

NORTHERN NEWS



American Planning Association
California Chapter
Northern
Making Great Communities Happen

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

January/February 2017

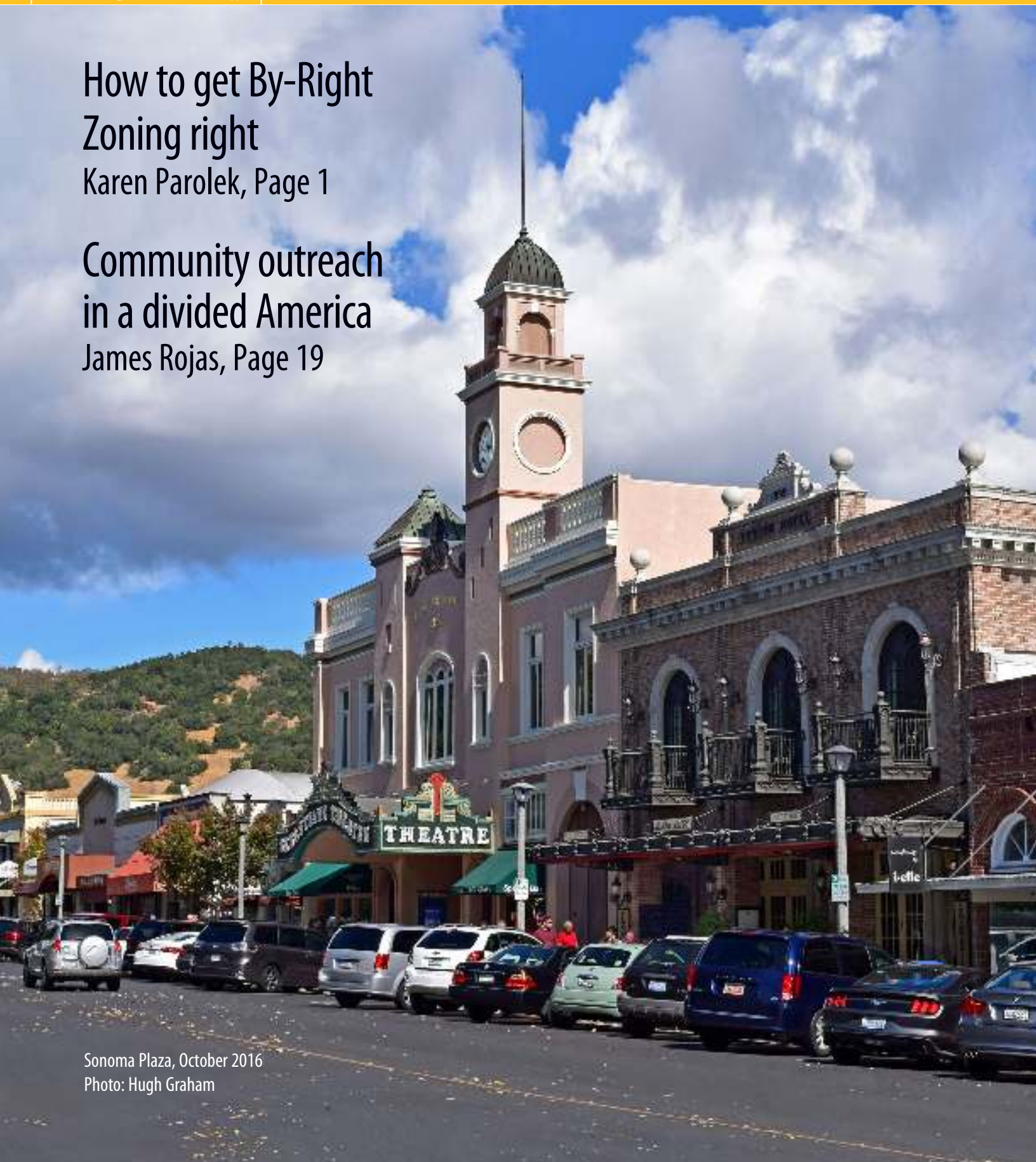


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Sonoma Plaza, October 2016
Photo: Hugh Graham



How to get By-Right Zoning right

Karen Parolek

Even though the California State legislature turned it down in its 2016 session, *By-Right Zoning* is getting a lot of buzz these days as a needed tool to help solve the affordable housing crisis many communities are facing. A zoning code is considered “by-right” if the approvals process is streamlined so that projects that comply with the zoning standards receive their approval without a discretionary review process. Unfortunately, in the discussion about a by-right process, conventional zoning has unnecessarily pitted housing advocates against neighborhood advocates.

Housing advocates and developers rightfully claim that discretionary review processes are contributing to housing crises across the country by increasing the cost and delivery rate of housing, and often directly preventing needed housing from getting built.

Former President Obama, Governor Brown of California, and the State of Massachusetts have joined the “By-Right Zoning” bandwagon.

However, residents, environmental groups, and others are upset about the idea of By-Right Zoning because it often seems that the discretionary review process is their only tool to prevent inappropriate and out-of-scale development. Their zoning codes are too blunt to provide the needed control, so they cling to discretionary review as their only protection. In some cases, this may be NIMBYs refusing to allow more or certain people into their communities. In many other cases, however, these are community members from all walks of life who want walkable neighborhood living rather than city living. They feel they have no other tools to compel developers to be respectful of their cherished places. From this perspective, By-Right Zoning may have Jane Jacobs rolling in her grave.

Conventional zoning is too blunt for a by-right process

So, isn't zoning supposed to define what can be built in our communities? The answer is yes, but conventional zoning is plainly flawed. Here are some of the reasons it doesn't work well to regulate our walkable neighborhoods. Conventional zoning:

- Regulates in the negative, describing what is not allowed rather than what is required or intended, preventing any possibility of accurately predicting what will be built. Setbacks, Floor Area Ratio (FAR), and density are examples of unpredictable regulations.
- Doesn't regulate enough detail regarding the form of the building and how it shapes the public space (and often regulates too

much detail about unnecessary things). For example, in walkable neighborhoods, it's often important that the front door faces the street, but most zoning doesn't address this.

“Conventional zoning has unnecessarily pitted housing advocates against neighborhood advocates.”



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Karen Parolek. The nature of Form-Based Codes makes it easy for a community to comprehend what is prescribed and allowed. Once the public is assured the outcome will be appropriate to the neighborhood, the code can then include a by-right review process. [Page 1](#)

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Alan Murphy. In a West Hollywood case, the court of appeal upheld the validity of in-lieu fees as an alternative to an on-site inclusionary housing requirement. The fees need only be reasonably related to the overall availability of affordable housing. [Page 20](#)

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Director's note

Sharon Grewal, AICP

Happy 2017!

We are beginning the year with significant change in Washington, but I believe we at the local level have the greatest impact in shaping our communities. In these challenging times, we, the planning community, have the opportunity to be a force for good and a force for change. We must be that change, involved in and committed to improving our communities.

During the Northern Section Retreat January 21st, your Board reflected on new ways we can engage our planning community and build coalitions with local organizations. As Section Director, I also have the privilege of representing the Northern Section on the California Chapter Board and look forward to bringing you great ideas from the Chapter Retreats.

In 2016, our Section hosted numerous events, offered you a total of 72.75 AICP | CM credits, awarded four Awards of Merit and eight Awards of Excellence, raised funds for California Planning Foundation (CPF) scholarships, and launched a revamped mentorship program with 200 members.

We plan to continue our programming and build on it in 2017. We are enhancing our Awards program, developing a Planning Commissioner Training program, adjusting for the new AICP exam, traveling to Southeast Asia with our International Planning Program (individuals pay their way), partnering with the California Planning Roundtable (CPR) to provide core professional skills training, renovating our website and adding mobile features, and offering more educational and network opportunities throughout our geographic area for professionals at all levels of experience.

New partnerships with SPUR and ULI

Northern Section is also excited to announce new partnerships with SPUR and the Urban Land Institute, ULI. These valuable partnerships offer an exchange of information and ideas and an opportunity to network with other professionals in related fields with whom we engage and collaborate in our work.

We have partnered with SPUR to co-sponsor dozens of free events each year in Oakland, San Francisco, and San Jose for AICP | CM credits. In association with ULI, we are kicking off our Northern Section Speaker Series, a series of educational programs offering AICP | CM credits, that covers relevant and current topics on implementing sustainability and regeneration at district and neighborhood scales.

We start the Speaker Series with a January 26th session on Low-Carbon Districts and Communities. To join us for this session with pioneers in district and neighborhood-scale urban regeneration, please visit <http://bit.ly/LtpX2X> for the promo code and registration link.

Our Section also continues to pursue partnerships with other agencies and local organizations to promote planning and build strong connections. If you know of organizations that would be interested in partnering with local APA, please contact me at director@norcalapa.org.

Section election

The votes are in! Sincere congratulations to **James Castañeda, AICP**, whom you elected as our new **Director Elect**. James took office on January 1 for a two-year term. I'm looking forward to continuing a great working relationship. Please see [page 17](#) for a brief bio.

New Board members

At our meeting November 10th, the Northern Section Board appointed **Dana Hoffman, AICP**, as East Bay Regional Activity Coordinator and **Eric Tucker** as University Liaison. We enthusiastically welcome Dana and Eric to the Board. Please see [page 18](#) for brief bios.

The Board and I are excited about bringing you a host of new types of events this year. You can check our calendar in our eNews every other week, and you can always go to <http://bit.ly/LtpX2X> to see what's coming up. We welcome your feedback and ideas. Stay tuned, and best wishes for an amazing year! ■

Assessing San Jose's Northside neighborhood

Lillian Hua and Kyle Kryak

A comprehensive planning report prepared by SJSU graduate students and CommUniverCity will serve as a foundation for future planning efforts in San Jose's Northside neighborhood.

This past fall, San Jose State University's Urban and Regional Planning graduate students conducted a community assessment of San Jose's Northside. The assessment is the first step in a multi-year neighborhood planning effort to form a baseline of existing conditions and help the community identify its planning priorities.

The effort unites a local community with San Jose State University and the City of San Jose. CommUniverCity (CUC) has been "building community" for over a decade in underserved San Jose communities by engaging residents and students to identify neighborhood-driven goals. Students used an asset-based community development approach that acknowledges the community's strengths, its valued institutions, and individuals who can help shape planning strategies.



San Jose's Northside Neighborhood.

Project Objectives

Compiling a comprehensive assessment of current conditions in the neighborhood was the first objective. Topics included the community's history, character, and identity, land use and transportation, stakeholder identification, and a commercial corridor analysis. Students used aerial photos, walking tours, structured observation, cognitive and demographic mapping, spatial data collection, stakeholder interviews, and door-to-door surveys.

A second objective was to hold a community open house to solicit input on the students' findings. The open house offered the students an opportunity to present preliminary findings via detailed demographic maps, a student-produced documentary video, and open discussion stations. An important outcome of the open house was gathering public opinion on the neighborhood's "top ten planning priorities," a list last compiled in 2002 as part of the city's Strong Neighborhoods Initiative.

A third project objective was to use data from the assessment and the open house to produce a comprehensive Community Assessment Report.

Divide and assess

To conduct a comprehensive assessment of Northside, the students formed three teams:

- **Community history, character and identity, and open house logistics:** This team conducted research on the historic richness of Northside, including historic buildings, events, and notable people. To describe the character of the neighborhood, the team catalogued differences in neighborhood architecture, businesses, and demographics. The team consolidated its findings with those from other teams to create a blueprint for a November 16th open house at Grant Elementary School, featuring stations tied to key assessment themes. Food was provided, and a special area was set aside for children to offer their views of the community.
- **Land use, mobility, urban form, and graphics:** This team examined traffic congestion, speeding vehicles, and pedestrian safety. In addition to collecting field data, the team consulted previously adopted reports and other planning documents and created graphics and maps that captured the essence of the community. Those were presented at the open house as an opportunity to collect additional comments from attendees.

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World roundup

Excerpts from around the world, linked to the original articles

Shenzhen: A record 11 skyscrapers completed in 2016

Quartz, January 12, 2017

Echo Huang, <http://bit.ly/2jl5mr6> • Shenzhen, a South China city of 11 million people contiguous to Hong Kong, “completed more skyscrapers last year than the US and Australia combined.”

