

POLICY WATCH – December 2015

In This Issue

- 2016: Ringing in the New!
- New Year's Resolutions!
- Members in the News



Happy New Year! All of us at North Bay Leadership Council wish you a happy, healthy and prosperous new year. This is a time of reflection about the past year and hope and excitement for the coming year. Many of us choose to make the new year a time of assessment and goal-setting, of renewal and change, and working to achieve better life/work balance. In this issue, we share some thoughts of doing that that may be helpful to you.

We also look forward to 2016. We have much to anticipate and hopefully, improve the North Bay. As always, by working together, we will achieve more. Let's partner on tackling the challenges in the North Bay and make 2016 a terrific year!

Best,



Cynthia

2016: Ringing in the New!

In the North Bay, we have a big year ahead. Not only do we have the Presidential election, but many important local and state elections. The November 2016 ballot promises to be one of the largest in history with the voters being asked to legalize marijuana, extend the Prop 30 sales tax, raising the minimum wage, . We will have hotly contested races in the North Bay for County Supervisors. And several City Council races promise to also be contentious. We can expect new faces to be elected this year!

After decades, commuter rail will finally be restored to the North Bay. The SMART train will be in service by the end of the year, giving commuters a green alternative to driving on Highway 101. And the Federal government has committed to funding the extension of the railway to the Larkspur Ferry terminal. It is very exciting to know that we will soon be able to get around without driving!

The Bay Area economy continues to lead the state, and the North Bay is the beneficiary of that boom. We can expect to see new jobs created and low employment. We will need to watch closely as companies adopt more automation to keep our local workforce skilled to fill the newly created jobs. The North Bay's connection of education and careers will give us an advantage in ensuring that workers are not left behind. Housing will continue to be a challenge but in 2016, we can see that there is an increased awareness in the need to build more housing and that many are now engaged in making that housing happen. We are delighted that junior accessory units are growing in popularity, new funding is being explored, and builders are starting to have the confidence to break ground in 2016.

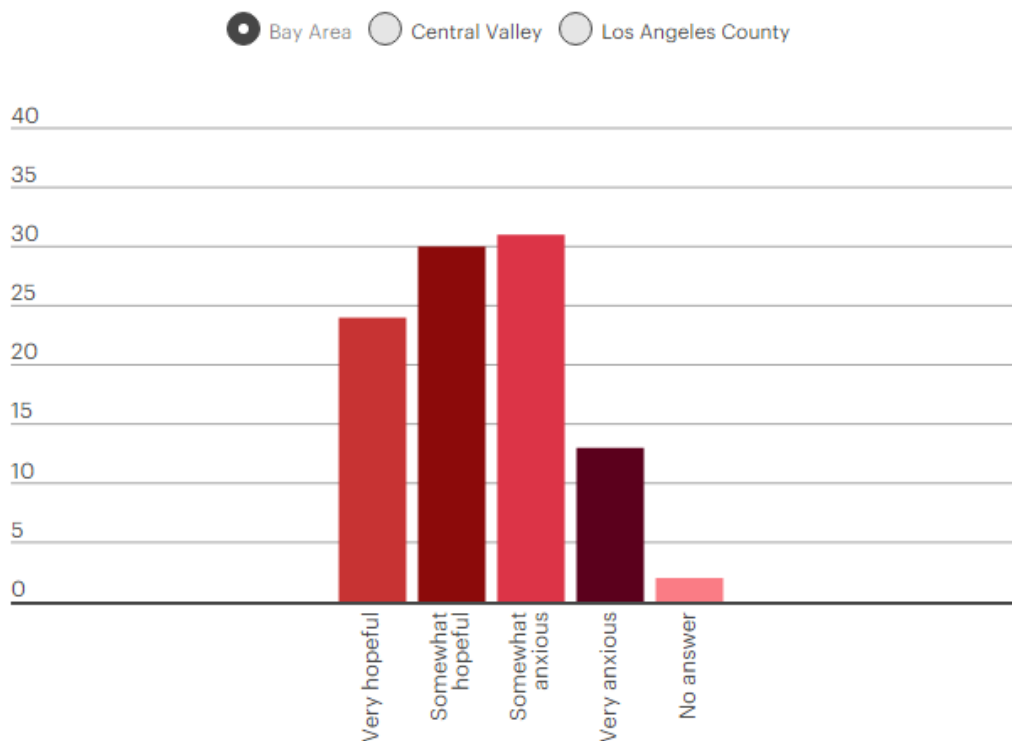
And transportation is looking brighter in 2016. Money has been found to complete another phase of the Marin-Sonoma Narrows, and the need for improvement of Highway 37 has been identified at the local and regional level.

