

# DAMON CONNOLLY

Winter 2019

SUPERVISOR, DISTRICT 1

## Topics in this issue:

- FireSafe Marin
- Point in Time Count
- Surveys, Workshops and Events
- Marin Commutes
- Employee Spotlight
- Local Office Hours



Dear Friends,

Serving as President of the Marin County Board of Supervisors in 2018 was a privilege. I started 2018 with the goal to see our Board's Chambers as the "go to" place for First Amendment speech, including youth. From the boys at St. Vincent's School for Boys, to environmentalists, to Rotary Interactors who provide music to older adults, to the culminating voices of the Marin School of the Arts singers — and literally every voice in between— our hearts were lifted and our minds opened. It also introduced our students to their County government. We also have a committed [Youth Commission](#) we count on for passion and expertise.

Our work as a Board created a strong foundation upon which we can continue to build in 2019. As much as we accomplished, we have hard work ahead and I am dedicated to do my very best on behalf of my constituents in District 1, and Marin County. My key priorities are: housing, transportation, climate change and resiliency, fiscal accountability, mental health and homelessness. Our Board continues to focus on an aggressive menu of options to address the issue of housing affordability in our County in a meaningful and creative way. Transportation and infrastructure improvements are the focus of a great deal of my time, from SMART, to the Richmond San Rafael Bridge, to improving local transit options. In 2019, I will continue to serve as Marin's representative on the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, as a Director of both SMART and the Transportation Authority of Marin, and as President of Marin Transit. We are looking for congestion relief and active transportation solutions in a myriad of ways.

Fire prevention is also a top priority of mine. Our agencies are working better together than they ever have, maintaining fire breaks, egress and ingress, and vegetation management. I urge you to visit [FireSafe Marin](#), which is a wealth of resources and information on preparing your home and your neighborhood to reduce risks of fire, and gives first responders the best chance of saving your property in the event of a fire.

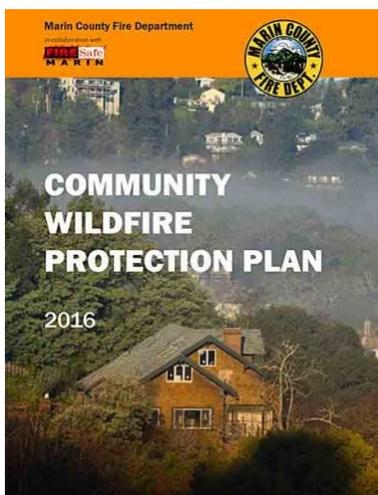
I take a proactive approach to problem solving, which I pledge to continue. Take a look at our [website](#) that goes into detail on my key priorities, and allows you to sign up for updates on the issues important to you. I always welcome the opportunity to talk with you — our office is open to you by email, phone, or in person.

Damon

## Reducing Wildfire Hazards and Improving Fire-Safety Awareness

The FireSafe Marin website provides all the information you will need to prepare your property and your neighborhood for wildfires and how to “harden” your home. They have frequently asked questions and technical tips for managing vegetation around your home.

[FIRESafe Marin website](#)



One of the goals in 2018 was to expand adoption of the **Firewise USA** program. Nine communities attained Firewise designation at the beginning of the year and grew to more than thirty by year's end. I'm proud that the District 1 communities of Dominican/Black Canyon, Lucas Valley Homeowners Association, and Mont Marin San Rafael Park are now Firewise neighborhoods. Marin is the fastest growing "Firewise County" in the United States!

If you are interested in finding out what is involved with becoming a Firewise neighborhood, there will be a community workshop on Friday, March 8 9-11am at the Marin Valley Community Center, 100 Marin Valley Drive, Novato, 94949.

### Key Policies and Priorities

Please check out our District 1 [webpage](#) to see my key policies and priorities.

We also have useful links including neighborhood associations.

You will also find a list of all of my Board assignments to committees and regional boards.

## The Point-in-Time Count— What do we know about the people who are unhoused in our communities?

Every two years during the last 10 days of January, communities across the country conduct a Point-in-Time (PIT) count of the people experiencing homelessness. This is a “snapshot” count at a given point in time. The purpose is to find individuals and families residing in emergency shelters, transitional housing, people sleeping on the streets, in cars, in abandoned properties, or in other places not meant for human habitation.

On January 28<sup>th</sup> I participated in the PIT with my Aide, Mary Sackett, Colin McDonnell, Case Management Director at Ritter Center and District 1 resident Alex Leonard. We drove and walked two assigned census tracts from 5am to 9am, counting every person experiencing homelessness.

We have been seeing great results now that all our agencies are working together through coordinated entry, focusing on getting the most vulnerable, the chronic homeless, into the first available units. We hope to see a decrease with this count. Coordinated Entry’s vulnerability assessments of everyone who accesses services allows agencies to encourage people to take advantage of health, mental health and other programs that can help stabilize them until they get into housing. So, while we have the chronic homeless at the top of the list for housing, benefits accrue to everyone, often leading to resolution of issues that were obstacles to getting into housing.

The biennial Point-in-Time Count is the only source of nationwide data on sheltered and unsheltered homelessness and is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to receive federal funding to provide housing and services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Currently, Marin County Continuum of Care receives more than



Cartoon by George Russell, printed in *Marin UJ*

\$4.1 million in federal funding for housing and services for the homeless in our county.

