–Northridge and a B.A. in urban studies/land use planning from San Francisco State University.



Timothy Rood, AICP, LEED AP, who had been the principal city designer for the city of San Jose since May 2017, has been promoted to division manager. He oversees the urban design and historic preservation teams, the permit center planning team, and a development review team. Rood also continues to serve as the City's urban design leader, working on the Diridon Integrated Station Concept, Downtown Vision, and Downtown Transportation Study. He holds M.Arch and MCP degrees from UC Berkeley and an AB in architecture from Columbia. He is currently a Piedmont City Councilmember, and serves on the boards of East Bay Community Energy and the Alameda County Waste Management Authority, Energy Council, and Recycling Board, collectively known as StopWaste.org. ■

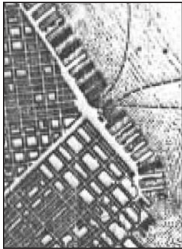
"The only lasting truth is change," wrote Olivia Butler. Change is also part of our understanding of the city — that it must constantly be changing, destroying itself and communities that people build, in order to grow and live and stay powerful. What does it mean to make your home in a place with this appetite for transformation?"
—Kaitlyn Greenidge, *"The City of Lost Love," The New York Times*,
<https://nyti.ms/2DY9Uwj>

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Third Annual Summit on Livable Communities — Mobility for All

Thursday, April 18, 10am – 1pm, Hyatt Regency New Orleans. AICP CM 3.0

Last year's summit in San Francisco was co-sponsored by APA California (<http://bit.ly/2x7GsDw>).

This Third Annual Summit will focus on forward-thinking programs reshaping our communities — providing long-term solutions for how mobility is delivered. Urban Planners and Aging Network Professionals will engage with multiple players from different sectors to push our thinking on accessible transportation and travel options for a livable community.

Eight professionals will present. Planners participating include **Jana Lynott, MP, AICP**, Senior Strategic Policy Advisor—Transportation and Livable Communities, AARP Public Policy Institute; and **Laura Bryan, MURP**, Director, Mayor's Office of Transportation, City of New Orleans.

If you don't plan to attend NPC 19 (April 13–16), or if you attend and it inspires you to learn even more, then nip on down to New Orleans. The Thursday-only registration fee is \$50. You can find more information, including how to register for the one-day program (required) at <http://bit.ly/2DXwfdi>.

Answer to Where in the world ([Page 8](#))

Loikaw, Myanmar, is a city of 140,000 (mostly Kayah, a Sino-Tibetan people) roughly 200 miles north of Yangon. A market can be seen in the lower right corner, and above it, the curved three-story Kanbawza Bank and a bridge over the Balu Chaung River. *Photo: Aliza Knox*

Medellín, Columbia, is a city of 2.5 million — the country's second largest. This view is of the street Carrera 45 in the El Poblado neighborhood. *Photo: Holly Pearson, AICP.*

After leaving Palo Alto, Mr. Kott worked for the transportation firm Nelson/Nygaard in San Francisco, which he called “an excellent cultural fit for me.” In 2007, he moved to the San Francisco office of Wilbur Smith Associates (now CDM Smith), and in 2008 to Redwood City, California, to become the transportation projects and programs manager for the San Mateo City and County Association of Governments (C/CAG), a job he held until 2012.

In August 2011, Mr. Kott started two ventures: Kott Planning Consultants, and the non-profit Transportation Choices for Sustainable Communities Research and Policy Institute, both in Oakland, California. Dr. Kott was the managing principal and vice president at Transportation Choices, an organization that researches sustainable urban and regional transportation planning and policy. Dr. Richard Lee, a principal at Transportation

Choices, saw “Joe as a socially-minded entrepreneur of the first order,” who brought “high standards and deep values to all of his work.” He was “the rare individual who had risen to the top of his profession, and then used that vantage point to chart and pursue new directions for himself and his profession,” wrote Dr. Lee.

Dr. Kott is survived by his wife of 45 years, Katherine, son Paul T. Kott, and daughter Amy E. (Kott) Rands. His son Andrew predeceased him in 2007.

