



GREENBELT ACTION

The Bay Area's Advocate for Open Spaces & Vibrant Places Since 1958

WINTER 2011



What will the Bay Area look like if we do—or don't—grow smart? Envision Bay Area takes some facts and impacts and dramatizes them on a new website.

Envisioning the Future of the Bay Area What happens if we don't grow smart

STEPHANIE REYES
POLICY DIRECTOR

It can be a challenge to move people's concerns from the street-level view to broader issues of climate change, water supply, and energy use. Now, the decisions about how and where we grow and develop—land use decisions—will be easy to connect to how we choose to live.

Greenbelt Alliance has partnered with the Silicon Valley Community Foundation to create Envision Bay Area, an initiative designed to bridge that gap. Envision Bay Area will help local residents and leaders understand the role that equitable smart growth can play in decreasing greenhouse gas emissions, improving public health, preserving open space, decreasing water use, and reducing both household and

government costs for transportation, energy, and infrastructure.

BY THE NUMBERS

The Envision Bay Area team hired renowned urban planning firm Peter Calthorpe and Associates to analyze and quantify the impacts of different growth scenarios for the Bay Area, building on their groundbreaking work in this arena through the Vision California project.

For example, Vision California found that by growing smarter—focusing growth in existing communities in compact, walkable neighborhoods—over the next 40 years, the state of California would save enough water to fill Hetch Hetchy more than 50 times. At the same time, Californians would save more than \$6,400 a year per household on

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Green Your City's Blueprint:

The tools to influence change

JENNIFER GENNARI
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Individual actions—bicycling instead of driving, turning off lights, recycling—are often the first steps taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. What we do collectively, though, can have a greater impact. Policies that change where we build are some of the best ways to lessen our shared footprint.

Too often, conversations about complex land-use solutions have not been in plain, accessible language. Updating a General Plan, a city's blueprint for future development, is one of the best ways to address climate change, yet it's a daunting task to take on if you don't have a degree in urban planning.

continued on page 6



green your city's blueprint:
a toolkit for climate-friendly general plans





THOUGHTS ON GROWING SMARTER

From the Executive Director

I've been enjoying the crisp winter days in the San Francisco Bay Area—including the rain, which is greening our iconic hills and ridges. When I look north and east, I'm proud to know that open space there is less likely to be developed, thanks to ballot box wins last November.

I'm happy to report that voters supported Greenbelt Alliance's position

on almost all of the ballot measures we highlighted in the last issue. Proposition 23, which would have gutted our state's global warming laws, was overwhelmingly rejected. Proposition 22 passed, which will limit the state from taking local money that cities need for parks, water pipes, and services. These wins help remove roadblocks to achieving Grow Smart Bay Area, our vision for directing growth into our cities and keeping our greenbelts green.

At the local level, voters around the region made sure that vital urban growth boundaries were established or renewed in Sonoma County, that the boundary line in San Ramon was not broken, and that a good vision for downtown Berkeley got a thumbs up.

These campaigns wouldn't have been successful without the strong commitment of community supporters who worked tirelessly alongside Greenbelt Alliance

staff. Local advocates make a difference; read more in reports from the field on pages 4 and 5.

Greenbelt Alliance is there to provide the expertise and assistance to make neighborhoods better but we can't do it without you, our supporters around the region. We're working now to reach out to new allies, especially those whose concerns often don't reach city leaders. In San Jose, we're expanding the network of people who we talk to so that more voices can be heard as we plan for our shared future. Check out the story on page 3.

As 2011 begins, Greenbelt Alliance is optimistic about strengthening the relationships we have with you, the people of the Bay Area. Together, we're making the region a better place to live. ■

Jeremy Madsen
Executive Director

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OUR MISSION: *To make the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area a better place to live by protecting the region's greenbelt and improving the livability of its cities and towns. We work through public policy development, advocacy, and education, in partnership with diverse coalitions.*

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Founder Dorothy Erskine (1896–1982)

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New Partners in Planning San Jose

Envisioning a future city that benefits everyone

MICHELE BEASLEY
SENIOR FIELD REPRESENTATIVE
ELLIE CASSON
CAMPAIGN ORGANIZER

Like many big cities, San Jose has distinct neighborhoods where generations of families have made their homes. That's what attracts Rebecca Gallardo, who was born and raised in East San Jose, to stay. "The value of community is why I continue to live here," said Gallardo, managing partner of Protelo Group Real Estate and a founding member of the Latina Coalition of Silicon Valley. "Each community is faced with its own challenges, but we are rich in our heritage with the beautiful Alum Rock Park and the East Foothills view."

