

CALREGIONS

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NEWS ABOUT CALIFORNIA'S REGIONS

SHOWCASE:

[NB: Two regional groups, working with others, tried recently to put a sales tax increase on the November ballot whose proceeds would be used for the protection of open space and habitat. They had different results. Though the historical circumstances, timetable, political culture and other salient characteristics of San Diego County and Placer County are different, and no doubt contributed to the different outcome, in an odd way (our opinion) these thumbnail sketches reveal quite similar "lessons learned."]

San Diego Coalition for Transportation Choices

by Carolyn Chase, Director

(submitted by Chuck Nathanson, San Diego Dialogue)

Voters in the County of San Diego approved a half-cent sales tax in 1987 called "TransNet" that would pay for a specific list of transportation projects through 2007. The Regional Transportation Plan forecasts a multi-billion dollar deficit without an extension of this tax after 2007. The original measure barely passed with the required majority vote. Now, the 2/3 vote is required for passage.

In late June, a heroic effort was mounted to rally support for a vote on an extension that would go on the November 2000 ballot and raise \$5 billion for transportation, \$2 billion of open space and \$1 billion for watershed and pollution prevention measures. While the effort failed, mostly due to the impossible timeline, there are valuable lessons to be learned:

- Never underestimate the power of \$7 billion and a tight timeline to focus people's attention and increase the ability to identify and move through issues.
- Never overestimate the willingness of an elected official to take risks - especially on a short timeline.

Fundamental to the premise of the proposed extension was linking transportation issues with funding for open space and pollution prevention programs to deal with both the negative impacts of transportation and the County's need for investment in quality of life. Polling showed that voters want to link the issues together and take a more systems-oriented approach to growth. This linkage was attacked by some who feared that linking funding to land uses might interfere with a local jurisdiction's land use prerogative. An attempt also was made to introduce competition for dollars based on "smart growth" principles. In a process in which people knew there would be new winners and losers, there was not enough time to address their concerns.

Now that the possibility of a November vote has passed, interested parties can take the progress that was made and continue the education and negotiations process toward a positive outcome.

**Showcase: Placer Legacy
by Tracy Grubbs
Director of Special Projects
Sierra Business Council**

Placer Legacy is a partnership between the Sierra Business Council and Placer County to develop a science-based program to protect open space in Placer County. After more than two years of work, the Board of Supervisors adopted the program and a multi-source funding package in June of 2000. They also voted to place a _ sales tax increase on the November ballot to help fund the program. If passed by the voters, the tax would generate approximately \$8.5 million annually for open space protection in Placer County.

The keys to our success so far include:

- Partnering *early* with the County to design, facilitate and staff a stakeholder process that included key interests in the County including: environmentalists, ranchers, developers and business people. As the County's private business partner, we also worked to keep the process on time and on track.
- Checking in regularly with the Board of Supervisors to ensure they were comfortable with each phase of the program as it was developed.
- Using polling and strategic public outreach efforts (public forums, political organizing, newsletters, web pages, media) to increase public involvement and maintain political momentum.

News and Views in Brief

[NB: further information on most CRIs, including internet links, can be found at www.civiconavigator.com, which is currently being redesigned and updated]

Action Pajaro Valley: has been hosting a series of Community Vision Workshops and more than 1,300 residents have participated thus far. The region is severely challenged by the competing need for job and housing growth, while also preserving a viable agricultural economy and sensitive lands. NB: *inter-regional collaboration*: APV currently is hosting the Great Valley Center's traveling exhibition: "Housing the Next Ten Million." For more information on APV, visit www.actionpajarovalley.org.

Bay Area Alliance for Sustainable Development: the Alliance has entered into an unusual and promising partnership with the five regional public agencies in the Bay Area (Association of Bay Area Governments, Bay Area Air Quality management District, Bay Area Water Quality District, Bay Conservation and Development Commission, and Metropolitan Transportation Commission) bringing together the BAASD's "Livability Footprint" project, focused on prioritizing land use needs for jobs and housing growth over the next twenty years, with the public agencies' "Alternative Growth Scenario Project," which was designed to develop state of the art strategies for smart growth in the Bay Area. For more information on the Alliance, visit www.bayareacouncil.org.

Economic Alliance of the San Fernando Valley: the Alliance has been working toward a comprehensive in-Valley transit system, and was recently bolstered in its efforts by a new study that found that a transit zone could substantially increase the efficiency and reduce the costs of the Valley's bus system. For more information visit www.valleyofthestars.org.

Gateway Cities Partnership: the Partnership is working with the officials of its 27 cities to plan a major conference on sustainability this fall aimed at developing sustainability plans for each and every one of them.

Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network: "Bridging the Digital Divide" is one of JVS's major projects and they've developed a terrific information and resource website. For more information visit www.siliconvalleydigitaldivide.net.

Metropolitan Forum Project: MFP has been asked to work with Assembly Speaker Robert Hertzberg on a new Speaker's Commission on Initiatives to be chaired by MFP leader David Abel. The Commission will report back to the Speaker by January 2001 on what is working and not working in the state's initiative process with recommendations for improvement. For more information, visit www.metroforum.org.

