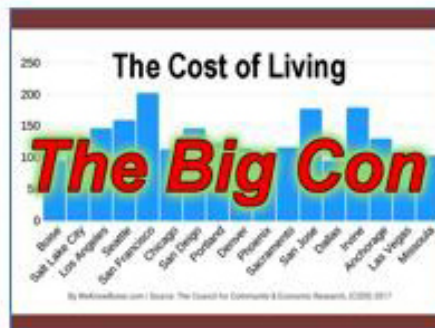


Community Venture Partners, Inc.

A Catalyst for Sustainable Solutions



2020 Annual Report

COMMUNITY VENTURE PARTNERS

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Letter from the President

November 2020

Dear Friends and Supporters,

I am hoping you and yours are all safe and well. To say that 2020 has been a challenge for us all is certainly a huge understatement. At CVP, we have felt the impacts of the Covid-19 economic shutdown in all aspects of our operations, working with community groups, and our ongoing legal actions in the courts.

CVP's community activities have always been a "hands-on" undertaking. Meeting with the community, attending hearings, and conducting strategy meetings has always been at the heart of our efforts. Most of these have either been extremely difficult or impossible to do this year. There are some things that technology just can't replace. But we've all adapted the best we can.

As a result, we've basically had to work twice as hard to get half as far.

Last year, I talked about the difficulty of dealing with the "bunker" mentality of government agencies, in response to community input. In 2020, that mentality has become a physical reality. Government offices have generally been shut down, so access to physical records has been hampered. The courts have also been delayed in handling caseloads. Dockets are constantly being rescheduled and our attorneys must plead on Zoom, which is often quite difficult. This has increased the time and effort required to prosecute our ongoing cases.

Our fundraising has also been significantly impacted by the "new normal" we are operating in. CVP has always relied heavily on small donors for financial support. Our average annual donation is typically less than \$150 from any one source. In 2020, we've lost approximately 20% of our donors due to financial hardship. And this has not just been among small donors, also included a number of long-time donors who typically make significant annual contributions (\$5,000+). At the same time fixed expenses are rising (liability insurance rose 30% year over year). As a result, so far, CVP is running at a loss in 2020.

In spite of this, we continue to support and empower community organizations, initiatives, and events, and publish research and commentary on a wide range of issues. We provide free consultation and advisory services to municipal agencies, elected officials, and bona fide organizations that seek our assistance. And our long-term goals remain unchanged.

Our organization is built upon strategies that maximize both financial and personnel leverage, and employ widespread collaboration with community members and a network of professional consultants (legal, environmental, geological, hydrological, etc.).

The methods we are using have become predominately virtual, but we continue to work to educate the general public, advocate for community voices, challenge government corruption and transgressions of the law, and demonstrate housing, planning, and policy solutions that are economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable and equitable.

At the same time, there has been no lack of challenges needing to be addressed at the state, regional, and local level. Local administrators remain inundated by an onslaught of new housing legislation. So, more and more, CVP's work involves doing what our local and county leaders are failing to do on behalf of our residents.

We expect this trend to continue. The number of housing laws presented in the state legislature, each year, is growing exponentially. Each of these, in one way or another, attempts to wrest control of local planning and zoning away from locally elected government and hand it over to private development interests. This is being achieved through a combination of over-riding, state regulations and housing mandates, and the institution of "by right" provisions in these new law, under which private developers can sue cities and counties for development approvals.

In the absence of the ability to work face to face work, public education has received a greater share of our efforts. CVP has continued to promote the voice of the community through the publication of the [Marin Post](#). The readership of the Marin Post continues to rise at a rate of approximately 2,500 new readers every month.

Lastly, one of our long-term goals is to undertake projects that demonstrate our commitment to innovative, sustainable development, and provide future income streams to reduce dependency on donations. Although we've had to make some adjustments to the projects we've been working on, as described in this Report, that goals remains intact. We believe this is the best way to ensure that we can remain an unbiased, independent voice.

SUPPORT CVP

CVP remains the *only* fully independent, donor-supported 501(c)(3) nonprofit, advocacy organization working across the full spectrum of public policy issues in Marin County, while also providing free services and assistance to community groups and local government agencies. CVP is a pro-active, *solutions-driven* organization promoting a positive vision for the future of Marin County, the San Francisco Bay Area, and California.

CVP receives no funding from corporate interests or government entities. We rely solely on donations from individuals and nonprofit foundations, and we will continue to need your support in the coming year to work on your behalf for government transparency, responsible public finance, environmental protection, sensible growth, and sustainable planning.

We remain extremely grateful to all of you who support our efforts. CVP would simply not exist without your generosity. CVP accepts donations in all forms, including common stock and other negotiable securities. Please [contact us](#) for more information. Also, please remember to sign up on [Smile.Amazon.com](#), and designate Community Venture Partners as your charity beneficiary, so

that .5 percent of the value of all your purchases on Amazon will be automatically donated to CVP by the Amazon Foundation.

Please click [HERE](#) to make your annual donation to CVP

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 concerns. Thank you for your continued confidence and support.

Sincerely,
Bob Silvestri



President

Reader Hint: Throughout this Report you will find [blue text links](#) to more detailed information about each topic discussed. To open a [blue text link](#) in a new browser tab, right click on the link. It will give you the option to open it in a “New Tab”, so you’ll still have the Report opened in the original tab.

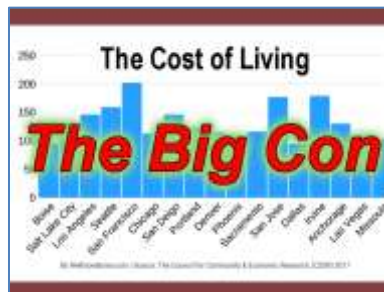
PLEASE NOTE: CVP has gone paperless. We will no longer send out printed copies of our Annual Reports or Updates, unless requested. Please be sure we have your correct email address so you are kept up to date on our activities.

COMMUNITY VENTURE PARTNERS

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

EDUCATE - ADVOCATE - DEMONSTRATE

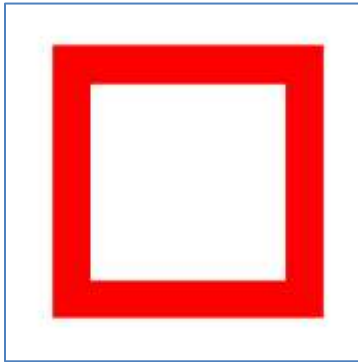
CVP's community-serving efforts include *educating* the public and decision makers about issues of general concern, *advocating* for local voices and government adherence to state and federal laws and regulations, and *demonstrating* better solutions to growth, planning, and affordable housing.



This Report provides an update on our most significant accomplishments and initiatives during the past 12 months.

THE MARIN POST

Keeping the community informed is essential to effective civic engagement.



The [Marin Post](#) remains the single most impactful initiative CVP has undertaken to empower community voices. The Marin Post has become a recognized voice in the North Bay and remains the premiere self-publishing platform for alternative views and investigative citizen-journalism. The Marin Post is also an integral part of how CVP updates our supporters about our activities.

The Marin Post recently surpassed 125,000 unique readers of articles by 187 writers, since our launch in June 2015. Readership has increased 40% year over year and is growing at *over 2,500 new readers every month* (Google Analytics data).

