

NORTHERN NEWS



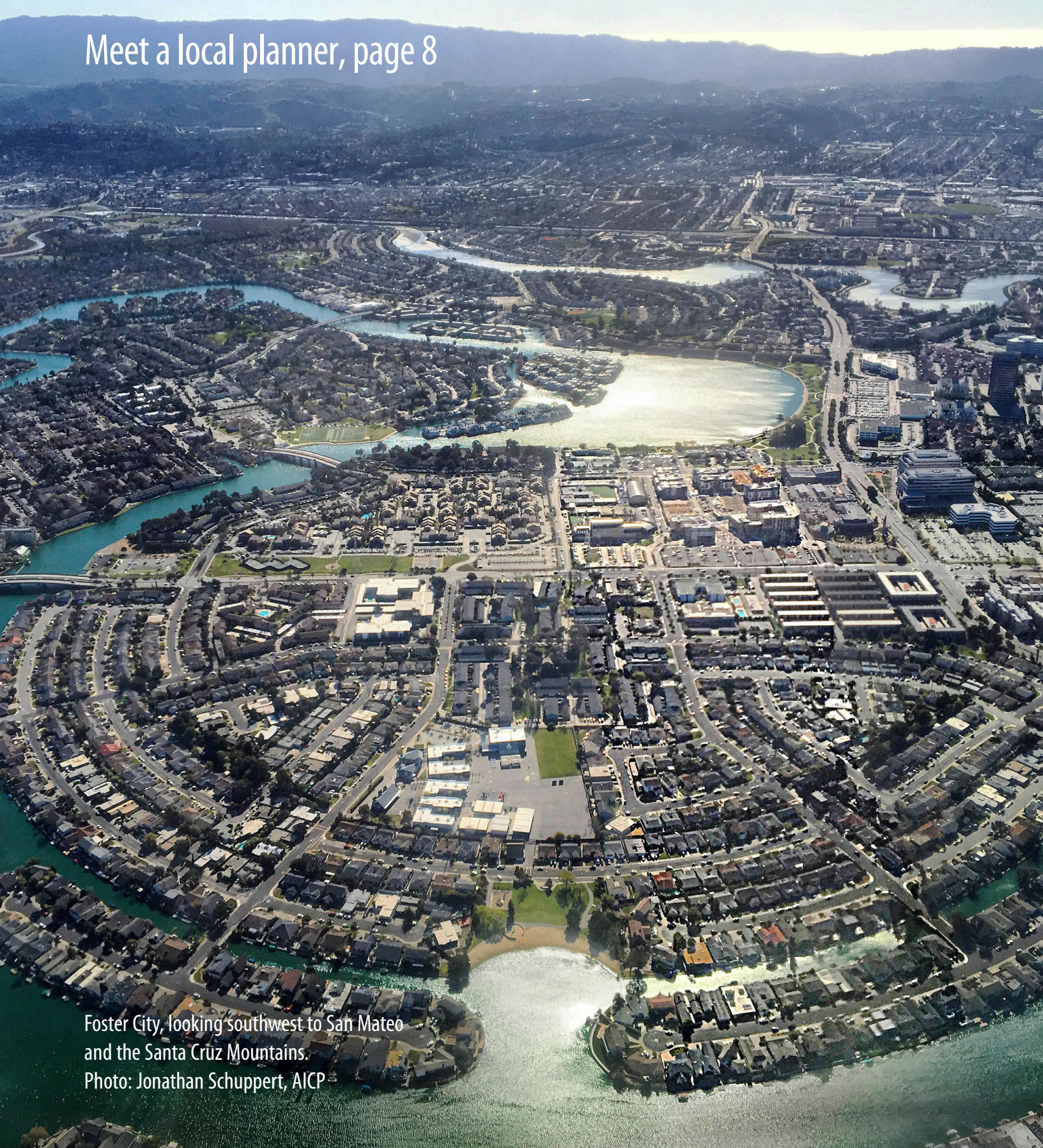
A Publication of the Northern Section of the California Chapter of APA



American Planning Association
California Chapter
Northern
Making Great Communities Happen

April 2018

Meet a local planner, page 8



Foster City, looking southwest to San Mateo
and the Santa Cruz Mountains.

Photo: Jonathan Schuppert, AICP



“How I became a planning director”

YPG's Veronica Flores reports

Earlier this March, the Young Planners Group (YPG) had the opportunity to hear from a dozen planning directors all in one room. In collaboration with the Bay Area Planning Directors Association (BAPDA), YPG heard firsthand about the different paths to becoming a director.

Panel members Margaret Kavanaugh-Lynch (Development Services Manager, El Cerrito), Andrea Ouse (Community and Economic Development Director, Concord), and Allen Tai (Planning Manager, City of Alameda) opened, giving us their diverse experiences, backgrounds, outlooks on planning, and why and how they became planning directors. It was clear they were passionate about their work and even more eager to share what they know with young and emerging professionals.

Participating planning directors:

- Drummond Buckley, Orinda
- Danny Castro, Sausalito
- Hillary Gitelman, Palo Alto
- Rosalynn Hughey, San Jose
- Margaret Kavanaugh-Lynch, El Cerrito
- Casey McCann, Brentwood
- Andrea Ouse, AICP, Concord
- Guido Persicone, AICP, East Palo Alto
- Christina Ratcliffe, AICP, Martinez
- Al Savay, AICP, San Carlos
- Paul Spence, Livermore
- Allen Tai, AICP, Alameda



Planners munch and network at the Arup office. Photo: Jason Su.

The panel and subsequent Q&A set the tone for small breakout sessions, the highlight of the evening: Each planning director met with five young planners in an informal and comfortable setting. Our questions covered a spectrum of topics including what skills managers seek when hiring, how to get involved within the planning field, and thoughts on AICP certification. Here are some key takeaways:

- **Be a Problem Solver** – Whether working in the public or private sector, we need to be able to effectively balance competing priorities among community members, developers, and private-interest groups on such issues as housing, transportation, and sustainability priorities. Much of our work will focus on the built environment, but we cannot forget about the “people” aspect. We need to facilitate conversations with all interested parties. We can’t focus purely and strictly on what the planning code does or doesn’t allow.
- **Be a Team Player** – It is very easy to be absorbed by our own work and projects, but we need to make an earnest effort to assist with other tasks as they arise. This may involve assisting

(continues on [page 14](#))

WHAT'S INSIDE

"How I became a planning director"

YPG's *Veronica Flores reports*. Following a panel discussion, 12 planning directors each met with five young planners and emerging professionals in a comfortable setting to share what they know. [Page 1](#)

Director's note

Sharon Grewal, AICP. Industry is pushing planning's boundaries • Film screening: The United States of Detroit • 6th Annual Acronym Happy Hour. [Page 3](#)

Low-income housing opens at former Naval Air Station

HUD USER. Thirty-two homes in Alameda are a small but important part of a continuing brownfield development first proposed in 2000 in a master plan for a base that closed in 1997. [Page 4](#)

Where in the world

A photo by *Erin Camarera* from a country we have not previously covered. [Page 5](#)

Homelessness: Coming to light

Cherise Orange and Kojo Pierce. "We have come dangerously close to accepting the homeless situation as a problem that we just can't solve." But we can. [Page 6](#)

Planning news roundup

Finding better ways to plan for, and recover from, wildfire • Why do we have an SB 827 anyway? • Millbrae: Mixed-use project near

train station narrowly approved after public negotiation

• California: Development fees push up cost of housing • Bay Area Tech may not be 'over' • Caltrain on HSR draft business plan • Minneapolis: Allow fourplexes citywide to relieve housing shortage? • Vancouver: 5% of homes empty and liable for new tax • North Bay: Prefab finds a home in fire-ravaged neighborhoods • BART: Bill would give agency power to set station-area zoning • Sacramento: State may tear down freeway bridges, build bigger ones • SoMa: Calls for more housing in area plan. [Pages 7 and 16–21](#)

Meet a local planner

Catarina Kidd, AICP, interviews *Amy Skewes-Cox, AICP*. [Page 8](#)

SB 1000 outreach workshop April 4

Integrating Environmental Justice into General Plans. [Page 10](#)

April 30 deadline to apply for CPF scholarships

Free webinar on April 3rd. [Page 11](#)

CityTalk: A cross-generational conversation

May 10th in San Jose, for mid-level planners. [Page 12](#)

Who's where

Diana Elrod; Whitney McNair, AICP; Destiny Preston. [Page 13](#)

Board member directory and editorial information [Page 22](#)

Soon, in June: APA California–Northern Awards Gala



When: Friday June 1, 2018. Come celebrate the best of Northern California planning. The evening will include a video presentation, presentation of awards, and a cocktail reception.

