

# NORTHERN NEWS



American Planning Association  
California Chapter  
Northern  
*Making Great Communities Happen*

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**February 2018**



Eastbound Highway 24 approaching I-580  
in Oakland on a January weekday

Photo: H. Pike Oliver



Help for a neighborhood as Google arrives

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## Help for a neighborhood as Google arrives

Nicole Guzman, with Nikki Chan and Michael Tkalcovic

**DELMAS PARK** is a working-class neighborhood about to undergo significant change. It's immediately west of and across the Highway 87 freeway from downtown San Jose, and adjacent to and south of the SAP Center. The historic Amtrak-serving Diridon Station, owned and operated by the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board, lies within the north-west quadrant of the neighborhood. This is an area in which Google is snapping up properties for a multimillion square foot office expansion.

Over the past several years, graduate students from San Jose State University's department of urban and regional planning and CommUniverCity (CUC) have been working together to help San Jose neighborhoods understand and plan for urban change. Beginning with the 2017 Fall semester, SJSU graduate students mounted a yearlong community assessment of, and priority-setting process for, Delmas Park.

The first step involved creating a partnership with the community, gathering residents' opinions about the neighborhood, learning about current land use policies, and researching the area's rich history. We expect by summer 2018 to have a comprehensive report that neighborhood leaders can use to advocate for their documented priorities and help shape Delmas Park over the coming decades.

The students used an asset-based lens to examine Delmas Park, continuing the work started by the city's now-defunct Strong Neighborhoods Initiative. That initiative was cut in 2012 when California's redevelopment agencies were dissolved.

### History

Delmas Park's rich, storied past includes Native American settlements and a fascinating array of industries, including silk production, vegetable canning, and winemaking. Antoine Delmas, for whom the community is named, imported a popular grape from France that jump-started Zinfandel wine production in the South Bay. The Lakehouse Historic District — the neighborhood's two northernmost blocks — is known for its late 19th century Queen Anne style homes. Irene Dalis (1925–2014, <http://bit.ly/2pHgnI1>), the founder and director of Opera San Jose, lived here as a child. Her childhood home is a registered historic landmark.

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The Delmas Park Neighborhood



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**Eureka: General Plan Guidelines workshop.** The Governor's Office of Planning and Research has scheduled a workshop to explain the major changes in the guidelines, provide information on the update process and next steps, and answer questions about use of the new guidelines: **Friday, February 9, 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM**, at Humboldt State University Aquatics Center, 921 Waterfront Drive, Eureka, CA. For details and to register, go to <http://bit.ly/2GjPpKD>



## Director's note

Sharon Grewal, AICP

### Happy 2018!

The year just began, but APA California–Northern Section is already off to a great start. Our Northern Section Board met on January 27 for an all-day retreat on how we can provide additional services and opportunities for our members. We provide more events and CM credits than any other Section in the state, but there's always room for improvement. In 2018, our Board will be expanding with a number of new positions including Social Media Coordinator, Organization Liaisons, Planning4Health Coordinator, and Young Planning Group (YPG) Representatives for the East Bay and San Francisco.

### Elected officials and planning commissioners

We will this year be strengthening our relationship with our local, regional, and state officials toward enacting strong planning policies. We will continue to host legislative webinars, and will resume our Planning Commissioner Training with live sessions across the Bay Area and also via webinar. If you are interested in speaking at the training, please contact our Planning Commissioner Liaison, Don Bradley, AICP, at [aicp@norcalapa.org](mailto:aicp@norcalapa.org).

### AARP/ASA/APA Livable cities: Putting policy and program ideas into practice

Register now for the second annual *Summit on Livable Communities for All Ages*, Thursday, March 29, at the Hilton San Francisco Union Square. The Summit is co-sponsored by Northern Section APA and AARP and includes national and local speakers discussing policies related to our aging populations, followed by an interactive breakout session. **Space is limited.**

**Register at** <http://bit.ly/2FLZ24K> or see **page 6** for more information.

### 2018 Northern Section Awards – Call for Nominations

Northern Section has issued a call for nominations for Section Awards. Last year we revamped the Awards Program. This year, we are modernizing with a two-step electronic submittal process. Northern Section has

amazing planners and projects. We want to showcase the very best of these and send them on to garner California and national awards. The deadline for nominations is Wednesday, February 28. Please visit <http://bit.ly/1qWlzgb> for more information regarding the categories, rules, and submittal applications. Our Awards Co-directors **Carmela Campbell, AICP**, and **Florentina Craciun, AICP**, can answer your questions at [awards@norcalapa.org](mailto:awards@norcalapa.org).

### Call for volunteers – Mendocino County

As a result of continuing fire recovery efforts, Mendocino County is short of staff and has put many planning projects on the back burner. They're focusing on fire cleanup and rebuilding efforts and need help with other planning projects. The County has asked for assistance with three tasks:

1. An ordinance update to bring the county into compliance with state requirements on Accessory Dwelling Units.
2. A Local Coastal Plan ordinance update for cultivation of cannabis in the Coastal Zone.
3. Blanket rezoning of properties in the Ukiah Valley Area Plan for consistency with General Plan designations.

Volunteers would greatly be appreciated! Please contact **Mary Lynn Hunt**, [huntm@mendocinocounty.org](mailto:huntm@mendocinocounty.org), Chief Planner, for more information.

### 2019 National Planning Conference Local Host Committee – Call for volunteers

NPC19, the 2019 APA National Planning Conference, will be held in San Francisco, April 13–16, 2019. The Local Host Committee kicked off conference planning efforts last year. We are now reaching out to the entire Northern Section for volunteers for a range of committees including Local Activities, Planner's Guide, Orientation Tour, and Mobile Workshops. Please sign up at <http://bit.ly/2GdA2U1> or see **page 5** for more information.

# Water resilience in the Bay Area in response to a changing climate

Holly Pearson, AICP

In recent years Californians have become increasingly accustomed to unpredictability when it comes to our weather and our seasons. Following a string of extremely dry years between 2011 and 2014, we experienced the heaviest season of rain and snowfall during the winter of 2016–2017 since record keeping began. What do these trends — these extreme variations in precipitation from one year to the next — mean in terms of our water needs in the San Francisco Bay Area? And as we adjust to the new conditions brought about by global climate change, how can we adapt our regional water systems and patterns of consumption to ensure that our urban communities have enough water in future decades?

I put these questions to Newsha Ajami, Ph.D., Director of Urban Water Policy with the Water in the West program at Stanford University. While the lack of rainfall in some recent years has caused concerns for many California residents about the water supply, she said, it's more important to look at our demand for water and how it has evolved over time. "The population of the Bay Area has increased significantly in the past couple of decades, but our water use hasn't changed," Ajami explained. "We've had about 27 percent population growth since 1990, but we're still using almost the same amount of water." This demonstrates how much more efficient we have become about how we use our water supply.

Even with this success in improving our efficiency in terms of water consumption, Ajami emphasizes the importance of adapting to the changing climatic reality and the resulting impacts on our water system. We currently depend on large, centralized water systems that were built in the last century and were designed for specific climatic assumptions — specifically on snowpack in the Sierras to meet our water needs. "As we've been experiencing drought, the snowpack has been shrinking. There's more rain and less snow now than in the past. And even when there is a lot of snow, higher temperatures mean that the snow melts faster than expected," says Ajami. "This is the new reality. It creates uncertainty in how the water system works, and we have to adapt to the changes."



Newsha Ajami, Ph.D., is with the Water in the West program at Stanford University.

Ajami, along with other Bay Area water policy experts, is focusing on enabling innovation in the water sector and developing the region's water resiliency. The solutions lie partly in adapting our existing centralized water systems by moving water in a different way, storing more rain, and capturing snowmelt at a different time of the year. Other key strategies involve shifting to more decentralized water sources. "Local solutions can help take the pressure off our aging infrastructure, introduce more flexibility in the system, and help meet water demand in a more efficient, less capital-intensive way," Ajami explains.

Local solutions to the changing water system in California are as diverse as the communities that are working on them. Ajami notes that each community has its own opportunities to deal with short-term challenges related to water supply and consumption. "Cities in the Bay Area had pretty diverse ways of responding to the drought," she says. "Some cities instituted mandatory cuts in water use, while other communities had more back-up supply. Some cities made efforts to introduce

*(continued on next page)*

## Water resilience in the Bay Area in response to a changing climate (continued from previous page)

recycled water and on-site reuse, and some started looking into groundwater as a resource. A number of communities focused on conservation, looking at how the media impacted people's behaviors during the drought. Individual choices and behaviors clearly played a big role in reducing water use."

