BRINGING DOWNTOWN BACK

WAYS TO BOOST INFILL DEVELOPMENT IN THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY

COUNCIL OF INFILL BUILDERS

ABOUT THE COUNCIL OF INFILL BUILDERS

The Council of Infill Builders is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation of real estate professionals committed to improving California through infill development. Infill development revitalizes neighborhoods and communities, provides transportation choices, creates viable close-knit mixed-use areas, reduces greenhouse gas emissions and improves the overall economy. The Builders seek to educate the public about these benefits through research and outreach.

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Rendering of downtown Visalia mixed-use project | Courtesy of William Martin

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The San Joaquin Valley represents California's fastest-growing region. Accommodating new residents in infill areas – defined as resource-efficient, mixed-use neighborhoods where residents live within walking and biking distance of key services and transit – will help Valley communities by revitalizing downtowns and boosting sales and property tax revenues. New investment in downtown neighborhoods will help meet emerging market demand for walkable, convenient communities and preserve the Valley's open space and invaluable agricultural land.

The Council of Infill Builders convened a diverse group of builders, public officials, financial leaders, and land use experts in Fresno in October 2013 to identify key barriers and recommend solutions to encouraging more infill development in Valley downtowns.

The group described **four key barriers** that generally limit infill opportunities across the Valley's diverse array of cities and town:

1. Insufficient amenities and attractions in downtown areas
2. Lack of adequate infrastructure in Valley downtowns
3. Lack of available financing for pioneer infill projects
4. Few constraints on horizontal growth

To be sure, additional barriers may exist in specific markets, such as concerns over local schools or crime. However, participants agreed that these four represent the most common barriers that render infill development more costly and uncertain to build and therefore more challenging to attract adequate financing.

To help overcome these barriers, the group recommended **five priority solutions:**

1) **Improving urban design and expanding amenities**, such as through "pop-up culture" of food trucks and art shows and by allowing more experimentation and temporary permits for activities that bring residents into downtown neighborhoods.
2) **Flexible zoning** that allows for new product types and catalytic interim uses for existing buildings or public spaces to encourage revitalization in key infill areas.
3) **Regional and local prioritization of infrastructure in infill areas**, such as parks, utility upgrades, and sidewalks, as well as upgrading and performing deferred maintenance on public infrastructure, based on municipal assessments and master planning for infrastructure needs.
4) **Air district funding to finance catalytic infill projects** that will reduce driving and air pollution by reviving downtown neighborhoods.
5) **Tiered or differential development impact fees** that account for the true fiscal and environmental burdens of outlying projects and encourage new projects in infill neighborhoods.

These and other solutions are discussed in more detail in this report.

Historic photo of downtown Visalia

Fresno townhomes | Photo courtesy of Granville Homes

INFILL AND THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY

The San Joaquin Valley represents California's fastest-growing region. According to the California Department of Finance, household population is likely to increase 94 percent, from 3.8 million in 2010 to 7.47 million in 2050.[1] The increase will require homes for nearly 700,000 new households.[2]

In what types of neighborhoods will new Valley residents live?

If history is any guide and policy and fiscal signals do not change, Valley cities and counties will likely accommodate the growing population in low-density, auto-oriented housing, built on the region's invaluable agricultural land. In fact, single-family homes accounted for approximately 90 percent of the average annual residential permits issued in the region between 1990 and 2011.[3] Often referred to as "sprawl," this low-density development separates housing from jobs, retail, schools, and services and therefore requires residents to drive for most trips. It often fails to respond to the growing market of residents without children in the home and tends to discourage walking, bicycling, or transit trips for all.

Can infill development provide alternative housing for new Valley residents?

More auto-oriented development would mean a missed opportunity to meet emerging market demand. Residents of the San Joaquin Valley are increasingly looking for housing in walkable or bikeable communities that are not car-dependent. Infill development to meet this demand refers to resource-efficient land use where residents live within walking

San Joaquin Valley household population is likely to increase 94 percent, from 3.8 million in 2010 to 7.47 million in 2050. The increase will require homes for nearly 700,000 new households.

While the Valley represents a diverse region of rural and urban residents with varying income levels, market surveys reveal an increasing and unmet demand for attached and smaller-lot housing.

and biking distance of key services and transit options and neighborhoods contain a compact and diverse mix of uses, such as housing, offices, and retail. Residents in infill areas do not have to drive a car to get to their jobs and run errands, and the compact footprint of these neighborhoods helps preserve open space and farmland.

Recent consumer preference surveys of the entire San Joaquin Valley, as well as for Kern County specifically, indicate that up to 48 percent of total housing demand in the Valley will be for single-family homes on smaller lots (6,000 square feet or less), which represent only 14 percent of the current supply in counties such as Fresno, Kern, and Merced. Residents also increasingly demonstrate a preference for attached homes, such as townhouses, and homes within easy walking distance of services and retail.[4] While the Valley represents a diverse region of rural and urban residents with varying income levels, these market surveys reveal an increasing and unmet demand for attached and smaller-lot housing.

This demand in the Valley mirrors state and nationwide trends. For the first time in California, multiple-family housing units surpassed single-family homes in new construction throughout the state in 2012, with local jurisdictions reporting 23,801 multiple-family housing units and only 20,883 single-family homes statewide.[5] Nationally, a United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) survey of residential building permit data in the fifty largest metropolitan areas between 1990 and 2009 showed a substantial increase in the share of new construction built in central cities and older suburbs, including a particularly dramatic rise during the 2005-2009 years covering the real estate downturn compared to 2000-2004.[6] Moreover, in California's major metropolitan regions, the share of residential construction in historic central cities and core suburban communities increased between 1995 and 2008.[7]

More compact development could also provide household savings in terms of energy and water bills, as well as time. Future growth scenarios indicate that Californians could save up to 19 million acre-feet of water, which given increasing population, dwindling snow pack from recent droughts, lack of new water storage, and lowering water tables could be vital to managing limited water supplies. In addition, compact development patterns could reduce building energy use by up to 15 percent statewide.[8] In the San Joaquin Valley, these scenarios would result in residents saving $9,500 per year in auto and utility costs and $4,000 per year in fuel costs.[9]

Many Valley governments have historically underinvested in their downtown neighborhoods that would otherwise be ripe locations for more infill.

Why isn't there more infill development in the Valley?

Despite increasing demand for it, infill development is still more costly to build, given California's regulatory environment, impact fee structures, construction types, materials, and site-specific challenges. In addition, infill relies upon public amenities, in the form of infrastructure, parks, schools, retail centers, transit, and other resources to attract residents. Yet many Valley governments have historically underinvested in their downtown neighborhoods that would otherwise be ripe locations for more infill. And typical infrastructure financing tools, such as assessment districts, can be difficult to utilize for scattered, small-scale infill projects, while the steep costs to upgrade neighborhood amenities and infrastructure is typically an undue burden on any one infill project.

