

November 22, 2005

Board of Commissioners
Housing Authority of the County of Marin
Marin County Civic Center
San Rafael, CA 94903

SUBJECT: Grant Proposal for Housing Search Specialist Program for FY 2006-07

RECOMMENDATION: Authorize the Executive Director to submit to the County of Marin the Housing Search Specialist grant proposal for FY 2006-07 in the amount of \$20,528 of CDBG funds.

SUMMARY: Housing Authority staff requests authorization to submit a grant proposal to the County for CDBG funds for the Housing Search Specialist program for the upcoming fiscal year (2006-07). Funds, if awarded, will be used to support continued program staffing for the position of Housing Search Specialist within our Housing Assistline. The primary objective of this position is to assist extremely low-income, *hard to house* individuals and families overcome barriers to locating safe, affordable rental housing in Marin County.

Marin Housing has found that certain groups, identified as *hard to house* households, have more barriers to utilizing their Section 8 Vouchers and finding stable housing. *Hard to house* households are defined as: individuals with disabilities and the frail elderly as well as households with a source of income other than employment, a language barrier or with three or more children. Typical problems include poor credit reports, poor or no rental histories, past evictions and erratic employment histories. In addition, *hard to house* families have issues with self esteem, language barriers, a lack of presentation skills and little or no skill in "selling" themselves as a potential tenant. These families and individuals have a harder time finding housing than the Section 8 Voucher-holding population as a whole.

The Housing Search Specialist will assist extremely low income *hard to house* households by negotiating with landlords, educating the public about the Section 8 program, assisting households locate safe affordable housing, facilitating credit clean up workshops, and constructing rental resumes and reference letters.

FISCAL IMPACT: The part time Housing Search Specialist position would be eliminated and 360 *hard to house* households would not receive housing search assistance.

CHRISTINE GOUIG
Executive Director