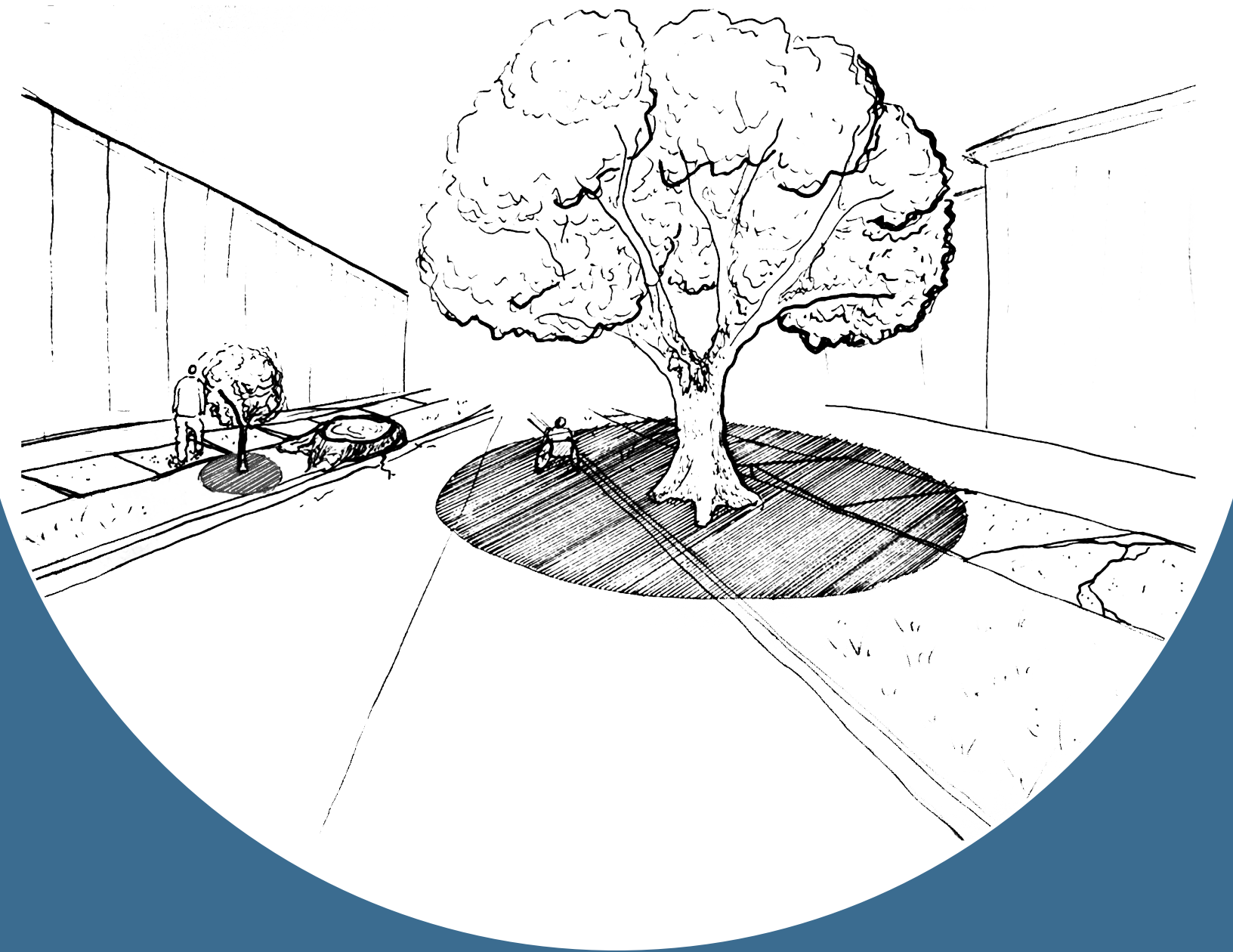


LET'S TALK ABOUT THE BROKEN  
SIDEWALKS IN EUGENE!