In addition, many Valley residents lack the incomes necessary to afford the resulting higher rents or sale prices for typical infill homes, while the relatively weak Valley tax base means local governments are often unable to provide the public investments necessary to spur more infill development. Indeed, the Valley ranks among the hardest-hit by the recent recession, with an average county unemployment rate of 14.9 percent as of February 2013.[10] This unemployment rate is over five percentage points higher than the state as whole and nearly double the nationwide average.[11]

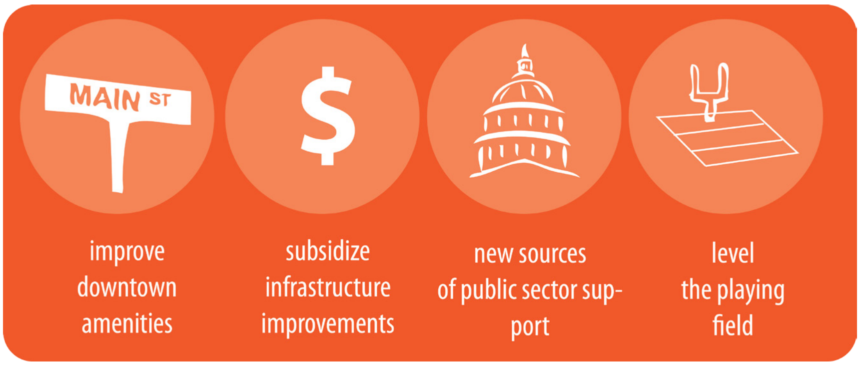
Historic photo of downtown Visalia
Photo from William Martin

How can policy makers make infill "pencil" in the Valley?

Despite the challenges associated with building more infill development, significant opportunities exist to build new projects in the Valley's diverse, core downtown regions. With the right combination of private investment and supportive public policy, infill neighborhoods could thrive among discrete market segments, such as young professionals, couples without children, seniors, and students. This revitalization effort can also ensure equitable impacts by providing more housing options, including affordable housing for multiple income levels. Ultimately, more infill development means increased economic activity and tax revenue, with decreased burden on municipal budgets and less traffic, air pollution, and open space and agricultural land conversion.

To identify the key challenges and prioritize solutions, the Council of Infill Builders convened a diverse group of infill development experts, including builders, finance experts, and public officials (please see the full list of participants and biographies at the end of this report), for a facilitated discussion in Fresno in October 2013. This report summarizes the key findings and recommended solutions.

KEY VALLEY INFILL BARRIERS & SOLUTIONS



1) Insufficient amenities & not enough focus on place

Infill development is by its nature more expensive to build, given the regulatory process, construction materials and high-wage labor required for multistory buildings, the challenge of building in developed neighborhoods, and the cost of upgrading older infrastructure. The higher construction costs form a barrier to development unless consumers are willing to pay a higher price per square foot than they would for competing suburban product. As a result, in order to achieve feasibility, infill projects must be able to attract buyers from specific market segments, including young professionals, seniors, singles who are willing to live in smaller spaces, and higher-income individuals, couples, or families. These renters or buyers in turn require neighborhood amenities that make the area attractive for urban-style living, which can eventually lead to improved local schools and public safety that attract families with children. However, many Valley downtowns lack the entertainment, retail such as grocery stores, and recreational amenities that create great urban spaces. These features can range from less expensive cultural activities like art shows, festivals, and concerts, to more expensive public investments in parks, plazas, and other urban spaces.

Infill projects must be able to attract buyers from specific market segments, including young professionals, seniors, singles who are willing to live in smaller spaces, and higher-income individuals, couples, or families.

Local officials and businesses need to develop and implement creative solutions to bring residents into downtown environments.

SOLUTION: Improve downtown amenities

Successful downtowns often benefit from strong political will and a commitment to stay with a strategy to revitalize the area. Local officials and businesses will therefore need to develop and implement creative solutions to bring residents into downtown environments. Given limited public resources, cities should focus their efforts on areas that are most likely to become successful urban infill neighborhoods, which can then inspire models that can be replicated elsewhere. Many cities will need to begin with low-cost options, while more successful infill neighborhoods should explore financing tools for more permanent and expensive amenities to solidify the desirability of an infill area.

Local leaders should embrace strategies to revitalize their downtowns for the public by looking to other cities with innovative means of encouraging activity, such as temporary uses or attractions including retail, food trucks, weekly farmers markets, and entertainment. Local officials need to be willing to try small steps to encourage public life and amenities in infill areas. If these steps do not succeed, they must be ready to try alternative measures. They should target specific areas for these strategies with goals developed through a community vision process. Ultimately, they must be willing to take bold actions within those areas, prioritizing the experience of pedestrians and bikers in particular.

Local officials and business leaders should:

Encourage "pop-up" retail, food venues, events and festivals in infill areas. These activities could enhance the utilization of empty buildings, vacant lots, and public spaces by creating events and festivals that feel like a "new thing in town" to draw young people and professionals.

Identify streets that could be temporarily closed for events. Local governments could give traffic engineers and other departmental officials with jurisdiction guidance to be flexible in these areas.

Contact event promoters, local nonprofits, and DJs to organize events. These activities could include art and music shows, farmers markets, and other cultural festivals in these spaces for "one-off" events, with the goal of bringing residents to downtown environments.

Encourage food trucks and other mobile businesses to set up in public spaces. These mobile eateries can draw customers and support pop-up events and festivals in infill areas. Easy permitting and reduced fees could bring these businesses downtown. Where populations cannot yet support a brick-and-mortar or full-time establishment, trucks can also provide services such as hair cutting, as well as retail products

Photo courtesy of Lauren Mitchell

including locally grown or produced products. Unlike brick-and-mortar stores, trucks can service a neighborhood on a schedule consistent with an emerging market for the goods and services until demand becomes sufficient for permanent uses.

Develop transportation and parking plans for downtown or infill events and activities. These plans could also address safety concerns in neighborhoods with reputations for crime in order to ensure that visitors can safely and easily arrive and enjoy the activity.

Utilize vacant lots to create infill amenities and temporary or short-term pop-up services and fare. These lots could be used for activities such as community gardens to beautify the downtowns, as well as farmers markets and other events to encourage more pedestrian traffic.

Ensure that urban design in downtown environments accommodates walking and biking. Pedestrians and cyclists are key to activating infill neighborhoods and provide the customer base for many downtown events.

Ensure that local zoning codes allow for flexible and adaptive use of space for infill activities. Zoning requirements such as parking minimums can form a barrier to the reuse of urban spaces, even when market support exists. Relaxing requirements for the reuse of existing buildings can offer a relatively cheap option to jumpstart economic activity and events in underused downtown spaces.

Temporarily eliminate parking requirements for interim uses in public infill spaces. Infill events and activities will benefit if organizers do not need to provide expensive and sometimes infeasible parking options.

Photo courtesy of Majunznk

Make public rights-of-way easy to use for public events or outdoor culture. These areas could be used for sidewalk dining and street closures to encourage downtown infill activity.

Consider implementing "parklets" in infill areas. Parklets involve reclaiming street parking spots for pedestrian usage by erecting temporary plazas, sculptures, and seating areas that patrons can enjoy. The temporary nature of the designs allows local governments to be flexible in implementing them to avoid lengthy planning processes and to adjust or remove unsuccessful experiments.

Develop form-based codes for predictable designs for urban amenities. Many urban amenities, from festivals to parks, benefit from innovation in design and implementation. Local governments should therefore utilize flexible codes for private building activities, such as form-based codes, to allow for greater experimentation and adaptation to local contexts. They can also issue guidance to public agencies about what makes public urban spaces successful, modeled on the urban design "Kit of Parts" that the City of Los Angeles recently employed.[12]

Dedicate staff time to support private sector efforts to bring pop-up culture and infill amenities to infill neighborhoods. Many of these events require assistance from public officials, such as in the planning, traffic, and safety divisions. Local governments should ensure that staff members from these departments are available to support private sector infill activities.

Photo courtesy of Jim Fenton

Local communities should first assess their infrastructure needs in infill-appropriate areas and then work with state and regional leaders to direct existing and new revenues to improve these areas.

2) Lack of infrastructure

Many prime infill neighborhoods in the Valley and elsewhere suffer from decades of disinvestment. These older neighborhoods often have deteriorating infrastructure, from aged or insufficient sewer and other utility services to crumbling streets and sidewalks. The aesthetic and practical impacts of this deterioration places a great burden on infill projects, particularly pioneer projects, to pay for infrastructure upgrades for entire neighborhoods. Adding this cost can sink individual projects, while the benefits of infrastructure investments could open market opportunities for a whole range of developers.

