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MESSAGE FROM A BOARD DIRECTOR

Road Work Ahead: Speculation on the Uncertainty of Mobility and Transportation

Earlier this year, at the **West Coast Urban District Forum** in Downtown Long Beach, [Gabe Klein](#) asserted "*There are no transportation problems - only land use problems.*" To a large degree, the economic viability and sustainability of our downtown districts are inextricably linked to how accessible they are. This has always been the case, but we are long past the day where the B.I.D.'s approach to access is simply advocating for more parking spaces.



As placemakers, we now understand that the way our cities and transportation systems have been designed are [not economically or environmentally sustainable](#), and are [arguably just insane](#). We cannot support more congestion. Yet, we have a long history of retailers depending on having reliable, accessible and affordable parking.

If history has taught us anything, it is that the future is uncertain. It is, however, fairly certain that there will be some major changes in transportation and mobility in the very near future. The rapid advancement of autonomous vehicles promises to disrupt how we move ourselves around, how we use our roads and how we park. Other technological advancements like freight drones and 3D printing will undoubtedly alter the [transportation of goods](#) (a trillion dollar industry) which [will have an impact](#) in our districts. Exactly how and when, these changes will happen and how our cities will adapt is highly speculative. What infrastructure investments make sense today? How do we plan for this uncertainty and at what cost?

A very important, and often overlooked part of planning, is to plan on being wrong. This is especially important when planning very expensive [transportation infrastructure](#) projects that are intended to last for generations. It's fair to say that as far as planning transportation projects is concerned, we generally don't have a great [track record](#).

[Scenario planning](#) is a growing model of projecting numerous future possibilities and informing the decision-making process, not by predicting the future, but by understanding many possible futures. This can inform policies that both respond to and affect the outcomes, while encouraging planning for a [flexible future](#) potentially saving millions of dollars.

Finally, it is important to remember that mobility is not the goal. Every transportation system in recorded history was developed to provide access. We mustn't separate transportation planning from land use planning and communications planning. It is also important to remember that considering transportation of goods in our planning process can be as important as, or even more important than, transportation of people. A successful downtown district is one that provides access - access to opportunities, access to goods and services, access to entertainment and culture and access to community. Access is the goal, mobility is a strategy.

Global economics, federal policy, energy costs, political winds,

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technological innovations and so many other variables will all have a determining role as to the future of mobility and transportation. It's likely, however, that the biggest and most important variable is leadership. As a community of California downtown management organizations, we are uniquely poised, collectively and individually in our own communities, not only to be on the forefront of responding to the imminent changes in transportation, but to significantly shape the policies and directions that will provide effective access to our downtowns and inform the future of transportation.

Chip
Executive Director
Downtown Association of Santa Cruz
Pedestrian
DowntownSantaCruz.com

CDA POLICY CORNER

PRIORITY LEGISLATION FOR CDA

CDA TAKES "OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED" POSITION ON BILL TO ADD CIVIL LIABILITY PROVISION TO CA'S PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST ACT

AB 1479 (Bonta, D-Oakland) - Civil Liability, Public Records Request Act

The bill would require any public agency to designate a person/persons to act as an agency's custodian of records who would be responsible for responding to any request made pursuant to the California Public Records Act (CPRA). Furthermore, the bill allows a court to assess a civil penalty against any agency in the amount of not less than \$1,000 to nor more than \$5,000, which shall be awarded to the requester, if the court found that an agency knowingly and willfully without substantial justification, failed to respond to the PRA request.

Although recent amendments have improved the bill, the civil liability provisions would still apply to private non-profit organizations which would place extraordinary financial burdens to our Property Business Improvement Districts (PBIDs) that adhere to the Public Records Request Act. The inclusion of a civil penalty provision creates a real economic incentive for those that abuse the Act to seek not only the penalty, but to also seek attorney's fees and court costs. This provision poses a serious threat to the viability of our PBIDs - particularly our smallest members. The California Downtown Association is "opposed unless amended" to restrict the application of the bill to only governmental agencies.

AB 1479 was approved, as amended, in the Senate Judiciary Committee on July 11, and will be heard again in late August when the Legislature returns from summer recess. CDA's advocacy efforts will be seeking amendments that protect PBIDs in California.

SUPPORT

SB 611 (Hill, D-San Mateo) - Reforms to the Disabled Parking Placard Program

This bill will implement recommendations of the California State Auditor that are designed to improve oversight of disabled driver placards and plates that enable users to park in more accessible spaces and park free at meters without time limits. Specifically, the bill will, a. require DMV to conduct quarterly audits of applications and work with state health boards in analyzing applications to ensure that information is accurate, b. require DMV to use the Social Security Administration's Death Master File to cancel placards whose permit holders have died, c. require all permanent placard holders (not license plate holders) to reapply every 6 years, d. require applicants to provide proof of their name and DOB through driver's license or birth certificate, e. limit replacement cards per person to 4 every 2 years. The bill has been approved by the Assembly policy committee and will be heard in the Assembly fiscal committee in late August.