We hope that more good news emerges of 2016 unfolds. And we are glad that so many of us are working to make the North Bay a great place to live and work!

Optimism continues into 2016 for Bay Area Economy. In the San Francisco Business Times, **“Bay Area largely optimistic, new poll finds, as region's boom continues,”** (Nov 11, 2015), results of a poll of residents showed that the optimism for the regional economy is strong, especially when compared with other regions in the state. “The poll conducted by USC Dornsife and the Los Angeles Times found that 33 percent of Bay Area voters felt they were getting ahead financially – a major shift from the only 20 percent of those surveyed who felt the same way in Los Angeles County. Only 17 percent felt they were gaining financially in the Central Valley. Indeed, the disparity was great enough that USC Poll Director Dan Schnur, head of the school's Jesse M. Unruh

“One key area where Bay Area respondents felt pressure was a familiar pain point: keeping pace with the region's rising prices. Only 50 percent of those polled in the Bay Area said they had enough money to maintain their standard of living, while statewide that number weighed in at 57 percent. But that number improved when asked if their personal finances would improve in the next few years, with 24 percent of Bay Area respondents saying they felt it would – while only 19 percent statewide saw progress on the horizon.”

“Another key takeaway? How bullish California residents throughout the state are on the tech industry. The poll found 56 percent said that the tech sector's increasing prominence in the global economy had made their personal finances stronger, while only 47 percent nationwide felt tech had improved their finances.”





56%

Californians who said tech's increasing importance to the economy had made their personal financial situation easier



20%

Californians who said it had made it harder



47%

People nationwide who said tech's increasing importance to the economy had made their personal financial situation easier

New Year's Resolutions??

Many people think making New Year's resolutions are a good way to do strategic planning for the coming year. Certainly, assessing the past year and seeking ways to improve have merit. And it is proven that setting goals leads to higher level of achievement than not. For those of you who are thinking about resolutions, here are some ideas for you.

In [5 New Year's Resolutions For Better Work-Life Balance In 2016](#), by Natalie Burg, (Forbes, Dec. 21, 2015), the author stresses the importance of work-life balance in your life. Berg says, "According to a recent Stanford and Harvard study, workplace stress is as bad for you as secondhand smoke. A healthier life begins with giving yourself a break from that stress. The start of a new year is the perfect time to reassess your priorities and find a better work-life balance year round."

Here are some of her suggested resolutions:

Quit and Connect

"Mary LoVerde recommends asking two questions: 'What do I need to quit?' and 'With what or whom do I want to connect?' When work-life balance is out of whack, it's because something is standing in the way. Take steps to connect with whatever is missing from your life—the things that make you feel like you're living more. It could be meeting up with friends on weeknights, getting away with the family for the weekend or taking time to pursue a hobby."

Build Leisure into Your Week

“According to [Jeff Davidson](#), work-life balance author and thought leader, the key to any resolution is making it a measurable goal that is quantifiable. First, he recommends picking a measurable goal, such as number of relaxing lunches, days with a timely departure from work, or work-free weekends. Then work toward hitting that goal. ‘Start at one weekend, where you bring no work home whatsoever,’ said Davidson, ‘and then bump it up it up to two, and maybe get up to three.’”



