

BOLINAS BEACH ENTRANCES

Trash, Maintenance & Public Access 9.9.26

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION — A UNIFIED VISION

Community members with longstanding involvement in the beach entrances are working together with BCPUD to develop a unified approach to the increasing impacts of beach visitation. Participants include residents from four properties on Wharf Road; residents from three Brighton properties, including representation from members of the Rod and Boat Club; the Bolinas Fire Chief; participants in the Bolinas Lagoon Advisory Committee; Community Center staff who have collected trash at the beach sites for decades; and an individual who has provided landscape installation and maintenance at Brighton Beach for more than 20 years. Together, they bring direct, long-term experience with the entrances, visitor impacts, maintenance needs, and environmental concerns.

A. PUBLIC TRASH RECEPTACLES — GUIDELINES

The current household-style trash receptacles are not appropriate for the volume and nature of use at the Bolinas beach entrances. Any replacement should use public-space receptacles designed for high-volume use that are critter-proof, corrosion-resistant, resistant to vandalism, securely affixed, and simple to operate. They should be removable by a person rather than requiring a garbage truck, allowing frequent and flexible servicing, with daily or more frequent emptying during periods of heavy use.

The objective should be a small number of strategically located, highly visible receptacles—not numerous trash cans throughout the area. They should clearly indicate where trash belongs, remain accessible, and avoid blocking views of the beach. The receptacles currently used at the County Park on Brighton Ave provide a useful model. Bigbelly is another possibility because solar-powered compaction substantially increases capacity while allowing flexible servicing; concerns about vandalism and communications reliability at these sites should be evaluated.

Receptacles should be framed or contained in an aesthetically appropriate, fire-safe structure that remains visible and accessible, respects adjacent residents, and does not obstruct the beach view. An artistic metal structure or screen could provide containment without relying on wood.



*Figure 1 - Wharf Rd. 2023
(currently no receptacles at
this location)*



Figure 2 - Brighton 2011 (before daily pickup)



*Figure 3 Brighton 2026 (daily pickup from aging
containers)*

RECOMMENDATION

Establish minimum standards for receptacles and identify appropriate locations at both Brighton and Wharf Road. Even if receptacles are not ultimately placed at Wharf Road because of previous problems with trash entering the lagoon, that entrance will still require regular removal of litter and storm debris. Service levels should be established for normal periods, high-volume periods, and special events, with daily or near-daily servicing as the target. The Community Center could remain a logical participant in some aspects of the work if appropriately funded.

B. SERVICE OPTIONS

Recology currently provides debris boxes at Mesa Park at no cost to the community, an arrangement negotiated by BCPUD, and has offered to further assist with trash pickup at the beach entrances. Before that option is considered, BCPUD should obtain a specific proposal identifying the type, capacity and design of public-use receptacles Recology can provide; ownership, maintenance and replacement responsibilities; emptying method and frequency; availability of daily or near-daily service during high-volume periods; and all receptacle and ongoing service costs. Information about how the service operates at Stinson Beach Park would also be useful. If Recology can meet the community's requirements with an appropriate level of service, that option should be seriously considered.

Marin County Parks already services trash receptacles daily at the County Park on Brighton Ave and at Agate Beach. Given the extraordinary and growing volume of visitors using the beach entrances—including summer camps, surf camps, fishing activities, general surfing, kayaking, and other beach visitors—the County should consider whether Parks staff can also monitor the entrances and provide regular servicing. Because the County has responsibility at public beach property, County participation in ongoing maintenance is particularly appropriate and could include staff time, regular monitoring, trash-bin servicing, funding for contracted service, or a combination of these.



For more than 20 years, the **Community Center** has provided trash-related work at the beach entrances. The Conservation Corps of North Bay currently picks up recyclables weekly at Brighton Beach and at the Community Center, and formerly did so at the Wharf Road entrance. It is not reasonable or sustainable to expect a small nonprofit organization to continue raising funds for an ongoing service fundamentally related to maintaining public beach access. Some level of Community Center involvement may still be necessary even if an outside vendor provides trash collection, but the County should establish and fund an appropriate service arrangement, potentially through a contract for services the Community Center currently provides and could continue to provide. The amount may not be large, but the staff time and fundraising effort required to sustain it are significant for a small nonprofit.

