

The 2010–2011 Annual
Report of the **San Francisco**
Planning and Urban
Research Association

You know us
as **SPUR**

What it means to be an urbanist





The San Francisco Ferry Building has become the anchor for a newly vibrant Embarcadero neighborhood. SPUR was an important advocate for the historic renovation, which now hosts shops, restaurants and a farmers' market.

Urbanists are people who love cities. We see cities as special places rich with life, energy and promise.



SPUR tours and programs explore the ideas and issues that shape our region. More than 6,000 people participate in nearly 200 forums, walking tours and other SPUR events each year.

Gay-rights supporters celebrate the overturn of Proposition 8 with a choreographed dance on the steps of San Francisco City Hall. The city is the stage for a vital public life.



Cities allow us to live in ways that are true to who we are. Here we can create lives that might not be possible elsewhere. We coexist comfortably with people whose passions and beliefs are different from our own.



More than 1,500 fans of urbanism gather for SPUR's annual Member Party each summer. SPUR's membership ranges from influential Urban Leaders to up-and-coming Young Urbanists.

On PARK(ing) Day, SPUR joins like-minded organizations in transforming parking spots into public spaces. The Great Streets Project, a collaboration between SPUR and the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition, has organized property owners to create semi-permanent “parklets.”



Urban life lets us bump up against the new and different. And that makes creative sparks fly. Cities are the best incubators for innovation. We come here to discover, collaborate, solve, invent.



Exhibitions in the SPUR Urban Center Gallery, like the 2010 show Do-It-Yourself Urbanism, bring our research and policy work to the public.



The counterpart to compact growth is open space. Good urbanism integrates city parks for livability as well as a regional “greenbelt” to limit sprawl.

We believe that cities are the solution to serious environmental problems. We are urbanists because we are also ecologists. By living compactly, we conserve resources, protect habitat, reduce pollution and slow climate change.



SPUR works hard to promote livable streets that welcome transit, bikes, pedestrians and cars. More than 25 percent of urban land is used for streets.

Crowds on a Muni platform are one sign that our transit system is overextended. In 2010, SPUR helped to pass Proposition G, which improves work rules at Muni to make the agency more efficient.



We don't look at the problems cities face and give up. Urbanists fight to fix what doesn't work. Where others see insurmountable challenges, we see the chance to get things right.



“I believe today SPUR is the most powerful civic organization in this city, and with that power comes a real responsibility. How will this city be planned in the future? What social programs do the most for the most people? Play a role. And if you do, San Francisco will always be a great city.”
— Senator Dianne Feinstein speaking at the 2010 Silver SPUR Awards luncheon



The Treasure Island plan envisions a sustainable, livable neighborhood with new housing, retail, open space, ferries and bus service. SPUR has worked to support the plan for many years.

We value the texture and history of place. But we're not bound to the past. Urbanists have faith in change. We can imagine a future that's better than the present.



Through the Urban Center — our community-oriented meeting space in downtown San Francisco — SPUR invites citizens to get involved in the processes that shape our region's future.

Community Planning

Our goal: Allow San Francisco to grow and change while remaining true to the qualities that make it a beautiful and livable city.

www.spur.org/community_planning

www.spur.org/americas-cup

www.spur.org/projectreview



Treasure Island, Parkmerced and the Embarcadero

SPUR worked hard on the major community plans in San Francisco including Parkmerced, the Northeast Embarcadero and Treasure Island. The Parkmerced project will add 5,700 housing units in the southwest portion of San Francisco while reconfiguring a car-oriented street grid and providing substantial transit and sustainability improvements. The Northeast Embarcadero Study will guide the development of private property along the west side of the Embarcadero, from the Ferry Building to Fisherman's Wharf, while strengthening the public realm. Treasure Island will create 8,000 units of housing, rehabilitate existing historic structures, create open space, add new ferry service, and enhance bus service to and from the island.

Speaking out in favor of housing

SPUR continues to be a leading voice in articulating the importance of increasing housing supplies at all levels. We have never gotten distracted by the debates over different types of housing — rented vs. owned, affordable vs. market rate — because San Francisco faces a long-term structural shortage of housing of all kinds. It is the single greatest threat to the continued cultural vitality of our city life. SPUR explains how housing markets work to a variety of audiences; we provide practical suggestions about how to increase housing production in

appropriate locations; and we defend the urgency of making infill development a more viable alternative to sprawl at the regional scale.



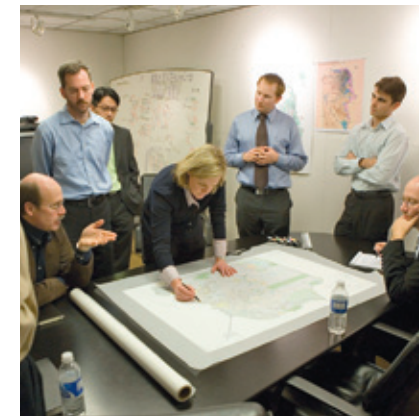
A General Plan that's ambivalent about housing

If you read the "Housing Element" of the City's General Plan, you will nowhere in it see the idea that San Francisco should increase density near transit. The City has backed away from this basic tenet of planning through years of debate about this part of the General Plan, which must be updated every five years. Much of the work for the next Housing Element update took place last year, with adoption scheduled for 2011. SPUR provided many good ideas to the process, many of which were not taken. What we can say is this: It would have been a lot worse without us.



