



Growing Together

Executive Summary

ADVANCING HOUSING SOLUTIONS FOR WORKERS IN WEST MARIN

Community Voices

"West Marin is very beautiful, with the nature and the beach. I love living here. I like that it is a small community, and I know everyone. I grew up with my neighbors and they're all very good people."

"They closed down the ranch where my husband worked, because they couldn't pay for health insurance. When they close a ranch, they take away housing, salary, health insurance. If they keep closing ranches, where do we go?"

"We had to downsize our herd due to drought years, increasing cost of feed, and pricing instability. We laid off two of our four employees, and family members have to work even more hours now."

"We have been supporting this country, paying taxes, and being responsible members of the community. We deserve to have safe housing as we age; it is not fair to live in these conditions after contributing so much."

"My home is sinking like the Titanic, it's falling apart."

"I am comfortable where I am living. I just wish the home I am in now did not have so much mold."

"We cannot afford to live in West Marin and provide a future for our children here while spending 3/4 of our salaries on housing! It is unsustainable and creates great inequality and insecurity for hardworking families."

"OUR RANCH OPERATION IS NOT PROFITABLE — MY HUSBAND IS THE BREADWINNER, AND HIS FULL-TIME JOB IS ESSENTIAL TO OUR ABILITY TO MAINTAIN THE RANCH AND OUR EMPLOYEES."

"Housing in West Marin is based on who you know and word of mouth. Most renters I know are renting from family or friends, or they are an 'exception to the rule' and know someone willing to rent at below-market rents."

"The cost and limited availability of housing are the main obstacles to hiring. Very few of our employees still live locally, but many would like to either return or resettle here."

Introduction & Methodology

PURPOSE & GOALS

The health and vitality of West Marin's communities are dependent on creating an adequate supply of quality housing affordable to local workers and residents.

Currently housing is scarce and expensive due to restrictive land use policies, limited infrastructure (particularly water and septic systems), land and construction costs, and community resistance to new development. The importance of this issue led to the formation of The Committee for Housing Agricultural Workers and Their Families (Committee) by the County of Marin, Marin Community Foundation and West Marin Fund.

In 2023, the Committee commissioned a Housing Action Study to better understand the existing housing conditions and unmet housing needs of agricultural workers and other lower-income households in West Marin, and the social, economic, and racial barriers they experience accessing reliable, quality housing. The resulting report summarizes population, housing, and employment trends, as well as findings from primary research conducted by and with local communities to identify housing barriers and solutions.

APPROACH

We used a participatory and inclusive research process grounded in equity-focused principles including prioritizing the perspectives of people most impacted, building community capacity, centering lived experience, and honoring the trust and confidentiality of community members. Local bilingual, Latino outreach workers and interviewers who live in West Marin, on and off ranches, and/or work in West Marin and have local knowledge, connections and community trust were recruited and critical to enrolling study participants. The expertise and voices of agricultural and other lower-wage workers were captured through the Committee, local interviewers, listening sessions, and surveys.

To read a version of the full report, visit wmhousingolutions.org

METHODS

- **In-depth Interviews** with 68 Latino workers, representing 281 adults and children, most of whom lived in West Marin.
- **Intercept surveys** in Spanish of 34 lower-wage workers commuting into West Marin for employment.
- **Online surveys** in English of 48 lower-wage workers employed in West Marin.
- **Listening sessions** in Spanish and English with 24 interview and survey participants.
- **Interviews with 17 agricultural organizations**, employers, and property owners, including cattle, dairy, lamb/sheep, oyster, and vegetable farmers.
- **Interviews with 28 subject matter experts** including local, regional, and statewide housing, supportive service, and agriculture industry leaders.
- **Document review and analysis** including existing reports and studies and census tract, school district and county, state, and federal data on demographics, housing, employment, and the agriculture industry.

LIMITATIONS

Many of the households at the center of this study have mixed immigration status, live in unpermitted rental units without lease agreements, are paid 'under-the-table' for positions without employment contracts, and reside in unincorporated rural areas.

"This study aims to capture the voices of those who are often Unseen and Uncounted — people whose lives, jobs, and homes are not permitted or documented — yet are so vital to our communities."

— Nayeli Bernal, Study Research Director

Interview & Survey Results

This study captured the perspectives of 150 people, representing the housing situations of over 363 family members, who live and/or work in West Marin. In-depth interviews and shorter surveys were conducted in Spanish with 102 Latino households, while the 48 online survey responses were received in English.

