

Major Points

Bolinas Community Coastal Alliance (BCCA)

Parking & Traffic Idea Statement

BCCA puts forth this draft for discussion. Our intent is to offer community-based solutions to the urgent problems that our town is facing. The small village downtown center of Bolinas is overwhelmed by a tsunami of overnight vehicle parking, traffic and camping. On weekends, holidays and most summer days and nights, traffic jams crowd our narrow and short 2 downtown streets. Streams of vehicles *built for habitation* roll into Bolinas, mostly on weekends and holidays, stake out their camp spots, and remain for days, weeks, months, essentially occupying and privatizing their access to the beach and village and limiting use by day visitors and residents.

Those who utilize the public streets for shorter, or longer-term habitation, represent the entire economic spectrum and walks-of-life. "Van life" folks, some in high dollar value RVs, as well as others seeking a free camping spot, park alongside a smaller number of people living and camped more permanently on the streets in their vehicles. This smaller number of street inhabitants utilize additional parking spaces with storage vehicle/units. To the outside eye, this gives the appearance that this population is more numerous.

Thus far, Marin County and the California Coastal Commission [CCC] appear to have let the needs of this smaller group of homeless individuals dominate the conversation for solutions. A focus on "homelessness" and "vulnerable populations" is too narrow and does not reflect the complexity of what Bolinas is facing. We should not let this concern allow us to wash our hands of the primary problems facing our town - access to commercial, social, and public services for residents and visitors, safe access to the beach, protection of the natural environment, and community safety.

The huge chaotic influx of traffic into the town poses the potential for loss of emergency service access and is a hazard. Uncontrolled camping raises public health and personal safety concerns. It is environmentally destructive. While some of the short-term campers most likely bring in their own water, the longer-term campers need to tap into community sources. As the camping community grows, this unregulated use could undermine efforts that Bolinas has made through regulation to conserve water; it is feasible that it could potentially affect the future ability to manage limited community resources.

We now seek action that reflects the needs of the whole community. Community members have been actively pursuing remedies since at least 2005. A timeline of community action [included at the conclusion of this document] details the intensity of these efforts. In recent months community members have come together to continue these efforts by the formation of the BCCA, reflecting the concern of at least 100 community members including the majority of residents on downtown streets and those yet to be added to the community alliance. In July, BCCA developed a purpose statement to guide efforts and outline the challenges Bolinas now faces. The draft idea statement presented here is a summary of suggested actions that we have researched and examined.

Recent critiques by the California Coastal Commission (CCC) and challenges to moving forward stated by the County have helped to shape the idea statement now presented. Since the plan for implementation of the 2018 Advisory Measure X has encountered serious road blocks, we have come up with

alternatives that meet the intent of the recent advisory measure, CCC concerns and the 14+ years of prior community effort. We suggest that the ideas presented here to be phased in over a three-year period. Idea statement key elements are: delineation of specific areas of parking for automobiles, pick-ups and motorcycles with a vehicle height and length exclusion and specification of duration of time of use in some public areas. It maintains existing access to downtown. It asks for amendment and enforcement of the 72-hour County parking code. It calls for the development of an off-site parking site to manage the influx of visitors.

We very much appreciate that the County has recognized that it is important to include community members in the development of any strategy to move this effort forward. We look forward to exploring and working together for viable, comprehensive solutions. We believe that any solution is going to require Marin County to dedicate the needed resources for implementation. We ask the CCC to look at the whole picture of how this uncontrolled influx of visitors is affecting the small, environmentally sensitive town of Bolinas.

Major Points – PHASE I, IMMEDIATE ACTION – Map attached for reference

#1. Remediate hazards and congestion on town streets by limiting parking **at all times** of oversize vehicles on **portions** of Park, Brighton and Wharf Rd and in the **overnight hours** on one section of Brighton adjacent to County Park/Open Space area. Proposed solution:

Parking for automobiles, motorcycles, and pickups [ATM] that are not taller than 7’ or 22’ in length. [ATM: 22’/7’ is shorthand notation for this limit] is allowed.