Good design = good urbanism

Through our project-review process, SPUR continues to support practical examples of good urbanism. Our committee reviews proposals for individual buildings and evaluates their potential to enhance the vitality of city life and adopt principles of good urban design. In evaluating projects, we look at the appropriateness of the proposed land use, the relationship to the public realm and other urban design issues, as well as environmental sustainability. This year's projects included the Pier 70 Master Plan and the Edward II Inn, a hotel transformed into 24 units of housing for youth transitioning out of foster care.



America's Cup comes to San Francisco

In 2012, San Francisco will host the 34th America's Cup yacht race. There is no doubt that the San Francisco Bay will provide a breathtaking venue for yacht racing, and no doubt that there will be an infusion of spending in the city tied to the event. But the real opportunity comes from leveraging the America's Cup to make some major long-term investments in our city. SPUR has called for the City to come together to make some important public-realm improvements — such as an extension of F-line streetcar to Fort Mason and new bike paths on the Embarcadero — *before* the race happens, and to make sure we get high-quality private development that will stand the test of time.

Steady progress on Market Street

Market Street is San Francisco's ceremonial center and key travel corridor — and yet its central section, the Mid-Market neighborhood, is one of the city's most economically depressed areas. Restoring Market Street to its former greatness has been a focus of activity at SPUR for many years. In that time, many plans have stalled or failed to get traction. But slowly, if one is patient enough to notice, there are signs of progress: new stores, more pedestrians, some new housing and employers. In 2010, we were part of a group that began discussions about a geographically targeted tax break to bring more businesses to the Mid-Market neighborhood. The idea came to fruition in 2011. And the work continues...



Disaster Planning

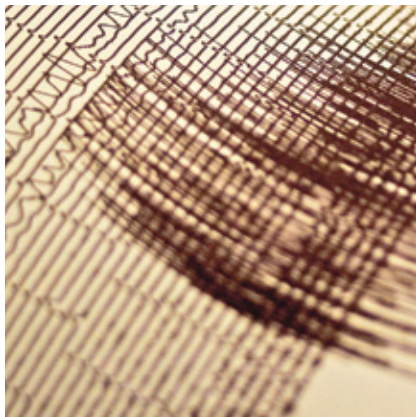
Our goal: Make San Francisco truly resilient by taking steps now to help our city remain safe and usable after a major earthquake.

www.spur.org/disaster_planning
www.spur.org/after-the-disaster
www.spur.org/seismic-safety-bond
www.spur.org/lifelines



Our big loss: the seismic safety bond

SPUR spearheaded a campaign to provide \$46 million in bond financing for affordable housing developments with “soft story” conditions, i.e. multiple ground-floor garages or windows, which make buildings vulnerable to collapse. While Proposition A made it to the November 2010 ballot, it secured only 63 percent of the vote — several percentage points shy of the two thirds needed to pass. We hope to see funding for the retrofit of soft-story buildings become part of a future bond package to help strengthen our city before the next big earthquake comes.



Preventing an exodus: how we can “shelter in place”

Cities can permanently lose hundreds of thousands of residents after a disaster if there is no place for them to stay while their homes and workplaces are rebuilt. To prevent this, we began working on what it will take for San Francisco to achieve “shelter in place” — living in our homes while they’re being rebuilt. With support from a grant from the United States Geological Survey, SPUR is defining the minimum condition a residence can be in to be considered habitable; determining who is qualified to inspect housing after a disaster; defining the acceptable duration of water, power and other outages; identifying special considerations for vulnerable populations; and determining the feasibility and cost of temporary housing as an alternative.



Designing redundancy into our transportation system

What happens if the BART tube collapses in an earthquake? Or the Golden Gate Bridge? SPUR’s report “Transportation and Recovery” analyzed the major transportation corridors in the city and region through the lens of potential infrastructure failure in a disaster. Based on the level of redundancy in the corridor, we proposed a set of recommendations to minimize the risk of catastrophic failure and plan for quick recovery following a major disaster.



Governing in the wake of disaster

SPUR’s work on disaster recovery expanded to tackle the question of how to structure governance to facilitate rebuilding after a disaster. We launched a task force to focus on three core functions of local government after disaster:

- 1) Repairing public facilities and services;
- 2) Providing resources and information for private companies to repair and rebuild their affected assets; and
- 3) Providing vision and leadership for the recovery and rebuilding process.

SPUR will complete this report in 2011.

The Lifelines Council

SPUR continued to participate actively in San Francisco’s Lifelines Council, co-chaired by SPUR Board Member Chris Poland. “Lifelines” are the systems and facilities that cities rely on to function, including communication, electric power, liquid fuel, natural gas, transportation (airports, highways, ports, rail and transit), water and wastewater. The City convened this council at SPUR’s recommendation in order to establish coordination processes for lifeline restoration and recovery following a major disaster event.



Economic Development

Our goal: Build the foundations of a prosperous, equitable, growing job base.

- www.spur.org/economic_development
- www.spur.org/economic-growth
- www.spur.org/payroll-tax
- www.spur.org/future-of-work



Organizing for economic development

SPUR released a major report arguing for the creation of a new public-private entity to attract businesses to San Francisco and encourage them to stay. The report argued that economic development requires extensive private sector involvement, in part to maintain continuity across political changes at City Hall. The paper called for creating a new, independent economic development organization that would not seek to influence public policy but instead focus on attracting and retaining jobs in San Francisco. SPUR also argued that this new organization should have a stable and non-political funding source to make sure it can carry out economic development activities over a several-year time frame.



