

Young Ranch Digest
December 31, 2015 – January 14, 2016

PUBLIC MEETINGS

1. San Jose City Council Agenda
January 14, 2016
Items 4C: 1.2. & 6.a.1 General Plan Text Amendment, Zoning Code Changes, and Council Policy for Mobilehome Parks
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Three Potential Threats to California's Recovery
By Carson Bruno
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HIT Invests \$24.9 Million To Rehabilitate Casa del Pueblo Apartments For San Jose Senior Citizens
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New Funding Round Gives Boost to Open Space
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First-of-its-kind \$12 parcel tax proposed for all nine Bay Area counties
By Paul Rogers progers@mercurynews.com
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6. Palo Alto Online
Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors OKs funding for housing, homeless services
InnVision Shelter Network will be given \$150,000 annually to serve Palo Alto, San Jose
by Bay City News Service
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7. Silicon Valley Business Journal
Silicon Valley Leadership Group backing 2016 land parcel tax initiative
By Bryce Druzin
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8. San Jose Mercury News
Santa Clara County wants to open up fairgrounds for different uses
By julia baum@community-newspapers.com
POSTED: 01/14/2016 04:19:03 AM PSTT
[click here for article](#)

FULL TEXT of MEDIA

1. RealClearMarkets.com
Three Potential Threats to California's Recovery
By Carson Bruno
POSTED: December 31, 2015
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A new year is always a good time for reflection; both to take a look back on the past year and to look forward to consider what challenges might lay ahead. At the start of 2015, I laid out five New Year's Resolutions Sacramento should have worked hard to keep in the New Year. Unfortunately, for the most part, California's policy leaders largely ignored these resolutions.

Now as we look forward to 2016, let's examine three potentially significant threats that could derail California's slow-but-steady economic recovery.

Over-regulation of the sharing economy: The sharing economy has been under continuous attack since it started to gain traction among consumers. And for one simple reason: it challenges the status quo, which regulators and bureaucrats do not like. Whether it has been California's Labor Commission unilaterally going against federal labor law and declaring Transportation Network Company (i.e. Uber) drivers employees not independent contractors, or the new idea put forth by San Diego Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez that TNC drivers, even if they are independent contractors, should have the right to collectively bargain, or if it is NIMBY-ism at its worst when activists in San Francisco attempted to impose a de facto ban on Airbnb, the sharing economy cannot idly sit by and expect their representatives in Sacramento to have their backs. Not only would over-regulation of this burgeoning industry squash innovation; it is a full-frontal attack on the next wave of industry coming out of the Silicon Valley-Bay Area, which as I've highlighted, is the singular driver of economic, labor force, and tax revenue growth for the Golden State.

San Francisco's housing market heating up too much: Some are arguing that San Francisco is at a serious risk of another housing bubble burst. Meanwhile, others don't think the city is in the midst of a housing bubble. Both are likely to be correct. While the home price-to-annual rent ratio (a good indicator of housing bubbles) for San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties currently is around 22 - which is over twice the national ratio - they are still significantly lower than before the 2007-2008 bust. However, while previous housing bubbles were characterized by over-building, the

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current over-heating is largely due to a restriction on supply. And therefore, the bubble may not burst because of supply saturation, but because demand collapses as businesses and individuals look elsewhere to locate their company or work and live. According to the Silicon Valley Leadership Group's annual Silicon Valley Business Climate Survey, housing costs rank among the top three business challenges and cost of living challenges. As other regions look to poach Silicon Valley-Bay Area talent and business, more competitive housing markets will be their number one pitch.

A not-so-temporary Proposition 30: In 2012, Governor Jerry Brown promised that if Proposition 30's income and sales tax increases were passed, they'd be a temporary fix to the Golden State's budget deficit. Now, as Prop 30's expiration rapidly approaches, some of the same special interests that funded the original ballot initiative are pursuing plans to either extend or make permanent some or all of Prop 30's tax increases. Prop 30 is particularly problematic for California because it doubles down on the state's worst tax feature: personal income tax volatility. Because California is so reliant on the personal income tax, which is heavily progressive and California's wealthiest are particularly reliant on capital gains realizations, slight variations in the stock market can yield massive swings in tax revenue collections. A surplus can literally turn into a deficit overnight. Since 1945, the average expansion has lasted 58 months. As of December 2015, we are in month 79 of the current expansion. If history is any measure, we are due for a downturn, and since Prop 30 has only made California more reliant on a volatile revenue source, Sacramento should remain wary.