In addition to long-term locals such as Gallardo, San Jose is projected to add 470,000 new residents over the next thirty years and has been creating opportunities for homes as it updates its General Plan. In a city that is 178 square miles and boasts an ethnically and economically diverse population, the challenge is to ensure that future changes benefit everyone.

Studies show Latino students are now the majority in California's public schools and that the state's Latino and Asian voters are significantly more concerned about issues such as climate change and water pollution than the general population. It's imperative, then, to be more inclusive in planning for future growth so that decisions represent the entire community.

INCLUSIVE PLANNING

The draft version of San Jose's Envision 2040 General Plan contains many great policies that support retrofitting tired strip malls into thriving transit villages. Success, though, depends on how the General Plan is implemented once it is adopted by the city council this summer. And this means there is need for broad support for the vision and goals of Envision 2040. If we do not proactively ensure that everyone has a seat at the table, then we will not make progress in achieving our shared goals.

Greenbelt Alliance has begun reaching out to San Jose's many diverse neighborhoods.



Greenbelt Alliance is working to ensure that everyone—especially people already living in a community—are included in the conversation about city plans for future growth.

Engaging Latino, Asian, youth and senior communities allows us to discuss changes on the horizon, such as our aging and growing population, climate change, and a new economy. Honest discussions allow for the discovery of rich ideas and creative solutions and provide an opportunity to explain the benefits of transit villages and complete streets.

HEALTH AND CITY PLANS

The 2004 California Healthy Kids survey revealed that one in three Latino students age 6-19 were overweight and that at current rates one in two Latino children will develop diabetes. Equal access to parks, trails and healthy foods as well as to safe streets for walking and cycling is the foundation of a healthier lifestyle.

San Jose's General Plan can move the city more in this direction. San Jose is already one of the best cities in the country for urban gardens and more than half its gardeners are immigrants. Growing fresh, traditional produce, Chinese, Filipino, Latino and Vietnamese people build community as they mix among the vegetable plants.

According to research by Public Health Law and Policy, 737 San Jose residents are on a waitlist for a community garden plot. Language in the draft plan can expand access to gardens for those who need it most. This is an example of how general plan policies,

once implemented, can have an impact on people's quality of life.

DEEPENING THE CONVERSATION

In 2010, Greenbelt Alliance met to listen and learn from leaders in San Jose's Hispanic and Vietnamese communities. For example, last June, we participated in a discussion that connected the efforts of New Orleans' Vietnamese in rebuilding their neighborhood after Hurricane Katrina to why San Jose's Vietnamese have an important role to play in planning for the future of their community. Although these are just the first steps, we've already recognized how important and rewarding it is to develop relationships with new partners.

It is time to celebrate our diverse backgrounds, our cultural and historical heritages, as we plan for the future. This is what makes San Jose and the entire Bay Area such a dynamic, attractive place to live, work, and play.

Gallardo hopes for the best. "It is possible to make plans for our neighborhoods, even plans that involve significant redevelopment—the kind of redevelopment that brings in more revenue for the city and makes a place more 'desirable'—that do not come at the cost of the people who already live there," she said. "We should be, and can be, planning for the needs of *everyone*." ■



Ellie Casson This fall, Greenbelt Alliance staff and volunteers visited small businesses throughout the North Bayshore neighborhood of **Mountain View**. When asked about allowing more homes to be built nearby, most owners welcomed the idea. “Right now we have a pretty good rush at lunch time, but after the work day, this neighborhood is empty,” said Daniel Choi, owner of The Sunny Bowl on Plymouth Street. “If there were more homes in the area, it would feel like a more friendly community.” Thanks in part to the support Greenbelt Alliance organized, the Mountain View City Council approved the study of 1,500 homes in North Bayshore as part of the environmental report for the General Plan.



Amanda Bornstein This November, voters passed urban growth boundary measures in **Santa Rosa, Cloverdale, and Petaluma**. With the success of Measure Q in Cloverdale, all nine cities in the county have open space protections in place. Measure O in Santa Rosa and Measure T in Petaluma won by two-thirds of the vote, sending a clear message that residents in the county’s two biggest cities do not support sprawl development. Greenbelt Alliance played a leading role in these wins, especially in Santa Rosa where we ran the “Yes on O” campaign. Former Santa Rosa City Council member Steve Rabinowitsh volunteered on the campaign because “Measure O helps protect our hillsides, our creeks, our clean water supplies and the beautiful land that surrounds us.”



