

COMMUNITY VENTURE PARTNERS

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Letter from the President

December 2016

Dear Friends:

2016 was a “year in the trenches,” which found Community Venture Partners engaged in a wide variety of projects and issues in communities throughout Marin. As always, we’ve been guided by our founding principles and tax exempt purposes:

To facilitate and assist community-based planning and development solutions through projects, programs and initiatives demonstrating the highest principles of economic, social and environmental equity and sustainability.

Generally, 2016 has focused on three major issues that affect all Marin residents:

Lack of government transparency and accountability:

The lack of government transparency and accountability arises either to cover up corruption and mismanagement, or its existence invites it and enables it. Today, the financial and political stakes become higher for each decision and the unbridled power of unelected regional agencies warps sensibilities, few are capable of saintly decisions unless they know they have a good chance of getting caught.

Political favoritism, fudging facts, knowingly misleading the public and elected officials, plus considerable amounts of ignorance and incompetence, are the stepchildren of decreased transparency and accountability, and create a culture of dysfunction.

As the public has become increasingly aware of what’s going on and demanding greater transparency and participation, instead of responding positively and embracing our new interactive age, we’re seeing government doing the exact opposite. And as government becomes more defensive, the public protest only grows louder.

As the number of decisions made behind closed doors increases, it inevitably leads to...

Negative impacts and unintended consequences:

A decision-making process grounded in opaque dealings and led by political influence, ideological agendas, and personal ambition, usually leads to inequitable, counterproductive public policy, the outcomes of which usually include a long list of unintended, negative impacts.

These impacts are eventually brought to the attention of elected representatives by their constituents, though it's usually long past the time anything can be done about it. However, instead of reversing misguided policies, local government today seems to concentrate more on saving face, better marketing, pointless public "workshops" (more marketing), and enlisting the services of high paid handlers and consultants of all descriptions.

Public "study sessions" in Marin have become vapid, dog and pony shows without any real opportunity for meaningful input. People are divided into small "discussion" groups led by professional handlers, and not allowed to comment on anything off the agenda. Questions are summarily ignored unless they support predetermined "choices." In other words, the public is allowed to rearrange the deck chairs on the Titanic but not allowed to question its route.

Meanwhile, the proliferating negative impacts inevitably lead to...

Escalating taxes, fees and cost of living

Ill-conceived public policy too often results in the need for more revenues to deal with unforeseen, negative consequences. Myopic planning and development approvals that fail to take into account the cumulative impacts on schools, infrastructure, and public services demand more revenue sources to address those impacts. And, in an attempt to avoid public criticism, government too often resorts to quick fix "just throw more money at it" thinking to appease critics and show that they are "doing something" about the problems.

Under these circumstances, policy decisions become increasingly influenced more by special interests and attempts to stimulate growth than focused on serving the community being impacted. And the solutions proposed often make everything worse. This is particularly true on the national, state and regional levels, which filter down to local government in the form of mandates and overriding regulations.

As a result, new committees are formed, more consultants are hired, and planning policy becomes more aligned with the politicized visions of state and regional agencies, which promise to help "fix" the problems in exchange for sizable grants.

Zoning becomes less about enhancing and preserving the community's character and quality of life than about bringing in as many government grants and new development fees as possible. The focus of planning also becomes more driven by avoiding penalties or currying favor with powerful agencies, than addressing local problems (i.e., actually building enough affordable housing).

As we continue to mint new quasi-governmental agencies at a rapid rate, the financial burdens of supporting this ever expanding mess, with the concomitant salary and benefits excesses required, results in a never-ending cascade of regressive fees, bond measures, and new taxes levied on those least able to pay, just to enable local government to continue to provide basic public services.

Public services and management responsibilities that only a few decades ago were easily paid out of a municipality's general fund are today constantly being broken out as "new" taxes and fees, resulting in an a la carte government financing model that forces residents to essentially pay twice for the same service. All of these additional fees and taxes are passed through by real estate developers and directly impact the costs of home ownership and renting, making it harder for young people, service workers, retirees and teachers to live in our community.

A thorough discussion of these questions can be found in the published series entitled *Marin 2016 – Dispatches from the front*, published on the Marin Post (<http://marinpost.org>) and is available for purchase [in paperback on Smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com).

I continue to believe that CVP's efforts are critically needed if there is to be any hope of preserving the character and quality of life in Marin, while still supporting a highly diverse community. CVP continues to educate and inform the public about issues of shared concern. [The Marin Post](#), the first 100% citizen journalist, online newsmagazine in California, has played a central role in the effort.