PARTICIPANTS

20 years was the average longevity of working in West Marin*

81% were born in Mexico*

50% did not have documented legal immigration status*

HOUSING

89% rented their homes

71% lived on a ranch*

46% of households living on ranches did not work in agriculture*

41% lived in housing provided by their employer*

41% had a written lease*

11% of those living in employer-provided housing had a lease*

63% paid under \$2,000 per month for housing

85% were cost-burdened, spending more than a third of their income on housing*

26% reported spending more than their total income on housing costs*

72% households had four or more people living in the home*

7 was the average number of serious habitability issues (mold, pests, water quality, heating, etc.) per household*

INCOME & EMPLOYMENT

72% had an annual average household income under \$60,000

43% had to decide between paying for housing or other basic needs*

68% both lived and worked in West Marin

32% commuted in from outside the region

39% worked multiple jobs to make ends meet*

50% worked in agriculture*

56% of agricultural worker households were employed on a dairy ranch

91% of dairy and cattle workers lived in employer-provided housing

AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS

255 agricultural operations in Marin: dairy and cattle; vegetables, fruit, and nuts; aquaculture (oyster farms)

791 hired farm workers reported, almost all in permanent, year-round positions

100% cited the lack of affordable housing as a challenge to their business**

83% had 5 employees or fewer**

59% had other sources of income to supplement their agricultural earnings**

* These data points are from in-depth interviews with 68 low-wage workers.

** These data points were from interviews with 17 agricultural employers.

Key Findings


Four key themes surfaced from the interviews, surveys, and listening sessions with agricultural and other lower-wage workers; agricultural and other employers and property owners; and local, regional, and state leaders and experts.

1 | THE INSUFFICIENT SUPPLY OF QUALITY AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEGATIVELY IMPACTS EVERYONE IN WEST MARIN AND BEYOND

- West Marin needs at least 1,000 new units affordable to households earning less than \$65,000 per year.
- This housing shortage causes workers and their families to choose between living in substandard housing, paying more than they can afford and forgoing other necessities, and/or enduring long commutes into the area.
- For employers, they are unable to recruit or retain enough employees and have had to reduce operating hours and even close businesses due to the lack of a local workforce.
- Community members and visitors are also impacted – by lack of students and teachers in schools, decline in dining options and other services, and enduring more traffic and pollution as workers commute in from afar.

“Our local businesses and volunteer fire departments are struggling to find staff. School enrollments are declining and it’s difficult to fill teaching positions. These jobs and positions contribute to our communities; they are the coaches of our baseball teams, volunteers for nonprofits and they help our coastal villages remain vibrant and welcoming for visitors.”

— Supervisor Dennis Rodoni



COUNTY OF MARIN
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
CODE COMPLIANCE DIVISION

CAUTION ENTER AT YOUR OWN RISK

UNSAFE AND DANGEROUS STRUCTURES, BUILDINGS, MOBILE HOMES, TRAILERS, & VEHICLES UNFIT FOR HUMAN OCCUPANCY

ORDINANCE 3777 -2022, MARIN COUNTY CODE, CHAPTER 19.04
MARIN COUNTY CODE, 19.04.027 – SUBSTANDARD AND UNSAFE BUILDINGS
MARIN COUNTY CODE, 7.52.020 RESTRICTIONS ON HUMAN HABITATION OF HOUSECARS, CAMPERS AND TRAILERS
DO NOT REMOVE, COVER, OR DAMAGE THIS PLACARD

Former Tacherra Ranch Housing Unit, © Cassandra Benjamin.

2 | THE MAJORITY OF EXISTING RENTAL HOUSING IS IN POOR CONDITION, UNAFFORDABLE, AND/OR INACCESSIBLE

- Most households interviewed for this study were living in housing that lacked basic amenities and had major environmental and health issues. In interviews, 78% were living in housing with problems that Marin County Environmental Health Services would consider a “major violation.”
- Renters in West Marin are afraid to report the poor conditions of their housing due to fears of eviction and loss of employment, particularly those that are living on their employer’s property and/or are undocumented.
- Many households live in over-crowded conditions as most rental units are two-bedroom or smaller and not designed for multi-generational families that range in size from four to eight adults and children.
- The rental market is largely word-of-mouth and segregated with White prospective renters having more options for in-law type units in neighborhoods, while Latino renters are often consigned to ranch housing and mobile homes.
- Many potential rental units are only used as vacation homes or rented short-term for visitors and not available for use by full-time residents.