The breadth of topics covered continues to expand and The Marin Post remains the only online, citizen journalist, news magazine in California, where anyone who meets our User Guidelines can contribute content. We continue to add new features and enhancements, work on keeping all accounts secure, and have been able to deliver 99.9% uptime.

Our paid advertising offering, which we discussed in last year's Report, has been completed and launched and is slowly growing. Our ad solution includes unique algorithms that ensure premium page placement for advertisers. Our systems *does not track user behavior* or record personal data.

The Marin Post offers a low-cost, cross-platform advertising opportunity that displays on all computers, tablets, and mobile devices. It is unarguably the best online advertising value in Marin.

Marin Post readers are highly educated professionals of all ages, who are actively engaged in their communities.



According to the "Web Competitive Index," an independent analysis of website advertising competitiveness, the Marin Post is 4th in the North Bay in marketing reach!

To learn more [CLICK HERE](#).

PUBLIC OPINION POLLING

The Marin Post has begun conducting public opinion polls with our readership. For examples, please see:

[*Coronavirus Opinion Poll Results*](#) – April 8, 2020

[*March 3rd Ballot Measure Polling Results!*](#) – March 3, 2020

SOLID PERFORMANCE

The Marin Post's servers, hosted by Amazon AWS and Digital Ocean, presently fend off more than one security attack per minute, 24 hours a day. At the same time operating costs, coding consultant fees, software upgrades, and maintenance costs increase annually. Your continued financial support is critical.

SUPPORT THE MARIN POST

Please consider becoming a contributor of content and [**MAKING REGULAR MONTHLY DONATIONS**](#) so the Marin Post can continue to provide the best possible services.

[Click here to donate](#), and note the "Marin Post" in the "purpose" box when you donate online.

CHALLENGING STATE HOUSING LEGISLATION



Last year we reported our efforts challenging “regionalism”-- an unsanctioned concept of governance that is being imposed on Marin’s cities by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). This represents an unbridled over-reach by state and regional agencies, backed by corporate and real estate development interests, to wrest control of local planning and zoning away from locally elected officials.

Efforts by our state legislature to eliminate single-family zoning and supersede local control of development and growth reached a feverish pitch in 2020.

The state legislature went so far as to use the Covid-19 lockdown as a way to avoid community input and move dozens of draconian laws through committees, all of which would have ripped apart the fabric of California communities.

The grassroots opposition throughout the state included constituencies across the spectrum: from the wealthy towns of Marin at one end to the impoverished, inner city neighborhoods in South Los Angeles, on the other end.



Throughout, CVP has acted as a clearing house, a news conduit, an advisor to local agencies and lobbying groups, and provided free publishing and editorial services to help them all reach a wider audience. Our efforts also included providing comprehensive [research to](#) explain the complexities of the issues and the impacts of potential outcomes to the general public.

CVP publishes commentary on the facts and dynamics that are driving the state’s affordability challenges and how proposed legislation will only exacerbate them. For examples of these efforts, please see:

[*The Failure of Senate Bill 50 – A Tale of Ignorance and Arrogance*](#) – January 21, 2020

[*The Camel is inside the tent – SB 35 and Novato’s “New Urbanism”*](#) – June 30, 2020

[*While the cat’s away: New housing legislation in California*](#) – May 30, 2020

[*The Gaslighting of Single-Family Zoning*](#) – August 16, 2020

Unfortunately, going forward, we anticipate that the situation in Sacramento will only get worse, while the economic stagnation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic continues to hurt those most in need of affordable housing. It is important to note that both of Marin’s elected state

representatives, Assembly member Marc Levine and Senator Mike McGuire, voted their full-throated support for every one the anti-single-family zoning laws that came before them in 2020. These two gentlemen have completely lost touch with their Marin County constituency.

The concept of regional governance states that every part of the San Francisco Bay Region is responsible for providing employee housing and infrastructure for the benefit of major corporate employers that are responsible for most of the region's jobs growth, even if those jobs are not in our county.

Certainly, coordination between local governments to deal with impacts of regional growth is a worthy goal. But the creation of unelected regional agencies to issue mandates and control local growth, planning, and zoning is not just a bad deal for California taxpayers but it violates the California State Constitution.



In spite of our opposition to the misguided laws Senators Scott Wiener and Toni Atkins have been trying to pass, the great irony in all this is that CVP is *a pro-affordable housing organization*. As discussed in this Report, we are actively working to develop affordable housing for those most in need, in Marin County. However, we are opposed to laws that pretend to address the problem, but actually make things worse.

As an example of our work supporting low income communities, please read:

[*Golden Gate Village Resident Council vs. Marin Housing Authority - An Untold Story - Part I – August 6, 2020*](#)

ADDRESSING “AFFORDABILITY”



CVP has continued to analyze our state's “affordability” challenges. And our research and commentary continues to be recognized and published in other journals such as the Berkeley Daily Planet and the LA Planning Report.

Please note that I did not use the term “affordable housing” to describe this challenge. We believe that **affordability is a systemic problem** that impacts all aspects of our lives, including

the costs of healthcare, education, and quality food, as well as housing. The root causes are all the same.

To put this in the simplest possible terms, the problem is that more than half of our working population is simply not paid enough to qualify as what we've always called “middle class.” Our analysis and detailed commentary has been published in The Marin Post. For examples, please see:

[*The Big Con: Affordability facts that politicians will never tell you*](#) – February 28, 2020

[*The Great Disconnect*](#) – June 4, 2020

In the San Francisco Bay Area, we are presently drowning in the politically correct view that embracing big government and no-holes-barred, hyper-growth, driven by outsized regional housing quotas, is the best way to address affordability. These policies are aggressively funded by major corporations and vested interests, hell-bent on placing the blame for all society's dysfunctional outcomes on middle-class, suburban families.



The lack of affordability simply cannot be addressed by tinkering with planning and zoning, because that is not its cause. It is driven by economics, inequitable tax policies, lack of equal access to opportunity, and failures of our public education system.

The State continues to cling to *a single-minded strategy of endlessly increasing taxes and top-down control of growth and planning*, combined with the removal of local zoning laws, in the misguided belief that it will unleash powerful market forces that will magically solve all our affordability problems. It is a belief system based purely on ideology, with no basis in facts. CVP has continued to challenge Sacramento's "tax and spend" mentality and dissect their false assumptions about planning and growth policies.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING



As a solutions-driven organization, CVP believes that growth and land use decisions must be grounded in localism and incorporate locally-driven processes that enable communities to solve their own growth, affordable housing, and planning challenges in environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable ways.

Affordable housing goals would be better served if state and federal government provided funding directly to local government than by enacting unfunded mandates and enforcing housing quota compliance.