We are grateful to all of you who have supported our efforts.

[PLEASE CONSIDER DONATING NOW](#) to help us continue our work on your behalf.

As always, we promise to make every dollar count. I remain available to meet with each of you throughout the year, to hear your thoughts and discuss the issues at hand. Thank you for your continued confidence and support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Silvestri', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Bob Silvestri
President

COMMUNITY VENTURE PARTNERS 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

UPDATE ON PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

EDUCATE – ADVOCATE - DEMONSTRATE



One of the greatest challenges we face as a community, remains the lack of public involvement and knowledge about local affairs. A solid understanding of the facts and circumstances, and alternatives available to us, are all essential to cultivating that civic engagement.

Toward that end, CVP educates the public through events, outreach, and published research and commentary about growth, planning development, and related topics, and offer free consultation on a wide range of matters.

CVP also works to nurture an effective “ecosystem” of collaborative community organizations that can work together in response to shared concerns. To do so, we assist with capacity building and organizing strategies and advise on everything from how to craft policy position papers to setting up web sites and planning events.

Some of the organizations, agencies and community groups that have sought consultation or benefitted from CVP's pro bono assistance and research include:

Expanding advisory services and network of collaborators

Agricultural Institute of Marin	Novato Community Alliance
Bel Marin Keys Homeowners Assoc.	North San Rafael Coalition of Residents
Citizen Marin	Novato Homeowners Association
Corte Madera Town Council Members	Novato League of Neighborhoods
Danville City Council Members	Novato Planning Commission Members
Friends of Corte Madera	Organized Residents of Marinwood
Friends of Kentfield	Orinda City Council Members
Friends of Kite Hill	Preserve Novato
Friends of Marin Open Space	Quiet & Safe San Rafael
Friends of Mill Valley	SF Bay Regional Water Quality Board
Garden Valley Park Homeowners	SF Region 9 EPA
Golden Gate Village Residents Council	San Marin Compatible Housing Coalition
Kirsch for Supervisor Campaign	Santa Venetia Neighborhood Association
Larkspur City Council Members	Sausalito City Council Members
Larkspur Fights Back	Sausalito Historic Society
Lilypad Homes nonprofit	Save Fairfax
Marin Audubon	Scott Valley Homeowners
Marin Against Density	Seminary Property Owners Association
Mill Valley City Council Members	Strawberry Community Association
Mill Valley Planning Commission Members	Sustainable Tam / Almonte
Mt. Tam Taskforce	

Offering consultation and advisory services to the community is just one of the unique public services offered by Community Venture Partners. But, our effectiveness depends on an equal commitment to other aspects of our work.

CVP takes three pronged approach to affecting public policy change. To accomplish our goals of bringing about greater government transparency, greater community engagement, and greater local control, we work to “educate” the public and decision makers, to “advocate” for local voices and adherence to state and federal laws and regulations, and to “demonstrate” more appropriate and sustainable long term solutions to growth, planning and affordable housing.



The Marin Post

Better government decisions are informed by better public access to information. To address that need, Community Venture Partners created [the Marin Post in June of 2015](#). This free, online, self-publishing platform is available to anyone who wants to inform the public about subjects that are not otherwise being covered by traditional media.



The Marin Post is arguably the single most impactful initiative CVP could have undertaken to empower community voices. It provides a forum for diverse voices and it has obviously struck a nerve.

As such, the Marin Post strives to maintain a high level of journalistic integrity and quality of content that is intellectually rigorous and offers an evidence-based exchange of ideas.

In its brief existence and without the benefit of a single dollar spent on marketing or advertising it has served

over 27,000 individual readers, served up over 116,000 page views, and given over 83 writers the opportunity to post their opinions and in-depth content.

The Marin Post has quickly become Marin's premiere publishing platform for alternative views and investigative journalism. The unique technology that supports the Marin Post has also provided CVP with a real time window into the interests and concerns of Marin residents.

Some of the major topics of local interest are shown in this graphic.



CVP continues to work toward our goal of having the Marin Post become a financially self-sustaining venture. As a part of accomplishing this, we now offer subscriptions. Subscribers can set up customized email alerts about topics that interest them and articles published about their town or by their favorite authors.

[Subscription fees are modest](#), starting at \$5 per month, \$10 per quarter and \$30 per year.

CVP continues to receive pro bono, legal support for this project from [Wilson Sonsini, Goodrich & Rosati](#). We remain indebted to them for their assistance and guidance. However, customer support service demands are growing and users are also requesting new features, for which continued donations are needed.