3 | THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT POLICY, ECONOMIC, AND COMMUNITY CHALLENGES TO IMPROVING EXISTING HOUSING AND BUILDING NEW HOUSING

- There is limited government jurisdictional authority, enforcement and oversight of rental housing, particularly for housing on ranches that is often unpermitted.
- Improving existing substandard housing requires significant capital beyond the means of many property owners.
- There are limited places to build new housing as most of the land in West Marin is protected from development and designated for open space, parks, and agriculture. Much of it is also under California Coastal Commission authority, which further limits development and increases building costs and time.
- It is particularly expensive to rehabilitate and build new housing in West Marin due to additional septic and water costs, lengthy permitting processes, and a lack of financing sources for smaller-scale, affordable development.
- Community Opposition is a significant constraint to housing production, with residents actively mobilizing against new housing projects (even those with 5-units or less of housing).

4 | THE VOICES AND EXPERIENCES OF LATINO WORKERS AND RESIDENTS ARE ESSENTIAL TO SOLVING THE HOUSING CRISIS

- Many Latino workers in West Marin are long-term residents (living here for an average of 20 years) drawn by the region's tranquility, natural beauty, and close-knit community. They are essential contributors to West Marin's schools, economy, and culture.
- Latino residents and workers face structural and interpersonal racism and exclusion, and are most often relegated to lower-wage, physically demanding jobs, substandard housing conditions, and are frequently at risk of displacement.
- Fears of losing jobs or housing constrain the Latino community's ability to join the broader community conversations on housing needs and solutions.
- One way to counter the legacy of racism and discrimination is to resource and elevate the voices of Latino residents and workers around housing solutions. This untapped potential is starting to emerge in Bolinas, through the Bolinas Community Land Trust's work with the former Tacherra Ranch residents, and resident leadership in their new, Bo-Linda Vista community.



Mesa Apartments,
© Community
Land Trust of
West Marin.

"In unincorporated West Marin, the housing crisis is felt even more acutely than in the rest of the county. Institutional factors (zoning, Coastal Commission regulations, costs imposed by the county) and geographic and infrastructure factors (septic systems, water availability, and transportation limitations) create obstacles that are real limitations to development."*

— Jessica Lage, Author & Researcher

"The Latino community has suffered the most. They should allow us to live well because we also work. I wish for this study to not just listen to the problems but also give solutions and for the voices of Latino people to be heard."

— West Marin Low-Wage Worker

* "Know the hands that feed you,; Gentrification and Labor Migration in West Marin" BOOM California, May 2022.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were developed through an iterative and collaborative process. Key stakeholders provided recommendations and priorities for action through interviews, surveys, and listening sessions, which were then tested in subsequent interviews, listening sessions, and meetings with the Committee. The final recommendations were chosen for inclusion based on having support from a range of stakeholder types, feasibility, and potential for impact.



HOUSING SOLUTIONS IN ACTION

Bolinas Community Land Trust (BCLT) is dedicated to creating, preserving, and sustaining long-term affordable housing. BCLT is purchasing the Tacherra ranch, where it plans to replace 23 condemned structures with new, permanent farmworker housing for the nearly 60 residents, almost all of whom are Latino. In 2024, the residents renamed their housing community to “Bo-Linda Vista” (Beautiful Bolinas View). Bo-Linda Vista has multiple phases, each requiring a blend of funding and support from private, local, county, and state partners. In 2023, residents were provided with temporary emergency housing through recreational vehicles with funding of \$622,000 from the County of Marin and \$622,000 from Marin Community Foundation.

Rehabilitate Existing Substandard Rental Housing

1.1 | IMPROVE SUBSTANDARD HOUSING ON RANCHES

- Develop a fund for agricultural employers at a trusted nonprofit organization (non-governmental entity) to provide grants to improve housing conditions on their properties.
- Develop property management agreements with local land trusts and affordable housing providers to provide rehabilitation, maintenance, and property management and leasing services for existing rental housing.
- Develop a privately-funded pool of direct financial assistance for tenants to use to address most immediate habitability, health, and safety needs.