SOLUTION: Finance and subsidize infrastructure improvements

The public sector has a strong role to play in upgrading infrastructure in infill areas, with a likely sales and property tax return from the economic activity generated by revitalized neighborhoods. Local communities should first assess their infrastructure needs in infill-appropriate areas and then work with state and regional leaders to direct existing and new revenues to improve these areas.

State leaders should:

Create an improved state infrastructure bank that provides loan funds to local governments that plan for and support infill infrastructure. Infrastructure banks loan money, with repayment from increased property and sales tax revenues as the development boosts economic activity in the jurisdiction. The state should bolster support and funding for its existing infrastructure bank and lower barriers to lending from it.

Restore and expand tax-increment financing for urban infill. The demise of redevelopment agencies in 2011, due to legislative and judicial actions related to the state budget, left a significant gap in financing for many infill projects. Redevelopment funds were premised on repayment from future increases in property taxes stimulated by development projects. Borrowing against projected future tax increments would help local governments pay for catalyzing infill infrastructure. In turn, that investment could unlock private capital for new infill projects. State legislation could resurrect this authority for infill development areas, as proposed in SB 1 (Steinberg).[13] Governor Jerry Brown has also endorsed expanding infrastructure financing districts, which similarly rely on tax increments for funding, to urban infill areas and lowering the voter-approval threshold for forming such districts from two-thirds to 55 percent.[14] One key component of any financing mechanism to replace redevelopment should be the exclusion of low-density, outlying projects from accessing these funds.

Loft apartment in downtown Bakersfield | Photo courtesy of Bakersfield Life Magazine

Dedicate high speed rail bond funds for a revolving loan fund for infill infrastructure. High speed rail money for the Valley segment of the train could backstop private capital loaned for infill projects connected to the stations. These infrastructure improvements will relieve individual infill projects from having to pay for them, therefore reducing overall costs to build infill. The result will be more growth concentrated around high speed rail stations and connected corridors.

Regional entities, such as councils of governments, should:

Implement a regional infrastructure fundraising effort that focuses on infill needs. Current regional transportation plans under SB 375 (Steinberg, 2008) focus transportation investments on projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions from driving. These plans should ensure that not only transit and other needs receive funding, but also sewer, water, power, and other common infrastructure needs in infill areas. In addition, the regional plans should focus on maintaining existing transportation infrastructure rather than building new road and highway projects.

Study the economic needs and opportunities for infill development in the San Joaquin Valley. Studies that document the market segments most likely to prefer infill neighborhoods would help regional and local decision-makers better identify the specific infrastructure needs that they must address in order to meet and encourage this market demand.

Local officials should:

Develop a master plan and urban development standards to assess infrastructure needs in an infill area. This plan should form the basis to guide all infill infrastructure investments and to determine impact fees on proposed projects.

Facilitate public-private partnerships to fund infill infrastructure needs. As determined by a master planning process, these partnerships can help reduce public sector costs and speed the infrastructure build-out necessary for many infill projects.

Tier density allowances to infrastructure improvements. Proponents of outlying projects, particularly greenfield projects, should only receive permits if they account and pay for the infrastructure needs created by the density levels over the life of the projects.

Create a tiered fee system, such as a community facility fee, to cover the long-term cost of infrastructure, facilities, and services. The broad-based fee system and its resulting revenue can free individual infill developer capital and reduce the costs to build, thereby making it easier to attract private investment in infill projects.

Develop community infrastructure financing mechanisms for infill areas. These tools could include a tiered fee system, as discussed previously, or a benefit assessment district to fund local public facilities, in which properties that will benefit from a public investment help repay the funds through assessments on their property taxes.

Air district officials should:

Provide revolving loan funds and grants to finance catalyzing infill infrastructure projects. Air districts such as the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District collect fees from projects that contribute to air pollution. Dedicating a portion of these air district funds to select infill-related infrastructure projects could catalyze development that reduces regional driving and aid local master planning efforts for infill neighborhoods. Air districts should base these loans, gap financing, and/or grants on data and estimates regarding the air quality savings associated with forecasted infill development patterns.

Infill neighborhood in downtown Bakersfield | Photo courtesy of Bakersfield Life Magazine

Local government leaders should identify projects that are critical to unlocking greater private investment in infill-appropriate areas and work with state and regional leaders to develop financing programs to help get these projects built.

3) Lack of financing

Infill developers in the Valley often face challenges securing financing for otherwise meritorious projects, particularly for the missing gap that redevelopment agencies used to cover. Financial institutions may be unlikely to help finance pioneer projects in untested markets without comparable projects to assess risk. Public sector budgets are strapped, and the state has so far been unable to replace redevelopment funds with alternative sources.

SOLUTION: New sources of public sector support

Local government leaders should identify projects that are critical to unlocking greater private investment in infill-appropriate areas and work with state and regional leaders to develop financing programs to help get these projects built. In addition, local leaders can reduce costs for these projects to lessen the financing burden.

State leaders should:

Dedicate cap-and-trade funds to economic revitalization projects in infill areas. Auction revenue from the state's cap-and-trade program under AB 32 (Nuñez, 2006) could total in the billions of dollars. Governor Brown's proposed budget dedicates $100 million of the projected $850 million in revenue to fund local implementation of SB 375 and similar efforts, to be administered by the Strategic Growth Council.[15] The legislature has not yet approved this plan, although SB 535 (de Leon, 2012) requires that a portion of it fund low-income communities.[16] Given the economic poverty and blighted condition of many Valley downtowns, auction revenue could both address equity concerns and reduce greenhouse gas emissions if it can provide for economic

Historic downtown Modesto

Downtown Fresno
Photo courtesy of Flickr's Dusty

revitalization in infill areas. For example, auction revenue could provide capital for revolving loans to fund infrastructure and therefore leverage private investment.

Restore and expand tax-increment financing for urban infill. As discussed above, borrowing against projected future tax increments would help local governments pay for pioneer infill projects that could revitalize entire neighborhoods. State legislation should resurrect this authority for infill development areas.

Provide loan guarantees for pioneer infill projects that can catalyze neighborhood revitalization. These loan guarantees would help infill developers attract more private investment in their projects by reducing risks.

Local leaders should:

Waive fees for pioneer infill development and implement a tiered-fee structure. Fee reductions for catalytic infill projects can make them more attractive to private investors and reduce the costs of building them. These waivers therefore serve as a form of public support that can spur economic activity in revitalized neighborhoods and increase long-term municipal tax revenue. The long-term revenue increase can offset the initial cost of the waiver to the local government.

Make the infill development and permitting process more transparent. Infill developers often complain that pioneer projects are often subject to late objections from municipal officials who did not understand the impacts of an infill project on their operations or on otherwise unconsidered public codes. An example at the convening included a fire chief who belatedly realized that he needed a new $1.8 million hook and ladder truck to access a proposed four-story infill building and then required the developer to cover the cost. Municipal government leaders should therefore ensure that they undertake careful planning and educate developers in advance in order to avoid adding regulatory hurdles and costs late in the implementation process.

Implement more flexible zoning in order to get out-of-the-box development projects. As discussed previously, flexible zoning encourages innovation and creative, context-specific projects and implementation necessary for revitalizing infill areas.

Set aside contingency funds in case a project or investment does not yield the desired results in the first or second attempt. Innovation will occasionally entail missteps and failed experiments. Local governments should budget for these missteps and not let them stifle innovation that could lead to successes revitalizing an area for infill.