This year, we've published commentary about how the affordable housing development business [really operates](#), the [enormity of our overall "affordability" challenges](#), as a society, how that impacts our ability to provide affordable housing, and what governments could be doing, right now, [to create more affordable housing](#) in ways that are less negatively impactful on existing communities. Our primary vehicle for the widespread distribution of our research is the [Marin Post](#). For examples of these efforts, please see:

[*The Dow Jones, CalPERS, and Us*](#) – November 13, 2019

[*When the housing “crisis” meets a financial crisis, who will pick up the tab?*](#) – November 21, 2019

[*Financing Affordable Housing in California*](#) – February 6, 2020

CVP has worked to remain a voice of reason in the mix and a voice advocating for middle class and working class residents in the Bay Area. We continue to work with elected officials and offer free, strategic, advisory support to other organizations, including CO\$T, Livable California, Friends of West Tam Valley, the Lifehouse Agency, Citizen Marin, Citizens for Sustainable Pension Plans, MADD, Sustainable TamAlmonte, Marin Sierra Club, and others.

Lastly, as explained in detail in this Report, CVP continues to pursue bricks and mortar solutions, such as our collaborative proposal to develop senior assisted living and affordable housing for Marin County residents with disabilities, at Larkspur Landing. We have also recently launched a new initiative, which we call “Generative Affordable Housing.”

SOCIAL EQUITY

Social equity underpins CVP’s work to promote fair and transparent local government decision-making and sustainable planning solutions. To do this effectively, we work to increase public awareness and understanding about why our economy and social institutions are failing to address shared social equity needs. The public will not support socially equitable solutions unless they have a certain level of general knowledge in hand. For more on the complexities of this issue and what we could be doing about it, please see: [*What now?*](#) – January 2, 2020.

PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Sustainable planning must be grounded in environmental science. CVP continues to support of environmental preservation and the reduction of the negative environmental impacts of uncontrolled development and growth. As a proponent of green building and green technology, CVP publishes commentary, scientific research, and analytical reports on these issues on the Marin Post.

In times of economic crisis, our planet always ends up getting the short shrift. This is evident everywhere, particularly at the federal level, where significant environmental protections established over the past 50 years are being set aside, daily. In California, new state housing laws are incrementally dismantling the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), ironically, in the name of the environment.



California progressives are cherry-picking environmental science to support their ideological, predetermined outcomes and political goals. As a result, locally elected government, community voices, historic neighborhoods, and our open spaces are all under siege.

CVP has published investigative reporting about how environmental sustainability issues are inextricably linked to social equity and social justice policies. Our work also includes alerting the public about specific, critical situations in need of public participation.

For recent examples, please see:

[*Party on to the Apocalypse*](#) – December 12, 2019

[*New CEQA guidelines for traffic impacts make assessment meaningless*](#) - May 15, 2020

[*The Biggest Loser*](#) – September 19, 2020

[Click here](#) for a list of other environmental studies and articles by third-party authors and institutions that have been published on the Marin Post.

FIRE SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



The tragedy of wildfires has become our new normal, in California. CVP has been sounding the alarm about this issue and how we should be preparing for it in Marin, for years. We've led a chorus of voices pushing back against state legislation, recently signed into law by Governor Newsom, which puts large parts of many southern Marin cities at extreme risk. Among these are the new "Accessory Dwelling Unit"

(ADU) laws, which allow property owners to add 2 second units, "by right," overriding all local planning, zoning, and fire safety laws.

This legislation directly threatens [the health, safety, and general welfare of California residents](#) living in areas designated as "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones" (VHFHSZ), as prescribed by The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE).

For example, more than 1/3 of all homes in the City of Mill Valley are located in a VHFHSZ fire zone and at risk of catastrophic loss: losses that potentially triple if the new ADU laws are not challenged.

To read more on this subject, please see:

[Marin Cities need to push back against "by right" ADU development in high fire hazard areas](#) – February 7, 2020

[Recent ADU legislation threatens public safety in high risk fire zones in Marin](#) – February 12, 2020

FINANCIAL MISMANAGEMENT BY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

CVP continues to doggedly monitor how local government agencies are managing their operations and spending our tax dollars. We continue to publish investigative reports about mismanagement and financial malfeasance. For examples, please see:

[The Marin County version of the 1980's S&L Crisis?](#) – November 5, 2019

[A penny for your thoughts and \\$100 billion for us - the Faster Bay Area ballot measure](#) – December 17, 2019

As discussed in detail in this Report under “CVP Case Studies,” below, we have also brought legal actions against city and county agencies for mismanagement and misappropriation of funds, and brought charges before the Marin County Civil Grand Jury and the Office of the Marin County District Attorney.



CVP and the Marin Post bring together technical experts, legal counsel, and financial analysts in collaborative efforts that have resulted in the publication of a number of ground breaking “whistleblower,” investigative reports on a variety of subjects.

Some of these include dissections of the ongoing financial mismanagement of the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit Agency (SMART) and the boondoggle of SMART’s purchase of the commercial freight operations and liabilities of the North Coast Railroad Authority, by Mike Arnold, Ph.D. and Bernard Meyers. Another is a series of exposes, by Jim Phelps, on the accounting shenanigans and false claims that are being perpetuated by Marin Clean Energy in an attempt to explain away why their rates are higher and less green than PG&E’s.

In many cases, the Marin Post’s publication of these stories was the first and *only* coverage made available to the public. For examples, please see:

[What SMART is not telling the public](#) - November 20, 2019

[Part II - A Primer on What SMART is Not Telling the Public](#) - December 4, 2019

[The NCRA Boondoggle: From Bankruptcy to Bankruptcy in 30 years](#) – April 4, 2020

[*The NCRA Boondoggle Part II: Other Bidders Never Had a Chance*](#) – April 17, 2020

[*MCE – Misleading Consumers Everywhere*](#) – August 16, 2020

[*SMART Just Got Hit by a Freight Train – PART I*](#) – August 22, 2020

[*SMART Just Got Hit by a Freight Train – PART II*](#) – August 27, 2020

CVP 2020 CASE STUDIES

CVP regularly fields requests for assistance from community groups about local planning and zoning decisions by local governments that are not supported by the majority of residents.

Challenging Planning & Zoning Decisions

THE MARINSHIP - SAUSALITO (2020)

“The Marinship,” lies east of Bridgeway and North of Napa Street and is Marin’s only remaining industrial-zoned, working-waterfront community. As such, we believe, has an important role to play in attracting high-paying, 21st century jobs to Marin. It is a significant historical site, once the largest shipyard building “Liberty Ships” during WWII. Many of the original buildings associated with the shipyard still stand today and are a defining characteristic unique to Sausalito.

In January of 2020, CVP was approached by the *Marinship Working Waterfront Coalition* (MWWC), a group of residents, property owners, business owners, and stakeholders representing a diverse and eclectic mix of maritime industries, small manufacturers, artisans, artists, tradesmen, and tech startups.



Despite commitments in the City’s new General Plan Update to preserve the physical, aesthetic, cultural, and economic character of the Marinship, the MWWC was worried that such policy statements would be eroded for the sake of economic and financial expediency in the future.

The MWWC asked CVP to help apprise the public and policy makers of the socioeconomic importance of the Marinship, the consequences of failure to properly assess and address the environmental and life safety risks, and, if needed, to legally challenge the adequacy of the proposed General Plan Update and Environmental Impact Report.

In our opinion, the Marinship faces some of the most formidable, existential challenges found anywhere. These include sea level rise, liquefaction risk, significant land subsidence, flooding, toxins in the soils, the rising saline water table, the lack of emergency access, rapidly failing infrastructure, and more.