[PLEASE CLICK HERE TO DONATE TO THE MARIN POST](#)

As important as public education is, it remains only one piece of our three pronged approach to change. Information must be combined with ongoing advocacy to significantly affect government decision making.



As noted, 2016 has been a year in the trenches for CVP. We have been extremely active on the advocacy front to push back on government incompetence and malfeasance at every opportunity. The following are just some of the major examples of our achievements and efforts.



CVP v Marin County Supervisors

Sometimes, when all other remedies have been exhausted, residents are forced to take legal action to ensure that local government is functioning properly. At a County Board of Supervisor’s meeting in August of 2014, the Supervisors and staff engaged in an extensive discussion, and listened to a formal presentation about the Marin County 2015-2023 Housing Element; an item that was not posted on the agenda and for which no public notice was given, and which focused on the

[comment letter that CVP](#) had filed. Public notice is required under our “Open Meetings” Law: the Ralph M. Brown Act.

In response to their unnoticed hearing, CVP filed a [Cease and Desist](#) letter. The County chose to ignore it, and alleged that they had done "[nothing wrong](#)" and that CVP's claim was "[all bark and no bite](#)." In December of 2014, Community Venture Partners, Inc. (CVP) filed a [Petition for Writ of Mandate; Injunctive and Declaratory Relief](#) in Marin Superior Court. After almost a year and a half of argument in Marin Superior Court CVP was granted declaratory relief, and the County was found guilty of the violation. This was a precedent setting action on behalf of the people of Marin County.

For a complete summary of the proceedings please go to “[Marin 2016 – Part VI: Dispatches from the front – Marin County Government](#)” on the Marin Post. [CLICK HERE](#) to view the video of Bob Silvestri making his summary comments to the Board of Supervisors after the court’s final decision.



The Corte Madera Inn Rebuild

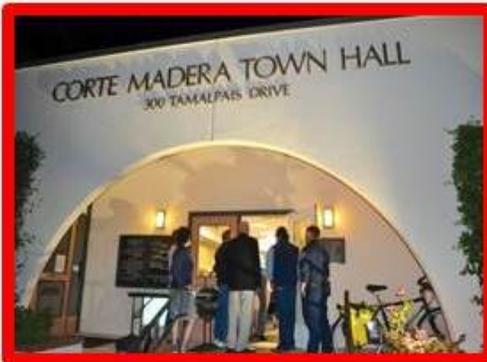
The Town of Corte Madera may remain forever infamous for approving the WinCup project on Tamal Vista Boulevard. That said, one wonders why they've spent the past two years trying to push through the approval of another [misguided "developer-led" plan for the rebuild of the Corte Madera Inn](#).

We all understand that a city has the obligation to allow anyone to submit any type of proposal and it must process that proposal thoroughly, and without prejudice. But the obstinacy of this particular developer, their refusal to change any aspect of their proposal for any reason, and a long list of questionable "facts" presented, made this project suspect early on.

The developer, Reneson Hotels, is proposing to increase the size of the present hotel by about 70%, which requires the destruction of the small, wetlands pond, behind it. The developer has continued to claim it is the "only" alternative that is financially feasible if the property is to remain a hotel. The Town planners have never seriously questioned that contention.

CVP has been actively engaged in an effort to save the pond, while still allowing a new hotel to be built on the property. Our opposition is not about being for or against property rights. The developer doesn't have the zoning rights to do what he wants to do. In fact, he's asking for a special hotel zoning exception and a General Plan Amendment that only he will benefit from.

CVP continues to argue that a new hotel can be constructed on the site, while saving the wetlands and wildlife habitat. We presently have our case before the Army Corps of Engineers, the EPA, and the SF Bay Regional Water Quality Board. For a complete summary of this issue please go to ["Marin 2016 – Part VI: Dispatches from the front – Corte Madera"](#) on the Marin Post.



The Tamal Vista Boulevard Rezoning

In addition to the situation at the Corte Madera Inn, over the past two years, the Town has engaged in a planning review of the Tamal Vista Boulevard corridor. This specific plan was, in part, in response to public outcry over the WinCup project, and to address the lack of planning on that street, which enabled that project. The Town also decided to include decisions about allowing zoning for high density housing on the boulevard, which is presently not allowed.

