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Gualala Community Action Plan Workshop II Results 14 June 2006

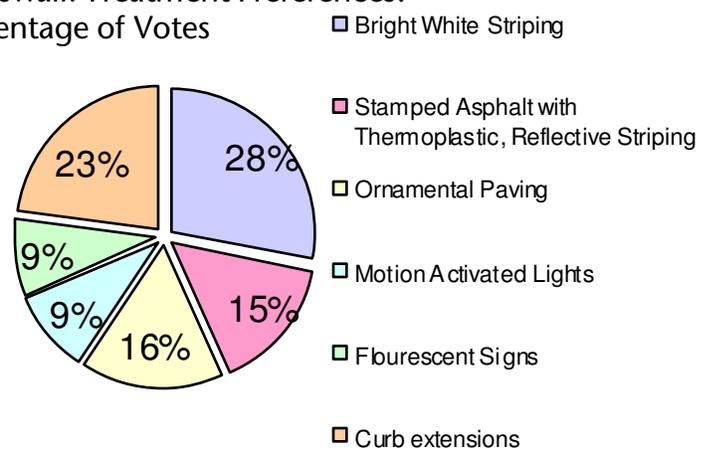
Introduction

The Gualala Community Action Plan, a project undertaken by the Mendocino County Council of Governments, is intended to be a guide for enhancing the town of Gualala's "livability" through implementation of public improvements concentrated along Gualala's Main Street, Highway 1. The primary concerns associated with livability include pedestrian safety, vehicular circulation, and non-vehicular access to and through town. On the evening of Wednesday, June 14, 2006, over fifty representatives of the community of Gualala joined presenters from RRM Design Group and Pacific Group at the Gualala Arts Center to evaluate a range of "Options and Ideas" generated during the initial data gathering phase of the project. The following pages present an analysis of questionnaires that participants filled out during the slide show presentation, including some ideas as to how these responses might shape the Community Action Plan.

Crosswalk Treatments

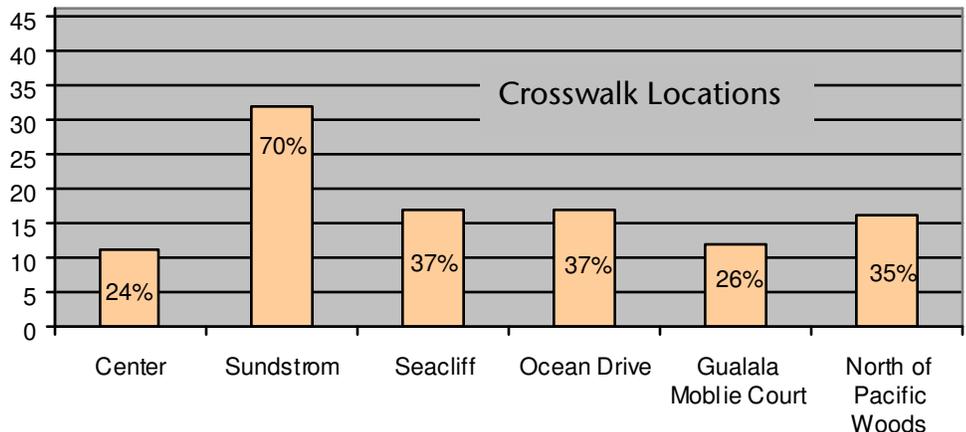
Roughly a third of the respondents' votes indicated that bright white striping was an appropriate crosswalk treatment. Another third of the votes went to colored paving, although this third was split 50/50 between reflective stamped asphalt and ornamental paving. Almost a fourth of the votes implied that curb extensions were also desirable. Fewer people felt that fluorescent pedestrian safety signs and motion-activated lights would be appropriate, options which each received less than 10 percent support. The Community Action Plan will therefore explore the feasibility of crosswalks combining bright white striping, curb extensions, and colored paving.

