

# Landscape and Interpretation Project, US-101 – Raymond

## **Project Description**

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### **Location**

City of Raymond

US-101 MP 58.25 to MP 59.85

### **Purpose & Need**

This project was part of Washington’s scenic byways improvement program. It was a top priority for the city of Raymond to create a visually appealing community for travelers along US-101 and to introduce travelers to the unique Willapa basin, with its forested hills, natural rivers, tidal estuaries, salt marshes, and pristine bay.

### **Context**

This project is rural in nature and is predominately within residential and small-business land use. The posted speed of US-101 is 55 mph, with speed lowering to 35 mph through the city. This location has potential for additional new development. The project raised environmentally sensitive issues throughout because of the Willapa River, which contains endangered salmon. There are pedestrian facilities in the corridor, and the route serves as a through route to other destinations.

### **Initial Design Concept**

In order to create a visually appealing community for travelers along US-101, this project has three major components: signage, landscaping, and interpretation. These components will provide:

- "Gateway to the Willapa" entrance signs at both the northerly and southerly city limits
- The landscaping of the corridor from north of the Willapa Bridge to the Port of Willapa Harbor.
- Interpretive displays and brochures with information on the local Willapa environment and heritage located at a new downtown waterfront park located on a site immediately adjacent to US-101 on the south fork of the Willapa River.
- Public restrooms available at the waterfront park.

### **Challenges**

Some community members viewed this project as being forced on the community by governmental agencies since there were limited opportunities for input from locals.

Although the project had appealing aspects and would often be perceived as beneficial, mixed opinions about the project remained because of the changing landscape and the proposed interpretive nature of the project.

### **Funding**

Funds for the project were committed by several local agencies. The city’s funding totaled \$370,000 for design and construction.

### **Schedule**

The project duration was from June to November 1993.

**Exhibit 1 – Logger Silhouettes**



**Exhibit 2 – Gateway to the Willapa**



### **Challenges**

- Overcoming perception “top down” project
- Maintenance and aesthetic issues
- Funding issues
- Selection of displays
- Changes during Implementation
- Community participation

## Process

### **Public Participation**

This project supported local objectives by improving the visual impression of the Raymond community. This project had broad support from a range of public agencies. The city will undertake the necessary long-term maintenance of the facilities in this US-101 coastal corridor project, including landscaping, interpretation, and signage.

## Results

### **Design/ Construction Considerations**

Landscaping within the city of Raymond improves the scenic environment along the highway. The interpretive project is one component of a new waterfront park providing a number of recreational opportunities. The new park includes a 3,000 square foot pier for viewing, picnicking, and fishing, with a gangway to a floating dock for temporary displays and brochures. This site is also located on the Burlington Northern rail line, which will soon be abandoned and has been proposed for development into a regional recreational trail by the State Parks Commission.

The interpretive displays and brochures provide information on the unique Willapa environment as well as local history and culture. The entrance signs, landscaping, and interpretive project are focused on attracting the US-101 tourist into Raymond businesses and services as they pass through the city. The displays and brochures provide a range of information on the local ecosystems, including forests, riparian zones, tidal wetlands, and the river and bay systems. The displays also provide information on local history and culture: logging, river transportation, ethnic backgrounds, historic recreation, and entertainment.

**Exhibit 3 – Native American Sculpture**



### **Regional Benefits**

This project addresses four of the regional corridor objectives:

- Scenic/Recreational/Environment
- Cultural/Historical
- Economic/Tourism
- Educational/Interpretive

### **Environmental Enhancements**

This project enhances the environment through the planting of over 800 trees and 2,000 shrubs. These plantings not only beautify the community, but also create noise and visual buffers between residential and industrial areas located along the corridor. Another primary component of this project is the education of the public on the very fragile and unique Willapa environment.

### **Solutions**

- Prepare a public involvement plan
- City will provide maintenance
- Scenic byway improvement
- Communication with all agencies
- Work with various groups to keep project on schedule
- Selecting displays based on community desires and needs