The last PIT, in January 2017, counted 1,117 individuals in transitional housing, shelters and on the street, of which 708 were unsheltered, that is, living in a place not meant for human habitation. Of those, 32 were children under 18, and 51 were over the age of 60.

It is estimated that 329 single individuals in Marin County were experiencing *chronic homelessness* in 2017, which was 29% of the total count. Additionally, there were 11 families with 30 members experiencing chronic homelessness. 94 of the total 2017 count were veterans, 67 of whom were unsheltered. This represented an increase over the 2015 count.

The number of unhoused people overall went down between 2015 and 2017, but at the same time, the number of chronic homeless went up.

The 2017 PIT report is [here](#). More details on how the County is addressing homelessness can be found [here](#).

## **Surveys**

### **Workshops**

### **and events!**



- **On Tuesday, February 5<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm we will be holding a workshop on 5g.** We encourage you to attend and share your thoughts. The staff report is [here](#). We have a webpage, and [survey](#), on small wireless telecommunications, including 5g.
- Marin residents age 60 and older and those who work with older adults are encouraged to take the **Age-Friendly County of Marin** [survey](#).
- Interested in local solutions for Climate Change? All **Drawdown:Marin** related events are listed on this [Calendar](#).

## **Marin Commutes** Better Commute – Better Community

We have an on-going commitment to high-quality transportation options and alternatives to single occupancy vehicle trips. "[Marin Commutes](#)" provides localized information for those living and working in Marin County, building awareness about alternative transportation options.

Marin Commutes encompasses the following individual programs:

- Marin Emergency Ride Home Program – whether it's a sick child or unexpected overtime, get reimbursed for your emergency ride home when you walk, bike, carpool or take transit to work
- Vanpool Incentive Program
- Get SMART Lyft Pilot Program
- Transportation Authority of Marin/511 Marin Telework Initiative
- Car Share Program

Regional bike share, dynamic trip planning and tracking capabilities, and orientation package for employers will be added later this year.

Leaving your car at home even one day a week can reduce stress, save money, and improve air quality (potentially reducing emissions by as much as 10% per year). In April Marincommutes.org will have a six-week campaign, with prizes and raffles. Join me! Let me know what is working, and what is not working. Signup for Marin Commutes to stay up to date on promotions and incentives [here](#).



## Employee Profile: Paul Mushrush, Shipping and Receiving Clerk

I share with you Paul Mushrush's statement to the Board when he was honored as Employee of the Month. Paul represents the best in our County workforce. He has appreciation for the job, for the part he plays in the organization, and the opportunities afforded him.

### **Paul's statement: (abbreviated)**

My job is all about providing a service and supporting all the County departments in their daily efforts. I've been at the County for six years. I was with my previous employer for 31 years. When they moved away, six years ago, jobs were not easy to find. You'd better believe I was happy to land an interview for the Marin County Civic Center.

In the last 40 years, I've been unemployed for exactly two weeks. A steady paycheck is very important to me; and many of my fellow Americans haven't been as fortunate as I have, when it comes to stable employment. I appreciate it.

I've also been able to take just about every business development course that the County offered; for things like team-building, customer service, and such. All these activities take time. Not every County worker can arrange their schedule to accommodate additional meetings and projects. I was able to do so because my work unit and my head office supported me. I recently graduated from the Leadership Academy where I was able to apply my interest in promoting individual and team performance as well as streamline work systems.

I've been especially interested in the 5 Year Business Plan because of the hope of positive chang-

es it offers, and because of the positive change it is delivering, quietly and steadily, in four key areas of improvement. The 5 Year Business Plan consolidates and builds upon many years of experience in strategic planning. The Plan was designed by a wide-ranging group of County employees and community partners. It is guided and informed, not by closed-door meetings of top executives, but by employees from every level of the organization; and by fact-finding surveys where every employee has an equal voice.

A few years ago, one of my teammates was also honored as Employee of the Month. He gave a terrific speech; and then at the end, performed an unprecedented feat by getting the entire Board of Supervisors chamber to do "The Wave". It came off perfectly. I'm not a big sports fan, but I do know how hard it can be to get everyone on the same page — here at our huge, complex, government organization. On that day my friend demonstrated that a little inspiration, a little participation, and a little clear communication can go a long, long way when everybody works together.

That's the rising wave of team dynamics that I hope will wash over this whole organization... and soak in thoroughly!

Paul  
Mushrush



## District 1 Newsletter

### **Damon Connolly**

Supervisor, District 1  
Marin County Board of Supervisors  
(415) 473-7331

[Email](#)

[Website](#)

### **Aides:**

#### **Mary Sackett**

(415) 473-7354

[Email](#)

#### **Susannah Clark**

(415) 473-7342

[Email](#)

### **Location and Mailing Address:**

Marin County Civic Center  
3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 329  
San Rafael, CA 94903

### **Online Addresses:**

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Newsletter](#)



## LOCAL OFFICE HOURS

### **Thursday, March 7th at 5-6:30pm.**

Marinwood Market, 155 Marinwood Ave., San Rafael.

An opportunity for people who might not otherwise have the time to meet and discuss county or neighborhood issues. Connect with me regarding anything on your mind. I hope to see you there!



All County publications are available in alternative formats (Braille, Large Print, or CD), upon request. Requests for accommodations may be made by calling (415) 473-4381 (Voice) 473-3232 (TDD/TTY) or by e-mail at [disabilityaccess@marincounty.org](mailto:disabilityaccess@marincounty.org) at least four work days in advance of the event. Copies of documents are available in alternative formats, upon request.