1.2 | SUPPORT RESIDENTS LIVING IN OR DISPLACED BY SUBSTANDARD HOUSING CONDITIONS

- Convene residents and understand their short- and long-term housing needs and desired solutions, providing safety net, legal aid, and community organizing support.
- Develop immediate, interim housing sites for the 50–100 households in extremely substandard housing and most at risk of displacement.
- Continue support for Bolinas Community Land Trust and the residents of Bo-Linda Vista, to improve their temporary housing and create permanent solutions.

1.3 | ENSURE ROUTINE INSPECTION OF HOUSING ON RANCHES

- Establish a comprehensive inspection system with clear authority of who is accountable for housing conditions on ranches. Proactively inspect rental housing to help keep people in their homes.
- Collect and publish data on inspections to track housing conditions, code violations, and repairs on housing on and off ranches.

1.4 | SIMPLIFY THE REGULATORY AND PERMITTING PROCESS FOR HOUSING REHABILITATION

- Expedite and streamline permitting process for the rehabilitation of agricultural worker housing including adding permit expediter and/or agricultural ombudsman in the County Community Development Agency.
- Develop and implement more flexible regulatory rules and processes at the County that allow property owners to improve the safety and habitability of housing on their properties and legalize non-conforming housing and septic systems.
- Design a permit or inspection amnesty program to encourage improvements focused on public health and safety issues as top priority.
- Explore opportunities to make it more affordable for property owners to bring their unit up to code. Consider temporary fee waivers or deferments for permits required to improve condition of agricultural worker housing.
- Implement additional measures identified by the Marin County Agriculture Team to improve services provided to farmers and ranchers.



HOUSING SOLUTIONS IN ACTION

The January 2023 mass shooting on two San Mateo farms brought to light the number of farmworkers living in unpermitted, crowded, and unsanitary housing conditions. In response to the tragic shooting, the **County of San Mateo** announced the launch of a **Farm Labor Housing Compliance Task Force**. The task force is charged with conducting proactive inspections of farmworker housing to ensure they are in compliance with local and state health and safety rules and regulations. Under local regulations, farm operators are required to obtain permits from the County if they provide housing for five or more workers. For owners with unpermitted employee housing, the County provides technical assistance to help obtain the necessary permits. If the farm owners comply with the Task Force inspection, they can then qualify for the **Farm Labor Housing Loan Program**, which provides no-interest, forgivable loans to agricultural operators and landowners to construct new housing, rehabilitate existing units, or replace substandard mobile homes utilized by farmworkers. Applicants can borrow up to \$150,000 per unit for rehabilitation and replacement. For construction of new units, the maximum loan amount is \$250,000 for each of the first two units and \$200,000 for each subsequent unit.

A full version of this housing solution can be found online at wmhousingolutions.org.

Maximize Existing Housing and Develop New Housing

2.1 | INCENTIVIZE USE OF EXISTING HOUSING FOR LOCAL WORKERS

- Incentivize use of existing ADUs for rentals by allowing amnesty to fix them up to code, providing property management and tenant placement services, and connecting homeowners to ADU Marin.
- Develop an incentive program for property owners to rent to full-time residents such as Placemate, which works with jurisdictions in vacation towns to develop Lease to Locals programs with financial incentives for property owners.
- Disincentivize leaving homes vacant by developing a Vacant Home tax and using the revenue for affordable housing.

2.2 | IDENTIFY AND SECURE LAND FOR HOUSING

- Expedite development of the most feasible housing element sites, encouraging and financially supporting development on mission-based land (owned by government, school districts or faith-based organizations). Partner with larger affordable housing developers on a scattered-site strategy with multiple sites at once for economies of scale and access to more financing sources (i.e., low-income housing tax credits).
- Expand housing on private ranches by identifying existing agricultural land owners and employers with parcels that could be used for worker housing and encouraging those whose property is subject to the Williamson Act to consider using the provision that permits subdividing up to 5 acres for sale or lease to a nonprofit or government to develop and provide agricultural worker housing.
- Whenever developing on working ranches, ensure that sites are used for local workers who are not employed on that particular site and/or managed by an outside entity to reduce risk of simultaneous housing and income instability for workers.



