

# Dangerous Downtown Streets



## Safety Problems and Solutions for Eureka's 4th & 5th Street Corridor (US-101)

October 2025



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# Executive Summary

Eureka's 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets are surface streets that are part of the US-101 state highway corridor. 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets comprise one of the busiest corridors in the North Coast region, with high levels of car, truck, bicycle and pedestrian traffic. The corridor is also one of the region's most dangerous. Despite representing only about 0.2% of the county's road miles, the corridor has been the site of 18% of the county's pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries in the last decade, as well as 4% of bicyclist serious injuries and 3% of motorist serious injuries and fatalities.

This report identifies safety hazards for pedestrians, bicyclists, bus riders, and motorists by reviewing official police-reported crash data, crowdsourced street safety reports from the Street Story platform, and the findings from walk audits in the corridor conducted in October 2024 and a bicycle safety audit conducted in May 2025. Important hazards identified for all modes of transportation include high traffic speeds, as well as secondary hazards related to high speeds, such as failure to yield (right-of-way violations) and traffic signals and signs violations (such as running red lights).

Another important hazard is the limited ability of drivers on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets to see pedestrians, bicyclists, and other vehicles crossing at intersections without traffic signals, and the limited ability of people crossing the street to see approaching vehicles. Additionally, the current one-way, three-lane street design results in unpredictable driver lane-changing and turning behavior. For bicyclists, the complete lack of dedicated bicycle infrastructure also creates major safety hazards. The report also identifies specific locations of particular concern for pedestrians, bicyclists, bus riders, and motorists.

Finally, the report recommends specific street design solutions to improve safety for all modes of transportation in the corridor. These solutions include:

- ✓ Lane conversion with Class IV bikeway implementation
- ✓ Traffic signals (with exclusive bike phases) at key unsignalized intersections
- ✓ Protected intersections with visible pedestrian queuing areas, or curb extensions with Class IV bikeway cut-throughs
- ✓ Bike turn boxes (where protected intersections are not implemented)
- ✓ High-visibility crosswalks on all legs of all intersections<sup>1</sup>
- ✓ Extended no-parking zones at intersection approaches
- ✓ Raised crosswalks on side streets

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<sup>1</sup> In September 2025, after data collection and analysis for this report was complete, Caltrans began painting high-visibility crosswalks at many intersections in the corridor where they had previously been missing.

- ✓ Close redundant or unnecessary driveways
- ✓ Remove sidewalk obstructions
- ✓ Widen sidewalks where clear paths are too narrow for wheelchair users or other pedestrians to comfortably pass
- ✓ Add pedestrian-scale lighting where needed
- ✓ Other traffic calming measures

## Glossary of Key Terms

**Bike Turn Boxes** are green-painted bicyclist staging areas at intersections, in front of the stop bar for cars and trucks. Turn boxes increase bicyclist visibility and allow them to make left turns without merging into traffic.

**Class IV Bikeways** are bike lanes that are separated from car and truck traffic by some kind of physical, vertical element, such as bollards or a concrete curb. Also called separated bikeways or protected bikeways.

**High-Visibility Crosswalks** are usually painted in a “ladder” style with many thick, parallel lines perpendicular to the direction of pedestrian travel (as opposed to a single pair of painted lines delineating the crosswalk area).

**Lane Conversion** as used in this report means the removal of a general (car and truck) traffic lane from the current street design and the use of the resulting street space to provide a separated, protected bikeway.

**Pedestrian-Scale Lighting** refers to light fixtures that illuminate sidewalks, crosswalks and pedestrian paths enough for pedestrians to clearly see their surroundings. These fixtures are generally closer to the ground and provide more ground-level illumination than traditional vehicle-scale lighting.

**Protected Intersections** are intersections that provide corner islands behind which bicyclists can queue in a high-visibility but protected location before crossing, allowing safe, two-stage left turns (crossing in one direction, waiting behind a corner island, then crossing in the perpendicular direction when safe).

**Raised Crosswalks** are crosswalks raised above the level of the street, increasing pedestrian visibility and lowering traffic speeds.

**Unsignalized Intersections** are intersections without a standard traffic signal, also known as a traffic light.



# Introduction



Eureka's 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Street are a one-way couplet of surface streets which collectively are designated as US-101, a state highway. 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets are each three-lane, one-way streets, with two additional lanes for parking along much of their length. They carry high volumes of local, regional, and interregional vehicle traffic, including light, medium, and heavy-duty vehicles. The corridor runs directly through downtown Eureka, the region's biggest population, employment and service center, and is consequently also among the busiest pedestrian, bicycle and transit facilities in the region.