COMMUNITY UNITED TO REPAIR OUR BROKEN SIDEWALKS

## Survey Response Summary

SEPTEMBER 2026

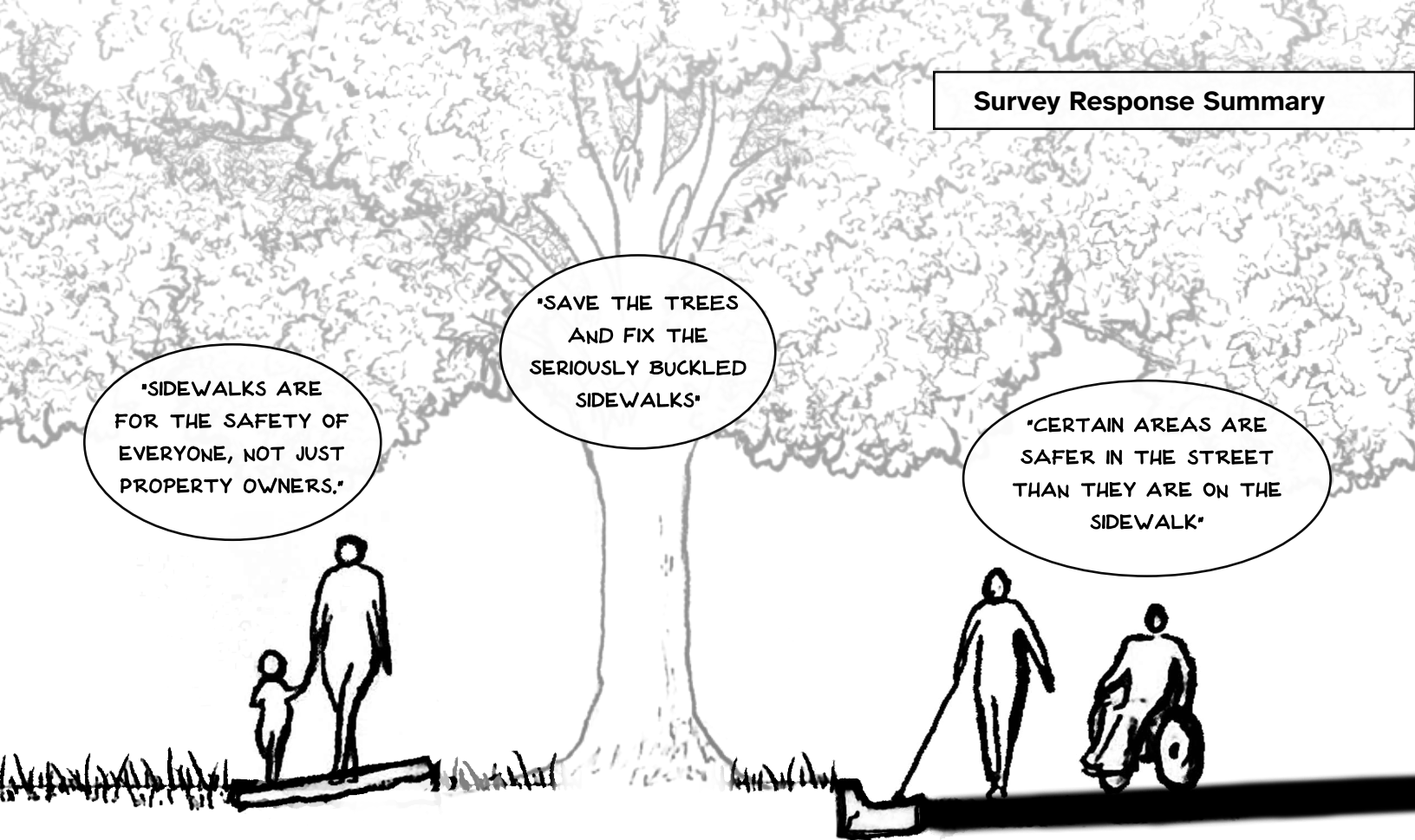
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## Cover Graphic Description

*The illustration on the previous page is a hand sketch of the problems surrounding broken sidewalks provided by Alejandro Bechtle-Hanson, the 2026 UO MLA graduate who's volunteering with CURBS and drafted this summary report.*

*Several survey respondents expressed interest in Alejandro's work. We encourage those who want to learn more about his research and the sidewalk designs he's developing to visit his website: [alejandrobechtle.com](http://alejandrobechtle.com).*



"SIDEWALKS ARE FOR THE SAFETY OF EVERYONE, NOT JUST PROPERTY OWNERS."