Air district officials should:

Provide revolving loan, gap financing, and/or grant funds to finance pioneer infill projects. As described above, dedicating air district funds to select infill projects can catalyze development that reduces regional driving and aids local master planning efforts for infill neighborhoods.

State and local officials should ensure that low-density, outlying developments account for and pay for their true fiscal, health, and environmental impacts.

4) Few constraints on horizontal growth

Large-lot, detached single family homes are cheaper to build and often benefit from generous public support, particularly in the form of subsidies for highway and road building. In addition, financing tools such as community facilities assessments are used more easily for larger-scale "greenfield" development. Meanwhile, the true costs of such development, in terms of increased traffic congestion, municipal services, and air pollution, as well as lost open space and agricultural land, are externalized and rarely if ever accounted for by the project developers. By contrast, as discussed previously, infill development is by its nature more expensive to build, which means that infill can have a difficult time competing with cheaper outlying housing for many market segments.

Cities with constraints on horizontal growth, either through natural geographic boundaries such as bays, mountain ranges, or islands or through urban growth boundaries or other policy mechanisms to contain development, often benefit from the investment directed to these areas with thriving downtowns.

SOLUTION: Level the Playing Field

State and local officials should ensure that low-density, outlying developments account for and pay for their true fiscal, health, and environmental impacts. In addition, policy makers should create and expand incentives and inducements to promote infill development.

Federal and State leaders should:

Offer new homeowners or renters in infill project areas various financial incentives, such as student loan forgiveness or income tax deductions. Federal tax policy currently encourages homeownership through the mortgage interest deduction, which often benefits residents of outlying areas where homes are cheaper. Policies to encourage residents to own or rent in infill areas could similarly boost demand and offset the higher costs of infill.

State leaders should:

Dedicate high speed rail bond funds for infill development and conservation easements. These funds could provide gap financing for station-connected infill development or backstop a revolving loan fund for infill infrastructure. In addition, conservation easements could protect open space and agricultural areas that might otherwise be developed for low-density projects connected to high speed rail.

Downtown Fresno art gallery | Photo courtesy of Granville Homes

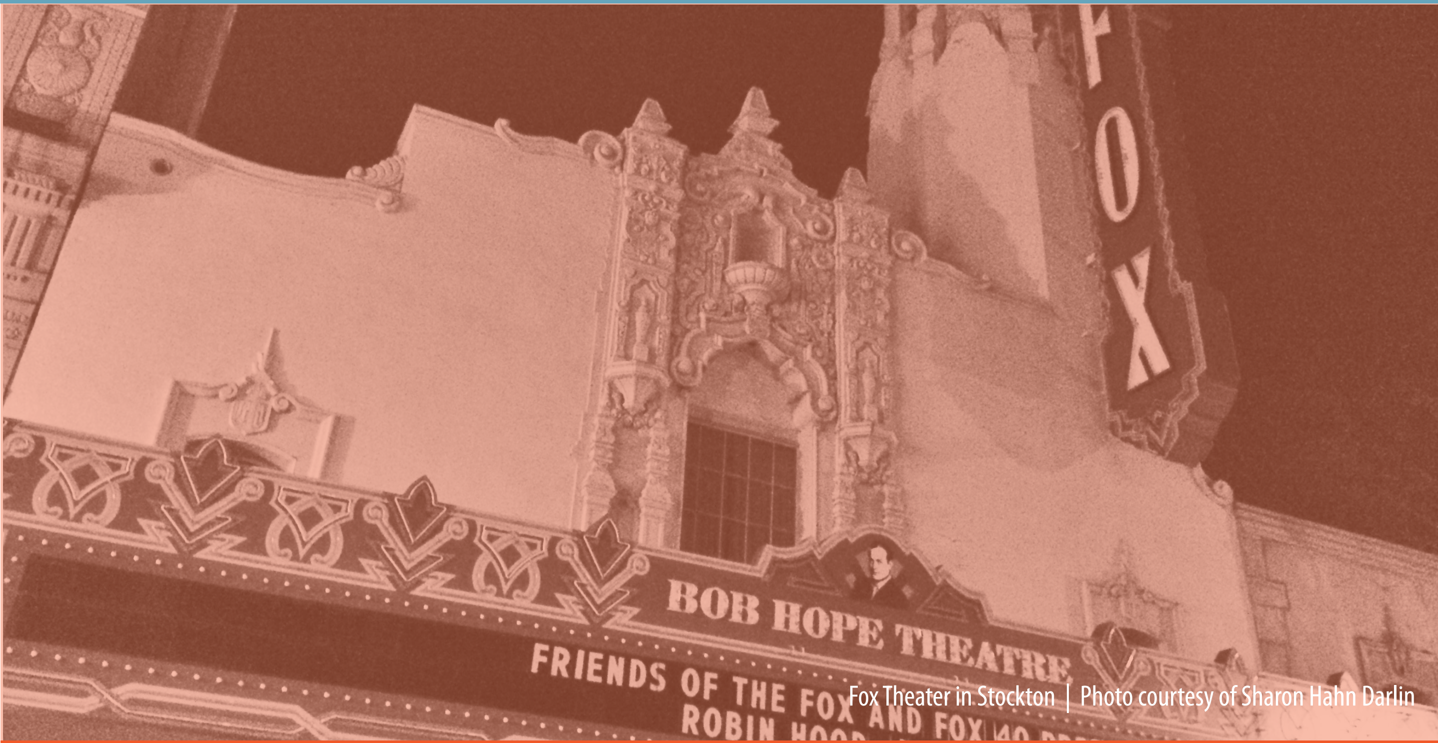
Further reduce regulatory barriers through statutory California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) exemptions for infill. CEQA requires lead agencies to analyze likely environmental impacts from a project and mitigate them if feasible. Expanded exemptions for infill projects in high-priority, urbanized areas could add more certainty to the development process and build on current categorical infill exemptions that are regulatory in nature. In addition, the exemptions could designate environmentally beneficial infill areas that could qualify for additional CEQA relief, as contemplated by SB 226 (Simitian, 2011).

Allow local governments to defer property taxes and other fees during development of infill projects. Such a break or deferral on property taxes or development fees could reduce upfront project costs and therefor help infill developers take more risks to develop projects in areas in need of revitalization.

Develop a new analysis for determining the long-term costs and impacts of various development patterns, such as through a state university partnership or by supporting existing computer modeling and mapping programs. Such an analysis would allow local governments to budget better in planning and permitting new projects and could inform fee structures.

Regional entities, such as councils of governments, should:

Provide planning grants for local infill plans. Regional transportation plans under SB 375 could establish grants for local governments seeking to develop specific plans for infill development. Developers with infill projects that are consistent with these specific plans are then eligible for CEQA exemptions and other streamlined permitting. The competitive nature of these grant programs would also help ensure that meritorious local initiatives receive funding.