“In 2016 the world saw the completion of 128 skyscrapers, up from 114 in 2015, according to the US-based Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat. (CTBUH defines a skyscraper as being higher than 656 ft.) Of those, 84 came from China, a new record for the nation.

“Meanwhile, many cities in China have growing office vacancy rates. In Shanghai’s central business district — home to the Shanghai Tower, the nation’s tallest building at 2073 ft. (<http://bit.ly/2jla4oN>) — the rate jumped from 7.3 percent in the third quarter last year to 10.5 percent in the fourth, according to a Cushman and Wakefield report.

“China’s building boom is likely to slow down, notes the CTBUH. But with 328 skyscrapers under construction in 2017, it might take a while.”

Meanwhile, “China’s appetite for US investments is higher than ever, [despite] China’s growing fears about capital outflow and a generally trade-averse Trump administration. The country has invested some \$64 billion in the US since 1990, most of that after 2008 according to figures from research firm Rhodium Group. Last year, Chinese foreign direct investment (FDI) into the US surpassed FDI flowing in the opposite direction for the first time ever — with US firms investing a total of \$13.1 billion in China, and China investing \$15.3 in the US.” <http://bit.ly/2jlaprf>



Ping An Finance Center, Shenzhen. At 119 floors and 2048 feet, it is China’s second tallest building. Photo: Wishva de Silva via Wikimedia CC BY-SA 4.0, <http://bit.ly/2jlfC2D>

UK doubles down on garden villages

Financial Times, January 1, 2017 (subscription required)

Kate Allen, <http://on.ft.com/2jnE7Mk> • “Britain’s first wave of ‘garden villages’ has been given the nod along with three new ‘garden towns,’ in a move to build up to 200,000 new homes.

“The 14 villages of 1,500 to 10,000 homes each are a new addition to the government’s program of garden town construction. The villages — which could total up to 48,000 homes — will be distinct new places rather than extensions to existing urban areas, and span the country from Cumbria to Devon.

“Garden towns are settlements of more than 10,000 homes, while garden villages comprise 1,500–10,000. Both are based on the urban planning ideas of Ebenezer Howard, who in the 1890s set out the idea of planned, self-contained settlements surrounded by a ring of countryside.

“The earliest garden towns, constructed in the 1900s, included Letchworth and Welwyn. The idea was revived in the 1940s to cope with postwar slum clearance, resulting in the construction of a wave of new towns. They proved controversial, however, and a 2015 report argued that the new towns never achieved sufficient scale to be economically successful.

“Seven garden settlements — which can be appealing for local politicians whose electorates are often opposed to development in existing neighbourhoods — are already being built, and more are planned.

“Gavin Barwell, housing minister, said the concept of garden villages and towns ‘not only delivers homes, it also brings new jobs and facilities and a big boost to local economies.’”

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U.S. roundup

Excerpts from around the country, linked to the original articles

State transportation agencies will measure movement of people, not cars

StreetsblogUSA, January 12, 2017

Angie Schmitt, <http://bit.ly/2jwAVf5> • “What you measure is what you get, and for a long time, America’s transportation policy establishment was obsessed with measuring just car congestion in the quest for free-flowing vehicular traffic. The result is wider highways, more sprawl, and more congestion.

“But on January 9, U.S. DOT changed course, releasing new standards to guide how transportation agencies measure their performance (<http://bit.ly/2jwsOiB>).

“An earlier draft of these rules would have codified emphasizing the movement of cars and trucks as a primary goal. Thousands of comments poured in demanding an approach that also values transit, biking, and walking — and the agency listened.

“The revised U.S. DOT standards will lead agencies to assess their work in ways that support investments in transit and active transportation, according to Stephen Lee Davis at Transportation for America. No funding is at stake — U.S. DOT can’t reward or punish state DOTs, which will now have to set new goals and report their progress, with new ways to hold transportation policy makers accountable.

“Here are four key wins in the new rules — which can’t be struck down easily as they’re the product of a lengthy regulatory process mandated by the 2012 federal transportation bill.

1. States will measure the movement of people, not just vehicles.
2. State DOTs will have to track their impact on carbon emissions.
3. People who walk, bike, or ride transit will be counted.
4. Free-flowing rush hour car traffic isn’t the goal.”

New York: City added or preserved most affordable housing units since 1989

The New York Times, January 11, 2017

Charles V. Bagli, <http://nyti.ms/2jwUHap> • “Mayor Bill de Blasio announced that his administration built or preserved 21,963 units of housing in 2016 for poor and working-class New Yorkers, the most since 1989. The total includes 6,844 apartments in newly constructed buildings, according to data provided by city housing officials.

“These apartments are earmarked for families and individuals who meet income requirements, with about 35 percent of the units set aside for three-person households making no more than \$40,800.

“Mr. de Blasio — even before he took office in 2014 — pledged to build or preserve 200,000 units over the next decade. But affordable housing remains a challenge, given the city’s increasing population, the demand for housing at all income levels, and a wave of luxury development that has washed over nearly every neighborhood in the city.

“The de Blasio administration has increasingly sought to earmark more affordable apartments for New Yorkers with very low and extremely low incomes. About one-fifth of the apartments built or preserved in 2016 — far above the 8 percent goal set in the city’s housing plan — were for those earning less than \$25,000.

“Of the units built or preserved last year, more than 30 percent were in Manhattan, with about 29 percent each in the Bronx and Brooklyn.

“The only time the city built or preserved more housing was in 1989, when Mayor Edward I. Koch completed 23,136 affordable units.”

(U.S. continues on [page 25](#))

Mountain View ‘moonshot’ could alleviate traffic mess. SkyTran, a NASA Space Act company headquartered at the NASA Ames Research Center, is a patented, high-speed, low-cost, elevated Personal Rapid Transportation (PRT) system. The system is one of several options that could be studied by the city of Mountain View in a \$250,000 study commissioned to look into building an automated-guideway transit (AGT) line linking the city’s downtown transit center and the bustling North Bayshore tech hub. Such driverless systems usually move along elevated guideways and avoid much of the difficult property acquisition that hinders many transportation projects. —Mark Noack, *Mountain View Voice*, <http://bit.ly/2jIHxpj>

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Meet a local planner

By Siân Llewellyn, AICP



Andrea Ouse, AICP, has been with the city of Vallejo a little more than four years and is the community and economic development director. She holds an MPA in public administration from Cal State East Bay and a BS in city and regional planning from Cal Poly SLO.

How did you come to planning?

I didn't know about planning until I was well into my undergraduate studies. I had been taking architecture classes and looking around, and discovered the planning curriculum at Cal Poly – San Luis Obispo. I was impressed that the course of study was so broad, and covered such a wide range of disciplines. This was an accredited undergraduate program in a highly regarded architecture school. I decided to finish my undergrad there and get the planning degree. Later in my career, I got an MPA from California State University – East Bay.

Though I didn't know about planning as a profession until after I started college, I was always interested in cities. I grew up in the rural Central Valley and my family took trips to cities around the west. I experienced the energy of Portland, Spokane, Seattle, the World's fair in Vancouver, and of course, San Francisco.

During my undergraduate studies I had two internships. The first was with the City of Paso Robles. I worked on geo-coding the city on an early GIS platform. While in the planning department, I met some of my first mentors. My second internship, during my senior year, was a four-month urban design fellowship with the City and County of San Francisco. I had a sublet on Russian Hill and completely enjoyed city life during my last semester in college. I worked on the transition of a Diamond Heights housing development from the San Francisco Redevelopment Authority to the City. We mapped out the policies that would be required as the project moved under City control. It was great experience, after which I was ready to start my career.

Tell us about your career path

I graduated into the teeth of the recession in 1992. Our recent Great Recession reminded me of those early days — our economy was shot and there were very few jobs of any sort in California. My first real job was as a staff planner in Yuma, Arizona, where I was part of the economic refugee migration, as we called it, working outside of California.

(continued on next page)



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Meet a local planner (continued from previous page)

Planning in Arizona was less constrained legislatively than in California. For example, there was no state environmental review with the reach of CEQA. I learned a lot, but knew I wanted to be back in northern California. I moved back to the Bay Area as an assistant planner in Pacifica in 1994. That began my 16 years as a planner on the Peninsula: I moved to Daly City in 1997, Belmont in 2000, and Colma in 2002, where I ultimately became the Town's city planner.

The Colma job was interesting because it brought me into a consulting firm. The Town had outsourced its planning department, and the firm holding the contract was LSA Associates. I eventually handed off the City Planner hat at Colma to another consultant at LSA so I could concentrate on the broader consulting side at the firm. I stayed with LSA for 10 years and became managing principal of their South San Francisco office. So I have been on both sides of the public-private planning fence.

By 2012, I wanted a change. While I enjoyed consulting and the broad range of projects, I missed the full spectrum of responsibilities that comes with being rooted in the community. I wanted to be leading change in a specific community.

I moved to the City of Vallejo as Planning Manager in December 2012. The city faced a number of challenges but had made a commitment to long range planning and had a great City Manager, Dan Keen. He is also a planner and has become a great mentor. This is where I wanted to invest my time, a place where I could feel the continuum of change that you get when you are imbedded in a community. In June 2015, I became the city's Director of Community and Economic Development. I've been building my own team; it has been enthralling to see it come together and grow. It has been a great (and exhausting!) ride to partner with all the other department heads, all committed to the same vision as the City moves to realize its long-range plan.

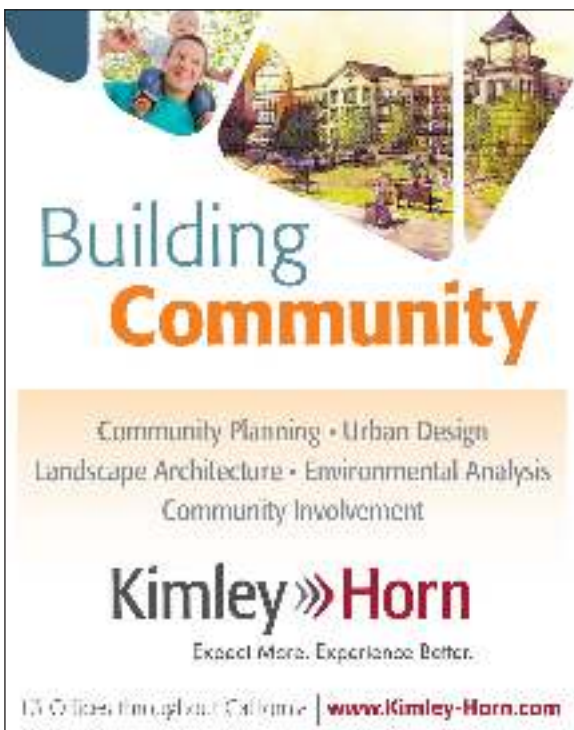
The community has loudly and authoritatively established a vision for its future. That has brought about a huge change in the community's perception of itself and the outside world's perception of Vallejo.

What topics interest you now?

We are just finishing the Healthy Community element of our Vallejo General Plan Update. This has me thinking about how planning needs to be better connected with public health. Planners have so concentrated on the physical shape of our cities and towns that we forget that our planning affects our communities' public health. We need a better interweaving of city planning and public health — and not just on physical connection issues like walkability, but also on the particular health impacts of what we do.

Take asthma, for example: If there's a high incidence location and we back into solving the issue through planning, we are only addressing the symptoms. Take food deserts, the inability in particular areas

(continued on next page)



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

to find healthy nutritious affordable food: If a neighborhood has no groceries, it may be for physical and economic reasons, but that's ultimately a public health issue. We need to get ahead of — to have earlier and more extensive conversations about — these issues, not just address them after the fact.

Any advice to planners starting out?

Find a mentor. Mentors have had a profound impact on my career. Not just through formal mentoring programs, but also informal guidance on topics I hadn't considered until after they were introduced to me. For example, I learned about finance and budgeting from informal mentors who took the time to explain them. By watching another informal mentor, I learned about establishing a vision for a department. At the time, I hadn't even thought I would one day need that skill.