SB 2 (Atkins, D-San Diego) - Affordable Housing

The bill would enact the "Building Homes and Jobs Act" and impose a fee of \$75, not to exceed \$225 per transaction, at the time of recording of specified real estate documents in order to generate approximately \$200-\$300m annually to fund affordable housing projects. Funds would be deposited in the Housing & Community Development's Building Homes and Jobs Trust Fund to support

eligible affordable housing projects. The bill was approved by the Senate and now heads to the Assembly where it will be heard in policy committee in August.

AB 56 (Holden, D-Pasadena) - Infrastructure Financing

The IBank is authorized to fund and assist in a variety of projects that help spur economic development. However, the IBank is prohibited from funding housing directly, thus local governments and private developers can run into problems if funds are used to fund housing. AB 56 addresses a "grey area" and clarifies the types of infrastructure-related projects that can be funded by the IBank. Specifically, the bill adds "housing-related infrastructure" to the types of projects under the "public development facilities" definition that could utilize IBank funding - infrastructure like city streets, drainage, water supply, flood control, environmental mitigation measures, power and communications, public transit, sewage treatment and water treatment. Completion of these "public development facilities" are needed in order to incentivize transit-oriented development projects that are so critical to fostering development, growth and revitalization of California's urban regions. The bill has been approved by the Assembly and is now eligible to be taken up on the Senate Floor.

Jason Bryant
Bryant Government Affairs
July 2017 Legislative Update

IN THE NEWS

Metro Bike Share Expands to Pasadena

StreetsBlogLA

This morning, the city of Pasadena celebrated the arrival of Metro Bike Share. In the city of Pasadena the system includes 375...

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Sacramento, Emerging from Bay Area's Shadow, Becoming Booming Urban Alternative

Curbed

A once-sleepy state capital is now the state's fastest-growing big city.

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L.A. Metro Takes Multi-Pronged Approach to Improving Aging Blue Line

The Architects Newspaper

The Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LAMTA) is working toward making a series of modest but necessary...

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Cambodia Town Blooms with Many Murals

Gazettes

Art has the power to ignite imaginations, evoke emotions and spark creativity.

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Vibrant Neighborhoods Create Energetic Business Climate

SFGate.com

It's very apparent that Oakland is not the same city it was a generation ago.

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LimeBike Bike Sharing Program Coming to Lake Tahoe's South Shore

Tahoe Daily Tribune

Want to avoid traffic and bike to lunch instead? There's an app for that.

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What Killed Single-Payer in California?

New Republic

If single-payer can't pass with Democratic super-majorities in the Golden State, that raises serious questions about any national effort.

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The Disappearing Roadside Motel

GOOD

In 1939, when John Steinbeck imagined Highway 66 as "The Road of Flight," he evoked the crushing realities of Depression-era migrants...

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Council Votes to Form Paso Robles Tourism Improvement District

Paso Robles Daily News

At the most recent Paso Robles City Council meeting, the council voted to form the Paso Robles Tourism Improvement District.

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Downtown Chico Property and Business Improvement District Approved

KRCR TV

Property owners approved the Downtown Chico Property and Business Improvement District with a majority vote.

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Strategies for San Francisco's Second Biggest Park

StreetsBlogSF

"How many of you have been to McLaren Park?" asked Dawn Kamalanathan of San Francisco Recreation and Parks...

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Art Lovers can Swarm to New Bumblebee Installation Downtown

Santa Monica Daily Press

Bumblebee's Santa Monica family is growing with a temporary art installation on Colorado near the former Sears building.

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A Spreading 'Yimby' Movement

The New York Times

It's like Woodstock, but for housing activists.

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A Generational Failure: As the U.S. Fantasizes, the Rest of the World Builds a New Transport System

The Transport Politic

Tomorrow, two high-speed rail lines open in France, providing new corridors for trains to slice through the countryside at 200 mph.

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Giving Away TIGER and Transit Money to Wall Street

The Overheard Wire / Talking Headways Podcast

This week Beth Osborne of T4America and Kevin DeGood of The Center for American Progress join us to discuss infrastructure and...

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Over 25 Breakout Sessions have been posted on the IDA Annual Conference & Tradeshow website. Sessions including CDA Members are: [Calculating the Value of US Downtowns and Center Cities](#), featuring **Steve Welliver**, Deputy Chief Executive, Downtown Santa Monica, Inc., and [NIMBYs, Elites and Socialists, Oh My!: How Downtown Organizations are Navigating New Political Turbulence](#) featuring **John Caner**, CEO, Downtown Berkeley Association. Learn more about their sessions and other Conference highlights by clicking [here](#).

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Do you have your ear to the ground when it comes to the latest downtown news in your region? To submit news to be considered for inclusion in the newsletter, please contact Allison Shashok at allison@downtown.org.

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