

MARIN COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
PLANNING DIVISION

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Community Development Agency
RE: Countywide Plan Scenarios
DATE: August 18, 2003

Dear Planning Commissioner:

Background:

A review of land use alternatives provides an opportunity to consider potential build-out scenarios during the preparation of the Marin Countywide Plan. While a specific build-out date is not identified, the land use scenarios project how different future growth patterns could ultimately affect life in the county. In order to explore alternative futures for Marin, staff, in collaboration with members of the public, prepared four land use scenarios addressing the following:

- Economic Vitality
- Environmental Preservation.
- Housing/Social Equity
- Transportation Choice

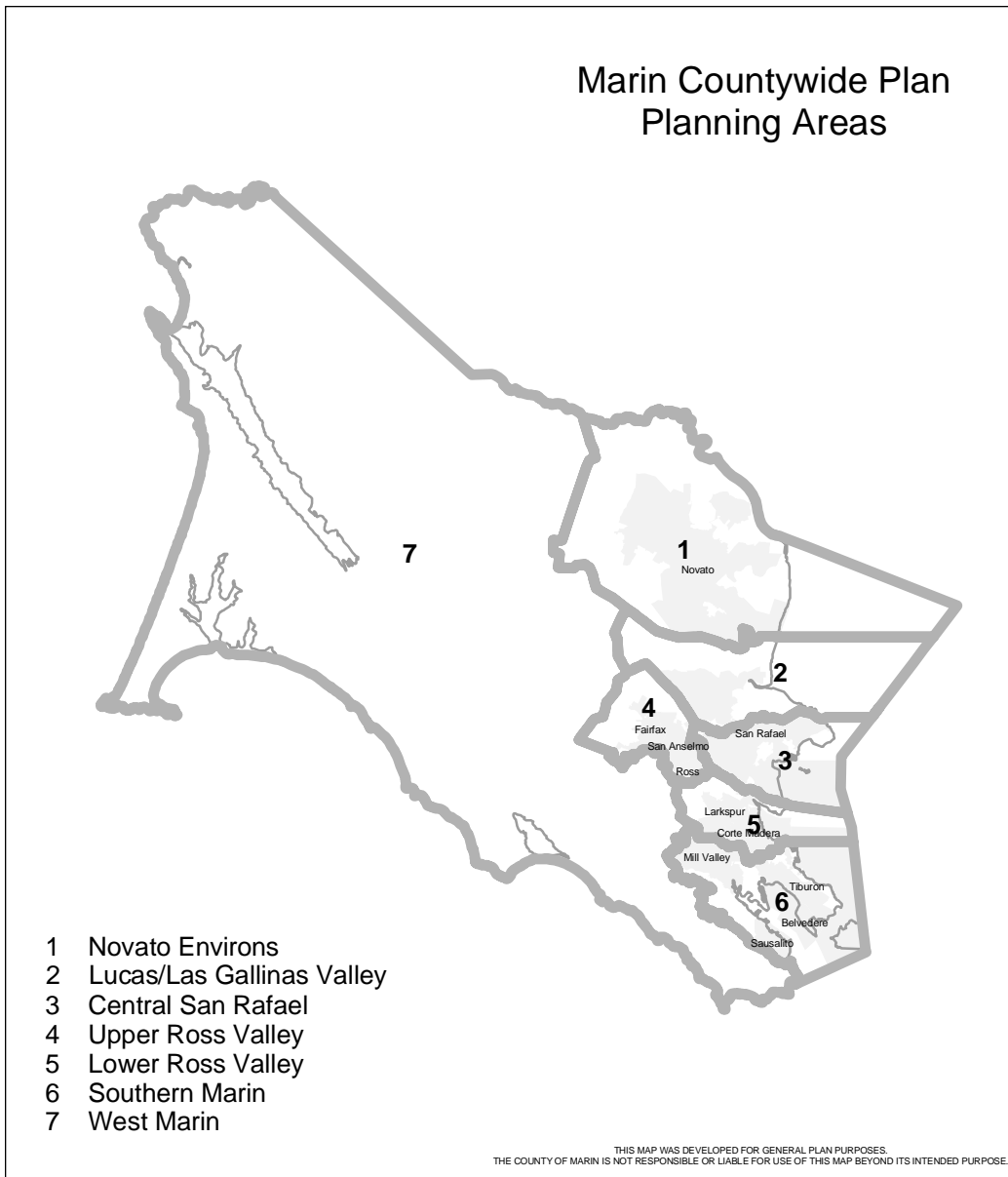
Staff worked with groups of between 10-25 representatives to prepare the assumptions reflecting their values (see attachment 1) and quantified them for use in a computer model. Evaluation of these scenarios will be used to prepare a preferred alternative that will be included in the Countywide Plan and evaluated under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as part of the Environmental Impact Report.

