

From: [Eris Weaver](#)
To: [Mary Gourley](#)
Subject: public comment (item NOT on the agenda) City Council Meeting 05/19/2020
Date: Monday, May 18, 2020 4:51:30 PM
Attachments: [image002.jpg](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image007.jpg](#)

Dear Councilmembers:

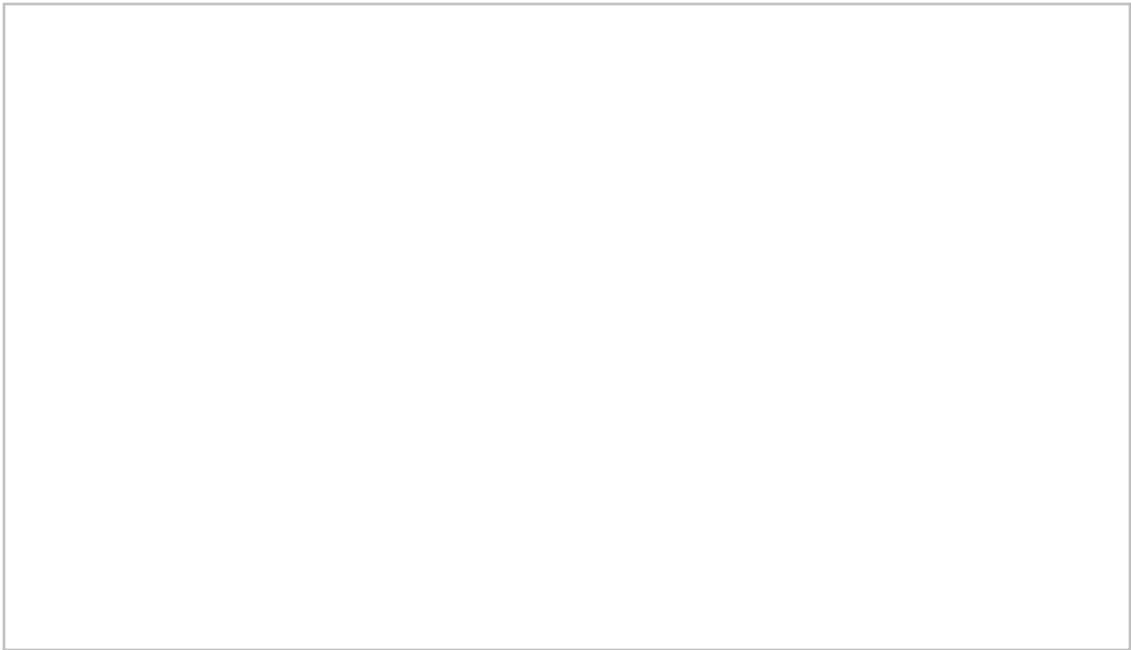
One of the unexpected benefits of the Shelter in Place order has been a resurgence in cycling – folks who haven't ridden in years are pulling rusty bikes out of the garage and riding with their families. Local bike shops report a significant surge in repairs and sales. ("I even stopped advertising because I have all the work I can do!" said one owner downtown.) VMTs and greenhouse gas emissions are down.

Now, happily, our parks and bike paths have reopened, and we have a marked reduction in vehicle traffic. We have an opportunity to keep this momentum going and support people in their new transportation habits. Cities around the world are closing streets to through traffic to create more space for people to exercise while maintaining social distance. It can be done quickly and cheaply: [Oakland recently closed 74 miles of streets](#) using nothing more than cones and signage.

Streets closed to through traffic are not closed to emergency vehicles or drivers that must use the street to access a final destination, such as local residents. Drivers using the streets will be reminded by signage to drive slowly and expect to share the roadway with people on foot and bike.

We now don't have to look very far for examples of Slow Streets projects – last week, the [city of Petaluma](#) launched such a project in two locations, one on the west side and one on the east side. The fact that this project has come, as far as I can tell, from within the city rather than proposed by activists makes it all the more impressive. I encourage you to follow Petaluma's lead, and consider what streets in Sebastopol might lend themselves to such a program. I imagine that Petaluma's Public Works staff would be willing to share what they're learning from their rollout. If there is any way that the Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition can be of assistance in developing and promoting such a program, we would be most happy to do so.

Thank you, and Happy Bike Month!



One of Oakland's "Slow Streets" | Photo: OakDOT



Eris Weaver, Executive Director
Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition
eris@bikesonoma.org
707-545-0153 office • 707-338-8589
cell

www.bikesonoma.org/btwd