Where: The Green Room in the Veterans Building at the San Francisco War Memorial, 401 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco.

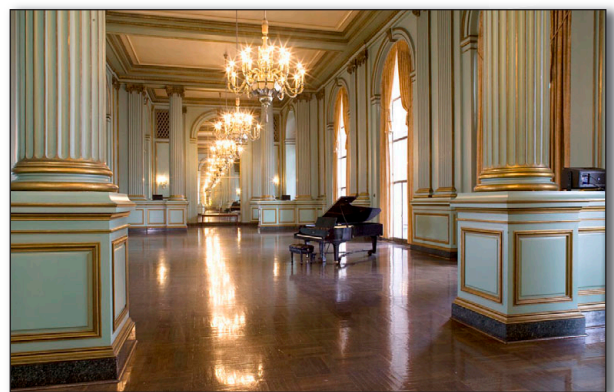
Time: 6:30 to 10 pm.

Tickets: Reserve now through Eventbrite at <https://bit.ly/2G5T52k>

Questions? Contact Awards Program Directors Florentina Craciun or Carmela Campbell at awards@norcalapa.org.

Be a Sponsor of the Awards Gala

Sponsorship opportunities include tickets to the Awards Gala; advertising in the *Northern News* and *eNews*; and recognition during the Gala. To see the perks go to <http://bit.ly/1qWlZgb>. To sponsor, contact Florentina Craciun at (510) 379-1117 or awards@norcalapa.org.



The Green Room is known for its distinctive color, soaring ceiling, and russet tiled loggia. Photo: Joel Puliatti.



Director's note

Sharon Grewal, AICP

Industry is pushing planning's boundaries

Cities have long been designed for vehicular traffic, using a large proportion of their land for roads. As technology advances, cities are being forced to rethink how they manage sidewalks, curbs, and streets. For example, we now see sidewalks sprinkled with dockless bikes and electric scooters used for first-and-last-mile travel.

These alternative means of travel for urbanites are creating chatter among policymakers. How should jurisdictions regulate streets while supporting sustainable approaches to our transportation needs? How can cities repurpose their roadways to serve all transportation modes safely and sustainably? How can jurisdictions keep up with the advance and testing of autonomous vehicles on public roads without slowing down the industry? These are all important questions that cities are grappling with now and will be for some time. Stay tuned for Northern Section events discussing these issues in May and beyond.

Film screening: The United States of Detroit

Come watch a powerful 82-minute documentary about grassroots movements that are improving communities in Detroit. Meet your fellow East Bay planners April 17 at the New Parkway Theater, 474 24th Street, Oakland, at 6:30 to grab a drink or a snack before the 7:00 pm screening. Stay for the panel discussion, featuring the director and a native Detroit comedian, after the film. For details and to purchase \$12 tickets, go to <http://bit.ly/2pCiBWL>.

6th Annual Acronym Happy Hour

It's again that time when your favorite Bay Area transportation and planning organizations come together in one place on one night. Toast complete streets, shared use mobility, and our collective wonkiness as we network and socialize. Please join us on April 19 at Jones, 620 Jones Street at Geary, San Francisco. Go to <http://bit.ly/2ptAYgn> on our new website for more information. Complimentary appetizers will be provided by our sponsoring organizations.

New Board members

At our most recent meeting, your Northern Section Board appointed Destiny Preston of Arcata to the post of Advertising Director. We are excited to welcome her to the Board. Read more about Destiny on [page 13](#).

Board and committee positions

Do you want to be more involved with the planning profession? If so, consider joining our Northern Section Board in one of the following positions:

- Planning4Health Coordinator
- ULI Liaison
- SPUR Liaison
- AEP Liaison
- Holiday Party committee
- Young Planners Group committee
- Regional Activity Coordinators (Redwood Coast, North Bay, San Francisco, East Bay, Peninsula, South Bay, Monterey Bay). ■

Five proposals for massive housing development in South City. Five developers are vying to build housing on a six-acre site in South San Francisco near the city's BART station. The city bought the site almost a decade ago. Once owned by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, it is known as the 'PUC Site.' The property sits on Mission Road about a half-mile from the BART station and near El Camino Real and is bisected by Colma Creek. The land is zoned for up to 1,000 homes, and the proposals range from 639 to 847 homes. The city asked that the developer set aside a minimum of 20 percent of the homes for low-income residents. The winning team and the city will negotiate the land price and other development terms, which could take up to 10 months." —Blanca Torres, *San Francisco Business Times*. Slideshow at <http://bit.ly/2u5f2Nf>.

Housing for low and extremely-low income households opens in Alameda

Part of a brownfield development on a naval base that closed in 1997

HUD USER, March 5, 2018

<http://bit.ly/2G0msUg> • In the city of Alameda, located on an island in California's San Francisco Bay, the scarcity and high cost of housing personally affects most residents. The city's rental vacancy rate is approximately 2 percent, and an estimated 44 percent of renters spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs. Recently, following the disposition of hundreds of acres of land formerly owned by the U.S. Navy, the city had a unique opportunity to build an entirely new mixed-use community with nearly 900 new homes.

The resulting Bayport and Alameda Landing developments, <http://bit.ly/2Gf021z>, planned and executed by private master developer Catellus, contain a mix of affordable and market-rate housing, retail, and office space. As part of an agreement with another private housing developer to help fulfill their inclusionary housing obligation, the Housing Authority of the City of Alameda (HACA) worked with nonprofit developer Resources for Community Development (RCD, <https://rcdhousing.org>) to build Stargell Commons at the Alameda Landing site, completed in May 2017. Backed by strong community support, this family housing project received widespread acclaim thanks to its striking modern design.

Stargell Commons

Stargell Commons is made up of 32 units of family housing, with all units affordable to families earning between 30 and 60 percent of the area median income (AMI). Seven units have project-based subsidies, limiting rent to 30 percent of AMI. Three 3-story buildings contain five one-bedroom, 16 two-bedroom, and 10 three-bedroom units. One unit is reserved for management staff. An additional single-story building contains space for community activities and offices for tenant services. The four buildings surround a surface parking lot and courtyard with a children's play area.

The residential buildings are composed of ground floor flats with walk-up-style townhomes above them. The project's modern aesthetic intentionally contrasts with the more traditional architecture of the surrounding area, adding vibrancy to the streetscape and demonstrating that affordable housing can be creative and exciting. The buildings' facades feature vertical and horizontal



Nonprofit developer Resources for Community Development worked with the Housing Authority of the City of Alameda to build a unique affordable housing project with striking architecture. Stargell Commons has since become a source of pride in the community.

Credit: Housing Authority of the City of Alameda

changes in plane and material as well as sunshade and canopy elements. The site also includes "paseos," or pedestrian connections to the surrounding neighborhood. RCD is in the process of attaining Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification, with the property currently meeting LEED Platinum specifications because of features such as a photovoltaic system for hot water heating, ENERGY STAR lighting and appliances, and "Bay Friendly," drought-tolerant landscaping.

Site amenities include a landscaped courtyard, a multi-purpose community room with a full kitchen that opens to the courtyard, and secure bicycle storage. The site is also within walking distance of a new shopping center featuring a grocery store and several restaurants, and it is near a free shuttle to downtown Oakland. The nonprofit Operation Dignity (<https://operationdignity.org>) provides onsite tenant services such as case management and housing retention support. In addition, property management coordinates community-building activities such as movie nights and trips to museums as well as youth programming such as a summer lunch program, an anti-bullying campaign, and the provision of school supplies.