SF's economic outlook

In cooperation with the San Francisco Controller's Office, SPUR hosted the MFAC Annual Economic Outlook Briefing. The briefing brings together experts from key industries — real estate, retail, hotels and banking — to discuss regional economic trends that affect the City budget. This year's briefing focused on the significant implications of the great recession and how the City's revenue projections should be adjusted to reflect those conditions.

The fight against "job sprawl"

SPUR continued to develop its focus on slowing our region's "job sprawl," the decentralization of jobs from cities to lower density areas. We first wrote about the growing regional competition for jobs and housing in a 2007 article. We produced a major policy paper on the future of downtown San Francisco in early 2009 and later wrote an article that proposed shifting work to specific job centers in Northern California. Since then, we have continued our research and shared our ideas at a number of forums, including the California Planning Roundtable and a forum sponsored by the Association of Bay Area Governments. SPUR continues to encourage planners to be as concerned about job sprawl as they are about housing sprawl. In 2010, we succeeded in making job sprawl a major area of concern for the Bay Area's Sustainable Communities Strategy. In 2011 we will continue our research and advocacy around how to shift more work to locations served by transit.



Tax waste, not work

San Francisco is one of the only cities in California to levy a tax on the payroll of private businesses — a direct disincentive to creating jobs. SPUR and others argued that it would be preferable to shift the tax structure away from things we want more of (jobs) and onto things we want less of (waste and pollution, for example). This year, as Twitter threatened to leave San Francisco for Brisbane, SPUR advocated to eliminate the payroll tax and make it possible for successful companies to stay in San Francisco as they grow.



Good Government

Our goal: Promote an effective, well-managed public sector and nurture a climate of civic engagement.

www.spur.org/good_government
www.spur.org/budget-reform
www.spur.org/june-2010-voter-guide
www.spur.org/november-2010-voter-guide



Budgeting firsts for SF

SPUR celebrated a number of San Francisco budgeting firsts: the City completed its first two-year budget, initiated its first five-year financial plan, and adopted reserve policies that will prevent the depletion of tax revenues during economic booms and require setting funds aside for recessions. These gains were the direct result of SPUR’s extensive work on 2009’s Proposition A, a suite of budget-process improvements that require the City to better forecast its expenditures and revenues. These firsts were an important step, but as the City budget worsened in 2010, SPUR continued to lead the public dialogue with a series of forums on budget deficits, capital planning and the growth in employee costs. SPUR’s leadership in these conversations raised awareness and underscored the severity of the financial pressures facing the City as the Great Recession wears on.



Ballot Analysis

Drawing on the collective skills and experience of our Ballot Analysis Committee and Board of Directors, SPUR analyzed 22 ballot measures for elections in June and November 2010. These included core SPUR issues such as earthquake and disaster preparedness, City retirement benefit costs, equitable collective bargaining, and even an innovative proposal to allow Saturday voting for the November 2011 election. This comprehensive analysis is widely regarded as the single best source in San Francisco for citizens to get an understanding of the issues they will face in the voting booth.



Good Government Awards

SPUR honored the work of outstanding City employees and teams with the 31st Annual Good Government Awards. The five awards acknowledged significant innovation and creativity taking place in the public sector. Winners represented the Department of Public Health, the General Services Agency, the San Francisco Airport Commission, Recreation and Parks, and the Human Services Agency.

Wise spending on capital projects

SPUR staff and board members served on the Citizens’ General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee. The committee oversees how the City spends general obligation bond proceeds, including such major capital projects as the rebuilding of Laguna Honda and San Francisco General hospitals, branch library improvements, and seismic retrofits of police and fire stations. SPUR initially proposed this committee and continues to look for ways to increase the City’s investment in infrastructure.



Regional Planning

Our goal: Focus regional growth into compact land-use patterns linked by excellent public transit.

- www.spur.org/regional_planning
- www.spur.org/urbanist-san-jose
- www.spur.org/beyond-the-tracks
- www.spur.org/bayplan



SPUR vs. Sprawl

With the passage of California's climate change laws — Assembly Bill 32 and Senate Bill 375, which led to a state mandate to reduce emissions by reducing driving — the legal framework for regional planning is in greater flux than it has been in decades. SPUR is deeply involved with the new round of regional planning at the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments. The region is required to produce its first-ever Sustainable Communities Strategy, which will reorganize growth in a way that makes it possible for more people to get around without driving. Last year we advocated for high standards in curbing emissions, driving and sprawl — sometimes successfully, sometimes not. It's too soon to tell how strong a document the Sustainable Communities Strategy will be. But with our allies in the environmental, social justice and business communities, we are making a major run at a visionary plan to shift population growth and job growth into compact centers adjacent to transit.



South Bay spring break: SPUR visits San Jose

In April, a group of 35 SPUR leaders took a three-day trip to Northern California's largest city, San Jose. The trip reinforced the importance of San Francisco and San Jose working together on shared issues like high-speed rail, community planning and funding for infrastructure. The trip also established strong relationships between SPUR and two important partners: the City of San Jose and 1stACT Silicon Valley, a network of business, civic and arts leaders working to create a cultural identity for Silicon Valley. The trip was covered in the Urbanist with essays on retrofitting suburbia, San Jose's model of economic development and the challenge of getting people to ride transit in spread-out Santa Clara County.