**Crosswalk Treatment Preferences:
 Percentage of Votes**

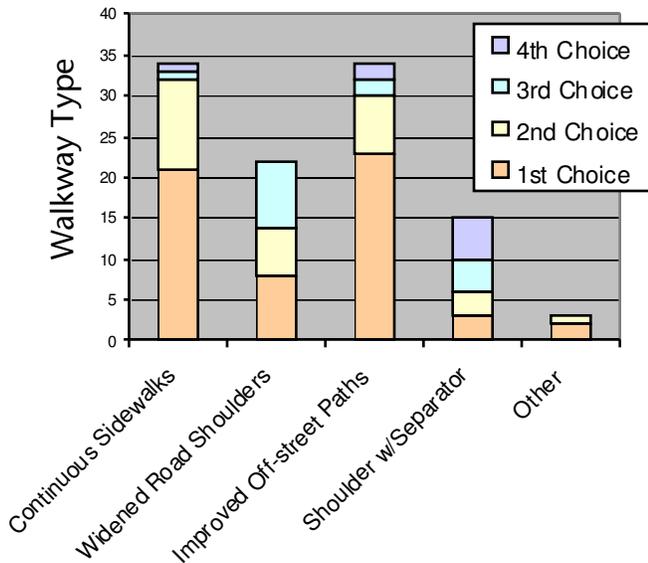


Crosswalk Locations

Gualalans at the workshop were very supportive of crosswalks. Most people (70%) voted to retain the existing crosswalk at Sundstrom Mall, while over a third of the respondents also wanted to see



crosswalks at SeaCliff, Ocean Drive, and the North Side of Pacific Woods. Crosswalks at center and Gualala Mobile Court were relatively less supported, although they did receive votes from about a quarter of the workshop participants. In light of these results, the Community Action Plan will suggest implementation of appropriate treatments at all six crosswalk locations, in order of community priority.

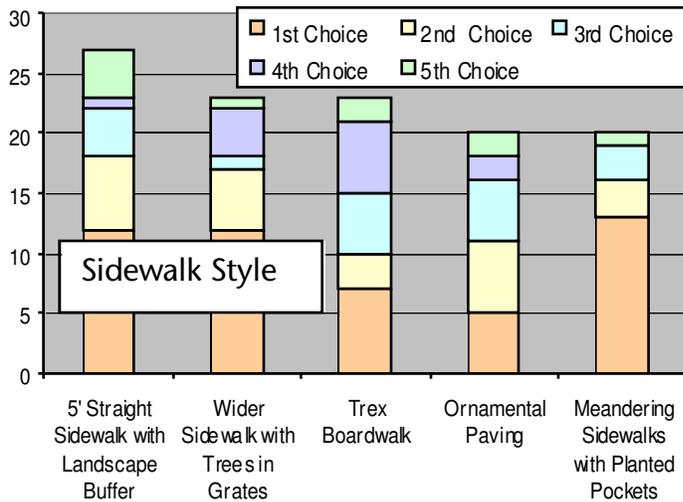
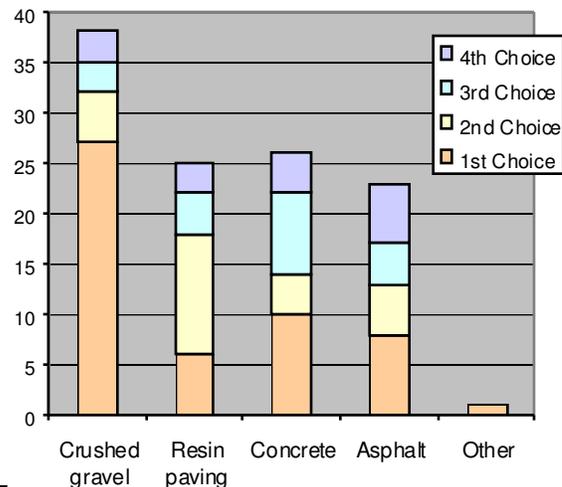


Pedestrian Walkways

This subject is fairly straightforward for the people of Gualala. They generally prefer improved off-street paths and continuous sidewalks (when feasible) throughout the study area. Wider, shared road shoulders are a less popular option, and a curb separator is even less supported. Responses to the "other" category included combinations and specifics on surfacing. This data indicates that the Community Action Plan should explore the implications of a combination of sidewalks and off-street paths throughout the study area.

Walkway Surfacing

This question was posed to further explore the option of off-street walkways. More than half the participants chose crushed gravel as their first choice, more votes than any other surface received in total. Taking first and second preferences into account, resin paving was the closest competitor, followed closely by concrete and asphalt, respectively. The Community Action Plan will note these preferences and suggest crushed gravel surfacing for off-street paths, while allowing for discussion of the relative merits of other surfacing options and changing technologies.

