

It was an extraordinary honor to be awarded the 2015 ULI WLI Fall Meeting scholarship and be counted among a group of such accomplished professionals from across the nation. The WLI and co-sponsor Prologis did a tremendous job creating a meaningful and varied program, pairing us with accomplished mentors, and providing a guest experience with a Product Council. Coupled with the thoughtful and provocative tours, discussions, and networking events happening throughout the week, the overall experience was truly powerful and valuable for my own growth, the people I met, and for what I can bring back to Los Angeles and share with the ULI, WLI, and my profession.

San Francisco, in the midst of a tech-boom and corresponding urban renewal, was perhaps one of the most important attendees to the 2015 ULI Fall meeting. Serving not just as backdrop, but also an active participant, the city set the stage for thoughtful and profound discussions about how technology is reshaping our cities. Attendees could experience in real-time the kind of transformations and trends the industry's thought leaders were exploring in their panel discussions and talks. It was clear that many of the Fall Meeting's experiences coalesced around certain themes: *disruption, active urbanism, and the value of diverse perspectives.*

On Disruption

There may be no place that better than San Francisco that demonstrates the coming changes new technology is bringing not just to our digital world, but now, increasingly, to the physical hardscape of our cities. The Meeting's sessions kicked off with a dynamic discussion with Charles Kenny and Jack Uldrich, in which they teased out scenarios and tough questions that will face the development community as the 'Internet of Things' explodes in growth. The week concluded with a powerful address from Paul Saffo, noted futurist, on the acceleration of technology and what this means for society. Driverless cars, the sharing economy, and a radical shift away from traditional public 'transactional' spaces, (e.g. shopping online instead of at a store), will require us to move quickly to adapt and unlock the technologies' potential while limiting and mitigating its fallout.

On Active Urbanism

One recurring theme that showed promise for addressing this loss of traditional urbanism as spaces become either digitized or more mercurial – sometimes private, sometimes public – was an idea of '*active urbanism*'. By this I mean developers, companies, or groups that become curators of spaces and even entire campuses in order to provide an authentic and creative experience – not just a service or collection of products. With a ULI tour and as a guest of the UDMUC Silver Product Council, I was able to explore several adaptive reuse developments along the heart of Market Street and in Mountain View, where tech companies had taken a really active approach in filling in the missing pieces that are increasingly lacking in the contemporary urban experience. They actively programmed events and spaces to become the infrastructure of experience and to grow a strong sense of community – gyms, learning centers, movie nights, art, food, beauty... It is no longer enough to provide passive space in a world where you can get anything cheaper and faster online – the only currency buildings have are their ability to create lasting and unique experiences – *active urbanism* – to create communities.

On the Value of Diverse Perspectives

As these themes were investigated through tours, panel discussions, and coffee breaks, they made WLI's mission and role even clearer and more essential. Our communities are more robust, resilient, exciting, diverse, innovative, safe, fulfilling, and inclusive when everyone can participate in shaping

them. With more perspectives and ideas, we can identify the best opportunities and confront the toughest challenges of disruptive technology and look for ways to strengthen community, whether through *active urbanism* or other means. WLI is helping to lead the way within the industry with mentorship and leadership so that strong voices essential to the best evolution of our cities are heard and empowered.

Thank you again for the opportunity to experience the Fall Meeting and for the honor of being a 2015 Scholarship recipient.