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Have a news story or a
project you'd like to

September 2017

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT-ELECT

Downtown Housing & Livability

Many of our organizations were founded with a singular purpose: drive economic activity and position downtown as a hub for commerce and employment. As downtowns evolved to include a variety of daytime and nighttime uses, including a burgeoning residential population, we adapted to include an expanded list of stakeholders. Still, I spend far more hours in a week thinking about my district's businesses than about its residents, and I'd venture to guess many of you would say the same. Direct engagement with individual downtown residents is difficult and time consuming, so it often drops to the bottom of already overcrowded to-do lists. Here are a few questions we should be asking about residential uses in our downtowns.



Cost: The high cost of living in California is a well-established fact. (For proof, just ask my small town Midwest grandmother what she thinks of the rent check I write each month.) Recently, the [Mercury News](#) reported the statewide median rent for a two bedroom apartment was the third highest in the country at \$2,400 per month. This statewide figure, however, pales in comparison to the true cost of renting in our urban centers. Our residential rental prices in Santa Monica ranked highest in the nation earlier this year, averaging \$4,799 for a one bedroom unit according to [Curbed LA](#). How do we balance the need to maximize revenues for our residential property owners against the financial needs of our would-be-residents?

Inclusion: In order to reach their full potential as the central focus of our communities, our downtowns must be accessible to the greatest number of people. Great downtowns will house a racially and economically diverse population of residents reflective of the community's diversity as a whole. Downtown Santa Monica's diversity index stands at 54.9 today, comparable to the citywide index of 56.5. (Diversity index measures the likelihood two people chosen at random from the same area will be of the same ethnicity.) Does the diversity of your downtown residents mirror the diversity of your community's population? If not, what actions should we be taking to ensure our downtowns are welcoming to all?

Livability: A few years ago, the City of Santa Monica was awarded a grant by Bloomberg Philanthropies to move beyond economic indicators and produce a reliable measurement of its citizen's wellbeing. The results of the [Wellbeing Project](#) for Downtown Santa Monica were illuminating. On the positive side, downtown residents were found to have greater access to stores and services, to spend more time outdoors, to have excellent exposure to cultural amenities, and to take advantage of a rich network of transit options. On the other hand, those living downtown reported higher levels of stress (with rent and job security as primary causes), feeling less sense of community with their neighbors, and having fewer opportunities for social interaction. One focus of our organization in coming years will be to see these metrics improved before the wellbeing data is gathered again. How do we create engagement and a sense of community in downtown residential buildings with high turnover and short tenancies?

highlight in the CDA *District Digest*?

[E-mail us today!](#)

CDA Members

Arlington Business Partnership
Bixby Knolls Business Improvement Association
Central City Association
Chrysalis
City of Citrus Heights
City of Dana Point
City of Folsom
City of Glendora
City of Lancaster
City of Los Angeles, Office of the City Clerk
City of Monterey Park
City of Ontario
City of San Diego - Economic Development Dept.
City of Temple City
City of Tracy
Civitas
County of Santa Cruz - Office of Economic Development
Dinuba Chamber of Commerce
Downtown Association of Santa Cruz
Downtown Berkeley Association
Downtown Long Beach Associates
Downtown Los Angeles Partnership
Downtown Modesto Partnership
Downtown Oakland Association/ Lake Merritt Uptown District Association
Downtown Oxnard Merchants Association
Downtown Pomona Owners Association
Downtown Roseville Partnership
Downtown Sacramento Partnership
Downtown San Diego Partnership
Downtown San Mateo Association
Downtown Santa Barbara, Inc.
Downtown Santa Monica, Inc.
Downtown Vacaville BID
Downtown Ventura Partners
Downtown Visalians, Inc.
Figueroa Corridor Partnership
Gateway to LA Airport Business District
Gilroy Economic Development
Hollywood Property Owners Alliance
Ironsmith, Inc.
LA Downtown Industrial District BID
LA Fashion District BID
MJM Management Group
North Tahoe Business Association
Old Pasadena Management District
ParkSmart, Inc.
Paso Robles Main Street Association
Progressive Urban Management Associates, Inc.
R Street Sacramento Partnership
Riverside Downtown Partnership
San Jose Downtown Association
San Luis Obispo Downtown Association
South Park BID
The Downtown Burbank Partnership
The Placemaking Group
The River District
Tracy City Center Association
Tulare Downtown Association

How does your organization engage with its residential stakeholders? We welcome your thoughts on the cost, inclusivity, and livability of downtown housing, and look forward to future discussions with our members on this topic.

Sincerely,

Steven Welliver
Deputy Chief Executive
Downtown Santa Monica, Inc.
steven@downtownsm.com

CDA POLICY CORNER

CDA-sponsored SB 2 and the Housing Package Approved by the Legislature

During the final days of the 2017 Legislative Session, the California Assembly approved SB 2 along with a package of bills to address California's housing shortage and affordability crisis. The package will generate new revenue for affordable housing and loosen some regulations that often stifle new construction projects.