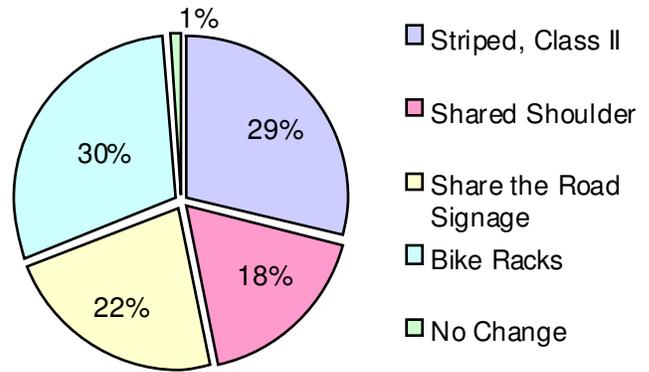


Sidewalk Treatments

For areas where a continuous sidewalk is feasible, participants were asked to evaluate a range of sidewalk treatments. Both first and second choices were split closely between meandering sidewalks with a landscape buffer, wider sidewalks with trees in grates, and a 5' straight sidewalk with a landscape buffer. Because participants have expressed essentially equal support for three very different schemes, the Community Action Plan will evaluate all three of these options as they relate to other factors under consideration.

Bicycle Facilities

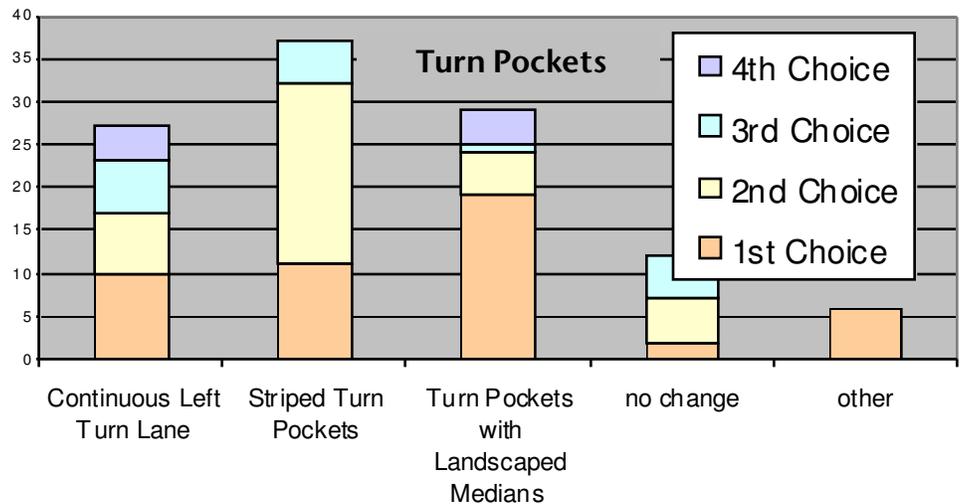
At the first public workshop, and during key stakeholder interviews, several participants felt that considering improvements for bicycle travel within and through Gualala should not be a priority for the Community Action Plan. Gualala’s steep topography, limited highway right-of-ways, and safety concerns were the main reasons cited for opposition. Nevertheless, the question was presented during the opportunities and ideas workshop because bicycles will continue to be present on the roadway and public funding is often available for bicycle programs. Participants were asked to vote for each of the ideas they supported. We were surprised to find that at workshop 2, participants were much more supportive of bicycle facilities, with only 1% (basically 2 voters) advocating no improvements at all. Over half the participants voted both for bike racks and for Class II Bike Lanes (striping separating bikeways from roadways), and there was strong support for the shared shoulder option and “share the road” signage as well. As a result, the Community Acton Plan will continue to consider bicycles a part of Gualala’s livability and suggest a reasonable scale of improvements within an integrated plan.



