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# Gualala Community Action Plan
## Publicity & Outreach Strategy
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## 1.    Introduction:

### 1.1 Purpose and Intent

The purpose of this Publicity and Outreach Plan is to describe the process that will be used to inform and involve the community in the Gualala Community Action Plan process. This publicity and outreach effort is designed to involve the various citizens, communities, and interest groups of Gualala with special efforts to include representatives of the Hispanic or Latino, Asian and American Indian populations. Initial steps to achieve this are described in this document using the following methods and strategies:

- Building trust in the public process.
- Educating the public about this planning process.
- Involving participants in the Gualala Community Action Plan process.
- Soliciting input and feedback on the evolving Community Action Plan.

### 1.2 Background

The Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG), through a Caltrans Community Based Transportation Planning Grant, has hired the RRM Design Group consulting team to conduct an outreach process and to establish a Community Action Plan (CAP) for the town of Gualala. The purpose of the CAP is to develop a plan and strategy for traffic calming, increase pedestrian and bicycle safety, increase parking supply, improve parking delineation as well as identify economic development opportunities.

### 1.3 Target Population

The target population for the public outreach effort includes all of Gualala and Sea Ranch residents, property owners, and business owners. Efforts will be made to include representatives of the various minority demographic populations (including Hispanic or Latino, Asian, and American Indian).  Public workshops ideally should be conducted in English and Spanish to ensure input and feedback from the Gualala's English and Spanish speaking populations alike.

COMMUNITY | PUBLIC SAFETY | RECREATION | EDUCATION | URBAN
ARCHITECTS | ENGINEERS | LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS | PLANNERS | SURVEYORS | WWW.RRMDESIGN.COM

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## 1.4: Goals of Public Outreach
- To engage the community and maximize public participation in order to gain consensus on the Community Action Plan
- To solicit, collect, interpret, and analyze public input
- To assist in the development of alternatives
- To distribute the message
- To gain the momentum needed to implement the project

## 1.5: Advantages of Public Outreach
- Better decisions – through outreach, participants learn about the perspective of others, which facilitates the development of common ground, and becomes the basis for creative solutions that serve all users.
- Better implementation opportunities – people are less likely to oppose a plan or project which reflects their input and ideas. In fact, people will often make a further commitment to participate in the implementation of a project they feel ownership of as a result of their involvement in the outreach process.
- Education – The public outreach process can educate participants on problems, issues, concerns and a palette of possible solutions.
- Manage diversity – diverse communities can improve inter-group relations, build trust and find common ground on a project through public outreach.
- Collaboration – the open communication of public outreach can effectively involve multiple governmental and non-governmental parties on issues that cross jurisdiction lines and ensure that everyone has the same understanding of the issues and solutions available.

## 2.    How to Achieve Success
Below are recommendations on how to ensure the largest turnout possible to public workshops. In addition to these recommendations, minority populations identified in Section 1.3 above should receive notice via phone, fax, and mail formally inviting them to participate in the process. This also provides the opportunity to describe the process in more detail and address questions that these groups might have.
- Facilitation will be more successful if it is not only bi-lingual but bi-cultural. The translator needs to understand the concepts and jargon of planning/architecture.
- Prepare participants as to how the regular community wide workshop will be run.
- If desired turn out is not achieved, address the participants on the importance of their participation, and reevaluate the public noticing.
- The participants should feel a sense of pride participating in this process.
- Create an atmosphere that enables people to get out of their "comfort zone". Ask them to present their ideas and they will.
- People will stay longer if food and drinks are provided.

- Set up the room to allow facilitator to walk into audience and interact with participants.
- Have meetings in locations familiar to the target population.
- Utilize "phone trees" and local organizations to attract people from the Hispanic community to attend.
- Recruit a leader from each community group to contact, remind and help get participants to meetings
- Have such leaders (mentioned above) call their participants before the meeting to ensure they will attend.
- Provide a fact sheet addressing walkability, livability and traffic calming so that each workshop does not need to revisit the educational presentation.
- Word of mouth is one of the strongest methods to get people to participate
- Childcare –People are often not comfortable with leaving their children with an unknown childcare provider.  In-room childcare can increase attendance and give a higher level of comfort for participants. This is important to keep in mind when looking at the building site and size.
- Consider local school schedules when setting meeting dates.
- Consider other public events and meetings when setting meeting dates.
- Keep up momentum!  When too much time lapses between meetings or workshops, enthusiasm naturally slips.

## 3.      Organized Oversight & Communication
### 3.1 Establish a Technical Advisory Group
This group offers a reality check opportunity from decision makers and those who have the ability to assist with implementation. Regular check-in meetings with this group reduce the need for redesign. The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) will also assist in the initial identification and contact of key stakeholders. MCOG staff should identify and contact potential TAG members.

Hold regular meetings with TAG to review work product prior to public distribution.

### 3.2 Establish a Community Advisory Committee
This committee consists of a broad base of community members intended to represent a wide range of local interest. It will be focused on working with MCOG and RRM to represent the Gualala community and keep the community informed about the CAP process. The committee will participate in workshops, data collection, and draft plan activities in order to guide design solutions. The CAC will be contacted and organized by MCOG staff. RRM Design Group will facilitate CAC meetings and provide committee with appropriate documents for review prior to meetings.

It is recommended to meet with the CAC prior to public workshops to gauge community reaction to the work product. The CAC should be asked to promote public participation on the project, through sending flyers and talking with residents and business owners.

### 3.3 Interview Key Stakeholders

To craft an effective strategy, it is essential to identify key stakeholders who can reach out and involve the community in revitalization work. Stakeholders should include groups and individuals who know about the community and what is going on in and around it. Interviewing such stakeholders streamlines the identification of problem areas, priorities, projects and events that will affect the project area, efficiently bringing the project team up to speed. The key stakeholder meetings shall be conducted by the consultant who presents an unbiased opinion and encourages an open dialogue.