Paul Kott wrote that his father “was the kindest man I’ve ever known. He was also the most intelligent, thoughtful person I’ve ever met. His love was powerful, and that love was reflected in his values and actions. He made the world a better place, both professionally and personally, fighting for more livable cities and battling climate change and greenhouse gas emissions. He was truly interested in the lives and interests of others.” ■

‘How the Green New Deal could retrofit suburbs’

This excerpt represents about a quarter of a CityLab article on February 11, 2019, by Amanda Kolson Hurley, a CityLab editor and the author of Radical Suburbs.

“The original New Deal included a bold attempt to rethink suburbia. The ‘Green New Deal’ calls for a national, 10-year mobilization that would repair and upgrade infrastructure and switch the country over to 100-percent clean energy, among other goals.

“As its name makes clear, the Green New Deal has strong parallels to the original New Deal with its massive public-works projects and jobs programs. [So] a smaller, more obscure initiative of the old New Deal is worth revisiting: the greenbelt-towns program, undertaken by the short-lived federal Resettlement Administration (RA).

“The RA’s town-building program was inspired by the ‘Garden City’ movement that swept across Europe at the turn of the 20th century. The Garden City would be a place not just to live but to work, compact enough that residents would be able to stroll across it in 20 minutes or so, and linked to other Garden Cities and larger cities by rail. The land would be publicly owned, and rents would fund public services.

“But the project had powerful detractors. Some saw a master-planned federal city as the height of social engineering. The construction and real estate industries cried foul.

“Greenbelt cost a lot to build, there weren’t many jobs for residents nearby, and commuter transportation to Washington was a stubborn problem.

“The Green New Deal can harness the spirit of Greenbelt to retrofit existing suburban places to be more sustainable, livable, and equitable. Working with states and localities, the federal government could perhaps choose a handful of pilot sites to test and refine strategies.

“Upgrading and building affordable housing — near job centers and transit, and to the highest standard of energy efficiency — would help meet an urgent need while enabling green-workforce training. The government could prioritize extending, or building, light-rail and bus-rapid-transit systems in suburbs, and redesigning roads for walking and biking, so more suburbanites can leave their cars at home.

“The Green New Deal could also have seed money for initiatives that, for example, turn obsolete parking lots into wetlands, establish community land trusts, or kick-start small-business incubators in aging shopping centers.

“To avoid the most catastrophic effects of climate change, Americans must change how we live and get around more fundamentally.”

You can read the complete article on CityLab at <http://bit.ly/2SO3wld>. ■



Rua Conde de Bobadella in the center of Ouro Preto is one of the city's typical steep cobblestoned streets.
Photo: Juan Borrelli, AICP



Looking north to Our Lady of Carmo Church from Rua Getúlio Vargas. The street was named for Brazil's interim president (1930–34), constitutional president (1934–37), and dictator (1937–45). Photo: Juan Borrelli, AICP



Tiradentes Square and the Museum of the Inconfidência, dedicated to those who died in a failed rebellion movement for Brazilian independence from Portugal. Photo: Juan Borrelli, AICP

(continues on next page)



SJSU students in Ouro Preto, Brazil. Back row (l-r): Nels Langbauer (program assistant and translator), Evan Anselmo, Claire Leone, Cade Baldrige, Mike Jacobson (program assistant). Zak Mendez, Alfredo Rivas. Middle row (l-r): Michelle Louie, Geoffrey Henderson. Front row (l-r): Melanie Reis, Aisha Nelson, Rick Kos, AICP (program leader), Juan Borrelli, AICP, Alex Hinds. Photo: João Batista ■



Our new CEO. "The American Planning Association has selected Joel Albizo, a talented association leader with deep strategic and operational expertise, as the new Chief Executive Officer of APA and AICP, effective April 8, 2019. Albizo has more than 30 years of association management experience and is seen as an innovator within the association CEO community. Albizo has been the CEO for the Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards, where he led the formation of new coalitions within the design professions (architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, and interior design). 'I am thrilled to join the APA team,' said Albizo. 'The association has a well-earned reputation as a welcoming destination for all who value and work toward safe, healthy, equitable, and sustainable communities.' APA and AICP membership are at their highest levels in more than a decade." —Read more at <http://bit.ly/2SN6NBj>

Approval process isn't only obstacle to SF housing goals

San Francisco Examiner, February 9, 2019

Laura Waxmann, <http://bit.ly/2SIGWAh> • “Close to 45,000 potential homes are currently approved in San Francisco — the highest number tracked by the city’s planning department to date — but many have yet to break ground.

