



**PEAK HOSPITALITY INC.**

**To: Mr. Tariq Chechi, Project Manager**  
Gualala Downtown Project Team, Caltrans District 1  
[GualalaDowntown@dot.ca.gov](mailto:GualalaDowntown@dot.ca.gov)

**To: Robert Juengling and Tom Murphy**  
GMAC Streetscape Committee, Gualala Municipal Advisory Council  
[GMAC95445@gmail.com](mailto:GMAC95445@gmail.com)

**Re: Draft Alternative 4C**

**January 30, 2022**

**To all Concerned;**

As owner and operator of The Hotel Breakers and Vue Kitchen Restaurant, I'm writing in very strong opposition to Caltrans' Draft Alternative 4C, which is proposing to add on-highway parking instead of ending it. This ill-devised plan would also remove existing landscaping from the heart of our historic downtown instead of enhancing it, as required by law. I was shocked to learn of these proposals and I call on Caltrans to abandon this plan and stay with plan for Alternative 4A, as it was supported by locals.

Alternative 4C would trample the goals and spirit of the project as defined in the Gualala Town Plan and Coastal Plan. In my case, they would put my customers at greater risk of an accident while harming the curb appeal of my hotel and restaurant. As someone who spent his entire career in hospitality sector, I know they would also hurt our local economy by sustaining blight instead of eliminating it.

My customers and employees often complain it is dangerous to pull onto the highway when cars or trucks are parked anywhere near my entrance. Such vehicles make it very difficult to see oncoming traffic. Even if a car is parked 50-75 feet back from our driveway, I myself have trouble entering the highway safely, especially when turning left. This has also been brought up in previous town meetings and shared with the Caltrans project manager. To add on-highway parking, even with an open-ended interim or a 20-foot setback, would only add to that well-known hazard.

Hospitality businesses like mine rely highly on curb appeal. Removing both a well-established hedge and planned landscaping on both sides of the highway would do serious harm to my establishment and put



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lives in danger. That thick hedge currently shields the view of my off-highway parking, as recommended in both the Town and Coastal plans. Indeed, the plans require more landscaping like that, not less.

I invested my life savings in the Breakers/Vue property, relying on the fact that the plans legally require safety improvements and additional landscaping. Suggestions by Caltrans that it would seek to change that law betray promises long made to our community. Such talk is not just inappropriate, but morally repugnant.

As a businessman in Gualala, I have witnessed how past Caltrans actions fueled ugly debates. This is destructive and should end for the health of our community, which has already had three Caltrans Town Halls since 2018 and voted just last year in favor of Alternative 4A as a sensible compromise. I urge Caltrans to move ahead with Alt 4A which has support of majority of our community and will help improve safety of locals and visitors.

Please contact me if I can be of assistance.

David B. Shahriari

President Peak Hospitality INC

DBA: The Hotel Breakers and Vue Kitchen

Friends of Gualala River

P.O. Box 1543

Gualala, CA. 95445

Email [info@gualalariver.org](mailto:info@gualalariver.org)



*Submitted via email to GMAC*

Dear Mr. Chechi,

Friends of Gualala River (FoGR) is writing to express its support for the Gualala Streetscape Plan 4A which we encourage CalTrans to adopt and implement.

FoGR is a nonprofit, grassroots organization whose mission is to protect the Gualala River Watershed and the species living within it. The Gualala Downtown Streetscape project lies prominently within the Gualala River Watershed bordering the Gualala River estuary. The viewshed when entering Gualala from the south provides outstanding views of the Gualala River which is designated as a Wild and Scenic River by the State of California for its exceptional beauty and natural resources. Views entering town, and the watershed, from the north provide glimpses of the river and ocean. FoGR worked closely with CalTrans in Sonoma and Mendocino counties a few years ago to install "Entering Gualala River Watershed/Keep it Clean" signage as part of its efforts to increase awareness about the Gualala River watershed and encourage protection of this exceptional natural resource. We value the care and skills that CalTrans' staff provided FoGR volunteers to ensure the project's success.

The Gualala River is home to endangered and threatened species. Environmental DNA testing commissioned by FoGR in December 2020 revealed the presence of threatened CCC Coho salmon and endangered Northern California California Steelhead trout and California Red-Legged frog in the Gualala River estuary. The Gualala River has been listed as impaired by the EPA's Clean Water Act 303 (d) for over 20 years due to excessive sediment and high temperatures. Adding more asphalt and removing existing vegetation, as Alternative 4C proposes, would likely have a negative impact on the river due to increased drainage and runoff of vehicle related pollutants into the estuary. Moving more parking spaces farther away from the estuary and increasing vegetation would be healthier for the environment, safer and more aesthetically appealing.