"SAVE THE TREES AND FIX THE SERIOUSLY BUCKLED SIDEWALKS"

"CERTAIN AREAS ARE SAFER IN THE STREET THAN THEY ARE ON THE SIDEWALK"

## HIGH-LEVEL SUMMARY

- Over 300 total responses, 298 included enough answers to be statistically useful for the summary overview.
- 281 stories and comments\* describing personal **injuries from broken sidewalks**, expressing concern for pedestrians with **disabilities** and asserting that sidewalks are **public infrastructure**. Many commented on tree-sidewalk conflicts, both about having to pay to repair sidewalks broken by city-owned trees and about wanting to **avoid tree removal**.
- The most concerning theme identified in survey feedback is that **pedestrians are using the street due to broken sidewalks**.
- Overall, respondents urged the City of Eugene to seek ways to **publicly fund** sidewalks to protect the public's safety. The **majority** of respondents said they would **support** a fee-based model similar to Corvallis. See page 5 for more key insights.
- Respondents reported the areas where they regularly use the sidewalks; **every neighborhood in Eugene** was referenced but **Downtown** was cited the most, see the map on page 6.

Note: This survey is **not** an academic survey or generalizable research, it is a summary of community feedback intended for the City of Eugene staff, mayor, council members, and any other figure with the potential ability to enact positive change in Eugene's sidewalk system. All included responses are anonymous to protect respondent privacy.

### Introductory Graphic

*Illustration by Alejandro Bechtle-Hanson of the problems surrounding broken sidewalks with quotes taken directly from comments and stories recorded in the survey.*

*Comments, stories, and concerns echoed across neighborhoods and circled around the same themes described above and on the following pages.*

\*194 respondents provided stories and/or comments, including comments about what respondents thought the sidewalk repair policy was if they were previously unaware.

## MORE QUOTES FROM THE COMMUNITY

While this survey was voluntary and **people who are already interested in sidewalks** would have been more likely to respond, we believe respondents represent the perspective of a large portion of Eugene. While distributing the survey, CURBS worked to **hear the voices that are often under-represented**, including people who are currently **unable to use the sidewalk**. However, most respondents were able-bodied. While many expressed **empathy for people with disabilities**, who are visibly at greater risk of injury on sidewalks and more likely to be pushed into the street, collected feedback affirms that **broken sidewalks endanger us all**. The most common, uniting message from survey respondents is that people across Eugene **want the city to fix this** pervasive problem, and public funding seems like the most equitable, sustainable solution. The following quotes were pulled from examples of the feedback recorded in the survey and are representative of common identified themes across stories and comments.

### BROKEN SIDEWALKS ARE IMPACTING PEOPLE REGULARLY ACROSS EUGENE

- **"I tripped this morning.** It's not unusual for me."
- **"I can't count the number of times** my foot has snagged on a lifted crack..."
- **"No real story, I just trip over broken sidewalks on probably a monthly basis,** especially near my home in the Whiteaker. I have multiple friends who have trip-and-fall stories that they've shared with me."
- **"...I often push my grandson in a stroller** which actually provides me with some extra balance, but **causes its own problems with some of the biggest bumps** stopping us with a jar to the whole body."
- **"The downtown core of Eugene** has many **broken and lifted sidewalks.**"
- **"Though it's less risk for me currently, my wife is a runner and tripped** a few times."
- **"There are too many instances to share..."**

### BROKEN SIDEWALKS ARE CAUSING SERIOUS INJURIES

- **"A crack in the sidewalk caused me to be ejected from my wheelchair** and resulted in **breaking my back** at L-4 and L-5."
- **"I have fallen more than once.** Once I sprained a wrist, once skinned a knee, broke my glasses and cut my face. I often walk at night to events or neighbors and most of my falls have happened at night despite carrying a flashlight."
- **"Since moving to Eugene, I have tripped and fallen several times one time I had to have stitches in my head."**
- **"Broke my wrist** tripping on an uneven sidewalk and curb."
- **"I tripped and fell due to raised and broken sidewalk several years ago** and have had neck pain off and on ever since. It was at night, so I **avoid walking outside at night.**"
- **"I have known people who have been disabled, permanently disabled, and have died** from falling on sidewalks. Falls are a major health risk for people in my age bracket..."

## PEDESTRIANS ARE USING THE STREET DUE TO BROKEN SIDEWALKS

- “About two years ago, I tripped on a sidewalk in the Jefferson Westside neighborhood and had to get stitches for a cut to my head. Since then, **I prefer to walk in the street** even though I know it is dangerous.”
- “**I plan my movements based on the condition of sidewalks.** Because of my impaired mobility I prefer walking on the bike path as it is maintained by the city. If a sidewalk has buckling I watch my feet. If I need to go faster **I use the street.**”
- “I recently saw a gentleman, in an electric wheelchair, traveling **in the street** because the sidewalk was inaccessible.”
- “It is very **common** for me to see **people on mobility assisted devices walking out in the road** because they can’t get through on a sidewalk or it is just too unsafe for them.”
- “I walk three times a week with an active senior group. A lot of the time **we walk on the street** because the **sidewalks are too uneven, broken and unsafe...**”
- “I am a full-time wheelchair user. Live in West Eugene in the Churchill area. The sidewalks in my neighborhood are terrible. I have not fallen out of my wheelchair, but I **have had to be in the street** almost all the time because I can’t manage the sidewalks.”

