

In August of this year the Stinson Beach Affordable Housing Committee proposed to the Marin County Board of Supervisors a strategy for increasing the inventory of affordable housing in West Marin. This proposal involved an increase in the Transient Occupancy Tax from 10% to 15% and the simultaneous creation of a new entity to guide the use of that increase in revenue to the creation of affordable housing. Here is how it would work:

The Transient Occupancy Tax is a short-term rental/hotel tax on occupancies of less than 30 days at a rate of 10% of the total rent for the tenant's stay. The proceeds of the TOT go into Marin County's general fund. Approximately 79% of this revenue comes from District 4, which includes the communities of West Marin. We propose a ballot measure offered next November to the District 4 voters to create a Community Service Area made up of the communities of West Marin for the specific purpose of creating affordable housing in that area. The same ballot measure that creates the Community Service Area would stipulate that it be funded by an increase in the Transient Occupancy Tax to 15% from its present 10%. Such an increase would provide over \$1,300,000 per year for this purpose, every year. It is our intention to get this measure on either the June 2018 or November, 2018 ballot.

TOT as a source of funding for affordable housing has several advantages. It is paid by visitors rather than residents, reducing the likelihood of voter objections to an increase. It provides a certain political and economic symmetry in that overnight visitors would support housing for the long-term residents who provide many of the services associated with their visits, residents whose housing shortage is caused in part by the conversion of rentals from long-term to short-term. It thus goes some way to provide common ground to short-term rental owners and affordable housing advocates, groups that are often at odds over rental regulations and housing priorities. It returns a greater amount of TOT funds to West Marin where the revenue originates. Finally, it preserves a source of revenue to the County.

Our proposal is supported by Supervisor Dennis Rodoni, Senior Planner Leelee Thomas of the Marin Community Development Agency, Kim Thompson of Community Land Trust of West Marin, Arianne Dar of the Bolinas Community Land Trust, etc etc . We are presently seeking wide support for this proposal in anticipation of next year's ballot measure. If you agree with us that increased housing stock for families in West Marin is a vital and immediate need, and if you agree that a steady and predictable flow of money is essential in meeting this need, then please join us in this effort. Call, write or email \_\_\_\_\_ to let us know what you want to do to spread the word about this vital undertaking.