Having access (and your mind open) to a variety of skills prepares you for leadership. You can learn many of these skills through informal mentoring, perhaps from someone in an entirely different field. Be open to absorbing information from different disciplines, and you will keep learning throughout your career.

Which three cities do you admire, and why?

Lisbon, Portugal, really resonates. My family background is Portuguese (and Native American), so perhaps I have a bias. Lisbon is at the same longitude as and feels like a European version of San Francisco. It is also a water-based city and a working city, not just a destination city.

San Francisco — my home city for my entire life. Growing up in Merced County, I was only a couple of hours away. I vividly remember what it was like to come to visit in the early 1970s, and it has been fun to watch the city evolve over the past four decades.

New York City — it has such energy about it; all those tight-knit neighborhoods sewn together into a tapestry. New York wins, I always say.

All interviews are edited. Interviewer Siân Llewellyn, AICP, lives in San Francisco and is Director of Urban Development at Hatch. ■

Our Platonic bridge. The late Kevin Starr, "on the Golden Gate Bridge ('Golden Gate,' 2010, <http://nyti.ms/2k2PQkv>): 'Like the Parthenon, the Golden Gate Bridge seems Platonic in its perfection, as if the harmonies and resolutions of creation as understood by mathematics and abstract thought have been effortlessly materialized through engineering design.'" —Mike McPhate, *California Today*, <http://bit.ly/2k7I31X>



Call for papers and Design Awards competition: *Public Places for community, democracy, health, and equity*

54th International Making Cities Livable Conference,
Santa Fe, NM, October 2-6, 2017

Suzanne Lennard, Ph.D. (Arch.)

Public places — our streets, plazas, squares, and green spaces — belong to all of us! They are our democratically shared common wealth — the most important aspect of every city. How we treat the public realm demonstrates how we value our fellow citizens, our democratic principles, our health, and our community.

Join us in Santa Fe to share your achievements and learn from others how we can take back our streets and squares — and in the process, strengthen community, civic engagement, health, and equity.

Paper proposals and project submissions are invited on the following issues:

- Public Places for community and democratic dialogue
- Public Places for health
- Public Places for increasing equity

To submit a project, please go to <http://bit.ly/2hBHdYH>.

To give a presentation at the conference, please see the Call for Papers at <http://bit.ly/2hBSmc6>.

Extended deadline for submission is February 28, 2017.



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AICP | CM 2015–16 reporting period has ended

From APA National: “On December 31, 89 percent of AICP members whose Certification Maintenance reporting period began January 1, 2015, had logged at least 16 of the 32 required CM credits, and 70 percent had met all CM requirements. Members in this reporting period who have not completed CM requirements must earn and log all required CM credits by **May 31, 2017**. Missing this deadline will cause AICP membership to lapse and will require reinstatement before regaining use of the AICP credential.” ■



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BAAQMD announces Draft 2017 Clean Air Plan

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District's draft 2017 Clean Air Plan (PDF, 5MB, 264 pp.) is available for review at <http://bit.ly/2jq1Xao>. The plan is a call to action to “Spare the Air and Cool the Climate” — to lead the region to a post-carbon economy, to continue progress toward attaining all state and federal air quality standards, and to eliminate health risk disparities from exposure to air pollution among Bay Area communities.

Action plan

The plan includes a wide range of proposed “control measures” — actions to reduce combustion-related activities, decrease fossil fuel combustion, improve energy efficiency, and decrease emissions of potent greenhouse gases. Many measures reduce several pollutants: ozone precursors, particulate matter, air toxics, and/or greenhouse gases. Others focus on a single type of pollutant, such as super GHGs like methane and black carbon, or harmful fine particles which impact public health.

Public Comment period

The District invites your review and comment on the draft plan. Comments should be submitted by February 28 to cleanairplan@baaqmd.gov. Open houses on the plan are scheduled for January 30 through February 8. Check for dates and locations at 2017 Clean Air Plan, <http://bit.ly/2jpFRCs>. ■

APA California 2017 Call for presentations

January 31, 2017, at 11:59 p.m., is the deadline to submit a session proposal for the APA California 2017 Conference in Sacramento.

Proposals should reflect the conference theme of Capitalizing on Our Diversity. **For more information**, read the Call for Presentations at <http://bit.ly/2jHFqn1>.

Time is short! **Submit your presentation proposal at** <http://bit.ly/2jHoddn>.

Questions? Contact Julia Lave Johnston and Jeff Henderson, AICP, Programs Committee Co-Chairs, at apa.california.2017.programs@gmail.com. ■

- Is overly complicated, often with layers of fixes and overlays, rendering it nearly impossible to determine what can and cannot be built.

Without fixing these problems, removing the discretionary review process in cities and towns with conventional zoning could detrimentally affect our walkable neighborhoods.

The win-win of Form-Based Codes and a by-right process

Fortunately, we have a proven solution: Form-Based Codes (FBCs). FBCs regulate the form of the buildings in a prescriptive manner and at a sufficient level of detail so that the outcome is predictable. This renders the design review process unnecessary, enabling by-right review. FBCs work like this:

1. Create a detailed community vision

First, the community comes together to create a physical vision for their places, including important details about how the buildings must be built to contribute to the public spaces that are our streets and plazas. The community can dial up or down the level of detail they include based on what they want to allow or require in their neighborhoods.

Importantly, this Form-Based Coding process also ensures that the detailed discussion about where and what type of housing to allow happens at a community level, preventing later project-level battles. While building on decisions made during the general plan process, this detailed visioning with renderings lets community members see and understand what their town may look like once their housing decisions are implemented, and enables them to modify those decisions as needed. It translates policies into pictures the public can truly grasp.

This visioning process is the best time and place for communities to show leadership in advocating for all constituents' right to decent, affordable, walkable housing options, and for neighbors to consider their desires for their own neighborhoods within the context of how many families are homeless or paying too much of their income for housing and transportation.

Importantly, this Form-Based Coding process also ensures that the detailed discussion about where and what type of housing to allow happens at a community level, preventing later project-level battles.

2. Write prescriptive regulations

Once these decisions are made, the FBC is written to prescribe what can be built, mostly by focusing on the form of the buildings as they shape the public space, although also including simplified use regulations. Examples include regulating front build-to lines — rather than setback lines — and maximum footprints to prevent buildings that are too large for the neighborhood character. These regulations are carefully written to reflect the context — the regulations for a downtown main street will be different from those for a smaller neighborhood main street. They are also written to regulate only what is truly necessary, removing what is unnecessary or obsolete.



Because of the prescriptive and simplified nature of FBCs, the community can more easily understand what the code allows and can work with city staff to vet the code to ensure the prescribed outcome is appropriate for the neighborhood. In other words, everyone can actually understand the code and its intent, so everyone can help make sure it's right.

3. FBCs enable a by-right approval process

Once the desired outcome is prescribed appropriately in the FBC, the code can then include a by-right review process. A discretionary process is no longer necessary because the community can be confident that what will be built will be appropriate.

The by-right review process lets developers know all the requirements before they start the design process, so they can create a more accurate pro forma to determine

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How to get By-Right Zoning right

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whether the project will be viable. They will also only have to design the building once, saving the cost of multiple redesigns. The lower cost and lower risk of development under a by-right process will contribute to making projects more viable, leading to more housing being built and at lower costs. In addition, the reduced risk on projects within FBC areas can enable developers to lower their profit margin thresholds, since they will not need to cover the cost of projects that did not survive risky discretionary review processes.

By-Right Zoning is needed, so let's get it right

By-Right Zoning is critically important to increase housing affordability at all levels of the housing spectrum. To get it right, conventional zoning codes need to be updated to FBCs to effectively prescribe the outcome desired by the community, enabling communities to confidently let go of discretionary review. FBCs with By-Right Zoning contribute to housing affordability, ensure that development meets the community's vision, and help to provide housing options for everyone who wants to live in a walkable neighborhood.



Karen Parolek, a leading innovator in the development of Form-Based Coding, is Principal and CFO at Opticos Design, Inc. in Berkeley, where she advocates for healthy, walkable, and equitable communities. She holds a bachelor of architecture from the University of Notre Dame and co-wrote with Daniel Parolek and Paul Crawford "Form Based Codes: A Guide for Planners, Urban Designers, Municipalities, and Developers (2008, John Wiley and Sons). You can reach her at karen.parolek@opticosdesign.com. ■

A Guide for Planners, Urban Designers, Municipalities, and Developers (2008, John Wiley and Sons). You can reach her at karen.parolek@opticosdesign.com. ■

AICP Exam workshops begin at UC Berkeley

Become a member of AICP! APA California–Northern Section is again sponsoring a series of AICP examination preparation workshops at UC Berkeley.

The sessions will be held every third Saturday from late January through early May, from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m., with a lunch break between the morning and afternoon classes. Expert experienced speakers, recent successful workshop graduates, or the course organizer, Prof. Don Bradley, Ph.D., AICP, will cover each of APA National's exam domains. Dr. Bradley, who is Northern Section's AICP Director, has presented these courses at various Bay Area locations for 28 years.

All necessary study materials, including APA National's current and past CDs (a \$500 value), a glossary, speaker handouts, practice tests with answers and rationales, test taking tips, and readings are provided for the course fee of \$100. The fee is waived for full time planning students and university employees; a \$50 rate is available for APA board members; and scholarships are available through APA California and Northern Section.

"If you attend the workshops and do a reasonable and appropriate amount of studying, I guarantee you will pass the broad and difficult national exam, or you can return to the workshops at no additional cost until you pass," said Bradley.

The dates for the upcoming meetings are January 28, February 18, March 11, April 1, April 22, and May 13. Each meeting covers a different domain. The last workshop is held one week before the national test window closes.

Classes will be held in Wurster Hall, home of the College of Environmental Design and the Department of City and Regional Planning, at Bancroft and College Avenue on the southeast corner of campus.

To register, call (650) 592-0915, email Dr.DonBradley@comcast.net, or send a check for \$100 to:

Donald Bradley,
2995 Woodside Road, Suite 400,
Woodside, CA 94062.

- **People and partnerships, 13th Street corridor analysis, and community video:** This team convened focus groups to discuss Northside's challenges and opportunities. The students then analyzed the neighborhood's main commercial corridor, 13th Street, to document the current mix of land uses, and created a 13th Street vision video in 3D format to demonstrate 13th Street's potential as a more walkable corridor. Following interviews with Northside residents including San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo, the team consolidated its findings in a 10-minute documentary that was presented at the open house — to much acclaim, as neighbors saw one another on the big screen.

The neighborhood

The Northside neighborhood — one of San Jose's original residential districts — covers approximately 1.25 square miles just north of the downtown core. It comprises primarily single-family residences with a scattering of multifamily along its western edge. Northside is notable for its variety of architectural styles, ranging from Victorian and Tudor to Craftsman and midcentury modern. A mix of auto body repair shops and restaurants can be found along the sole commercial corridor, the 13th Street/Luna Park Business District. Before evolving into commercial, the business district was an enclave of Italian immigrants, and the most notable business is Chiaramonte's Italian Market, founded in 1908. Louis Chiaramonte, great-grandson of the founder, has operated the store since 1985.



The John C. Morrill house in Northside. Photo: Lillian Hua



Luna Park/13th Street Commercial Corridor. Photo: Lillian Hua



Chiaramonte's Italian Market. Photo: Daniella Gonzalez

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The Northside Neighborhood Association was formed in 1965 — the oldest such group in San Jose. Northside's founders and original board of directors included Joyce Ellington, for whom the local library is named, and Norm Mineta, a former San Jose councilmember, mayor, congressman, and cabinet member under presidents Clinton and G. W. Bush.

Fruit and vegetable canning shaped the neighborhood. The city's first cannery, the San Jose Fruit Packing Company, was established here in the 1870s. Alongside the canneries, the Grower's Market co-op opened on Taylor Street in 1932 and became a distribution center for local farmers in the South Bay. Most of its members were Italian immigrant farmers and produce brokers. A restaurant and bar, originally named Growers' Restaurant and then later Bini's Bar and Grill, opened on a corner of the Grower's Market property. Bini's was the place to go after a full day in the canneries.