Fox Theater in Stockton | Photo courtesy of Sharon Hahn Darlin

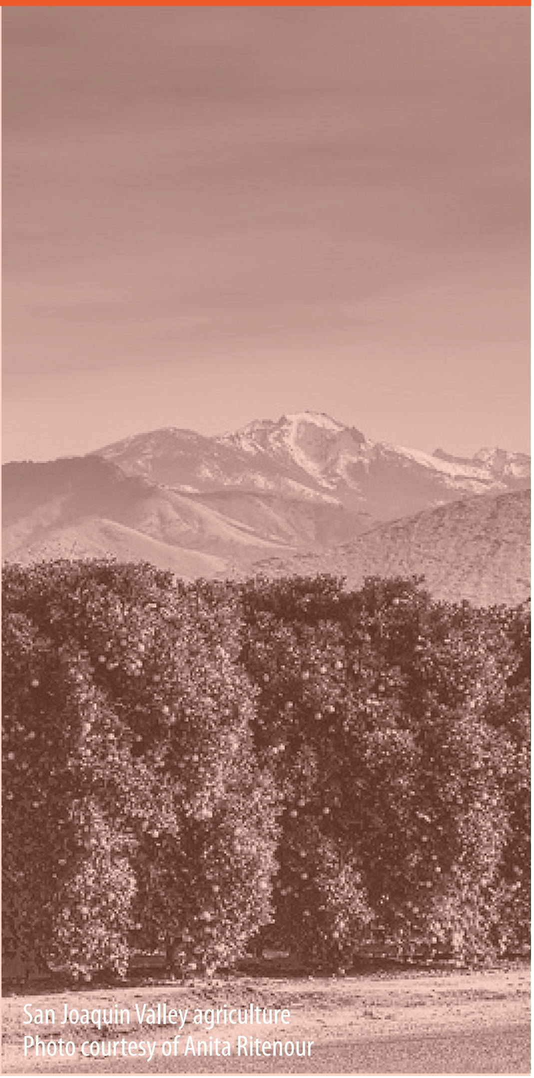
Direct regional transportation funds first to existing infrastructure that encourages infill development. As discussed above, regional transportation plans should focus on maintaining existing transportation infrastructure rather than building new road and highway projects. Often these existing transportation projects are located in infill-appropriate neighborhoods.

Local officials should:

Redistribute sales tax revenue to infill-supportive development, such as a transit-oriented development fund via a city-wide sales tax. This tax revenue could serve as an investment to catalyze infill projects that would boost tax revenues overall through increased economic activity.

Institute project impact fees based on environmental or economic impacts, like distance-based fees (such as the City of Lancaster's Urban Structure Program) or vehicle miles traveled fees. These fees would require outlying projects to pay more for the increase in vehicle miles traveled but would reduce fees on infill projects that benefit the local economy and environment. Local officials could consider directing the fee revenue to new infill projects in the geographic areas where the fees were generated in order to help offset the impacts of the outlying projects.

Upzone to allow more and diverse development in transit station areas and corridors, particularly along the high speed rail and Amtrak route in the Valley and connected areas. Current zoning too often restricts the market from determining appropriate density, parking, and mix of uses.



Account for increases in regional vehicle miles traveled from development in non-infill areas. Concentrating more new housing and jobs in areas without transit access or proximity to services and other destinations will only serve to increase traffic and air pollution. Local governments should assess these impacts in permitting new projects and require full mitigation.

Provide incentives for infill developers to make their projects denser. Local governments can encourage higher density by relaxing restrictions on height and parking and reducing fees or taxes accordingly. In addition, they can encourage developers with qualifying infill projects to utilize the statutory CEQA exemption for projects in transit priority areas that are consistent with a specific plan, in regions with approved SB 375 plans.

Tier density allowances to infrastructure improvements. Developers of outlying projects should only receive allowances to increase project density if the impact fees account for the burden on the public infrastructure created by the density. Infill projects would likely benefit given their reduced infrastructure needs from concentrating development in neighborhoods that require less driving, water, and energy use per unit.

Develop specific plans for infill areas. Specific plans allow communities and local leaders to envision and zone for future development in a specific area or neighborhood. The plans trigger environmental analysis under CEQA, which allows individual projects that are consistent with the plan to avoid having to undertake duplicative analysis. Developers therefore have a strong incentive to build projects that are consistent with these plans because they will often experience an easier permitting process.

Air district officials should:

Enforce the "indirect source rule" on outlying, low-density projects. The rule requires developers of large residential, commercial and industrial projects to reduce smog-forming and particulate emissions generated by their projects. These projects generate more air pollution by forcing residents and customers to drive longer distances. Developers then pay the air district fees to offset these costs. Air districts should ensure that they properly enforce this rule with outlying projects and account accurately for the fiscal impacts of the driving and air pollution. The districts could then use these funds for infill-related grants, gap-financing, and revolving loans, such as for infill infrastructure.

Infill homes in Fresno | Photo courtesy of Granville Homes

Without a coordinated, focused effort to develop inward, the Valley will repeat the development problems plaguing many metropolitan regions around the United States, such as Los Angeles, Phoenix, and Atlanta.

CONCLUSION

With its flat topography and historic investment in growing outward instead of inward into core areas, the San Joaquin Valley is at risk of continuing to strain municipal budgets and paving over agricultural and open space lands, while worsening traffic and air quality. Without a coordinated, focused effort to develop inward, the Valley will repeat the development problems plaguing many metropolitan regions around the United States, such as Los Angeles, Phoenix, and Atlanta. To underscore the need for action, recent economic forecasts indicate that the Valley may experience greater rates of economic growth in the coming year than the rest of the state, which will eventually restart demand for new housing.[17]

Fortunately, the Valley possesses many historic and once-thriving downtown neighborhoods that can be revitalized with strategic investment. Valley cities may have to start with small steps to begin the process. They can learn from the experiences in neighboring cities and towns in order to replicate the most successful policies and ideas, while ensuring that they reflect the character and needs of each community. Through this local experimentation and idea-sharing, the Valley's diverse communities can turn their downtowns back into economic and social hubs, reviving them as centerpieces of the regional economy.

INFILL CASE STUDIES IN THE VALLEY

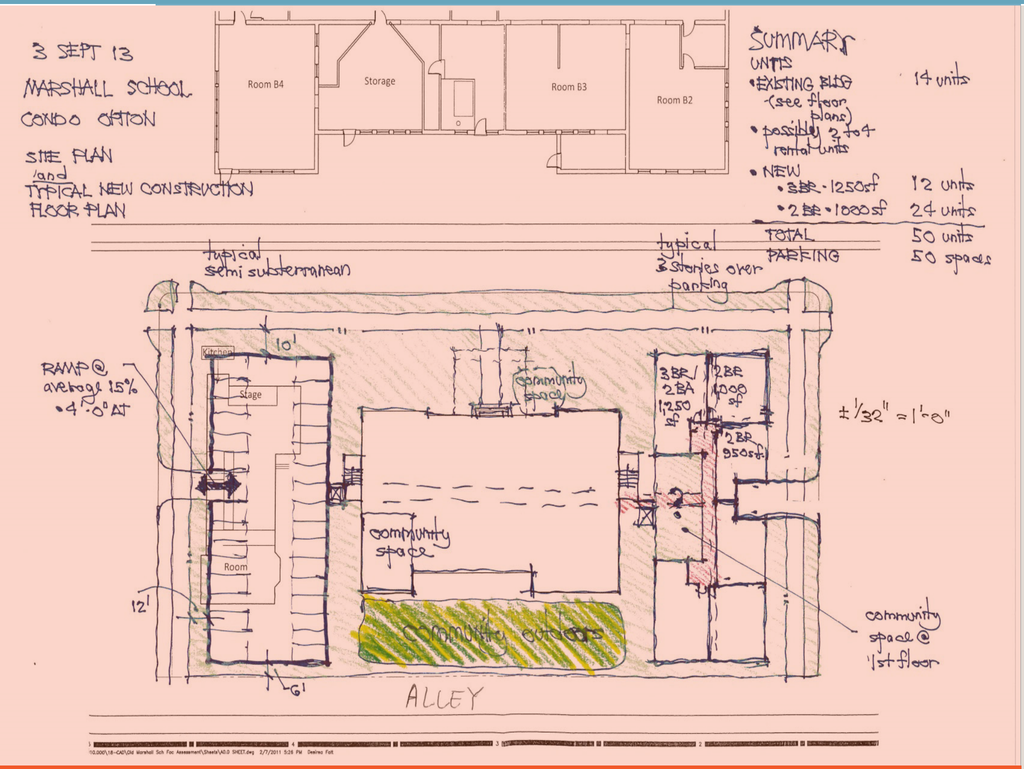
As an example of the challenges facing infill projects in the San Joaquin Valley and related markets, infill builder and architectural firm Mogavero Notestine Associates (MNA) presented two sample development scenarios at the October 2013 Fresno convening. MNA proposed both projects for development in Sacramento. These projects represented infill opportunities within the City of Sacramento, which may have a similar residential market to many parts of the San Joaquin Valley. For example, both markets have not been affected greatly by the San Francisco Bay Area apartment boom, and developers generally have not considered building unsubsidized, market-rate residential projects in these areas. To be sure, rents in Sacramento are higher than in the San Joaquin Valley, and while the Sacramento market is marginally viable economically, the San Joaquin Valley market faces more challenges currently.