Among the six-bill package, the major bill would put a \$4 billion bond on the November 2018 ballot, with \$3 billion for existing housing programs and \$1 billion for veterans' housing. Another bill would allow developers to bypass some local development regulations when building affordable apartment complexes. **Finally, SB 2, by Senator Toni Atkins (D-San Diego) - a CDA-supported bill - would apply a \$75 fee on real estate transaction documents in order to generate roughly \$200-300 million annually to fund affordable housing projects.**

While money generated from the fee is the smaller piece of the funding source for more housing, SB 2 was a "must have" bill in order to move the rest of the housing package. From the bond revenues, one billion would be set aside for veterans housing programs. Of the remaining \$3 billion, half would go to an existing program that aids construction and preservation of rental housing units for people with incomes up to 60 percent of an area's medium income. The rest of the money would be distributed to existing programs that aim to build more housing near public transportation, provide grants for "innovative" housing programs and give homeowner loans, among other things.

In addition, SB 35 by Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco) will waive some local regulations for apartment builders in communities that aren't meeting housing production targets. To qualify for the streamlined process, developers will have to pay workers a "prevailing wage," an industry standard rate that is backed by organized labor. Several other bills will ensure that local governments allow building of homes for all income levels and waive environmental reviews that can be used to slow down the building process.

We expect the Governor to sign the housing package in the coming weeks. Congratulations on this win and for supporting SB 2!

Jason Bryant
Bryant Government Affairs
September 2017 Legislative Update

2017 DOWNTOWN ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Every year, IDA recognizes outstanding improvements to downtown by the work of dedicated individuals around the globe through the Downtown Achievement Awards. These exceptional projects highlight organizational advances in a variety of categories and stages of completion.

Congratulations to CDA member, **Downtown Santa Monica, Inc.** for winning an Excellence Award for the Downtown Santa Monica Annual Meeting Video!

View all 2017 winning presentations on downtown.org.

IN THE NEWS

California Legislature Passes Affordable Housing Bills

The Mercury News
After years of havoc caused by budget-busting rents and runaway home prices, a collection of affordable-housing bills negotiated with

Ukiah Main Street Program
Union Square BID
Urban Place Consulting Group,
Inc.
Vista Village Business
Association
Walnut Creek Downtown
Business Association
Westwood Village Improvement
Association
Wilshire Center Business
Improvement District

Gov. Jerry Brown have passed the Legislature.
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DTSM Data Highlights Ambassador Expansion

Santa Monica Daily Press

Downtown Santa Monica Inc.'s (DTSM) expanded ambassador program tracked almost 8,000 violations in a pair of local parks during the program's first six months.

[READ MORE](#)

Lumina's Sexy, Slinky Condos Work to Make Rincon Hill a Neighborhood

San Francisco Chronicle

If you have a fetish for voluptuous towers, Lumina may be just your style - two smooth shafts with plenty of curves, slinky and taut, in skin-tight wraps of cobalt blue.

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Park(ing) Day in California

StreetsBlogCal

Park(ing) Day is a grass-roots event wherein people turn street parking spaces into something more useful and fun than car storage.

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What if Legal Pot Costs More Than Black-Market Pot?

The New York Times

California has a marijuana conundrum. As regulators in California prepare for the start of recreational marijuana sales in January...

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Sacramento Considers Adding Homeless Shelters in Wake of Deadly Winter

CBS Sacramento

Sacramento city leaders addressed an urgent need to add shelters for the homeless before winter hits.

[READ MORE](#)

L.A.'s Expanding Subway Line Spurs First Crop of Luxury Towers

The Architects Newspaper

By the time currently planned extensions to Los Angeles's Purple Line are completed in 2024, the subway line will run from Downtown L.A. to Westwood, roughly nine miles further than it does today.

[READ MORE](#)

How Floral Crowns Could Reignite Interest in a Local Retail Space

Sacramento Business Journal

Through Sept. 22, locally owned Studio FIG will fill 1,296 square feet on the ground floor of a mixed-use building known as 1600 H. In addition to its retail component, the business is expected to offer workshops.

[READ MORE](#)

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City

IDA: What We're Reading

In 2008, at the height of the nationwide housing crisis and economic recession, sociologist Matthew Desmond moved into a Milwaukee trailer park on the verge of a court mandated closure.

[READ MORE](#)

San Jose First City to Sue President Trump over DACA

Fox KTVU

The city of San Jose has now joined 15 other states, the University of California and the state of California in suing President Donald Trump over the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA ...

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California High-Speed Rail: Everything You Need to Know

Curbed San Francisco

You've probably heard that California is trying to build its own shiny and speedy bullet train. After voters approved a 2008 ballot proposition that kicked off one of the nation's largest and...

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CDA'S NEW WEBSITE

Have you filled out the membership directory form yet?

CDA is building a new website and we are adding a membership directory!

In order to include your organization accurately, please take minute to fill out this [directory form](#). Thank you!

SPREAD THE WORD

Is your entire staff reading this newsletter?

Please forward to your team and ask them to [sign up!](#)



CDA District Digest Leadership

Executive Editor:
Karin Flood
President, CDA

Editor:
Allison Shashok
Marketing & Communications Manager, IDA

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.

CDA District Digest

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