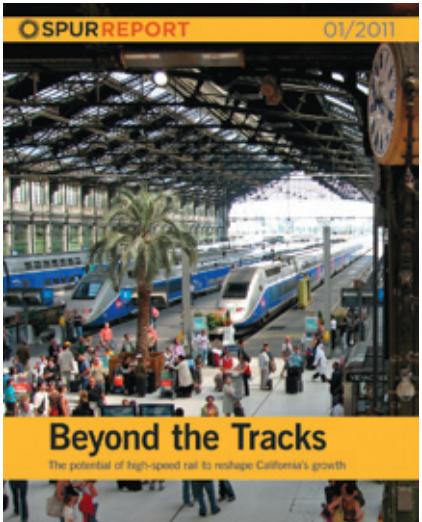


Updating the Bay Plan

SPUR provided detailed recommendations to the Bay Conservation and Development Commission on its proposal to amend the Bay Plan with new findings on climate change and sea level rise. SPUR's suggestions and line-item edits — widely used as the basis of other stakeholders' comments — urged BCDC to address climate change in two ways. Within its narrow band of jurisdiction along the shoreline, we argued, BCDC should identify which areas are best protected and restored to wetlands, and which are good candidates for thoughtful, well-planned infill development that would curtail regional sprawl and reduce climate change. We also urged BCDC to work with other agencies and local governments to identify long-term regional flood protection strategies to reduce our vulnerability to projected sea level rise.

Readying the region for high-speed rail

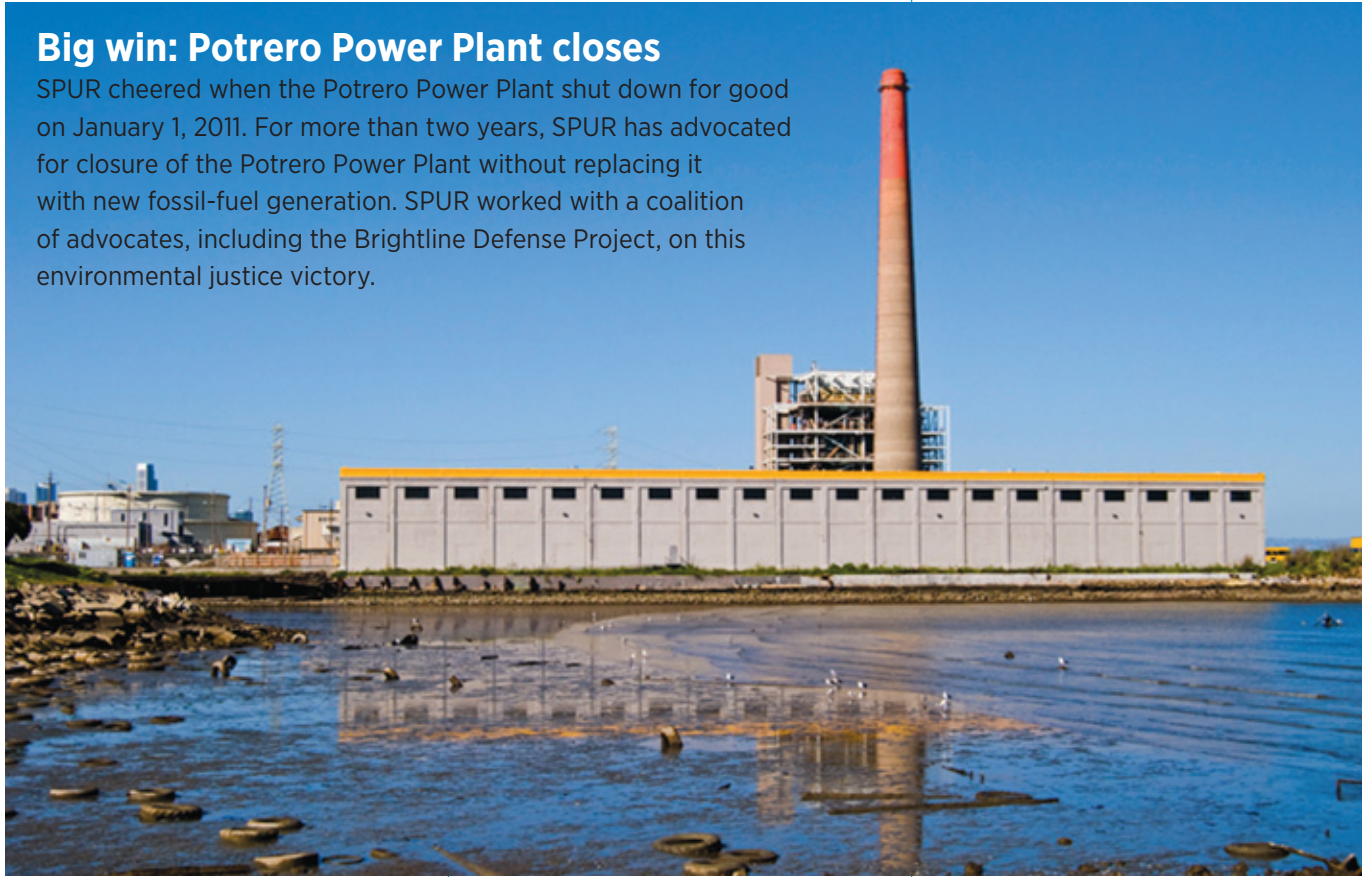
We released "Beyond the Tracks," a major report on high-speed rail and land use. Based on more than a year of work by a SPUR members, the paper described how high-speed rail will change California's economic geography and argued for state-level guidelines and incentives to ensure that local planning and development can best respond to the opportunity of high-speed rail. While getting high-speed rail built is a major focus for SPUR, we know that it will not succeed unless we change the land use around the stations, as well.