Many people live on or near 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets. 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets also provide access to many important civic, commercial and social destinations, including the Humboldt County courthouse, jail and many other county offices; Eureka City Hall; the Humboldt County Library; offices of regional agencies, non-profits and social service providers including the Humboldt County Association of Governments, the Humboldt Transit Authority, and Tri-County Independent Living; and many businesses, including major

trip generators such as the North Coast Co-op, Target, and numerous hotels and retail shops.

Along with Broadway, which comprises the remainder of the US-101 corridor in Eureka, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets are known to be among the most unsafe streets in the region for people walking, biking, or rolling, and even for people in vehicles. However, while work has begun on safety upgrades to part of Broadway (and projects are planned for the rest), no significant safety projects are currently planned for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets.



*Injury and fatal crashes in the 4th & 5th Street corridor, 2015-2024. Image: TIMS*

This report characterizes safety problems in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Street corridor for pedestrians, bicyclists, bus riders, and motorists by combining data from several different sources, including:

- The Transportation Injury Mapping System (TIMS),<sup>2</sup> a tool developed and maintained by the UC Berkeley Safe Transportation Research and Education Center (SafeTREC) using data from California's Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS). TIMS uses police-reported collision data to map the location of crashes which result in injury or death. For this report, crashes in the ten-year period 2015-2024 were reviewed. (2023 and 2024 data were provisional at the time of this review.)
- Street Story,<sup>3</sup> a crowdsourced street safety platform also developed by SafeTREC and used by Humboldt County residents since 2019. Any member of the public can post an anonymous online report on Street Story about locations that feel safe or unsafe, or where they have experienced a crash or near-miss. For this report, Street Story reports made in Humboldt County before July 1, 2025 were reviewed.<sup>4</sup>

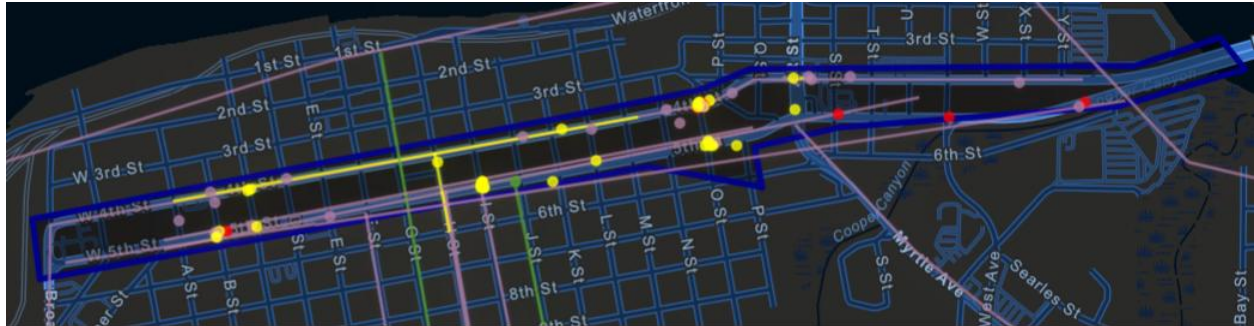
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<sup>2</sup> <https://tims.berkeley.edu/>

<sup>3</sup> For all Street Story reports, see <https://streetstory.berkeley.edu/>. For a 2024 assessment of Street Story reports throughout Humboldt County, including the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Street corridor, see <https://transportationpriorities.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Street-Story-Data-Analysis-Final.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> The corridor boundary used for the Street Story analyses can be found at <https://streetstory.berkeley.edu/custom/tht398>.

- The findings from two walk audits conducted in the corridor in October 2024 and one bike audit conducted in May 2025. The audits were facilitated by CRTP. The report of findings from the walk audits is in Appendix A,<sup>5</sup> and Appendix B contains the report of findings from the bike audit.<sup>6</sup>



*Street Story reports in the 4th & 5th Street corridor. Image: UC Berkeley SafeTREC*

Each of the following sections focuses on a specific group of street users—pedestrians, bicyclists, bus riders, and motorists—and provides: (a) a brief summary of general safety problems in the corridor for each group; (b) identification of specific locations of particular concern for each group; and (c) potential solutions to the safety problems identified. A final section of the report includes a comprehensive list of recommended safety improvements which would address problems throughout the corridor.

<sup>5</sup> Available at: <https://transportationpriorities.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Walk-Audit-Report-4th-5th-St-2024.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> Available at: <https://transportationpriorities.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Bike-Safety-Audit-Report-4th-5th-St-2025.pdf>.