The Streetscape plan area is in the most visible and visited part of the Gualala River Watershed and it should strive to protect all users and inhabitants, and enhance the natural environment. This position is consistent with the Gualala Town Plan. FoGR requests that CalTrans carefully consider how it can help protect the environment in downtown Gualala and the estuary by adopting and implementing Alternative 4A.

Thank you for considering FoGR's input in this important planning process.

Sincerely,

*Charles Ivor*

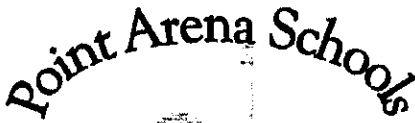
*Lynn Walton*

*Jeanne Jackson*

*Nathan Ramser*

FoGR Board of Directors

CC: Chairman Robert Juengling, Gualala MAC  
Executive Director Nephele Barrett, MCOG



Point Arena Joint Union High School District  
Arena Union Elementary School District  
P.O. Box 87, Point Arena CA 95468  
(707) 882-2803 \* Fax (707) 882-2848

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Warren Galletti - Superintendent  
Catherine Chin, Fiscal Resources - Dunnell Daleuski, Human Resource Analyst

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To: Gualala MAC, Gualala Downtown Planners  
Re: Gualala Downtown Bus Stop  
Date: January 24, 2022  
From: Warren Galletti, Superintendent, Point Arena Schools

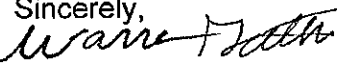
The Point Arena School District has no interest in adding a school bus stop on Hwy 1 as part of the Gualala Downtown Streetscape Project. The question surfaced, with no prior notice or information to the school district, when the Gualala MAC met Jan. 6 with planners from Caltrans and the Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG). The answer from the School Districts Perspective is a simple "No."

A video of that meeting showed this idea stemmed from a Caltrans plan, Alternative 4C, to add four "interim" on-highway parking spaces at the Hotel Breakers. The interim would end only if and when the Surf Center adds more parking, a project the center has delayed for many years. Caltrans officials said the area could then be utilized as a bus stop or landscape strip.

From the school district's perspective, the plan is flawed on these and quite possibly other levels.

1. We do not need a new bus stop in downtown Gualala and do not foresee such a need.
2. If for some reason the district did want a bus stop in Gualala, we would surely seek an off-highway location.
3. Alternative 4C would remove existing and planned landscaping in that area. As our students are taught and have learned, greenery not only helps fight global warming but also fosters an appreciation of nature – a key part of life here on the county's South Coast. The Gualala Town Plan and Coastal Plan emphasizes this theme. That's why landscaping is a key element of Alternative 4A, which was strongly supported by residents of Gualala last year.

In closing, I urge Caltrans to do away with any plan to add new "interim" parking as proposed in Alternative 4C and to proceed with Alternative 4A. Alternative 4A was first proposed by Caltrans, recommended by GMAC, and endorsed by a large majority of residents in a Caltrans Town Hall Survey. I strongly recommend that Caltrans move forward with Alternative 4A.

Sincerely,  
  
Warren Galletti  
Superintendent, Point Arena Schools

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Board of Trustees  
Cindy Cione - Robert Shimon - Bob Gardiner - Sal Martinez  
Mary Visher - Sigrid Hillscan - Miquette Thompson



# Save Gualala

*Established 2019 to preserve and enhance  
the rural, coastal charm of Gualala.*

SaveGualala@gmail.com

To: Downtown Gualala Project Team, Caltrans, District 1

Date: January 28, 2022

Re: Your Proposed Alternative 4-C

Save Gualala was formed in 2019 in direct reaction to a Caltrans proposal that would have transformed our charming downtown into what many characterized as a sterile strip mall. That plan violated our Town Plan (Local Coastal Plan) and drew staunch opposition from the people who actually live, shop, and visit here. The opposition stemmed from the fact the plan stripped out all required landscaping on both sides of the highway, widened the right-of-way to an unacceptable width, and added permanent parking on both sides of our Main Street through the length of downtown – all illegal under the Town Plan/LCP.

After defeating that nightmare proposal, Save Gualala supported Caltrans proposal 4A as a reasonable compromise that would have provided a smooth transition to a streetscape that complied with Town Plan requirements, but still allowed parking on the northeast quadrant of town until Caltrans determined a center turn lane was required. It included landscaping throughout the project along with other requirements of the Town Plan. The plan was also supported unanimously by the Gualala Municipal Advisory Agency, the county board assigned to represent Gualala residents in planning matters.