Sustainable Development

Our goal: Reduce the city’s ecological footprint through conservation and efficient use of water, energy and materials.

www.spur.org/sustainable_development
www.spur.org/potrero-victory
www.spur.org/adaptation
www.spur.org/greening-apartments



Big win: Potrero Power Plant closes

SPUR cheered when the Potrero Power Plant shut down for good on January 1, 2011. For more than two years, SPUR has advocated for closure of the Potrero Power Plant without replacing it with new fossil-fuel generation. SPUR worked with a coalition of advocates, including the Brightline Defense Project, on this environmental justice victory.

A master plan for Ocean Beach

SPUR launched a major master planning effort for Ocean Beach, one of the city’s most well-used resources — and biggest management challenges. The area hosts more than 2 million visitors a year, as well as two threatened bird species and much of the city’s critical wastewater infrastructure. Recent erosion south of Sloat Boulevard has created

unprecedented momentum for a long-range plan to address the protection of this important area. The master plan will consider ecology, infrastructure, access and amenities as the beach faces ongoing erosion problems and climate-induced sea level rise.

Securing our water supply

We published a paper analyzing the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission’s plan to diversify the city’s water resources with investments in conservation, groundwater and recycled water. SPUR supports the direction of San Francisco’s urban water plan for improving resource sustainability and local resiliency to disasters, including earthquakes and climate change.



Greening older apartment buildings

Multifamily apartment buildings make up more than two-thirds of the city’s housing stock — and most of them date from the days before anyone had heard of greenbuilding. Rebate programs to retrofit older buildings to use less water, energy and materials already exist, but they’re confusing and not well known or understood. SPUR convened a blue ribbon task force and published a major policy report on greening San Francisco’s existing apartment buildings, with a recommendation to the City that it create a “one-stop shop” for the rental housing community to access resources and services from various utilities.



Better wastewater management

We worked with and testified in support of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission’s adoption of goals for the Sewer System Improvement Program, a \$5 billion program currently in the early planning stages to upgrade the city’s wastewater and storm-water management system. For years, SPUR has advocated for integrated water management and well-planned investments in green infrastructure to more sustainably handle storm water.

Getting ready for climate change

We completed a major policy report on planning for climate change adaptation in the Bay Area. SPUR’s blue ribbon task force wrapped up two years of work and held four workshops to vet strategies for public health, energy, water supply, ecosystems, transportation and sea level rise. The report addresses how we should adapt to climate change in the Bay Area, including which tools and strategies will make us resilient to its most severe impacts: drought, higher temperatures and sea level rise. SPUR recommended more than 30 strategies for local and regional agencies to begin minimizing the region’s vulnerabilities to these long-term but potentially catastrophic effects.



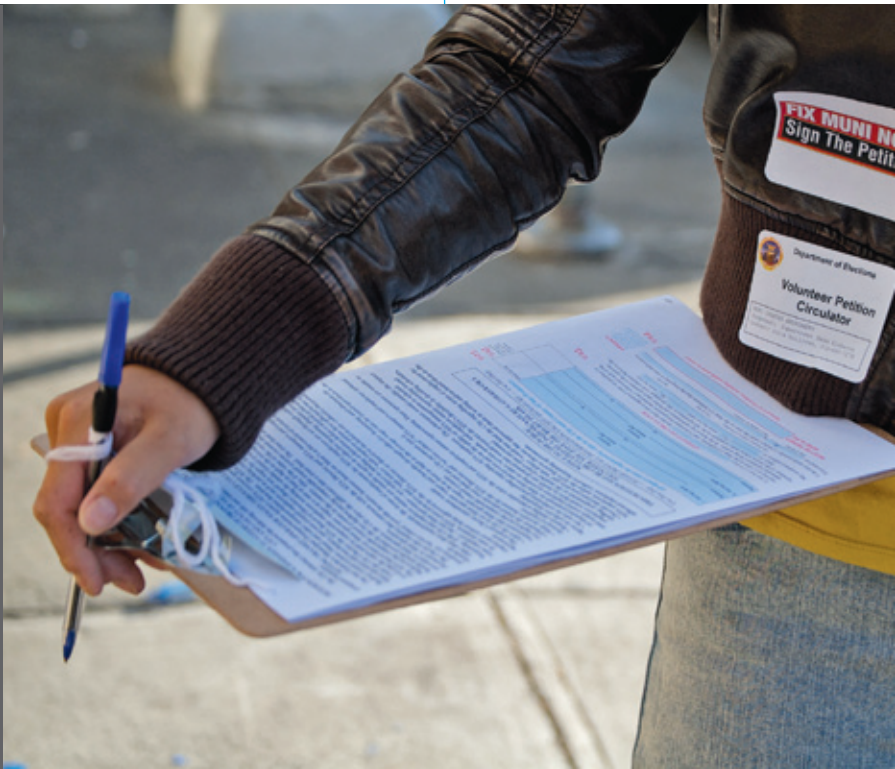
Transportation

Our goal: Make it easier to move around the city and make it a joyful experience to be out on the streets spending time in public.

www.spur.org/transportation
www.spur.org/muni-reform
www.spur.org/saving-caltrain

Our big win: Muni reform

SPUR took on the controversial topic of transportation management by developing a ballot measure designed to improve the work rules at Muni. Our approach was not to rewrite specific rules at the ballot but rather to give both labor and management an incentive to trade better pay for more flexible work rules. We did this by removing a provision in the City Charter that had set pay by a formula. Proposition G won with 64 percent of the vote in November 2010. We are not naive about how long it takes to change a workplace culture, but this reform gave Muni new tools toward better morale and higher performance.