These challenges are reaching a point where addressing them is becoming critical to the future of the Marinship, its property values, its ability to attract private capital and retain jobs, and even to the solvency of the City itself and its ability to generate tax sufficient revenues in the years ahead.

CVP engaged a team of experts and legal advisors to analyze the City's Draft General Plan Update and Draft EIR, which resulted in our submission of hundreds of pages of analysis, comments, and suggestions for improvement.

To read those comments and a detailed explanation of the issues, please see:

[*Sausalito 2040 General Plan Update: Focus on The Marinship - June 14, 2020*](#)

[*Sausalito 2040 General Plan Update – Part II - The Kosmont Economics Study - June 26, 2020*](#)

[*The Sausalito 2040 General Plan Update - Part III - Housing and the Marinship - July 16, 2020*](#)

[*MR Wolfe & Associates file comment letter on the Sausalito 2040 General Plan Update and DEIR - August 6, 2020*](#)

[*Community Venture Partners files comment on Sausalito General Plan Update and DEIR - August 6, 2020*](#)

[*Watershed Sciences' analysis and comments on the Sausalito GP Update and DEIR - August 7, 2020*](#)



Being a solutions-driven organization and faced with the overwhelming evidence of the need for the City to take immediate and decisive action, CVP began providing the community and the City with an outline of a path forward, including options to finance the work.

Change is coming to the Marinship and the economic forces and overwhelming environmental forces at play indicate that it will be dramatic. What remains to be seen is whether it will be for the better or for the worse. That will take careful and deliberate decision making and planning.

To learn more, please see:

[*The Future of the Marinship: PART I - September 6, 2020*](#)

[*The Future of the Marinship: Part II - Innovation - September 11, 2020*](#)

Our work with the community and the City is ongoing, after having early success in convincing the City to dramatically extend the public comment period during these difficult times due to Covid-19.

EXPOSING GOVERNMENT CORRUPTION & MALFEASANCE

INVESTIGATION OF THE MARIN COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICE CONTRACTS PROGRAM (2017 to 2020)

CVP regularly initiates its own, independent investigations into corruption and malfeasance by government agencies. This is a follow-up on one such investigation that CVP began more than two years ago, which came to a finality in 2020. Overall, the process of bringing this particular case against Marin County revealed **a level of corruption and fraud, at multiple County agencies** and among elected officials, far beyond what we had originally imagined.



The complete background history about this effort can be found in [the full 174 page investigative report and complaint](#) CVP filed with the Marin County District Attorney's Office.

On the positive side, **as a result of CVP actions, the County of Marin was forced [to abandon their decades-long, fraudulent "grants to buy votes" program](#)**. The replacement program has eliminated the fraudulent "contracts" scheme and reduced the total funding by 80%. And, although the original \$27 million in taxpayer funds spent prior to our filing of our complaint will never be recovered, it is anticipated that going forward our actions will save that taxpayers of Marin County that same amount over the next ten years.

In brief, the County of Marin had been maintaining an off-ledger "slush fund" which doled out taxpayer funding to favored groups (between \$2.5 and \$3 million per year), for more than 15 years. These gifts of public funds were intentionally disguised as "contracts for services" so that they would not show up as itemized expenses in the County's published, Annual Budget. These fraudulent contracts, which were written by the recipients, themselves, were directed by Marin Supervisors to reward their supporters.

One would think that when malfeasance of this magnitude is presented to the Marin County Civil Grand Jury and the Marin County District Attorney, there might be some concern and some action taken. Remarkably, the exact opposite occurred. Both agencies did everything they could to bury the voluminous evidence and collaborated in a cover-up of this theft of public funds.

The Civil Grand Jury not only failed to investigate the County but, [as reported in the Marin II](#), they met with the County and turned over all our evidence against them, in order to craft a backroom “settlement” that would help the County avoid prosecution.

We then contacted the State Attorney General’s Office, but were informed that we were required to present the case to the Marin County District Attorney’s office, first. But, when we presented with the evidence, which included detailed accounting and emails, to the Marin DA, they quickly buried any investigation into the matter and refused to return CVP’s emails and phone calls. As bad as that was, it gets worse.

Other state committees and agencies in Sacramento, such as the Office of the State Controller, have the ability to take action and recommend that the State Auditor look into the matter. But their caveat is that one of their own, an elected state legislator or senator, has to “recommend it.” CVP contacted more than a dozen state assembly members and senators to request help, including Marc Levine and Mike McGuire, and presented them with the case evidence, but not a one returned our calls or emails.

Finally, the California State Auditor’s Office maintains a “Whistleblower” hotline, ostensibly, to investigate this type of financial malfeasance. At first, after we explained the facts and circumstances, they said they were eager to look into the case, but soon after, the State Auditor buried the whole thing without a trace and stopped responding to our emails.

Frankly, we came away from it all astonished at the collusion and corruption at all levels of our state and local government.

In the course of this undertaking, CVP published a series of articles on some of the details of this case. For those, please follow the links, below.

[*Complaint to DA Regarding Illegal Acts and Regulatory Violations by Marin County*](#) - October 2, 2019

[*Marin County scrambles to correct its illegal Community Service Contracts Program*](#) - November 26, 2019

[*The County's sudden change of heart compounds the County's violations?*](#) - December 3, 2019

The complete historical documentation on this case can be found using these links,

[*The Marin County “Community Service Contracts” Program - Investigative Report - PT I*](#), published July 4, 2019

[*The Marin County “Community Service Contracts” Program - Investigative Report - PT II*](#), published July 9, 2019

[The Marin County “Community Service Contracts” Program - Investigative Report - PT III](#), published July 18, 2019 -

[The Marin County “Community Service Contracts” Program - Investigative Report - PT IV](#), published July 24, 2019

[Appendix of Evidence – A and Appendix of Evidence – B](#)

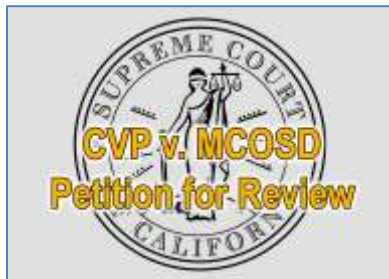
PUBLIC ATTORNEY GENERAL LEGAL ACTIONS

Since our inception, CVP has been a fearless public advocate for government transparency, adherence to the law, and the protection of the community’s right to comment and engage in government decision-making. This generally requires bringing forth legal petitions in the courts.

In some cases, our arguments, which always include options to avoid litigation, have prevailed without the need to go to court. In those instances, where filing a petition was not required, city and county agencies corrected the defects we had challenged, making litigation unnecessary. However, when all else fails, we are always ready to bring our arguments before a presiding judge.

The following are some of the cases we’ve been involved with, over the past 12 months.

CVP v. COUNTY OF MARIN OPEN SPACE DISTRICT: (2017 to Present: ongoing)



As we thoroughly documented and explained in last year’s Annual Report, in 2017, CVP filed a petition in Marin Superior Court against the County of Marin Open Space District for their violation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in opening the Alto Bowl Preserve to mountain biking on single track hiking trails, without adequate environmental assessment of impacts and in direct violation of their own *Roads and Trails Management Plan* (RTMP).