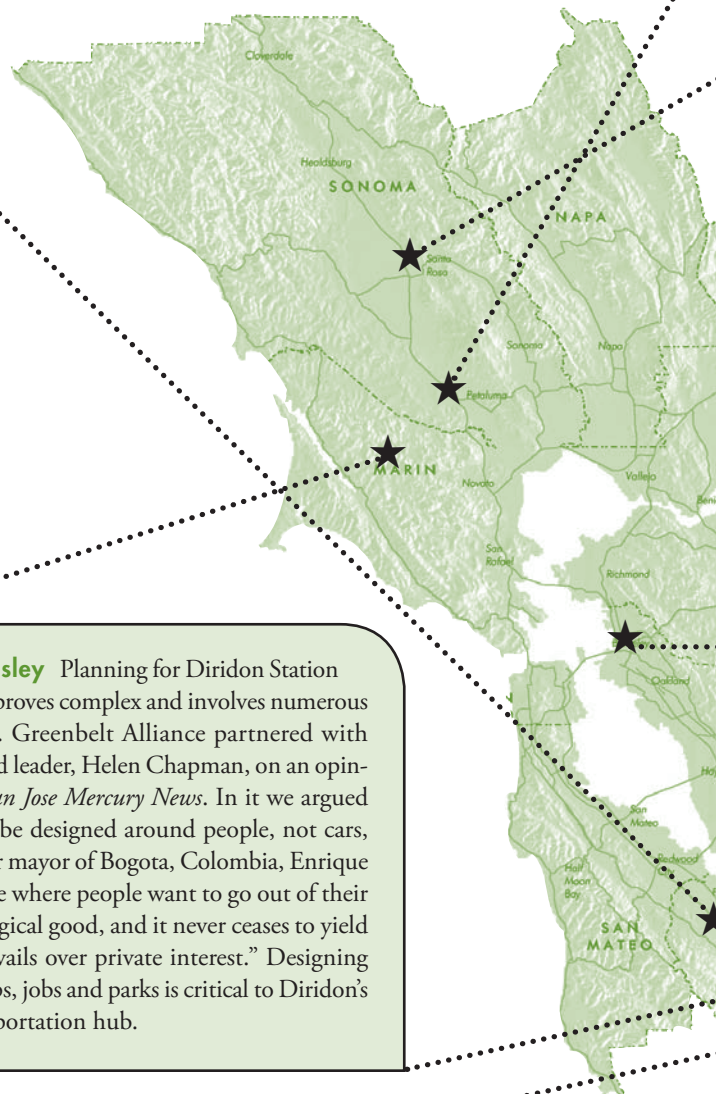
Whitney Merchant In **Marin County**, a new leadership development program gave people who need or live in affordable housing a chance to be heard. Greenbelt Alliance worked with the Novato Housing Coalition to recruit participants who spent six months honing their speaking skills to describe where they live and why. These new leaders also learned about the housing element process, and practiced telling their stories to City Council and Planning Commission members, Rotary and Democratic Clubs, and at public hearings. The diversity of their experiences, from having a daughter with disabilities to raising kids on a small salary, is a reminder of the broad spectrum of people who benefit from living in a safe and affordable home.



Michele Beasley Planning for Diridon Station in **San Jose** proves complex and involves numerous stakeholders. Greenbelt Alliance partnered with neighborhood leader, Helen Chapman, on an opinion piece that ran in the *San Jose Mercury News*. In it we argued that Diridon Station must be designed around people, not cars, and quoted visionary former mayor of Bogota, Colombia, Enrique Penalosa: “A great city is one where people want to go out of their homes. Public space is a magical good, and it never ceases to yield pleasure... Public good prevails over private interest.” Designing the right mix of homes, shops, jobs and parks is critical to Diridon’s success as a dynamic transportation hub.



Michele Beasley The **Santa Clara County** Open Space Authority is kicking off a strategic visioning process. Greenbelt Alliance and our open space allies—Committee for Green Foothills, Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, People for Land and Nature, and Save Open Space, Gilroy—will be engaged partners as it defines its role and preservation goals.