The canneries along the west side of Northside have closed, and many were converted into apartment buildings. Also related to the canning industry was Luna Park, an old amusement park that also housed a minor league baseball team, the San Jose Prune Pickers, in 1907. The site has since been filled with houses, but the Luna Park Business District continues the memory of a beloved institution.

Open house

Graduate students and CUC hosted an open house at Grant Elementary School on November 16, 2016. Approximately 49 residents and 15 children attended. Among the attendees were Mayor Sam Liccardo, District 3 Councilmember Raul Perez, and longtime resident Bob Ellington, the 93-year-old husband of Joyce Ellington.

Six themed stations lined the school cafeteria walls. The community video, "A Little Bit of Heaven," featured interviews with neighborhood residents and business owners highlighting Northside's assets. Several stations engaged residents to answer surveys and place stickers on posters regarding land use, mobility, and community identity. Residents who attended cited similar problems across



Students at the open house with Mayor Sam Liccardo (last row, third from left) and longtime resident, Bob Ellington, front and center. Source: CommUniverCity



A resident at the open house at Grant Elementary School. Photo: CommUniverCity

multiple stations: heavy traffic, speeding vehicles, homelessness, and crime around Backesto Park. They also wanted more restaurants and shops along 13th Street.

Next Steps

The open house achieved its objectives — the students showcased their findings, engaged the community, collected data, and facilitated a partnership between the community and the university to continue the assessment. Their findings will be documented in a final Community Assessment Report that will be shared with neighborhood leaders. The finished report will be available at the end of January at <http://bit.ly/1RoPopz> as a foundation for future CUC and SJSU efforts in Northside.

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This semester, a new group of Urban and Regional Planning students will continue to assess Northside. They will focus on facilitating a conversation on the priorities last set in 2002 and will help the neighborhood identify new planning priorities. They also will further assess Backesto Park, potential streets for traffic calming, and bicycle routes along Coyote Creek. Their report will assist CUC as it works with the community to update its planning priorities.

Lillian Hua is a junior planner with the City of Milpitas. She previously worked in the building and planning divisions of the City of San Jose. Hua is pursuing her master's degree in urban and regional planning from San Jose State and holds a BA in urban studies from UC Irvine. You can reach her at lillianhhua@gmail.com.

Kyle Kryak is a graduate student at San Jose State University pursuing his master's degree in urban and regional planning with a concentration in transportation planning. He holds a BA in Geography and GIS certification from the University of Miami. You can reach him at justdialkyle@me.com. ■

Where in the world



Photo: Linton Atlas (Answer on [page 36](#).)

Who's where



Ricky Caperton is now senior environmental planner, specializing in CEQA/NEPA compliance, at LSA Associates, Fresno. He previously was an associate and project planner at PlaceWorks in Berkeley. Caperton holds an MA in environmental law and policy from Vermont Law School and a BA in environmental studies and planning from Sonoma State University. In his free time, he enjoys traveling, skiing, hiking, and visiting with family and friends.



James Castañeda, AICP, a Planner III with the San Mateo County Planning and Building Department, has been elected by the membership to serve as Northern Section's Director-Elect. He took office on January 1st, and will serve for a two-year term. Castañeda will become Section Director on January 1, 2019, after his term as Section Director-Elect ends. He holds a BS in city and regional planning from New Mexico State University.



Tracey Ferguson, AICP, recently joined homebuilder D.R. Horton's Land Acquisition and Forward Planning Team in the Pleasanton office. Ferguson has over 15 years of experience in planning and land development. She most recently was project manager for The New Home Company (Roseville) and before that was a consultant with Atkins North America (Sacramento). Ferguson has been active in APA California and the Sacramento Valley Section's leadership since 2008. She co-founded the APA award-winning PLAN Sac Valley Mentoring Program for young planners and most recently served as Section Director. Ferguson holds a BA in geography from CSU Sacramento. She is enjoying her recent move to the Bay Area and lives in Castro Valley.



Shannon Fiala is a transportation development specialist with the California Coastal Commission, San Francisco, where she has worked since 2014 as a coastal planner. Before that, she was the Ocean Beach Deputy Project Manager for SPUR. Fiala serves on the Northern Section Board as one of APA California-Northern Section's two Regional Activity Coordinators for San Francisco. She holds an MCP/MLA in urban and environmental planning from UC Berkeley, and a BS in resource ecology and management from the University of Michigan.



Tom Ford, AICP, has joined Campbell-based M-Group as director of urban design. He began his planning career with 16 years in the Bay Area, but spent the past six years preparing design guidelines, urban design studies, and master plans in Southeast Asia. Many experiences and incidents have been drawn from that period for *Pacific Crossings*, a forthcoming book of short stories. Ford holds a master of architecture from UC Berkeley and an AB in dramatic art from UC Davis.

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Ellen Greenberg, FAICP, is now deputy director for sustainability at the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Sacramento. She previously was principal and director at Arup in San Francisco, and most recently, London. Greenberg holds an MCP and an MS in transportation planning, and a BA in geography, all from UC Berkeley. She is the author of *Brexit: A planner's view from London*, in *Northern News*, July-August 2016, <http://bit.ly/2a2SI9V>.



Dana Hoffman, AICP, was recently appointed to the APA California–Northern Section Board as East Bay Regional Activity Coordinator. She is an Associate Planner II at Michael Baker International, where she works on comprehensive planning and sustainability projects, policy development, and community engagement. Hoffman holds a BA in political science (environmental policy) from Rice University, and a master's in city/urban, community, and regional planning from Cal Poly SLO. She was a member of the APA California 2015 Conference Host Committee.



Eric Tucker was recently appointed to the APA California–Northern Section Board, where he will serve as University Liaison. A resident of San Francisco, Tucker works at the City of Oakland as a bicycle facilities planning trainee in the Transportation Planning and Funding Division. He holds a master's in urban and regional planning from San Jose State University and a bachelor's in environmental studies and planning from Sonoma State University.



Zach Tusinger recently joined Rohnert Park's Development Services Department where he is a planner working on current and long-range planning projects, economic development projects, and a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. Prior to Rohnert Park, Tusinger worked three years as an attorney: one year in municipal law, and after his hometown of Joplin was devastated by a tornado in 2011, two years as an Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps Legal Fellow assisting disaster victims in Missouri, Oklahoma, Colorado, and New York. He holds a master of urban planning from the University of Kansas, a JD from Saint Louis University, and a BA in history and political science with a minor in architecture from Drury University, Springfield, Missouri. ■

"Planners who work in a regulatory setting [should] recognize that there are more opportunities to be creative in contemporary planning practice. The range of planning work has expanded to include implementation-oriented activities. Rather than wait for proposals to come to the zoning counter, planners make things happen through new forms of action. Instead of being limited to administering zoning and subdivision regulations in the office, planners bring about improvements in the field. There is an enormous opportunity in creative, non-regulatory work for planners. But one needs to go get it."

—Professor Richard Willson, FAICP, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Cal Poly Pomona, <http://bit.ly/2iE4P4k>

Community outreach in a divided America

James Rojas

Since the November elections, many folks, especially women and minorities, are on edge. People are hurting and looking for how to engage and heal communities.

As an urban planner, I find that much needed community engagement has become more difficult. Can urban planners take on a new role and become healers, providing meaningful engagement that peels away differences and helps us find common goals?

I learned that people become positive when they use their imaginations and their hands to create, make, and do. When we start by doing something rather than just talking, we inspire hope that what we are doing will turn out well.

We humanize the urban planning process when we use story telling, objects, art making, and play to break down barriers posed by language, age, ethnicity, and professional training. The process can create a safe space for everyone to come together, listen, share, collaborate, and bond. This is especially important for those who have difficulty expressing their feelings (not just their views) in a public setting. Through this process participants can find common values and generate cutting-edge ideas and solutions for their communities.

Assume that *everyone* is an urban planner with something to offer. Members of the public who participate in the planning process need to be supported in working together and in developing a shared sense of ownership over their places. This is particularly important for women and people of color. Planning professionals who want to access and use crucial community knowledge must start with an effective engagement strategy rooted in respect for difference.

We live in a world in which people's experiences are not always highlighted or respected in the urban planning outreach process. Humanizing and relaxing the community meeting format to integrate storytelling, imagination, objects, and hands-on activities allows for all voices to be expressed in a variety of different ways.

Participants personalize the planning process based on their experiences. We can give them a sense of ownership and attachment to each other and to place by focusing their skills on critical thinking, creative problem solving, collaboration, and civic literacy. In acknowledging their skills, we validate their identities and experiences. We also increase the likelihood that they will engage further in

civic participation, when otherwise they might feel intimidated, fearful, or skeptical about engaging.

As urban planners, we have a social responsibility to engage with all members of the community. Their contributions are needed in shaping the future of our cities.



Photo: James Rojas



James Rojas is a globetrotting planner who developed *Place It*, a visualization method to engage the community in the urban planning process.

Rojas lives in Alhambra, California. He is a member of the California Planning Roundtable and a founder and member of the Latino Urban Forum. You can contact him at jamestrojas@gmail.com.

City does not have burden of showing reasonableness of housing fees

Alan Murphy

Just over a year after the California Supreme Court strongly endorsed inclusionary housing ordinances, the Second District Court of Appeal upheld a city's collection of in-lieu housing fees against a developer's claim that the city failed to carry its burden of proving the fees were reasonably related to development impacts. *616 Croft Ave., LLC v. City of West Hollywood*, No. B266660 (Second Dist. Sept. 23, 2016), <http://bit.ly/2ggwz8W>.

In *California Building Industry Association v. City of San Jose*, 61 Cal. 4th 435 (2015), the California Supreme Court ruled that inclusionary housing ordinances are legally permissible as long as it can be shown an ordinance is reasonably related to the public welfare. The court rejected a claim that a city may impose inclusionary housing requirements on new residential development projects only if it first shows that the need for affordable housing is attributable to new development. (Our full report on the state supreme court decision is available at <http://bit.ly/2ggpsxj>.)

The court of appeal recently applied the California Supreme Court ruling to deny a challenge to the City of West Hollywood's collection of fees for inclusionary housing. The city requires developers of for-sale residential projects with 10 or fewer units either to sell a portion of the newly constructed units at below-market rates or, alternatively, to pay an in-lieu fee designed to fund construction of an equivalent number of affordable units. The city conditioned approval of a developer's condominium project on payment of in-lieu fees. The developer paid the required fees under protest and filed suit.

Citing extensively from the California Supreme Court decision, the court of appeal rejected the developer's claim that the city had the burden of proving the fees were "reasonably related" to the deleterious impact of the development. The court held that the validity of in-lieu fees, as an alternative to an on-site inclusionary housing requirement, does not depend on whether the fees collected from a developer are reasonably related to that development's impact on a city's affordable housing need. Rather, like an on-site requirement, in-lieu fees only must be reasonably related to the overall availability of affordable housing, and the challenger must show the fee schedule was invalid, an effort the developer here did not undertake.



Alan Murphy is a Land Use, Development, and Environmental Attorney with Perkins Coie LLP, San Francisco. In his practice, Murphy secures and defends land use entitlements and counsels clients in preparing development applications. He has significant experience with local general plans, specific plans, zoning codes, conditional uses, variances, the Subdivision Map Act, development agreements, impact fees, CEQA, NEPA, and San Francisco's discretionary review process. Murphy holds a JD from Yale Law School and a BA in political science from Stanford University. You can reach him at AMurphy@perkinscoie.com. ■

SF BRT is taking shape. "San Francisco transit planners have been talking about bus rapid transit for nearly two decades. Two lines recently took important steps toward becoming reality. North-south Van Ness Avenue is getting 2 miles of dedicated bus lane down the center median with nine stops from Union to Mission streets. The first phase of construction on the \$223 million project began in October. On Jan. 5, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors approved a 'hybrid approach' for Geary Boulevard. There will be dedicated, center-median bus lanes for 1.7 miles between Arguello Boulevard and 27th Avenue. But buses will have to drive in dedicated curb lanes for 6.5 miles. Construction is supposed to start in 2019."