(continues on page 15)

Where in the world



Photo by Erin Camarera. (Answer on [page 13](#))

Redevelopment: Coming to a city near you? “Amid a deepening housing crisis, a coalition of California lawmakers is trying to revive one of the casualties of the Great Recession: local redevelopment agencies that provided roughly \$1 billion annually for affordable housing.” AB 3037, the Community Redevelopment Law of 2018 (Chiu, D-San Francisco, <http://bit.ly/2u6Sxr7>), would authorize a city or county to propose the formation of a redevelopment housing and infrastructure agency by adoption of a resolution of intention and providing that resolution to each affected taxing entity. “To avoid past abuses, Chiu said, the new agencies would be audited regularly, and local projects would be required to undergo state-level reviews.” —Kate Murphy, *East Bay Times*, <http://bayareane.ws/2u2BbMk>

An average salary of \$142,000 is not enough. Tech workers are finding “other metros ‘increasingly desirable’ as ‘their salaries are growing faster and their cost of living is lower,’ [according to] Hired CEO Mehul Patel. The Bay Area still has a vibrant ecosystem with a high number of tech companies, but the high cost of living in San Francisco coupled with the more rapidly increasing salaries in other metros present a headwind for the region, Patel said. Nearly 40 percent of Bay Area tech workers are looking for jobs outside of the region — and that number is on the rise, according to data last year from job search site Indeed.” —Alisha Green, *San Francisco Business Times*, <http://bit.ly/2FNxtve>

Homelessness: Coming to light

Cherise Orange and Kojo Pierce

Homelessness in the Bay Area has reached crisis levels and can no longer be ignored. Echoing former governor Linda Lingle of Hawaii, “We have come dangerously close to accepting the homeless situation as a problem that we just can’t solve.”

But we can. Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity, to have a home, and have the services they need to live a bountiful life. As cities begin exploring tiny homes and other solutions that will take time and require an exorbitant amount of resources, the question becomes what can we do right now? How can I make a difference in my community today?

On a sunny Saturday in February, several planners came to Hellyer County Park — a 178-acre urban park with a multi-use paved trail — to participate in Northern Section’s South Bay RAC/Diversity Committee event, *Sharing the Hiking Trails with the Homeless*. The event brought out professionals from a variety of backgrounds including transportation planners and planning directors from jurisdictions such as Half Moon Bay that are grappling with encampments in parks.

We first heard from the rangers at Hellyer County Park on their interaction with homeless individuals. In many cases, park rangers are on the frontline of outreach and can link individuals to County agencies and organizations that can help them get on their feet.

We also heard from Kojo Pierce, a case manager with HomeFirst™, the leading provider of services, shelter, and housing opportunities for the homeless (and those at risk of homelessness) in Santa Clara County. Standing out the most was the urgency and need for compassion and help for fellow human beings.



Santa Clara County Park Ranger Kristy Burton describes how park rangers work with homeless individuals to connect them with local social service organizations and agencies. Photo: Cherise Orange

Homelessness is a serious issue that calls for a multi-level solution. No one person or planner has the correct answer. But we need people who are ready to provide actionable solutions. Planners can play a significant role in reducing homelessness and educating the public on perception versus policy.

If you are interested in helping to create a shared forum within APA California–Northern Section on tackling homelessness, please contact South Bay RAC Cherise Orange, southbayrac@norcalapa.org, or Diversity Director Miroo Desai, diversity@norcalapa.org. Make the time, volunteer, and offer support to the agencies, shelters, or service providers. ■

“Let’s face it: Continuous growth is our national policy. U.S. history basically amounts to 400-plus years’ worth of constant westward expansion, then subdivision sprawl. When I finished my master’s degree in planning in 1981, there were 230 million Americans. Today, there are 327 million. That’s almost 100 million more people in just 37 years. The Census Bureau’s 2013 projection series anticipates another 90 million people by 2060, or roughly 2.14 million per year — the equivalent of adding a Houston-sized city every year, year after year, with no end in sight.”

—Chris Williamson, AICP, *Planning Magazine*, <http://bit.ly/2GDzBTJ>

Planning news roundup

Excerpts linked to the original articles

Finding better ways to plan for, and recover from, wildfire

Planning, March 2018

Kristen Pope, <http://bit.ly/2FKcfOP> • “As a wall of flames raced through the hills near Santa Rosa last October, APA California Chapter President Pete Parkinson, AICP, knew it was time to go. That evening, for the first time in 15 years, he and his wife, Celia, fled their home on a ridge near Bennett Valley. Later that night it burned to the ground. And they were hardly the only ones. In total, more than 100 homes in their neighborhood were destroyed; only around 30 still stand.

“Parkinson and his wife headed to his mother-in-law’s home and arrived just in time to help her and some of her neighbors evacuate before that neighborhood caught fire.

“We feel lucky to [have gotten] out,’ he says.

“‘We plan for what we imagine the future will hold,’ Parkinson says. ‘If, on October 7, 2017, you asked any planner, including me, to imagine and plan for a scenario where a firestorm jumps a six-lane freeway and roars into a community like Santa Rosa, destroying an entire suburban neighborhood, a mobile home park, the city’s most upscale residential area, and hundreds of thousands of square feet of commercial space, you’d be accused of Chicken-Little-style fear mongering.’

“‘We did not imagine that a catastrophe of this power and scope was even possible,’ he says. ‘But it’s clear that [when it comes to wildfire], we need to imagine far bigger than we have before.’”

Why do we have an SB 827 anyway?

The New York Times, California Today, March 19, 2018

Conor Dougherty and Jennifer Medina, <http://nyti.ms/2FLIxsS> • “Given that California is falling behind its climate goals and suffering from a dire housing shortage that has given the state the distinction of having the nation’s **highest poverty rate**, it seems clear that some inevitably controversial plan will have to be adopted if the state is going to become greener and more economically equal. It seems equally clear that the state won’t get there without some big changes to existing neighborhoods — which won’t be easy.

“To gauge the impact of the bill, Urban Footprint, a software platform that allows people to map neighborhoods and analyze planning policies, recently ran the numbers (<http://bit.ly/2GJ85nP>) for three consecutive East Bay

BART stations: the higher-density MacArthur station in Oakland, the slightly lower-density Rockridge station (also in Oakland), and the very low-density station in the next door suburb of Orinda.

“The results are startling. At the MacArthur station the number of new housing units could increase from 4,447 units today to 27,156 under the bill. In Rockridge it could go from 4,096 to 25,500. Orinda: 731 to 12,090.

“To be sure, the bill is anything but a sure thing. And those numbers are theoretical maximums. The actual increase in housing, which would take decades to build, would most likely be much lower. ... Yet to really make a dent in the problem, people will also have to change how they live.”

(The news roundup continues on [page 16](#))

“Reno housing market has gone from moribund to scorching. For decades, one of Reno’s chief attributes has been its proximity to California. It has prospered by being a refuge for people and businesses looking for less expensive homes, land, and labor, along with the added benefit of not having a state income tax. And that is what is driving growth today. Net annual departures from California slowed to about 20,000 after the recession, but have climbed back to more than 100,000, according to the Census Bureau. And it’s not just happening in Reno. Austin, Texas; Boise, Idaho; Denver; Phoenix; Portland, Oregon; and Seattle have all seen a huge influx of homebuyers from California, according to the real estate website Zillow. A common thread is that each of these cities faces a growing housing crisis that, while not as severe as California’s, is setting off many of the same debates. —Conor Dougherty,

The New York Times, <http://nyti.ms/2GJVkzM>

Meet a local planner

By Catarina Kidd, AICP

Amy Skewes-Cox, AICP, is principal of her environmental planning consulting firm, a solo practice specializing in CEQA review since 1999.

Tell us about where you live, work, and attended school.

I live and work in the same location — just south of San Rafael in an office that looks towards Mt. Tamalpais, a mountain I've known since childhood. I got both my undergraduate degree (conservation of natural resources) and master's (landscape architecture/environmental planning) from UC Berkeley.