OUR FIELD WORK

- ★ campaign
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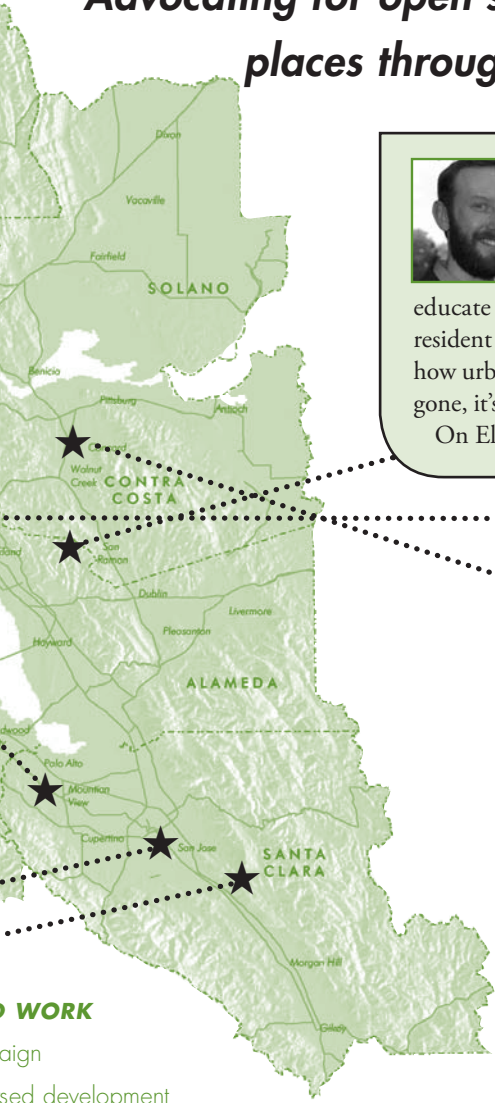
Amanda Bornstein *Bicycle Magazine* named **Santa Rosa** one of the top 10 destinations for cyclists to put on their bucket list. With the new SMART train slated to open in 2014, it will be easier for people to take transit to bike trails, one of the many recreational attractions in Sonoma County. This was one of several points that emerged from the December 11 Transit Oriented Development 101 workshop hosted by Greenbelt Alliance, the Accountable Development Coalition, and Conservation Action Fund for Education. Local residents, advocates, and leaders came together to discuss a shared vision for the neighborhood surrounding the new North Santa Rosa train station and other cities along the new train line.



Stephanie Reyes Sibella Kraus has pursued her passion to revitalize and sustain the farms and ranchlands of the **Bay Area** for over 25 years. Recently, Kraus, director of Sustainable Agriculture Education (www.sagecenter.org), turned her attention to making sure agriculture and natural resource lands become a significant component of the Bay Area's Sustainable Communities Strategy. Working with Greenbelt Alliance, Kraus urged the Association of Bay Area Governments to host a November panel on agriculture and open space in the Strategy, bringing the issues front and center for dozens of regional leaders.

It's no coincidence that, two months later, our regional leaders adopted a set of targets for the Sustainable Communities Strategy that included a strong open space preservation target. But Kraus emphasizes that a target is just the beginning. "We will need a concerted effort to secure the economic development support needed to ensure the viability of our farmlands," she affirms.

Advocating for open spaces and vibrant places throughout the Bay Area



Matt Vander Sluis In November, voters in **San Ramon** overwhelmingly rejected a ballot measure that would have broken the city's urban growth boundary to allow development in the Tassajara Valley, a critical wildlife habitat and agricultural area in Contra Costa County. Greenbelt Alliance helped lead the charge, working with a tireless group of volunteers to educate the community about the negative effects of breaking open space protections. Dorothy Burt, a resident of the Tassajara Valley, spoke for many volunteers when explaining why she got involved. "I know how urban sprawl happens and how you lose community identity by everything running together. Once it's gone, it's gone for good." Fortunately we were able to bring that message to enough residents in San Ramon. On Election Day 72% of voters rejected the measure.



Matt Vander Sluis
In October **Concord**

unveiled the latest layer of plans for the future of the former Concord Naval Weapons Station, including features to protect open space and provide residents with opportunities to walk, bike, and take transit. Greenbelt Alliance is working to tighten up the plan to ensure all new residents have access to healthy places they can afford with shorter commutes and less traffic.