Street-level experiments: bike lanes and parklets

The San Francisco Great Streets Project catalyzes the return of San Francisco's streets to their rightful place as the center of civic life. Along with the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition and the Project for Public Spaces, SPUR continued to be a core partner of the Great Streets Project, supporting initiatives such as long-term planning for improvements to Market Street, experimental trials for traffic-calming and separated bike lanes, and the city's first "parklets," which transform parking spots into mini public spaces.

The Transbay Transit Center

The last year saw both progress and setbacks for the Transbay Terminal. Pre-construction work began, and most of the funding fell into place. But the project is threatened by efforts to reduce the height of buildings in the Transbay Redevelopment Area, which are to provide one of the major sources of funding. At the same time, the governor's efforts to eliminate redevelopment funding throw the entire project area into question. Meanwhile, the extension of Caltrain into the terminal is threatened by Peninsula residents who want to stop

high-speed rail, which would share tracks with Caltrain between San Jose and San Francisco. We spent the last year putting out fires of all kinds and working to remind people of how important the Transbay Terminal and extension of Caltrain are to the future of Bay Area transit.



Saving Caltrain

Caltrain is one of the most important transit systems in the Bay Area. With 40,000 passengers a day, it connects San Francisco to Silicon Valley and provides a framework for transit-oriented growth up and down the Peninsula. But it has no stable revenue source and relies on annual financial support from transit agencies in three separate counties. When one agency decided to cut its funding, the other funders followed suit, presenting the region with the prospect of drastic service cuts — and tens of thousands more vehicles on the roads. In response, SPUR joined with other groups in Silicon Valley to discuss solutions for securing Caltrain's future. Our goal: To find a sustainable long-term funding and governance model to save Caltrain. This work led to a SPUR policy paper framing the issues and suggesting funding ideas and structural changes to Caltrain. While the agencies found a short-term solution in 2011, the long-term fate of the agency remains unclear.

Meeting the challenges of high-speed rail

California secured federal funds to support initial construction of a high-speed rail segment in the Central Valley. While SPUR had long argued that the ideal first phase to demonstrate the ridership potential of high-speed rail was the San Jose-to-San Francisco segment along the existing Caltrain corridor, we continue to be very supportive of the High Speed Rail Authority's work. There are many reasons that the first segment was directed to the Central Valley — including opposition from residents on the Peninsula. These communities have legitimate concerns about the design, which we are working to address. SPUR is organizing support for the project while providing detailed input to the planning and design work. California is an ideal place to build high-speed rail, and we believe it's a critical investment in the state's future.



Watchdogging regional transportation

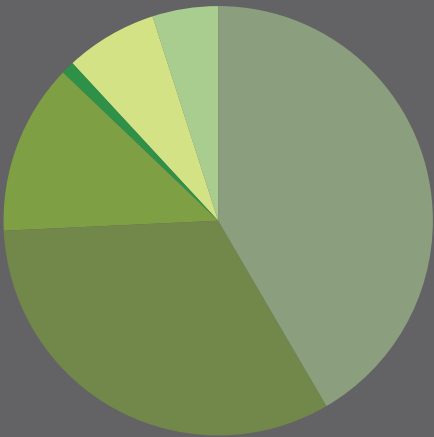
This was a big year for regional transportation planning. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission started work on the 2013 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (see "Regional Planning"), as well as restructuring its Policy Advisory Council and launching a major study on the region's transit system. SPUR Regional Planning Director Egon Terplan was appointed to a seat on the Policy Advisory Council, which provides input on major policy matters before the MTC. SPUR's Transportation Policy Board also weighed in on the Transit Sustainability Project, which is analyzing the financial sustainability of the region's transit system. Meanwhile, after almost 40 years in service, BART announced it would replace its aging fleet of cars. SPUR provided early input to BART on its car-replacement program and reviewed capacity needs on the Bay Bridge corridor.

SPUR Income and Expenses

2010-11
fiscal year

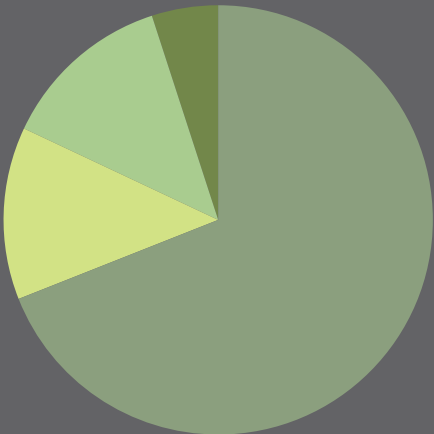
Income

Special events	1,200,158	42%
Membership	946,537	33%
Grants	370,281	13%
Legacies and bequests	15,339	1%
Other donations	188,042	7%
Earned income	155,193	5%
Total	\$ 2,875,550	100%



Expenses

Policy, programs & publications	1,940,256	69%
Development	353,997	13%
Urban Center	378,948	13%
Administration	140,765	5%
Total	\$ 2,813,966	100%



Letter



What does it mean to be an urbanist?
Dedication to work that supports
sustainable, prosperous, equitable cities.