After several workshops and hearings, and significant public opposition, including comments by CVP and numerous conversations with decision makers, the Town Council passed a new zoning ordinance and General Plan Amendment that allows housing as a conditional use. This decision

follows a trend in Marin, where governments imagine every street lined with small shops with apartments over them. This Norman Rockwell fantasy is alarmingly out of touch with our times, where retail and small store ownership is being decimated by the Internet, and the realities of real estate development and finance, and the profitability of luxury housing when compared to commercial development make such development almost impossible. Nevertheless, the Town believed that this was a good idea.

CVP reminded Town officials throughout the process that they have failed to consider a growing list of new laws at the state level, which are now targeting such zoning to force cities to offer “by right” high density housing development in an areas where housing is an allowed use. For example, newly passed AB1934 opens the door for high density housing in any commercially zoned area, and makes any proposal that fits the zoning almost impossible to deny at the local level. In addition, with as little as 10% “affordable” units (includes up to 120% of local median income) the State Density Bonus of +35% is automatic. Local concerns about height, traffic, lack of schools, parking or infrastructure are no longer allowed. Local zoning control is essentially being removed.



The demise of ABAG

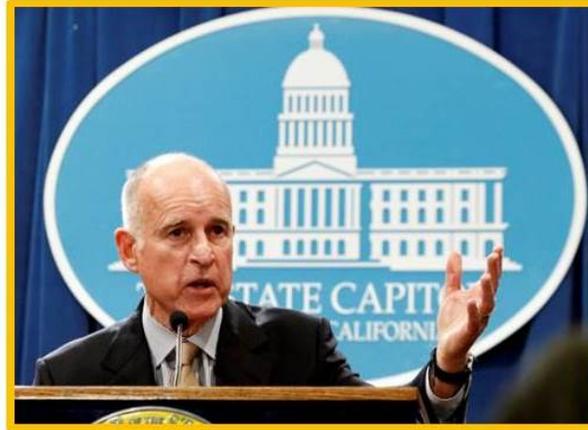
Probably the greatest threat to loss of all local control of zoning and planning is [the recent takeover of the Association of Bay Area Governments \(ABAG\)](#) by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), which is a state agency with no accountability to SF Bay Area voters.

CVP has been fighting against regional control of our local planning and decision making process since our inception. Since 2013, we’ve consistently pointed out the flaws of Plan Bay Area, the regional plan to urbanize Marin County, showing how [it will not reduce greenhouse gases](#) or [solve our affordable housing challenges](#).

An overview of our position on this issue is found in “[Marin 2016 – Part I: Is representative government slipping away.](#)” and “[Marin 2016 – Part X: Endgame.](#)” published on the Marin Post. For an expose on how ABAG and all Marin cities lost future say in planning and housing growth quotas, see “[Regional government sells out Bay Area cities](#)” and “[ABAG leaders betray local cities.](#)” by Zelda Bronstein, on the Marin Post.

CVP continues to work to assist cities in maintaining local control. However, with the full force and funding of state government against our support of “localism,” we will need significant financial support in the coming years, to take on this challenge.

For more discussion about the loss of local control please see “[Marin 2016 – Park IX: Regionalism.](#)” published in the Marin Post.



“By right” Zoning + 35% Density Bonus

Unprecedented forced growth with disregard for cumulative impacts

AB1934 – opening the door to high density housing and density bonus in commercial zones with housing “partner”

Local zoning and planning overridden

*Height, parking, traffic, design, infrastructure no longer arguable
(tax residents to enforce compliance)*

As noted, the loss of local control remains the number one challenge we face. It is now clear that the state is intent on not only removing the voices of local government in planning decisions about high density housing, but they are now working to craft new legislation to force cities to build housing or suffer significant financial penalties.

CVP remain dedicated to opposing these policies and is actively offering assistance to all community groups and government agencies seeking to oppose the consequences of this state juggernaut.



CVP supports pension reform groups

CVP has been actively supporting the work of the [Citizens for Sustainable Pension Plans](#) primarily through the promotion of their public educational materials, studies and articles on the Marin Post.

Fanciful calculations of future gains and lack of accounting for the impacts of unfunded public pension liabilities have a direct effect on public policy in other areas of government such as planning and development.

As a result, policy decisions have become increasingly influenced more by special interests and attempts to stimulate growth than focused on serving the community being impacted. Zoning seems less about enhancing and preserving the community’s character and quality of life than about bringing in as many government grants and new development fees as possible. The focus of planning has also become more driven by avoiding penalties or currying favor with powerful

agencies, than addressing local problems (i.e., actually building affordable housing). The financial burden of supporting this ever expanding mess, with the concomitant salary and benefits excesses is resulting in a never-ending cascade of regressive fees, bond measures, and new taxes levied on those least able to pay, just to enable local government to continue to provide basic public services.

