

MEMORANDUM

MARIN COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

TO: WEST MARIN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

FROM: Roy Bateman
Reid Thaler

SUBJECT: Recommendations for Funding Year 37 (2011-12)
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Proposals

DATE: February 10, 2011

The recommendations from Community Development Block Grant staff for funding projects in the West Marin Planning Area are listed below. These recommendations will be presented and considered at the West Marin Planning Area public hearing on Wednesday, February 16, 2011, at 7:00 p.m., at the Dance Palace Community Center, Board Room, 503 B Street, Point Reyes Station.

A NOTE ON THE CDBG FUNDING LEVEL

Last year, Marin County's CDBG allocation was \$1,727,272.

Our funding agency, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), has not yet announced our CDBG grant allocation for the 2011-12 program year. Funds for Marin's 2011-12 program year come from the federal budget for federal Fiscal Year 2011, which runs from October 1, 2010 to September 30, 2011. Congress is not expected to come to agreement on a Fiscal Year 2011 budget until March 2011, halfway through the federal fiscal year. The budget situation in Washington is volatile. The House Republican Study Committee, a group of 175 Representatives, has proposed completely eliminating CDBG. The House Appropriations Committee proposed a 13% cut in CDBG funding, but then announced that it would abandon its initial budget proposal and seek deeper cuts in federal spending. The United States Conference of Mayors has designated continued funding for CDBG as its highest priority. Although the Obama Administration had originally proposed continued funding for CDBG at the same level as last year, it has recently proposed a 7.5% cut in the program. Meanwhile, the National Low Income Housing Coalition has reported that the House Financial Services Committee plans to scrutinize the CDBG Program and consider whether to end CDBG funding for the nation's wealthiest communities.

Because there is such a wide range of possible CDBG funding amounts, we have assumed in this report that Marin County's 2011-12 CDBG grant will be the same as last year's grant. The staff recommendations in this report are based on the West Marin share of our estimated 2011-12 CDBG allocation. However, the actual amount available for the West Marin Planning Area is likely to be different from the amount listed in this report because the County's CDBG allocation could be higher or lower than our estimate, depending on the outcome of the federal budget process.

To avoid the need for an additional hearing, staff recommends that the grant amounts set at the West Marin Local Area Hearing be subject to revision once HUD announces our CDBG formula allocation. At that time, staff would recalculate the amounts available for each planning area and for the public service component of the program. Staff recommends that West Marin public services receive the maximum amount permitted by the CDBG regulations, with the public service funding split between the two recommended public service projects in the same proportion as in this report. Staff recommends that any remaining funds be used first to fully fund the Bolinas Garage at the requested amount, with the balance of funds directed to the Tomales Town Hall. Staff would then round numbers to the nearest hundred dollars. However, no project could receive more than the amount the sponsor requested.

**RECOMMENDED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
FUNDING ALLOCATIONS FOR THE WEST MARIN PLANNING AREA**

HOUSING

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1) Bolinas Garage
(Bolinas Community Land Trust)
Rehabilitation of rental housing
6 Wharf Road, Bolinas | <u>\$23,200</u> |
|--|-----------------|

Housing Subtotal	\$23,200
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CAPITAL

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1) Tomales Town Hall
(Tomales Town Hall)
Rehabilitation of community center
27150 State Highway 1, Tomales | <u>\$13,001</u> |
|---|-----------------|

Capital Subtotal	\$13,001
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PUBLIC SERVICE

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 1) Home Care Assistance for the Elderly
(West Marin Senior Services)
Home care and assistance for the elderly and disabled
11435 State Highway 1, Point Reyes Station | <u>\$5,769</u> |
| 2) Human Services Coordinator
(San Geronimo Valley Community Center)
Salary for coordinator of emergency food pantry
6350 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, San Geronimo | <u>\$8,900</u> |

Public Service Subtotal	\$14,669
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Total Funds Available for West Marin Planning Area	\$50,870
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Maximum West Marin Planning Area funds available for Public Services	\$14,669
Minimum West Marin Planning Area funds required for Housing (County policy requires each planning area to allocate at least 30% of its funds for housing.)	\$15,261

Reprogramming of Previously Allocated Funds

At its January 1992 meeting, the CDBG Priority Setting Committee decided that unspent CDBG balances allocated to projects over two years ago should be considered for reallocation (“reprogramming”) to other projects which may be in greater need of the funds. In compliance with this policy, CDBG staff have sent the required 30-day notices to all project sponsors with CDBG funds which were allocated two years ago or earlier, as well as to newer projects which have been moving slowly, so that the Committee would have the option of reprogramming these funds.

In the West Marin Planning Area, a 30-day notice was sent to one project sponsor. A detailed analysis of this project is presented below:

Bolinas Community Firehouse and Clinic--Emergency Generator Shelter (Bolinas Fire Protection District and Coastal Health Alliance)
(2007-08) \$9,160

In 2007, CDBG funds were allocated to the Bolinas Fire Protection District and the Coastal Health Alliance to construct an enclosure for emergency electrical equipment, including the main electrical panels and an electric generator, which is located outside the building. The enclosure is needed to protect the equipment from damage from the salty ocean air. The shed has been completed and CDBG staff recently authorized payment for the project. Since the project has been completed and payment is in process, staff recommends that the funds not be reprogrammed.