—Josh Cohen, *Next City*, <http://bit.ly/2iE6g2J>

New Delhi: Making Connaught Place pedestrian-friendly

News18, January 6, 2017

Press Trust of India, <http://bit.ly/2jo80wj>

• “Urban planners and heritage activists have welcomed the government’s move to pedestrianize the middle and inner circular roads of Connaught Place, while boosting parking and deployment of rickshaws and e-buses for ferrying commuters.

“The move to make Connaught Place pedestrian-friendly needs to be executed with proper planning. People would now be able to admire the architectural grandeur of this iconic building complex.

“Connaught Place (‘CP’ as it is popularly known) was built from 1920s–1930s as a premier shopping and recreation destination in the heart of Delhi, and — despite a lot of change effected in and around it — still enjoys a pride of place in the city.

“Named after the Duke of Connaught, Prince Arthur, who visited India in 1921, the building was designed by Robert Tor Russell, who also built the Parliament House. A handsomely colonnaded structure, its design is said to be inspired from the Royal Crescent in Bath, England. A lot of refurbishment of CP was carried out during the Commonwealth Games in 2010, and the Central Park was created from earth dug out of its metro (Rajiv Chowk station).

“On January 5, the Union Urban Development Ministry decided on the pedestrianization on a pilot basis, to be implemented for three months from February 2017 for



Connaught Place. Source: Google maps

ground level testing of issues related to changes in traffic circulation, experience of pedestrians and shop owners, management of reclaimed parking lots, and traffic load on Outer Circle.” You can see 30-second aerial daytime videos at <http://bit.ly/2jnZ2ip>.

History of Urbanization: 6,000 years in three minutes

Metrocosm, June 15, 2016

Max Galka, <https://youtu.be/yKJYXujJ7sU> • “This map [video, 3:20] visualizes the history of urban settlements over 6,000 years. The data shown in the map (from 3700 BC, the beginning of Sumerian civilization) comes from a Yale-led study published in June 2016 in *Scientific Data*, which compiled the most comprehensive dataset on historical urban populations to date.

“In the video, as a timeline glides across 6,000 years, cities pop up on a world map at the points when their populations were first documented in historical and archaeo-

logical records. (This is not necessarily the same year in which these cities were ‘born.’) The later a city was written into history, the warmer its color on the map.

“The data has a number of limitations and is ‘far from comprehensive.’ Certain parts of the world are better represented than others, and some well-known cities do not appear until centuries after they were founded. ‘What I found most surprising,’ said Galka, ‘was how early some of the MesoAmerican cities formed, several hundred years before the first cities in Europe.’ ”

(World continues on next page)

Barcelona: Superblock expansion plan takes first steps

Next City, December 6, 2016

Ignacio Amigo, <http://bit.ly/2idao9j> • “Barcelona has an ambitious Urban Mobility Plan to reduce space for cars by 60 percent, cut traffic by 21 percent by 2018, and reduce air pollution to levels meeting EU regulations. At the center of the plan is the creation of ‘superblocks,’ the first of which were rolled out in the Poblenou neighborhood in September.

“The concept groups contiguous blocks where motor vehicles are discouraged by reducing streets to a single lane, limiting speed to 10 kmh (6 mph), and removing parking areas. Bicycles are allowed to move freely within the superblock.

“The idea is not new to Barcelona. Areas of historic El Born and Gràcia were turned into superblocks in 1993 and 2005, respectively.

“In the Poblenou pilot, the city is starting with low-impact interventions that can be easily reversed.

“But one group of neighbors demanded withdrawal of the project, charging that the implementation process ‘has not been democratic’ and that the superblock has created new problems — an increase in noise and traffic at the perimeter of the superblock, and difficulties for suppliers and taxis to work in the area.

“[In response,] the city has added loading and unloading areas; widened some lanes to ease the turns of garbage trucks; lifted a ban on left turns; and added a bus line through the superblock.

“A major challenge remains how to use the new space. If the current plan (<http://bit.ly/2id8ky6>) proceeds, five new superblocks will be created by 2019.”



(World continues on next page)

Amsterdam hopes for housing in unused space above stores. “Starved for living space amid a growing population, Amsterdam has a long tradition of creating homes in less obvious places. Starting in February, Amsterdam will offer a grant of up to €25,000 (around \$26,600) to store owners who want to convert unused space on their premises into homes. It’s not only landlords that can apply for the fund: With permission from the landlord, store tenants can also apply for the funds. This could unlock a potentially large area of living space for the city. Last year a pilot version in the downtown Amsterdam Centrum brought 850 more apartments onto the market, many of them created on the second floor above stores on the busy shopping streets Nieuwendijk and Damrak. One of the reasons the potential subsidy is so generous is that in some cases actual construction is necessary to make the upper floor spaces accessible once more.”

—Feargus O’Sullivan, CityLab, <http://bit.ly/2iE6t5U>

Mapping urban trees in 11 cities

Next City, December 30, 2016

Jen Kinney, <http://bit.ly/2iwMq8g> • “Out of 11 cities studied around the world, Vancouver beat out Seattle, Geneva, Tel Aviv, and others in a new measure of urban canopy developed by the MIT Senseable City Lab. The project, Treepedia, <http://bit.ly/2iwytxO>, uses Google Street View imagery to measure urban canopies from a human level. Called the ‘Green View Index,’ the measure presents the percentage of canopy coverage in a given area on a scale of zero to 100 by analyzing street view images for greenery. Vancouver scored an overall GVI of 25.9 percent, while Paris ranked a paltry 8.8.

“[The idea is to] ‘encourage local authorities and communities to take action to protect and promote the green canopy cover,’ said Carlo Ratti, director of the Senseable City Lab, in a statement.

“Users can either view citywide tree coverage or zoom in to see individual data points and the street view images that prompted them. The cities compared on the platform are Boston, Geneva, London, Los Angeles, Paris, New York, Seattle, Tel Aviv, Toronto, Turin, and Vancouver.”

Australia: Which city sprawls most

Charting Transport, December 3, 2016

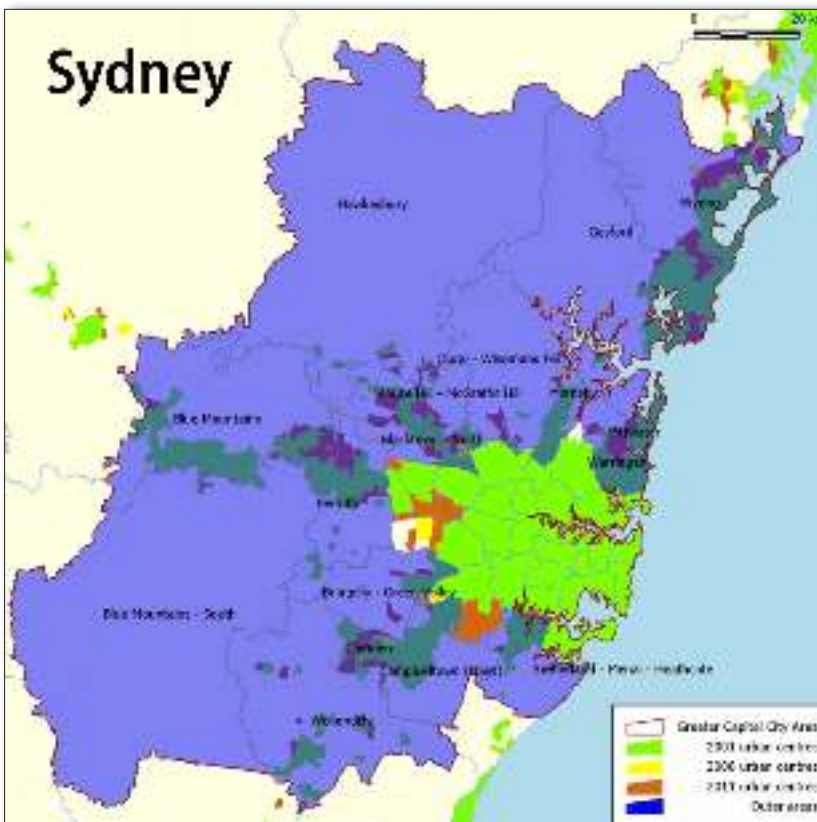
Chris Loader, <http://bit.ly/2gANWFz> • “For a while now, I’ve been tracking urban sprawl and consolidation in Melbourne, but some interesting recent research prompted me to compare Melbourne to the other large Australian cities. How do Australian cities compare for population growing out versus up?

“To define ‘outer’ growth, I mapped the 2001, 2006, and 2011 ABS urban centre boundaries (<http://bit.ly/2gATlfx>) of each city, then looked at regions within each Greater Capital City that either saw substantial urban growth between 2001 and 2011, or were located on the fringe of the main urban area. With an outer area defined for each

city, I calculated the annual population growth of these outer areas (based on 30 June estimates for each year), and compared that to growth of the city as a whole. Perth comes out on top, with 81 percent of population growth in outer areas in 2015. Sydney and Adelaide are around 32 percent, while Melbourne and Southeast Queensland come in around 45–50 percent.

“So is Perth the most sprawling large city in Australia? Yes, in terms of percentage of population growth, but not in terms of absolute population growth in outer areas. There Melbourne comes out top, with around 45,000 residents moving into growth areas in 2014–15. Population growth in outer Sydney slowed dramatically between 2002 and 2006. There was also a slow down in non-outer areas, although it was a little less dramatic.”

(World continues on next page)



The future of cities

YouTube, December 8, 2016

Oscar Boyson,

<https://youtu.be/xOOWk5yCMMs>

• “Wayyy too much info for 18 minutes,” said one commenter. Still, this film from “The Nantucket Project (a TED-ish conference focused on big ideas) looks at how different cities are approaching [inevitable and accelerating growth by] focusing on issues of technology, transportation, health, and history,” writes Amelia Taylor-Hochberg, editorial manager of *Archinect*. But see for yourself, and prepare: It goes so fast you’ll have no time for anything else, and you won’t need coffee.



Malaysia: Huge Chinese-made city rises near Singapore

Bloomberg, November 21, 2016

Pooja Thakur Mahrotri and En Han Choong,

<http://bloom.bg/2g7x4ps> • “In a corner of Southeast Asia, China’s developers are swamping the housing market, pushing prices lower with a glut of hundreds of thousands of new homes. They’re betting that the city of Johor Bahru (JB), bordering Singapore, will become the next Shenzhen.

“Growth in many Chinese cities is slowing, forcing some of the world’s biggest builders to look abroad. They found a prime spot in Iskandar, a special economic zone on the southern tip of the Asian mainland north of Singapore.

“The scale of the projects is dizzying. Country Garden’s Forest City (<http://bit.ly/2g7DncL>) will house 700,000 people on an area four times the size of New York’s Central Park. Construction began in February; about 8,000 apartments have been sold.

“Forest City is the biggest of about 60 projects in the zone around JB that could add a total of half-a-million homes. ‘Land is plentiful and cheap,’ said Alan Cheong, senior director of research and consultancy at Savills Singapore.

“‘The Chinese are attracted by lower prices and the proximity to Singapore,’ said Alice Tan, Singapore-based head of consultancy and research at real-estate brokers Knight Frank LLP. ‘It remains to be seen if the upcoming supply of homes can be absorbed in the next five years.’ Meanwhile, sales reps sell a Utopian dream — a city of the future with smart, leafy buildings and offices full of happy, rich residents.” ■

“A lost opportunity. Why is no one focusing on the most important resource the city has to encourage development of [more ‘affordable’] housing: publicly owned surface parking lots in commercial districts close to public transportation? Why aren’t city planners, elected officials, and housing advocates advancing proposals to develop these precious but underutilized parking lots into combinations of an underground parking garage and multi-floor apartments?”

—Editorial, *Palo Alto Weekly*, <http://bit.ly/2gjPtM5>

Orlando: In step with Paris climate accord

Orlando Sentinel, January 10, 2017

Chris Castro and **Lindsey Mendelson**,

<http://bit.ly/2jm2Uai> • “Cities — responsible for 70 percent of global greenhouse-gas emissions — are positioning themselves to lead efforts to curb climate emissions while tapping into the clean-energy revolution, saving money, and creating jobs.

“Orlando is leading the way in Florida, with a commitment to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions 90 percent from 2007 levels, and supply half of citywide electricity needs through clean energy, like wind and solar, by 2040.