Marla Wilson In **Berkeley**, voters were faced with a key referendum on the direction of downtown last Election Day. Measure R represented a promising proposal to voters: a vision of improved public spaces and more walkable streets, new homes downtown near BART stations and along bus lines, and innovative incentives to encourage community benefits in development projects.

"Voters understood that Measure R will make Berkeley a greener and more vibrant place to be," reported Erin Rhoades of Livable Berkeley, a grassroots group that backed the measure. Measure R united environmental, labor, and business groups and despite vocal opposition, the measure emerged victorious with over 64% of the vote.

Greenbelt Alliance is proud to have been a part of this victory, and pleased that such a strong majority of Berkeley residents cast their vote for a better Berkeley.

WORK
campaign
sustainable development

Envisioning the future

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auto costs and utility bills, thanks to more centrally located homes. The Envision Bay Area team conducted a similar analysis specifically for our region.

ONLINE FUN

Our next step was to take those facts and figures and bring them to life. A new interactive website will allow users to choose their own priorities for the future (things like “daily needs close to home” or “large homes with big yards”) and then play around to see how different development scenarios impact the things they care about. The website will launch soon; you’ll find a link at greenbelt.org/envisionbayarea.

To make sure residents know about the Envision Bay Area site, Greenbelt Alliance and the foundation are partnering with the Bay Area’s public broadcasting stations, KQED Public Radio and KTEH Public Television. They will provide programming highlighting the connections between land use and key issues like water, energy, and cost of living as well as direct viewers and listeners to the website. To tune in, visit kqed.org/news/science/climatewatch/milestogo.

NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR

Like many complex policy questions, the issue of how we use our land over the next generation is best grappled with not by sitting alone at a computer, but in a dialogue with other interested and civically engaged residents. Throughout 2011, the

Envision Bay Area team will hold a series of public workshops around the region to explore various growth scenarios and launch conversations among residents, elected officials, and community leaders.

These meetings will be timed to coincide with local and regional planning efforts that are currently underway, including development of the Bay Area’s Sustainable Communities Strategy, a regional plan required by The Climate Protection Act, SB 375.

As community members understand the relationship that land-use planning has to the priorities they care about, they will be more likely to get engaged in planning processes in their community. Envision Bay Area is one more way Greenbelt Alliance will build support for a growth pattern that leads to a more sustainable and equitable region for everyone. ■

Tools to influence change *continued from page 1*

Now, Greenbelt Alliance’s newest publication, *Green Your City’s Blueprint*:

A Toolkit for Climate-Friendly General Plans, provides local advocates with clear

instructions to change a general plan to be more climate-friendly and the tools to succeed.

The toolkit explains the basic structure of a general plan, and then describes specific language you can ask city staff to insert in each element. It provides step-by-step instructions for working with city staff and leaders. For those who want to know more about state rules, it also gives an overview of California legislation that impacts how city’s plan for the future.

Green Your City’s Blueprint benefits from the expertise and experience of Greenbelt Alliance’s long history of advocacy, including the good policies that have been added to San Jose’s General Plan. And the toolkit will be essential as Bay Area cities move to comply with requirements for a Sustainable Communities Strategy.

“Each community can make profound reductions in greenhouse gases by reshaping development patterns over time. *Green Your City’s Blueprint* explains how general plans can save open space, strengthen neighborhoods, and reduce how much we drive,” said Matthew Taecker, Principal Planner for Downtown Berkeley, and Secretary for the California Planning Roundtable. “It is a *must read* for anyone interested in taking on climate change at home.”

Copies are online at greenbelt.org/resources/reports. To receive a printed copy, please call 415-543-6771. ■



ENDANGER BUS

Seen a MUNI bus that looks like it’s out of its element? Four San Francisco buses are ‘wrapped’ with images of Bay Area animals whose threatened habitats may be preserved through urban growth that is compact and transit-focused. The project, designed by Greenbelt Alliance volunteer and San Francisco artist Todd Gilens in conjunction with Bay Nature, reintroduces the species to our minds. If you want to know more, visit www.endangerbus.org for information about the habitats of the featured species, the role public transit plays in conservation, and the work Greenbelt Alliance and others do to make our region more hospitable to all. ■

Love in Hiking Boots

Couple meets on a greenbelt outing

SARA BARZ
COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATE

A true greenbelt love story: Girl signs up for a Greenbelt Outing. Boy attends the same hike. They find themselves lost in discussion about the nature of Barnabe Peak. One year later they marry.