Analysis:

Land Use Scenarios: The following four scenarios modify *nonresidential floor area* including retail, office, warehouse, hotel and group quarters square feet and *housing units*, by changing the amount of potential development on individual parcels of land. At a future meeting, the land use alternatives will be tested against different quality of life indicators including transportation and environmental factors.

One way to present comparisons among the four alternatives is by showing the differences by Planning Area. As shown in Map 1, Planning Areas encompass the entire County, but changes shown in West Marin can seem relatively small because of the large boundary area.

Map 1



Scenarios By Planning Area:

The following table (Table 1) makes a comparison among the four scenarios, existing conditions on the ground today and the 1994 Countywide Plan at build-out for *nonresidential floor area and housing units* in unincorporated Marin County by Planning Area. The spreadsheets detailing the four alternatives by Planning Area are attached (see attachment 2).

Nonresidential Floor Area: The scenario with the greatest increase in nonresidential floor area is the economic vitality alternative, while the environment preservation alternative generated the least. The economic vitality alternative also had the greatest increase above the existing 1994 Countywide Plan and thus the greatest increase over existing conditions. Conversely the environmental preservation

alternative recommended a decrease in nonresidential floor area below the 1994 Countywide Plan and a slight increase above existing conditions. These changes were anticipated because the economic vitality assumptions included increasing the allowable floor area ratio in central business districts and targeted transit sites from .3 to .35. The environmental preservation alternative maximized protection of environmentally sensitive lands and considered a decrease in nonresidential floor area as necessary to reduce the additional transportation and environmental impacts caused by the additional job growth. All alternative scenarios recommend additional nonresidential square feet in Southern and West Marin (see detailed spreadsheets), while three recommend a large increase in nonresidential square feet in Novato.