“Since 2007, Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer has spearheaded an ambitious citywide initiative called Green Works Orlando to be the most sustainable city in America.

“Green Works successes over the years include expanding the downtown Lymmo bus circulator and SunRail commuter train, performing energy efficiency retrofits for

1,200 houses, and expanding solar-powered electric-vehicle public charging stations.

“In addition, Orlando became the first city in Florida to pass the Building Energy and Water Efficiency Strategy, which requires the largest buildings throughout the city to report their electrical and water use annually in order to receive performance scores. Through this effort, Orlando is poised to [not only] save more than \$200 million in wasted energy, \$64 million in public-health benefits, and 900 million gallons of water, [but also] to cut roughly one-fifth of annual greenhouse-gas emissions by 2030.

“Cities like Orlando have shown that meeting the requirements of the Paris Agreement is not only achievable, but also paves the way for a cleaner, safer future for us all.”

New York: Reclaim Fifth Avenue for pedestrians

The New York Times, January 9, 2017

Janette Sadik-Khan, <http://nyti.ms/2j9pJXU> • “Fifth Avenue in Midtown Manhattan [is] home to one of the world’s densest concentrations of humanity and traffic bedlam. Its five lanes run past the New York Public Library, the Empire State Building, and Rockefeller Center, as well as cathedrals of commerce, tourism, and high-end retail. Retail floor space on the avenue rents for \$3,000 per square foot a year, more than double the cost of similar space along the Champs Élysées.

“Fifth Avenue at 56th Street is the site of Trump Tower, which has rapidly turned into a fortress of Secret Service agents and heavily armed police surrounded by tourists, camera crews, and protesters. They join the usual shoppers, workers, and other pedestrians on already crowded sidewalks.

“[All this] provides an extraordinary opportunity to reclaim Fifth Avenue as a pedestrian street shared with mass transit [to] create a truly American public space: an entirely new civic platform at the nation’s new center of political gravity.

“This isn’t just a feel-good experiment in civics, nor is it a public transit boondoggle. Streets that accommodate more people are also better for business.

“This change would require close consultation with the city Police Department and transportation officials. It would also have to meet the needs of the federal authorities managing the president’s security. But this transformation of Fifth Avenue may be that sweet spot where urbanism, transportation engineering, democracy, and politics can align.”

(U.S. continues on next page)

From coal to beer through preservation. “By April, ‘if the brewing gods are willing,’ the owners of the three-year-old Mare Island Brewing Company hope to be creating their own craft brews in a completely remodeled historic Coal Shed on Mare Island, thanks to a Grow Vallejo Fund loan. The island’s main developer, Lennar Mare Island, is restoring the exteriors and structural elements of the nine Coal Sheds and leaving the interior of one to the brewery.”

—Rachel Raskin-Zrihen, *Vallejo Times-Herald*, <http://bit.ly/2jZHBO>

Pittsburgh, PA: Best street transformation of 2016

StreetsBlog USA, December 30, 2016

Angie Schmitt, <http://bit.ly/2hAQfW1> • In mid-December, StreetsBlog “asked readers to choose their favorite American street transformation of 2016 (see <http://bit.ly/2hANzaL>). Six finalists were in the running. These projects sped up bus trips for tens of thousands of riders (San Francisco), improved critical links in city bike networks (Chicago, Atlanta, and Oakland), and healed an old downtown freeway scar (Rochester).”

“Our winner came from Pittsburgh, a city that’s made a big splash rethinking its streets the past few years under Mayor Bill Peduto.”

“Coming out on top of the voting was Strawberry Way, a downtown Pittsburgh alley that was widely-used but nondescript. The local non-profit Envision Downtown transformed the alley into a three-block, car-free gathering place. Pavement murals from artist Deanna Mance and street furniture and planters turned a grey, moribund space between buildings into an inviting place.”



Source: usa.streetsblog.org, <http://bit.ly/2hAULDA>

Albany, NY: Gondolas for transit?

Valley News (NH), January 8, 2017

Mary Esch, <http://bit.ly/2jnWVei> • “While only a couple [of gondola systems] are used for public commuter transit in the U.S. — Portland’s Aerial Tram and New York City’s Roosevelt Island Tramway — cable-propelled urban gondolas are gaining traction in Italy, Germany, Portugal, and France.

“Medellin, Colombia, launched an aerial gondola mass transit system in 2004, and Mexico City inaugurated its Mexicable gondola transit in October 2016.

“In the U.S., gondola projects have been proposed, with varying degrees of interest, over the Potomac River between Georgetown and Rosslyn, Va.; across the center of Austin, Texas; from downtown Miami to the Marlins ballpark; and across New York City’s East River.

“An Albany, NY, gondola is aimed at a specific problem: The city’s busy Amtrak station is actually located across the

Hudson River in the city of Rensselaer, a 1.3-mile cab ride from the downtown government and entertainment district where most people are headed. “‘One purpose,’ said Peter Melewski of McLaren Engineering Group, which pitched the idea, ‘is to solve a transportation problem. The other is a draw for tourism.’

“Gondola proposals have been slow to gain traction in the U.S., facing ‘pie-in-the-sky’ skepticism, political opposition, and residents’ concern about privacy with commuters peering down on their homes.

“‘And no city wants to be first,’ said Toronto-based urban planner Steven Dale, who created The Gondola Project. ‘They want to be able to point to someone and say, we can do it, too.’”

(U.S. continues on next page)

Our sprawl starts at the Mexican border

CityLab, December 28, 2016

Tanvi Misra, <http://bit.ly/2hB0EAL> • “Every day, students living in Juarez cross the border to go to school in El Paso. Travelers flying into the Tijuana airport can walk over to San Diego on a pedestrian bridge. Folks living in Mexico work on the American side of the border every day. Around 350 million such people cross the border every year, many through ports of entry designed to welcome, because the border separates several sister cities that are one urban and economic unit.

“But growth in these border cities has manifested differently for a variety of economic and cultural reasons. The difference is evident in a new map created by Sasha Trubetskoy.

“Using land use data, Trubetskoy, who’s studying statistics at the University of Chicago, has arranged 14 border cities (each pair with at least 15,000 residents) side-by-side.

“At the beginning of the 20th century, most of the Mexican cities were small frontier towns, writes Jesús Ángel Enríquez Acosta, a sociologist at the University of Sonora. After World War II, as cities in the American Southwest grew, so did their Mexican equivalents, often in response to economic demands from across the border. Within Mexico, as migrants from other parts of the country poured in, these cities grew dense — with mixed-use buildings packed around plazas and parks.

“On the American side of the border, some border towns are booming because of their Mexican equivalents. El Paso felt a recent lift as conditions in Juarez have improved.”



Source: Sasha Trubetskoy, University of Chicago, <http://bit.ly/2iks1mG>

Seattle may adapt SF legacy business protections

Next City, December 20, 2016

Erica C. Barnett, <http://bit.ly/2h2RexE> • “Seattle City Council Member Lisa Herbold wants to make sure businesses like the blue collar Wedgewood Broiler don’t go the way of other beloved local institutions that closed in the last decade. She’s proposed a ‘legacy business’ program that would provide such neighborhood institutions with financial or regulatory support to help them survive as Seattle continues to boom.

“Her idea is based on a similar program in San Francisco. Under a proposition passed in 2015, businesses 30 years or older that ‘have contributed to their neighborhood’s history’ and agree to maintain their identity can apply for placement on the city’s Legacy Business Registry. Once the mayor or a member of the Board of Supervisors nominates a business, it

becomes eligible for grants of up to \$50,000 to help with rent, renovations, or other costs. (Building owners could also get grants to subsidize below-market rents.) So far the program has qualified 300 businesses and is on track to fund grants of about \$3 million a year.

“One of the challenges is defining what counts as a ‘legacy’ business. David Campos, the San Francisco supervisor who spearheaded the project there, says their criteria are ‘intangible and very neighborhood-specific.’

“‘It is really important that we don’t have a legacy business template, but that each community has the ability to identify what’s important for them,’ Seattle’s Herbold says. ‘Growth happens, but the people who made this city what it is are still here.’” ■

California roundup

Excerpts from around the state, linked to the original articles

Gov. Brown's budget resurrects plan to increase housing construction

Sacramento Business Journal, January 10, 2017

Allen Young, <http://bit.ly/2jhyXBJ> • “In releasing a state spending plan for the next fiscal year, Gov. Jerry Brown resurrected efforts to increase new housing through legislation that would streamline permitting and create incentives for local governments to meet housing goals.

“The plan released January 10 is far less specific than a permit-streamlining proposal floated by the administration last year. That proposal was defeated in the Legislature. [The current] plan asks for a bill package containing the same basic provisions of the prior proposal: creating incentives for local governments to lower fees and streamlining the lengthy building approvals process.

“The new budget documents call for a legislative package that would reduce regulatory barriers and fees related to housing construction, reward local governments with funding and other incentives for meeting housing goals, and penalize governments that fail to make changes by tying housing construction to infrastructure funding.

“Last year, Brown failed to muster support for a plan that would have raised \$400 million for affordable housing while cutting environmental reviews at the local level. The so-called by-right proposal died at the hands of construction trades and environmentalists.” See

<http://bit.ly/2jho5n8>.

Meanwhile, **Housing California** (January 13, <http://bit.ly/2jhKdhw>) opines that “The governor’s 2017–18 proposed budget doesn’t go far enough to reflect shared California values, and even pauses policy that he signed into law last year. Governor Brown seems to be signaling that he is looking to legislators to develop a housing proposal that has no impact on the general fund and links a permanent source of funding for affordable homes to [the] streamlining [of] housing development.”

Sacramento: A new neighborhood rises at midtown's southern edge

The Sacramento Bee, January 8, 2017

Ryan Lillis and **Tony Bizjak**, <http://bit.ly/2jmcTWI>

• “Along R Street between 16th and 18th streets, a village of offices, shops, and apartments called Ice Blocks is rising fast on the site of the former Crystal Ice plant. If all goes as planned, it will emerge as one of Sacramento’s most densely populated neighborhoods.

“More than 650 apartments and town homes are either under construction or in final planning stages within three blocks of 19th and Q streets. The wave of housing construction — much of it to be offered at upper-end rents and prices — represents the largest concentration of new housing injected into Sacramento’s central city in decades, and promises to turn the area surrounding the midtown Safeway into a teeming village of 1,200 or more residents within the next couple of years.

“Developer Michael Heller compared the project to Berkeley’s upscale Fourth Street shopping district. It’s also been described as a much larger version of Heller’s MARRS complex at 20th and K streets that includes the popular LowBrau restaurant and a weekly farmers market.

“Darryl Rutherford, executive director of the Sacramento Housing Alliance, said it is ‘pretty disappointing’ more emphasis is not being placed on building affordable housing in the area. Developers are no longer required to set aside a percentage of units in large housing projects for low-income residents. ‘We’re talking about people who are working in the midtown community who are baristas or line cooks,’ he said.”

(California continues on next page)

Los Angeles: Downtown hasn't seen this much construction since the 1920s

Los Angeles Times, January 8, 2017

Andrew Khouri, <http://lat.ms/2jl4UXf> • “On the corner of Wilshire Boulevard and Figueroa in downtown Los Angeles, workers are putting the finishing touches on the Wilshire Grand, the West Coast’s tallest building. Owned by Korean Air, it rises 1,100 feet and will have a hotel, offices, and observation deck.

“Downtown is undergoing its largest construction boom in modern times — an explosion juiced by foreign investment that’s adding thousands of residences, construction jobs, and a multitude of shops and restaurants.

“That the ongoing construction wave is comparable to the 1920s — when downtown was the undisputed heart of a mushrooming metropolis — is a striking example of the area’s transformation in the past two decades

“Since 2010, according to real estate data firm CoStar, 42 developments of at least 50,000 square feet have been

built. An additional 37 large projects are under construction.

“The rapid pace means that by decade’s end, today’s boom should easily surpass the 1980s, when developers built office skyscrapers on Bunker Hill as part of an urban renewal effort. The amount of building is staggering, and unlike the two-decade expansion seen in the 1970s and 1980s — the current construction is varied and more widespread.