What was your path to planning?

Planning may be in my bloodstream. My father practiced architecture for a short time and a grandfather designed many of the original Spanish style buildings in Santa Barbara including El Paseo. I spent a lot of time in the outdoors as a child and was inspired to go into planning after studying conservation and landscape architecture. My first job out of graduate school was with a firm preparing environmental documents and I've stayed on this path ever since.

Whom do you admire professionally?

There are many. The most important is my husband, Robert Twiss. He is an environmental planner and we often easily discuss the development projects I'm reviewing. He inspires me with his insights into good planning and environmental protection. Others who have influenced my work are:

Aldo Leopold (<http://bit.ly/2tEbWzJ>),
Ian McHarg (<http://bit.ly/2tHy6Rp>),
Sim Van der Ryn (<http://bit.ly/2tD209s>)
and Douglas (<http://bit.ly/2tFLt19>)
and Kristine Tompkins (<http://bit.ly/2tGOBgO>).

What was the best advice you received and from whom?

I'm not sure, but the advice I'd like to share with younger planners is follow your heart and stay strong in your convictions and ethics. If you work with someone who is not ethical or who is not disclosing some important potential impact, stand up for what is right even if it means possibly losing a project. In the end, you will gain

respect from those who matter. Review the AICP and AEP codes of ethics; you have support there.

Does that imply you faced a situation where your ethics were challenged?

While I would not say the experience I recall was an ethics case, being able to walk away from an environment that is lacking professional courtesy is important for all planners. One of the principles in the AICP Code of Ethics is to deal with the work and views of other professionals in a fair and professional manner.

Tell us about a favorite project.

Over many years, I did the environmental review for the Mountain House New Community near Tracy. At first, I was dismayed by its "greenbelt busting" potential as the 4,000-acre site was on agricultural soils. Over time, I've seen it develop, and now it is about 50 percent built out. Each neighborhood has a school and kids bike to school. A fantastic riverfront park runs through the center of the development along a channel that was once an irrigation ditch. The commercial component has been very slow to develop, so there is still much out-commuting. It was quite a challenging project review as we had to carefully evaluate the jobs/housing balance and the need for affordable housing given the potential incomes of residents. I await the day when the town will be more self-sustaining.

Another amazing project was the San Joaquin County General Plan EIR. We recommended that the County adopt an agricultural conservation ordinance, where fees would be paid if land were taken out of agricultural use. It took more than 10 years to get that ordinance adopted. In the 20 years since then, more than 40,000 acres of prime Ag soil have been taken out of production — as we had projected in the EIR.

Your opinion: "A great urban space in the Bay Area is ____."

Having lived in Marin County most of my life, I'd say that the Marin Municipal Water District lands, GGNRA lands, and Mt. Tamalpais State Park offer the most amazing wild spaces so close to San Francisco. How lucky we are to have

(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.

Michael Baker
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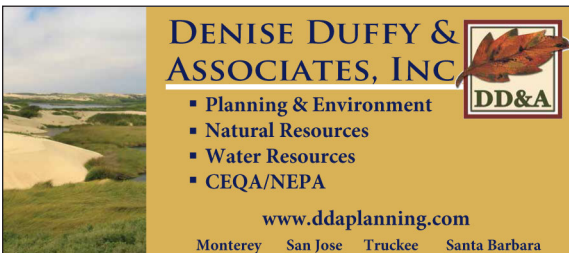
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Meet a local planner (continued from previous page)

them! They were preserved due largely to the efforts of local citizens beginning in the early 1900s.

Let's hear more about your practice as a solo consultant.

I have my own company. I work with a consistent team of specialists, testify at public hearings, and provide CEQA guidance. For many years prior to starting my own firm, I worked for several private consulting firms, with a brief stint as a public sector planner for Alpine County. I also worked on the Kirkwood Ski Resort Specific Plan.

How do you see public and private sector experiences and skill sets?

Experience in both sectors is valuable. In environmental planning, clients will often be public sector. If you sat at their desk, been on that side, you know what your clients are dealing with: bureaucratic hurdles, constraining regulations, and a framework limiting what can be developed. I found that I wasn't cut out for the public sector and my time there was brief. But it is good to try and understand both paths. For public planners, it's important to understand the private sector. In the public sector, there generally are more guarantees for stable work. In the private sector, you have to go out and find the work.

Speaking of finding work, you went from being an employee to running your own business. What was that like?

It was very scary at first. When I made that transition, I was an expert in CEQA but not in running my own company. I had to give it time and trust in myself; learn about contracts, billing, and scheduling; develop long-term work relationships; and value the support of my team of specialists. I have always appreciated the independence this has allowed me.

Any thoughts to inspire mid-career planners?

It's really important to guide younger planners. I belong to AEP and APA and spend a bit of time teaching. At mid-career, you need to remember you make incremental changes to the world. Enjoy your work. There can be chaos and disappointment, but every project is new and offers an opportunity to feel in tune with your surroundings. You are always learning about new sites and locations. Learn to value the art of diplomacy and show respect for others: People skills can be as important as technical skills.



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



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SB 1000 outreach workshop, April 4: Integrating Environmental Justice into General Plans

Last year's SB 1000 requires that all general plans have an environmental justice element, or related goals, policies, and objectives integrated in other elements of the plan, with objectives and policies to —

- *reduce* the unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities,
- *promote* civil engagement in the public decision-making process, and
- *prioritize* improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities.

The Governor's Office of Planning and Research will be holding a workshop in Oakland that will include presentations, a facilitated discussion, and interactive exercises on how you can apply these new concepts in your own community.

WHEN: Wed., April 4, from 9:30 AM to 12 Noon

WHERE: California Endowment meeting room,
2000 Franklin St., Oakland

For details and to register, go to <http://bit.ly/2GRWcMx>

"The myth of 'forcing people out of their cars.' SB 827 would change two important things about transit-adjacent land use: Cities and towns would —

- have to *allow* taller buildings that fit more units on a given piece of land *if developers and landowners want to build them.*
- not be allowed to *require* the construction of off-street parking spaces to accompany the construction of new dwellings.

So *some* of the land would be reused for townhouses and apartments, greatly increasing the number of people who can afford to live in California. Overall, SB 827 would reduce California's per person vehicle miles traveled (although aggregate VMT might rise since the population would rise.) But nobody is forcing anyone to do anything. It's about more options, not fewer. It's the status quo that forces a particular form of land use — detached houses with plenty of parking — on the vast majority of the developed land in America." —Matthew Yglesias, Vox, <http://bit.ly/2u2ZoSG>

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April 30 deadline to apply for CPF scholarships

Learn more in an April 3 webinar

The California Planning Foundation has announced its 2018 scholarship awards program: More than \$60,000 in scholarships will be awarded to outstanding planning students in California.

Every year, CPF invites planning students to compete for scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000. Scholarships are awarded, based on an application and selection process by the CPF Board, to students seeking to enter the planning profession. The scholarships are designed for *continuing students entering their final year of an eligible undergraduate or master's degree program*. Award criteria include academic performance, financial need, a commitment to serve the planning profession in California after graduation, and increasing diversity in the planning profession.

For a list of eligible degree programs in California, please see <http://bit.ly/2FocmQe>. Some scholarships are limited to students from PAB-accredited planning programs, asterisked in the list.

To join a free webinar on April 3rd where you can learn about the scholarship application process, you must pre-register at <http://bit.ly/2FpJG9f>. The webinar will be recorded and will be available afterwards for students who were not able to participate.

For questions, contact:

Hilary Nixon, Ph.D., at hilary.nixon@sjsu.edu or
 Kelly Main, Ph.D., at cpfapplications@gmail.com.