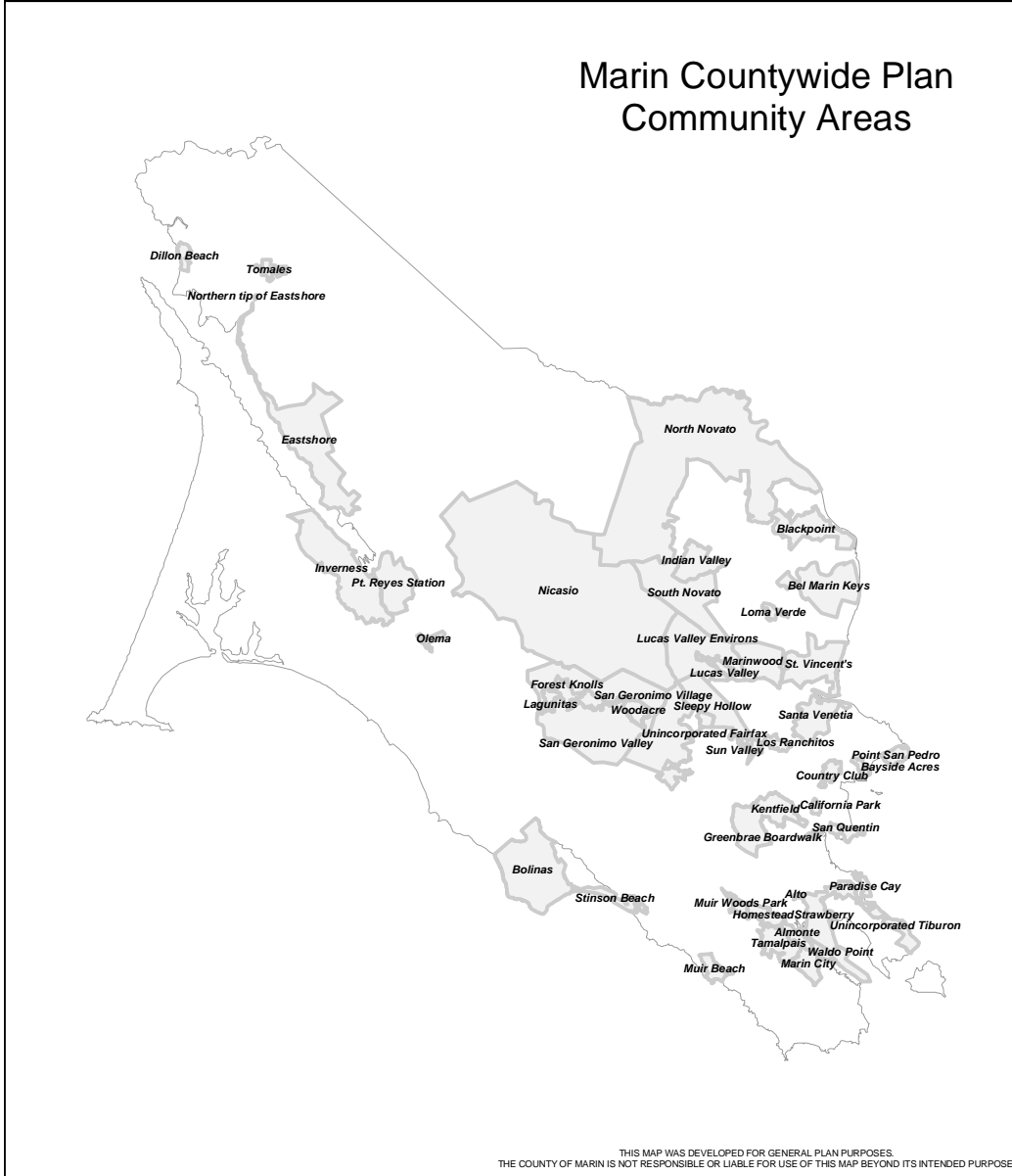
Housing Units: The Housing scenario had the greatest increase in housing units by recommending a significant increase over the number of units approved under the 1994 Countywide Plan. While the economic vitality alternative recommended the second highest increase over existing conditions because they closely linked a healthy and vibrant economy with the provision of sufficient affordable housing. The environmental preservation alternative recommended decreasing allowed housing units below the 1994 Countywide Plan, but still permitting an increase over existing conditions. All scenarios recommend additional housing in South & West Marin, while economic vitality and the housing alternatives increased housing in Lower Ross Valley & Lucas/Las Gallinas Valley's.

Table 1						
Four Alternatives Comparison by Planning Area (Total)						
	Existing	1994 Plan	Housing	Economy	Environment	Transportation
Nonresidential Floor Area	3,120,067	5,229,695	5,829,695	7,397,196	3,541,162	5,536,335
Change from 1994 Plan			600,000	2,167,501	-1,688,533	306,640
Change from Existing		2,109,628	2,709,628	4,277,129	421,095	2,416,268
Housing Units	27,286	36,941	46,550	44,001	35,667	38,379
Change from 1994 Plan			9,609	7,060	-1,274	1,438
Change from Existing		9,655	19,264	16,715	8,381	11,093

See attachment 2 for entire spreadsheets.

Another way to show the differences among alternatives is by Community Area (Map 2), which includes the boundaries of the existing Community Plan areas. This method helps to show at a smaller scale the amount of change, but it excludes information to areas outside their boundary.

Map 2



Scenarios By Community Area:

The attached spreadsheets (attachment 2) provide a detailed comparison among the four scenarios by Community Area.

Nonresidential Floor Area: Again, the economic vitality scenario recommends the greatest increase in nonresidential floor area, while the environmental preservation scenario recommends the least, and further suggests that a decrease below 1994 Countywide Plan levels be provided. The economic vitality and the transportation choice scenarios also recommended additional nonresidential floor area in the Tamalpais Community Area, while the economic vitality alternative recommended a significant amount in the Walden Point Community Area.

Housing Units: Again, the scenario recommending the greatest increase in housing units was the housing/social equity alternative, with the environmental preservation alternative recommending the least.