It is our great pleasure to share with you some of the most important accomplishments of the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR) over the past year.

From its founding in 1910 as the San Francisco Housing Association, SPUR has grown into one of the leading civic planning organizations in America, respected for its independence and thoughtfulness.

SPUR’s mission is to promote good planning and good government. We do this by bringing people together to think about hard problems, developing solutions — and then advocating to put those solutions into practice. We strive to be at the cutting edge of thinking about what makes for sustainable, prosperous, equitable cities — while at the same time remaining deeply practical about how to make change.

What you will find in this annual report are the high points of our work this past year. But it is also a statement of our values. At SPUR, we are urbanists not just because we love cities but because we think cities are the answer to serious problems. We express this belief in

the range of programmatic work we focus on: community planning, disaster planning, economic development, good government, regional planning, sustainable development and transportation.

Being dedicated urbanists also means we don’t shrink from the many difficulties our region faces. While the past year has been extremely challenging as we work our way out of the Great Recession, it has also been a time of momentous positive change in the urbanized Bay Area. We continue to see the values of sustainable urbanism take hold and see growing support for a new wave of investments in public transit, compact development, public space and green infrastructure.

We invite you to join our community of urbanists.

SPUR is a member-supported organization, and we depend entirely on the generosity of people like you to support our work. Join us online at www.spur.org/join

Gabriel Metcalf,
Executive Director

SPUR Annual Contributors

SPUR gratefully acknowledges the generous contributions to SPUR’s operating funds made by the following organizations and individuals in 2010.

We apologize for any omissions or inaccuracies to this listing and will publish any corrections in a future issue of the Urbanist. This list represents gifts made between January 1 and December 31, 2010.

Foundations and Grant Support

Institutional donors supporting SPUR through grants, membership or event sponsorships.

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- Craigslist Foundation
- Gaia Fund
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- Gladys and Ralph Lazarus Foundation
- Golden Gate National Recreation Area
- Hellman Family Foundation
- The Koret Foundation
- The Land Economics Foundation of Lambda Alpha International
- Pisces Foundation
- Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund
- San Francisco Foundation
- San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
- Seed Fund of the Studio for Urban Projects
- U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Department of the Interior
- Urban Land Institute
- Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation
- The Walter and Elise Haas Fund

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Charmaine Curtis



Principal, Curtis Development & Consulting
Co-Chair, SPUR Project Review Committee

What’s your favorite thing about living in the Bay Area?

The natural beauty and ever-interesting built environment make this a special place to live. I also relish the racial and ethnic diversity and the appreciation of difference.

What’s your least favorite thing about living in the Bay Area?

The extraordinary cost of living erodes our diversity. The lack of an efficient, reliable transportation system is also a perennial frustration.

What’s your best-kept local secret?

McKinley Square on Potrero Hill. The nearby

community garden has a great view of the San Francisco skyline. Potrero Hill and Dogpatch are filled with little oases away from the hustle and bustle of city life.

What do you think is the highest priority urban policy issue for SPUR in 2011?

The major transportation projects underway, including the Transbay Terminal and high-speed rail. Now the focus has to be on making sure they get done right.

What does being an urbanist mean to you?

Cities are physical manifestations of multiple opposing social, cultural and economic forces. An urbanist understands, appreciates and knows how to create and thrive inside this dialectic.

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Marketing Representative, Carpenters Local Union 22
SPUR Board Member

What’s your favorite thing about living in the Bay Area?
We are very diverse, and that adds to the vibrancy of business and culture.

What’s your least favorite thing about living in the Bay Area?
Traffic.

What’s your best-kept local secret?
It’s not exactly a secret, but I love the view from Twin Peaks.

What do you think is the highest priority urban policy issue for SPUR in 2011?
We need to approve and build affordable, dense, urban infill redevelopment.

What does being an urbanist mean to you?
Being personally invested in the well being of the community where you live.

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What’s your favorite thing about living in the Bay Area?

Sunday in Civic Center: the farmers’ market, Asian Art Museum, Main Library, a playground, shops, restaurants on Hayes, theater, opera and symphony matinees, all in 10 level blocks.

What’s your least favorite thing about living in the Bay Area?

Lack of a widely read newspaper that sets the agenda for daily discourse, establishes topics of shared interest and along the way gives all of us in the region the shared identity of being San Franciscans.

What’s your best-kept local secret?

The treasures of the Bancroft Library at UC Berkeley are not a secret. What isn’t widely known is that after registering, anyone can enjoy the rare maps, photographs and texts.

What do you think is the highest priority urban policy issue for SPUR in 2011?

Give young families the opportunity to stay in the city by building less expensive housing and fixing the school assignment hassle.

What does being an urbanist mean to you?

Thinking beyond your block and neighborhood to consider what’s best for the city and region.



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Maxwell Richardson	Katrina Shelton
Lauren Richter	Si Shen
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Donald Robertson	Kurt Shuck
Michael Rocco	Betty Shurtleff
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Jean Rogers	Sue Siegel
Thomas H. Rogers	William Siembieda
David Rolph	Stephen Silberstein
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Jessica Romm	Michael Simmons
Jeanne Rosenmeier	Lynn Simon
Rus Rudden	John Sims
Rosanna Russell	Jill Singleton
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Stacy Sabol	Zander Sivyver
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Jean-Paul Samaha	Jesse C. Smith
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Mary Beth Sanders	Linda Sobuta
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S. Bry Sarté	Ethan Solomita
Helen Sause	Charlene Son Rigby
Mark Scaroni	Sandhya Sood
Katie Schaefer	Matthew Soursourian
Gary Schefsky	Theresa Sparks
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Quinn Arntsen
Jeanette Arpagaus
Diana Arsham
Howard Ash
John Ashworth

Ken Kirkey



Director of Planning, Association of Bay Area Governments
SPUR Board Member

What’s your favorite thing about living in the Bay Area?