Happy New Year's and here's to hoping that California's leaders pay more attention to these 2016 potential threats than they did to keeping some important resolutions in 2015.

2. PRN Newswire

HIT Invests \$24.9 Million To Rehabilitate Casa del Pueblo Apartments For San Jose Senior Citizens

January 5, 2016

[click here for article](#)

SAN JOSE, Calif., Jan. 5, 2016 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust (HIT) today announced a \$24.9 million investment in the rehabilitation of the Casa del Pueblo apartments, a 165-unit, 12-story building in San Jose's Central Business District that provides affordable housing for seniors. The project will create an estimated 218 union construction jobs.

The rehabilitation project will completely refurbish all the units, including providing new appliances, windows, doors, floors and ceilings. The building, which was constructed in 1976, is located at 200 South Market Street.

"The HIT is pleased to help sustain the supply of affordable housing for senior citizens in San Jose," said Stephanie Wiggins, HIT's Executive Vice President and Chief Investment Officer. "This project demonstrates the kind of partnerships that can be forged so that our seniors can have safe, affordable housing they can depend on."

The lead developer is Preservation Partners Development (PPD), a California based development group specializing in the acquisition, rehabilitation and preservation of affordable housing developments assisted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and California Housing Finance Agency. The Blach Construction Company of Santa Clara is the construction firm

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and will utilize 100 percent union labor. Red Mortgage Capital, LLC, the mortgage lender, has worked on a number of HIT transactions in recent years. The building is owned by United Food and Commercial Workers International Union Local 5 and has served as its long-time headquarters.

"The Casa del Pueblo redevelopment has been worth all the time and effort to put this very complicated project together," said John Nunes, United Food and Commercial Workers International Union Local 5. "This was attributable to our great partnership between Local 5 and the AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust, which will continue to protect affordable housing for low income seniors and create hundreds of good paying union construction jobs."

Gerald Pfeiffer, Business Manager, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 332, also voiced his support, "IBEW 332 appreciates the investment in jobs the Housing Investment Trust has made with Casa del Pueblo."

About the HIT

The AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust (HIT) is a fixed-income investment company registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission. It manages over \$5 billion in assets for over 370 investors, which include union and public employee pension plans. The HIT invests primarily in government and agency insured and guaranteed multifamily mortgage-backed securities. The HIT is one of the earliest and most successful practitioners of socially responsible, economically targeted investing, with a track record of over 30 years that demonstrates the added value derived from union-friendly investments. The investment objective of the HIT is to provide competitive returns for its investors and to promote the collateral objectives of constructing affordable housing and generating employment for union members in the construction trades and related industries. Since its inception, the HIT has invested nearly \$8.5 billion (in current dollars) to finance more than 100,000 units of housing nationwide, generating 75,000 union jobs. More information is available on the HIT's website, www.aflcio-hit.com.

3. Independent News

New Funding Round Gives Boost to Open Space

Posted: Wednesday, January 6, 2016 12:00 am | Updated: 12:01 pm, Wed Jan 6, 2016.

By Ron McNicoll

[click here for article](#)

Funding approved by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) will give new life to efforts to preserve more open space throughout the Bay Area, including the Tri-Valley.

The commission voted to increase significantly its investment in conservation by expanding its first-in-the-nation Priority Conservation Area (PCA) grant program by over 60%.

PCAs consists of natural areas, recreation lands, farms, ranches, and urban open spaces that should be protected.

MTC previously approved \$10 million for open space grants for designated priority conservation areas (PCA) 2012. In December, the board decided to add \$16.4 million to what are called One Bay Area Grants (OBAG).

Half of the second round of funding will go to the four North Bay counties (Marin, Solano, Sonoma and Napa), which have more open space to protect than the other five counties. However, Alameda

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and Santa Clara lead the remaining counties, since they have larger open space areas than other counties. The first round of funding was split between North and East/South/West Bay at \$5 million for each of those two geographical categories.

In the Livermore area, some 28,000 acres have been designated since 2008 as eligible lands, virtually all in south and north Livermore. In 2015, Livermore had 16,000 acres added to the list. There is no map showing the areas listed as PCAs. However, they will be available in the future.

The Zone 7 Water Agency plan for a chain of lakes using old quarries between Livermore and Pleasanton was made eligible in 2008. The East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) served as the lead agency in nominating the area as a PCA. Not all of the lakes are under Zone 7 ownership yet. Jeremy Madsen, executive director of Greenbelt Alliance, told The Independent that he was glad to see the second round of open space grant money approved.