Bicycle Facilities:
Percentage of Total Votes

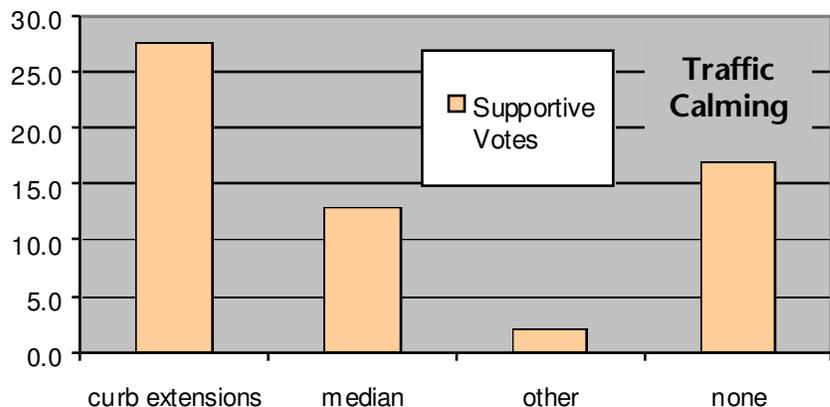
Turn Pockets

Most workshop participants support the idea of adding turn pockets to Highway 1 at key locations where traffic sometimes backs up while drivers wait for oncoming traffic to clear. The most popular first choice was a landscaped or hardscaped median guiding drivers into a safe left turn area. The most popular second choice is turn pockets indicated through road striping. A continuous left turn lane was also supported. The Community Action Plan will designate locations where turn pockets should be considered and note the range of supported alternatives as well as the feasibility and implications of each.



Traffic Calming

Curb extensions received supportive votes from over half of the report card respondents, although over a third thought that no constructed traffic calming measures were necessary. A quarter believed that medians would be acceptable. Two people advocated speed bumps.



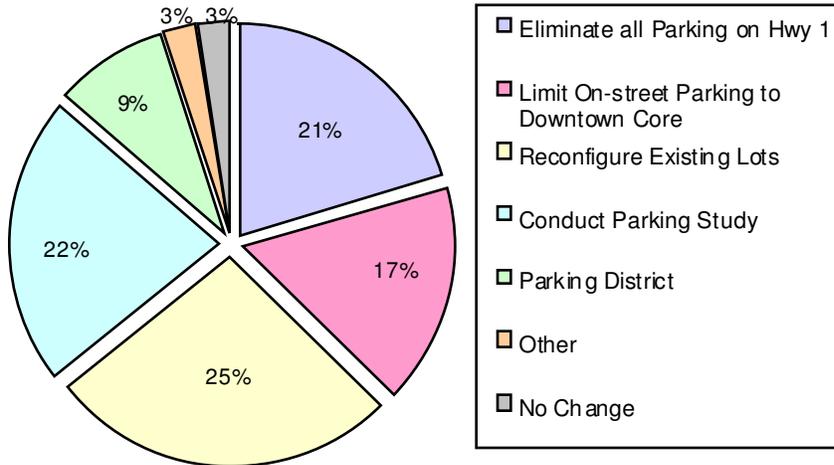
Parking

Parking is a contentious issue in Gualala. Often the road shoulders along the Highway are the only obvious place to park while patronizing local stores and restaurants, which are extremely dependent on visitor traffic. Coastal business owners are unlikely to support any improvement that reduces or compromises their allotted (already limited) parking areas. However, the adopted Gualala Town Plan calls

for eliminating the option of parking along Highway 1. At the workshop, almost all of the participants agreed that the current parking situation could be improved.

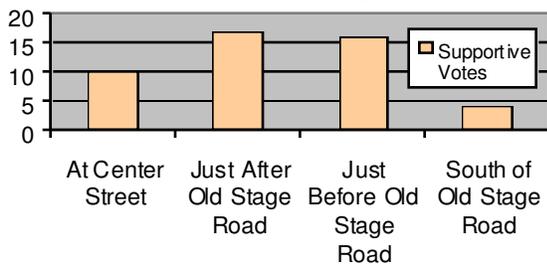
Respondents supported several methods of improving parking in the downtown area. Given the range of input, the Community Action Plan will suggest that Gualala undergo a focused parking study that includes identification of potential public parking facilities, suggested reconfiguration of existing parking lots, and

Parking Strategies:
Percent of Total Votes



public/private partnerships for funding and maintenance in order to ensure that businesses are not jeopardized in pursuit of the safety and aesthetic advantages of limiting on-street parking.