It is recommended to interview stakeholders at the beginning of the project to find out what their concerns are, what their hopes and needs are, and what other projects are going on that might affect this project.

### 4.        Consensus Building Methods

The methods listed below are tools to assist in facilitating the community in reaching consensus. Section 2: "How to Achieve Success" addresses how best to attract the target population to these events.

### 4.1 Walking Tour & Visual Audit

One of the best methods to gain a thorough understanding of the planning area is to conduct a walking tour with stakeholders. The consultant team will work with stakeholders to conduct a walking tour in which they collaborate on identifying key issues, noting existing conditions, and brainstorming ways to improve the project area. During the walking tour a visual audit will be conducted where participants will be asked questions about specific locations within the planning area to identify potential candidate sites for improvement as well as examples of what the community feels are appropriate design solutions.

### 4.2 Display Booth at Community Kick-off

RRM will set up a booth as part of a Community kick off event, displaying maps, showing the results of the visual audit, and taking input on the Community Action Plan process. At this early stage in the process, outreach should include an educational presentation to establish a common understanding of the concepts of "walkable" and "liveable" and what constitutes "traffic calming".

### 4.3 Issue Identification & Priority Setting

During the first workshop, an interactive exercise will be conducted to determine the community's desires, concerns, and needs for the project area with respect to traffic calming, increased pedestrian and bicycle safety, parking supply and delineation as well as economic development opportunities. Participants will then be asked to rank their preferences for each of the issue areas using a tape dot system.

### 4.4 Visual Preference Survey

RRM will then show a variety of slides on how other communities have solved similar issues as those identified in Gualala, and utilizing instant feedback software, workshop participants will be able to indicate their preferences on the images presented to witness immediately which images are preferred by residents.

### 4.5 Design Charrette

The last part of the first workshop will be devoted to a design charrette wherein workshop participants will utilize graphic legends to guide them in brainstorming design ideas on potential solutions to problem areas. The consulting team will work with the groups and help to sketch out design ideas on aerial photographs and will assist participants in presenting results of the design brainstorming exercise.

### 4.6 Review the Options and Ideas Report

During the second public workshop RRM will present the Options and Ideas Report outlining alternative treatments to key issue areas identified during the charrette. Workshop participants will participate in a voting exercise that allows them to suggest specific changes and identify ideas that they support or disagree with. RRM will then project photographic images of key issue areas from the Options and Ideas Report in order to draw ideas and recommended changes from workshop participants.

### 4.7 Review the Preferred Community Action Plan

During the third public workshop the consultant team will present the Preferred Community Action Plan and obtain feedback for further refinements and adjustments in creating a final Gualala Community Action Plan. Utilizing a report card exercise, detailed qualitative and quantitative feedback will be obtained on these features of the preferred concept, as well as feedback on priorities and phasing associated with implementing the Preferred Community Action Plan.

### 5.0 Approval Process
### 5.1 Public Hearing on Draft Community Action Plan

RRM Design Group and Pacific Group will prepare for and attend the public hearing before MCOG on the Draft Community Action Plan utilizing a PowerPoint presentation to obtain further public input on the Community Action Plan. During this hearing the

public will have the opportunity to make recommendations on how the Draft Community Action Plan might be improved.

**5.2 Presentation of Final Community Action Plan**
RRM will make a PowerPoint presentation of Final Community Action Plan to the MCOG for acceptance at a public meeting. RRM will also present it to the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors at a public hearing.

## 6. Communicating the project to the public

We live in a world that expresses itself in a disharmony of voices, representing a broad range of groups and perspectives at every scale, from statewide to small communities like Gualala. Locally, one of the major polarities is between commercial and private interests. To develop an effective and targeted communication strategy, it is important to provide a clear and consistent message.

Strategy # 1: Develop a clear message and mission for the project; identify a primary point of contact or spokesperson for the project at the local level to distribute that information.

Multiple communication mechanisms can be used to target the same or different audiences and topics. Use existing forms of communication that people are used to such as local newsletters, websites and email distribution lists.

Strategy #2: Send factsheets to local organizations and ask them post the dates of public meetings in their newsletters, in an email to a group distribution list, on their websites and during their meetings. (Gualala Arts Newsletter, Action Network Newsletter, Sea Ranch Newsletter).

Established media are also important partners in outreach and communication. The primary media contact or spokesperson for the project should prepare and maintain a media contact list, with particular emphasis on reporters covering local issues. Submission deadlines (time of day or day of week) should be identified for each media outlet.

Strategy #3: Work with radio stations the Tide and the Coast radio stations, Independent Coast Observer, La Voz, and Lighthouse Peddler weekly papers. Include meeting dates, locations, and information sources in each press release.

In this day and age it is difficult to reach an entire community with one form of communication. Choosing the right forms of communication plays an important role in reaching as many people as possible. Publicity outreach needs to reach diverse populations within the project budget. To ensure the most exposure possible, a strategy using multiple forms of publicity is important. The following is a list of other creative information outlets:

- Flyers included in utility bills
- Flyers posted in:
    o Buses stops and in buses
    o Local library
    o Post office
    o Grocery store
    o Local businesses
- Create a project website (best way to provide most current information and work products to the public)
- Create a project newsletter and mail to residents and businesses
- Create an email newsletter and post on community website
- Create an information center or kiosk inside a local business or community center and advertise this on flyers as a place for more information

Strategy #4: Create flyers and fact sheets in both English and Spanish and distribute to the Hispanic or Latino, Asian, and American Indian popultaions.