# Pedestrian Safety



According to TIMS, during the past decade, police responded to crashes in which 79 pedestrians were injured or killed in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Street corridor. This represents about 15% of all pedestrian crash victims in Humboldt County during the period, despite the corridor comprising only about 0.2% of the county's road miles. 5 of the pedestrian crash victims in the corridor were killed and 32 were seriously injured, representing about 18% of pedestrian fatal and serious injury victims in the county during this period.

As of the date of this review on Street Story, 51 of the 722 hazard, near-miss, and crash reports in Humboldt County involving dangers for pedestrians were located in the corridor, representing about 7% of such reports. Just as with police-reported crashes, Street Story reports are disproportionately concentrated in the corridor.



## General Hazards

According to police reports, roughly 47% of crashes resulting in pedestrian injury or death in the corridor over the last decade were primarily caused by the pedestrian's right-of-way being violated—i.e., a driver improperly failing to yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian. The next most common primary crash cause at 33% was “automobile right-of-way violation,” although the data do not specify whose right-of-way was violated by whom. Notably, none of the crashes have “pedestrian violation” listed as the primary cause.

Police reports note that most crashes (54%) involve a pedestrian being hit in a crosswalk, while about 29% involve a pedestrian crossing the street outside of a crosswalk. It is important to note that many legal crosswalks in the corridor are not marked, and some police reports may therefore misreport a pedestrian hit in a legal but unmarked crosswalk as being outside of a crosswalk.<sup>7</sup> In at least 3 cases, the pedestrian was not even in the street when hit by the driver. More than half of crashes (53%) occurred during nighttime, dusk or dawn hours, suggesting that a lack of pedestrian-scale lighting could contribute to safety hazards.



The majority of Street Story reports in the corridor are about pedestrian hazards, near-misses, and crashes. Street Story users report that drivers on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets often drive too fast, run red lights, and drive too close to the curb, creating hazards for pedestrians.



Reports indicate that people do not feel safe walking or rolling in the corridor, and feel especially unsafe crossing the street. Crosswalks at unsignalized intersections are a particular concern. Many reports describe limited visibility (for both drivers and pedestrians) at unsignalized crossings, generally due to parked cars and trucks, and the difficulty of getting drivers in all three lanes of

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<sup>7</sup> In September 2025, after data collection and analysis for this report was complete, Caltrans began painting high-visibility crosswalks at many intersections in the corridor where they had previously been missing.

traffic to yield to crossing pedestrians at the same time.

Participants in the October 2024 walk audits in the corridor generally found the pedestrian experience in the corridor to be unsafe, unpleasant, and stressful, with many concerns about accessibility for pedestrians with disabilities. Particular concerns about safety and accessibility included crossing 4th and 5th Streets at unsignalized intersections, crossing side streets and driveways at unsignalized intersections, various sidewalk and curb ramp accessibility hazards, high noise levels, and lack of adequate lighting.

## Specific Locations

Pedestrian-involved crash reports and Street Story reports, as well as locations of issues identified through the October 2024 walk audits, are located throughout the corridor. However, there are a few locations with unusually high concentrations of crashes and Street Story reports, as well as some specific hazardous locations highlighted by the walk audits. The following table identifies these locations and summarizes the hazards associated with each location. Specific hazards are as identified in Street Story reports or the walk audit report, or inferred from knowledge of the location.

Location	Reasons for Identifying Location as Hazardous for Pedestrians			Hazards
	Crash Reports (TIMS)	Street Story Reports	Walk Audits	
5th Street from Broadway to A Street			X	Limited visibility where Broadway becomes 5 <sup>th</sup> Street; limited marked crosswalks in the segment*
5 <sup>th</sup> & B Street Intersection		X		Limited visibility due to parked cars; high volume of vulnerable pedestrian traffic
5 <sup>th</sup> & D Street Bus Stop & Surrounding Area			X	Lack of rider waiting space; accessibility hazards
4 <sup>th</sup> & H Street Intersection	X			High volume of left-turning vehicles; high volume of pedestrian traffic

5 <sup>th</sup> & I Street Intersection		X		High volume of right-turning vehicles (double turn lanes)
4 <sup>th</sup> & O Street Intersection		X	X	Low visibility & high speeds at curve
5 <sup>th</sup> Street from N Street to P Street (including 5 <sup>th</sup> & O Street Intersection)	X	X	X	High speeds; no traffic signals; bus stop maintenance needs
4 <sup>th</sup> Street from R Street to S Street (including 4 <sup>th</sup> & R Street Intersection)	X		X	Fast-moving right-turning vehicles; long crossings without sufficient signal time for slower pedestrians
5 <sup>th</sup> Street from R Street to S Street (including 5 <sup>th</sup> & R Street Intersection)	X		X	Fast-moving right-turning vehicles; long crossings without sufficient signal timing
5 <sup>th</sup> & V Street Bus Stop & Surrounding Area		X	X	High speeds & traffic volumes
* In September 2025, after data collection and analysis for this report was complete, Caltrans painted new high-visibility crosswalks at some of these intersections.				