The County first proposed a code that would prohibit overnight parking except for automobiles, pick-ups and motorcycles during late-evening to early-morning hours on most of the downtown streets. The vehicles to be excluded from over-night parking in County’s proposal would have been those longer than 22’. Members of the community objected to the length stipulation, without at the same time also requiring a height limit, as the proposal could essentially provide the opportunity for even more very large vehicles to park over-night than do now. Examples of such vehicles are Sprinter vans and modified campers/RV’s, some of which can be 11’ and greater in height. At the hearing for the code proposal, it was stated that the Sheriff asked for some additional clarifications that would give his Department enforcement direction, because auto and pickup are not clearly defined in the California Vehicle Code.

Height and length limits help solve this problem. The CCC queried as to why the limit the County proposed was only for evening hours. We propose that a portion of Brighton have ATM:22’/7’ limits for overnight parking [see section b. below] and on the other specified streets [sections, a, c, d] limit large vehicles at all times. The height and length provisions enable enforcement. The limitation on vehicle size and time of use only apply to a portion of downtown streets, those areas most affected by the huge influx of traffic. Access to existing parking remains on other town streets. We suggest the implementation of ATM:22’/7’ and time of use for 2 to 3 years, as a pilot program, after which its effectiveness and suitability are evaluated.

Streets to be affected in Phase I. See accompanying map. Red area indicates at all times and purple overnight.

- a. **Brighton Avenue, from Wharf to Cliff Road (this is the side of the street backing up to the Little Mesa) ATM:22'/7' at all times, limits on large vehicles.**

What this solves – RVs and large vehicles will not be able to park on **this side of the street**. These large vehicles will not be allowed to block access to the entrance to resident's homes. Many additional parking spaces will open up by the exclusion of large vehicles.

- b. **Brighton Avenue, non-residential side, between the 2 corners where Park Avenue intersects it (from the Marin County Park beside the tennis court area/diagonal parking, going towards Park Ave, along the park and open space portion of Brighton) ATM:22'/7' overnight, 11 pm to 5 am.**

What this solves – Day use for all vehicles is maintained. ATM: 22'/7' have 24 hour access, but vehicles larger than 22'/7' are not allowed overnight. (Note: In those diagonal spaces already in existence, 22" in length limit may not be feasible because of intrusion into the roadway). Many additional parking spaces will open up by the limit of overnight camping by large vehicles.

- c. **Park Avenue/Terrace at its two Intersections with Brighton ATM:22'/7' parking limits at all times for large vehicles at each of two parallel parking areas –one closest to the intersection of the western one-way Park Avenue and the second parking area across from the Episcopal Church extending to the corner.**

What this solves: hazardous intrusion into to a main, heavily trafficked street

Add a STOP SIGN at the corner of Park/Brighton at entry onto Brighton - currently a hazardous junction.

What this solves – safety, on this blind street and corner, currently cars speed down into Brighton endangering pedestrians and other vehicles alike. Existing signage at Brighton corner prohibiting parking to corner is often violated. Additional safety measures affecting parking where Park meets Terrace are also needed.

- d. **Wharf Road on a portion of the residential section of the road leading to the beach limits on large vehicles: ATM:22'/7' parking limits at all times.** This applies to the hill side of the road, starting from the beginning of the Barn property [gallery] to the beach's existing no parking zone; and from the dock on the lagoon side to the Bar. There would be **No Change** on lagoon side from the dock to the beach, which already has limited parking. It is essential to keep this portion of road clear of large vehicles for safety purposes. Vehicles which pass each other in this section of the road can only accomplish the task by cooperative shuffling, backing up, etc. If emergency services are needed, this area is a disaster in the making. This situation is only made worse if access is impeded by the parking of large vehicles.

What this solves: reduces congestion, increases emergency access to beach and increases safety for both pedestrians and vehicles.

#2. Add time limited parking by use of colored curb painting and some street signs in areas of public and commercial services.