Ajami points out that the essential challenge is to develop a more diverse water supply portfolio. "We need to have more options, and more depth to our options," she says. This is the key to sustaining our Bay Area cities and towns as weather patterns and water systems shift.

*Newsha Ajami will be speaking along with other water policy experts from San Francisco and the Bay Area in a panel discussion about urban water resilience at SPUR San Francisco on February 7 at 6:00 pm. The event, titled "Water, Water (Not) Everywhere," is free for SPUR members, \$10 for non-members. For more information and to register, visit <http://bit.ly/2rEX4Qo>.*



*Holly Pearson is APA California-Northern Section's Sustainability Director. A senior planner at Michael Baker International, she specializes in policy for sustainable cities.*

## Call for volunteers for the 2019 APA National Conference Local Committee

Northern Section is issuing this call for volunteers to serve as Local Host subcommittee members for NPC19, the 2019 National Planning Conference to be held in San Francisco, April 13–16, 2019. We're reaching out to the entire Northern Section membership for volunteers for a range of subcommittees including Local Activities, Planner's Guide, Orientation Tour, and Mobile Workshops.

### Subcommittees

**Local Activities** – Identify networking activities during the National Planning Conference (including the opening reception and other evening events).

**Mobile Workshops** – Work with others on identifying and submitting mobile workshop proposals on relevant projects in San Francisco and the region.

**Orientation Tours** – Create one or more high-quality planning tours of various geographic areas in San Francisco and the region.

**Planner's Guide** – Develop relevant planning information of interest to conference attendees to be incorporated into the APA app (and a printed document if funds are available).

**Merchandise** – Select items that will bear the conference theme and/or logo to be sold or used as promotional items.

**Volunteers** – Coordinate student and local conference volunteers to help assist at various sessions and activities.

Please sign-up at <http://bit.ly/2GdA2U1>.

For more information, contact the 2019 Local Host Committee, at [NPC19@norcalapa.org](mailto:NPC19@norcalapa.org). ■

**Interesting ridership stats.** "Caltrain started an annual onboard count of riders on Jan. 23 in order to obtain information for planning improvements, allocating resources, and validating ridership estimates based on sales, the transit agency officials said. Every rider on every train will be counted on a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday and will be averaged until the count concludes in mid-February. Riders will not be counted on Mondays or Fridays because the ridership is typically the lowest on those days. According to Caltrain records, ridership has more than doubled since 1997 when it was just 24,597 passengers compared to their 2017 count of 62,190. Caltrain gets its heaviest ridership beginning in summer and lasting through the fall, officials said." —Mountain View Voice, <http://bit.ly/2rCFaOo>



# Lovable, livable cities: *Putting policy and program ideas into practice*

## AICP CM 3.0

**REGISTER NOW** for the second annual Summit on Livable Communities for All Ages, **Thursday, March 29, from 9:30 AM to 1 PM**, at the Hilton San Francisco Union Square. The Summit is co-sponsored by AARP and **APA California Northern Section**.

National and local experts will discuss promising practices, prototypes, and successful projects that address challenges in planning to accommodate our new demographics. The Summit is part of the American Society on Aging (ASA) National Conference, which provides an exceptional opportunity to establish contacts with, and to work alongside, professionals in health and aging.

During the first half-hour, we will hear about what we've learned regarding obstacles to, and solutions for, adapting cities to our aging populations. Our speakers are **Jennifer Raitt**, director of planning and community development, Arlington, Massachusetts; **Rodney Harrell, PhD**, director of livability thought leadership, AARP Public Policy Institute, Washington, DC; and **Stephanie Firestone, MUP**, senior strategic policy advisor, AARP Office of International Affairs, Washington, DC.

The local speakers — and the interactive dialogues that follow — will focus on *housing, transportation, and outdoor spaces and the built environment*. The speakers are **Naomi Armenta**, senior transportation planner, Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, San Francisco;



**Hilton San Francisco Union Square.** Photo: Eric in SF [CC BY-SA 3.0] via Wikimedia Commons, 2008.

**Matt Raimi**, AICP, LEED-NP AD, Raimi + Associates, Berkeley; and **Denise Pinkston, MCRP**, partner, TMG Partners, San Francisco. Their 15-minute presentations will kick off 90 minutes of interactive dialogue in breakout sessions.

The fee for the three-hour summit is \$50, but **space is limited and will go quickly. To register, go to <http://bit.ly/2FLZ24K>**, then continue to “2018 Aging in America Conference – Thursday Only 2nd Annual Summit on Livable Communities March 29, 2017.” **AICP members will earn 3 CM credits.**

**NOTE:** We need volunteers to assist at the breakout tables. If you are interested, please contact Summit co-chair Wendy Cosin, [wendycosin@gmail.com](mailto:wendycosin@gmail.com). Fees will be waived for the first 10 who contact Wendy to volunteer. ■



Naomi Armenta



Stephanie Firestone



Rodney Harrell



Denise Pinkston



Matt Raimi



Jennifer Raitt

# Climate resiliency documents coming up

Excerpted from APA California's News Flash of January 12, 2016,  
"highlights from the 2018–2019 Budget Summary of interest to APA members"

By Sande George, Stefan/George Associates, [sgeorge@stefangeorge.com](mailto:sgeorge@stefangeorge.com)

In 2018, several groundbreaking climate resiliency documents will be released to help better plan for and understand climate change. Together, they reflect the Administration's comprehensive cross-agency response to make California's communities, natural systems, and built environment resilient to climate change:

- **California's Climate Adaptation Strategy:** The 2018 Update to Safeguarding California will catalog thousands of actions 38 state agencies are taking to prepare for climate change and strategies that will increase resiliency for people, infrastructure, and natural resources.
- **Sea Level Rise:** The Ocean Protection Council's State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance: 2018 Update will provide a bold methodology for state and local governments to analyze, assess, and plan for risks associated with sea level rise, underpinned by the latest sea-level rise projections.

- **Protecting the State's Forests:** The California Forest Carbon Plan will serve as a scientific foundation and policy vision for increasing the health and resiliency of California's forests against the worsening threats of fire and disease driven by climate change.
- **Basing Actions in Science:** The State's 4th Climate Change Assessment will consolidate the best available scientific understanding of how climate change is impacting the state. This body of science will serve as the foundation for how state agencies, local governments, and the public respond to forecasted climate change impacts.

You can find the 2018–2019 Budget Summary at <http://www.ebudget.ca.gov>. ■

## Where in the world



Photo by Barry J. Miller, FAICP (Answer on [page 17](#))





**“The built environment is as much a public health concern as it is an infrastructure need.** The built environment can influence both physical and mental health. Whether it’s blighted blocks or a lack of trees, the way cities are designed is as much a public health concern as food deserts or access to health care facilities. ... [This] first-of-its-kind design track within a medical school ... had a vision of medicine intersecting with fields outside of standard medical school study. Its goal was to design healthier cities, find more efficient ways to deliver care, and develop the next generation of medical devices. It’s not a bunch of heady undergrads touting the beauty of Copenhagen’s streetscapes — it’s a program that aims to arm a new crop of doctors with a modern set of tools to address public health through design [including] how to redesign urban spaces for public health.

—Bill Bradley, *Next City*, <http://bit.ly/2rszNkF>

**“High rents and redevelopment spell trouble.** A growing number of residents — suspicious of developers’ promises and the economic benefits of redevelopment — have been demanding more forceful action by city officials to preserve downtown Mountain View’s charm and its popular shops and restaurants. They have urged city leaders to oppose adding more tech offices downtown. But having more tech offices downtown doesn’t necessarily harm the city’s retail shops and cafes, according to city officials. Castro Street’s office workers have become the most loyal customers for downtown’s 264 retail businesses. And a study by the International Council of Shopping Centers found that office workers spent \$195 per week on average, mostly around their workplace.” — Mark Noack, *Mountain View Voice*, <http://bit.ly/2F3t17L>

# Orinda: Senior Apartments' design accommodates steeply sloped site

*Adapted from HUD USER*



**Eden Housing developed Monte Verde Senior Apartments on a steeply sloped site near downtown Orinda.** Credit DAHLIN Group

Orinda is a small city in Contra Costa County, where residents on fixed incomes have difficulty finding affordable housing. About 40 percent of Orinda's 700 renter households spend at least 30 percent of their income on rent.

In 2014 [on the site of the city's former library], Monte Verde Senior Apartments, a new senior affordable housing development, opened. Demand for the apartments, which are targeted to very low- and extremely low-income residents aged 62 and over, was so great that 1,000 people applied for the development's 66 units.