Placemate Lease to Locals Programs

facilitates innovative partnerships with local jurisdictions, providing property owners cash incentives to convert their units into new long-term, affordable rentals for local employees. The programs are overseen and funded by local governments, philanthropy, and/or non-profits and tailored to the needs of each housing market. It specializes in working with vacation towns where a sizable portion of the housing stock is used as second homes or vacation rentals. Current locations include four in California (Mammoth Lakes, Placer County, South Lake Tahoe, and Truckee) as well as recent expansions to vacation towns in Colorado, Idaho, Massachusetts, and Vermont. In less than four years, it has secured 597 units that are housing more than 1,350 local workers and their families.

HOUSING SOLUTIONS IN ACTION



Worker Housing on Giacomini Ranch, © Rosa Rodriguez.



Larger affordable housing developers can be encouraged to consider smaller-scale developments when the costs of financing, land acquisition, and land preparation are low, and there is broad community support. Such was the case for **People's Self-Help Housing Corporation** (PSHHC), a large nonprofit developer, who built the 8-unit Ellwood Apartments in Goleta, a coastal community in Santa Barbara County. **Ellwood Apartments** is located on a site that falls under the regulatory purview of the California Coastal Commission. Despite the challenges that Coastal Commission regulations can pose, the project obtained all approvals in less than a year and was constructed in just fifteen months. To pencil out this small-scale affordable housing development, PSHHC minimized construction costs by choosing a flat infill site where there was infrastructure in place and no need for grading or major offsite improvements. The project also had broad community approval, including among local environmental leaders who championed affordable farmworker housing and preservation of environmentally sensitive undeveloped land.

A full version of this housing solution can be found online at wmhousingolutions.org.

2.3 | INCREASE ACQUISITION, DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY AND FUNDING

- Expand funding for acquisition and development of affordable housing including: support for new local and regional housing bonds; prioritizing West Marin's agricultural and lower-wage workers within existing public funding streams; and exploring opportunities to work with rural-specific lenders such as Rural Community Assistance Corp (RCAC) and ROC USA.
- Support community land trusts and affordable housing developers to develop and manage more affordable rental housing, providing funding for expert project development, housing finance, and planning technical assistance; expediting major projects underway, particularly BCLT's Bo-Linda Vista in Bolinas and Community Land Trust of West Marin's (CLAM) 54-unit Coast Guard Housing in Point Reyes Station; and supporting greater coordination and economies of scale among West Marin land trusts.
- Explore development of a local preference policy for displaced workers to ensure that they are prioritized for upcoming units. Both Berkeley and San Jose have recently adopted policies to prioritize displaced community members.
- Work with regional affordable housing developers to develop housing for agricultural workers throughout Marin County. Options include exploring hybrid affordable housing projects that include occupationally-restricted units for farmworkers in eastern parts of Marin County along Highway 101 that provide access to West Marin.



Ellwood Apartments,
© People's Self-Help
Housing.

2.4 | REFORM ZONING AND LAND USE TO ENCOURAGE HOUSING

- Optimize and deploy a variety of local land use powers to incentivize agricultural housing and affordable housing production, including density bonuses, commercial linkage fees, and reductions in development standards and parking ratios.
- Support State Legislation to incentivize housing in coastal areas subject to the California Coastal Commission and remove affordable housing from appeal zones.
- Expedite and streamline permitting process and reduce permitting costs for development of worker housing in West Marin.
- Increase the number of larger scale septic systems that have been successful in West Marin already (e.g., Marshall, Tomales) to add more in-fill units.
- Prioritize updating the County's septic requirements and regulations to allow for an increased number of housing units on identified sites.

2.5 | SUPPORT AFFORDABLE HOMEOWNERSHIP

- Create opportunities for affordable community ownership of housing on and off ranches. Explore partnerships with [California Center for Cooperative Developments](#) and ROC USA.
- Explore creation of more homeownership opportunities, expanding work with [Habitat for Humanity Greater San Francisco](#) and developing a partnership [Self-Help Enterprises](#).

Aspen Road Homes, © Bolinas Community Land Trust and Habitat for Humanity Greater San Francisco.



HOUSING SOLUTIONS IN ACTION

The **County of Ventura** Zoning Ordinance is divided into two codes, a Ventura County Coastal Zoning Ordinance for areas subject to the California Coastal Commission (CCC) and a Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance for all other areas. The **Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance** offers valuable lessons for West Marin. It sets forth permitting and development standards for different farmworker housing prototypes. For any proposed farmworker project that meets these standards, the Planning Department grants a ministerial permit, or “over the counter” approval. The ordinance was recently updated in March 2022, in collaboration with farmworker housing organizations to increase and accelerate production. The Ventura County Ordinance is a successful example of how a county can relax development standards and simplify permitting requirements for small scale agricultural worker housing.