The relatively easy acceptance of differences and diversity that seems to be in our DNA.

What’s your least favorite thing about living in the Bay Area?

The high housing costs and uneven school quality can make this otherwise great area a very challenging place for non-affluent families to comfortably call home.

What’s your best-kept local secret?
Mint Plaza, just off Fifth and Mission, is a great addition to San Francisco and hopefully a harbinger of things to come in the Mid-Market area.

What do you think is the highest priority urban policy issue for SPUR in 2011?
Ensuring that the Bay Area has a significant, sustainable source of redevelopment and transit funding, and that those funds are used in a way that makes the Bay Area a stronger region.

What does being an urbanist mean to you?
Being fascinated with and energized by cities and city life.

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	Philip Bona		Caitlin Cameron	Julie Chase	

Tomiquia Moss

Director, San Francisco Community Justice Center
Secretary, SPUR Board of Directors

What’s your favorite thing about living in the Bay Area?

I love to eat, and this is a place of good eating! I also love the sheer beauty of the Bay Area. The bridges are breathtaking.

What’s your least favorite thing about living in the Bay Area?

Parking! I really want to see modes of public transportation improve in the Bay Area, so people can embrace public transit and reduce their dependency on automobiles.

What’s your best-kept local secret?

Best Burmese food: Mandalay, at 6th and California. The owners treat you like family. Best view: Inspiration Point in the Presidio, where I got married.

What do you think is the highest priority urban policy issue for SPUR in 2011?

Developing our presence in the greater Bay Area. SPUR has been forward thinking about climate change, transit policy and other issues that affect the region. It’s critical that we play an active role in how the Bay Area plans for growth.

What does being an urbanist mean to you?

Appreciating the complexity of living in a city and all it has to offer while being invested in making cities more livable and accessible for everyone.



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Christopher Clement
Bradley Cleveland
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Philip Elijah Coffin
Richard Coffin
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Eli Cohen
Peter Cohen
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Peter G. Hanson
Anton Haramis
Kelly Hardesty
David Harrison
Mackenzie Hart
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Carl Hartenstein
Samantha Hartley
Seth Hartley
Aaron Harvey
Peter & Helen Hasselman
Karl Hasz
Linda Hausrath
Alex Hayes
Stanley R. Hayes
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Rose Haynes
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Mark Heath
David Hecht
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Stuart Sunshine



Vice President, Parsons Brinckerhoff
SPUR Board Member

What’s your favorite thing about living in the Bay Area?
San Francisco is an incredible city to run in, with Golden Gate Park, the Presidio, the Embarcadero and Crissy Field all woven into the fabric of one urban area. A sunrise run along Crissy Field is a great way to start a day (especially if I’m running with my wife).

What’s your least favorite thing about living in the Bay Area?
We’ve lost our way when it comes to respecting one another and our many different opinions. There’s too much polarization. SPUR has the ability to create a place where all sides of a discussion can be heard and respected.

What’s your best-kept local secret?
If I tell, it will no longer be a secret! I encourage everyone to set out and discover their own treasures.

What do you think is the highest priority urban policy issue for SPUR in 2011?
We need to continue our local policy success at SPUR while expanding to a more regional approach. The Bay Area’s metro-economy is based on affordable housing, quality schools, job availability and good transportation. A city cannot support these initiatives alone. We should rely on the strength of the region in order to remain one of the best places to live, work and play.

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Michael Teitz

Emeritus Professor of City and Regional Planning, UC Berkeley
SPUR Board Member

What’s your favorite thing about living in the Bay Area?

The unparalleled access to amazing and beautiful places; also, the great restaurants.

What’s your least favorite thing about living in the Bay Area?

Traffic. Ideological arrogance.

What’s your best-kept local secret?

Why should I tell you? Okay, Estero Trail on Point Reyes.

What do you think is the highest priority urban policy issue for SPUR in 2011?

For this year, and many to come, it is climate change. We are acting locally, but it’s not enough to prevent a global tragedy of enormous scale.

What does being an urbanist mean to you?

Contributing to work on the key issues of our era. The world is now urban.



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We thank them for their dedication to good planning and good government in San Francisco and the Bay Area.

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What’s your favorite thing about living in the Bay Area?

Fabulous walks along the edge of the continent; great ethnic restaurants; the diversity of people; wild, open places close to the urban core; and the best organic produce sourced from local farms.

What’s your least favorite thing about living in the Bay Area?

The amount of time it takes to get consensus on important projects and regional issues, such as the Bay Bridge, high-speed rail and affordable housing.

What’s your best-kept local secret?

Best dim sum: the steamed dumplings (xiao long bao) at Yank Sing in Rincon Center. Best secret walk: the Vallejo Street stairs descending from Russian Hill to Chinatown.

What do you think is the highest priority urban policy issue for SPUR in 2011?

Linking affordable housing with jobs and superior public transit.

What does being an urbanist mean to you?

Caring passionately about cities and the qualities that make them great places to live. A true urbanist is also a “flaneur” who loves to stroll the city to discover, savor and celebrate it.





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