HOUSING PROJECTS

1. Bolinas Garage (Bolinas Community Land Trust)

With CDBG and HOME Program assistance, the Bolinas Community Land Trust purchased the Bolinas Garage property for use as a mixed-use project, retaining the existing gas station, the retail spaces, and the three single-room occupancy apartments on the second floor of the original garage building. The Land Trust converted the auto repair garage on the first floor into three studio apartments, and built two townhouse units at the rear of the property. The Land Trust staff are managing the property with care and sensitivity, keeping rents below the limits allowed by the CDBG and HOME Programs so that tenants affected by the recession can afford to remain in place. The Bolinas Garage provides affordable housing to single people and small families, creating a mini-community within this downtown Bolinas property.

The garage building, renovated in 2000, has developed leaks in the tiled outdoor decks on the second floor. These roof leaks are beginning to cause damage on the first floor. The Land Trust has requested funding to remove the ceramic tile from the decks and install new roofing in its place. At the large deck, which is used by the tenants as a sitting area, a new membrane and elastomeric surface would be installed. A standard asphalt roof would be installed on the smaller deck. CDBG staff recommends funding the full amount requested for these repairs.

Because the Community Development Block Grant allocation for West Marin is so small, only one housing project was recommended for funding.

Four housing proposals were not recommended for West Marin Planning Area funding.

The Bolinas Community Land Trust has withdrawn its proposal for housing development at 12 Wharf Road because the property has been sold and is therefore no longer available to the Land Trust.

In view of the limited amount of funding in West Marin, staff was unable to recommend funding for the Rehabilitation Loan Program, a countywide program operated by the Marin Housing Authority. Funds from other CDBG planning areas and the Countywide Housing component of CDBG have generally been made available to support the Rehabilitation Loan Program.

The Stockstill House, a senior assisted living home owned by West Marin Senior Services, was not recommended for funding this year. The Stockstill House currently has an unspent CDBG balance of \$52,061. The house switches back and forth between two septic systems. Last year, West Marin Senior Services thought that they might have to replace one of the septic systems. After consultation with an engineer, they have developed a plan to install a

grey water system to divert washing machine outflow into the ground so that the flow into the septic systems will be reduced. Unfortunately, it seems unlikely that the property has enough potential septic capacity to accommodate any additional bedrooms. The funds remaining from previous CDBG allocations should be sufficient to install the grey water system, to improve property drainage, and to add more paved parking spaces and a patio at the front of the house. West Marin Senior Services sought additional funds to replace carpeting with hard-surface flooring, replace kitchen appliances and cabinets, and build a wheelchair ramp from the deck to the rear garden. While these improvements would upgrade the Stockstill House, staff felt that roof repairs at the Bolinas Garage were more urgently needed.

In view of the very limited amount of funding in the West Marin Planning Area, CDBG staff did not recommend funding for any projects located outside West Marin. Staff did not recommend funding for the Uniting Nationalities Institutionalized group home, which would be located in Novato.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

1. Tomales Town Hall (Tomales Town Hall)

The Tomales Town Hall, built in 1874, serves as a community center for Tomales. It is managed by a non-profit organization which maintains the building and sponsors programs and events for the community. In the last few years, the Board of Trustees has been energized by new members who have brought a spirit of activism and enthusiasm to the Board. They have raised over \$170,000, not including grants or a recent bequest. With the proceeds, the Board has retired the debt on adjacent property they purchased to improve handicapped accessibility and to develop an outdoor gathering area.

In 2008 and 2009, the Town Hall was allocated CDBG funds toward insulating the building and replacing a noisy and inefficient heater. The project is almost finished. This renovation is not only more energy-efficient, but also serves to make the Town Hall more inviting for event rentals, thereby increasing the building's utilization and producing needed revenue.

Community volunteers have logged several thousand hours, making it possible to maintain and improve the Hall, expand community participation, and secure other grant funds. Currently, the Board is seeking funding toward additional repairs to upgrade the building and increase energy efficiency. Staff recommends CDBG funding for these improvements.

One capital proposal, the Tomales Community Park, was not recommended for funding although it has received CDBG funding in the past. The park applied for CDBG funds to complete the first phase of park renovations, which include construction of an additional play structure, leveling of fields, and creating handicapped-accessible paths. While the park renovation is a worthy project, staff feels that improvements to the Tomales Town Hall to address safety issues should have higher priority.

PUBLIC SERVICE PROJECTS

1. Home Care Assistance for the Elderly (West Marin Senior Services)

West Marin Senior Services provides frail elderly and younger disabled people with home care referrals, assistance with care management, transportation, counseling, case management, home-delivered meals, and other assistance to enable them to continue living in their homes independently. Last year, West Marin Senior Services had 224 active clients receiving direct care management services. The recommended funds would pay for a small portion of the salaries of staff members who assist clients with making arrangements for home care services.

2. Human Services Coordinator (San Geronimo Valley Community Center)

The San Geronimo Valley Community Center provides a variety of social service, recreational, day care, emergency food, and educational programs for residents of the San Geronimo Valley. The recommended allocation would pay for a portion of the human services coordinator's salary.

Seven public service projects were not recommended for funding.

Seven countywide public service programs, Family Law Legal Services, Fifty Plus Employment Services, Foreclosure Workshops, Home Connection of Marin, the Housing Search Specialist, Marin Brain Injury Network Services, and Senior Access Scholarships were not recommended for funding in the West Marin Planning Area. Because of its low population, West Marin receives a very small CDBG public service allocation, which must cover a large geographic area. CDBG staff recommends that West Marin CDBG public service funds be used to support the locally-based human service agencies which serve the greatest number of West Marin residents.