“‘No more bureaucracy. No more costly appeals. No more not in my neighborhood. It’s simple: Affordable housing as-of-right because housing affordability is a right,’ said Mayor London Breed.

“But public disapproval and the slow approval process aren’t the only roadblocks. Constraints on financing and a growing trend of flipping entitlements are significant causes for delays, with some sponsors never intending to build.

“Sean Keighran, president of the Residential Builders Association, cited city departments ‘working in a bubble’ as exacerbating ‘uncertainty’ already experienced by developers

due to construction loans, ‘high land costs, rising interest rates, rising construction costs, and a softening real estate market.’

“Keighran called construction loans the ‘highest risk of all,’ adding that interest rates, now as high as 8 percent, have doubled in recent years, while real estate sales are slowing down.

“The non-profit Council of Community Housing Organizations estimates that it can take up to four years for a for-profit project to secure financing for construction, and entitlements can be sold to other investors or ‘held for years with no firm requirement to build the project.’

“‘You can easily increase a property’s value in hundreds of thousands to millions of dollars just by entitling a project,’ said Jonathan Moftakhar, a realtor with Vanguard Properties.”

BART begins strengthening Transbay Tube

BART News, February 7, 2019

<http://bit.ly/2Skutgc> • “In November 2004, voters in Contra Costa, San Francisco, and Alameda counties approved Measure AA, which allowed BART to issue general obligation bonds to fund up to \$980 million of the \$1.2 billion total cost of earthquake safety improvements.

“The highest priority for upgrades has been the Transbay Tube, the very core of the BART system.

“The tube is structurally sound, but BART is preparing for a rare and devastating earthquake — defined as a 1,000 year event — something that happens once every thousand years. In an event this large, the tube won’t fail, but it could crack and leak. The current retrofit will install an inner steel lining to key sections of the 3.6-mile-long tube and an upgraded pumping system to allow larger quantities of water to be removed quickly from the tube.

“Later this spring, a crew of more than 100 will bring equipment and materials into and out of the tube via an 800-foot long custom-built work train each night. Passenger trains will single track through the tube during this work, in 24-minute headways after 9 pm on weeknights.



The locomotive work train. Photo: BART

“The components of the work train are being delivered to BART’s Hayward Shops. The work train will begin operations in spring from the Oakland Shops. It will travel through Lake Merritt and stop at the West Oakland Station to pick up the work crews before heading into the tube.

“The Transbay Tube work is expected to take three-and-a-half years.”

(The news roundup continues on next page)

How California voters' view affordability, climate change, and forest fires

Quinnipiac University, February 6, 2019

<http://bit.ly/2DhPg9K> • “From January 30 – February 4, Quinnipiac University surveyed 912 California voters with a margin of error of ± 4.1 percentage points, including the design effect.

“Affording the Golden State

“Led by younger voters, 43 percent of California voters feel they can’t afford to live in the Golden State. Among voters 18 to 34 years old, 61 percent say they can’t afford to live in California.

“Voters statewide say 77–18 percent that there is a housing crisis in California. That ranges from 72–20 percent among voters living inland and in the Valley to 87–11 percent among voters living in coastal areas.

“Climate change, forest fires

“A total of 78 percent of California voters are ‘very concerned’ or ‘somewhat concerned’ about climate change; 21 percent are ‘not so concerned’ or ‘not concerned at all.’

“California must do more to address climate change, 57 percent of voters say, while 19 percent say the state is doing enough and 18 percent say the state is doing too much.

“‘Californians say 62–34 percent that the changing climate is adding fuel to the wildfires. But voters are divided on which is more to blame for the severity of the fires, climate change or bad stewardship of the land,’ said Tim Malloy, assistant director of the Quinnipiac University Poll.”

Poll results can be downloaded as a PDF at

<http://bit.ly/2DkaCUe>.

