


From: Henry Mayer hmayer00@gmail.com 
Subject: Re: Gualala Downtown Enhancement I Erosion Control vs Hardscape Ambiguity
Date: June 27, 2025 at 14:51
To: Everett, Katie@DOT Katie.Everett@dot.ca.gov
Cc: Julia Krog krogj@mendocinocounty.gov, Liam Crowley crowleyl@mendocinocounty.gov, Nephele Barrett barrettn@dow-associates.com, Ted Williams williamst@mendocinocounty.gov, dave-shpak@outlook.com, Tom Murphy gmac95445@gmail.com

Thank you for the clarification Katie, I am glad to hear that at least the hardscape is only for the islands. My apologies for the misunderstanding.

Henry

On Fri, Jun 27, 2025, 8:29 AM Everett, Katie@DOT <Katie.Everett@dot.ca.gov> wrote:

Henry Mayer,

Thank you for your email requesting clarification on vegetation.

There is no landscaping proposed in the medians. Medians will be concrete. This is the area that is being described as hardscaped.

Other areas where soil is disturbed will have a seed mix placed to restore a naturally vegetated area.

I have labelled the areas in the rendering below to help visually represent the naturally vegetated areas versus the concrete median.



Regards,

Katie Everett, PE

California Department of Transportation

Project Manager – District 1

(707) 684-6998

From: Henry Mayer <hmayer00@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, June 26, 2025 1:52 PM

To: Julia Krog <krogj@mendocinocounty.gov>; Liam Crowley <crowleyl@mendocinocounty.gov>; Everett, Katie@DOT <Katie.Everett@dot.ca.gov>; Nephela Barrett <barrettn@dow-associates.com>; Ted Williams <williamst@mendocinocounty.gov>

Cc: Dave Shpak <dave-shpak@outlook.com>; Tom Murphy <gmac95445@gmail.com>

Subject: Gualala Downtown Enhancement I Erosion Control vs Hardscape Ambiguity

EXTERNAL EMAIL. Links/attachments may not be safe.

Director Krog, Mr. Crowley, Ms. Everett, Ms. Barrett, and Supervisor Williams,

This is Henry Mayer, GMAC member and member of GMAC's Streetscape committee. I am writing to you only for myself, as I have not been authorized by GMAC to speak on its behalf. I greatly regret that I was unable to attend today's Coastal Permit Administrator meeting, as I had to take care of my 4-year-old while my wife was in professional meetings. I do intend to (virtually) attend the continuation on July 10th. I have watched the video of this morning's meeting and I have an important point of confusion.

When Caltrans and Mr. Crowley gave a presentation to GMAC, the project had removed the landscaping that had been present in every iteration previously shared with the community. While the reasoning for this has been (mostly) explained, it is a devastating loss, and I remain unsatisfied with the outcome. However the small mitigation was that Caltrans discussed replacing the landscaped areas with native, drought-tolerant, no-maintenance grass mixes. While far short of the designed features, this would at least avoid creating a concrete eyesore throughout downtown.

However, there seems to be ambiguity remaining on this issue. Even at this morning's meeting, Mr. Crowley mentioned that the landscaped areas would be replaced with hardscape, whereas Ms Everett continued to talk about using native seed mixes in those areas.

I am seeking clarification on this point. If Mr Crowley is indeed correct that those areas would have hardscape instead of native grasses, that is a serious departure from the proposal on which GMAC voted in our meeting. Detailed renderings were not available to GMAC when we met and discussed that, and the renderings that have as of today been released remain ambiguous (and for reasons that escape me have cut out much of the original rendered area). **Can someone please clarify for me whether the landscaping has been replaced with concrete or with native grasses?**

The new renderings are also distressingly stark compared to the original renderings, which is what the community has seen before. In previous discussions at and outside of GMAC, I have repeatedly asked for an estimate of the required landscaping maintenance budget, and have never gotten a response. It is very unfortunate that this estimate was unavailable at GMAC's meeting, and the follow-up we requested there was never provided. The first estimate I've seen was in [Mr. Crowley's memo dated today](#), which stated "the annual cost of maintenance would be no more than a few ten thousand (\$10,000s) dollars." The county has repeatedly suggested that the cost would be prohibitive, but even for our struggling county that outlay is assuredly within its means. Gualala sends significant revenue to the County through property, tourism, and other taxes, and gets very little in return. A few \$10,000s in annual maintenance is a small thing in the budget, which would make an enormous difference to the residents and visitors of Gualala. I do not find the additional discussion of insurance costs particularly convincing, as Mendocino County already carries liability policies to maintain thousands of miles of county

roads, and adding half a mile of additional maintenance will not meaningfully impact the ongoing costs of the existing policies. **This is a primary gateway to Mendocino County, and it would be genuinely shameful to degrade its aesthetic components in order to save such a minimal amount of money.**

Please send clarification on the question of concrete vs native grasses as soon as practicable, so that I can be prepared for the meeting on July 10th. And I would urge the county, in the strongest possible terms, to reconsider the enormous return on investment that would be achieved, for the town and the county, by allocating this small outlay on annual landscaping maintenance.

Thank you for your time,

Henry Mayer

GMAC Member