14 Unit Apartment Project

This project is in a neighborhood immediately adjacent to the downtown core and consists of a three-story wood frame building with no elevators. All units are walk-up. The project includes two-bedroom units because the renter market will largely be single individuals as roommates and couples. MNA will provide alley-accessed parking at grade in order to diminish the cost of parking spaces. Subterranean or semi-subterranean parking in Sacramento tends to make infill projects, in general, infeasible, especially for small projects. The project's parking ratio, while less than 1:1, is still higher than other urban places, given that the Sacramento rental market continues to demand parking.

In general, few small infill sites are available for projects like this one in central Sacramento neighborhoods. The city has pockets of areas where rents are in the $2.00 or more per square foot range, but most rentals are closer to $1.30 per square foot (by contrast, Fresno's infill rents may be closer to $1.03 per square foot). However, the rental market has been relatively stable and thus offers a good opportunity for the development of rental housing in the long term.

MNA has been seeing returns on the cost of construction in the 6-8% range, which the company considers to be an acceptable return for an apartment project. Construction prices, while lower than in the San Francisco Bay Area, still create financing challenges. As a comparison to the Valley, MNA has found that construction costs in Sacramento and the Central Valley are similar, while Sacramento has a stronger rental market.



50 Unit Apartment/Condominium Project

This project entails the reuse of an existing building to create a three-story wood frame development. The reuse of existing buildings in infill areas can provide a great opportunity to introduce new uses and repurpose old buildings. In contrast to the 14-unit project, this development will have semi-subterranean parking in order to provide enough parking for the reuse of the old building and for parking for the new units to achieve a 1:1 ratio. In addition, the building will be elevator-accessed in order to market "flats" to a broader demographic – from young urbanites to aging boomers who want to downsize and live closer to pedestrian-oriented amenities.

Sacramento has a limited condominium market, so the project, currently in the land acquisition phase, will be developed as an apartment project with a condominium map on it to provide the option of selling the units should the for-sale market improve. Many for-sale condominium developers expect a gross margin of 18-20%, while the current gross margin for the project is 9-10%. Although this return is below-market for a condominium project and falls short of expectations for single-family, small-lot development, MNA believes this unique midtown project will bring higher per square foot values than resale for much of the surrounding market area and ultimately strong returns when it becomes available on the market in a few years. But values admittedly remain the ongoing challenge for developing any for-sale units near the central city.

INFILL CASE STUDIES IN THE VALLEY

CONVENING PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES

Steve Arago

First Carbon Solution

In May of 2013, Steve Arago joined First Carbon Solution's professional staff. Steve, a graduate of the UC, Berkeley, brings over 40 years of professional experience to the firm. He is a registered landscape architect in both California and Oregon. His diverse practice includes; land use planning, site feasibility studies, site development plans, site analysis studies, constraints and opportunities studies, due diligence studies, cost benefit analysis, landscape design, urban design, irrigation design, and construction based services. During his career, Steve has worked on a wide range of projects including; neighborhood commercial and retail developments, institutional (including airports, schools, hospitals and cemeteries), residential (including single family detached, townhomes, apartments and senior housing), office parks, light industrial and public works projects (including streetscapes, parks, plazas, sports fields, pedestrian and bike trails).

Keith Bergthold

City of Fresno (former)

Keith Bergthold has served as both Acting and Interim Planning and Development Director for the City of Fresno since February 2007. Keith holds a Masters Degree in Organizational Behavior from the School of Professional Psychology in Fresno and a BA Degree in Sociology from California State University, Fresno. Keith was born in Fresno, is proud of it, and believes that the San Joaquin Valley is a gift from God, ordained to be sagaciously developed, or woe be to us and our heirs. Keith loves to read and sometimes composes coherent prose from the back bedroom of the home he shares with his wife Debbie in Clovis. He also loves BMW motorcycles and long rides to Canada, and gratefully travels each day down Highway 168 to explore the possibilities germinating from his current day job as Interim Director of Planning and Development for the City of Fresno.

Vahagn Bznouni

Citizens Business Bank

Vahagn is the Assistant Vice President/Relationship Manager at Citizens Business Bank, where he has worked since 2005. His specialties include commercial loans (Real Estate, SBA, etc.). Previously he was the Assistant Vice President/Relationship Manager at Citizens Business Bank. His expertise includes Commercial Real Estate, LOC, and SBA lending. In addition, he volunteers at the Fresno Regional Workforce Investment Board and is Chairman of the Board at Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School and previously the Chairman of the Board at Fresno-Echmiadzin Sister Cities. He received his Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) in 2012 at Fresno State University and was certified by the California Bankers Association as a Commercial Lender at the Commercial Banking School in 2008.

Greg Collins

Visalia City Councilman

Greg Collins has over 37 years of experience in the planning field and 22 years of experience in local government. As a former public sector planner for Tulare County, Mr. Collins' positions ranged from environmental coordinator to project planner for two major land use plans: the Rural Valley Lands Plan and the Foothill Growth Management Plan. As a planning consultant, Mr. Collins has prepared planning reports, environmental impact reports, specific plans, general plan elements and zoning ordinances for cities and counties primarily within the San Joaquin Valley. Mr. Collins has also furnished contract planning services to small cities. Mr. Collins served on the Visalia City Council and Visalia Redevelopment Agency from 1975 to 1991, presiding over the

City of Visalia as it gained a reputation for innovative and progressive planning policies; from 1987 to 1991 he served as mayor and chairman of the Visalia Redevelopment Agency. After a 15-year hiatus, Mr. Collins was elected to the Visalia City Council in 2005 and again in 2011. Mr. Collins has a Bachelor of Science in Biology from the University of California at Santa Barbara and a Masters Degree in City and Regional Planning from California State University, Fresno.

Judith A. Corbett

Local Government Commission (retired)

Judith A. Corbett is the founder and for the past 25 years served as Executive Director of the Local Government Commission. She holds an MS in Ecology from the University of California and was co-developer of the highly acclaimed Village Homes, a model for sustainable development located in Davis, CA. Corbett has coauthored three books on resource efficient land use and building design, most recently Designing Sustainable Communities: Learning from Village Homes. With the Local Government Commission, she published over 50 policy guidebooks for local government officials on topics including community water sustainability, hazardous waste reduction, recycling, energy conservation and alternative energy, sustainable economic development, and resource-efficient land use patterns. The Ahwahnee Land Use Principles, spearheaded by Corbett, forecast the Smart Growth movement. She was named by Time Magazine as a "Hero for the Planet" and in 2005 received the National Leadership in Planning Award from the American Planning Association. She serves as a Board member for the Rail-Volution Conference and was a member of the Board of Directors of the Congress for the New Urbanism for the past 15 years.