Nonprofit developer Eden Housing and the design firm DAHLIN Group have won awards for Monte Verde's design, including the 2017 AIA/HUD Secretary's Award for Excellence in Affordable Housing Design, <http://bit.ly/2DUlrK4>. The award recognizes the developer's deft solution to the steeply sloped site, which was achieved without sacrificing accessibility. (Inclined walkways link the development to a neighboring park and other community amenities.) The award also praises Monte Verde for fitting in visually with the surrounding environment even while achieving a greater density than is found in much of Orinda, which is zoned primarily for single-family homes.

## **Award-winning design on a steep grade**

The four-story building is on a 1.4-acre site, nestled in a hillside with a 17 percent slope descending to Orinda Way. The building's three wings contain 66 one-bedroom, one-bathroom apartments ranging from 617 to 717 square feet.

Design elements within the building and in each apartment facilitate independent living and aging in place. Common facilities include a library, computer lab, exercise room, salon, community room, and lounges.

The development features sustainable materials and equipment that conserve resources and reduce Eden Housing's operating costs. Monte Verde achieved gold certification in the GreenPoint Rated New

Home Multifamily certification system through these and other measures, including being located within walking distance to public transit.

The site's 40-foot change in elevation presented a difficult design challenge, particularly because Monte Verde is home to seniors who may have impaired mobility. The developers made use of two level areas on the site that remained when the city's former library was demolished. The pads accommodate the building's main floor, including the main building entry, and a nearby courtyard. An accessible path links the building to the onsite parking garage, an adjacent park, and a bus stop on Orinda Way.



**The site design lets residents reach an accessible pathway.**

Credit DAHLIN Group

*(continued on next page)*

In response to community concerns that the building would be too large, the building is stepped back so that only a small portion of its fourth story is visible from Orinda Way.

Despite worries raised during the review of the 47-unit-per-acre development, the community is pleased with the result, said Drummond Buckley, Orinda's planning director. "It's been a valuable exercise for Orindans to be able to see what density actually looks like in a location like this," he said. In addition to the AIA/HUD Secretary's award, the project received the 2015 Gold Nugget Grand Award in the category of Seniors Housing Community, Active Adult/Independent Living.

### Developing a highly desirable but deed-restricted site

Monteverde provides senior housing near Orinda's downtown, which a city housing needs assessment recommended in 1999. The development is adjacent to the Orinda Community Center and Community Center Park. Across Orinda Way from the development are a supermarket, post office, and other retail shops. Public transit is nearby as well, with a local bus stop in front of Monteverde and a Bay Area Rapid Transit station within walking distance.

Even though the city, which owned the property, had designated it as a potential site for affordable housing, the East Bay Municipal Utility District held a deed restriction that limited the property to public benefit use, and affordable senior housing did not qualify. Woody Karp, Eden Housing's senior project developer, persuaded the utility district board that private, nonprofit affordable housing for seniors was a public benefit. The city, which owned the site, agreed to this interpretation and provided the land to Eden Housing at no cost. The city also supported Eden Housing's development by rezoning the site "multifamily," which allows senior housing facilities

up to 38 units per acre. Because state law allows affordable housing projects a density bonus, Monteverde was permitted a financially feasible density. The city also adopted a new parking standard for multifamily senior housing, requiring just 0.5 spaces per apartment along with spaces for staff and guests (43 spaces total).

### Financing

Development costs were \$23 million, which included demolishing the former public library and remediating the asbestos and lead paint. The largest source of funding came from 9 percent low-income housing tax credits, which generated \$10.7 million. Other funding came from private loans, the city, HUD, and other public agencies.

**Table 1: Monteverde Senior Apartments Financing**

Low-income housing tax credit equity	\$10,711,000
First mortgage	1,929,000
Second mortgage	3,872,000
HOME Investment Partnerships Program loan	2,040,000
Community Development Block Grant funding	2,050,000
City of Orinda	2,050,000
Other sources	377,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$23,029,000</b>

Monteverde provides project-based vouchers for all residents so that they pay a maximum of 30 percent of their income toward the rent.

*A longer, more detailed version of this article can be found in HUD USER, <http://bit.ly/2rj1bl3>. "The projects featured in [HUD USER's Case Studies] have demonstrated innovation through a multitude of partnerships and initiatives. Each report outlines a project's objectives and the development strategies used to achieve them." ■*

**"When it comes to urban planning, strategy isn't enough.** Rather than relying on strategy to solve a problem, cities require a tangible, detailed action plan that serves as a playbook for achieving their goals. ... With so many city governments and economic development organizations hyper-focused on strategy, it becomes easy to overlook the recipe for setting these strategies in motion. By developing a tangible action plan, cities can ensure that their community's goals are met on time, on budget, and to the overall satisfaction of stakeholders. For governments looking to solve their most pressing urban challenges, it is not enough to simply build a strategy. It is even more imperative to devise a plan of action." *This ultra-short article by Steven Pedigo and Alisa Pyszka in Next City sets forth six steps. <http://bit.ly/2rqXvh7>*



# Planning news roundup

Excerpts linked to the original articles

## California high-speed rail in crisis

*Los Angeles times*, January 21, 2018

**Ralph Vartabedian**, <http://lat.ms/2rtAhXD> • “Seemingly endless delays, cost overruns, and changes in California’s high-speed rail project have created an existential crisis. Over the next year, Governor Brown, the Legislature, and the next governor will have to decide whether to create new revenue sources, dramatically delay construction, or scale it far back from a complete 550-mile system, among other possibilities.

“The acknowledgment [came Jan. 15] that the cost of building just 119 miles of rail between the farm towns of Madera and Wasco has soared from about \$6 billion to \$10.6 billion.

“‘The financial demand for this is so enormous,’ said Martin Wachs, a UCLA transportation expert and a member of a peer review panel that oversees the project. ‘We should have been

more ready for this. The costs always rise and the schedule always slips, but that doesn’t mean the project isn’t justified.’

“An official close to the project acknowledged that the increasing costs render essentially impossible the current plan for a \$21 billion San Jose to Central Valley starter system. As a result, political experts, passenger rail advocates, and officials close to the project presume it will evolve into piecemeal segments in the north, center, and south that could remain separated indefinitely.

“Hasan Ikhata, executive director of the Southern California Assn. of Governments, said, ‘I hope the vision of connecting Los Angeles and San Francisco is achieved, because anything less is not a success.’”

## Santa Rosa: Sale of key housing development site collapses

*Press Democrat*, January 11, 2018

**Kevin McCallum**, <http://bit.ly/2Fy6r7g> • “A developer has walked away from an eagerly anticipated project to add hundreds of apartments beside the Santa Rosa downtown train station.

“The decision by Santa Clara-based ROEM not to move forward with the project was a blow to Santa Rosa and Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit officials, who had high hopes for swift construction of the \$70 million mixed-use development.

“SMART owns the vacant 5.4-acre property in Railroad Square just west of the rail station. For years, the site and neighboring former cannery property have been eyed for a mixed-use development to help revitalize the city’s economy, provide needed housing downtown, and boost train ridership. In mid-2015, with completion of the initial 43-mile operating segment of the

rail line on the horizon, SMART invited developers to share their visions for the property. Five did, and a year later, ROEM was the last one standing.

“The company’s presentation to the city council called for 268 units of market-rate and affordable housing, retail spaces focused on food and wine, and a public plaza. Council members were giddy and residents and rail supporters thrilled.

“But in November, ROEM asked the SMART board for an extension of [what was a] second deadline for 90 days. The board rejected the request, feeling the developer wasn’t demonstrating commitment to the project.

“The company [had] worked closely with city planning staff to increase density, pushing the latest version of the plan to 321 units, 48 of which would have been affordable.”

(Planning news roundup *continues on* [page 21](#))

**SF technology reporter doesn’t own car, relies on Transit app.** “If I need to drive down to Silicon Valley for interviews, I usually rent a car through *Getaround*, which is essentially an Airbnb for people’s cars. It’s pretty convenient, and I’ve even struck up a budding friendship with a guy on my street whose car I frequently rent! ... So why don’t I just buy a car? Between parking tickets, insurance, renting a garage in the city, a monthly payment, and gas, it’s way cheaper for me to be car-free and rent only when I need one. Maybe in 10 years it’ll be a moot point, and the streets will be filled with robot cars! I kind of hope so.” —Mike Isaac, *The New York Times*, <http://nyti.ms/2EC5lpU>

# Meet a local planner

By Catarina Kidd, AICP

**Benjamin Fu** is Assistant Director of Community Development, City of Cupertino. He holds a B.A. in architecture (city and regional planning) from UC Berkeley and is on track to receive a master of public administration from USC this year.

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

I split my time between the East Bay, where I live, and Cupertino, where I manage the city's planning, housing, and code enforcement. After graduating with a B.A. in architecture from UC Berkeley, I worked as an architectural designer in San Francisco. My exposure to the client's expectations and point of view — everything from finance to emotional connection — prepared me for my transition to a city planner working in local government.