Recommendation And Future Steps:

No action other than discussion and comment is required at this time. At a future Planning Commission meeting staff will compare the four scenarios to several quality of life indicators and environmental factors. Although each individual city and town in Marin County is responsible for it's own planning and land use decisions, this analysis can assess land use in conjunction with the cities and towns approved general plans to show a countywide build-out. Staff will also present this information to the Board of Supervisors and the Countywide Planning Agency and analyze this information to assist in the selection of a preferred alternative for inclusion in the Countywide Plan.

Sincerely,

Alex Hinds
Director

Michele Rodriguez
Principal Planner

Attachments:

1. Attachment 1 - Philosophy of Alternatives (4 pages)
2. Attachment 2 - Spreadsheets by Planning and Community Areas (4 pages)
3. Attachment 3 - Public Members List

I/adv/cwp/staff reports/pc 8-18-03

Countywide Plan Scenarios: Economic Vitality

The Vision:

The Economic Vitality alternative will maintain a healthy and vibrant economy while maintaining the quality of life that attracts businesses and residents to Marin.

Spiraling housing costs and the attendant transportation problems created because of increased commuting distances has been contained. Well-suited businesses are encouraged to locate in Marin and expand. Continued progress has been made to improve challenging permit processes, limited space availability, and difficulty in recruiting and retaining workers. Key to ensuring a vibrant economy is that there are sufficient housing units affordable to the workforce of Marin.

What are the desired outcomes?

- All commercial areas, excluding industrial areas have been rezoned to mixed-use to allow maximum flexibility in use/reuse of the site.
- Allowable floor area ratios and building heights have been increased in central business districts and for targeted transit sites to result in an effective FAR of .35 instead of .3.
- New housing construction has been focused on higher-density, infill areas rather than single-family to make the most efficient use of land and maximize the potential for affordability. Allowable density has not been decreased on any single-family parcel but infill densities are assumed at one unit per 1,000 square feet of lot area above and beyond any commercial FAR allowance.
- Publicly owned land (aside from parks and open space lands) has been used to provide additional housing.
- Retail centers have had housing added when being modernized or reconstructed at a rate of one unit per 1,000 square feet of building area.
- All new non-residential developments have been required to provide housing at a rate of one unit per 1,000 square feet of building area.
- Housing need for agricultural workers has been provided (520 units)
- Tax measures have been passed to fund transportation and housing as well as leverage outside funding.
- Public transportation has been improved to reduce single-occupant vehicle trips.
- Parking requirements have been reduced for non-residential projects to encourage the marketplace to determine appropriate amounts of parking.
- Airspace above parking lots has been used for additional housing.
- Second units are assumed to be on one of every ten single-family lots.
- The following specific sites have development as follows:
 1. St. Vincent's Silveira – 1,500 clustered moderate- to high-density housing units, 50,000 s.f. of resident-supporting retail space, exclusive of the St. Vincent's School and existing on-site facilities.
 2. San Quentin – 3,585 residential units clustered in a European village-like community with 500,000 s.f. of nonresidential space which is inclusive of existing structures that would be preserved and/or reused.
 3. San Rafael Rock Quarry – 400 residential units

Countywide Plan Scenarios: Environmental Preservation

The Vision:

The environmental preservation scenario will maximize protection of environmentally sensitive lands. Using concepts from Community Marin, this alternative creates a Bayfront Protection Corridor. Countywide, it removes, through public and/or private acquisition, development potential in areas with environmental significance including wetlands, associated upland areas, sub-tidal areas, undeveloped 100-year flood plains and other areas subject to inundation, steep slopes, riparian corridors, and other geologically sensitive areas. Commercial development potential has been reduced. Existing policy related to ridgelines has been retained. Planning decisions and land use designations are based on sound ecological principles and avoid development of sensitive habitats. Expansion of existing development and uses into sensitive habitats is not permitted. New development uses green-building techniques and is concentrated in already-developed areas proximate to transit service while home sizes have been capped to minimize resource consumption. Parking lots have been targeted for infill development instead of new development in greenfields.

In West Marin, Coastal Recreation Corridor and LCP policies continue to direct development patterns into existing villages rather than surrounding undeveloped lands. Environmentally sound agricultural operations have been encouraged along with allowing for agricultural-worker housing. Streamside and wetland policies protect creek habitat from development as well as agricultural runoff while hillside guidelines preclude inappropriate development along Bolinas Ridge. New development potential along the shore of Tomales Bay has been eliminated.