What this solves: *access to town services for residents and visitors alike in commercial area of Wharf Road and Brighton [i.e. Post Office, etc.] and an increase in safety for pedestrians and vehicles.*

Add a STOP SIGN at intersection of intersection of Olema/Bolinas Road at Brighton-main entry into town [hardware store side of street]].

What this solves: *This will significantly reduce the speed of vehicles entering the town and increase safety for pedestrians and vehicles.*

#3. Amend and enforce CA Vehicle Code 15.36.030 - Seventy-two-hour limit for distance requirement of 1000’. This would apply to all of Bolinas. A distance requirement helps with enforcement. Remove non-operable vehicles/ storage units and oversize vehicles on streets that take up parking spaces that could be used for resident and visitors. At a minimum we need consistent and timely enforcement to remove these obstructions from the streets. We recognize the challenges presented to enforcement however this is an urgent need.

What this solves – *opening of parking availability.*

#4. Maintain existing access on Brighton Avenue – From the Post Office and commercial business mini-complex parking lot side to Olema/Bolinas Road. No restriction on parking except that it is limited to operative vehicles only, and the 72-hour law will be posted.

In Phase 2, some length/height vehicle limitations will be imposed, requiring large vehicles to park in the off-site parking lot.

What this solves – *maintains existing parking availability and access to the beach for any operable vehicle and observes the 72-hour law*

#5. Increase access – On Brighton Avenue from the corner of Park-Terrace Avenue to the ADA parking spot by the public bathrooms/tennis court consider/explore the idea of changing some parallel parking to “ head in diagonal parking” in the area adjacent to the County Park [where diagonal parking is allowed] to extend towards Park Rd which can increase space for additional vehicles. ATM:22’/7’ limit on overnight parking would still apply.

Current diagonal parking should be required to park “head in”.

Adding a vehicle length requirement to any diagonal space should be considered such that no vehicle protrudes into the Brighton Avenue road way.

What this solves: *additional parking for cars. “Head in” discourages camping on walkways and open space.*

Major Points – PHASE II

1.Develop an off-site parking site which will serve the needs of visitors and those who have no other place to live other than their vehicles.

Proposed parking and traffic changes need to be coordinated with the development of a temporary emergency parking lot. Marin County has to take the lead in the development of this option. Bolinas

community members are ready to work with the County's leadership and staff for the implementation of this project.

We propose the development of an off-site parking area (out of downtown) for cars, vans, RVs financially supported by the County of Marin, fees for services by users as well as private donations. Shuttle service will be required to the downtown area of town on holidays, weekends and during the summer months. Shuttles already are put into use on July 4th and Labor Day when the downtown streets are closed. Planning needs to take into account those facing the emergency situation of working in town and having no place to live, (who will need to have in-an-out privileges) and others in vehicles who live on the streets. The Bolinas Community Land Trust has put forward that they will provide 24/7 supervision by a person or persons who will live at the facility. A site for the parking area is needed. Several possible sites are identified and more to be explored. We propose a pilot program for a 3-year period. During the operation of the off-site temporary parking area, critical factors will be documented, assessed, and a conclusion drawn about next steps.

***What this solves** – relieves pressure on downtown area and offers increased alternatives for parking.*

The County in the past has presented the many challenges to this idea of an off-site parking area, however, an off-site parking lot is the only tenable way to solve the problem of overuse and manage traffic at high impact times.

2. Residential Parking Permits and/or hourly parking on selected area of streets.

By the middle to the conclusion of the second phase of the Parking and Traffic Plan, a residential parking permit system similar to the two others in Marin County's unincorporated area (*San Quentin Village and Kentfield*) and administered by the Marin County Sheriff should be explored and a timeline for implementation to be set.