Public services and management responsibilities that only a few decades ago were easily paid out of a municipality's general fund are today constantly being broken out as "new" taxes and fees, resulting in an a la carte government financing model that forces residents to essentially pay twice for the same service. All of these additional fees and taxes are passed through by real estate developers and directly impact the costs of home ownership and renting, making it harder for young people, service workers, retirees and teachers to live in our community.

CVP remains committed to supporting pension reform and transparent financial management of public funds.



Hamilton Field

In March 2015, Marin Sports Academy, LLC submitted a proposal to Novato City officials to build a 1,000 seat baseball stadium and travel-league sports training complex on the former Army Landfill at Hamilton Field. The proposed 55-acre, for profit, commercial development was in clear violation of the original land use plan designating Hamilton Field as a community park for the use and benefit of all Novato residents.

The subject property is the old Hamilton landfill, which was "capped" by the Army Corps due to the presence of a variety of EPA listed toxic chemicals buried under the ground. The contents of the landfill were place there in the 1940's and 1950's, when environmental regulations were all but nonexistent. In their October 2006 assessment, the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board noted a long list of chemical contaminants associated with the landfill, which include:

...volatile and semi-volatile organic compounds, petroleum hydrocarbons, pesticides, poly-chlorinated biphenyls, and metals.

Their report also noted that

Pollutants were detected in the groundwater and soil gas beyond the permitted boundary of the Landfill, which suggested that pollution might not be contained within the Landfill.

According to the developer's own geotechnical report, the proposed project faces significant physical challenges carrying considerable risks of violating the integrity of the cap. If that cap were to be compromised, the results could be catastrophic to health and safety of humans (particularly children), wildlife and aquatic life.

[Preserve Novato](#) was formed by community members in Hamilton and Bel Marin Keys to stop this proposal. CVP has provided legal counsel and financial support for public education for almost two years. For a summary of this issue please go to “[Marin 2016 – Part VI: Dispatches from the front – Hamilton Field](#)” on the Marin Post.



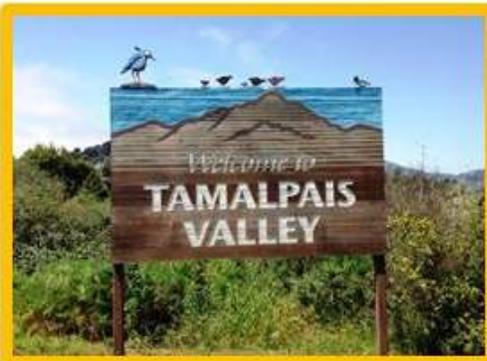
Toxic herbicides in Marin open space

As carefully [documented by Sharon Rushton](#) of Sustainable Tam/Almonte, after spending 7 years developing the [Marin County Open Space District \(MCOSD\) Vegetation & Biodiversity Management Plan \(the Plan\)](#) and its [Tiered Programmatic Environmental Impact Report \(EIR\)](#) at a cost to taxpayers of more than \$779,000, the Supervisors, acting as the MCOSD Board of Directors, voted on November 8th to accept the Plan

as a “reference document” but not certify the EIR, essentially discarding the expensive environmental review document.

The Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Plan was developed to provide an approach to vegetation management on the District’s 16,000 acres to fulfill the goals of environmental stewardship (including reducing wildfire risks and saving indigenous wildlife from invasive species) and protect public safety.

CVP has actively opposed the use of toxic herbicides and pesticides in our open space and our watershed in all instances where alternative methods are available. We continue to assist local groups and concerned citizens, bringing expert consultants and legal advisors to assist. The health of all of Marin’s residents and our ecosystem is non-negotiable.



The Garden Valley Park “paper streets” subdivision

The residents of Garden Valley Park in Tam Valley recently became concerned with an attempt to develop homes on a “paper street” subdivision map, dating back to 1919. A group of investors have been quietly acquiring most of the parcels in the antiquated subdivision then have attempted to disguise their plan by applying for permission to build just one home on one of the lots.

The Tam Valley Design Review Board, however, rejected their disingenuous proposal, calling it a “Trojan Horse,” intended to avoid a full review under the current planning, subdivision laws, and zoning regulations.

CVP has been assisting the Friends of West Tam Valley in their efforts to ensure a thorough and fully transparent public review process, and adherence to all current zoning, planning and environmental laws.