CVP won this case on both counts in trial court, but that decision was [subsequently challenged by the County](#) in the Court of Appeal, where the Court issued split decision. The Court of Appeal’s opinion, in their unpublished decision, was that the County had not violated CEQA, but had violated its own RTMP, and therefore they let the trial court’s ruling stand: that the County’s approval of introducing mountain bikes on the single-tracking Bob Middagh hiking trail in the Alto Bowl was to be “set aside.”

For a complete review of our arguments and motions and the Court of Appeal opinion, please see:

[*CVP petitions California Supreme Court on Appellate Court CEQA Opinion*](#) - March 7, 2020

Subsequently, CVP petitioned the California Supreme Court to review / reverse the Appeal Court's opinion. Please see:

See: [*CVP v MCOSED: CVP Petition For Review Reply Filed with CA Supreme Court*](#) - April 4, 2020

The California Supreme Court denied CVP's request for reconsideration, which means it neither ruled for or against the Court of Appeal's opinion. However, in a highly unusual ruling, it stated emphatically that the Court of Appeal opinion could not be published. This was unusual because they were not asked to rule on that issue and it clearly infers that they do not feel the Court of Appeal opinion was well-reasoned. Our suspicion is that CEQA is just too controversial an issue, politically, right now and they wanted nothing to do with it.

Keep in mind that an unpublished Court of Appeal opinion does not become case law or otherwise preclude similar petitions in the future, by other community members. This may be a very important point, going forward.

For a detailed explanation, please see:

[*CVP v MCOSED: CVP Petition to the CA Supreme Court denied: What now?*](#) - April 26, 2020

As it stands at this time, the original trail court ruling remains in effect, which states,

“A Peremptory Writ of Mandate (“Writ”) shall issue under seal of the Court, ordering Marin County Open Space District to set aside... its approval of the Bob Middagh Trail and Gasline Trail Project with respect to the District's decision to allow bikes on the Middagh trail.”

But the County is challenging this in the Trial Court, and a final decision is still pending.

Please note that CVP is *not against* allowing mountain biking in the Marin Open Space District. Our position is simply that allowing a combination of hiking, mountain (and electric) biking, and equestrian use on the same, narrow, winding, single-track trails is too hazardous and environmentally destructive (it forces “off trail” use). We support the separation of these user groups, as is done in Europe, to allow all to enjoy the open space, equally.

We are now headed back to the Trial Court for its final ruling. In anticipation of doing so, CVP has helped local community groups submit 5 new proposals about how to improve the Alto Bowl trails and improve the visitor experience for all. In addition, CVP has submitted its own proposal to create a separate mountain biking “east west” connector trail in the Alto Bowl Preserve, to serve the biking community's needs and resolve future conflicts.

We hope that this pro-active approach will result in an outcome beneficial to all users. The disposition of this case and timing of a future, final hearing in the Trial Court is unknown at this time.

CVP v. THE ASSOCIATION OF BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS (ABAG): (2018 to Present: ongoing)



As noted in our 2019 Annual Report, in April of 2019 CVP filed a [Cease and Desist demand letter](#) with ABAG, and a subsequent [Writ of Mandate](#) in San Francisco Superior Court in June 2019, regarding the agencies violations of the state's open meetings law, the Ralph M. Brown Act. Those actions were responded to with a series of [unusual counter-motions](#) and dirty tricks by ABAG, which resulted in what I have characterized as the most bizarre ruling I've ever witnessed.

Superior Court [Judge Schulman ruled against CVP](#), based on what one might charitably call "creative" legal theories, misconstrued facts, illogically conflated issues, and disregard for black letter law.

As a result, CVP filed an appeal. And in doing so, we brought in legal counsel who specializes in this area of the law, Paul Boylan, who thankfully took on the case on a full contingency basis. This case is still pending. Briefs have been filed but due to the disruption of the Covid crisis, no court date has been set, at this time.

For updates on our appeal, please see:

[*CVP/LC v ABAG on Brown Act Appeal - Update*](#) - January 29, 2020

[*CVP/LC v ABAG on Brown Act Violation Goes to the Court of Appeal*](#) - June 19, 2020

FWTV v. COUNTY OF MARIN: (2016 to Present: ongoing)

CVP has been providing assistance to Friends of West Tam Valley (FWTV) for more than four years, regarding the community's battle with the County of Marin to correct its faulty development approval process. The background information about this project can be found in our summary of activities in [last year's Annual Report](#).

Suffice it to say, had it not been for FWTV, the County would have already approved a large, luxury housing development right in the middle of a box canyon, situated in a "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone" (VHFHSZ), and in an area prone to landslides, flooding, and unstable geology.

The most egregious examples of the County's lack of due diligence has included improperly processing development applications that was legally incomplete, showing complete disregard for the findings of the Tam Design Review Board, processing a fraudulent lot merger

application, wherein the applicant did not even own all the land parcels included in the merger proposal, and initiating a CEQA Initial Study process and requesting funds from developers, without a complete project application in hand (a violation of the County's own CEQA guidelines).

With CVP's ongoing guidance and assistance, FWTV is continuing to fight for adherence to all applicable state and local regulations, adherence to the newly issues CEQA Guidelines for projects in VHFHSZ areas, and full transparency with regard to all dealings between County agencies and land developers.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

LARKSPUR LANDING SENIOR ASSISTED LIVING HOUSING DEVELOPMENT: (2015 to Present: ongoing)



Starting in 2015, CVP began working on a proposal to develop senior assisted-living housing on the 10-acre parcel at Larkspur Landing, owned by the Ross Valley Sanitary District (RVSD).

Our collaborative, development proposal includes 120 units of assisted living units (40% memory/dementia care) and 40 units of market rate senior housing, developed by Oakmont Living, 32 units of very low income housing for the [Lifehouse Agency](#) of Marin, in collaboration with [Eden Housing of Hayward](#), and a

100 room, boutique hotel (required by the City of Larkspur).

Our goal is to demonstrate that private parties can successfully develop “community supported and community serving” affordable housing projects that do not result in significant negative impacts on the environment, traffic, parking, schools, and existing infrastructure. Our proposal includes the development of two new public parks, a pond restoration, and hiking and biking access trails.

This effort is part of our goal of becoming a financially, self-sufficient nonprofit organization to the fullest extent possible. CVP is pleased to announce that we have secured private donor commitments of approximately \$4 million in support for the affordable housing component of the project.

RVSD recently completed remediation of the soils, under EPA supervision, and is preparing to move forward on the disposition of the property. All indications are that RVSD will post an RFP within the next 3 months, at which time our team will make an offer to purchase and develop the property. As we've noted, CVP has been working with the City of Larkspur for over 3 years, to ensure that our proposal meets all of their regulatory and General Plan policies and requirements.

Of note, however, is that recently passed state legislation may impact the possible uses of this site. Sacramento agencies have also increased pressure on the City of Larkspur to quadruple their market-rate housing production quota. At this time, it is difficult to determine how all these new regulations will impact the outcome of our efforts.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING “GENERATIVE” DESIGN INITIATIVE: (2020: ongoing)



Our “Affordable Housing Generative Design Initiative” is an endeavor to create a new way of conceptualizing, designing, and constructing affordable housing.