“Today’s boom can be traced to 1999, downtown experts said. That’s when Staples Center opened and the city’s adaptive reuse ordinance took effect, making it easy for developers to redevelop old, vacant office buildings downtown into residences.”

Beverly Hills: Purple Line will tunnel under high school

StreetsblogLA, January 4, 2017

Joe Linton, <http://bit.ly/2iUgTNQ> • “United States Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx announced \$1.6 billion in federal funds for Metro to extend the Purple Line subway to Century City. The total cost of the 2.59-mile subway extension with stops planned in downtown Beverly Hills and Century City is \$2.4 billion. The rest of the funding, \$747 million, was allocated as part of a countywide voter approved transportation sales tax increase in 2008.

“L.A. County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl joked that ‘we’re going to cash the check really fast’ before Trump takes his presidential oath of office on January 20. While the announced Purple Line funding is probably safe (Congress is responsible for allocating these funds annually), federal transit funding availability for future projects in blue states may become more difficult with the current Republican majorities.

In *Los Angeles Magazine* (January 4, 2017, <http://bit.ly/2iU7beo>), **Neal Broverman** wrote,

“While almost everyone in L.A. County cheered the latest cash infusion, many in Beverly Hills grimaced. The city and its school district have spent \$10 million trying to alter the course of the subway, which will need to travel under Beverly Hills High School. The city instead wants the station on Santa Monica Boulevard, but Metro’s studies said that would put it in the crosshairs of too many earthquake fault lines and make it harder for commuters to reach the towers of Century City.”



Source: Source: LACMTA, 2016

(California continues on next page)

California statewide housing assessment released

California HCD, January 3, 2017

<http://bit.ly/2hNPadt> • “On January 3, the California Department of Housing and Community Development released its Statewide Housing Assessment, ‘California’s Housing Future: Challenges and Opportunities – Public Draft,’ 56 pages, <http://bit.ly/2hNSoxF>.

“The Assessment offers the results of in-depth research into California’s far-reaching housing challenges:

- “Production averaged fewer than 80,000 new homes annually over the last 10 years, and ongoing production continues to fall far below the projected need of 180,000 additional homes annually.
- “Lack of supply and rising costs are compounding growing inequality for younger Californians.
- “One-third of renters pay more than 50 percent of income toward rent.
- “Homeownership rates are at their lowest in California since the 1940s.
- “California accounts for a disproportionate 22 percent of the nation’s homeless population.

- “Continued sprawl will decrease affordability and quality of life while increasing combined housing and transportation costs on families.

“In addition to analyzing housing needs and condition, ‘California’s Housing Future’ presents preliminary recommendations to address California’s housing challenges through a 10-year forward-looking policy framework.

“HCD is engaging in a robust **stakeholder process** to discuss and receive feedback on the Assessment, as well as its preliminary recommendations. The Assessment is expected to be complete by the summer.

“The **public comment period** runs through March 4. Email any comments or questions to sha@hcd.ca.gov.

“For information on and registering for **public workshops**, please visit the Statewide Housing Assessment website, <http://bit.ly/2hNOFjH>.

“To receive **email updates** on the Statewide Housing Assessment and related events, subscribe to HCD’s email lists at <http://bit.ly/2hNTLwh>.”

Caltrans will sell homes along 710 Freeway corridor

The Los Angeles Times, December 19, 2016

Laura J. Nelson, <http://lat.ms/2hffCMF> • “Transportation officials have begun the process of selling hundreds of houses acquired decades ago for a Los Angeles County freeway project that was never built.

“In the 1950s and 1960s, Caltrans began buying empty lots, houses, and apartments along the planned route of the 710 Freeway extension between Pasadena and Alhambra.

“But decades of litigation and legislation stalled the 6.2-mile project before construction could begin, leaving transportation officials as landlords for 460 structures. The properties, most of which are occupied, range from modest cottages in El Sereno to Craftsman mansions on stately streets in South Pasadena.

“Caltrans officials have mailed preliminary information to tenants of the 42 properties that will be sold first,

spokeswoman Lauren Wonder said. Tenants have three months to respond to the agency if they have any interest in buying their homes.

“Former owners and current tenants who meet certain income requirements would have the first chance to buy. Under a state law passed in 1979, low-income renters will receive a sale price below the market rate, as will tenants who make less than 150 percent of the county’s median income — \$68,025 for a single person; \$97,200 for a family of four.

“‘The idea is to keep tenants in the homes they currently rent, and provide them a path toward homeownership,’ Wonder said. The profits from the sales will be given to a state affordable housing program.

“The sale has sparked concern among some tenants who would not qualify for subsidized sales prices and would not be able to afford market-rate prices that could exceed \$1 million.”

(California continues on next page)

California 4

Yolo is state's fastest growing county

The Sacramento Bee, December 22, 2016

Phillip Reese, <http://bit.ly/2hfd4OF> • “Yolo County is not known for rapid population growth. But the state Department of Finance reported that the county’s population grew faster between July 2015 and July 2016 than in any other county in California. Yolo added about 4,000 people, for a growth rate of about 2 percent. Population growth statewide was 0.75 percent.

“Yolo County officials expressed surprise, but yes, a few large housing projects are underway.

“In Davis, The Cannery (<http://bit.ly/2hfcLU1>), a ‘farm-to-table new home community,’ is drawing new residents to a town known for opposition to growth. ‘It’s a residential subdivision of single-family attached and detached homes and apartments,’ said Katherine Hess, Davis community development director. The development, which also features space for stores, will eventually contain more than 500 homes, Hess said.

“In West Sacramento, developers are gearing up to build about 4,000 housing units in the Bridge District across the river from downtown Sacramento. While some of those

homes have already been built, most are slated for construction over several years, said Charline Hamilton, West Sacramento’s community development director. Hamilton said what is happening in West Sacramento ‘is not like a boom ... Our current general plan is only projecting a growth of a little over 1 percent’ each year for the next several years.

“Still, a large chunk of Yolo County’s growth came from new residents moving to the area, according to the Department of Finance.”



Source: Google Maps, <http://bit.ly/2iKD5Lc>

(California continues on next page)

“SB 35, a state-level approach to housing, is certain to engender a robust discussion about who makes decisions about housing in California. We have a long tradition of pure local control, since local communities are frequently in the best position to judge what makes sense for their residents. However, if unfettered local control means that [some] communities punt housing creation to other communities, the State needs to step in to ensure that all communities are equitably contributing to housing needs. Local control should mean that communities get to decide *how* they comply with their housing goals, not *whether* they comply. Under SB 35, cities that aren’t on track to meet their housing goals will lose some local control until they get back on track.”

—State Senator Scott Wiener, <http://bit.ly/2hN9uQI>

The economy of cities

New Geography, December 9, 2016

Peter Gordon and **John Cho**, <http://bit.ly/2hh0Uc3> • “Where does the city or region begin and end? ... What constitutes or defines the center, the downtown, the major sub-centers? Where do ‘suburbia’ and ‘exurbia’ begin and end?”

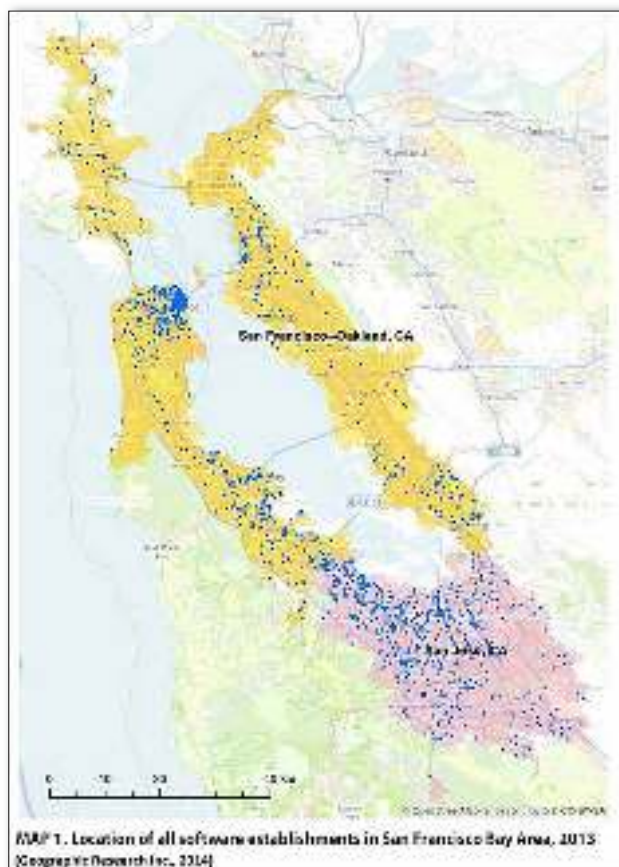
“Most studies of city success rely on simple metropolitan area average densities for the simple reason that these are easily found. Yet it is a leap to describe large and complex places via one single number. Consider that Los Angeles — which does not achieve almost anywhere the densities common to Manhattan or San Francisco — has been the densest urbanized area in the U.S. since approximately the mid-1980s, illustrating the problem of relying on just one number.

“Map 1 of the location of San Francisco Bay Area software firms illustrates the complexities. Does the Bay Area’s overall population density signify anything? Where does Silicon Valley begin and end? Which ones are sub-centers or clusters?”

“Standard labels fall short. Settlement patterns are complex — and emergent. Being near or far from ‘the action’ involves many possible trade-offs. Less expensive homes for workers? Better schools? Less commuting?”

“Map 2 plots locations of software firms in Los Angeles County. (See <http://bit.ly/2hh0Uc3>.) The same variety of arrangements and the same questions apply. But both maps show that the spread of software firms is always lumpy, but also dispersed widely. The largest Software firms (by number of workers) prefer the highest density quintile.

“Does density matter? By all means, but it is complex.” ■



“Is San Francisco at its breaking point?” The City Controller’s Office reported that our maxed-out office space, extreme housing crunch, and jam-packed transportation system are stifling further opportunities for growth. Between 2010 and 2015, the tech sector increased its share of the total job market from 9 percent to more than 20 percent. The City’s unemployment rate is at 3.5 percent, lower than the 4 percent during the previous economic cycle that peaked in 2007–08. These have been years of plenty. The good news — or the bad news, depending on how you see it — is the technology sector seems to be slowing, and local real estate prices are calming down, or at least not climbing at such insane rates.” —*Michael Howerton, editor in chief, San Francisco Examiner, <http://bit.ly/2gPDOFq>*

Norcal roundup

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

Silicon Valley bus drivers sleep in their cars but work alongside millionaires

ABC News, January 13, 2017

Muriel Pearson, Lauren Effron, and Lauren Pearle, <http://abcn.ws/2jzJRQM> • “Silicon Valley is home to some of the most profitable and innovative companies in the world. Many employees at these tech giants enjoy large paychecks and a host of perks. But thousands of others working alongside them don’t make enough money to afford housing near their jobs.

“Drivers of the shuttles that ferry tech employees to company campuses work for independent contractors hired by the companies. Many said their jobs provided few benefits and no paid holidays.

“Drivers who work a ‘split shift’ arrive for work at 6 a.m. to take tech employees to their offices, then have to wait around for a number of hours, unpaid, until it’s time to take the employees back home at the end of the day. They are paid for a total of eight hours but over a 16-hour period. Many sleep in their cars between shifts. Some sleep in their cars because they are homeless.

“Since ABC News began this report in 2014, some service workers have unionized. Under union pressures and publicity about drivers receiving few benefits, Facebook now requires contractors to pay contract employees a minimum of \$15 an hour, 15 days of paid time off, and a \$4,000 stipend for new parents if their contractors don’t provide parental leave. Apple and Google followed suit, announcing 25 percent wage increases for all drivers.”

East Palo Alto sues Menlo Park over growth plans

Mercury News, January 5, 2017

Kevin Kelly, <http://bayareane.ws/2ipLyDm> • “East Palo Alto leaders, have been warning Menlo Park since mid-2015 that its plan to greatly expand development in the east side of town wasn’t seriously considering the impact of all that growth on their city.

“On Dec. 29, East Palo Alto hammered that point home by slapping Menlo Park with a lawsuit alleging its General Plan update violates state law.