“In rush to build homes, don’t forget about water. In Arizona, new subdivisions in certain areas — including all the state’s biggest cities — must prove they have enough water for 100 years, <http://bit.ly/2tZqqu5>. Lately, there’s been talk of reducing that time frame, but there’s also some concern that new businesses may be scared away. Arizona is also beginning to consider some unconventional ideas to secure its water supply, including an ocean water desalination plant, <http://bit.ly/2u1LXCj>. If you’re trying to remember which part of Arizona touches the ocean, you get an idea of how unconventional the idea is. The landlocked state would help fund a desalination plant, perhaps in Mexico. In that scenario, Mexico would keep the desalinated water but cut back on how much of the Colorado River it takes and turn that river water over to Arizona.” —Ry Rivard, *Voice of San Diego*, <http://bit.ly/2u6B811>

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CityTalk: A cross-generational planning conversation in San Jose

Join APA California – Northern Section, San Jose State Alumni, and the Planner Emeritus Network for a panel discussion on the challenges mid-level planners face today.

- A question and answer session and a mixer will follow.
- The *free* event will be held at **The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library**, 150 E. San Fernando St., San Jose, on **May 10**, from **6–8 pm**.
Seating is limited; reservations required.

For details and to register, go to <http://bit.ly/2pzmuLS>



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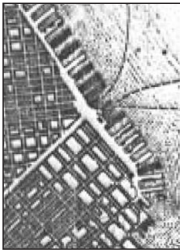
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Mission Bay employers struggle with crushing traffic.
“While the planned completion of the Warriors’ \$1 billion Chase Center in 2019, the continuing buildout of UC San Francisco, and the arrival of major tech companies like Uber and Dropbox to Mission Bay herald a coming-of-age for the formerly industrial district, the area’s traffic looks likely to worsen. Mission Bay is a choke point in the city’s transportation infrastructure, with few routes in and out. [But] it’s unlikely gridlock will negate development of the biotech center.”
—Kevin Truong, *San Francisco Business Times*, <http://bit.ly/2FN9bhV>



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Answer to Where in the world (Page 5)

The medieval riverside district of Porto, a city of 216,000 in northwest Portugal. At the right (east) is Ponte Luis I over the Douro River. On top of the hill is the Episcopal Palace. Photo: Erin Camarera

Who's where



Longtime Bay Area planner **Diana Elrod** has a new job as Principal at LeSar Development Consultants. She says it will always be less than full time so that her art can continue. Elrod previously was principal of her own planning firm, and housing policy and planning administrator for the San Jose Department of Housing before that. She holds a master's degree in urban planning and preservation from Columbia University, a master's degree from California Institute of Integral Studies, and a B.A. from Oberlin College.



Whitney McNair, AICP, is now Executive Director, Faculty and Staff Housing, Stanford University. She has been with the university since 2012 and was director for land use and environmental planning. Before that, McNair was a principal of Metropolitan Planning Group — she was co-founder of M-group — and planning manager for the city of Mountain View. She holds a master in urban and regional planning from San Jose State University and a B.A. in environmental studies from UC Santa Barbara.



Destiny Preston is Northern Section's new advertising director. A recent transfer to Northern Section from LA, Preston is an assistant planner at LACO Associates in Eureka, and a member of the City of Arcata's Economic Development Committee. Her previous planning experience includes public outreach for Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus, sea-level-rise adaptation research and outreach for Marin County, and processing Coastal Development Permits for a consulting firm in Malibu. Preston holds a master's in urban and regional planning from UCLA, and a B.S. in society and environment and a B.A. in peace and conflict studies, both from UC Berkeley. She lives in Arcata with her partner and spends her free time exploring the natural landscapes of the Redwood Coast. ■

teammates on their projects or even taking on new work outside of our own job or project descriptions. In doing so, we show our managers that we can take initiative, and potentially we are setting ourselves up to be topic specialists. Taking on these additional roles will also help us stand out from our peers when an opportunity arises for a promotion or raise.

- **Get Certified** – AICP Certification is highly recommended as soon as one is eligible. Studying for and taking the exam highlights our diligence and our continuous efforts to learn. BAPDA Chair Al Savay (Community and Development Director, San Carlos) shared that if he were reviewing two résumés with the same school and work experience, he would select the candidate with AICP Certification because that translates as a commitment to APA and the planning profession.
- **Networking** – Throughout the evening, the directors emphasized the importance of networking both with our peers and with those who are more seasoned. This is especially important these days when so few professionals stay at one job or one company for decades before retiring. APA offers a strong network that may one day help us with a job prospect or a contact for an upcoming project.

Whether those who attended aspire to become a planning director or not, the directors offered thoughtful insights on the planning field and possible career paths.



Allen Tai, AICP, speaks with young planners in one of the breakout sessions.
Photo: Veronica Flores.

They were very open with their responses, making it easy for us as emerging professionals to ask questions we would find difficult to pose in normal work settings.

The evening also gave us the opportunity to meet other professionals outside of school or work, expanding our personal networks through this one event. All of us — students, those just starting in planning, and seasoned directors — made many new connections. We left the room feeling inspired to continue our good work.

Special thanks to BAPDA, to all the planning directors who made the event a huge success, and to Arup for hosting the event at their San Francisco office. For more information on how to get involved with YPG and to hear about future events, contact Jason Su or Veronica Flores at ypg@norcalapa.org and [like us](#) on Facebook. ■

Infinite Suburbia. "Alan Berger, Professor of Advanced Urbanism at MIT, believes 'The sheer magnitude of land conversion taking place on the urban periphery demands that new attention and creative energy be devoted to the imminent suburban expansion. Despite having deep historical roots in conceiving suburban environments, the landscape architecture profession, the planning profession, and other design professions overwhelmingly vilify suburbia and seem disinterested in even significantly improving it.' In a PennDesign lecture, Berger took aim at planners' fixation on density as an urban cure-all. He noted repeatedly that global population trends suggest the future is suburban. Already, 70 percent of the U.S. population lives in suburbs, he said. He argued that policies promoting centralized density have spurred runaway gentrification. To Berger, the professional focus on urban environments reflects a stubborn disregard of suburban possibilities." —*UPenn Landscape Architecture*, <http://bit.ly/2u6XxvT>

Redevelopment of a naval base

Stargell Commons is part of Alameda Landing, a brown-field redevelopment project. In 1997, as part of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990, the U.S. Navy closed Naval Air Station Alameda and the Fleet Industrial Supply Center and transferred ownership of the 218-acre site to the Alameda Reuse and Redevelopment Authority (ARRA). ARRA then transferred ownership to private developer Catellus, which had been selected to redevelop the site as part of a request for proposals process. Catellus created a master plan for the site in 2000, initially planning a suburban office campus but later deciding to build two new mixed-use communities — Bayport and Alameda Landing. At full build-out, the site will contain approximately 300,000 square feet of retail, 400,000 square feet of office space, and 900 homes.

Current ownership of land at Bayport and Alameda Landing belongs to Catellus, single-family home developer TriPointe Homes (<http://bit.ly/2pznTC7>), individual homeowners, and the city. HACA owns three sites, which it leased to RCD to develop three affordable properties: Shinsei Gardens, Breakers at Bayport, and Stargell Commons. HACA developed Stargell Commons as part of an agreement with TriPointe Homes to fulfill the city's new inclusionary housing ordinance requiring all new development exceeding 10 units to reserve at least 15 percent of the units as affordable housing. TriPointe built 8 percent of their units as moderately affordable and paid a \$2 million fee to HACA for Stargell Commons, which provided the additional 7 percent of affordable units required. Overall, 22 percent of housing at Bayport and Alameda Landing is affordable.

Overcoming regulatory barriers

The developers of Alameda Landing benefited from a recent shift in policies for new development in Alameda, spurred by local advocacy. In 1973, the city instituted Measure A, an addition to the city charter prohibiting multifamily housing development, to preserve the city's small-town feel and unique character. The constraints of

the city's island geography stoked fears that new, high-density development would lead to increased traffic and congestion. Advocates, however, pushed for the city to make an exception to this moratorium, arguing that Measure A presented a significant barrier to the creation of affordable housing. By 2012, the city had instituted a multifamily overlay district as a new zoning category, passed a density bonus ordinance, and adopted a 15 percent inclusionary housing ordinance, effectively overriding Measure A. By the time HACA sought to build Stargell Commons in Alameda Landing, a large coalition of affordable housing advocates generated enough support for the project to outweigh the opposition. Every approval needed from the city was granted unanimously.