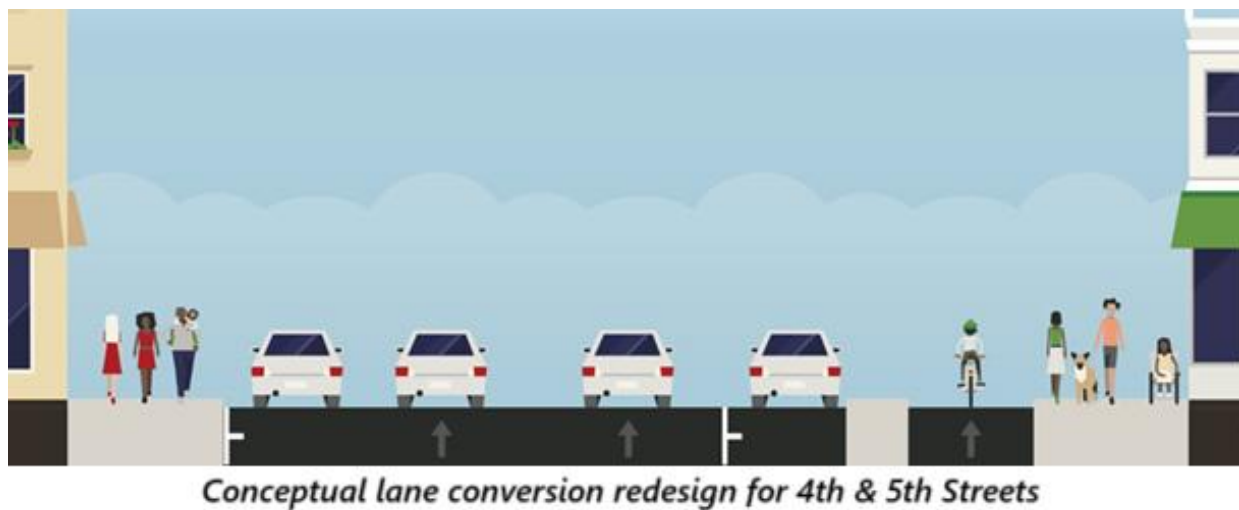
## Safety Solutions



The effect of vehicle speed on a driver's field of vision and the chance of pedestrian death in a crash. Image: LADOT.

High traffic speeds are the focus of many reported pedestrian safety concerns in the corridor. It is well established that high vehicle speeds both increase the likelihood of a crash and increase the severity of the outcome, especially for pedestrians and bicyclists. Additionally, high speeds are known to be a major contributor to other types of problems reported in the corridor, ranging from the failure of drivers to yield (right-of-way violations) to high noise levels. Drivers traveling at higher speeds also have a narrower field of view, limiting their ability to see pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists attempting to cross the street. Therefore, the most significant intervention we recommend is the conversion of a current car and truck lane to a protected bikeway. Both removal of general traffic lanes and addition of protected bikeways are proven traffic calming strategys. Reducing traffic speeds saves lives by reducing the likelihood of crashes and reducing the severity of crashes which do occur.

Specifically, we recommend removing one lane of travel on 4<sup>th</sup> Street and one lane on 5<sup>th</sup> Street, and using the space to provide separated (Class IV) bikeways, protected by a raised curb, and by parked cars where parking lanes currently exist. In addition to traffic calming, this design also mitigates other major hazards, including failure of drivers to yield and unpredictable lane-changing behavior. Finally, a separated bikeway creates a safer space for pedestrians who may be forced off the sidewalk by accessibility hazards, until such hazards can be fully addressed. A diagram of this conceptual redesign for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets is included below.



The following table identifies these lane conversions and other specific recommended safety interventions for major pedestrian hazards found throughout the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Street corridor. We recommend a corridor-wide approach to safety improvements. Therefore, the recommended interventions are intended to address both general corridor hazards and the specific locations identified above.



The walk audit report (Appendix A) includes some additional details about pedestrian comfort and stress concerns.