## SIDEWALKS ARE PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE THAT SERVE US ALL

- “Sidewalks are like roads; they are a **public resource accessible by all.** They are essential infrastructure. They should be maintained by public funding.”
- “A **proactive approach** to sidewalk inspections from the City of Eugene, instead of complaint driven inspections would be appreciated.”
- “I’ve lived in many urban areas. Eugene’s sidewalks are in the poorest condition. If the city truly were interested in **getting people out of their cars and walking more**, funding would be dedicated to fixing sidewalks in the neighborhoods adjacent to the downtown. Also, homeowners must keep their sidewalks clear of debris and overgrowth.”
- “**Homeowners often seem unaware** that it is their responsibility to repair sidewalks and/or keep them clear of debris.”
- “I thought that sidewalk repairs were **managed & funded by the city.**”
- “Having individual property owners responsible for their adjacent sidewalk incentivizes **patchwork** repairs. I might fix my section, only to have hazardous stretches to either side.”
- “...Additionally, individual responsibility doesn’t have a good path to fixes where **an entire block’s worth of sidewalk** needs to be regraded.”
- “Eugene’s policy regarding the cost of repairs is **inequitable.**”
- “Smooth sidewalks are helpful for **runners, bicycles, push toys, strollers, little kids, seniors and accessibility.**”
- “I support a system that spreads the cost more evenly. Making an individual pay is regressive. **We all use sidewalks**, and they should be considered public infrastructure just like streets. I am concerned that a monthly fee might impact financially constrained folks more, and would hope there is a way to adjust for that...”

- “Even though I’m privileged to be physically able-bodied, **running exposes me and others like me to increased risk from broken sidewalks** because there is less margin for error when moving quickly.”

### BROKEN SIDEWALKS ESPECIALLY IMPACT PEDESTRIANS WITH DISABILITIES

- “I am **forced to drive** regularly because I am **trapped by broken sidewalk** that I cannot safely pass. I also strongly **dislike the current system** of fixes being reporting based and I have yet to see repairs anywhere I have reported...”
- “I can’t reliably get to my nearest bus stop or grocery store because **my wheelchair gets stuck** in the broken sidewalk.”
- “I have two **kids in wheelchairs** and the broken sidewalks make it harder to maneuver.”
- “Since that fall I am very **reluctant to take walks** around my neighborhood or walk a couple of blocks to the library or even to the bus because I’m **afraid of falling.**”
- “The front casters on my wheelchair were stopped abruptly by a sidewalk slab that was raised about 1/2” and it **threw me forward onto the sidewalk...**”
- “All of 730 miles of sidewalk in Eugene needs be brought to **ADA standards.**”

### TREE-SIDEWALK CONFLICTS COMPLICATE SIDEWALK REPAIRS

- “Without glasses or contacts, I have limited vision. Especially at night, I have **difficulty walking on sidewalks** especially in the Jefferson neighborhood along west 11th due to the uneven paving of sidewalks. I struggle, though, because I am a huge fan of trees and **don’t want to report** because **I don’t want to see trees being taken down.**”
- “I agree with Craig’s assessment; **trees** not only contribute to the beauty, peace and conviviality of our city, but as we face a warming planet, play a **vital role in cooling our neighborhoods.** We should be trying to preserve them as best we can.”
- “Most of the broken sidewalks that I notice are because **tree roots** have uplifted them.”
- “I am afraid replacing the sidewalk would **damage the root structures** and shorten the life of these amazing trees. I don’t know what to do.”
- “Because of trees in the park strip, most sidewalks in Eugene will be broken at some point. **If the city is in charge of the trees, why aren’t they also in charge of the sidewalks?**”
- “It is **unfair to expect the home owner to repair** or replace damaged sidewalks due to the **city owned trees.**”

### EUGENE ALSO NEEDS SIDEWALK INFILL

- “I am more concerned by the **LACK** of sidewalks in many areas. This is more problematic.”
- “The other danger comes from **NO sidewalks...**”