Greenbelt Alliance members sent in more than 1600 messages to MTC in an effort to support the new round of funding, said Madsen. Greenbelt Alliance focuses on protecting the region's 3.6 million acres of greenbelt.

"Our big goal is to make sure that development comes to the Bay Area and happens in the right places. It should help people across the socioeconomic spectrum," said Madsen.

Toward that goal, Greenbelt Alliance has been supportive of smart growth, where high density residential housing is located near transit stations, such as in Dublin. Such urban planning helps to preserve the kind of urban edge agriculture that the Livermore Urban Growth Boundary and Alameda County Measure D were passed to protect, said Madsen.

4. San Jose Inside

Public Invited to Weigh in on Fairground Revitalization

By Silicon Valley Newsroom / January 6, 2016

[click here for article](#)

The public is invited to weigh in on the future of the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds, where officials want to build a public park and open space.

A community meeting will be held at 7pm Thursday in the Fiesta Hall on the fairgrounds site. The hearing is part of a multi-year effort by the county to encourage public participation in the plan to develop the underutilized property. Feedback from Thursday's meeting will be presented to the Board of Supervisors on Jan. 26.

At 155 acres, the fairground is one of the county's largest contiguous sites in Silicon Valley. The county hired a developer to renovate the fairgrounds back in 2008, but the economic downturn a year later waylaid those plans.

For the past year, however, C.H. Johnson consultants have drafted a blueprint to revive the project. The county's vision is to create a landmark gathering space on the sprawling site—half for public parks and open space and the rest of active recreational use.

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In the past year, the public has had several chances to share their ideas and review preliminary plans for the site. According to the county, more than 2,700 people have provided their input in person while another 2,800 weighed in through an online survey.

The county has uploaded a library of documents related to the project online for public review. Click here to take a look.

WHAT: Fairgrounds planning workshop

WHEN: 7pm Thursday

WHERE: Fiesta Hall, Santa Clara County Fairgrounds, 344 Tully Rd., San Jose

INFO: www.sccgov.org/fairgrounds

5. Contra Costa Times

First-of-its-kind \$12 parcel tax proposed for all nine Bay Area counties

By Paul Rogers progers@mercurynews.com

POSTED: 01/13/2016 07:32:23 AM PST2

[click here for article](#)

In a milestone for San Francisco Bay restoration that also raises questions about who should pay to protect property from rising seas caused by climate change, a low-profile government agency is expected to place a \$12 annual parcel tax on the June ballot in all nine Bay Area counties.

The measure, whose campaign is being bankrolled by Silicon Valley business leaders and Bay Area environmental groups, is believed to be the first local tax ever placed before voters in all nine Bay Area counties.

If approved by two-thirds of voters, the tax would raise \$500 million over the next 20 years to build levees and restore thousands of acres of wetlands and tidal marshes as a buffer to storm surges and floods in every Bay Area county.

FLOOD RISK

Areas shown in red will face flooding if the bay rises rises 55 inches, which scientists predict will occur by 2100.



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"The bay is a beautiful asset we all want to protect and restore," said Carl Guardino, CEO of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, which represents 390 large technology companies and other employers. "We are also concerned about the risk of sea level rise over time, or a storm that could cause flooding in unprecedented fashion. Either way we want to be prepared for it."

The leadership group, along with Save the Bay and the Bay Area Council, a business group, already has raised \$700,000 toward a campaign and plans to raise up to \$5 million. Influential leaders such as Robert Fisher of the Gap and John Doerr, a Silicon Valley venture capitalist, already have donated to the campaign.

On Jan. 13 at 1 p.m., the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority, a seven-member board created in 2008 by state lawmakers, will meet in Oakland at the headquarters of the state Coastal Conservancy. The authority will vote on whether to place the measure on the June 7 election ballot in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, Sonoma and San Francisco counties. Studies done by the Bay Area Council and other organizations show that 270,000 residents, 1,780 miles of road and highways, and a combined total of 89 schools and health care facilities near the bay's shoreline are at risk of catastrophic flooding from a 100-year flood and sea level rise. Other areas that computer models indicate could be flooded include the Oakland and San Francisco airports, communities along the Marin waterfront, Highway 101 through the Peninsula, and the headquarters of at least 20 major technology companies in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, including Google, Oracle, Facebook, Yahoo and Cisco.

The unique tax raises complex questions, however.

Since the \$12-per-parcel tax will apply to all property owners in the nine counties, will people who live far away from the bay, such as residents of Cloverdale, Gilroy, Half Moon Bay or Livermore be willing to vote yes?