Pedestrian Hazard(s)	Recommended Solution(s)
Unsafe traffic speeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Lane conversion with Class IV bikeway implementation</li> <li>✓ Other traffic calming measures</li> </ul>
Failure of drivers to yield (right-of-way violations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Lane conversion with Class IV bikeway implementation</li> <li>✓ High-visibility crosswalks on all legs of all intersections*</li> <li>✓ Other traffic calming measures</li> <li>✓ Traffic signals at key unsignalized intersections</li> </ul>
Lack of visibility for crossing 4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Extended no-parking zones at intersection approaches</li> <li>✓ Curb extensions with Class IV bikeway cut-throughs, or visible pedestrian queuing areas</li> </ul>
Unpredictable driver behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Lane conversion with Class IV bikeway implementation</li> </ul>
Accessibility hazards, including sidewalk widths & obstructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Remove sidewalk obstructions</li> <li>✓ Widen sidewalks where clear paths are too narrow for wheelchair users or other pedestrians to comfortably pass</li> <li>✓ Interim: Class IV bikeway implementation</li> </ul>
Crossing side streets & driveways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Close redundant or unnecessary driveways</li> <li>✓ High-visibility crosswalks on all legs of all intersections*</li> <li>✓ Raised crosswalks</li> </ul>
Insufficient lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Add pedestrian-scale lighting where needed</li> </ul>
<i>* In September 2025, after data collection and analysis for this report was complete, Caltrans began painting high-visibility crosswalks at many intersections in the corridor where they had previously been missing.</i>	

# Bicyclist Safety



According to TIMS, 18 bicyclists were injured or killed in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Street corridor in the last decade in police-reported crashes, representing about 5% of all bicyclist crash victims in Humboldt County during this period. 3 of the bicyclist crash victims in the corridor were seriously injured, representing about 4% of such victims in the county during this period. Anecdotal evidence suggests that bicyclists often avoid this corridor, which may account for the lower proportion of serious bicycle crash victims when compared to pedestrian victims.

As of the date of this review on Street Story, 20 of the 725 hazard, near-miss, and crash reports in Humboldt County involving dangers for bicyclists were located in the corridor, representing about 3% of such reports. Considering that the corridor represents only about 0.2% of road miles in the county, this is a disproportionate concentration of reports.

## General Hazards

Police reports contain less information about bicycle-involved crashes than those involving pedestrians. However, according to the reports, the most common primary causes of crashes in the corridor over the last decade resulting in bicyclist injury or death were: “traffic signals and signs” violations (28%), riding the wrong way (22%), and automobile right-of-way violations (17%). The vast majority of such crashes (78%) occurred during daylight hours.

There are fewer biking-related Street Story reports in the corridor than pedestrian-related reports, perhaps reflective of the fact that many bicyclists avoid the corridor altogether. However, reports indicate that many of the identified safety hazards for pedestrians—including drivers speeding, running red lights, failing to yield, and limited visibility at crossings—also apply to bicyclists. Reports also highlight the complete lack of bike lanes, bicycle-specific intersection improvements, or other bicycle facilities in the corridor.



Participants in the May 2025 bike audit in the corridor generally, but not uniformly, reported feeling unsafe and uncomfortable bicycling on or across 4th and 5th Streets. Participants uniformly reported that biking in the corridor would be unsafe for children, seniors, and people with disabilities. High traffic speeds and high traffic volumes, combined with the complete lack of bicycle infrastructure, made the corridor feel unsafe for most participants.

## Specific Locations

Bicyclist-involved crash reports and Street Story reports, as well as locations of issues identified through the May 2025 bike safety audit, are located throughout the corridor. However, there are a few locations with unusually high concentrations of crashes and Street Story reports, as well as some specific hazardous locations highlighted by the bike audit. The following table identifies these locations and summarizes the hazards associated with each location. Specific hazards were identified in Street Story reports or the bike audit report, or inferred from knowledge of the location.