Caltrans circulated Alt 4A – along with several competing concepts – thoroughly, described it in a detailed video preview, discussed it at a well-attended Caltrans Town Meeting, and found the residents in the Project Area were “very supportive” of Alt 4, with most preferring parking on the east side of the highway from Church to Ocean as described in Alt 4A. Like most of our neighbors, we were pleased to hear Caltrans had finally heard the voice of local residents.

We write today in strong protest of your recent plan to circulate a competing plan that would once again ignore the legal requirements of our Town Plan. Your Alternative 4C would not only remove planned landscaping from the heart of our historic downtown, but would remove existing landscaping that shrouds an off-highway parking area. It would spark new division in our town, which is weary of telling Caltrans to simply follow our Town Plan and the clear majority of Gualalans. Alt 4C would do this for the sake of four “interim” spaces, ostensibly to provide parking for the Surf Market, but in fact putting the parking in front of the Hotel Breakers, whose owner objects strongly to that plan.

We are against Alt 4C and urge Caltrans to drop this idea. We further urge your agency to adhere to Alt 4A out of respect for the clear wishes of the majority of our residents as clearly established in your own CEQA review. We stand by our commitment to preserve and enhance the rural coastal charm of Downtown Gualala, and will use all means at our disposal to defeat Alt 4C. Please listen and end this debate before it goes any further.

Dear Gualala Municipal Advisory Council Members,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Gualala Cypress Village Homeowners Association. We are composed of 12 home owners and their families located just off of Ocean Drive, at the northern end of the Gualala Downtown Enhancement Project. The recent January 2022 GMAC meeting with members of Caltrans and Mendocino Council of Governments has prompted this writing as that meeting surprisingly informed us of yet again another effort at degradation of the Gualala Town Plan and delay to an agreed-upon Streetscape Plan.

For over two decades, our membership and its Board of Directors has taken an active interest in the Gualala Town Plan and subsequent iterations of the Streetscape Plan. We have signed petitions, written letters to GMAC and MCOG and the *Independent Coast Observer*, attended GMAC meetings, Caltrans workshops, and various related discussions,. All of this has been done in an effort to support the Gualala Town Plan requirements of ADA-compliant sidewalks on both sides of the street, native landscaping, separated bike paths, and three lanes through downtown Gualala.

Because we unanimously support the Gualala Town Plan's requirements to make Highway 1 a scenic element of the Gualala townscape while enhancing safety, decreasing congestion, and encouraging people to walk about, the Gualala Cypress Village Board of Directors passed the following motion at its January 2022 meeting:

*The Gualala Cypress Village Homeowners Association fully supports the Gualala Streetscape Alternative 4A. We also support significantly enhanced highway safety via a southbound left-turn lane at Ocean Drive. Lastly, to help mitigate excessive speeding both northbound and southbound on Hwy 1, we support deployment of radar feedback signs on each side of the highway.*

Sincerely,

Bill Merget, President, Board of Directors  
Gualala Cypress Village Homeowners Association

January 21, 2022

Gualala Municipal Advisory Council

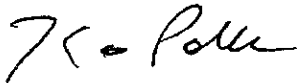
PO Box 67

Gualala, CA 95445

Sirs, Madam,

After reviewing the various streetscape options I am writing in support of Alternative 4A. I believe it best reflects the goal of creating "safe comfortable facilities for pedestrian and bicycle travel", improving "traffic flow" and improving "Gualala's visual character."

Best Regards,



Kevin Polk, President

Remaking Home at Whale Point Landing

39000 S Highway 1

Gualala, CA 95445

I have watched the Jan 6 video discussing the new streetscape proposal 4C and its comparison to 4A. My comments: I absolutely prefer 4A over 4C for a host of reasons:

(1) The on street parking on the west side of hwy 1 from the old video store to the south end of the Surf is dangerous in terms of being able to have a good line of sight both entering and exiting the parking areas. Red striping a no parking area back for 20 feet will have insufficient effect.

(2) I am fully in support of a center turn lane from Center Street at the south end of town to Ocean Drive at the north.

(3) Adding interim parking in front of the Breakers Hotel is a bad idea for all the discussed reasons - adding 4 parking spaces in a place that will be difficult to park in is not worth it. Certainly there will be wandering shopping carts left in that area.

(4) Likewise it is a safety issue to add truck parking in the choke point entry into town.

(5) I agree that the weekend craft vendors need a different place to set up as they create a traffic hazard.

(6) The 4C option is, frankly, Butt Ugly.

(7) The goal of making the transit of hwy 1 through town safer, easier and more beautiful is best achieved with Option 4A.

