



THE TOWN OF  
CORTE MADERA  
MARIN COUNTY CALIFORNIA

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Central Marin Fire Department  
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Planning Department  
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Building Department  
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Public works Department  
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Parks and Recreation Department  
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Sanitary District No. 2  
628-258-0294

Central Marin Police Authority  
415-927-5150

September 20, 2022

Pat Shepherd, Foreperson

Marin County Civil Grand Jury  
3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 275  
San Rafael, CA 94903

Re: Town of Corte Madera Response to Grand Jury Report "Affordable Housing:  
Time for Collaboration in Marin"

At its regular meeting on September 20, 2022, the Town Council reviewed the report "Affordable Housing: Time for Collaboration in Marin", dated June 24, 2022. The report calls for a response from the Town of Corte Madera to findings 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9, F10) and recommendation 1 (R1).

Please see the attached response from the Town.

Should the members of the Grand Jury require any additional information, please contact Interim Town Manager Adam Wolff at 415-927-5059 or [awolff@tcmmail.org](mailto:awolff@tcmmail.org).

Fred Casissa

Mayor, Town of Corte Madera

September 20, 2022

## Response to Grand Jury Report

Report Title: Affordable Housing: Time For Collaboration In Marin

Respondent/Agency Name: Town of Corte Madera

Your Name: Fred Casissa Title: Mayor

### FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the findings numbered: F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F9, F10
- I (we) disagree *partially* with the findings numbered: F8
- I (we) disagree *wholly* with the findings numbered: N/A

(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons therefor.)

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations numbered N/A have been implemented.  
(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)
- Recommendations numbered N/A have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.  
(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)
- Recommendations numbered N/A require further analysis.  
(Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.)
- Recommendations numbered R1 will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.  
(Attach an explanation.)

Date: 9/20/22 Signed: Fred Casissa

Number of pages attached: 5

## **RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**REPORT TITLE:** "AFFORDABLE HOUSING: TIME FOR COLLABORATION IN  
MARIN"

**AGENDA DATE:** SEPTEMBER 20, 2022

**RESPONSE BY:** TOWN OF CORTE MADERA TOWN COUNCIL

### **GRAND JURY FINDINGS**

- We agree with the findings numbered: **F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F9, and F10**
- We disagree wholly or partially with the finding numbered: **F8**

### **GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Recommendation numbered **R1** will not be implemented because it is not warranted at this time, or realistic.

## **RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY FINDINGS**

**F1.** Marin County lacks sufficient affordable and workforce housing.

Response: Agree.

**F2.** Increasingly, individuals who work in Marin County cannot afford to live in the county, many of whom must commute from outside the county.

Response: Agree.

**F3.** Recent California laws provide new incentives for local governments to collaborate in developing affordable housing.

Response: Agree.

**F4.** The Regional Housing Needs Allocation allotments are widely viewed as unachievable for the Town and many Marin municipalities.

Response: Agree.

The Town supports using the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) as a means of identifying sites for housing, but the current allocation of 725 units for the 2023-2031 planning period represents an increase of more than 1,000% above the 72 units that were allocated for the most recent planning period (2015-2023). Whether this amount of housing can be built within the eight-year timeframe will depend on many factors that are outside the Town’s control, such as owner interest, availability of land, financing, and other market forces.

**F5.** Failure to achieve Regional Housing Needs Allocation allotments will trigger loss of local control over housing development.

Response: Agree.

**F6.** There is new and increasing support and willingness to cooperate among elected officials for building affordable housing in Marin.

Response: Agree.

**F7.** A countywide approach to housing development would enhance Marin’s ability to meet affordable and workforce housing needs.

Response: Agree.

Marin County and its municipalities collaborates and coordinates housing programs with the towns and cities in a number of areas, as discussed further in the response to Recommendation R1 below.

**F8.** Large affordable housing developments in Marin require subsidies to be financially feasible.

Response: Partially disagree.

Regardless of size, all affordable housing developments require subsidies. In fact, smaller developments are more expensive, more difficult to fund, and cost more per unit than larger developments.

**F9.** Organizations with expertise and access to subsidies and other funding sources are successfully building new affordable and workforce housing developments in Marin.

Response: Agree.

**F10.** A countywide approach to housing development would enhance Marin’s ability to secure funding for affordable and workforce housing.

Response: Agree.