Orange County Business Council: this Fall, Venture Point, an affiliate of OCBC, will launch a new education and outreach initiative to increase access to capital for women and minority entrepreneurs. For more information visit www.venturepoint.org.

San Diego Dialogue: in partnership with SDD, Public Policy Institute of California Senior Fellow Mark Baldassare just released a Special Survey of San Diegans and found that growth-related issues are their major concern and also found a surprisingly large consensus behind bold government action to address those concerns. For more information, visit www.ppic.org.

San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation: SDREDC's Partnership for the New Economy is committed to a comprehensive approach to economic development and quality of life issues and strategies. If you wish to read SDREDC President Julie Meier Wright's superb April 2000 essay linking Infrastructure and Economic Development, visit www.sandiegobusiness.org.

Santa Barbara Region Economic Community Project: recently released “Preserving Our Future—Land Use Principles for the Next Generation,” a set of guidelines for preserving the natural and esthetic beauty of the region while accommodating future job and population growth. For more information visit www.sbrepc.org.

Tri-Valley Business Council: building on a two-year complex, multistakeholder visioning process, the Council has put on the November ballot a growth management initiative. An alternative, more restrictive measure has been put on the same ballot by the Sierra Club through a signature petition gathering effort. Whatever one’s views on the merits of the two options, the vote is also in part a test of whether multistakeholder approaches can compete with single-issue approaches for voter support. For more information visit www.trivalley.org.

Valley Vision/RAP: This private sector CRI has now been “mirrored” by the Sacramento Regional Partnership, an informal collaboration among 39 local public officials, including among others Dave Rosenberg, the Governor’s Director of Inter-Governmental Affairs and a Yolo County Supervisor. The Partnership is committed to work together across city and county lines on transportation, land use, farmland preservation, education, social services, public safety, public health, and environmental protection. For more information visit www.valleyvision.org.

NEWS ABOUT ALLIED ORGANIZATIONS

Alliance for Regional Stewardship: the Alliance has chosen three areas of focus with its CRI members from around the country: Tools for Civic Engagement; Public/Private Regional Planning; and Senior Volunteer Stewardship (which includes the preparation of a white paper on the federal role with regions to be presented to the next President of the United States). Alliance members will meet again in November hosted by the Chattanooga Institute in Chattanooga, Tennessee. For more information, visit www.civiconavigator.com.

California Environmental Dialogue: this project, organized under the auspices of the California Council for Environmental and Economic Balance (CCEEB), and staffed by Bill Dempsey, is a statewide collaboration of leaders from business, environmental organizations, and government. CED made a major contribution to policymaker and voter understanding of California’s conservation needs last fall when it published *Land Conservation in California: Needs for the Next Decade*. Now it has published *California Transportation: the Key to a Prosperous Economy and a High Quality of Life*. For more information visit www.cceeb.org.

California 2000 Project: with the departure of C2K director Debbie Drake for the Audubon Society’s Bay Wetlands Project, the Hewlett and Irvine foundations asked David Booher, consultant to the California Policy Reform Project (CPR—see below) to help with the re-organization of the project. In the meantime, Tenaya Hart continues to work with the eight Collaborative Regional Initiatives that received C2K Civic Engagement grants from the Irvine Foundation. And soon we’ll see the new C2K On-Line Debate project being developed for C2K by the Center for Governmental Studies. For more information visit www.c2kproject.org.

California Policy Reform: a project of CCEEB, is “a collaboration of business and labor leaders who are committed to a future that integrates economic and environmental sustainability with opportunities for all Californians.” The CPR website is a treasure trove of good theoretical and practical resources. For more information visit www.cceeb.org/cpr/.

Environmental Careers Organization/Sustainable Communities Leadership Fellows: SCLP is a leadership development program for graduate and college students linking sustainability projects across California. This summer there are 35 SCLP fellows working in “state-of-the-art” projects, including seven fellows placed with CRIs. Last year, a majority of those not returning to school were hired by their placement organizations or related agencies. For those interested in an extraordinary pool of talent, get in touch with Sharon Huntsman through www.eco.org/sclp.

Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities: this national organization of funders has now released two additional reports linking smart growth to other interests (you'll recall from the first CalRegions issue that the Funders Network and Policy Link had previously released "Smart Growth and Social Equity"). The new "translation" reports are: "Smart Growth and Workforce Development" and "Smart Growth and Open Space." For more information visit www.fundersnetwork.org.

Manuel Pastor, Jr.: with his colleagues Peter Dreier, J. Eugene Grigsby III, and Marta Lopez-Garza, our colleague Manuel Pastor has just published *Regions That Work: How Cities and Suburbs Can Grow Together*. This is important reading for all those interested in community-based regionalism. For more information visit www.upress.umn.edu.

Public Policy Institute of California: In addition to the Special Survey of San Diego mentioned above, PPIC has now released "Ethnicity, Neighborhoods, and California Politics," addresses the influence that the ethnic composition of neighborhoods and attitudes, particularly with respect to policy issues. For more information visit www.ppic.org.