***What this solves:** There will be parking spaces for downtown residents and visitors to their homes. Residents from the entire community will have access to the post office, commercial stores, and community events. Visitors will have parking spots which have been freed up by larger vehicles being parked off-site or for shorter duration.*

OTHER NEEDS

- 1. Review all county codes that may help with solutions, get definitions of codes for enforcement and review vehicle codes. For example, the County currently has a code applicable to their property [15.42.010] which states that "Parking of campers, house cars and/or trailers, (as defined in the California Vehicle Code Section 670) is prohibited"It goes on to state that this applies on Marin County property as they describe. Can this be amended for Bolinas, are there others?**
- 2. Discuss enforcement challenges**
- 3. Review solutions that other Coastal towns have enacted.**

YEARS OF COMMUNITY EFFORT AND DISCUSSION TO FIND A SOLUTION: WE NEED ACTION NOW!

The ideas proposed build upon years of effort by the Bolinas community to manage the parking situation in Bolinas. Looking back:

2005 – The Bolinas community approved a parking and traffic plan for downtown in an advisory vote, crafted over 2 years by local residents. The County supported it but the California Coastal Commission [CCC] raised objections.

2014 – The Bolinas Community Public Utility District [BCPUD] appointed a new committee for Downtown Parking and Traffic.

2016 – The Bolinas parking and transit survey was published. This survey was the work of the BCPUD Parking Committee. Over 500 people responded to a survey between September and December of **2015** -Respondents were roughly ½ residents, 85% who had lived in Bolinas for more than 5 years, 70% more than 10. Key outcomes:75% of residents supported the creation of a parking plan and 68% supported a satellite parking with shuttle on busy weekends. Of the 250+ visitors surveyed, 41% supported satellite parking if there was a shuttle that could take them and their gear to their destination. Of the visitors who responded, 79% were dedicated repeat visitors who come more than 4 times per year. The vast majority of visitors brought surfboard and beach gear with them. *A copy of the survey and results is attached: B. survey.*

2017–After much study, the Parking and Traffic committee made formal recommendations for changes to the original plan and submitted a revised detailed plan in October to BCPUD. At that time the CCC indicates it might approve a 3-year plan

2017 – In November the BCPUD Vehicle Habitation Committee also submitted its plan to BCPUD.

2018 – After numerous community meetings and meetings with our new Marin County Supervisor, Dennis Rodoni, Measure X and advisory measure regarding restricting overnight parking was passed by slightly over 52% of the Bolinas town voters. The language of the measure was designed to match existing County ordinances and to assure easier passage by the Marin County Board of Supervisors and subsequently CCC. It was to be a first step in relieving the downtown streets of overnight vehicular living.

2019 – On 4th of July weekend after 5000 people came to festivities in Bolinas, 22 people from the Bolinas community met to discuss a new parking plan and how the community could influence and have significant input into decisions that affect the town. The Bolinas Community Coastal Alliance [BCCA] started to form. Approximately 60 community members expressed interest in this effort.

2019 – Later in July, staff from the CCC sent a letter to the Marin County Department of Public Works which was passed onto Supervisor Rodoni and the BCPUD. This letter stated that there were problems with the County submission regarding the posting of street signs that had been voted on in Measure X. CCC staff stated the opinion that the plan would impede access, not solve the existing overcrowding and not meet CCC environmental justice concerns regarding people living in their cars.

2019 – Jennifer Blackman, BCPUD General Manger, called a meeting with members of the BCCA steering committee to report that Supervisor Rodoni has asked for a committee meeting of minds including representatives from the Marin County DPW, Office of Planning, Office of Development with representative members of the Bolinas Community and possibly one or two representatives of BCPUD to work together to write a viable parking plan for the community. The first meeting is to be held in September 2019.

2019 – August, the leadership circle of the BCCA/Alliance has put together a plan for consideration to meet the concerns of Marin County, CCC and the Bolinas community. It incorporates and builds on prior recommendations of the two BCPUD town committees that worked arduously from 2005 to 2017, and fulfills the intent of the town advisory measures. It also offers solutions to the problems outlined recently in the BCCA/Alliance “purpose statement.”

2019 – September, representatives of the leadership circle are scheduled to meet with County Supervisor Rodoni, county staff and BCPUD manager to strategize solutions.

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