

Hello, this is Tom Cookman with a Community Comment

Last Friday we had yet another pedestrian die after getting hit by a van while he was attempting to cross Broadway. Unfortunately, this is a very common occurrence. This problem has several reasons as to why it is so prevalent in Eureka. Our homeless population has to be one of the highest per capita in the United States. We are blessed to live in an area that has mild temperatures year round. Combine this with our marijuana industry and a Social Services Department that liberally distributes their budget of over \$150,000,000 and you have a recipe for a major homeless problem. Some of this money is used to provide temporary shelter for the the down and out. These facilities are all along Broadway in old motel sites. This puts a large population of street people on our main thoroughfare. This situation was created because of very poor planning by our government officials. The problem has many facets. First, the old motels are really an eyesore. This is what tourists see when they drive through Eureka and they just keep on driving to another town to eat at a restaurant or stay in a motel. Second, potential business investors take one look at how we take care of our city and they invest elsewhere. Third, and most importantly, the people living in these old motels are often serious drug abusers and they totally disregard traffic laws. They are too lazy to walk down to the crosswalk and wait for the traffic signal to change. They prefer to just step out into the traffic and attempt to get across Broadway without getting hit by a motor vehicle. This works most of the time, but too often we are faced with the situation that happened last Friday, where the person tragically gets hit and killed. The pedestrian pays the ultimate price for this accident, but it changes the life of the person who hits them as well. People who are responsible for another human being to lose their life,

even when it is 100% out of their control, are seriously affected, even to the point of suicide. This is a very grave problem that needs to be resolved. Instead of the Sleepy Hollow Motel, how about the Downtowner Motel? It is a huge facility that is empty and it isn't on Highway 101. Move these people to different facilities, tear down the old motels and make our city an appealing place to visit and a great place for businesses to invest. We have a lot to offer investors, but we are miserable at showing the beauty and potential of how awesome Eureka can be. First impressions are important. If you were going out on a date for the first time, would you put off bathing for two weeks? Would you wear filthy clothes that smell like farm animals? How would you like to go on a date where the person, even though they are really nice looking, smelled of the worst body odor you've ever smelled? That smelly, dirty, filthy clothed date is what Eureka looks like to the person visiting. I've talked to many people who say they will never come here again because of this situation. Our county is dying, and the people in charge are sitting in their offices with salaries that are \$100,000, \$200,000 and even a quarter of a million dollars a year trying to figure out ways to squeeze more taxes out of us, instead of creating a safe, healthy environment that promotes tourism and investment. Please get off your bureaucratic posteriors and clean up Broadway, which will not only save lives, it will promote business and tourism, which puts more money in your coffers.

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