Urban Land Institute: ULI's California Smart Growth Initiative is now underway, with Smart Growth Forums completed in the Bay Area and Los Angeles and future forums to be held in Orange County, Sacramento, and San Diego. The process will produce state policy recommendations for better growth in California. ULI recently brought on Gary Binger, formerly Deputy Executive Director and Planning Director of the Association of Bay Area Governments, to manage the project.

NEWS ABOUT GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC POLICY

State Budget. The state budget surplus made possible increased spending in the 2000-2001 fiscal year for many things, but the following are of special interest to regional organizations: K-12 education; school facilities and technology improvements; child care; all segments of higher education, including three new Institutes for Science and Innovation at separate UC campuses; state highway improvements and local transit, highway, and street projects (as included in the Governor's "Traffic Congestion Relief Plan"-- \$5.3 billion in General Fund dollars are committed to more than 100 projects over the next five years); multifamily housing, homeownership, and jobs-housing balance programs (the latter to incentivize local governments that meet their housing element targets); CALFED, water and air quality programs, and land conservation; various health and mental health expansions; a New Economy Initiative; and one-time discretionary funds for local government relief. For more information visit www.dof.ca.gov.

Inter-Regional Partnerships. Authored by Assemblymember Tom Torlakson, this bill encourages (and helps to fund) local and regional governmental organizations to collaborate on an inter-regional basis to address their jobs-housing imbalance problems. This will be an important pilot program for a new generation of regional and inter-regional collaboration.

Tax Credits for Land Conservation. The Legislature passed and the Governor signed the Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Act of 2000, which enables landowners to get tax credit for donation or dedication of lands for preservation of wildlife and open space.

State Trade and Commerce Agency/California Economic Strategy Panel. In May, the agency posted on its website (www.commerce.ca.gov) two new reports of interest to Collaborative Regional Initiatives: "Collaborating to Succeed in the New Economy: Principles from the LaJolla Retreat," and "Collaborating to Succeed in the New Economy: Findings of the Regional Economic Development Survey." The re-formation of the CESP has not yet taken place.

State Treasurer Phil Angelides. With strong support from the Treasurer, CALPERS announced in June that it would commit more than \$1.12 billion of its funds to new California investments,

including \$500 million for small businesses and emerging companies in underserved urban and rural communities. For more information visit www.calpers.org.

NEWS ABOUT CCRL

CARIT (California Alliance for Regional Information Technology): we have just completed a feasibility study and Business Plan for establishing CARIT as a brokering and support service to enable California's civic and public sector leaders to use the new information technologies for civic purposes, from community outreach and engagement to better long-term community planning.

Civic Entrepreneur Summit 2000: now scheduled for September 17-19 in Huntington Beach, this year's Summit features a focus on regions and the media, infrastructure and other state policy reforms and practical program learning exchange among the 18 regional teams and about 40 resource people in attendance. Of special note: State Assembly Speaker Robert Hertzberg will speak about his new Speaker's Commission on Regions.

Collaborative Regional Initiative Support, "Immersion Visits:" In order to be optimally helpful to CRIs, CCRL must be knowledgeable about each of California's regions. Thanks to the good organizing work of our colleagues Bud Laurent of the Community Environmental Council and Jon Clark of the McCaw Foundation, CCRL President Nick Bollman visited the Santa Barbara region for two and a half days in mid-July, and participated in eleven events: meetings, workshops, and speeches, culminating in a speech to more than 140 guests of the CEC Corporate Council on the importance of regional and inter-regional partnerships. A superb editorial in the Santa Barbara News Press on July 23 captured the spirit of the occasion, and of the entire visit. For those interested, the editorial it can be retrieved at newspress.com and a copy of the speech is available from CCRL.

Community Foundations' Regional Advisory Service: we have begun working with the East Bay Community Foundation to assist them in developing new regional civic engagement in their communities in Alameda and Contra Costa counties

Governor's Commission on Building for the 21st Century: CCRL presented recently to the Commission regarding the state's "human infrastructure," and offered ideas for a new state policy framework and inter-agency collaboration on workforce development. CCRL is also assisting the Commission leadership and staff to develop a compelling and comprehensive report to the Governor by the end of the year.

Northern California Grantmakers' Annual Conference: In July Nick Bollman was asked to speak on "Connecting the Dots: Picturing Philanthropy in the New Economy," along with CCRL Consultant and Collaborative Economics President Doug Henton. A digest of Bollman's remarks is available from CCRL.

21st Century Fund: In collaboration with the State Treasurer's office, this project will design and develop a statewide real estate investment fund to promote urban reinvestment and community economic growth without displacement in California's low-income communities.

Website update: civicnavigator.com and ccrl.org: the two will be joined in our new, binary splash site, calregions.org/civicnavigator.com, which should be up and running by September.

THANKS FOR VISITING CALREGIONS!

Nick, Diane, Renee, Doug, Kim, John, Kathie, and Trish