I am also enrolled in a public administration and policy graduate program at USC that is offered on campus, off-site, or online. The online option offered me more flexibility. My mid-career attempt to obtain an advanced degree is challenging in terms of balancing work and personal life. The time commitment is approximately 40 hours per week, similar to having a second full time job.

## **What was your path to planning?**

After a chance encounter with a planner from the San Francisco Planning Department at a Cal career event — I was representing the architecture firm where I worked — I was encouraged to apply for a position there. I felt that my architecture and design background would be beneficial for the department as they strengthened their internal design guidelines and process.

## **Whom do you really admire?**

My mother, and her level of hard work, commitment, and sense of responsibility as a single parent, living and working in a new country while raising a young child.

## **What was the best advice you received, and from whom — or the worst advice that still helped you?**

I received great advice from a former superior and mentor in the San Francisco Planning Department when I became acting manager six or seven years ago. He reminded me to keep my cool, act appropriately and professionally in the



office, and always be aware of my responsibilities and boundaries as a manager, even in social settings. Interesting, but not bad advice, was not to wear a blazer to work all the time. I learned to dress according to the environment and be more aware of existing culture and practice.

## **Who is your design hero, living or dead?**

**I.M. Pei.** His ability to succeed and gain respect as a design professional and a person during a more conservative and challenging era was an inspiration.

## **Tell us about a favorite project.**

When I was a young planner for San Francisco, I was assigned a conditional use permit for the establishment of a nonprofit social service organization being created by battered women to provide support for other battered women and to implement State Proposition 36. Prop 36 was the voter-approved measure that mandated treatment for substance abusers. Clients included referrals from the District Attorney and Hall of Justice, residential treatment facilities in the community, and social services. This was not a glamorous project, but it was for the underserved and underrepresented, and to me, that symbolized true planning and community development.

## **Your opinion: A great urban space in the Bay Area is \_\_\_\_.**

101 Second Street Atrium (corner Mission) in San Francisco. San Francisco's POPOS are unpredictable, and as outdoor spaces — not always protected from the elements — they can be underutilized. This glazed and covered space provides a cafe and connects to the outdoors. This is especially important in SF since it's often windy and cool. The space is functional, exceptionally visually pleasant, and always packed.

## **You have worked in small cities — and 13 years for San Francisco. What are the less obvious differences?**

To me, what is surprising is the lack of difference.

As a planner, you may face different challenges, but people are still the same. Human nature, expectations, and pressures are fairly similar. Property concerns and

*(continued on next page)*

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

issues between neighbors are fundamentally the same: concerns about transportation, property values, privacy, and over-development. In large cities, there is a stronger focus on public transit, open spaces, and the pedestrian experience. In small cities, there is often more of a focus on economic development and quality of life issues.

### **You've been in management for a number of years.**

#### **What surprises you about your role as a manager?**

How hard it is. When I managed projects as a planner, it required some managing of people, so I thought it would be a really simple transition. But when you take away "projects," focusing on people requires a different skill set. It can be taxing. To excel takes effort. Sometimes I find I need to be more careful about what I say: People have different expectations of a manager.

#### **What do you find most fulfilling about your job?**

#### **On what do you focus in a frustrating situation?**

Interpersonal relationships, often internal, but mostly external — breaking down that bureaucratic wall. Letting people know there are people they can talk to; easing their minds about what's happening next door and what the city is working on; and building trust. I like to think, how would I help if this were my mom? When someone is frustrated or challenging you, I think about how to make it a more humane experience.

#### **How do you stay grounded mid-career?**

It's probably common to feel impatient and pressured to be and do more. Sometimes we focus on advancement and forget about understanding others and ourselves. Be empathetic to your colleagues and the public. It pays to develop patience and emotional intelligence.

#### **Planners are often idealists, leading to disillusionment when in a political environment. Any thoughts on balancing principles and reality?**

Be humble and respectful. Use your experiences with family and friends. How would you explain something to people who don't know anything about planning?

No matter how "outside the box" we are urged to be or think we are, we operate within a set of codes. When you understand the why of a situation, you can often find solutions. Find other ways to get the same result. Find a common ground that makes sense for you, the applicants, and civic leaders.



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





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Northern Section is officially opening a call for nominations for Section Awards. In previous years, several Northern Section winners went on to garner State APA Awards. Let's keep up the tradition and recognize the best in planning.

**The deadline for nominations is Wednesday, February 28, 2018**

### The Section Awards Categories for 2018 are:

#### Project Awards

Opportunity and Empowerment	Best Practices
Comprehensive Plan – Large and Small Jurisdictions (2 awards)	Grassroots Initiative
Implementation – Large and Small Jurisdictions (2 awards)	Public Outreach
Innovation in Green Community Planning	Urban Design
Economic Planning and Development	Communications Initiative
Transportation Planning	Advancing Diversity and Social Change
	Planning Landmark
	Hard-won Victory

#### Awards for people, agencies, and firms

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Planning Agency (public sector)	Distinguished Service
Planning Firm (private sector)	Distinguished Contribution
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Academic Award	Planning Emeritus Network (PEN)

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Get all the details, rules, and applications at <http://bit.ly/1qWlzgb>

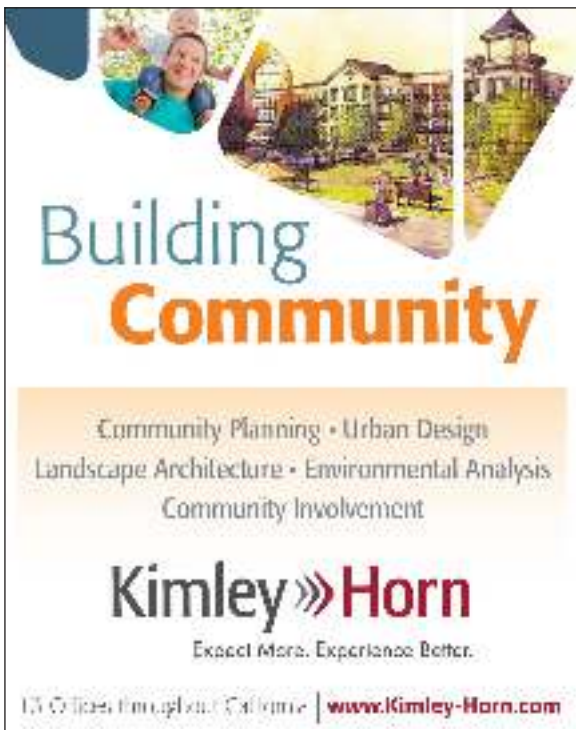
For more information, please contact Awards Program Directors Florentina Craciun or Carmela Campbell at [awards@norcalapa.org](mailto:awards@norcalapa.org)

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Are you interested in serving on the jury for the 2018 APA CA Northern Awards? Then please email a letter of interest (200 words) and your résumé to Awards Program Directors Florentina Craciun or Carmela Campbell at [awards@norcalapa.org](mailto:awards@norcalapa.org)

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## Congrats to northern California's newest AICP members

*Expect great things from these up-and-coming planners*

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Deena Morsilli	Sandra Villatoro
Michael Ohnemus	Richard T. Williams
Fernanda Roveri	Nancy Woltering

### Sacramento Valley Section

Lydia Altick  
Sara Bierman  
David Schlegel

**2017 Bay Area real estate story in a nutshell.** "Price appreciation outpacing income growth, and falling inventory that doesn't seem to be reversing course anytime soon. ... Recent data show the average person moving into the Bay Area earns \$8,500 more than the average person who leaves: \$90,000 for those coming in and \$81,500 for those going out. That's strong evidence that many middle-income Bay Area residents are being priced out and replaced by earners with higher paying jobs. Strong job growth and low supply equals high prices. ... It's taken decades to get us into this mess, and if we don't step up our housing game soon, it could take us decades to get out. —Ralph McLaughlin, Trulia's chief economist, as told to Richard Scheinin, Mercury News, <http://bayareane.ws/2EDtjRw>



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## Who's where



**Greg Beverlin** is now the transportation demand manager for Santa Clara County. He previously was a resource conservation specialist II in San Mateo County's Office of Sustainability and, before that, sustainability coordinator for the city of San Carlos. Beverlin holds a B.S. in environmental studies from the University of Kansas and a master's in urban and regional planning from San Jose State University. Outside of work, he enjoys exploring the many parks, beaches, and trails in the area, playing basketball, going on runs, and gardening.