Generative design, as applied to architecture and housing, is defined as an iterative design process that involves simple programmatic parameters and methods that generate a vast number of design variations and options that the designer can choose from to suit specific circumstances, locations, budgets, and needs, while reducing the time and costs of design, development, and construction.

Generative design methodology employs computer-aided design with “off-site” componentized, prefabricated construction techniques to offer inexpensive and highly flexible housing design / development tools that can result in cost-effective solutions to address infill, affordable housing opportunities.

With CVP President’s professional expertise, pro bono engineering consultants, and employing interns from the USC School of Architecture, who are proficient in CAD / BIM software, CVP has completed its first demonstration prototype, which is presented in ATTACHMENT “A.” We would conservatively estimate that the work accomplished to date would be valued at well over \$100,000 at market rate, but which CVP accomplished for an investment of less than \$10,000.

Our prototype, designed for an actual site in Marin County, is for infill, live/work affordable housing for artists, artisans, designers, and small business professionals.

Future prototypes will be for “active elderly” senior housing (for the “downsizing” market) and ex-urban infill, micro-unit housing for young professionals. The goal of this research is to advance the concept to the stage where we can present to foundations and investors to attract grants and investment capital, at a future date.

We are currently in conversations with various end-users to apply it to actual projects in our community.

THE NEW TECH AQUAPONIC FARM AND EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH CENTER:

(2016 to 2020)

CVP spent 3 years researching, engineering, and planning the New Tech Aquaponics Farm & Educational Research Center, located in Half Moon Bay, California. The goal was to demonstrate collaborative, community-serving, and environmentally sustainable development, using advanced engineered agriculture technology.



Another primary goal was to address food security and doing so by donating 10% of annual revenues in fresh produce to those in need, in each community in which a facility was located.

The New Tech Aquaponics project pioneered a number of innovations in engineered agriculture that dramatically reduced environmental impacts and resource demands, increased food production per acre by a factor of 25, created a replicable model for infill, engineered agriculture in urban and suburban

communities, demonstrated cutting-edge grow systems technology to dramatically increase crop yields, provided public education and school programs, created 21st century jobs training for veterans and economically disadvantaged residents, and advanced collaborative research and the science of aquaponics by providing “open source, cloud-based” data sharing. Our proposal was supported by a world-class advisory team.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW A REALTIME VIDEO TOUR PRESENTATION](#) of the prototype farm facility.

Unfortunately, the project has fallen victim to the Covid-19 pandemic. Our business model was primarily based on the existing buyer network established by project partner Ouroboros Aquaponic Farm, which consisted of direct sales to high-end restaurants, a network of chefs, and other boutique regional buyers.

These customers were essential to achieving sustainable operating margins: buyers who stood to benefit from our technology’s ability to deliver custom-tailored orders in record time. As you can imagine, this entire business has been decimated by restaurant and corporate office closings, to the extent that, presently, no one can predict when or if many of these customers will ever come back.

At this time, CVP has ceased all work on this venture, pending a reassessment of the situation at a future date and a determination if any further effort is justified or can be monetized. Fortunately, most of our engineering and pre-development costs were done pro bono by our network of advisors, partners, and collaborators, so our financial investment over the past four years has been minimal.

#####

ATTACHMENT "A"

THE “GENERATIVE DESIGN” AFFORDABLE HOUSING INITIATIVE

by Community Venture Partners, Inc.

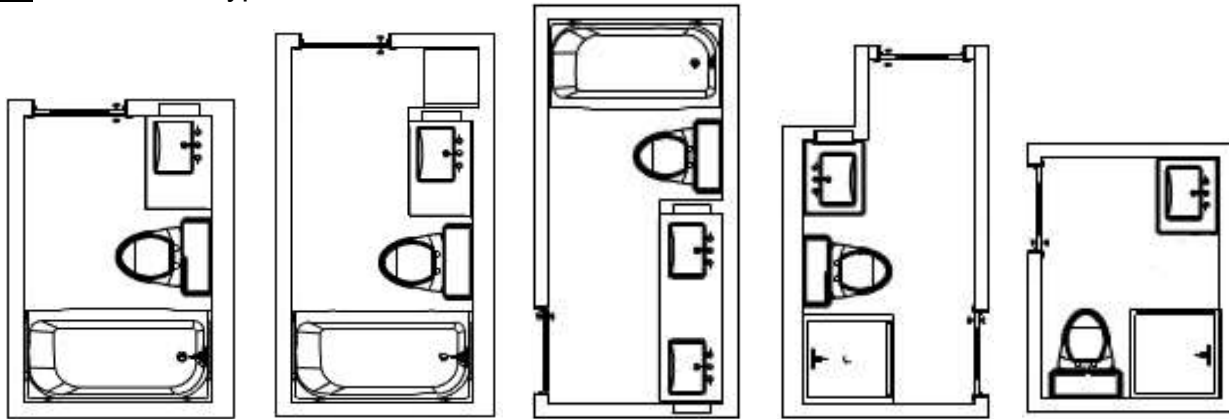
The CVP “Generative Design Affordable Housing Initiative” is an endeavor to create a new way of conceptualizing, designing, and constructing affordable housing. The generative design methodology employs state-of-the-art computer-aided design software with “off-site” componentized construction to offer inexpensive and highly flexible housing design / development tools that can result in cost-effective solutions, adapted to the requirements of any site in any location.



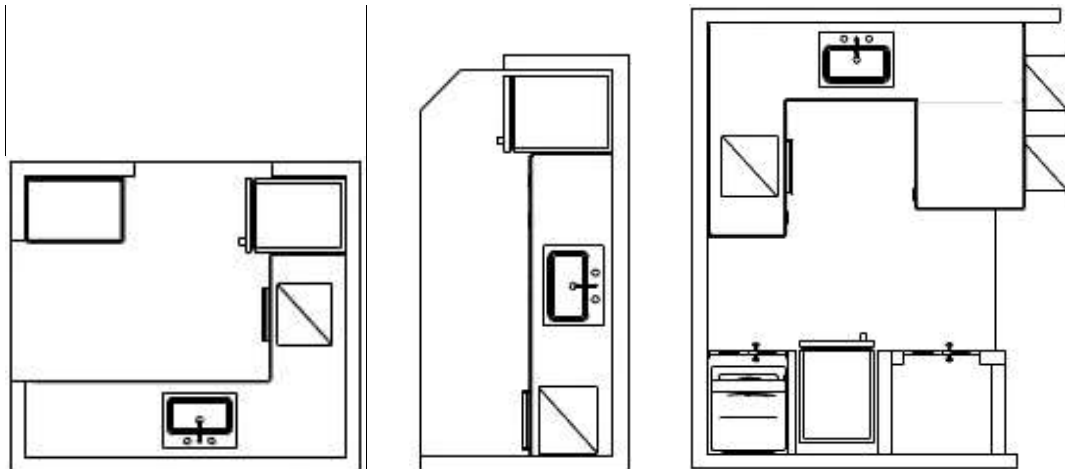
This presentation is a demonstration prototype of that methodology as applied to an actual, half-acre, development site in Mill Valley, California. The 17-unit, mixed-use project provides live/work affordable housing for artists, artisans, designers, and small business professionals, and includes shared work studios, a public gallery, café, and retail stores.