San Diego joins SF and Oakland in dropping parking requirements

The San Diego Union-Tribune, February 6, 2019

David Garrick, <http://bit.ly/2SuyAqa> • “[Help in solving] San Diego’s housing crisis by wiping out parking requirements for new [multifamily] complexes near mass transit moved forward on February 6. The City Council’s Land Use and Housing Committee voted 3–1 to forward the proposal for council approval on March 4.

“Council members in favor of the plan said reducing local reliance on automobiles [will make] housing cheaper and help the city meet the goals of its legally binding climate action plan.

“‘The cost of parking is incredibly detrimental to the cost of housing,’ said Councilman Scott Sherman, and as more young people choose to commute by transit, bicycle, and ride-

booking services, ‘This provides flexibility to deal with the market as it is today and could be in the future.’

“Councilman Chris Ward noted that many other large cities have made similar policy changes based on emerging trends, including San Francisco, Oakland, Sacramento, Santa Monica, Portland, Seattle, and Minneapolis. [Eligible San Diego projects must be] within half a mile of a trolley line, a bus rapid transit station, or two high-frequency bus routes. The transit must either be already operating or scheduled to begin operating within five years.

Councilwoman Dr. Jennifer Campbell, the lone ‘no’ vote, said wiping out parking requirements would be premature despite its potential to help solve the housing crisis, noting that nearly 94 percent of San Diego adults own a car.”

(The news roundup continues on next page)

“Social media has spawned a generation who appear to believe punctuation is optional, that grammar is for the elderly, and that ending a sentence with a period is a deliberate act of aggression. ...The editor’s job [is] to enhance, not override, the authorial voice. The copy editor might suggest that a writer tighten up a particular passage, ditch unpleasant punctuation, switch a sentence around or — taking into account that we all sometimes unconsciously favor certain words — stop using [‘development’] all the time. ... Go light on exclamation points in dialogue. No, even lighter than that. Are you down to none yet? Good.” —Sarah Lyall in *The New York Times*, <https://nyti.ms/2Dpt8ud>, quoting Benjamin Dreyer, whose new book is *Dreyer’s English: An Utterly Correct Guide to Clarity and Style*.”

Local housing policies across California: Results of a new statewide survey

College of Environmental Design, UC Berkeley, February 4, 2019

<http://bit.ly/2DpDoTe> • The Turner Center’s “residential land use survey [was conducted] in California from August 2017 to October 2018.” The survey analyzed responses from “252 incorporated places and 19 unincorporated county areas [to] questions on local zoning, approval processes, affordable housing policies, and rental regulations.” Here, from their 61-page descriptive report, <http://bit.ly/2Sk6PAv>, are just a few “highlights [of] the survey findings” from the Executive Summary:

“Zoning

- “... [V]ery little land is zoned to allow for multifamily housing.
- “Exceptions to zoning regulations ... are most commonly requested to reduce multifamily parking requirements or to increase how much housing can be built on a lot”
- “Most jurisdictions allow for some type of by-right development ... but cities often limit the size of by-right projects to five or fewer units. ...”

- “About half of California jurisdictions report that they made their zoning codes less restrictive over time, but [roughly] 10 percent made their zoning codes more restrictive.

“Approval process

- [While] “... project applications have a strong chance of approval, permitting, and completion ... multifamily projects have somewhat lower success rates compared to single-family projects.
- “... In many jurisdictions, fees vary so much that planners cannot effectively estimate the total costs of the fees for a development project.
- [While] “... proposed housing developments attract both local citizen support and opposition, ... planners indicate that elected officials almost always support residential development.

“Affordable housing policies

- “Far more projects were built under local inclusionary policies than under state density bonus law.”

SB 100 is moving Oakland toward a zero-emissions future

CityLab, February 4, 2019

Teju Adisa-Farrar, <http://bit.ly/2S8ZfbX> • “West Oakland residents’ decades-long resistance against poor air quality is starting to pay off as the Port of Oakland plans to reduce air pollution by transitioning to emissions-free solutions.

“In June 2018, the Port released the Draft Seaport Air Quality 2020 and Beyond Plan, <http://bit.ly/2t6RJiE>. The Plan aims to improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions and other pollutants, and includes proposals for vehicle electrification and zero-emissions infrastructure.