William Nieser,  
Gualala



[EMAIL from Dave Shpak – Design Suggestions]

1

**From:** shpak@pacbell.net <shpak@pacbell.net>

**Sent:** Monday, January 17, 2022 7:20 PM

**To:** gualaladowntown@dot.ca.gov; Frank\_Demling@dot.ca.gov; jeffrey.pimentel@dot.ca.gov

**Cc:** Murphy, Tom <gmac95445@gmail.com>; Juengling, Robert <robert@oceanicland.com>

**Subject:** Gualala Downtown Streetscape Enhancement Project: Alternative 4C comments

The purpose of this email is to provide additional comments on the Gualala Downtown Streetscape Enhancement Project Alternative 4C discussed at GMAC on January 6, 2022, as invited by Caltrans District 1 staff and GMAC.

I appreciate continuing efforts by Caltrans and MCOG staff to consider input from the community and to thoroughly analyze design solutions to achieve the best balance between that input and adopted plans, policies, and standards. A notable addition to the analytic framework is Director's Policy 37 that acknowledges the opportunity to advance complete streets in all project phases and sets priorities that encourage and maximize walking, biking and transit; foster socially and economically vibrant, thriving, and resilient communities; and maximize context-sensitive solutions for travelers of all ages and abilities.

As Tom Murphy demonstrated during his presentation at GMAC, there is ample space for parking provided in properties adjacent to SR1 within distances that support customer and service access to businesses. Unlike those properties, SR1 is the only place in Gualala that can integrate arterial capacity regional and local vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian travel, and create a connected, unifying, sustainable, and resilient social space in the civic center of Gualala. Successive alternatives have forced parking into the highway ROW, on an interim or permanent basis, in conflict with the adopted Gualala Town Plan, existing development, actual physical conditions and constraints, sensible transportation and modern land use planning techniques. Needless design and operational complexity to impose unnecessary and controversial parking come at the expense of straightforward design, safe highway operations, attractive and effective active modes, traveler equity, and articulating the community, county, and regional gateway place. Now is the time, while preparing to recirculate the CEQA Negative Declaration, to simplify the project design, avoid conflicts with adopted plans and standards, align the project with policies that prioritize roadway operations and complete streets, make SR1 the center of Gualala for the entire community, and improve ATP competitiveness.

Please revise Alternative 4C (with reference to Caltrans slides 13, 14, 19, 20 from 12/6/21 MCOG presentation):

1. Between Center Street and Sundstrom Mall south driveway
  - a. Specify roundabout at the intersection of SR1 and Old State Highway, instead of Notes 1 and 2 on rumble strips and speed sign.
  - b. Correct spelling of pedestrian beacon warning system caption.
  - c. Add crosswalk across Center Street (east of SR1 northbound lane).
  - d. Revise caption for reserved area between east sidewalk and bike lane to be "Reserved for Landscaping."
  - e. Provide center turn pocket for southbound left turns from Sundstrom Mall south driveway.
2. Between Sundstrom Mall driveways
  - a. Eliminate parking in ROW adjacent to southbound lane. Abandon the concept of placing a bus stop on SR1 in Gualala, since transit riders and operators are more safely and conveniently accommodated at stop(s) within the Sundstrom Mall parking lot.
  - b. Correct spelling of pedestrian beacon warning system caption.

[Shpak, p 2]

- c. Shift vehicle and bicycle lanes westward to maintain current center line.
  - d. Increase sidewalk in front of Hotel Breakers to 6 feet width.
  - e. Add 4-foot landscaping strip adjacent to southbound sidewalk between Surf Market south driveway and Hotel Breakers north driveway. Taper landscaping strip to zero north of Hotel Breakers driveway to maintain exiting motorist view of southbound traffic.
  - f. Add 4-foot landscaping strip adjacent to northbound sidewalk between Sundstrom Mall driveways.
  - g. Add note that final design of northbound 4-foot landscaping strip may integrate seating or other patio hardscape in front of the historic Gualala Hotel and Upper Crust Pizzeria.
3. Between Sundstrom Mall north driveway and Ocean Drive
- a. Eliminate parking in ROW adjacent to southbound lane.
  - b. Eliminate crosswalk bulb-out at Ocean Drive west leg.
  - c. Add pedestrian beacon warning system to the Ocean Drive crosswalks.
  - d. Continue vehicle lane configuration of 11-foot through and 12-foot center turn lanes from Sundstrom Mall to Ocean Drive.