Project financing

The total development cost for Stargell Commons was \$17.4 million. The largest source of financing was approximately \$12 million in low-income housing tax credit equity provided by the Wells Fargo Affordable Housing Community Development Corporation. Additional sources of financing included approximately \$2 million from HACA, \$450,000 from the city of Alameda, \$1.7 million from Alameda County, and a \$1.2 million permanent loan from Wells Fargo.

Support and demand for affordable housing in Alameda

RCD initially received 12,000 applications for Stargell Commons' 32 homes, reflecting the extreme shortage of affordable housing in the San Francisco Bay Area. According to Dan Sawislak, executive director of RCD, the project's unique modern architecture generated a significant excitement in the community. Sawislak believes that creative projects such as Stargell Commons may help to promote a more positive perception of affordable housing. Although Alameda Landing is almost complete, HACA is in the process of acquiring another recently decommissioned portion of Naval Air Station Alameda and has plans to build more housing, including 90 units for formerly homeless individuals. ■

Limit local control over zoning or height limits? “Mayor Faulconer and Senator Wiener share the same goal: Increase supply, particularly near transit, to create more housing affordability for working families. We're taking significant steps [in San Diego] to build more housing, reduce costs, and promote smart growth. We have been in contact with Senator Wiener's office to share our ideas, and we look forward to working with him on SB 827 as it moves through the legislative process.”

— *Mayoral spokeswoman Christina Chadwick by email to Andrew Bowen, KPBS, <http://bit.ly/2tZCL1i>*

Millbrae: Mixed-use project near train station narrowly approved after public negotiation

San Mateo Daily Journal, March 15, 2018

Austin Walsh, <http://bit.ly/2GD4B6l>

- It's full speed ahead for a housing and commercial development to transform BART land at the Millbrae train station.

“The Millbrae City Council voted 3-2 to approve the ‘Gateway at Millbrae Station’ during a meeting into the early hours of March 14.

“Before a large crowd, officials embraced the proposal comprising 150,000 square feet of offices, nearly 30,000 square feet of retail space, 400 new housing units, and a hotel abutting the station.

“The landmark decision completes years of discussions, planning, and policy development to craft the area near Millbrae Avenue and El Camino Real into a thriving transit-oriented hub.

“Critics called for amending project plans to include more retail, [lower] housing density, greater financial contributions from the developer, better traffic calming, a higher quality hotel, and increased consideration for the local school district.

“Of the 400 housing units, 80 are in a standalone project to be constructed nearby and reserved for veterans.

“Following a negotiation from the dais led by Councilman Reuben Holober, Michael Van Every, president of the development firm, committed to 20 more affordable units [and]



Location map, Gateway at Millbrae Station. Base: Google maps

an additional \$880,000 to the city’s Community Center rebuild fund.

“The [approval] paved the way for [a separate station-area] project with 444 housing units, 290,000 square feet of offices, and 13,200 square feet of retail. The two projects are only a portion of the residential development slated for the 116-acre site.”

Ed. note. The developer’s four-minute video shows location in the region and city, plus major and local transportation routes: <https://youtu.be/KG0uFbS6Mbk>.

(The news roundup continues on next page)

Don’t ditch those lawns just yet. “Urban green spaces are often cited as a potential solution to mitigate the effects of global warming. Until now most research in this vein focused on larger green spaces like parks. Your average backyard also can absorb and store a significant amount of carbon from the air, making such green spaces important in the battle against climate change. The results of research published in the journal *Ecological Applications* (<http://bit.ly/2FvAz2S>) suggest that fragmented ecosystems like backyards benefit cities and should be factored into urban planning.”

—Kendra Pierre-Louis, *The New York Times*, <http://nyti.ms/2FvgfyM>

California: Development fees push up cost of housing

Terner Center for Housing Innovation, UC Berkeley, March 12, 2018

Sarah Mawhorter and **David Garcia**,

<http://bit.ly/2FBwMFi> • “In the summer of 2017, the Terner Center embarked on a seemingly straightforward task: determine the amount and type of fees levied on new residential development in seven California cities — Berkeley, Oakland, Fremont, Los Angeles, Irvine, Sacramento, and Roseville.

“The onerous and lengthy process our research team faced tells the story of the development fee process in California. While fees act as an important tool to mitigate the effects of new construction, the development and administration of these fees is often opaque and lacking oversight, greatly contributing to the complexity and cost of building new housing.

“[Our] research ... revealed several problems with the way development fees are implemented in California cities:

- “Development fees are extremely difficult to estimate.
- “Development fees are usually set without oversight or coordination between city departments, and the type and size of fees levied vary widely from city to city.

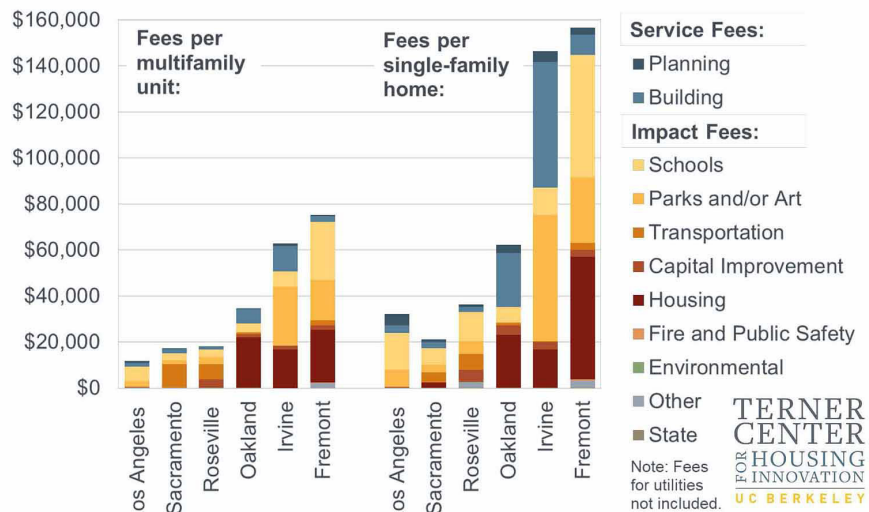
- “Individual fees add up and substantially increase the cost of building housing.
- “Projects are often subject to additional exactions not codified in any fee.

“Our research found that total fees can amount to anywhere from 6 to 18 percent of the median price of a new home depending on location.”

The Terner Center report, “It All Adds Up: The Cost of Housing Development Fees in Seven California Cities,” is available at <http://bit.ly/2GpFjIA>.

Individual fees add up and substantially increase the cost of building housing

Estimated Development Fees:



Credit: Terner Center

(The news roundup continues on next page)

“How to prepare for a crisis you couldn’t possibly predict. ... Most organizations emphasize deep specialization in one’s work rather than familiarity with everyone else’s. But cross-training helps teams change their plans on the fly because it allows team members to shift responsibilities and step into each other’s roles. It also means that people know how the jobs of different team members fit into the bigger picture. This gives teams a better understanding of what kinds of changes to a plan are advisable — or even possible — when a crisis strikes.”

—Chris Clearfield and András Tilcsik, *Harvard Business Review*, <http://bit.ly/2u6lovN>

Bay Area Tech may not be 'over'

The New York Times, March 12, 2018

Kevin Roose, a NY Times columnist, recently wrote about his three-day bus trip through the Midwest with a group of Silicon Valley venture capitalists. ("Silicon Valley Is Over, Says Silicon Valley," March 4, <http://nyti.ms/2GjhSkf>). A "main lesson from the trip," he later wrote (<http://nyti.ms/2GkXIq7>), "was that a lot of Silicon Valley's elite [are] fed up with the Bay Area for various reasons, [including] housing prices."

"I can imagine Silicon Valley investors doing in the Midwest in the near term:

- "1. Investing in companies based there.
- "2. Encouraging Silicon Valley-based portfolio companies to relocate some percentage of their employees there.
- "3. Moving there themselves.