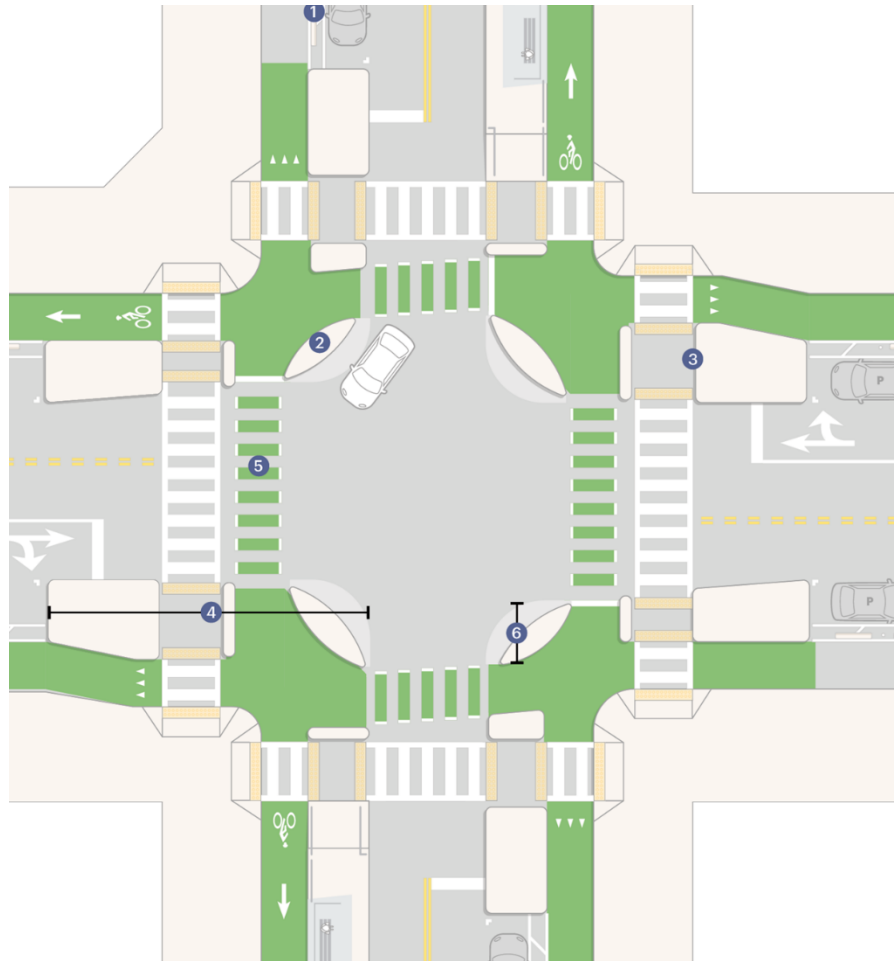
Location	Reasons for Identifying Location as Hazardous for Bicyclists			Hazards
	Crash Reports (TIMS)	Street Story Reports	Bike Audit	
4 <sup>th</sup> & C Street Intersection			X	Lack of signalization or bike facilities, especially left-turning bike facilities; high potential bike traffic
H Street from 4 <sup>th</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup> Street (including both intersections)			X	Lack of bike facilities, especially left-turning bike facilities; high potential bike traffic
I Street from 4 <sup>th</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup> Street (including both intersections)			X	Lack of bike facilities, especially left-turning bike facilities; high volume of right-turning vehicle traffic at 5 <sup>th</sup> & I St (double turn lanes); high potential bike traffic
4 <sup>th</sup> Street from R Street to T Street (including 4 <sup>th</sup> & R Street Intersection)	X			High speeds and volumes of vehicles (including on R Street/SR-255); high potential bike traffic
4 <sup>th</sup> & O Street Intersection		X		Low visibility & high speeds at curve

## Safety Solutions

Similar to pedestrian hazards, high traffic speeds are the focus of many reported bicyclist safety concerns in the corridor. Additionally, as noted in the pedestrian safety section of this report, reducing vehicle speeds is a proven safety strategy and helps address many other reported problems, including the failure of drivers to yield (right-of-way violations). Therefore, as described above, we recommend removing one lane of travel on 4<sup>th</sup> Street and one lane on 5<sup>th</sup> Street, and using the added space to provide separated (Class IV) bikeways, protected by a raised curb and by parked cars where parking lanes currently exist.



In addition to traffic calming, this design also provides much-needed safe bike infrastructure in the corridor and mitigates other major hazards, including failure of drivers to yield and unpredictable lane-changing behavior. Additionally, providing safe bicycling infrastructure should reduce the incidence of bicyclist signal and sign violations and wrong-way riding, and reduce the severity of the consequences when such violations occur.



Example of a protected intersection. Image: NACTO.

The intersection corollary for Class IV bikeways is the

protected intersection. A protected intersection provides corner islands behind which bicyclists can queue in a high-visibility but protected location before crossing, and encourages safe, two-stage left turns. We recommend protected intersection design at most intersections in the corridor, and bike turn boxes in other locations. Where parking lanes reduce pedestrian visibility, protected intersections should be designed with pedestrian queuing areas adjacent to bicycle queuing and corner islands to increase pedestrian visibility.

The following table identifies lane conversions, Class IV bikeways, and other specific recommended safety interventions for major bicycling hazards found throughout the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Street corridor. We recommend a corridor-wide approach to safety improvements. Therefore, the recommended interventions are intended to address both general corridor hazards and the specific locations identified above. Some additional details can be found in the bike safety audit report (Appendix B).