Add Fun to Your Commute

“Better work-life balance isn’t just about what happens at home and in your job; it’s also about how you get from one place to the other. Commuters now spend an average of 42 hours per year in traffic, according to the 2015 Urban Mobility Scorecard. Davidson recommends taking a different route home from work, or stopping off to see a movie, or to visit a friend. Set a goal for how many times a week you have a more fun commute to help you stick with it and increase how often you make it happen, he said. Each day, you’ll be making quantifiable progress toward living more.”

Set Boundaries

“Try to keep work at work. Setting boundaries like this can help sustain the work-life balance you’ve worked hard to achieve, but it can be tough, according to [Amanda Gore](#), a motivational speaker and author of *The Gospel of Joy* and *Joy Is an Inside Job*. Reminding yourself of your value at work, and that your personal time is worth protecting, will help set those boundaries, she said. Regardless of what your other work-life balance resolutions are, protecting the boundaries around them is crucial to making them long-term habits, said Gore.

More resolutions are suggested by [The unofficial Goldman Sachs guide to New Year’s resolutions](#), (Business Insider, Dec. 18, 2015) that go beyond some of the more common ones. Here are a few you may want to consider:

- **“Write down your goals.** Less than 10% of people fulfill their resolutions, but the ones who write them down have a much higher success rate. Take it a step further and make a list of what you want to accomplish each day, week, and month. Forget an app; [go old school](#).
- **Stay in on Friday nights.** Your weekend will become infinitely better, and your bank account will benefit too. It’s time to act like an adult; get drunk at brunch on Sundays instead.
- **Spend more time with old people.** The Greatest Generation now makes up less than 1% of the US population. Find a [World War II veteran](#) and take him to lunch from time to time.
- **Plan regular (Fake Business Trips).** Get away from your life for a few days to relax, and, if need be, let some bad out. It’ll make you a better partner and parent.
- **Get promoted.** Forget about LinkedIn; it’s the [Match.com](#) for the underemployed. Invite your seniors out, get them into a bar and network the old fashioned way.

- **Take a class.** Sign up with a friend to make it more fun and help you see it through. It could be anything - cooking, coding, or photography. The Nikon D810 SLR even comes with free classes.
- **Laugh more.** Socialize. Drink. Throw parties. Upgrade your friends if necessary. It's the life in your years, not the years in your life."

Other ideas are to select a theme for the coming year to organize your goals and strategies. The theme should be stated in one or two words like, Resilience, Forgiveness, Be Brave or Laugh More. Good luck in making 2016 the best year of your life!

Members in the News

College of Marin Academic Center wins higher education project award

College of Marin's new Academic Center has transformed the entrance to the institution in Kentfield.

Kaiser Permanente to Open New National School of Medicine in 2019

Kaiser Permanente today announced plans to open the Kaiser Permanente School of Medicine as part of the organization's ongoing effort to lead in meeting America's demands for 21st century health care.

Burr Pilger Mayer Brings in Michelle Ausburn as New Partner

Burr Pilger Mayer (BPM), a regional accounting and consulting firm with North Bay headquarters in Santa Rosa, promoted senior manager Michelle Ausburn to partner.

Redwood Credit Union Hosts Holiday Toy and Food Drives

All RCU Locations Now Collecting Toy and Food Donations to Benefit Local Nonprofits

Sonoma Raceway Toy Drive Benefits Sonoma Valley Children

Sonoma Raceway has taken the green flag on its 13th annual High-Powered Toy Drive to help spread cheer this holiday season. The raceway will partner with several Sonoma Valley businesses to put smiles on hundreds of faces throughout the community.

Read more online at www.northbayleadership.org/news



Who We Are

Over twenty years ago, business leaders founded the North Bay Leadership Council on a simple premise: We can accomplish more by working together. Today, the Council includes 47 leading employers in the North Bay. Our members represent a wide variety of businesses, non-profits and educational institutions, with a workforce in excess of 25,000. As business and civic leaders, our goal is to promote sound public policy, innovation and sustainability to make our region a better place to live and work. For more information: Call

707.283.0028 / E-mail info@northbayleadership.org

www.northbayleadership.org