"Nos. 1 and 2 are already happening. Many large tech companies have moved a significant number of jobs out of the Bay Area — Google opened a huge office in Boulder and Facebook is building one in Boston.

"On the bus, I heard a lot of talk about 'mid-tech' jobs (sales, growth, design). There's no reason mid-tech employees can't be in Bend, Ore., or South Bend.

"Unless Bay Area housing costs miraculously come down in the next year or two, Silicon Valley companies will feel increasingly compelled to move as many jobs as possible out of the Bay Area, and in time, the states between the coasts could become Silicon Valley's back and middle office [just as] Wall Street banks have thousands of employees in cities like Columbus, Ohio, and Salt Lake City."

Caltrain on HSR draft business plan

March 9, 2018

<http://bit.ly/2FHEnCo> • In a post on its website, Caltrain has "applauded" the California High Speed Rail Authority "on the release of their Draft 2018 Business Plan. Thanks in part to committed partnership and significant investment from the Authority, Caltrain has been able to proceed to electrify the Caltrain corridor between San Francisco and San Jose, and has secured the investment needed to replace 75 percent of the system's diesel fleet with high-performance electric trains."

"[HSR's] Draft 2018 Business Plan (<http://bit.ly/2FDN2pk>) would expand electrification of the Caltrain corridor south of San Jose to Gilroy [as] part of the phased implementation of a Silicon Valley to Central Valley Line.

"The approach focuses on the implementation of early interim high-speed rail service between San Francisco and Gilroy as early as 2027.

"Caltrain Board Chair Jeannie Bruins said, 'Cities along the Caltrain line south of San Jose are growing rapidly and this will be a tremendous step toward providing them with the transportation infrastructure they need to accommodate that growth.'

"Caltrain also looks forward to working with the [HSR] Authority and partners in San Francisco to ensure that Caltrain and high-speed rail service are extended to Downtown San Francisco's Transbay Transit Center as soon as possible. [That] extension ... holds dramatic potential for the expansion of Caltrain service to new markets and will help facilitate congestion relief and enhanced mobility throughout the entire corridor."

Caltrain is owned and operated by the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board.

(The news roundup continues on next page)

Our 'housing quagmire.' "In a March 8 forum in Sacramento, all six candidates for California governor focused on the topic of housing, with appropriate pledges to do something. [Gavin Newsom:] 'A crisis of this magnitude requires ... an affordable housing moonshot. We can't stand by and do nothing as skyrocketing housing costs and the habitual undersupply of [housing] slowly erodes the California Dream and forces more families onto the streets and out of their communities.' [Antonio] Villaraigosa matched the urgency: 'It's not about when the clock starts — time is up. ... This is a manmade disaster. It is making middle-class families poor, and making poor families homeless. We need everything and everyone at the table to find comprehensive, multi-faceted solutions' rather than 'one-off policy proposals' that 'often pit one interest against the other.'" —Jay Thorwaldson, *Palo Alto Weekly*, <http://bit.ly/2FNUSSW>

Minneapolis: Allow fourplexes citywide to relieve housing shortage?

Star Tribune, March 7, 2018

Adam Belz, <http://strib.mn/2u6vEEy> • “Increasing residential density to accommodate a growing population and drive down the cost of housing in Minneapolis was a campaign priority for Mayor Jacob Frey and Council President Lisa Bender. Faced with a growing population, rising rents and little money to pay for low-income housing, the City Council is hoping greater supply will help meet demand and slow the rise of prices.

“The city has cut several land-use regulations in recent years and regularly bends zoning rules so developers can build more multifamily housing in more places.

“To relieve a worsening shortage of housing, Minneapolis planners have suggested allowing the construction of four-unit apartment buildings in virtually any neighborhood. ‘You can’t create more housing options if you don’t allow for them,’ Frey said.

“The majority of the city is now zoned either for single- or two-family homes, and rewriting the rules to allow fourplexes on those properties would be a historic shift.

“Council Member Cam Gordon, who represents the area around the University of Minnesota, said it’s crucial for the city to plan for increased density. [But] he is concerned about unintended consequences from allowing owners to build fourplexes anywhere, and he worries that cheaper homes in neighborhoods that need starter homes would be the first to get torn down to make way for fourplexes.”

Vancouver: 5% of homes empty and liable for new tax

The Guardian, March 7, 2018

<http://bit.ly/2tYPH7v> • “Thousands of homes in Vancouver have been declared unused and liable for a new empty homes tax as part of a government attempt to tackle skyrocketing home prices and soaring rents.

“About 4.6 percent or 8,481 homes in the city stood empty or underutilized for more than 180 days in 2017, according to declarations submitted to the municipality by 98.85 percent of homeowners. Properties deemed empty will be subjected to a tax of 1 percent of their assessed value.

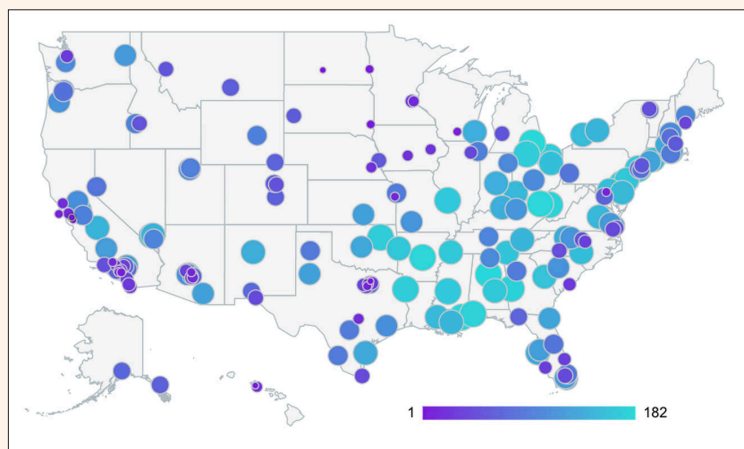
“In 2017 the government of British Columbia raised its foreign buyer tax from 15 percent to 20 percent to target offshore investors blamed for pushing up prices. Toronto, Canada’s biggest city, followed suit with a 15 percent tax in April.

“Before the foreign buyer tax, sales agents said investors in Asia were acquiring up to 40 percent of Vancouver condominium projects marketed abroad, absorbing the more expensive units that domestic buyers could not afford. Nearly 61 percent of the homes declared empty in Vancouver were condos, and other multifamily properties made up almost 6 percent, according to the city government. More than a quarter of the empty properties were in downtown Vancouver.

“‘This is not insignificant considering that the rental vacancy rate is less than 1 percent in Vancouver,’ said Robert Hogue, senior economist at Royal Bank of Canada. ‘This kind of data is completely new, so it is difficult to put into context.’”

(The news roundup continues on next page)

Look who’s happy now. WalletHub compared 182 of the largest American cities, including the 150 most populated cities in every state, across three categories: emotional and physical well-being, income and employment, and community and environment. The happiest cities in the country include five in northern California (national rank in parentheses): Fremont (1), San Jose (3), San Francisco (13), Oakland (18), and Santa Rosa (22). —Adam McCann, WalletHub. Methodology and complete list of cities at <http://bit.ly/2tUVWcs>. Hat tip to Kristina Houck, La Jolla Patch, <http://bit.ly/2FJPMSi>



2018’s Happiest Cities in America. Source: WalletHub. Interactive map at <http://bit.ly/2tUVWcs>

North Bay: Prefab finds a home in fire-ravaged neighborhoods

The New York Times, March 5, 2018

Julie Lasky, <http://nyti.ms/2FshVgj> • “If ever there was a time and place for prefab, it is now, in Northern California. Even before the fires, stringent statewide building regulations and a shortage of contractors and construction workers made erecting a home a challenge. With the spike in demand for labor and materials, the wait time for completing a stick-built house in the area is estimated to be four years at a cost from \$500 to \$700 per square foot.

“Compare that with what Stillwater Dwellings (<http://bit.ly/2GcVuZP>) offers. The Seattle-based prefab company charges \$350 to \$400 per square foot for a basic move-in-ready home assembled on a prepared foundation. Construction takes six to eight months once a building permit is issued.