Southern Gateway Location

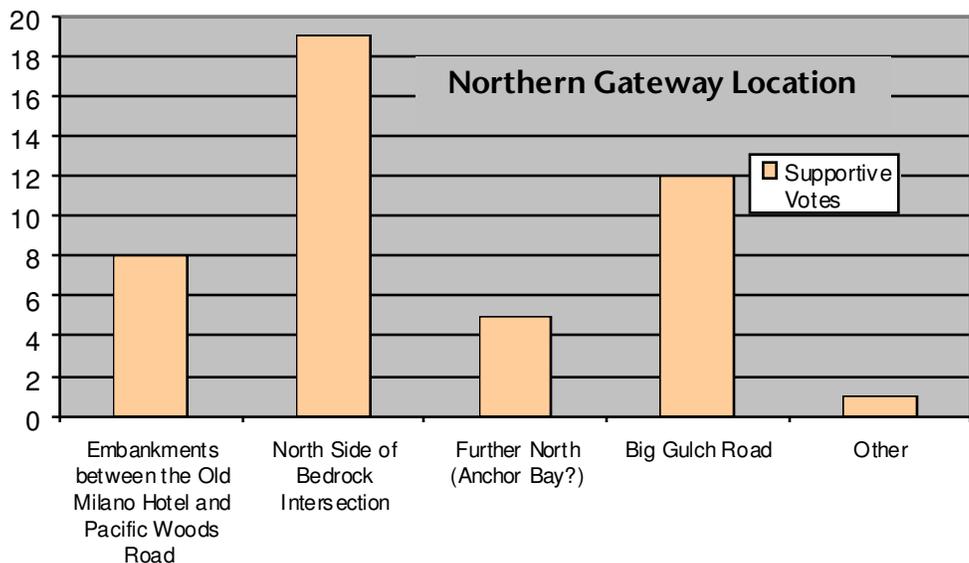


Gateways

Of the respondents who answered this question, 65% felt that gateways should be low wooden signs in a landscaped median as specified in the Town Plan. Thirty-three percent had objections, including maintenance costs and an aversion to medians. Two percent didn't care. As for locations, most people thought that the southern gateway should be located just before or just after Old Stage Road. The most popular location for the northern gateway was the

north side of the intersection at Bedrock, although many people felt it should be further north, at Big Gulch Road or even Anchor Bay. The Community Action Plan will recognize these preferences when delineating suggestions for gateway implementation.