What are the desired outcomes?

- Additional development potential has been reduced to existing levels for parcels meeting any of the following criteria:
 1. Within a ridge and upland greenbelt
 2. Within a 100-year floodplain
 3. Contain diked baylands and associated uplands
 4. Below sea level
 5. Containing wetland habitat
 6. Within 100 feet of a perennial, intermittent, or ephemeral stream, or man-made channel
- For the Inland Rural and Coastal Recreation Corridor, overall additional development potential has been halved.
- Second units are assumed to be on one of every ten lots with an existing single-family home.
- Existing policies in the Coastal Recreation Corridor continue as they exist today and have also been applied to parcels within the Inland Rural Corridor.
- The following specific sites have development potential designated as follows:
 1. St. Vincent's Silveira – 63 units
 2. Gness Field area – one unit per parcel
 3. Tomales Bay Shoreline (inboard of Highway 1 and Sir Francis Drake – No development
 4. San Quentin Prison property – 506 residential units (based on current land use designations)
 5. Novato Narrows – no additional development above what is currently permitted (agriculture).
 6. Tiburon Peninsula – existing development levels but not less than one unit per parcel.
 7. Strawberry and Marin City Shopping Centers – one residential unit per 1,000 square feet of nonresidential floor area in addition to current development.
- For nonresidential parcels not affected by any of the above criteria, remove half the potential additional development and convert to residential at the rate of one unit per every 1,000 square feet of nonresidential development removed.

Countywide Plan Scenarios: Housing/ Social Equity

The Vision:

The Housing scenario will provide sufficient housing for Marin residents with a special emphasis towards providing units affordable to lower-income members of the workforce, large families, the elderly, and the disabled.

Primary actions include development of policy actions and funding mechanisms to construct affordable ownership and rental housing including establishment of minimum densities, maximum home sizes, encouraging mixed-use developments, reducing parking requirements, establishing a countywide housing trust fund, and forming public-private partnerships to acquire land and leverage funding opportunities.

What are the desired outcomes?

- New housing construction has been focused on higher-density, infill areas rather than single-family to make the most efficient use of land and maximize the potential for affordability. Allowable density has not been decreased on any single-family parcel but infill densities are assumed at one unit per 1,000 square feet of lot area above and beyond any commercial FAR allowance.
- Targeted lots in single family neighborhoods, such as corner lots, provide opportunities for duplex and other medium-density multifamily housing
- Inclusionary programs have been applied to all development proposals.
- An affordable housing overlay zone has been established in transit-rich areas to facilitate financing and construction of affordable units.
- Retail centers have had housing added when being modernized or reconstructed at a rate of one unit per 1,000 square feet of building area.
- All new non-residential developments have been required to provide housing at a rate of one unit per 1,000 square feet of building area.
- Housing need for agricultural workers has been provided (520 units)
- 50% of new multifamily units are deed-restricted to be affordable to extremely low, very low and low-income households.
- Public transportation has been improved to reduce single-occupant vehicle trips.
- Airspace above parking lots has been used for additional housing.
- Second units are assumed to be on one of every ten single-family lots.
- Minimum densities have been established and single-family homes prohibited on multifamily-zoned properties.
- The following specific sites have development as follows:
 1. St. Vincent's Silveira – 1,200 clustered moderate- to high-density housing units, 50,000 s.f. of resident-supporting retail space, exclusive of the St. Vincent's School and existing on-site facilities.
 2. San Quentin – 3,585 residential units clustered in a European village-like community with 500,000 s.f. of nonresidential space which is inclusive of existing structures that would be preserved and/or reused.
 3. San Rafael Rock Quarry – 400 residential units

Countywide Plan Scenarios: Transportation Choice

The Vision:

The Transportation scenario will provide for land use patterns that support multi-modal, connected, and seamless mobility choices for Marin's residents.

Key to addressing concerns about excessive single-occupant vehicle trips and limited road infrastructure is to focus future growth to places that are already developed and are conducive to serving with transportation modes other than the automobile. This results in compact communities that emphasize transit-oriented development patterns that also enables easy bicycle and pedestrian circulation. A mixture of uses within these areas to serve basic needs within walking distance is critical. Transportation linkages and transit service will be regular and frequent, and serve activity nodes including schools, employment centers, and public facilities. An off-street circulation network is critical to encouraging pedestrian and non-motorized trips.