**Ellen Clark, AICP**, has joined the city of Pleasanton as deputy director of community development/planning manager. She has more than 17 years of experience in public and private sector planning, most recently in Moraga as planning director and Mammoth Lakes as principal planner. Clark holds a bachelor's degree in geography from the University of Cambridge. She began her planning career at Design, Community & Environment (now PlaceWorks) in Berkeley. Clark lives in Oakland with her family. When not working, she enjoys hiking and running on the local trails, travelling, and forging new culinary frontiers.



**Darcy Kremin, AICP**, is now the Walnut Creek office manager for Michael Baker International. She is also the firm's Bay Area Environmental Practice Leader — a position she has held since 2014 — and manages staff in both Walnut Creek and Oakland. Before that, Kremin was environmental planning manager for URS Corporation, senior project planner for Cardno ENTRIX, and senior planner at RBF Consulting. She holds an M.A. in urban and environmental policy from Tufts University and a B.A. in geography (environmental studies and political science) from UCLA. Kremin was co-chair of the APA California 2015 Conference (Oakland) Host Committee, served on the California Planning Foundation Board, and was Northern Section's Director in 2009 and 2010. She also finds time to volunteer at Girl Scout camp, run 5k with one daughter, attend Brownie camporee with the other, and root for two different girls' soccer teams from start to tournament.

*(continued on next page)*





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## Who's where (continued from previous page)

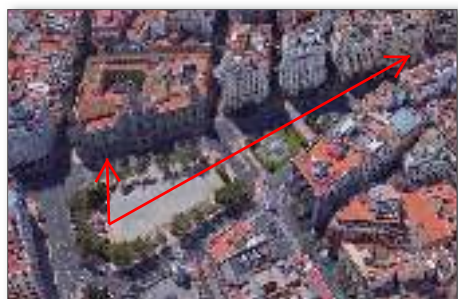


**Jennifer Piozet** has been promoted to supervising planner and oversees Planning Development Support at the city of San Jose. Her duties also include the comprehensive update of the city's Integrated Permitting System (AMANDA), process improvements, managing various Urban Village plans, and managing the Cambrian Park Plaza and Dick's Center signature projects. Piozet has worked for the city since 2014, beginning as Planner II. She holds a master of urban planning and a B.A. in art and design, both from San Jose State University. Piozet was *Northern News*' associate editor for two-and-a-half years, from 2013–2015. In her spare time, she remodels her home and reads with her cats.



**Christina Ratcliffe, AICP**, is the community and economic development director for the city of Martinez, since July. Over the past seven years, she has been community development director in Benicia, senior planner in Orinda, and planner for the city of Alameda. In the century's first decade, Ratcliffe was a senior associate for PMC and opened their Bay Area and Arizona offices. (Michael Baker International acquired PMC in 2015.) Ratcliffe holds an MCP from UC Berkeley, where she was awarded the "Rosie the Riveter 'We Can Do It' Award" by her fellow students, and a B.A. in urban studies from San Francisco State University. She was Northern Section's Professional Development Director from 2002 to 2004 and again in 2009 and 2010. Ratcliffe currently serves on the steering committee of the Bay Area Planning Directors Association. She enjoys spending time with her family, sailing, and tending to her 1916 Craftsman bungalow. The latter has been a weekend project for the last 18 years. ■

## Answer to Where in the world (Page 7)



**The Plaça del Ajuntament (City Council Plaza)** is the largest plaza in Valencia, Spain, the country's third largest city. The Ajuntament de Valencia (Valencia Town Hall) was built in the 18th century. Aerial view: Google Maps.  
Page 7 photo: Barry Miller, FAICP

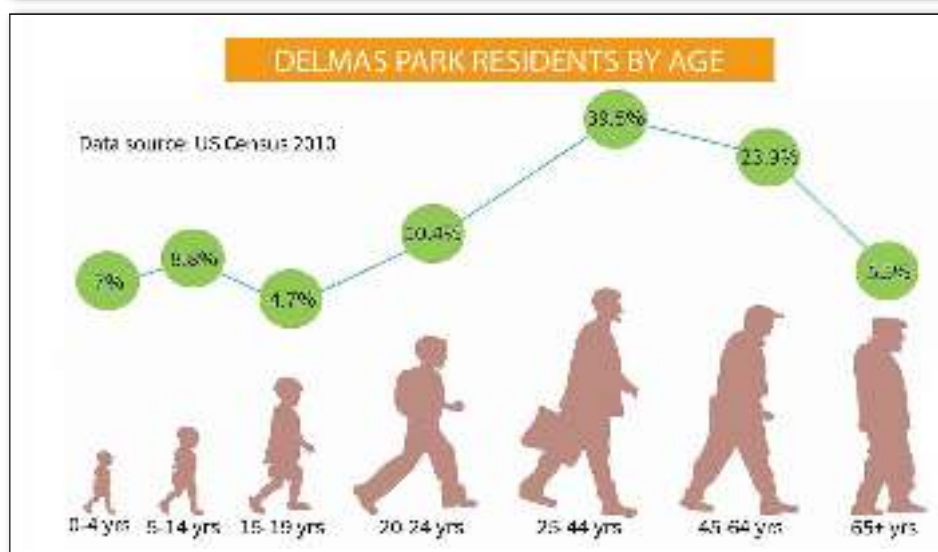
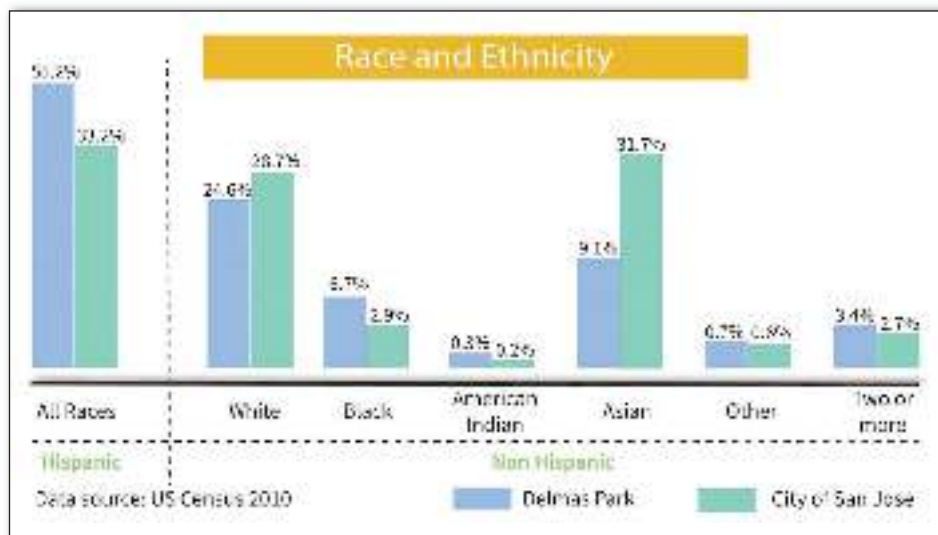


Houses in Lakehouse Historic District. Photo: Sneha Parmar

## Context

Our community assessment found that 42 percent of Delmas Park residents are female and 58 percent are male. Median household incomes in the neighborhood average about \$45,000 per year, well below the citywide average of \$88,000, but education levels are similar to the rest of San Jose. Delmas Park residents in the workforce are generally employed in the service industry. A majority of residents are renters.

Delmas Park is an enviably transit-rich community. Residents have access to the Diridon station, numerous VTA (Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority) bus routes, and VTA light rail service. Among reasons why Google chose this location for their forthcoming expansion may be the easy access to transit.



*(continued on next page)*

The community boasts favorites such as iJava, the neighborhood's only coffee shop, and diverse restaurants such as Poor House Bistro and Mudai Ethiopian. The neighborhood also has a number of light industrial operations, such as auto repair shops.

### Conducting the assessment

The graduate student team used a variety of methods to gather data for the assessment.

- An especially effective tool was Esri's Community Analyst, a web-based mapping application bundled with rich demographic information.
- Student teams collected photos of the neighborhood as community members led walking tours, then integrated the photos into an online, interactive "story map."
- The students conducted door-to-door surveys during which they elicited local residents' and business owners' concerns and aspirations for Delmas Park.
- A comprehensive assessment of the neighborhood's streetscapes and circulation in October helped establish the overall accessibility, connectivity, mobility, and safety conditions. These were mapped using ArcGIS software.

The graduate students hosted a Community Open House — a major component of the community assessment — as a way to share their preliminary assessment findings with the residents. Approximately 45 residents and 25 San Jose State students attended. The event — at the Children's Discovery Museum downtown — featured interactive posters and digital displays that advanced the assessment process with a rich data gathering opportunity. A student-produced documentary video, "Now Arriving: A Changing Delmas Park" (<http://bit.ly/2DWfZ1u>), premiered at the Open House. Councilmember Raul Peralez, featured in the video, and Mayor Sam Liccardo came to the event and shared their observations. Other distinguished visitors included Scott Knies, Executive Director, San Jose Downtown Association, and long-time residents Patrice Shaffer and Kathy Sutherland. San Jose State's Update News covered the event in video format.