Please contact me if you have any questions or would like to talk with me about my recommendations. I would be happy to mark up plan sheets to provide visual details of these refinements, if that would be helpful. Best regards. - Dave Shpak (530-902-1781)

**[Email from Mary Sue Ittner, Gualala]**

Having attended multiple meetings about the streetscaping plan for many years, including working on the Gualala Town Plan, I have become weary of making comments only to have issues that seemed settled brought up over and over again for discussion.

The Gualala Town plan G3.6-12 states: "No on-street parking shall be permitted on Highway 1." There are safety issues involved as well as aesthetic reasons for this requirement.

During the study for the Community Action Plan it was determined that the Surf Center had 40 existing parking places in the front of the buildings with 69 spaces needed by the Coastal Zoning Code. In early 2011 I wrote this to Dan Hamburg, then the Supervisor representing Gualala. "The CAP suggests that the parking problems of the Surf Center could be immediately improved by the demolition of the old Pharmacy Building that has been vacant for a number of years and is owned by Bower Limited Partnership (BLP). This would provide parking for the community and the Surf Market and would open up coastal views as well. In fact, BLP has a permit (CDP 24-2007) to do this which has been renewed twice, but not implemented."

Since that time many committees have met to come up with a solution to provide the needed parking when this solution continues to exist. There is now an empty building next to it as well. In order to accommodate the Surf Market, interim streetscaping plans have been proposed that include parking on Highway 1. There has been plenty of time for BLP to solve this problem and perhaps knowing parking on Highway 1 would be removed might be an incentive for action.

Participants at a Caltrans meeting were told that sometimes interim plans became permanent plans as there was no funding to come back later and make changes. Given that explanation a large majority of the people present voted for Alternative 2 that removed parking from Highway One.

At the October 2019 community meeting when "interim" parking on Highway 1 was proposed to help the Market, alternatives were not presented even though members of the committee that met for four hours at the Gualala Hotel to try to come up with a compromise plan were told alternatives would be presented, including parking on just the eastside of the Highway. Business owners of the Gualala Hotel and the Breakers Inn both reported that the success of their businesses depended on the implementation of the streetscaping plan without highway parking and residents who lived in the streetscaping area also were in favor of removing the parking. In spite of this only the plan the Surf Market supported was presented. At that meeting participants only voted about the width of the design since alternatives were not presented. All those opposed to parking on Highway One or a compromise of having it on one side of the highway did not have the opportunity to vote on those options. Those people may have voted for the wider option as it included the possibility of a left turn lane at a later date as the best choice of the two. Saying that people changed their minds after hearing about the need for retaining walls does not take into account that many people were not happy with what had been decided which also explains why so many people signed the Save Gualala petition.

New alternatives were then presented after that meeting, plans to keep parking on one side of the highway where most people did not park, but move it away from the most congested areas of town. These alternatives had support, especially the plan that had parking on the eastside of Highway 1. The latest proposal has some improved features for the area next to the Community Center. But as several speakers at the latest GMAC meeting explained, parking on Highway One in the most congested part of town is not safe and this area is one of the most widely used parts of town and it is important for it to be attractive. Four parking spaces won't make that much difference and it seems unfair to add it to a location where the landowner specifically requested that on street parking be removed even if it was allowed on the property next to his. Even if at a later date no parking signs were added if BLP had finally created parking that is lacking on the Surf Center property, it is unlikely that there would be a redesign with landscaping in front of the Breakers Inn.

**[Ittner, page 2]**

I still prefer Alternative 2 that follows the Gualala Town Plan, avoids having the streetscaping permit be appealed to the Coastal Commission and gives the opportunity for a more attractive streetscaping design, including clustered vegetation. A two foot strip of landscaping would be very limiting and difficult to maintain.

Anyone reading the Gualala Town Plan recognizes that it is time for it to be updated. This process would take a long time. At a GMAC meeting Julia Krog explained that even amendments take time and only a couple a year for the whole county can be undertaken. Before an amendment could be proposed, there would need to be many meetings to determine what to change and they have not started. It's fair to believe given the history that there would be many opinions and consensus not easily reached. There would still be people who want to remove parking from Highway One and would support many of the other requirements of the Gualala Town Plan. The North Coast Office of the Coastal Commission has had staffing problems for a number of years and often is forced to put off matters when something comes up that has a statutory time limit that takes preference. They still have not brought back to the Commission a recommendation on the BLP permit for the Surf Center property that was set aside in 2008. It is unlikely that the Gualala Town Plan could be changed quickly.

So much effort has been put into coming up with a plan to beautify Gualala and make it more pedestrian friendly. The wisest choice is a plan that follows the Gualala Town Plan.

**Mary Sue Ittner, Gualala**