“The update, approved by the Menlo Park City Council on Nov. 29, allows for up to 4,500 new residential units, 2.3 million square feet of new nonresidential uses, and 400 new hotel rooms in the city’s bayfront area.

“The lawsuit was filed in San Mateo County Superior Court by Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP, San Francisco. It could be up to four months before the case goes to trial — if it does.

“Under state law, Menlo Park officials now must meet with East Palo Alto within 45 days of the lawsuit filing. If it becomes clear no compromise can be reached, both cities would have roughly 60 days to prepare for trial.

“‘We filed a lawsuit because East Palo Alto didn’t feel it was getting the response required by law, and CEQA requires the parties to have settlement discussions,’ said Ellison Folk, an attorney with the law firm. ‘It’s not saying Menlo Park can’t do this, it’s that the impacts and the burdens need to be more equitably shared.’”

Bay Area: Traffic congestion shot up 84 percent in 10 years

San Francisco Business Times, January 3, 2017

Antoinette Siu, <http://bit.ly/2iC84bf> • “Time lost to Bay Area traffic congestion is likely to keep rising sharply in the next decade, according to recent data from California Department of Transportation. That’s the difference from 2005 to 2015 in daily vehicle hours of delay. (One hour of daily delay reflects one car stuck in traffic for one hour.) The data covers the nine-county Bay Area.

“The congestion amounts to much more than a headache for drivers. The traffic mess is threatening the region’s economic growth.

“Employers are already seeing lost productivity from workers stuck in traffic. Traffic congestion will slow the

economy as employers think about recruiting in other places and workers find the long Bay Area commutes makes the region unlivable.

“The Bay Area Council, a business advocacy organization, said fixing traffic congestion is its No. 1 priority for 2017.

“In the meantime, the data from Caltrans predicts congestion will continue to worsen. Sean Nozzari, deputy district director of Caltrans’ traffic division for the Bay Area, estimates the region may see a 70 percent rise in congestion in the next 20 years.”

(Norcal continues on next page)

San Ramon: Court ruling favors 'Mello-Roos' tax

East Bay Times, January 9, 2017

Sam Richards, <http://bayareane.ws/2j9wnNQ> • “The state Supreme Court has declined to hear an appeal of an October decision that San Ramon can lawfully require a special tax district for residents of a planned condominium project to pay for city services, ending 2½ years of legal action over the matter.

“The court said Dec. 21 that it will not consider the latest appeal by the Building Industry Association of the Bay Area and the Pacific Legal Foundation. Those groups sued San Ramon in March 2014, claiming the ‘Mello-Roos’ tax the city requires for municipal services to the 48-unit Ryan Terrace condominium development off Crow Canyon Road near Home Depot is illegal. The groups argued that, because Ryan Terrace is an ‘infill development’ surrounded

by developed areas where police, streets, and other services already exist, services there don’t qualify as ‘new.’

“The builders’ association believes Mello-Roos districts, also called Community Facilities Districts, discriminate against those living in new townhomes and condos amid existing housing by requiring them to pay for city services their nearby neighbors don’t. An attorney with the Pacific Legal Foundation said this victory for San Ramon could have a chilling effect on plans for affordable housing in the Bay Area.

“City officials, meanwhile, contended that the new tax was needed because providing police, fire, and other services to those 48 condos will cost more than what the new homes would generate for the city in property taxes.”

Santa Rosa: March completion for reunified Old Courthouse Square

Press Democrat, December 23, 2016

Kevin McCallum, <http://bit.ly/2iGli7w> • “Fifty years after knocking down its courthouse and punching four lanes of traffic through its center, [Santa Rosa is nearing completion of] the painful, messy, and expensive process of reunifying the two halves of the Old Courthouse Square [and making it] whole again.

“[Envisioned but] sidelined in the 1990s, the reunification effort resurged last year after downtown business leaders advocated for a simpler, less-expensive design ... like the successful plazas of Sonoma and Healdsburg: a square ringed by side streets with plenty of parking, wide sidewalks, and a flexible space in the center suitable for both everyday use and special events.

“Others called it foolhardy for the city to sever a major artery through downtown. Some downtown

businesses have been vocal in their critique of a project that was supposed to be finished Nov. 18 but will now extend into March.

“While the delays (e.g., redesign of the square’s electrical system and discovery of an aged underground tank with 800 gallons of black oil) have been frustrating, the city’s bet is paying off. A developer will turn the historic but mostly vacant Empire Building and a neighboring structure into a 62-unit boutique hotel. For that to be underway even before the work is finished is encouraging, as revitalization of the downtown business environment has always been one of the primary goals of the reunification project.”

(Norcal continues on next page)

“Oh, my poor, beloved Oakland, center of my business, shopping, and social life. For decades, this city has been unable to achieve a meaningful economic lift-off. About a decade ago, it started to get its ducks in a row (largely thanks to then-Mayor Jerry Brown). Post-recession, things got really exciting for Oakland, and suddenly it became hip. Now the NY Times (<http://nyti.ms/2hE5hdD>) would have us believe Oakland has become the victim of its own success. I have to agree that home prices have become insane. But still, give Oakland a break! It’s just trying to become a grown-up city.” — *Lucy Armentrout, former planner and former member of Northern Section’s board of directors*

Berkeley: Creative housing topped by a working farm

San Francisco Chronicle, December 24, 2016

John King, <http://bit.ly/2ixf5em> • “The new housing on Berkeley’s south side [has a] rooftop farm above 18 free-standing structures that hold 77 apartments. In all, one-third of an acre of ‘land’ is available for farming. Combine those elements in the middle of a fairly dense city, and they make a point that pedestrian-friendly housing doesn’t need to be packaged in squat, costumed boxes along busy streets.

“The developer and architect used two large prefabricated modules — one containing two small individual bedrooms and a shared bathroom, the other holding the living, dining, and kitchen areas (<http://bit.ly/2ixpMNF>).

“The street look can be forbidding. But the open-air corridors and multistory sight lines [give] the interior a collegial feel that’s much more inviting than your standard

apartment block. This is no mean feat given that the 77 apartments together contain 236 beds.

“Garden Village, at the corner of Dwight Way and Fulton Street on the edge of downtown Berkeley, shows the potential for experimentation as suburbs and cities add housing to their central districts. The layout traces back to California’s love of outdoor living even as it folds in such still-experimental elements as stacked modular construction and rooftop farming.”

Monthly rents are \$1,098 for 2-BR units and \$1,316 for 4-BR units. BMR units are available, and UC Berkeley students are assigned to some Garden Village units. Also see *Northern News*’ mention of this “New ‘zero-parking’ Berkeley development” in the November 2013 issue, page 18, <http://bit.ly/1bgOFmY>.

San Francisco: Inclusionary zoning expands below-market housing stock

HUD USER, December 16, 2016

<http://bit.ly/2iwG3BI> • “Tishman Speyer’s 1400 Mission Street is a 15-story condominium building developed to comply with San Francisco’s Inclusionary Housing (IH) program, <http://bit.ly/2hNn4z2>. The building, the second-largest offsite affordable housing development constructed under San Francisco’s IH program, was required as a condition of approval of the developer’s 656-unit luxury condominium project, Lumina.

“Under IH requirements, developers of market-rate multifamily housing of 10 or more units have four options to contribute to affordable housing. Tishman Speyer could pay a fee to the Citywide Affordable Housing Fund, reserve 12 percent of Lumina’s condominiums for households making no more than 90 percent of the area median income (AMI), build offsite ownership units equal to 25 percent of Lumina’s units for households making no more than 90 percent of AMI, or a combination of [such efforts].

“With Lumina’s 656 units ranging from \$1 million to \$49 million, Tishman Speyer decided to build the required 167 BMR units — 25 percent of Lumina’s units — offsite. Since 1992, only 5 percent of developers in San Francisco with IH obligations have chosen the offsite option.

“Tishman Speyer manages the building, but the IH administrator — the Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development — sets the sales price and other details for each BMR unit. Only first-time homebuyers who meet income restrictions, obtain financing through an approved lender, and work with a HUD-approved housing counselor through HomeownershipSF (<http://bit.ly/2hNgwAn>) are eligible to purchase the units.”

(Norcal continues on next page)

A portable granny unit on every lot. More than a thousand people have read or seen December’s *Northern News* lead article on planning our communities for an aging population. If you’re one of them, you’ll be interested in this five-minute video (<https://youtu.be/9qXvfOGt3g>) of a prototype single-story, 460 sq. ft., portable, temporary, one-bedroom home that can be plopped down on the rear corner of probably two thirds of the single-family lots in United States. Thanks to Calgary architect John Brown, associate dean at UCalgary’s Faculty of Environmental Design, who narrates the video, and to Cailynn Klingbeil for her article in *Next City* on this “laneway house” for seniors, <http://bit.ly/2g0fsd4>.

Contra Costa Transportation Authority is testing driverless shuttles

East Bay Times, January 17, 2016

Erin Baldassari, <http://bayareane.ws/2iHWAew>

• “The Contra Costa Transportation Authority has begun testing two driverless shuttles for a two-year pilot program at GoMentum Station in Concord and the Bishop Ranch office park in San Ramon. The shuttles were purchased from the French firm, EasyMile. Testing is underway within the secure confines of Concord’s former naval base.

“The box-like shuttles have no steering wheel, brake pedal, or accelerator pedal. They are expected to begin transporting employees at Bishop Ranch in April, assuming testing goes as planned.

“Representatives from the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), which is spearheading the project, plan to host an event in February to show off the shuttles to the media and others at the GoMentum Station, said Randy Iwasaki, the CCTA’s executive director.

“The governor signed a new law in September that allows the shuttles to cross over public roads. The law requires the CCTA, or one of its private partners, to submit a detailed testing plan to the Department of Motor Vehicles before the driverless shuttles hit city streets. But Iwasaki said the agency is still months away from deploying the vehicles on public roads.”

For a photo and an earlier article on EasyMile EZ-10, see *Northern News*, October 2016, page 32,

<http://bit.ly/2i1FFt>

Oakland: Was gentrification a factor in warehouse fire?

The New York Times, December 6, 2016

Conor Dougherty and Julie Turkewitz,

<http://nyti.ms/2gbRPNe> • Oakland has been “a place where service workers could buy a home, young professionals could get an extra bedroom, and artists lived in low-rent warehouses. But Oakland’s price advantages have mostly eroded. Rents have increased 70 percent in five years, more than in any other big city in the nation, according to Zillow.”

“A dangerous mix of factors led to the fire on December 2nd. The victims were trapped in a tinderbox. Yet the economic backdrop shows how rising rents and fears of eviction can push people in a desperate search for housing to unsafe spaces. In Oakland, this often means living at the whims of any landlord willing to look the other way.

“Many of the city’s industrial warehouses originally served as a waypoint where shippers stored cargo. But as ‘containerization’ accelerated, warehouses went empty and artists moved in.

“The result has been a vast gray economy of live/work spaces that, legal or not, are an important source of affordable housing. While living in an illegal space may require coping with a makeshift kitchen with a sink that drains into a bucket, it’s better than living nowhere.

“‘You bring these places up to code and you end up pricing out the people who make Oakland such a great place,’ said Thomas Dolan, an Oakland architect who helps building owners convert illegally occupied warehouses into legally occupied lofts.” ■

Answer to Where in the world (Page 16)

Udaipur, Rajasthan, India. City Palace district, seen from Lake Pichola. Photo: Linton Atlas.



Source: Google maps

South Bay and Peninsula Regional Activity Coordinators wanted

Are you an APA member living or working in the South Bay or Peninsula? Are you interested in serving on Northern Section’s board of directors?

Then consider a term as a Regional Activity Coordinator (RAC). RACs serve in each of Northern Section’s seven geographic areas to organize meetings, workshops, or networking events in their regions. RACs also serve on a variety of Board committees and provide valuable input to the Board on the professional needs of APA members in their regions. If you’re up for the challenge, camaraderie, and fun, please contact Northern Section Director Sharon Grewal, AICP (Sharon.Grewal@acgov.org) for more information.

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- Raise member awareness and involvement in APA affairs;
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- Encourage professionalism in the conduct of its members; and
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