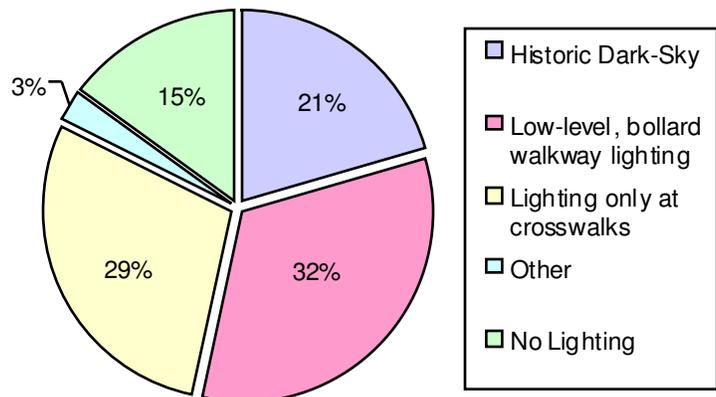
Northern Gateway Location



Street Lighting: Percent of Total Votes

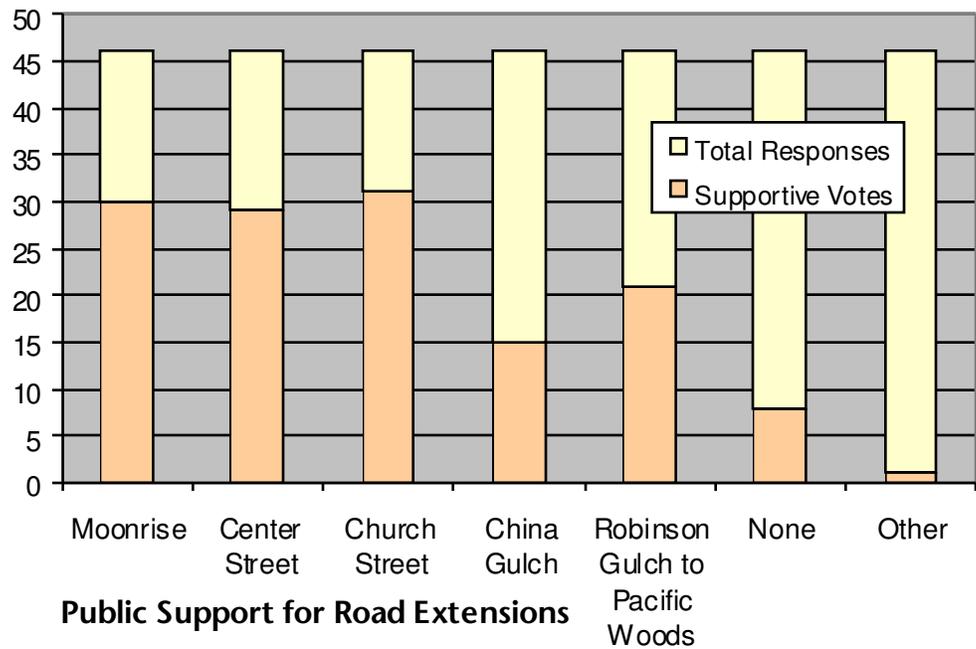
Streetlights

Street lighting is another important issue in Gualala. Many people feel that the disadvantages of illuminating the area outweigh the potential advantages, especially since nighttime foot traffic in town is rare. Although there is a contingent that supports conventional ornamental streetlights, using dark sky models and a historic theme, most respondents preferred minimal night lighting. A concern for maintenance was voiced regarding bollard lighting and there was a suggestion that solar-powered options be considered. The Community Action Plan will evaluate methods of street lighting that impact the night environment as little as possible while still enhancing pedestrian safety.



Road Extensions

This issue brings up a lot of strong feelings in Gualala. There is a question as to whether it within the scope of the Community Action Plan project to address the issue of these potential road extensions, since they are technically located outside of the defined project area and are a divisive subject that tends to slow down consensus-building strategies. The impact these extensions would have on local travel patterns, especially in regard to Highway 1,



does support their inclusion as a factor in the Community Action Plan, however. Construction of these roads could potentially change Gualala’s housing market, demographics, local traffic pattern, and budgetary concerns, which are all key factors in the way Gualala develops in the coming years.

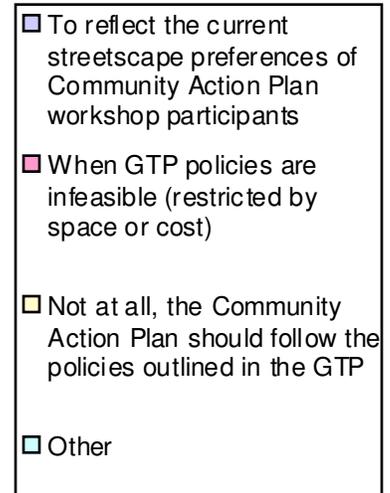
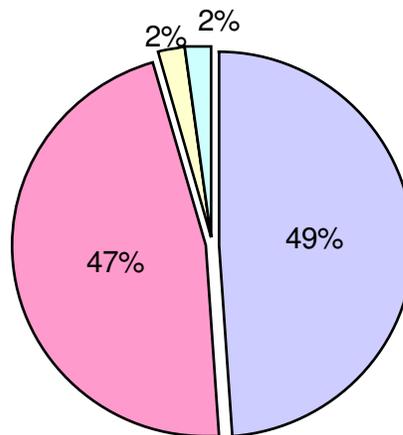
The Community Action Plan will not make recommendations, declare feasibility, or present funding scenarios regarding these road extensions, but will acknowledge the community’s preferences as expressed at both the first and second workshops and attempt to consider proposed Highway 1 improvements in light of the potential effects these circulation changes could bring.

Over half of the respondents supported three of the road extensions proposed by the Gualala Town Plan. The fourth, China Gulch, drew less support due to environmental issues and steep terrain. When Robinson Gulch to Pacific Woods extension was suggested, the idea was supported by about half the people who returned report cards. A few held out for no road extensions, and one person merely stated there needed to be more discussion.

Should the Gualala Town Plan be Changed?