A full version of this housing solution can be found online at wmhousingsolutions.org.

Increase Tenant Protections and Safety Net Services

3.1 | STRENGTHEN TENANT PROTECTIONS IN UNINCORPORATED MARIN COUNTY

- Ensure implementation of [Marin County's Just Cause Eviction \(JCE\)](#) ordinance and develop a policy to expand eviction protections to all rental properties, regardless of number of units or location on ranches.
- Invest in outreach and education about housing rights and tenant protections. Provide tenant rights workshops and education in Spanish and targeted to the Latino community.
- Increase partnerships with legal aid organizations, such as [Legal Aid of Marin](#), that bring expertise in tenant rights and rural and agricultural employment and housing.
- Explore the development of a Rent Board or Tenant Commission charged with conducting outreach to tenants and enforcing existing policies.

3.2 | FORMALIZE TENANCIES FOR AGRICULTURAL WORKERS AND THOSE LIVING ON RANCHES

- Promote written leases by providing property owners with lease templates and helping tenants in reviewing and advocating for written leases.
- Provide training and services to help landlords on their rights and responsibilities, offer Landlord/Tenant conflict resolution and mediation, provide fair housing information, and connect landlords with property management services.
- Activate nonprofit property management services and encourage landlords to use them (such as the former Real Community Rentals program developed by CLAM).

3.3 | INCREASE SAFETY NET SERVICES

- Increase funds and flexibility of emergency rental assistance for low-income households struggling with housing costs and allow for longer-term time frame for their use.
- Develop nonprofit rental match services to help homeowners and others to rent to workers and workers to secure units, making the rental market more visible, accessible, and fair and less underground, word of mouth, and segregated.
- Support bilingual and bicultural outreach and education efforts about upcoming affordable housing opportunities, including reaching out to residents in Spanish via text, WhatsApp and in-person meetings, as well as targeted outreach at places of employment.
- Bring immigration assistance services to West Marin. Partner with the [Canal Alliance](#) and others to provide workshops and one-on-one support locally. Explore developing a more comprehensive program to help eligible workers obtain citizenship.

HOUSING SOLUTIONS IN ACTION

PUENTE

Puente de la Costa Sur

For farmworkers who live in employer-provided housing, their tenant rights are intrinsically tied to their employment. But agricultural employers many not understand all of their responsibilities as landlords. To support both farm workers and employers, Puente de la Costa Sur (Puente) created the **Model Lease project**. Puente offers a lease template that can be used by employer-landlords and employee-tenants that protects the rights of both parties.

Build Public and Political Will

4.1 | INVEST IN LATINO LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Provide leadership development and organizing support to lift the voices of agricultural workers and their families to advocate for improved housing conditions and new housing sites.
- Educate Latino community leaders on decision-making processes and bodies so they can be a part of the decision-making process themselves. Support Latino leaders in becoming appointed and elected to decision-making positions on boards/staff/committees regarding housing in West Marin, with equitable compensation.
- Provide housing specific advocacy training for Latino Community Members) to better understand housing system and advocacy opportunities.

4.2 | INCREASE LATINO COMMUNITY ORGANIZING AND POWER BUILDING

- Provide comprehensive funding and (if needed) fiscal agency for Latino-led community organizing focused on housing in West Marin. Explore possible partnerships, trainings, and workshops with [North Bay Organizing Project](#) and [Canal Alliance/Voces del Canal](#), among others.
- Bring organizers from other counties to share successful models and build solidarity, including [ALAS \(Ayudando Latinos A Soñar\)](#), San Mateo County's [Farmworker Advisory Commission](#), and Ventura County's [House Farm Workers! Coalition](#).
- Work with the [Point Reyes Light](#) and the new bilingual reporter that is being hired through the California Local News Fellowship to highlight Latino stories, voices and calls to action. Advocate for more coverage from KWMR, Hearsay News, the Marin Independent Journal, West Marin Feed, and the San Francisco Chronicle. Partner with the [Latino Photography Project](#) for visual representation.