Residents and stakeholders were asked, "In general, how satisfied are you with the results of today's Open House?" Seventy-seven percent said they were "very satisfied." The majority of attendees believed the event



San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo at the Open House. Photo: Nikki Chan

increased their understanding of how to become involved in the community planning process and also expanded their knowledge of neighborhood issues, assets, and priorities.

### Notable findings

Over a period of three months, the graduate students deployed to Delmas Park and rapidly expanded their understanding of the community. A number of interesting findings emerged from their work:

- The prospect of a major Google campus in and around Delmas Park is unmistakably coloring resident conversations. We would characterize the tenor of these discussions as "cautiously optimistic." Some residents were outspoken in welcoming Google's investment; others voiced worries about traffic increases, gentrification, and a loss of community character.
- Over time, Diridon Station will be transformed into the "Grand Central Station" of northern California. Projects already underway are the California High Speed Rail and the VTA BART Silicon Valley Extension, with a major transfer point at Diridon.
- Delmas Park occupies an enviable central location near major transportation corridors.
- The neighborhood severely lacks recreational opportunities and open space, and is also greatly in need of a dedicated community meeting space. This concern crept into many conversations, even while most residents laud the "urban feel" of the neighborhood.

*(continued on next page)*



### Next steps

We estimate that the student team contributed more than 1,200 person-hours synthesizing the data collected over the course of the fall 2017 semester and organizing the Community Open House. Building on that effort, a new cohort of graduate students will meet and work with the residents during the spring 2018 semester.

Those students will, in turn, collaborate with residents and business owners to determine the neighborhood's top planning priorities. They will also host a second Community Open House in April 2018, then integrate the findings into a final assessment report. We hope that the report will be an authoritative reference for the neighborhood's leaders as they work with the city and developers (including Google) to advocate for their documented priorities. Aiding the neighborhood leaders will be a dedicated team from CommUniverCity to assist with specific projects that emerge from the neighborhood-driven priorities.

A draft assessment report will be accessible to the public on San Jose State University's Urban and Regional Planning department website at <http://bit.ly/1RoPopz>. The Delmas Park documentary video, "Now Arriving: A Changing Delmas Park," can be viewed on YouTube at <http://bit.ly/2DWfZlu>.

**The authors of this article** are graduate students at San Jose State University:



**Nikki Chan** is pursuing her master's degree in urban and regional planning with a concentration in applications of technology in planning. She holds a BS in environmental studies from UC Santa Barbara. You can reach her at [nicolette.chan@sjsu.edu](mailto:nicolette.chan@sjsu.edu).



**Nicole Guzman** is pursuing her master's degree in urban and regional planning with a concentration in community design and development. She holds a BA in sociology with a minor in geography from California State University, Sacramento. You can reach her at [nicoleanne.guzman@sjsu.edu](mailto:nicoleanne.guzman@sjsu.edu).



**Michael Tkalcevic** is pursuing his master's degree in urban and regional planning focusing on transportation. He holds a BS in environmental studies from San Jose State University. You can reach him at [miketkalcevic@gmail.com](mailto:miketkalcevic@gmail.com). ■

**Federal tax credits worth less = fewer affordable housing units.** "Though Republicans initially sought to slash it, the federal tax bill retains a low-income housing tax credit [LIHTC] program. But because the bill cuts corporate taxes from 35 to 21 percent, it could make the federal tax credit less valuable. The changes, therefore, could significantly reduce investor demand for the housing credit, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition. Matt Schwartz, president and CEO of California Housing Partnership Corporation, said his advocacy group has calculated that California could lose \$540 million per year, which translates into a loss of more than 4,000 units in 2018, he said. Over 10 years, he said, projected losses in number of units could swell to nearly 50,000."—Angela Hart, *Sacramento Bee*, <http://bit.ly/2E7GjPh>

**San Francisco: Interactive map of 14 high-rises under construction.** "This map originally appeared in 2017, but we've updated it for the new year. San Francisco's dense skyline anticipates the completion of some towers long under construction and the emerging profile of others underway. To make the cut, a building must be eight or more stories when completed. Here are the buildings poised to change the city's skyline for good."—Adam Brinklow, *Curbed SF*, <http://bit.ly/2rusZms>

## Paris' automotive liberation took awhile

CityLab, January 19, 2018

**Laura Bliss**, <http://bit.ly/2rn6Qqa> • “For all the attention Paris gets for its transportation woes, the city’s remarkable shift away from the car deserves more: Driving within Paris city limits has dropped about 45 percent since 1990, the share of cyclists has increased tenfold over the same timeframe, and transit’s mode share has risen by 30 percent.

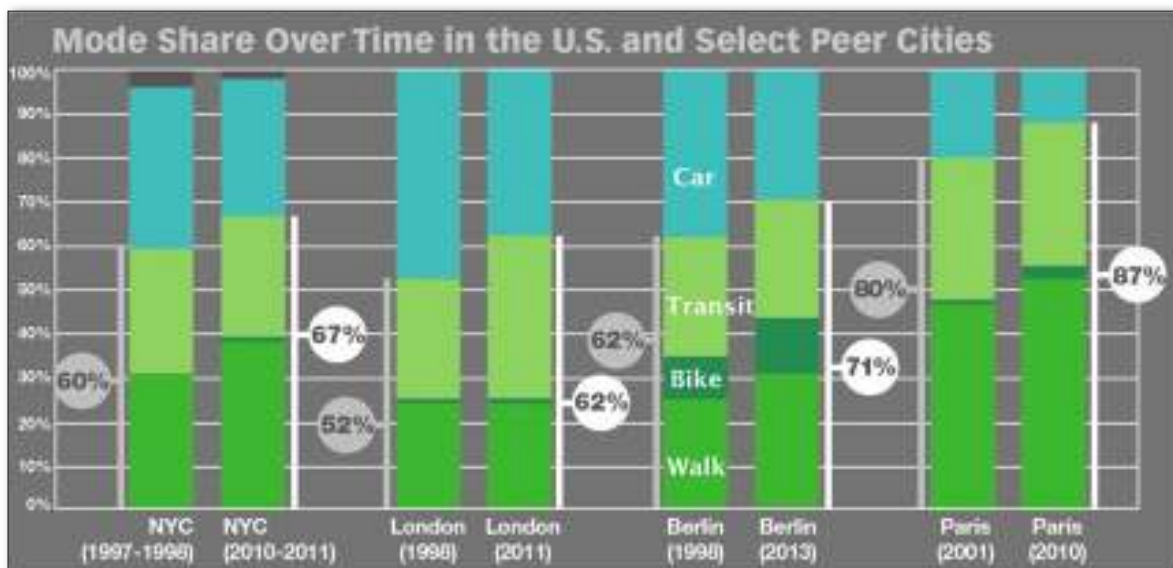
“The graph below, from the New York City Department of Transportation, shows how the cities’ mode share shifts stack up over time.

“Car traffic increased steadily for most of the 20th century until the 1990s, but early mayors laid key foundations for [the transformation].

- “Jacques Chirac, Paris’ mayor from 1977 to 1995, helped encourage pedestrianism by increasing the number of bollards to prevent illegal sidewalk parking.

- “Chirac’s successor, Jean Tibéri, banned cars in the Place de la Concorde and introduced the city’s first bike plan in 1996.
- “Mayor Bertrand Delanoë (2001–2014) reconfigured streets to accommodate dedicated bus lanes, created 400 miles of bicycle lanes, closed the banks of the Seine to traffic in summer, and in 2007, introduced the city’s bikeshare program, Vélib.
- “Delanoë’s protégé and current Mayor Anne Hidalgo implemented a ban on older cars on roads during week-days, and pedestrianized the lower quays of the Seine.

“If there is a lesson that Paris can teach the rest of the urban world, it may be that major shifts can happen — but they take time.”