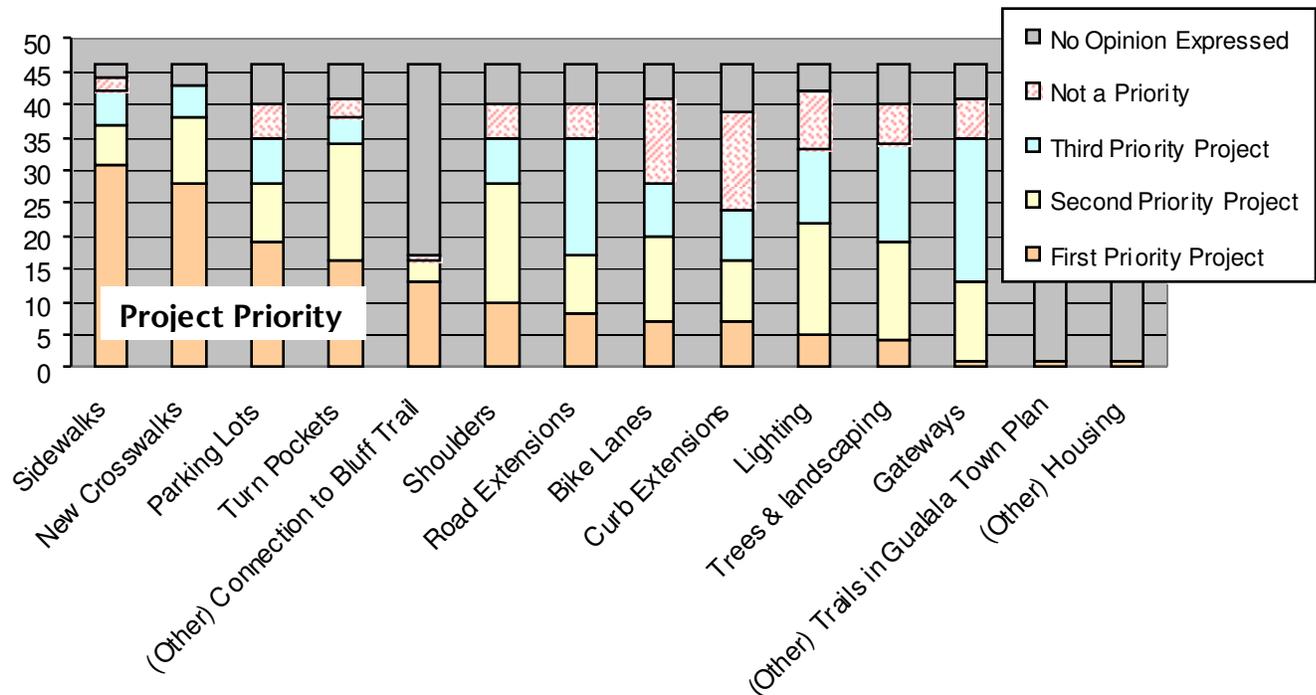
Gualala Town Plan

The residents of Gualala were almost unanimous in their feeling that investing public time and money to amend the Gualala Town Plan, if necessary to implement appropriate changes, would be worthwhile. Half supported changing the town plan to align with the results of the workshop, while the other half believed in changing the town plan only when financial or physical limitations precluded implementing the policies already in place.



Improvement Priorities

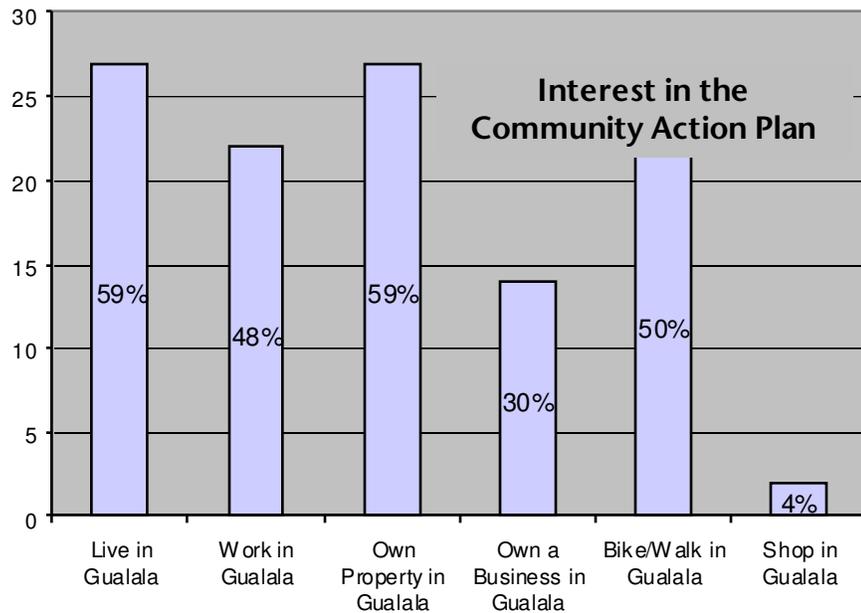
When asked which improvements covered in the workshop were the most important to implement soon, participants seemed to easily identify priorities. Sidewalks and crosswalks top the list of first priority projects, with parking lots, connections to the bluff trail, and turn pockets not far behind, although more people felt that turn pockets were a second-priority project than first. Shoulders, lighting, and bike lanes also figured significantly in the second-tier category. Road extensions and gateways were most often designated third priority. Landscaping received an equal number of votes as second and third priority. Although curb extensions had been favored in earlier questions, when it comes down to it, Gualalans aren't that concerned with having them right away. Bike Lanes and landscaping could also wait, according to respondents. The Community Action Plan will use these sentiments, coordinated with other data, to develop a phasing schedule for improvements.