Will opponents be able to write different language in the ballot pamphlets of each county to tailor their message to local concerns? Will homeowners be willing to open their wallets to fund a measure that not only protects wildlife but also protects some of the richest companies on Earth?

"You have big companies like Apple that will only pay \$12 per parcel," said Jon Coupal, president of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association. "I respectfully suggest that Apple can afford the \$12. "You have large businesses trying to spread the burden to other taxpayers. If this were structured as a benefit assessment district, the properties closer to the bay would have to pay more."

Guardino contends, however, that not only do major companies employ tens of thousands of workers, the costs should be spread widely because public assets -- freeways, schools, sewage treatment plants, airports and hospitals -- are at risk. And internal polling by supporters found that more people said they are likely to vote yes on a parcel tax than a property tax that would be based on the value of each parcel.

A telephone poll of 1,505 people commissioned in December by the Restoration Authority found that 65 percent of likely voters in the Bay Area support the tax.

The number grew to 70 percent when arguments in favor were explained. But support varied widely. While 76 percent of Marin County voters, 71 percent of San Franciscans, 70 percent of Alameda

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County residents and 65 percent of Santa Clara County residents backed the idea, only 44 percent did in Napa County, 55 percent in Solano County, 61 percent in Contra Costa County, 62 percent in San Mateo County and 63 percent in Sonoma County.

Because the two-thirds requirement applies to the entire region, however, a large majority in one area could offset a lower margin in a different county.

Environmentalists say the measure is critical in helping fulfill long-term restoration plans around the bay. A study in October by more than 100 scientists, coordinated by the Coastal Conservancy and other organizations, found that 54,000 acres of wetlands -- an area twice the size of the city of San Francisco -- need to be restored around the bay in the next 15 years to provide protection from surging storms. The alternative is concrete sea walls, which can cost more and would turn the bay into a giant bathtub over time, with far fewer birds, fish and other wildlife, the report concluded. Driven by melting ice and expanding warming water, the bay and the Pacific Ocean off California will rise up to 1 foot in the next 20 years, 2 feet by 2050 and up to 5 feet by 2100, according to a 2012 study by the National Academy of Sciences.

"This is the most important thing we can do for the bay," said David Lewis, executive director of Oakland-based Save the Bay. "There's an urgency to restore tidal marshes, for ecological benefits and flood control benefits. The sooner we start the sooner they can provide benefits. But money has been the missing ingredient for a long time."

6. Palo Alto Online

**Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors OKs funding for housing, homeless services
InnVision Shelter Network will be given \$150,000 annually to serve Palo Alto, San Jose**
by Bay City News Service

Uploaded: Wed, Jan 13, 2016, 8:08 am

[click here for article](#)

The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors approved Tuesday millions of dollars to address housing and homeless issues to aid people who are living on the streets.

"Facing the challenges of the homeless must be a shared responsibility in order to make progress in housing and sheltering the 4,000 or so who, each night, have nowhere to go," board president Dave Cortese said in a statement.

The board also unanimously approved a resolution that declares a homelessness crisis in the county, county officials said.

"We hope this resolution will prompt all our cities and agencies to take similar action and pursue policy changes to raise revenue for affordable housing," Cortese said.

The county's Housing Task Force, on which supervisors Cindy Chavez and Mike Wasserman serve, recommended the numerous items passed Tuesday by the board.

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Other options the task force is calling on cities to look into include inclusionary zoning that requires home developers to make a portion of their units affordable, residential or commercial fees and zoning changes that would allow for second units on existing lots, according to county officials.

The board also approved \$2.9 million over the course of three years for the Emergency Assistance Network, a group of seven nonprofits, to provide 400 beds for families, according to county officials.

"It's important for folks to know that there are places they can go when times get tough," Supervisor Joe Simitian said in a statement.

"Organizations like these are important access points for low-income residents who need emergency funds for rent, utilities and other housing costs," Simitian said.

Each nonprofit will receive \$75,000 a year, with the exception of InnVision Shelter Network, which will be given \$150,000 annually

to serve Palo Alto and San Jose, county officials said.

Another \$1.1 million was loaned to Abode Services for repairs at the Santa Clara Inn, located off of The Alameda in San Jose, county officials said.

The board also allocated \$240,000 annually for three years to Housing Trust Silicon Valley for Destination: Home, a program of The Health Trust, for employment, education and wellness services, according to county officials.

The Housing Trust will also receive \$750,000 for loans or grants that will be given to community- and faith-based organizations, county officials said.