## **RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Marin County Civil Grand Jury recommends the following:

**R1.** No later than December 31, 2022, the Marin County Board of Supervisors and Marin’s city and town councils should jointly create a regional authority, or empower an existing authority such as the Transportation Authority of Marin, to coordinate affordable and workforce housing policy on a countywide basis.

**This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted at this time, or realistic.**

The Town agrees that more collaboration on housing policy and funding would be beneficial and will likely result in more affordable housing in our communities. In fact, much work has been done to date, as described below, and additional opportunities are being developed. The Town remains open to additional collaboration and/or more formal arrangements in the future as appropriate.

However, forming a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) with 12 jurisdictions would take a significant investment of time, funding and energy that would likely impair current housing efforts, and of course requires willing partners. Doing so by December 31, 2022 is not a realistic timeline, particularly given that each Marin jurisdiction is currently striving to meet statutory deadlines to submit their housing element by January 31, 2023.

Below is a brief summary of existing and recommended new pursuits for strengthening interjurisdictional coordination and planning around affordable and workforce housing.

### Existing collaboration

Cities and towns have long collaborated with each other and the County on housing matters, beginning in 2008 with the development of the countywide Housing Element Workbook, which provided a shared template, background information and model programs and policies for development of the 2009 Housing Element. This effort resulted in all Marin municipalities receiving certified housing elements, which in turn made more housing funds available.

In 2019, County staff reconvened a countywide working group of Planning Directors and planning staff to encourage interjurisdictional collaboration on housing issues and solutions, with a specific focus on responding to new state legislation to streamline housing developments. The working group established common goals and coordinated on housing legislation, planning, production, and preservation of existing affordability. The working group meets once monthly and has evolved from briefings and discussions regarding state housing legislation into collaboration on projects to facilitate the development of more housing in Marin County. The working group applied jointly for SB2 planning grants in the summer and fall of 2019 and has started to collaborate on these grant projects, including Objective Design and Development Standards, an ADU Workbook and Website, and inclusionary housing program updates. The group received funds from ABAG to work collaboratively on shared Housing Element deliverables including translation dollars, Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing products, visualizations, and a countywide website.

### Future collaboration

The Town intends to expand collaboration with other Marin County jurisdictions in the following ways:

1. ***Commit to collaboration:*** In the Town’s draft 2023-2031 Housing Element, a proposed program “*Inter-Jurisdictional Planning for Housing*” commits the Town to coordinating its housing strategies with other jurisdictions in the county as appropriate to meet the Town’s housing needs and address regional planning and housing issues.
2. ***Implementation of Housing Element programs:*** During implementation of the 2023-2031 Housing Element, the County, cities and towns will collaborate on program implementation, especially those related to Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing and tenant protections. This will include:
  - ***Model ordinances:*** developing model ordinances to be considered by the Board of Supervisors and City and Town Councils.
  - ***Outreach and community engagement:*** Conducting shared outreach and community engagement.
3. ***Housing Element Collaboration:*** Develop a deeper and more formalized collaboration on the Housing Element in the future. This could include:
  - ***One Housing Element:*** Develop one document with shared background, outreach, programs and policies. This would provide consistency, save funds and improve accessibility for stakeholders and housing developers.

Town of Corte Madera Response to Grand Jury Report Findings and Recommendations  
“Affordable Housing: Time for Collaboration in Marin”

- *Consider a Subregional approach:* The County and cities and towns will consider developing a subregional approach to meeting the Regional Housing Need Allocation in the next housing element cycle.
  - *Shared consultants* to conserve resources and develop more consistent policies and programs, the County, cities and towns will seek to hire the same consultants to prepare parts of the housing element, conduct regional outreach and conduct any needed environmental review.
4. ***Funding collaboration:*** explore ways to more effectively collaborate on shared funding for affordable housing. This could include:
- *Inclusionary policies:* Developing more consistent policies and fees to encourage and facilitate more affordable housing as part of new market rate developments and increase funding for affordable housing.
5. ***Shared staffing:*** With the exceptions noted above, the County, and cities and towns address most housing issues individually, and often with limited staff and financial resources. Programs and policies in the Housing Element require concrete goals and deliverables that will be difficult for smaller jurisdictions to achieve. Shared staffing initiatives would encourage coordination and working together to tackle the housing crisis on a larger scale through shared housing staff to provide expertise and local knowledge to support affordable housing developers. This would also result in consistency throughout the county and adoption of best practices.