“The Seaport plan notes California’s 2030 and 2050 greenhouse gas reduction goals (<http://bit.ly/2SddsEw>), but is timid regarding implementation of electrification [and] shies away from adopting electric trucks and equipment.

“David Wooley, Executive Director of UC Berkeley’s Center for Environmental Public Policy, says, ‘Trends in

battery technology costs suggest that electric drive technology may become competitive with new diesel equipment soon,’ and he added: ‘Action now will also position the Port, its tenants, and supporting business to reduce costs and improve competitiveness of port operations over the long term.’

“The West Oakland Indicators Project has been a vital part of pushing the Port to make sure [the Seaport] plan centers on public health and air quality in the surrounding community. Oakland has a long history of resistance and consistent action from frontline communities fighting against industry that harms public health and destroys the environment (<http://bit.ly/2Sb5Wdj>). Now with the support of legal advocacy organizations, and in partnership with three of the state’s most active ports, these populations are gaining traction.”

(The news roundup continues on next page)

Chicago buildings combine libraries with mixed-income housing

WTTW Chicago, January 24, 2019

Evan Garcia, <http://bit.ly/2SxLELv> • Chicago has “two new buildings that combine libraries and affordable housing. A collaboration between the Chicago Public Library, which has 81 locations throughout the city, and the Chicago Housing Authority [aims to provide] housing and educational opportunities under the same roof.”

One new “building offers 44 senior apartments, 30 Chicago Housing Authority units, and 14 affordable units in Irving Park; [the second has] 29 affordable apartments, 37 CHA units, and 7 market-rate units in Little Italy.

“Another mixed-use building [will] open later this year on the city’s North Side.

“The monthly rents for both CHA and affordable apartment units are set at 60 percent of the area’s median income — occupants of CHA units are eligible for further rent assistance through vouchers.

“The buildings were designed by some of Chicago’s top architects chosen from a design competition held by the city.

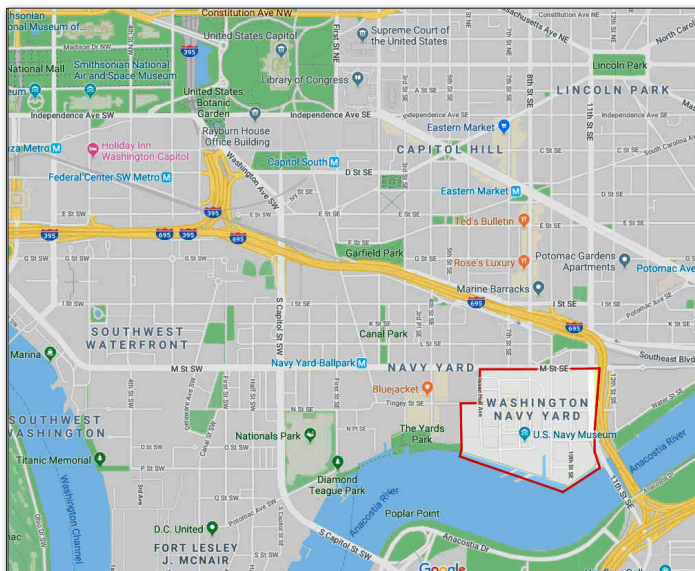
“The design of these buildings is beautiful, but also allows for the evolution of the kinds of library services long into the future,” said Chicago Public Library Commissioner and CEO Brian Bannon.

“The libraries will offer high-tech programming including 3D printing, virtual reality, and robotics. “

Hat tip to Fay Darmawi.



Screen capture from WTTW video ■



The US Navy wants to build a wall in Washington.

“The Navy is considering erecting a 14-foot flood wall around the Washington Navy Yard to protect the historic complex along the Anacostia River from rising sea levels, internal Department of Defense documents show. Military engineers proposed the wall in a study, obtained by Bloomberg News through a public-records request, that describes a structure as long as 1.5 miles, to protect three dozen buildings at a cost of as much as \$20 million. It’s the latest example of a federal agency getting ready for climate change, despite the Trump administration’s public dismissal of the threat.” —*Christopher Flavelle, Bloomberg*, <https://bloom.bg/2UzBJ4m>

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