The organizations can either make repairs or expand their spaces to provide drop-in services or beds for the homeless, according to county officials.

"There is no 'one size fits all' solution to homelessness," Simitian said.

"The more we learn about it, the more we realize that the problem can only be solved on a person-to-person basis. These programs and services aim to meet a range of needs in a variety of locations," Simitian said.

7. Silicon Valley Business Journal

Silicon Valley Leadership Group backing 2016 land parcel tax initiative

By Bryce Druzin

Jan 13, 2016, 2:26pm PST

[click here for article](#)

A \$12 land parcel tax initiative will appear on the June ballot in all nine Bay Area counties, following a unanimous vote by the San Francisco Restoration Authority board on Wednesday.

As reported by the San Jose Mercury News, the tax would be charged to all property owners and would raise \$500 million over 20 years. Revenue would be earmarked for construction of levies as

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well as restoration of wetlands and tidal marshes to protect residents and businesses close to the Bay from storm surges and rising sea levels.

Because the tax is directed for a specific use, two-thirds of voters would need to approve the measure in order for it to pass.

According to the article, the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, Save the Bay and business group Bay Area Council have raised \$700,000 to back the initiative, and plan to raise a total of \$5 million. This is far from the only initiative the Leadership Group, which has 390 members that include the largest local tech companies, will deal with in 2016.

Though no official positions have been taken yet, the organization is expected to oppose a possible San Jose gross receipts tax and support a Santa Clara County transportation-tax measure, both planned for the November's ballot.

Studies from the Bay Area Council and other organizations say that Silicon Valley infrastructure and companies are at risk of catastrophic flooding in the case of a "100-year flood" and a rise in sea levels, according to the article.

These include Highway 101 along the Peninsula as well as many tech companies headquarters in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, including Google, Facebook, Oracle, Yahoo and Cisco, all members of the Leadership Group.

8. San Jose Mercury News

Santa Clara County wants to open up fairgrounds for different uses

By julia.baum@community-newspapers.com

POSTED: 01/14/2016 04:19:03 AM PSTT

[click here for article](#)

The Santa Clara County Fairgrounds eventually could become home to a Go Kart course, paintball battlefield, heritage farm, a small-scale Golden Gate Park and even a diamond for the San Jose Giants baseball team.

Those and other uses have been suggested in the last couple of years for the 150-acre fairgrounds on Tully Road, which also happens to be where the annual county fair is held.

The Board of Supervisors has talked about turning the fairgrounds into a community gathering space since 2014. On Jan. 26, it is scheduled to consider requesting proposals from parties interested in staking out portions of the property.

The board wants half of the land dedicated to a public park and open space and the other half to active recreational uses.

At a Jan. 7 community meeting, county officials unveiled preliminary designs for the fairgrounds that include everything from sports fields to a park similar to San Francisco's Golden Gate Park.

Some residents suggested developing a heritage farm with orchards, farmlands and a farmers market.

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Santa Clara County asset development manager Glen Williams said that among those who have informally reached out to the county were paintball and Go Kart vendors, as well as the San Jose Giants minor league baseball team.

"We've heard from the Giants, the San Jose Flea Market, individual users," Williams said. "We expect we'll hear from more and others, but at this point none of those [queries] have been formal."

Many youths from the local 4-H and Future Farmers of America chapters attended the meeting to make sure that in the end they will have enough space for their animals at the county fair.

Westmont High School freshman Rachel Causey, who has raised cattle, sheep and goats for both the 4-H Club and Future Farmers of America, said she's concerned that the exhibit space during the annual fair has been reduced.

"People see the amount of people coming to visit as small, but we're actually increasing in numbers from previous years and have actually outgrown other buildings on the grounds," Causey said.

Her father, Robert Causey, said that if the fair is restricted to about 30 acres, that wouldn't be enough space for everything and could pose some hazards.

He said the fair's space had shrunk so much last year that carnival rides were set up next to the animal wash racks. His daughter's steer was tied up at in a wash rack when it was spooked by a noisy ride, broke out of its halter and ran through the main hall.

Williams cautioned that the designs shown at the meeting are not formal proposals and simply demonstrate how the space could be set aside for many uses.

"There are multiple design ways you could design 30 acres dedicated to the fairgrounds and include all or most of the existing buildings," Williams said.

"We want to create a community gathering space that will be something the entire community will be proud of and will meet a variety of community needs," he added.

At its Jan. 26 meeting, the Board of Supervisors is to decide whether to authorize staff to seek qualifications and proposals from interested parties.