Bicyclist Hazard(s)	Recommended Solution(s)
Lack of bicycle infrastructure on 4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Streets	✓ Lane conversion with Class IV bikeway implementation
Lack of bicycle infrastructure at intersections	✓ Protected intersections with visible pedestrian queuing areas, or bike turn boxes
Unsafe speeds	✓ Lane conversion with Class IV bikeway implementation
Signals and signs violations	✓ Lane conversion with Class IV bikeway implementation
Failure of drivers to yield (right-of-way violations)	✓ Lane conversion with Class IV bikeway implementation ✓ Traffic signals with exclusive bike phases at key unsignalized intersections
Lack of visibility for crossing 4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Streets	✓ Extended no-parking zones at intersection approaches ✓ Protected intersections with visible pedestrian queuing areas, or bike turn boxes
Unpredictable driver behavior	✓ Lane conversion with Class IV bikeway implementation

## Bus Rider Safety



As of the date of this review on Street Story, there are only 24 reports in Humboldt County involving dangers for transit riders, and only one of them was located in the corridor. However, some of the busiest bus stops in Humboldt County are located in the corridor, with the stop at 4<sup>th</sup> & H Streets being the busiest in the corridor.

## General Hazards

Police reports do not indicate any bus passengers injured or killed in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Street corridor over the last decade, and most Street Story reports do not specifically indicate transit as a mode of concern. However, bus riders almost all walk, bike, or roll to and from bus stops. Therefore, pedestrian and bicyclist hazards identified in other sections of this report should be viewed as bus rider hazards as well.

## Specific Locations

The pedestrian and bicyclist sections of this report identify specific locations with particular hazards in the corridor, all of which are relevant to bus riders traveling to and from bus stops. However, the following table highlights specific locations of particular concern to bus riders, due to their proximity to bus stops. Specific hazards are as identified in Street Story reports or audit reports, or inferred from knowledge of the location.



Location	Reasons for Identifying Location as Hazardous for Bus Riders				Hazards
	Crash Reports (TIMS)	Street Story Reports	Walk Audits	Bike Audit	
5 <sup>th</sup> & D Street Bus Stop & Surrounding Area			X		Lack of rider waiting space; accessibility hazards
4 <sup>th</sup> & H Street Intersection	X			X	High volume of left-turning vehicles; high volume of pedestrian & bike traffic; lack of bike lanes and left-turning bike facilities
4 <sup>th</sup> & O Street Intersection		X	X		Low visibility & high speeds at curve
5 <sup>th</sup> Street from N Street to P Street (including 5 <sup>th</sup> & O Street Intersection)	X	X	X		High speeds; no traffic signals; bus stop maintenance needs
5 <sup>th</sup> & V Street Bus Stop & Surrounding Area		X	X		High speeds & traffic volumes

## Safety Solutions

Safety interventions for people walking, biking, or rolling to bus stops are addressed in the sections of this report on pedestrian and bicyclist safety. The entire 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Street corridor is used by people accessing bus stops, and we recommend corridor-wide safety improvements. However, if specific locations are improved first, areas near bus stops should be prioritized. Additionally, bus stop accessibility improvements such as shelter, seating, and bike storage should be included in safety improvement projects.



# Motorist Safety



According to TIMS, during the past decade, police responded to crashes in which 548 motorists (including both drivers and passengers) were injured or killed in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Street corridor. This represents about 6% of all motorist crash victims in Humboldt County during this period, despite the corridor comprising only about 0.2% of the county's road miles. 1 of the motorist crash victims in the corridor was killed, and 31 were seriously injured, representing about 3% of motorist fatal and serious injury victims in the county during this period.

As of the date of this review on Street Story, 15 of the 360 hazard, near-miss, and crash reports in Humboldt County involving dangers for motorists were located in the corridor, representing about 4% of such reports. This represents a disproportionately high concentration of reports.

## General Hazards

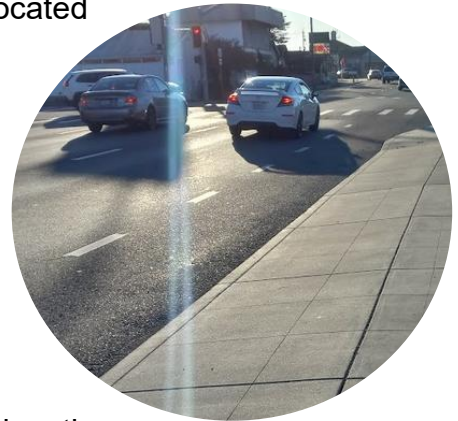
According to police reports, the most common primary causes of crashes in the corridor over the last decade resulting in motorist injury or death were: unsafe speeds (28%), traffic signal and sign violations (27%), and automobile right-of-way violations (15%).

Police reports note that the most common types of crashes that injure or kill motorists in the corridor are broadsides (44%) and rear-ends (33%). The vast majority of such crashes (74%) occurred during daylight hours.