What are the desired outcomes?

- Programs identified in the Transportation Vision Plan have been implemented.
- Motorized transportation is primarily alternative-fuel based.
- All commercial areas, excluding industrial areas, have been rezoned to mixed-use to allow maximum flexibility in use/reuse of the site.
- Targeted transit areas have been defined as land within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of a train station or ferry terminal, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of a bus terminal and the 101 bus pads, and $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of selected bus routes.
- Allowable floor area ratios and building heights have been increased in central business districts and for targeted transit sites to result in an effective FAR of .35 instead of .3.
- New housing construction has been focused on higher-density, infill areas rather than single-family to make the most efficient use of land and maximize the potential for affordability. Half of the remaining development potential in the Inland Rural and Coastal Recreation corridors has been allocated to a development transfer pool, which may be used in targeted transit areas to provide additional affordable units above what is permitted by current code.
- Retail centers have had housing added when being modernized or reconstructed at a rate of one unit per 1,000 square feet of building area.
- All new non-residential developments have been required to provide housing at a rate of one unit per 1,000 square feet of building area.
- Tax measures have been passed to fund transportation as well as leverage outside funding.
- A joint powers authority has been established to oversee transportation improvements and manage transportation programs.
- A network of bicycle and pedestrian pathways has been constructed, and bike routes added to roadways as designated on the bicycle master plan.
- Barriers to pedestrian and bicycle access have been removed and sufficient parking areas for bicycles have been provided at activity nodes.
- Parking maximums have been established for areas served by transit.
- Airspace above parking lots in targeted transit areas has been used for additional housing.
- Second units are assumed to be on one of every ten single-family lots.
- The following specific sites have development as follows:
 1. St. Vincent's Silveira – Assumes no large-scale development

2. San Quentin – 2,100 residential units clustered in a European village-like community with 285,000 s.f. of nonresidential space which is inclusive of existing structures that would be preserved and/or reused.
3. Strawberry Shopping Center – 169 units
4. Marin City Shopping Center – 170 units

2003 ALTERNATIVES ATTENDEES LIST

ALTERNATIVE	INTEREST GROUPS	ATTENDEES
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marin Chamber of Commerce 	John Williams (Novato) Ken Harth (Novato) Elissa Giambastiani, Tom Hinman (San Rafael) Rob Franco (Sausalito)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miscellaneous 	Glen Bachman and Leslie Ruhland, Business Renaissance Haydon Ongaro /Accuchex Luan Champlin / Marin YMCA Elissa Giambastiani
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marin Economic Commission 	Clark Blasdell Bill McCubbin
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bank of Marin 	Bob Griswald
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marin Conservation League (MCL) 	Kathy Lowrey Charles McGlashan Priscilla Bull
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Forum 	Nona Dennis Kathy Cuneo
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sierra Club 	Herb Kutchins Karen Nygren
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marin Audubon Society 	Barbara Salzman Bruce Bajima Jim Gonsman
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Action Committee (EAC) 	Katherine Caufield Gordon Bennett Sam Wilson
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MALT 	Bob Berner
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self 	Cela O'Connor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tomales Bay Assoc. 	Ken Fox Ben Moseley
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salmon Protection 	Todd Steiner
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tomales Bay Watershed, Bolinas Lagoon Watershed Team, Friends of Corte Madera Creek, Watershed Protection Network 	Neysa King John O'Connor Ann Thomas Elena Belsky

Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congestion Management Agency • Marin County Department of Public Works 	Steve Kinsey Dean Powell
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marin Bicycle Coalition 	Debbie Hubsmith Mark Birnbaum
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self 	Karen Nygren
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMART 	Lillian Hames
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Golden Gate Transit 	Ron Downing Alan Zahradnik
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marin Citizens for Eff. Transport 	Don Wilhelm
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRANSDEF 	David Schonbrunn Walt Strakosch
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Council 	Beth Smith David Cury Leelee Thomas Richard Marc Antonio Chantell Walker
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • League of Women Voters 	Sue Beittel Wendy Buchen
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marin County – Federal Grants/Housing 	Roy Bateman Barbara Collins
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General 	Katie Crecelius Elena Belsky
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecumenical Association of Housing 	Betty Pagett