COVID-19 Street Response Survey: Unincorporated County Results

48 survey respondents were residents of unincorporated Humboldt County. For these respondents, 61% reported walking and/or biking the same amount or more since the stay-at-home order was issued in March, while 93% of respondents reported driving the same or less. This represents a significant and fundamental shift in the way local residents are using the streets.

33% of respondents reported that it was moderately difficult to difficult to maintain a safe social distance from others while walking, biking or otherwise using the streets. While the majority of respondents reported little to no difficulty social distancing, these results demonstrate that a significant portion of the population is having trouble complying with this public health mandate.
Large majorities of unincorporated county respondents supported the implementation of Slow Streets, automatic walk signals for pedestrians, and reduced parking requirements for businesses as responses to the pandemic. Given the urgent need for ongoing public health measures in response to the pandemic, as well as the broad public support demonstrated here, we suggest that the county begin to implement each of these measures as soon as possible. Several respondents noted, and we strongly agree, that when implementing these measures it is critical to ensure convenient access for people with various mobility limitations.
Many respondents suggested specific candidates for Slow Street locations. We encourage county officials to investigate and consider implementing Slow Streets at each of the locations suggested by local residents:

- Avenue of the Giants: Weott to Myers Flat
- Briceland Thorn Road
- Cedar Street (Cutten)
- Cliff Road (McKinleyville)
- Elk River Road
- Hiller Road (McKinleyville)
- Larson Heights Road (McKinleyville)
- Locust Street (Garberville)
- Murray Road
- Ocean Drive (McKinleyville)
- Roberts Drive (Cutten)
- School Road (McKinleyville)
- Upper Bay Road (Arcata Bottoms)
- Whitmore Avenue (Redway)
- Heartwood area (McKinleyville)

Respondents also identified numerous areas where they always or sometimes have trouble maintaining adequate social distance from others due to inadequate bike or pedestrian infrastructure. We encourage county officials to review these areas and consider measures to alleviate the problems, including temporary sidewalk or bike lane extensions and Slow Streets. Problems reported on recreational trails, parks, etc. indicate a need for more safe and comfortable walking and biking environments closer to people’s homes.

- Azalea Avenue & surrounding neighborhood (McKinleyville)
- Benbow Dam Road
- Benbow Drive
- Excelsior Road: Holly St and Fern Dr (Cutten)
- Herrick Avenue
- Ocean Drive (McKinleyville)
- Peninsula Drive (Manila)
- Upper Bay Road (Arcata Bottoms)
- Walnut Drive: Northridge Rd to McClaskey Ln (Cutten)
- Avenue of the Giants swimming holes
- Hammond Trail
- Hiller Park
- Manila Dune trails
- McKinleyville: Throughout
- Moonstone Beach
- Whitethorn

Respondents also included some additional location-specific comments which county officials should consider, including the following (reproduced exactly as entered on the survey):

- I saw the bike lane narrowed on the freeway shoulder near Westhaven drive. Please be vigilant about bike safety on the new exchange at Indianola. Also, Trying to get to the bike path going South on 101 at Bracut is very tricky and also impossible. What is the plan to mitigate that?
  I’m so appreciative of the work you do. I cannot emphasize enough how important it is. Bike riding is one of my favorite activities. I’m so happy to see more people on bikes. It’s a glimmer of good news during COVID. Thanks!
- We need sidewalks in Whitethorn! There are none.