Relatively few Street Story reports in the corridor focus on hazards to motorists. However, several note hazards from other drivers switching lanes unpredictably and/or turning from the wrong lane, as well as the limited ability for drivers to see pedestrians attempting to cross the street in some locations.

## Specific Locations

Motorist-involved crash reports and Street Story reports are located throughout the corridor. However, most reported crashes resulted in minor injuries or property damage only. To focus on motorist safety, we reviewed locations for crashes resulting in fatal or serious injuries to motorists, as well as Street Story reports involving hazards for motorists. No specific clusters of Street Story reports emerged, but a few locations stood out with unusually high concentrations of official crash reports. The following table identifies these locations and summarizes the hazards associated with each location. Specific hazards are inferred from knowledge of the location.



Location	Reasons for Identifying Location as Hazardous for Motorists		Hazards
	Crash Reports (TIMS)	Street Story Reports	
5 <sup>th</sup> Street from Broadway to D Street	X		High speeds; lack of traffic signals
4 <sup>th</sup> Street from N Street to O Street	X		High speeds; limited visibility at curve
4 <sup>th</sup> & R Street Intersection	X		High volumes of traffic from both US-101 and SR-255; many turning movements

## Safety Solutions

Similar to pedestrian and bicyclist hazards, high traffic speeds are the focus of many reported motorist safety concerns in the corridor. Additionally, as noted in other sections of this report, reducing vehicle speeds is a proven safety strategy and helps mitigate many other reported problems, including the failure of drivers to yield (right-of-way violations) and traffic signal and sign violations. Therefore, as described above, we recommend removing one lane of travel on 4<sup>th</sup> Street and one lane on 5<sup>th</sup> Street, and using the added space to provide separated (Class IV) bikeways, protected by a raised curb and by parked cars where parking lanes currently exist.

Additionally, many motorists driving on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets report difficulty seeing pedestrians, bicyclists, and other vehicles trying to cross the street. Lowering traffic speeds improves the ability of motorists to take in information about their surroundings (and thus detect other street users).<sup>8</sup> Other interventions described in the pedestrian and bicyclist safety sections of this report can also directly help improve visibility of other users.

Motorist Hazard(s)	Recommended Solution(s)
Unsafe speeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Lane conversion with Class IV bikeway implementation</li> <li>✓ Other traffic calming measures</li> </ul>
Unpredictable driver behavior & right-of-way violations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Lane conversion with Class IV bikeway implementation</li> <li>✓ High-visibility crosswalks on all legs of all intersections*</li> <li>✓ Other traffic calming measures</li> <li>✓ Traffic signals at key unsignalized intersections</li> </ul>
Traffic signals and signs violations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Lane conversion with Class IV bikeway implementation</li> </ul>
Lack of visibility of crossing pedestrians, bicyclists & vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Extended no-parking zones at intersection approaches</li> <li>✓ Protected intersections with visible pedestrian queuing areas, or curb extensions with Class IV bikeway cut-throughs</li> <li>✓ Bike turn boxes</li> <li>✓ Traffic signals at key unsignalized intersections</li> </ul>

*\* In September 2025, after data collection and analysis for this report was complete, Caltrans began painting high-visibility crosswalks at many intersections in the corridor where they had previously been missing.*

<sup>8</sup> See Jo, Lee and Lee 2014: The effect of driving speed on driver's visual attention: experimental investigation; [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-07515-0\\_18](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-07515-0_18).

## Recommended Safety Improvements

The following table summarizes the major safety improvements recommended in this report and the street users who will see major safety benefits.

Recommended Improvement	Primary Safety Benefits			
	<i>Pedestrians</i>	<i>Bicyclists</i>	<i>Bus Riders</i>	<i>Motorists</i>
✓ Lane conversion with Class IV bikeway implementation	X	X	X	X
✓ Traffic signals (with exclusive bike phases) at key unsignalized intersections	X	X	X	X
✓ Protected intersections with visible pedestrian queuing areas, or curb extensions with Class IV bikeway cut-throughs	X	X	X	
✓ Bike turn boxes (where protected intersections are not implemented)		X	X	
✓ High-visibility crosswalks on all legs of all intersections	X		X	
✓ Extended no-parking zones at intersection approaches	X	X	X	X
✓ Raised crosswalks on side streets	X		X	X
✓ Close redundant or unnecessary driveways	X	X	X	
✓ Remove sidewalk obstructions	X		X	
✓ Widen sidewalks where clear paths are too narrow for wheelchair users or other pedestrians to comfortably pass	X		X	
✓ Add pedestrian-scale lighting where needed	X	X	X	
✓ Other traffic calming measures	X	X	X	X