Mode share over time in four cities. Credit: Strategic Plan, 2016, New York City DOT

**“How some employers slay nasty commutes.** Shifting away from stand-alone tech campuses — reached by lengthy car commutes — employers like SurveyMonkey are setting up shop in spiffy new mixed-use developments that integrate office space, housing, retail, and public transit — allowing employees to walk or take BART or Caltrain to work. SurveyMonkey took a risk last December by moving out of downtown Palo Alto to Bay Meadows, a mixed-use development built on a defunct racetrack in suburban San Mateo. When complete, the 83-acre complex abutting the Hillsdale Caltrain station will include five office buildings, 1,150 housing units, a coffee shop, a brewery, an ice cream shop, and two restaurants. Other employers — Salesforce, Yelp, Twitter — make it easier for their employees to commute by setting up shop in downtown San Francisco.” —Angela Hart, *Sacramento Bee*, <http://bayareane.ws/2E7wNfa>

### Seattle's 'Amazonia' neighborhood made me uneasy for whatever city gets HQ2

*Business Insider*, January 10, 2018

**Harrison Jacobs**, <http://bit.ly/2EKLJQJ> • “The race for cities wanting to host Amazon’s new \$5 billion headquarters — and the 50,000 high-paying jobs the company says it’ll come with — is on. [The list has been pared to 20 cities, and Los Angeles is the only surviving competitor west of the Rockies.]

“For those wondering what their city may look like should Amazon choose it, the company’s current home in Seattle



Amazon Cricket Building, southeast corner, Terry Ave. North and Thomas St. in South Lake Union. Photo: Joe Mabel [CC BY-SA 4.0] via Wikimedia Commons.

is a cautionary tale. Locals point to snarled traffic, soaring housing prices, never-ending construction, and accelerated gentrification.

“I recently spent a day in the Seattle neighborhood locals call Amazonia to see whether it is as bad as everyone thinks. ...

“Seattle reminded me of stories about Seoul, South Korea, where anything and everything is made by or tied to Samsung, which dominates the economy there. Amazon’s purchase of Whole Foods last summer seemed to hint at that future.

“For decades, Boeing dominated, putting workers and the city at the mercy of the company’s layoff cycles. In the early 1970s, for example, the company cut its workforce in half, devastating the local economy. People fear that history will repeat itself.

“It’s hard to deny that Amazon has been a positive for the city, but there is definitely an uncomfortable feeling that the area is Amazon’s fiefdom, subject to Amazon’s rules. My run-in with Amazon’s security guards reinforced that. Cities trying to win HQ2 might want to be careful what they wish for.”

Ed. note. Don’t miss this article’s 43 eye-popping, ground level images. Also see an amped-up 12-minute video at <http://bit.ly/2FThJTS>: Guy with GoPro rides bicycle past 33 of Amazon’s Seattle office buildings.

### San Francisco: Anti-displacement nonprofit nabs building to preserve housing, commercial

*Mission Local*, January 9, 2018

**Julian Mark**, <http://bit.ly/2EwmcdD> • “MEDA, the Mission Economic Development Agency, has bought a 16-unit building at the corner of 17th and Mission Streets for \$7.75 million. A bridge loan provided by the San Francisco Housing Accelerator program [marked the first step in preserving] 11 residential and five commercial spaces currently occupied by mostly longtime, low-income tenants. This is the nineteenth purchase under the nonprofit’s Small Sites program, which is aimed at protecting longtime residents and neighborhood-serving areas, and their fourth loan from the accelerator program.

“MEDA is working to purchase corner buildings along Mission Street — especially between Duboce Avenue and

Cesar Chavez Street — so that a proper mix exists to meet our families’ housing and small-business needs, reversing a trend of gentrification and displacement,” said Karoleen Feng, director of community real estate at MEDA, in a statement.

“Johnny Oliver, who heads MEDA’s small sites program, said the nonprofit had its eyes on the building for more than a year, but its owner had been asking a price ‘that did not meet city guidelines.’

“A year later, Oliver said, the price dropped by about \$1 million, and MEDA jumped on it. MEDA will be doing rehab work on the building at around \$10,000 to \$20,000 per unit.”

Ed. note: *Next City* also covered this on January 23rd, <http://bit.ly/2Ga1ke9>.

*(continued on next page)*



### California: Bill introduced to allow more homeowners to add housing on their property

*Sierra Sun Times*, January 9, 2018

<http://bit.ly/2EJEDMe> • “Seeking to build on the success of two prior bills that have sparked a large increase in applications to build accessory dwelling units (ADUs), Senator Bob Wieckowski (D-Fremont) has introduced SB 831 to address remaining issues brought to light by Californians seeking to build an ADU on their property.”

[In 2015, Oakland received just 33 ADU applications. In 2017, by November 1, the city had received 247 applications. Los Angeles went from 90 in 2015 and 80 in 2016 to 1,970 applications as of November 2017. San Jose went from 28 in 2015 to 166 in 2017. Source: David Garcia, Turner Center, Dec. 2017. [See next page.](#)]

“Since the passage of Wieckowski’s SB 1069 in 2016, applications for ADUs are way up in Los Angeles, San Diego, Oakland, San Francisco, San Jose, and other cities across the state. SB 831 would eliminate all local fees for an ADU; create a temporary amnesty program to evaluate existing unpermitted units; hold local agencies accountable through HCD; and deem ADU permit applications to be automatically approved if an agency has not acted upon the application within 120 days.”

“Like SB 1069 and SB 229, Wieckowski’s prior ADU bills, SB 831 is sponsored by the Bay Area Council.”

### Bay Area: For a home, head to the mall

*Mercury News*, January 8, 2018

**Marisa Kendall**, <http://bayareane.ws/2FOUABW>

• “Bay Area residents aren’t going to malls just to buy shoes anymore — instead, they’re moving in.

“In an attempt to draw new crowds, a growing number of malls are building housing amid their movie theaters and stores. It’s a solution intended to keep malls relevant as many retailers struggle, and may play a role in easing the region’s housing shortage.

“In the Bay Area, housing is at the forefront of a list of challenges. The option isn’t only for dead malls — newer shopping centers that have embraced residential construction include trendy Santana Row in San Jose and Bay Street in Emeryville, both offering modern apartments and condos above bustling retail stores.

“More are in the pipeline. Developers who bought Richmond’s struggling Hilltop Mall last summer have the city’s OK to erect up to about 10,000 residential units there. Owners of the dead Vallco Mall in Cupertino are considering using housing to revamp the property.

“Malls often make prime targets for housing developments — they tend to be located in convenient, transit-accessible areas, but aren’t close enough to residential neighborhoods to stoke NIMBY complaints — and they’re increasingly empty. As many as a quarter of U.S. malls likely will close in the next five years, Credit Suisse researchers wrote in a May report. But homes in revamped or brand new malls still are likely to be out of reach for many workers in the Bay Area.”

### “How ‘Not in My Backyard’ became ‘Not in My Neighborhood’”

*The New York Times*, January 3, 2018

**Emily Badger**, <http://nyti.ms/2EvtQVX> • “In Seattle, the neighbors don’t want apartments for formerly homeless seniors nearby. In Los Angeles, they don’t want more high-rises. In San Jose, they don’t want tiny homes. In Phoenix, they don’t want design that’s not midcentury modern.

“Homeowners in each of these places share a conviction that owning a parcel of land gives them a right to shape the world beyond its boundaries.

“The roots of this idea are as old as nuisance laws that have tried to limit how one property owner can harm another. Over the decades, homeowners expanded [that] claim beyond their lot lines, look[ing] out for schools and streets in ways that are vital to American communities. But increasingly it means the senior affordable housing, high-rises, and tiny homes — also arguably vital to the larger community — are never built.

“How Americans came to peer beyond their own properties is also, inescapably, about race. As urbanization brought blacks and whites closer together, white communities reacted with racially restrictive covenants. The Supreme Court ruled such covenants unenforceable in 1948, but they had long-lasting effects.

“As residential mobility rates have declined, Americans are staking even stronger claims to their neighborhoods, with renters now behaving in ways once associated with homeowners.

“We want people to be invested in their neighborhoods, but not to the exclusion of anyone else who might live there. We want to empower neighbors to fight a trash dump, but not to halt every housing project the region needs.”

(Planning news roundup *continues on next page*)

### Marin County resisted growth; high housing costs and segregation persist

*Los Angeles Times*, January 7, 2018

**Liam Dillon**, <http://lat.ms/2EvaYGu> • “Marin residents often win fights to keep the county’s landscape unspoiled by large, new construction. But residents’ long-standing distaste for development hasn’t led just to the preservation of open spaces. In this affluent enclave of high real estate and rental costs, decades-old patterns of neighborhood segregation remain intact.

“When a Los Angeles-based nonprofit examined demographic data on wealth, education, criminal justice, and other issues in California, it found that Marin had the largest inequities between racial groups of any county in California, <http://bit.ly/2ExXpWz>.

“Marin residents’ resistance to development exasperates low-income housing advocates, who say the opposition from locals is antithetical to their professed values. The county, while predominantly wealthy and white, is also one of California’s most liberal: Almost 80 percent of voters there chose Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential election.