The Design/Build Methodology: Generative design starts with standardized, physical components of the project. In this case that consists of residential use types, such as bathrooms, kitchens, and living spaces. These components will be pre-manufactured off-site and combined in a variety of configurations that are adapted to the project's overall design parameters.

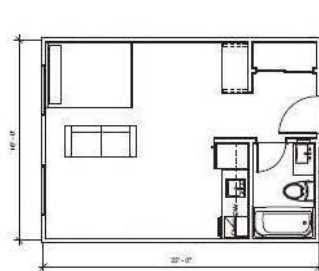
Examples: Bathroom Types



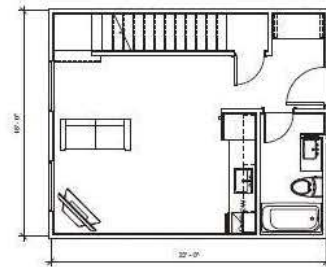
Examples: Kitchen Types



Components are combined with various living spaces to create prototypical unit types.



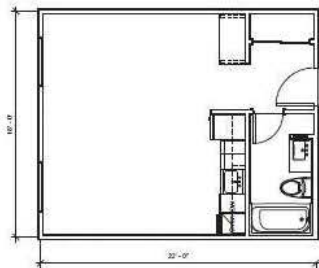
TYPE A.1
16' STUDIO
8' BATH/KITCHEN



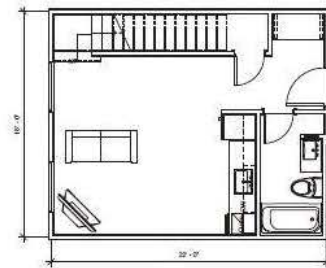
TYPE A.1
18' LIVE/WORK LOFT
10' BATH/KITCHEN



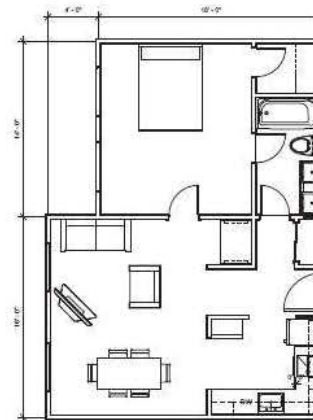
TYPE B
20' STUDIO
U - Kitchen



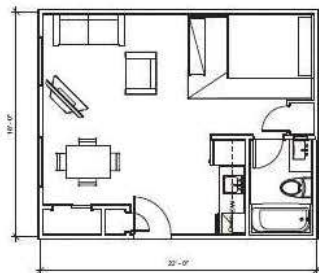
TYPE A.1
18' STUDIO
10' BATH/KITCHEN



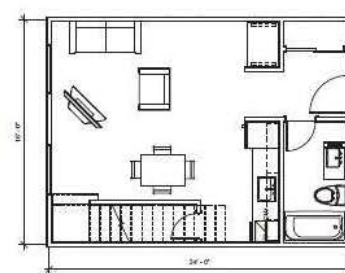
TYPE A.1
18' LOFT
10' BATH/KITCHEN
UNDER STAIR CLOSET



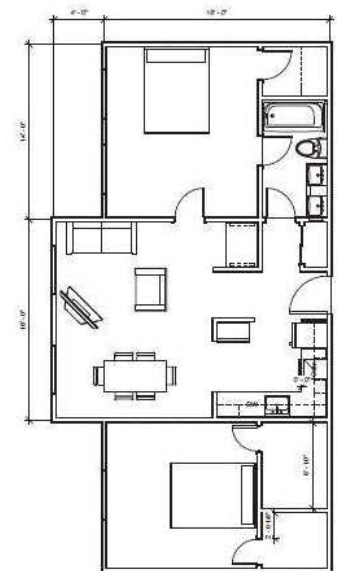
TYPE C
18' 1 BED/1BATH
L - Kitchen



TYPE A.2
18' STUDIO
+OFFICE
+LARGER BEDROOM
8' BATH/KITCHEN



TYPE A.2
18' LOFT
10' BATH/KITCHEN
SMALLER UNDER STAIR CLOSET
BETTER FURNITURE LAYOUT



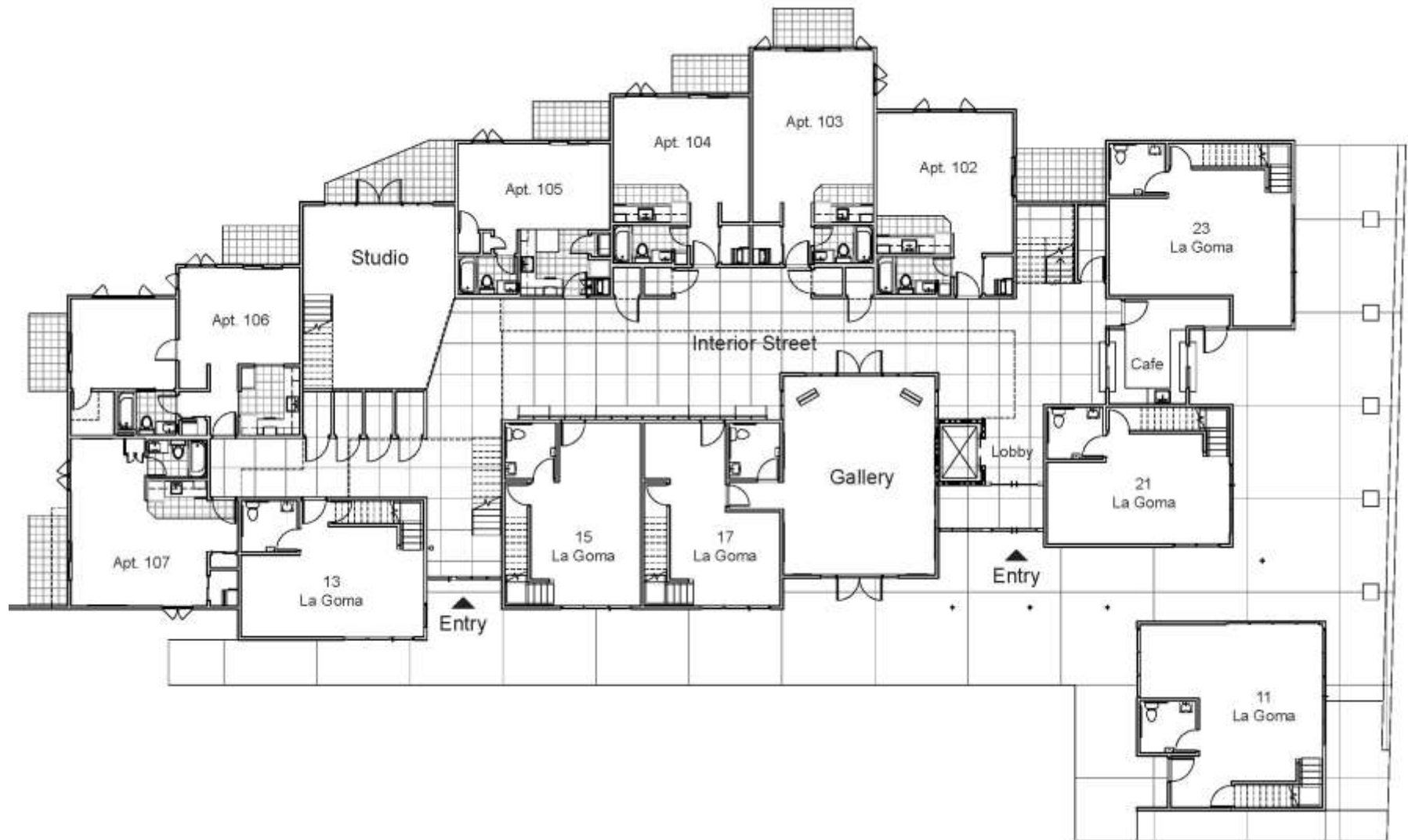
TYPE C
18' 2 BED/2BATH
L - Kitchen

All Lofts are 18'