Zac Cort

The Cort Group

A Stockton native, Zac has obtained an extensive scope of experience throughout California. He achieved his B.S. in Business Management from California State University, Dominguez Hills in Carson, CA. He has directed commercial and residential real estate investments in Long Beach, Fresno, San Diego, and Stockton. Prior to starting The Cort Group, he was an Account Executive with Bear Stearns. This experience allowed Zac to expand his portfolio to include corporate finance, mergers and acquisitions, risk management, private client services and asset management. With many years' experience in the finance industry and development, Zac is able to work closely with institutional and private lenders to tailor the best possible financing for revitalization and investment projects. He is a leading advocate for residential development in downtown Stockton with a vision of creating an urban lifestyle community using the city's current assets and structure to build the environment. This highlights Zac's philosophy that The Cort Group's development strategy is based upon: "The historic integrity of existing buildings should be preserved when properties are modernized combined with creating new and refreshing structures. The perfect marriage to progress our downtown."

Dan DeSantis

Fresno Regional Foundation

Eight years ago Dan DeSantis became the Fresno Regional Foundation's first CEO. Since then, working closely with the Board of Directors, Dan has guided the Foundation through its Rebirth as it has assumed the position of the visionary philanthropic leader in the San Joaquin Valley. Dan grew up in the San Fernando Valley. He received his bachelor's degree in Education from California State University, Northridge and earned a master's degree in Public Administration at the University of Southern California. Dan spent the first 20 years of his professional life as a Hospital Administrator. He spent the last twelve years in healthcare as the CEO of Sierra Kings District Hospital in Reedley, CA. In 1999, he was hired by the Fresno Superior Court to create and run the court's first mediation program. Dan left the court in 2005 to join the Fresno Regional Foundation.

Darin Dinsmore

Crowdbrite

Darin Dinsmore is a Planner and developer who focuses on infill and mixed-use development projects. He was the planning director for the Sierra Business Council in charge of helping to implement the award winning planning for prosperity program. He has worked with cities and developers to create model infill projects and to streamline the regulatory And approval process for implementation. As the project manager for the Truckee Railyard partnership, an award-winning mixed-use redevelopment of a 70 acre brownfield. Creator of the community enhancement program for Tahoe with more than $270 million of proposed projects. Partner and investor with New Urban Builders on a 250 acre infill project on a former Hospital site in Chico California. He also published the mixed-use and commercial development toolkit with the SBC. Most recently he's been using new crowdsourcing in crowdfunding techniques to help fast track project approval and revitalize neighborhoods and cities With more than 70 projects around the globe. Crowdbrite Helps build the natural, social and financial capital to strengthen neighborhoods and revitalize cities. We start with the social capital and build capacity for change, one project, one place at a time.

Colin Drukker

The Planning Center|DC&E

Colin's career at The Planning Center|DC&E has focused on general plans, housing affordability and design studies, and mixed-use specific plans. He is currently the project manager for Housing Element updates for the cities of La Quinta, Westminster, and Dana Point. Additionally, Colin is the project manager of the SCAG Compass Blueprint Implementation on Multiple Sites in San Gabriel Valley, in which he oversees six demonstration projects that foster transit-oriented development in a high-growth area of southern California. Colin has also recently managed the Carson Marketplace Specific Plan and the Artesia Corridor Specific Plan in Gardena, two mixed-use projects that promise to have significant influence on their respective communities. Colin keeps his clients and The Planning Center|DC&E informed of the latest planning issues and technology. For example, he speaks on the topic of inclusionary housing to jurisdictions in Orange County and the Inland Empire. He is also the project director for The Planning Center|DC&E's studies on suburbia and practical steps that communities can take to enhance the suburban experience.

Tim Egkan

The Cort Group

Chris Ganson

Office of Planning and Research

Chris Ganson is a Senior Planner with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research. He focuses on transportation and land use planning policy, developing and evaluating metrics and performance standards needed to achieve state policy goals including greenhouse gas emissions reduction, reduction of other environmental impacts, improvement of human health, and improvement of long-run fiscal health. Previously, he worked at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, the World Resources Institute, and US EPA's Region 9 office. Chris holds master's degrees in City Planning and Transportation Engineering from UC Berkeley.

Steve Gunnells

The Planning Center | DC&E

Steve's career spans the spectrum of community planning and economic development. He works with communities to bridge the gap between long-range planning, policies, and economic development; with community organizations and special districts to fund and implement priority projects; and with developers, to guide project decision-making and obtain entitlements based on sound economic and market analysis. Steve focuses on crafting plans, policies, and development projects that are grounded in regional and global economic realities. He helps his clients leverage market forces to achieve their goals. And most importantly, he uses his grasp of economics and real estate markets not only to overcome existing challenges but to help communities create visionary plans that capitalize on the possibilities, not just past trends. As The Planning Center|DC&E's in-house economist, Steve plays a role in a great many of the firm's active projects. Before coming to The Planning Center|DC&E, Steve worked as a community planning and economic development consultant for communities and developers in Michigan and Ohio. He has also served as the field director for a consulting team on a World Bank project in Yemen, an Economic Development Fellow with the International Economic Development Council, and a county Planning Director in Virginia.

Allison Joe

Strategic Growth Council

Allison S. Joe, AICP works on efforts related to development and implementation of statewide and regional land use planning efforts, including implementation of Senate Bill 375, sustainable infrastructure, and infill and transit-oriented development policies. Allison has professional experience in public infrastructure finance, real estate market and financial feasibility analysis, economic development, housing policy, and industry sector analysis. Significant experience in market analysis and urban revitalization is a foundation of Allison's professional portfolio, particularly in the Central Valley and Southern California. Ms. Joe received her MA in Planning from the University of Southern California and a BA in Politics, Philosophy, and Economics from Claremont McKenna College. She is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners, American Planning Association, and the Urban Land Institute, and is also a Commissioner on the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission.

Curt Johansen

Sustainable Community Partners LLC & Council of Infill Builders

Mr. Johansen is the Managing General Partner of Sustainable Community Partners, LLC an innovative company that envisions, entitles, designs, finances, constructs, and markets sustainable conservation communities. His current work is the culmination of a career spanning 30 years in mixed use development, with the last ten exclusively in pursuit of sustainable communities. His projects seek to locally source food, energy, education, green building, and transit. Mr. Johansen is a recognized leader in the pursuit of development reform; his philosophy adheres to principle-based practices of linking jobs with housing; preserving priority agricultural, habitat, and open spaces; designing institutional systems for reclamation and re-use of renewable resources; creating place-based communities that include culturally diverse, affordable housing; and integrating small neighborhood schools with an eco-literate curriculum.

Roberta Rand Marshall

DMB Pacific Ventures LLC

Roberta Rand Marshall is responsible for the management and oversight of project entitlement and re-entitlement efforts including land planning, zoning, environmental approvals, and federal and state regulatory permitting, together with the corresponding community outreach. Ms. Marshall has over 30 years of experience in managing the entitlement, permitting and construction of large-scale community development projects. Ms. Marshall joined DMB Associates, Inc. and subsequently DMB Pacific Ventures LLC, in 2006 as Senior Vice President and General Manager of Tejon Mountain Village. Ms. Marshall also assisted in the negotiation of the historic Tejon Ranch Conservation and Land Use Agreement with regional and national conservation groups to protect significant portions of the greater Tejon Ranch. Prior to joining DMB Associates, Inc. and subsequently DMB Pacific Ventures LLC, Ms. Marshall served as Vice President of Community Development for Irvine Community Development Company, a subsidiary of The Irvine Company in Newport Beach, California, where she planned, entitled and developed the award winning Newport Coast Planned Community. Ms. Marshall holds an undergraduate degree from the University of Vermont, a Master of Urban and Regional Planning from Rutgers University and a Master of Architecture from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

William Martin

Martin and Martin Properties

William Martin is a third generation Californian from Visalia. He has a diverse background that includes orchard farming, an economics degree, and two theological degrees. He is the Managing Partner for Martin and Martin Properties LLC, a family office that owns a diverse array of income producing properties in California, Idaho, and Colorado. His favorite property and future potential project is the restoration of the historic Palace Hotel, built in 1876, at the 100 block north, south, east, and west of downtown Visalia. He also owns 5 other properties in the downtown core of Visalia. He is past club President of the year for District 5230 of Rotary, a member of Visalia's historic preservation committee, on the executive board of the chamber, and on the executive board of the downtown property owners association.