“Some of Marin’s housing problems can be traced to the 1940s, when development in the county was booming. As it did in other communities across the country, the federal government guaranteed bank loans to developers of white-only subdivisions in Marin, promoted the use of racially restrictive covenants on deeds to prevent people of color from buying homes, and subsidized white residents’ mortgages but not others, according to a recent report by county officials on housing disparities.

“Now, almost 85 percent of the county is off limits to development. At the same time, affordable housing in Marin County is all but unavailable, and racial disparities and segregation continue.”

### California: ‘ADU applications skyrocket after regulatory reform’

*Next City*, January 4, 2018

**Josh Cohen**, <http://bit.ly/2Forbyi> • “In 2016 and 2017, the California state legislature passed a slew of reforms reducing regulations on accessory dwelling units (ADU) such as basement apartments, garage conversions, and backyard cottages.

“It’s too early to see the impacts of ADU reforms on the ground, but there’s already been a massive uptick in ADU permit applications in many California cities.

“Researchers at UC Berkley’s Turner Center for Housing Innovation released a report, <http://bit.ly/2FornOu>, looking at ADU applications from 2015 through 2017 to understand how the regulatory changes are spurring ADU construction.

“It turned out, there was quite a pent-up demand from homeowners.

“Los Angeles saw the most dramatic jump, from 90 applications in 2015 and 80 in 2016 to a whopping 1,970 applications as of November 2017. Oakland, which had 33 and 99 applications in 2015 and 2016, jumped to 247 in 2017. San Francisco has been experimenting with looser ADU regulations since 2013, but still saw applications increase from 384 in 2016 to 593 in 2017.

“Report author David Garcia, Turner Center’s policy director, said two reforms — easier permitting and reduced parking requirements — have had the biggest impact on the increased ADU applications. Time is money in housing construction, and complicated permitting delays the process. Similarly, the parking requirement adds construction cost and complexity to projects.

“Though ADUs are just a small part of the housing crisis solution, some housing advocates such as Stuart Cohen, executive director of TransForm, are excited to see an easier path to their construction. But Cohen says it’s important to remember, ‘there’s no substitute for having a massive infusion of funding and construction of dedicated affordable housing. ADUs are a great complement to, not a replacement for that funding.’” ■

**“How San Jose can build housing our children can afford.** First, we need to expand high-density zoning along ... transit, particularly downtown. ... [T]ransit-oriented construction [and] smaller units reduce costs for millennials and empty-nesters seeking an urban lifestyle, while denser housing within walking distance of amenities and transit can enable smaller households to trim auto-burdened budgets. Second, ... by reducing zoning barriers on targeted sites, we can encourage mixed-use development to revitalize declining neighborhood business districts, ... replace seismically vulnerable ‘soft-story’ apartments, and supplant ‘LULUs’ (Locally Undesirable Land Uses) like liquor stores and bars. ... [But] our efforts will not succeed without a regional commitment. So long as jobs-heavy suburbs to our west shun housing in favor of revenue-producing employment centers, our housing crisis — and daily commutes — will worsen. ... [W]e need more neighborhoods throughout the valley to say “YES in my backyard.” —San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo, *The Mercury News*, <http://bayareane.ws/2rux7ms>

## BOARD MEMBER DIRECTORY

### Director

Sharon Grewal, AICP

[director@norcalapa.org](mailto:director@norcalapa.org)

### Director Elect

James Castañeda, AICP

[directorelect@norcalapa.org](mailto:directorelect@norcalapa.org)

### Immediate Past Director

Andrea Ouse, AICP

[pastdirector@norcalapa.org](mailto:pastdirector@norcalapa.org)

### Administrative Director

Sophie McGuinness

[admin@norcalapa.org](mailto:admin@norcalapa.org)

### Treasurer

Jonathan Schuppert, AICP

[treasurer@norcalapa.org](mailto:treasurer@norcalapa.org)

### AICP Director

Don Bradley, AICP

[aicp@norcalapa.org](mailto:aicp@norcalapa.org)

### Awards Program Directors

Florentina Craciun, AICP

Carmela Campbell, AICP

[awards@norcalapa.org](mailto:awards@norcalapa.org)

[awards@norcalapa.org](mailto:awards@norcalapa.org)

### Communications Director

Matt Reiter

[communications@norcalapa.org](mailto:communications@norcalapa.org)

### CPF Liaison

Terry Blount, AICP

[cpfliaison@norcalapa.org](mailto:cpfliaison@norcalapa.org)

### Ethics Review Director

Vacant

[ethics@norcalapa.org](mailto:ethics@norcalapa.org)

### International Directors

Hing Wong, AICP

Alex Hinds

[international@norcalapa.org](mailto:international@norcalapa.org)

[international@norcalapa.org](mailto:international@norcalapa.org)

### Legislative Director

Stephen E. Velyvis

[legislative@norcalapa.org](mailto:legislative@norcalapa.org)

### Membership Director

Sandra Hamlat

[membership@norcalapa.org](mailto:membership@norcalapa.org)

### Mentorship Director

Liz Probst, AICP

[mentorship@norcalapa.org](mailto:mentorship@norcalapa.org)

### Planning Commissioner

Don Bradley, AICP

[commissioner@norcalapa.org](mailto:commissioner@norcalapa.org)

### Planning Diversity Directors

Miroo Desai, AICP

Cindy Ma, AICP

[diversity@norcalapa.org](mailto:diversity@norcalapa.org)

[diversity@norcalapa.org](mailto:diversity@norcalapa.org)

### Professional Development Director

Afshan Hamid, AICP

[professionaldevelopment@norcalapa.org](mailto:professionaldevelopment@norcalapa.org)

### Section Historian

Juan Borrelli, AICP

[historian@norcalapa.org](mailto:historian@norcalapa.org)

### Student Representatives

Cody Aarons

Mike Jacobson

[berkeleyrep@norcalapa.org](mailto:berkeleyrep@norcalapa.org)

[sanjoserep@norcalapa.org](mailto:sanjoserep@norcalapa.org)

### Sustainability Director

Holly R. Pearson, AICP

[sustainability@norcalapa.org](mailto:sustainability@norcalapa.org)

### University Liaison

Eric Tucker

[universityliaison@norcalapa.org](mailto:universityliaison@norcalapa.org)

### Webmaster

Eric Tuvel, AICP

[webmaster@norcalapa.org](mailto:webmaster@norcalapa.org)

### Young Planners Group Directors

Veronica Flores

Jason Su

[ypg@norcalapa.org](mailto:ypg@norcalapa.org)

[ypg@norcalapa.org](mailto:ypg@norcalapa.org)

## Regional Activity Coordinators (RACs)

### East Bay

Dana Hoffman, AICP

Sarah Allen, AICP

[eastbayrac@norcalapa.org](mailto:eastbayrac@norcalapa.org)

[eastbayrac@norcalapa.org](mailto:eastbayrac@norcalapa.org)

### Monterey Bay

Justin Meek, AICP

John T. Dougherty, AICP

[montereybayrac@norcalapa.org](mailto:montereybayrac@norcalapa.org)

[montereybayrac@norcalapa.org](mailto:montereybayrac@norcalapa.org)

### North Bay

Kristine Gaspar

[northbayrac@norcalapa.org](mailto:northbayrac@norcalapa.org)

### Peninsula

Lindy Chan

Laura C. Russell, AICP

[peninsularac@norcalapa.org](mailto:peninsularac@norcalapa.org)

[peninsularac@norcalapa.org](mailto:peninsularac@norcalapa.org)

### Redwood Coast

Stephen Avis, AICP

[redwoodcoastrac@norcalapa.org](mailto:redwoodcoastrac@norcalapa.org)

### San Francisco

Rebecca Fleischer

Yosef Yip

[sfrac@norcalapa.org](mailto:sfrac@norcalapa.org)

[sfrac@norcalapa.org](mailto:sfrac@norcalapa.org)

### South Bay

Cherise Orange

[southbayrac@norcalapa.org](mailto:southbayrac@norcalapa.org)

## NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

### Editorial

#### Editor

Naphtali H. Knox, FAICP

[knoxnaph@gmail.com](mailto:knoxnaph@gmail.com)

#### Associate Editor

Catarina Kidd, AICP

[news@norcalapa.org](mailto:news@norcalapa.org)

## Advertising Director/Jobs

Vacant

[advertising@norcalapa.org](mailto:advertising@norcalapa.org)

## Newsletter Designer

Nancy Roberts

[tproberts@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tproberts@sbcglobal.net)

## ADDRESS CHANGES

Membership Department

American Planning Association

205 North Michigan Ave, Suite 1200

Chicago, IL 60601

(312) 431-9100

[www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org)

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