The Sir Francis Drake Boulevard Rehab Plan

The County of Marin is proposing to rehabilitate several miles of the Sir Francis Drake Boulevard from the Highway 101 intersection to Kentfield. Changes to the roadway include narrowing of traffic lanes and reconfiguration of a variety of intersections.

Community concerns about the plan are significant. This is one of the most important thoroughfares in the entire County and it is well known for its unmanageable traffic congestion. Many question whether the “improvements” being proposed won’t in fact make traffic congestion even worse than it already is.

CVP has been assisting community members with their analysis of the proposal and will continue to monitor its progress throughout its environmental review process.



Mill Valley “by right” zoning

In 2015, Mill Valley updated its General Plan along with its 2015-2023 Housing Element. In that document, it noted ways to facilitate affordable housing. As a consequence, and because the city’s zoning ordinance had not been updated in decades, Mill Valley also [proposed a new Multi-Family Residential Mixed Use Zoning Ordinance](#) that would (1) make high density residential “by right” in all existing commercially zoned

areas, and (2) offer developers extremely lenient parking bonuses that reduce requirements from 2 parking spaces per dwelling unit to as little as ½ space per unit in some instances.

“By right” zoning means that a developer cannot be denied approvals so long as a proposal meets all other local zoning and building codes. The current zoning for multifamily in commercial areas was “conditional use,” which means that the City gets to decide whether or not high density multifamily development will be allowed. By right is generally acknowledged to be an open invitation to development.

This trend toward giving developers carte blanche to do as they please, in spite of the ongoing pressure by state agencies to remove to local control, ensures the loss of the quality of life that has made Marin a special place to live.

CVP vigorously opposed this proposal and eventually prevailed in having the “by right” provisions removed.

For a complete summary of this issue please go to “[Marin 2016 – Part VI: Dispatches from the front – Mill Valley](#)” on the Marin Post.



Public Records Act requests – The public’s right to know

Community Venture Partners has been assisting local community organizations throughout Marin, to help them use the California Public Records Act to force local decision makers to be more transparent in their dealings and spending decisions. Unsurprisingly, this has been met with significant resistance by local agencies, which seem intent on continuing to conduct business outside of the public eye.

CVP remains available to educate and assist all members of the community to help them obtain records and documents from their local government.

However, as important as public education and advocacy are, we must also demonstrate better ways to address our growth, planning and affordable housing challenges in the future, and do so in a way that is economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable and just.



The CVP Larkspur Landing Senior Assisted Living and Aquaponic Farm and Educational Research Center

Soon after the defeat of the Larkspur Landing Station Area plan CVP began working on [a proposal](#) to develop a senior assisted living housing facility in combination with a state-of-the-art, aquaponics greenhouse farming facility on a portion of the 10 acre, vacant parcel near the corner of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and Larkspur Landing Circle (owned by the Ross Valley Sanitary District).

CVP's proposal for the site, which is currently zoned for yet another housing / retail / office / hotel development, will involve a collaboration of uses that are better suited to serving local needs and will not significantly increase development impacts, while offering significant public benefits to those most in need in our community.

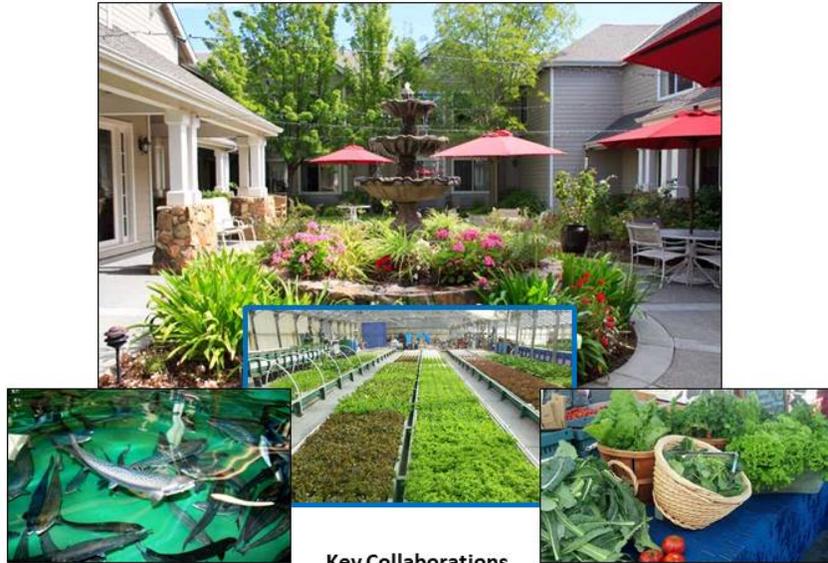
The need for senior assisted living is assured by our aging demographic, and the greenhouse and educational research center will train disadvantaged residents in 21st century job skills, and donate a minimum of \$100,000 per year in free, fresh, organic food to those most in need in the community.

