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# Gualala Community Action Plan

## Results of Public Workshop #1 2 May 2006

The first public workshop for the Gualala Community Action Plan was held at the Coast Life Support District Training Center in Gualala on April 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>. This interactive workshop included two days worth of activities.

Day one (Friday): From approximately 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., RRM conducted key stakeholder interviews. At 4:00 p.m. RRM & W-Trans conducted a walking tour of the planning area with key stakeholders who were asked to identify their likes and dislikes in the planning area. Issue areas were recorded digitally by RRM & W-Trans. During this time a visual audit of the project area was conducted to record features within the community that would be identified as candidates for improvements.

Day two (Saturday): From 9 a.m. to noon, a Community kick off event was held in the form of an "open house", displaying maps, showing the visual audit, and taking input on the Community Action Plan process. This time was also devoted to educating event participants on livability, walkability, and traffic calming concepts as well as the Community Action Plan process. From 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., RRM facilitate the interactive portion of the first public workshop. The beginning of the workshop was devoted to an Issue Identification and Priority Setting exercise followed by a visual preference survey. The last part of the workshop in the afternoon was devoted to a design charrette wherein workshop participants worked in small groups, utilizing graphic guides to brainstorm design ideas on potential solutions to problem areas on aerial photographs.

The stakeholder interviews went well with many stakeholders responding via email or by hand delivering responses to the questionnaire. A large amount of interest and suggestions was received for stakeholders. It has been extremely challenging getting to all of them and phone calls are still being made. Responses to the questionnaires that have been received to date have been tallied and can be reviewed in Appendix A.

Friday afternoon's walking tour was well attending with just over twenty participants. As we walked through the community, participants were asked to identify key issues and any suggested solutions to those issues. During this tour issues surrounding sidewalks were the most abundant. While there were varying opinions on where sidewalks should be located, the most common recommendation was from Ocean Drive to Center Street. Other key issues identified were the need for turn pockets along the Highway, better road connectivity, cross walks at Ocean Drive, and multiple ways of addresses parking issues in Gualala. More detailed results from the walking tour can be found in Appendix B.

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Saturday afternoon was the next interactive exercise starting with the Issue Identification and Priority Setting. During this exercise participants were asked to examine eight topic areas and provide a list of issues under each topic. Participants were then asked to determine which topics and issues were most and least important to them using colored dots. In general results from this exercise were consistent with the findings from the Walking Tour with the topic of "Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety/Route" generating the most interest/support. Under this topic the issue "No bike lanes on Highway 1" had the highest level of support. The issue with the highest level of support was "consistent landscaping in downtown". The topic with the highest level of opposition was "Vehicle Travelways and Treatments". Under this topic and across all the topics the issue "add stop sign or light" had the most amount of opposition. Following at a distant second "bike path on both sides [of highway]" received a high level of opposition.

During the priority setting exercise, the issues of public safety were up of the utmost concern to participants. In our opinion the opposition to bicyclists on the Highway is due to the lack of bicycle facilities. Negative experiences in attempting to pass bicyclists were mentioned along with the concern for bikes as large trucks and recreational vehicles pass them along Highway 1. Sidewalks also generating some interesting comments during the day with the room split on providing a formal sidewalk versus a more natural path. Supporters of the path concept were drawn to the more rural feel of the path while supporters of the sidewalk concept were concerned with accessibility and maintenance. The ability to make turning movements and the concern for pedestrians crossing the highway were two additional issues that came up frequently. Many participants brought up parking along the Highway as a contributing factor to both of these issues. For detailed results from the Issue Identification and Priority Setting exercises see Appendix C.

Following the priority setting exercise, a visual preference survey was conducted. Participants were shown a series of twenty four slides representing various traffic calming and other treatment options that would increase walkability and beautification along Highway 1. Street lighting provoked many comments from participants who voiced concern about light pollution. In general participants favored rural design features and low maintenance landscape that did not block views. Detailed results of the Visual Preference Survey can be found in Appendix D.

The last exercise of the first public workshop was a Design Charrette where participants were asked to draw their recommendations for improvements on a base map. A map key guided participants in locating: gateways, sidewalks/paths, crosswalks, landscaping/trees, parks, parking, bike lanes and bus stops. Participants were instructed to add to the key any item they felt was missing. Working in groups, many participants added new roads and one included a ferry from the bluff across the river to the oceanfront beach. Detailed results of the Design Charrette can be found in Appendix E.

The preferred gateway location on the south end of town was near Old State Highway with the vacant area south of Oceansong also having strong support. On the north end of town participants favored a gateway near Bed Rock Materials. Pedestrian facilities were shown most frequently from Cypress Village to Center Street on the east side, from Bed Rock Materials to the Gualala River Bridge on the west side of the highway, and going up Old State Highway. Desired crosswalk locations were spread across town with all groups showing the existing crosswalk location. Seven groups showed crossings at Ocean Drive,

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four groups at Pacific Woods, three at Church and three showing the mobile home park. Some groups opted to show new roads on their maps. Of those groups, four of them showed Church Street extending south to Center and four showed the Church/Moonrise extension from the Gualala Town Plan.

Locations for other items on the maps were spread throughout town with no clear preference for one location. These items included landscaping, parking, bus stops and bike lanes.

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