Ilana Schatz and her husband David Lingren, who will celebrate their 8th wedding anniversary in March, met on an outing in Samuel P. Taylor Park in March 2002. "We had independently decided that hiking was a good way to hang out with people," said Schatz. "Greenbelt Alliance hikes were more interesting than some other because they're not a high-pressure social scene. It was easy to start talking and walking together on the trails."

Although new to each other, they were not newcomers to Greenbelt Outings. "I started in 2000 after I moved to the Bay Area from New York City. I picked up an

outings calendar in REI and decided to give it a try," Lingren recalled. "Ilana started a couple of years before me."

Now the couple enjoys many outings together, from Uvas Canyon in southern Santa Clara County to the tide pools in Half Moon Bay. "We love Greenbelt Outings because they introduce you to hidden gems of Bay Area nature, which we wouldn't have seen otherwise," Schatz said.

Residents of El Cerrito, Schatz and Lingren are founders of Fair Trade Judaica, which links fair trade to Jewish values and practice. They have an appreciation for sustainable values. "We really like Greenbelt Alliance's focus on preserving the greenbelt by combining land conservation with the smart infill housing work," said Lingren. "A



lot of organizations work to protect open spaces, and lead great hikes there, but people have to live somewhere, and Greenbelt Alliance distinguishes itself by promoting the smart growth balance between nature and places for people to live."

At their wedding in 2003, Schatz and Lingren asked their guests to donate to two organizations, one of which was Greenbelt Alliance, in appreciation of good work and providing such personal experiences in nature. Added Schatz, "We're happy to be members and donors." ■

EVENTS AND NEWS

GREENBELT OUTING

The following is just one of Greenbelt Alliance's winter outings. To see a complete list, go to www.greenbelt.org and click on Outings Calendar.

SUNDAY, MARCH 27

BAY TRAIL LOOP, 9 A.M. TO NOON

Join Greenbelt Alliance to explore a new section of the San Francisco Bay Trail in Richmond. Teaming with wildlife and offering spectacular vistas, the trail passes



though the former site of a landfill to reach rich tidal wetlands where Wildcat and San Pablo creeks enter San Pablo Bay. Our leaders on this 3.5-mile, handicapped-accessible loop are Sandra Beyaert and environmental hero award recipient Bruce Beyaert.

FOUNDATION NEWS

Greenbelt Alliance is grateful for support from numerous foundations for our regional leadership creating a Sustainable Communities Strategy for the Bay Area. William and Flora Hewlett Foundation granted \$235,000 to underwrite this effort

to promote land use and transportation policies that reduce vehicle emissions. Silicon Valley Community Foundation granted \$75,000, a portion of which will be to support this work in the South Bay. Envision Bay Area, which seeks to educate about Sustainable Communities Strategy, is funded by grants from Oram Foundation (\$60,000), Resources Legacy Fund (\$50,000), and Mary A. Crocker Trust (\$25,000).

SAVE THE DATE FOR BLUEGRASS 2011

Bring your blanket, sit on the grass, and enjoy the sounds and sunshine at the sixth annual **Bluegrass for the Greenbelt June 4!** The festival will be in the meadow at the Dunsmuir-Hellman historic estate in the Oakland hills. Returning artists this year will include favorites Laurie Lewis and the Right Hands, The Wranglers, and the Tuttle Family with A.J. Lee. The festival will feature family-friendly activities, food, and a free shuttle from BART. Check bluegrassforthegreenbelt.org for updates! ■

OUR ANNUAL THANK YOU

Check out Greenbelt Alliance's 2010 annual report, www.greenbelt.org/resources/annualreports.html, as we thank our donors who gave \$500 and up.

Not on the list? You can increase the size of your gift by checking to see if your employer will match your contribution. Questions? Call Andrew Alvarez at 415 543 6771 ext.315. ■



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***Check out how to
Green Your City's
Blueprint, Greenbelt
Alliance's new toolkit!***

INSIDE ACTION:

**ENVISIONING THE
FUTURE OF THE BAY AREA**

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**THE TOOLS TO
INFLUENCE CHANGE**

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**green your
city's blueprint:**



**NEW PARTNERS IN
PLANNING SAN JOSE**

(PAGE 3)



**LOVE IN
HIKING BOOTS**

(PAGE 7)



***Bluegrass for
the Greenbelt
is June 4—
don't miss it!***