Toward this end, CVP is co-developing groundbreaking technology for its fisheries management, crop yield enhancement, and grow lighting and climate control systems. The remaining acreage on the site would be available for overflow parking for the Country Mart and the ferry terminal, or for the location of a new RVSD headquarters building and corporate yard, or a combination of all these.

[The Larkspur Landing Senior Housing and Aquaponic Farm and Educational Research Center](#) will demonstrate a local serving, sustainable development model that would avoid increasing the most egregious impacts on the City of Larkspur: adding more traffic at the Sir Francis Drake Boulevard / Highway 101 intersection, and adding a significant number of new students to Larkspur's already crowded school system. The two proposed uses (senior assisted living and aquaponics farming) would arguably create the lowest impacts of any type of development possible at this location.

Larkspur Landing Aquaponic Farm and Senior Assisted Living Housing

*LOWEST IMPACT 21st century nonprofit / for profit sustainable development for public good **



Key Collaborations

[Ouroboros Aquaponics](#) - Aquaponics operations
Senior assisted living housing
[AST](#) - Aquaculture systems technology
[Bon Appetit Management Company](#) - Food buyers

[CBO Financial](#) - Financing, grants and tax credits
[HWI Architects](#), San Francisco - Architecture
[Nexus Greenhouse Systems](#) - Greenhouse design

Innovative technology = Enhanced productivity



Solar powered, app driven, fisheries and grow systems, providing **\$100,000 per year** in free produce to local agencies.
This is the future of food.



Affordable housing with car-share included

CVP is currently exploring opportunities to develop micro-loft, infill housing with car-share available for all tenants. Smaller footprint micro-lofts ensure greater affordability. Renters are relieved of the need to own a vehicle because an alternative fuel vehicle will be included in the rental cost.

Units would employ green, zero carbon building techniques and be equipped with state-of-the-art communications networks and energy saving appliances and mechanical systems.



Complete Communities – Better bottom up planning tools for the 21st century

Centralized planning is an outdated, 20th century idea. We live in a bottom up, choice drive, technologically enabled world. Yet with so much technology all round us and so many possibilities available to us, we're still running our cities as if it were the 1950's. This is embarrassing to say the least.

Having reliable real time data and interactivity could enable better planning and development outcomes that are more appropriate to the specific needs of each circumstance.

In 2014, Community Venture Partners proposed a planning initiative called [“Complete Communities.”](#) It was a technological antidote to Plan Bay Area. The goal remains to develop community-based methods to address planning decisions by creating a suite of interactive, Internet-based survey and data analysis tools, to promote more appropriate types of growth and development in each participating community.

The nine county database would enable planners to better understand cumulative impacts of their decisions. Since top down planning has been so deficient in this regard, a corresponding "bottom up" planning approach could also help us arrive at more appropriate funding allocations and planning solutions. The current absence of a balanced planning approach continues to produce the worst of all worlds: development driven primarily by politically motivated grants funding and private interest profits, with little regard for community values or housing needs.

This Internet-based, community surveying / data-sharing platform has been proposed to be implemented throughout the San Francisco Bay Area in collaboration with the Association of Bay Area Governments (“ABAG”). The data collected from municipalities and the public, combined with other publicly available land use and Census data would produce a more accurate picture of regional planning and growth.

The Complete Communities toolset allows each community to conduct polling in real time. Polling topics could include affordable housing, growth, development, public amenities, jobs, traffic, parking, infrastructure and schools, to urbanize or not, and other issues of shared community concern. Both public and private users would be asked to prioritize their community's needs and indicate their visions for their future.

The resultant data would be displayed in real time, using color-coded graphics, comparative database display tools, and Google Maps imagery. Users could "data-mine" the results to compare and contrast how individual communities align with each other or their region. Critically, the online platform would also allow member communities to crowd-source planning and design solutions, or financial assistance and consulting advice, or anything else they might need.

As a problem solving tool, crowdsourcing has often proved to produce superior results more quickly and at a fraction of the cost of traditional consulting arrangements. These kinds of data tools are invaluable to understanding how growth and planning are occurring in the region, and the impacts of local, state, or regional planning initiatives.

