

January 28, 2021

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Measure Z Committee  
c/o County Administrative Office  
825 Fifth Street  
Eureka, California 95501

CAO

To: Measure Z Committee

As a critical care pharmacist my passion is helping and serving other people, it is truly my calling. I would not have chosen to become passionate about traffic safety but it chose me on December 13, 2019 when I was a pedestrian walking in the crosswalk 1 block from my house at F and Henderson Street with the legal right of way and I was hit by a car that fled the scene. My life has changed since that day and traffic safety has become a passion of mine. Through becoming part of the neighbor group, Slow F Street, and working towards improved traffic safety, I have transformed from victim to survivor.

Please accept this letter in support of Measure Z Funding towards the causes of the Slow F Street Group. This group supports the Rosewood and Henderson Center neighborhoods efforts to improve the safety along F Street in Eureka. F Street is unique because it is the only street in Eureka that connects the waterfront at both ends via way of Herrick Avenue. It has schools, churches and many stores on it as it passes through Henderson Center and Old Town. F Street has become a bypass to Broadway as GPS systems reroute drivers due to congestion on Broadway. F Street is essentially now the F Street Super Corridor and has become a hot spot of accidents with pedestrians, bicycles and cars. There are over 4,000 cars a day that use F Street in each direction and from Henderson Center to the 101 entrance there are minimal crosswalks. There are also issues with traffic speed, visibility, and road conditions. The safety of F Street can be improved at the same time as making it a beautiful entrance to Eureka which it has the potential to be.

10 years ago RCAA did a "walkability" study and it was determined that a safety light was needed at Oak and F Street. This and other recommendations were not followed and recommendations for a school crosswalk were only partially implemented. At a recent Eureka City Council meeting it was disclosed there were other more recent "traffic studies" but they only observed traffic for 1 hour outside of rush hour and during the lockdown for Covid-19. Since the last RCAA study the traffic situation on F Street was gotten worse. The Slow F Street Group has written grants in an attempt to have funding for a third-party, evidence-based group (RCAA) to conduct a comprehensive updated study. This would provide the City and County with direct recommendations to be implemented for improved traffic safety for all modes of transportation.

In my role as a critical care pharmacist the last 7 years, I have treated dozens of patients that have been the victims of pedestrian and bicycle vs car accidents. One of the most impactful was a neighbor who was hit in the same intersection I was and passed away. I see the impact these accidents have on our residents lives and the lives of their loved ones as well as the impact this has on the health care system. These patients almost always have traumatic brain injuries and cannot return to the way of life they had known before. Many require long term skilled nursing care. This is a huge preventable burden on our healthcare system that is already being overloaded.

Using Measure Z funding in order to implement traffic safety strategies on F Street will benefit not just the residents of the immediate area but the community in general. Henderson center is the site of many community activities year round and F Street is used to get from one end of town to the other so all the citizens of Humboldt will benefit from improvements. Not addressing these issues that have become blaring obvious is not an option anymore and will result in further harm to community members and the time for change is now.

Sincerely,  
Kelly Wehausen PharmD