C. PUBLIC INFORMATION AND SIGNAGE

Both beach entrances have numerous signs, particularly Brighton Ave, and several have been repeatedly defaced despite County efforts to replace them. A site visit to both entrances would be useful before adding or changing signage. The review should consider whether the number of signs can be reduced; their placement, visibility and clarity; whether information is duplicated or confusing; whether signs can be consolidated or protected from graffiti; and whether signage at Wharf Road can be repositioned so it does not unnecessarily intrude on the view. Information should clearly direct visitors to public toilets and appropriate trash receptacles elsewhere in town. A simple map could help reduce inappropriate disposal at the beach entrances. Community members should be involved in decisions about signage placement.

D. ONGOING MAINTENANCE

The Brighton seawall repair represents a significant private investment in the beach entrance area and will result in ongoing maintenance responsibilities for the newly installed areas directly associated with the project. The adjacent areas and Wharf Road do not have the benefit of this resource. On Wharf Road, winter storms create particularly difficult conditions, with substantial debris washing onto the entrance area. Since the trash cans were removed, Community Center staff have been removing a minor amount of trash daily because very little is now left at the entrance; for the most part, this system has worked. However, there is currently no reliable funding to sustain the necessary work at either beach entrance, and the property at both entrances is divided among several owners.

E. RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

BCPUD as noted previously, should obtain a specific Recology proposal addressing service provision. Community representatives should meet with Marin County Supervisor Rodoni to determine what the County can provide through County Parks and whether the County Executive can help coordinate the appropriate County departments and identify a sustainable funding and service solution. The Brighton seawall repair represents a significant private investment in the beach entrance area; County funding for trash management and basic maintenance would leverage that investment by helping ensure that surrounding public-access areas are maintained and function effectively.

F. OVERALL OBJECTIVE — A SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION

The goal is not simply to install more trash cans. It is to establish a small, well-designed, frequently serviced system together with reliable funding for basic maintenance at both beach entrances. The Community Center can be a constructive partner, but it should not be expected to fund routine maintenance of heavily used public beach access over the long term. The County, BCPUD, Recology, and the community should work together on a sustainable solution that protects the lagoon, maintains the beach entrances, and reflects the extraordinary level of public use these areas now receive.



ACTION ITEM: REQUEST MEETING WITH SUPERVISOR RODONI REGARDING BOLINAS BEACH ENTRANCES

Recommended Action:

Direct BCPUD staff to request a meeting with Marin County Supervisor Dennis Rodoni and appropriate County staff to discuss the community initiative addressing trash, maintenance, and public access at the Brighton and Wharf Road beach entrances.

Purpose:

The meeting would provide an opportunity to present the community's unified assessment of the increasing impacts of beach visitation and discuss how the County can participate in developing a sustainable solution. Discussion would include appropriate public-use trash receptacles and servicing, ongoing maintenance, County Parks involvement, and potential County funding or other resources.

The community has brought together residents and individuals with longstanding, direct experience with the two beach entrances, including residents from Wharf Road and Brighton, the Rod and Boat Club, Bolinas Fire Chief, Bolinas Lagoon Advisory Committee participants, Community Center staff, and individuals with extensive experience maintaining Brighton Beach.

Requested Outcome:

Seek the County's participation in developing and funding an appropriate long-term service and maintenance arrangement, with the goal of protecting the lagoon, maintaining public beach access, and responding to the extraordinary level of public use at these entrances.

Bolinas Downtown, A Working Group (BDAWG)

September 8, 2026 meeting

Six community members met via Zoom. It was the fourth quarterly meeting of this informal Bolinas community based group, formed a year ago. BDAWG focuses on parking, traffic, pedestrian safety, refuse impacts, and visitor-related pressures as they relate to the quality of life and safety of neighborhood residents and the broader community in downtown Bolinas. September meeting's sole focus was the trash collection issue at the two beach entrances and was a follow up to an 8/31 visit to the two sites. On 8/31 approximately a dozen community members reviewed the condition of the beach entrances while discussing possible solutions. A partial list of participants is described in the attached *Bolinas Beach Entrance Trash, Maintenance & Public Access Report*.

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Community members participating in the September meeting were Bruce Bowser, Chuck McParland, Sherry Hirsch (recorder) and Kirsten Walker (liaison to BCPUD). Site visit follow-up participants were Janine Aroyan and Roger Peacock.