“After the fires, the rebuilding process will be hampered by competition for contractors, and building departments struggling to expedite paperwork. Prefab puts fewer demands on local construction professionals because so much of it is standardized.

“But Allison Arieff, a writer and former editor of *Dwell* and the author of the 2002 book ‘Prefab,’ doubts prefab will blossom into a viable movement.

“‘The issue for prefab isn’t aesthetic,’ she said. ‘The permitting is the hiccup.’ And the cost of single-family homes built largely in factories is still too high to create an economy of scale. As Amanda Dameron, lately of *Dwell*, put it, ‘Only the wealthy can afford to employ what is supposed to be a cheap alternative.’”

BART: Bill would give agency power to set station-area zoning

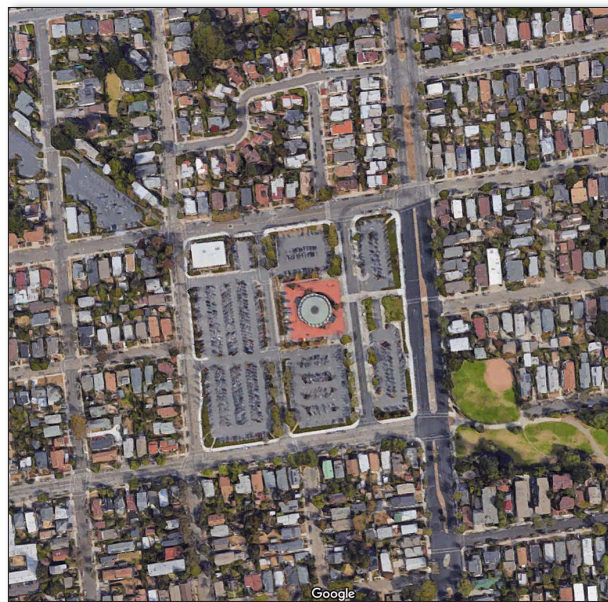
KQED News, March 5, 2018

Dan Brekke, <http://bit.ly/2G1luax> • “Assembly members David Chiu, D-San Francisco, and Tim Grayson, D-Concord, introduced AB 2923 (<http://bit.ly/2G0iRpc>) in February. It would set new rules for development on BART property, mostly on parking lots that surround many of the agency’s stations.

“‘We have too many BART stations surrounded by parking lots,’ Chiu said in an interview March 4. ‘It’s much more effective to build a couple floors of housing on top of what is an open parking lot than what we see today. We’re trying to jump-start the conversation in every locality that has a BART station ... the best way to deliver housing without disrupting existing communities.’

“AB 2923 would apply to BART-owned parcels of at least one-quarter acre and within a half-mile of a BART station entrance. If BART fails to enact new standards for transit-oriented development by April 2019, the bill would use the zoning guidelines the agency put in place last year, <http://bit.ly/2G10EaZ>.

“The guidelines categorize BART stations as regional center stations (downtown Oakland); urban neighborhood/city center stations (North Berkeley); and neighborhood or town center stations (along the Pittsburg-Bay Point line in Contra Costa County). The guidelines call for developments of at least 12 stories for regional centers; at least seven stories around stations like North Berkeley (pictured here), and at least five stories around the suburban Contra Costa County stations [at] a minimum of 75 units per acre.”



North Berkeley BART station area. Image: Google Maps

(The news roundup continues on next page)

Sacramento: State may tear down freeway bridges, build bigger ones

The Sacramento Bee, March 5, 2018

Tony Bizjak, <http://bit.ly/2FxcyIM> • “Flush with new gas tax funds, state officials are exploring what could be the biggest Sacramento freeway redo in modern times — tearing down and replacing the twin freeway bridges that carry Interstate 5 over the American River.

“Caltrans says the half-mile spans just north of downtown are among 45 pinch-points the agency has identified on three major freight corridors — I-5, I-80, I-10/60 — that force oversized trucks onto sometimes long and costly detours.

“In some cases, overpasses are too low. A notorious one on I-80 in Berkeley, less than five miles from the Oakland port, is only 14 feet, 9 inches tall, more than a foot lower than the

16-foot modern federal standard for existing bridges.

The federal standard for new bridges is 16 feet, 6 inches.

“‘The freight industry in California is a big part of the economy,’ said California Transportation Agency Secretary Brian Annis. ‘We have major ports, and those ports have competitors in other states. Investing in this type of infrastructure ... gets goods efficiently to market.’

“Focusing on the three main freight freeways that connect to coastal ports will give the state more bang for the buck, Annis said. ‘It is efficient for freight, but good for communities too, because you are keeping the trucks on those primary freight corridors.’ ”

SoMa: Calls for more housing in area plan

San Francisco Examiner, March 3, 2018

Laura Waxmann, <http://bit.ly/2CWiusJ> • “New residential development in [Central SoMa] allowed under the plan is expected to result in 7,000 housing units, of which 33 percent will be affordable. But community stakeholders and planning commissioners at a Planning Commission hearing March 2 agreed the plan could do more.

“The planning commissioners voted to initiate the plan, which is a first step in its adoption, but acknowledging that a ‘second act’ was needed to increase housing significantly as the neighborhood faced staggering levels of anticipated growth.

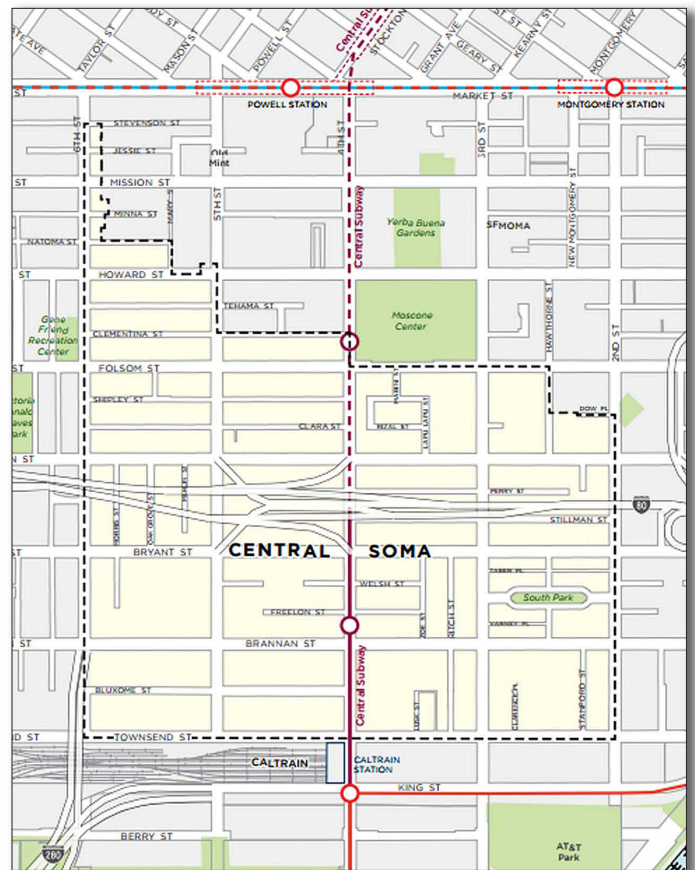
“John Eberling, executive director of the affordable housing developer TODCO and a member of We Are Soma, said that his coalition ‘opposes the plan as it now stands,’ and called for 50 percent of the housing to be affordable.

“Eberling said the plan lacks protections for current residents in the area, calling it a ‘downtown expansion plan of tech office spaces into our SoMa neighborhood.’

“Supervisor Jane Kim, who introduced the plan at the hearing, said the 33 percent affordable housing required for proposed development in the area was significant [and] felt like a dream a few years ago.

“Commissioner Katherin Moore, FAICP, urged her fellow commissioners and planning department staff to proceed with caution.

“‘We have failed to have a proper [jobs-to-housing] balance in San Francisco for a long time,’ adding that she thought the jobs-to-housing ‘tilt’ proposed under the plan to be ‘a very extreme one.’ ” ■



Central SoMa area plan boundary. Credit: San Francisco Planning Department

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