CVP met with ABAG officials to discuss the proposal, who agreed that this real time data would be beneficial to their work. They indicated that they needed this kind of data as much as residents do. Our discussions even delved into how it might be funded. Of course, if the project were to be implemented, it would mean that the public would have access to data about all the planning and project proposals afoot, everywhere.

Then the Metropolitan Transportation Commission ("MTC") made its move to take over all regional planning and neuter ABAG. MTC apparently has no interest in "open source" or information sharing.



Regionalism

With the demise of ABAG and the loss of local representation in planning, regional growth pressures continue to intensify and Marin County is a prime target of State and Regional agencies and housing advocacy groups seeking to force cities to increase growth. This push to “urbanize” the suburbs is the number one challenge facing all small communities in the San Francisco Bay Area. It is driven by a growing call for more unelected, top-down government.

For more on this subject please see “[Marin 2016 – Part II: Will the suburbs be hunted to extinction?](#)” and “[Marin 2016 – Part IX: Regionalism,](#)” published in the Marin Post.

“Regionalism” eliminating local control of growth



CVP supports regional cooperation NOT regional control
(by unelected agencies)

CVP continues to support affordable housing and social equity, but we believe that solutions must be economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable, and must be based on planning solutions that are appropriate for each of our small, suburban communities. ***We support regional cooperation not regional control.***

SUPPORT COMMUNITY VENTURE PARTNERS

Facing the significant challenges ahead will only be possible with continued financial support from the community. Help us continue to push back on flawed government decision-making and ill-conceived planning. Please help us continue to build an expanding network of collaboration for change.

Community Venture Partners is solely dependent upon donations from individuals like you.



Donations by Mail

Make checks payable to:
Community Venture Partners, Inc.
73 Surrey Avenue
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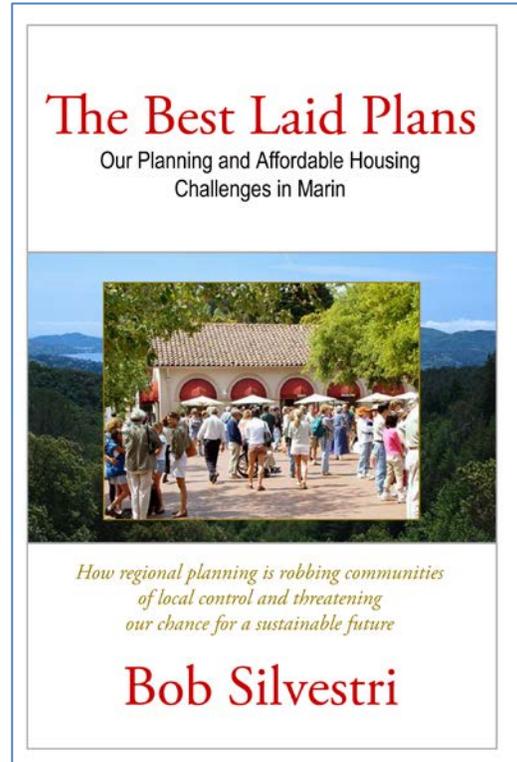
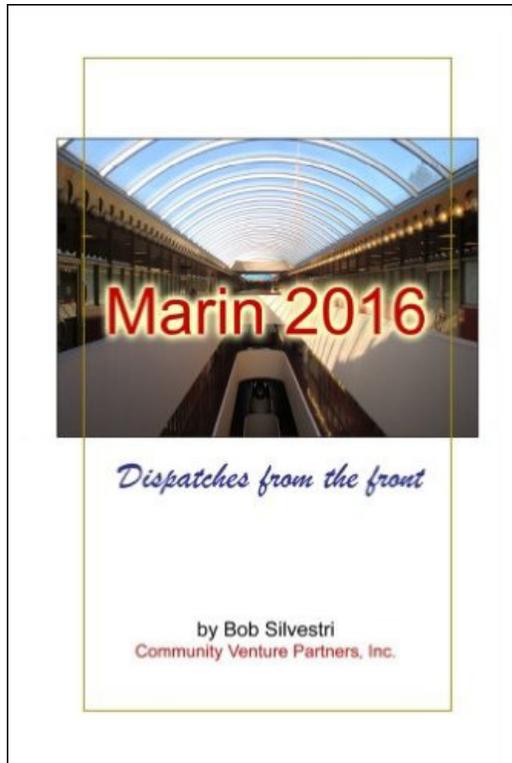
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