David Mogavero

Mogavero-Notestine & Council of Infill Builders

David Mogavero, Senior Principal, has over 30 years of experience with special expertise in the areas of ecological building, environmental planning, infill development, urban design, and energy efficient design. His commitment to human-based architecture, the revitalization of existing neighborhoods, economic and ecological sustainability of communities, and participation in the planning and design process by end-users is well-known and recognized within professional and citizen communities. As one of the most experienced advocates and practitioners in land use transit issues in the Central Valley, Mr. Mogavero has actively lectured, written and advocated for environmentally-sound urban development, including infill and higher density transit and pedestrian oriented development. Through his professional practice and tenure as a board member and President of the Environmental Council of Sacramento and The Planning and Conservation League, he has facilitated the widespread adoption of these principles in projects and communities throughout California.

Jason Moody

Economic & Planning Systems

Jason Moody is a Managing Principal with Economic & Planning Systems (EPS), a land use economics consulting firm with offices in Berkeley, Sacramento, Los Angeles, CA, and Denver, CO. During his 20 years at the firm, Mr. Moody has worked extensively in the areas of real estate market and financial analysis, public finance, regional economics and revitalization strategies. Mr. Moody has led the firm's practice in the economics of downtowns, focusing on the feasibility and market implications of individual projects, as well as entire districts and corridors. Mr. Moody has also worked extensively in San Joaquin Valley including numerous projects for the City of Fresno (e.g., fiscal analysis of General Plan Update), Visalia (General Plan Update), Madera (impact fees and tax increment financing), Turlock (impact fees, General Plan Update, and retail market analysis), and Merced (economic and financing of UC Merced). Mr. Moody is currently working as part of a multi-disciplinary consulting team led by the Renaissance Group to provide technical expertise to Fresno General Plan Implementation/Infill Development Task Force.

Craig Murphy

City of Bakersfield

Alysia Nordberg

Mogavero Notestine

Ms. Nordberg has experience managing, planning, financing and implementing social service programs, housing and redevelopment projects. The majority of Ms. Nordberg's work has been completed in neighborhoods facing difficult issues. She has worked in the non-profit sector developing and managing transitional housing programs, developing affordable rental and home ownership housing. She has experience working closely with cities and counties to develop implementation strategies to better balance the services, housing and jobs needed to establish healthy neighborhoods. Her ability to evaluate existing conditions, prepare comprehensive analysis and provide recommendations for planning purposes provides a benefit to her clients throughout the project. Currently the Development Manager at Mogavero Notestine Associates, she is responsible for the planning, financing, feasibility analysis and development of residential and mixed-use infill projects and works closely with the Principals providing key facilitation for communication, plan development, and plan preparation.

Mike Olmos

City of Visalia

Katherine Aguilar Perez-Estolano

California High Speed Rail Authority

Katherine Aguilar Perez-Estolano is an expert in urban planning, transportation, and stakeholder engagement. As co-founder of ELP Advisors, she has managed numerous transportation planning and community engagement projects. Prior to co-founding ELP Advisors, she was the Executive Director of the Urban Land Institute, Los Angeles District Council (ULI LA), and was formerly the Vice President of Development for Forest City Development where she focused on transit-oriented development and mixed-use projects in emerging markets. Before joining Forest City, Ms. Perez-Estolano was the co-founder and Executive Director of the Transportation and Land Use Collaborative (TLUC) of Southern California, a nationally recognized non-profit that promotes greater civic involvement in planning and development. Previously, she worked as Deputy to Pasadena Mayor William Bogaard on transportation, planning and Latino constituent issues. Ms. Perez-Estolano is an Adjunct Professor at the USC School of Planning and Development. She has also served as an Adjunct Professor at the UCLA School of Policy and was honored to be recognized as a 2009-2010 Senior Fellow of the UCLA School of Public Affairs. Ms. Perez-Estolano received her Master's Degree in Urban Planning and Transportation from UCLA and her Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from California State University Northridge.

Jeff Roberts

Granville Homes

Jeff Roberts was born and raised in Los Angeles. He moved to Fresno to attend Fresno State in 1973. He graduated in 1976 and then pursued his graduate studies in Urban and Regional Planning. Jeff worked for the County of Fresno early in his career but has spent 18 years as a private consultant and the last 12 years as an employee of Granville Homes. Jeff is a Board member of the Building Industry Association and the Millerton Lake Area Chamber of Commerce. He is a past Board member of the Fresno Arts Council and the past President of the Tree Fresno Board of Directors. Jeff has been married to Tina for 32 years. They have a 25 year old son, Andy.

Mott Smith

Civic Enterprise

Mott Smith is co-founder of Civic Enterprise, an L.A. firm that builds innovative, socially-conscious projects in emerging neighborhoods and provides innovative parking and economic development solutions for cities and communities. He is very active in local, regional and state legislative issues. His built work has been honored by the Urban Land Institute, the L.A. Conservancy, and Architectural Record Magazine. He is a founding board member of the California Infill Builders Federation, teaches in USC's Master of Real Estate Development Program and Planning Program in the USC Price School of Public Policy. Earlier, he was as Acting Director of Planning for the L.A. Unified School District after serving as founding Executive Director of New Schools-Better Neighborhoods. He also worked as editor/business manager of The Planning Report. Mott is past president the Westside Urban Forum. He received a Master of Real Estate Development from USC and a BA in Linguistics from UCLA.

Terry Watt

Terrell Watt Planning Consultants

Terrell Watt has been the owner of Terrell Watt Planning Consultants since 1989, a firm specializing in planning and implementing projects that promote resource conservation and sustainable development patterns which are significant to the region. Terrell is an expert in general and specific planning, open space and agricultural land conservation and environmental compliance. Her role also includes facilitation, public outreach, and negotiation. Terrell has a wide variety of clients throughout California including non-profit organizations, government agencies and foundations. In 2005, on behalf of Friends of Harbors, Beaches and Parks and its environmental coalition she negotiated $243.5 million in an Orange County transportation measure to comprehensively mitigate for habitat impacts due to freeway projects. Prior to forming her own consulting group, Terrell was the staff planning expert with the environmental and land use law firm Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger.

Linda Wheaton

California Department of Housing and Community Development

John Wright

Planner

John Wright served as the Director of Planning and Development Services for the City of Clovis until his retirement from full time work in April 2008. His accomplishments there include the development of a fully funded major facilities streets program, the redevelopment of the downtown into "Old Town Clovis" and the development of some of the first major trails projects in the region. He is a charter member of the American Planning Association and was honored in 1995 with its Distinguished Leadership award locally. He received the Lifetime Achievement award from the Urban Land Institute in 2008 of which he was a member for more than 34 years. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of both the Clovis Community Foundation and the San Joaquin Valley Housing Collaborative. He serves in his church organizing community service projects and community relations. He assisted the Fresno Council of Governments in the development of the Valley Blueprint and is currently working with them on its implementation. He chairs the San Joaquin Valley Planner's Network, and the valley wide Greenprint Steering Committee. He also serves on the 2014 Fresno Regional Transportation Plan Update Roundtable.

ENDNOTES

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