Interest in CAP

The attendees at the June 14th workshop represented a diverse group of stakeholders in Gualala's future. Over half live in Gualala, over half own property, half say they bike or walk in Gualala as is, and just under a half also work in Gualala. Thirty percent own a business in Gualala. Four percent noted that they shopped in Gualala as a write-in in the "other" category, which brings up an interesting point. While these

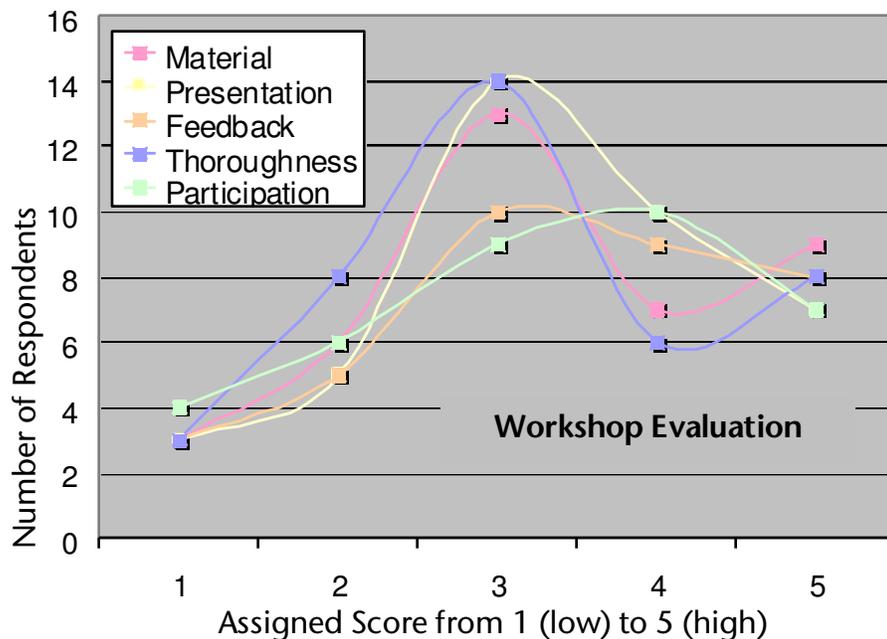
people may not have a Gualala address, they represent a substantial number of people from up and down the coast who come to Gualala to shop and eat (therefore keeping local businesses alive) on a daily to weekly basis. For the most part, they park in town and travel Highway 1 to do errands, whether on foot or driving from place to place, just like Gualala's residents and businesspeople, who would most likely also have checked the "shop" category if it had been available. Safe access to businesses and services is a key component of the Community Action Plan.



Most people, of course, fall into more than one of the categories mentioned above. There are many convergent reasons that people came to the workshop to express the preferences regarding Gualala's Community Action Plan, and the Community Action Plan will be an attempt to serve as wide a range of interests as possible.

Workshop Evaluation

Feedback on the workshop itself was collected in two ways, both on the report card questionnaire and on separate comment cards. Nineteen people (a little over 1/3 of the attendees) returned comment cards, and all but three felt the workshop was worthwhile. Half of the respondents hadn't been to the first workshop, and half had. Fourteen said they would return for the next workshop. A range of suggestions



for improving the next workshop were received, as well as compliments on the balanced approach and comments on specific improvements mentioned in the Options and Ideas presentation.

On the 42 report cards returned, respondents tended to grade the material, presentation, feedback process, and thoroughness of the workshop as average to high in quality.