TYPES

- A.1 - Straight Kitchen, Corner Utility w/ Storage on Back
- A.2 - Straight Kitchen, Corner Utility w/ Storage on Side
- B - U Kitchen, Connected Utility on Back
- C - L Kitchen, Separated Utility on Back

Varying combinations of living unit types and public spaces result in a unique architectural statement that reflects the overall design parameters and site constraints for the project. Note that this live/work design includes outdoor patios, indoor public “street” spaces, a public gallery, and shared working studio space.



Starting with very simple components that are cost-effective to construct, results in a rich design solution that is perfectly adapted to its location and integrated into the scale and massing of its surrounding community. This particular project is solar-powered and meets LEED Platinum certification standards.



Dynamic Architectural Design



Appropriate Residential Scale



Integrating Mixed-Use into the Community



Dramatic Interior Streetscapes with Natural Light and Living-Wall Greenspace



Striking Contemporary Residential Unit Interiors



CVP Financials: October 31, 2019 to November 1, 2020

Income/Expense

Income		
Donations		\$114,353
Payroll Protection Program Loan		\$12,743
Investment Income		
Corporate Bond & Other Interest	\$7,992	
Dividend Income	\$867	
Interest-Savings, Short-term CD	\$25	
Total Investment Income		\$8,884
Program Service Fees		\$224
Total Income		\$136,204

Expense		
Bank Charges		\$0
Business Auto Expenses		\$301
Business Registration Fees		\$841
Dues & Fees		\$99
Equipment		\$1,187
Event Materials		\$123
Insurance		
Business Umbrella Coverage		\$376
Errors & Omissions		\$1,236
Health Insurance		\$3,411
Liability		\$1,648
Meals & Meetings		\$425
Merchant Fees - PayPal		\$681
Operating Costs		
Advertising		\$0
Postage, Shipping & Delivery		\$57
Printing and Copying		\$124
Supplies		\$506
Telecommunications		
Internet		\$2,769
Telephone		\$778
Payroll Expenses		
Employees: 1 full time/1 part time		\$69,600
Payroll Expenses - Fee		\$5,536
Payroll Taxes		\$6,155
Professional Fees		

Accounting Fees	\$0
Consultants - CAD, Engineering	\$9,000
Consultants - Tax	\$900
Legal Fees Paid	\$22,408
Legal Fees Due by 12/2020	\$13,268
Other Consultant Fee Due/Payable	\$10,000
Publications	\$0
Security	\$478
Travel	
Airfare	\$0
Conference, Convention, Meeting	\$0
Hotel/Lodging	\$0
Parking	\$18
Tolls	\$50
Web Site	
Applications	\$384
Webmaster / Code Consultants	\$14,554
Web Site Domain Registry	\$423
Web Site Hosting	\$1,529
Total Expense	\$168,865
Net Profit / Loss	(\$32,661)

SUPPORT COMMUNITY VENTURE PARTNERS

CVP's ability to respond to the challenges ahead will only be possible with your continued financial support. Please help us continue to push back on flawed government decision-making and ill-conceived planning in Marin. Please help us continue to build an expanding network of community 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

Mill Valley, CA 94941

We accept donations of common stock and other types of securities. [Contact us](#) to make special arrangements for transfer and delivery.

Donations are tax deductible to the extent provided by law. We advise all donors to seek financial advice from a qualified tax professional.

The names of all CVP donors are kept strictly confidential.

SUPPORT THE MARIN POST EVERY TIME YOU PURCHASE ON AMAZON!

The Amazon Foundation will donate 1/2% of the total value of your purchases to Community Venture Partners, every time you buy something on their site -- at no additional cost to you!

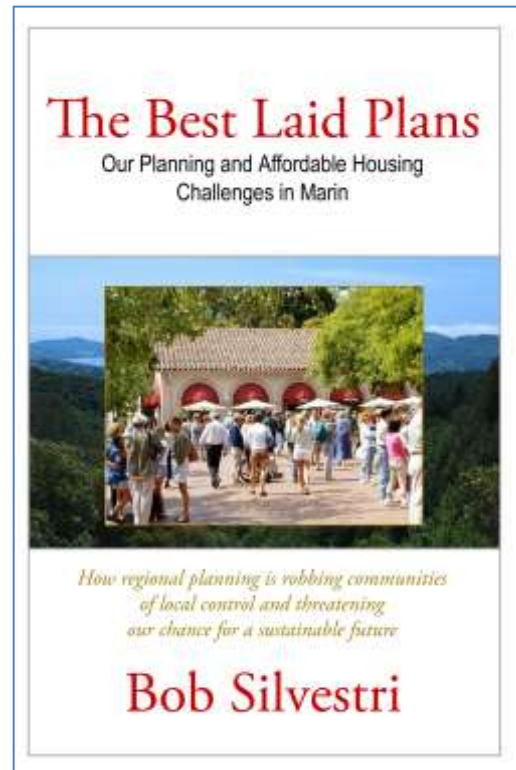
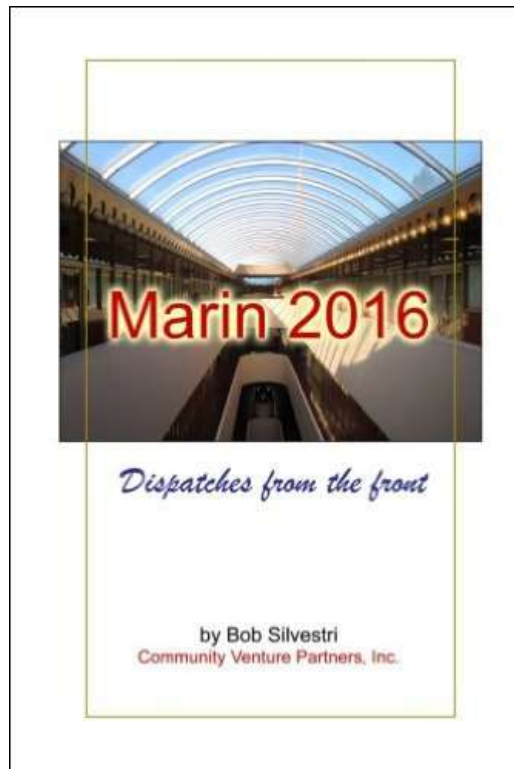
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Books by Bob Silvestri, President of CVP

Online at smile.amazon.com

Click on the images to order.



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