HOUSING SOLUTIONS IN ACTION

House Farm Workers! is a Ventura County coalition of farmworker housing advocates and growers dedicated to supporting affordable, safe, and stable housing for Ventura County farm workers and their families. Founded in 2004, the organization engages in advocacy and organizing to build a social, political, and regulatory environment that is supportive of farmworker housing. Their work includes educating and organizing farmworker communities, mobilizing public support, engaging public officials, and collaborating with other grassroots organizations to ensure affordable housing for farmworkers.



Un orgullo de leonas latinas (A pride of Latina lionesses),
© Estela Macias Reynoso

4.3 | EDUCATE AND ACTIVATE WEST MARIN HOMEOWNERS, RESIDENTS, AND THE BROADER PUBLIC

- Educate and inspire the broader West Marin community to understand housing conditions and affordability issues, solutions, and how to be part of efforts to welcome more neighbors by publicizing study findings and recommendations via social media, local newspapers, radio, and in-person presentations throughout West Marin.
- Develop a West Marin pro-housing group that conducts ongoing public education on the housing issues facing low-wage and agricultural workers in West Marin and mobilizes community members to take action in support of pro-housing policies and specific project sites, creating simple ways for people to support, rather than oppose, housing.

4.4 | INSPIRE ELECTED OFFICIALS, GOVERNMENT STAFF, PRIVATE FUNDERS, AND NONPROFITS TO TAKE ACTION

- Develop a list of specific, concrete actions and commitments for year one and seek to raise funds to help achieve them.
- Develop and update a dashboard of recommendations and action items that is publicly visible online and includes the list of entities and organizations needed to achieve each one. Provide a timeline, highlight successes, and track where progress is still needed.
- Regularly highlight specific stories of positive impact for workers, businesses, agricultural employers, and others to maintain a sense of urgency and possibility.

“West Marin is at a critical juncture. We need to act now and work together to create equitable housing solutions and inclusive communities.”

— Sarah Hobson, Executive Director of West Marin Fund & Committee Chair



HOUSING SOLUTIONS IN ACTION

Neighbors for More Neighbors is a grassroots effort in Minneapolis founded by community activists to address the city's affordable housing crisis and to overcome NIMBYism. Since 2017, Neighbors for More Neighbors has engaged hundreds of volunteers to build political support for affordable housing. In 2019, the group won a major victory when the city council approved the Minneapolis 2040 comprehensive plan, which declares the city's intent to abolish single family home zoning and allow duplexes and triplexes to be built anywhere in the city. Their success was possible by engaging three critical partners: residents, elected officials, and city staff. The organizers educated the public using art, social media, and blogs to focus attention on the problems and demand solutions. They worked with city staff to share and analyze data and design a more collaborative process for land use planning. Finally, they mobilized elected leaders to vote to adopt and implement the city plan.

Acknowledgments

We are very grateful to the 150 workers and 17 agricultural employers who shared their experiences, expertise, and recommendations with us. We also appreciate the dozens of local, regional, and state leaders who informed this project, providing connections, perspectives, and recommendations regarding study design, implementation, and actionable recommendations.

The Community Participatory Research approach would not have been possible without the many individuals above, most of whom we consulted multiple times to make meaning of early findings and vet emerging recommendations. Our deepest thanks go to our incredible interview team — Jasmine, Esme, Santi, and Alma — who opened their personal networks and established trusting relationships with prospective interviewees so that their stories might be heard by a wider audience.

Now, it is our turn. It is time for all of the readers of this report and the broader West Marin community, to support the workers' recommendations and take concrete action to ensure safe, stable, affordable homes and an inclusive and thriving West Marin.

STUDY TEAM

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COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AGRICULTURAL WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Representatives and Leaders from the following organizations:

- [Bollinas Community Land Trust](#)
- [Community Land Trust Association of West Marin](#)
- [County of Marin Community Development Agency](#)
- [Marin Agricultural Land Trust](#)
- [Marin Community Foundation](#)
- [National Park Service](#)
- [UC Cooperative Extension, Marin County](#)
- [West Marin Community Services](#)
- [West Marin Fund](#)
- West Marin Workers and Ranchers

LATINO PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT

We are also indebted to the many photographers of Gallery Route One's Latino Photography Project for sharing their images and bringing this report to life. The Project provided training and equipment to local photographers in order to capture the experience, perspectives, and culture of local workers and their families. Photo captions marked with an "*" asterisk indicate their work and more information can be found at LatinoPhotographyProject.com.

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