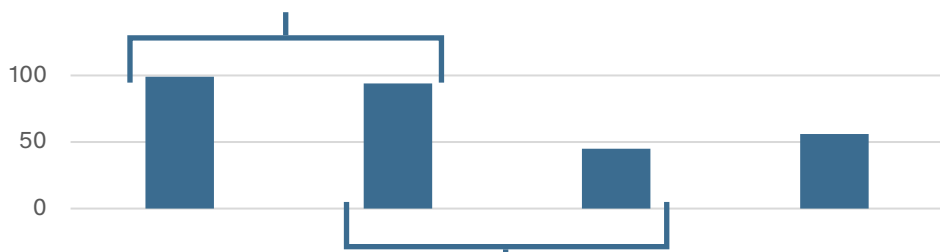
### THE COMMUNITY IS PLEASED THE CITY IS DISCUSSING THIS ISSUE

- “I am glad that someone is bringing this issue up to the **city council**, finally!”

## KEY FINDINGS

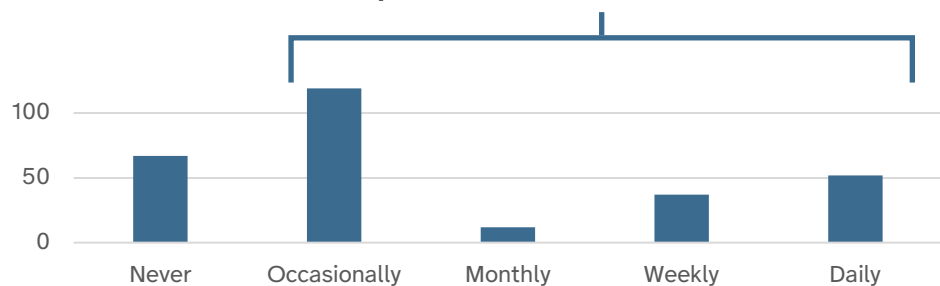
Survey respondents were largely united in agreement that **sidewalks are public infrastructure that should be publicly funded**. The broken sidewalks personally impact the majority of respondents; many have gotten **seriously hurt falling on the sidewalks**, and **the community is ready for change**. The broken sidewalks in Eugene are harming pedestrians and discouraging people from traveling in any manner besides driving. We believe that the sidewalk system must be repaired proactively, efficiently, and sustainably for the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

### 65% Have Personally Tripped/Fallen on Broken Sidewalks



### 47% Know Someone Else who Has

### 74% Walk/Roll in the Street Due to Broken Sidewalks



### Key Findings

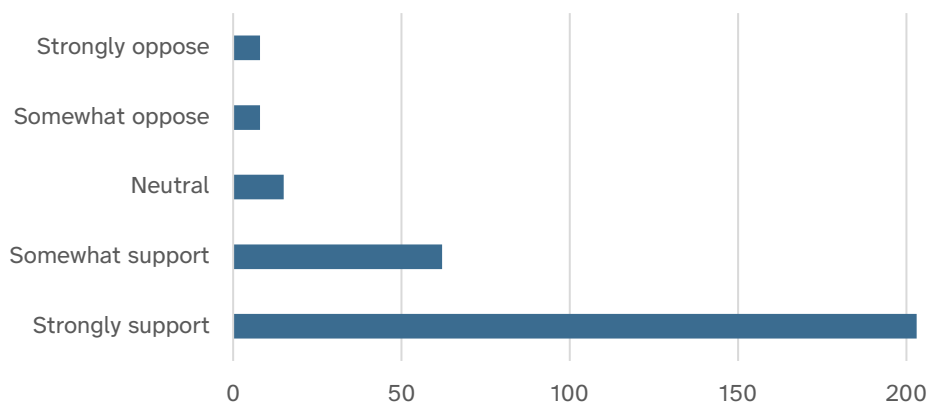
Two bar charts illustrating key findings from community survey feedback.

The first chart shows the number of respondents who reported tripping or falling on a broken sidewalk in Eugene and/or knowing someone who has.

The remaining 19% said they have not tripped/fallen and don't know anyone who has; these respondents were still concerned about broken sidewalks.

The second bar chart shows the proportion of people who walk or roll in the street due to broken sidewalks. 17% walk/roll in the street daily, 12% do weekly, 4% do monthly, and 40% do occasionally. Based on written feedback, it's likely that people also regularly see others walking/rolling in the street where there are broken sidewalks.

### Would respondents support or oppose a fee to fund sidewalk repairs?



### Support for a Fee-based System

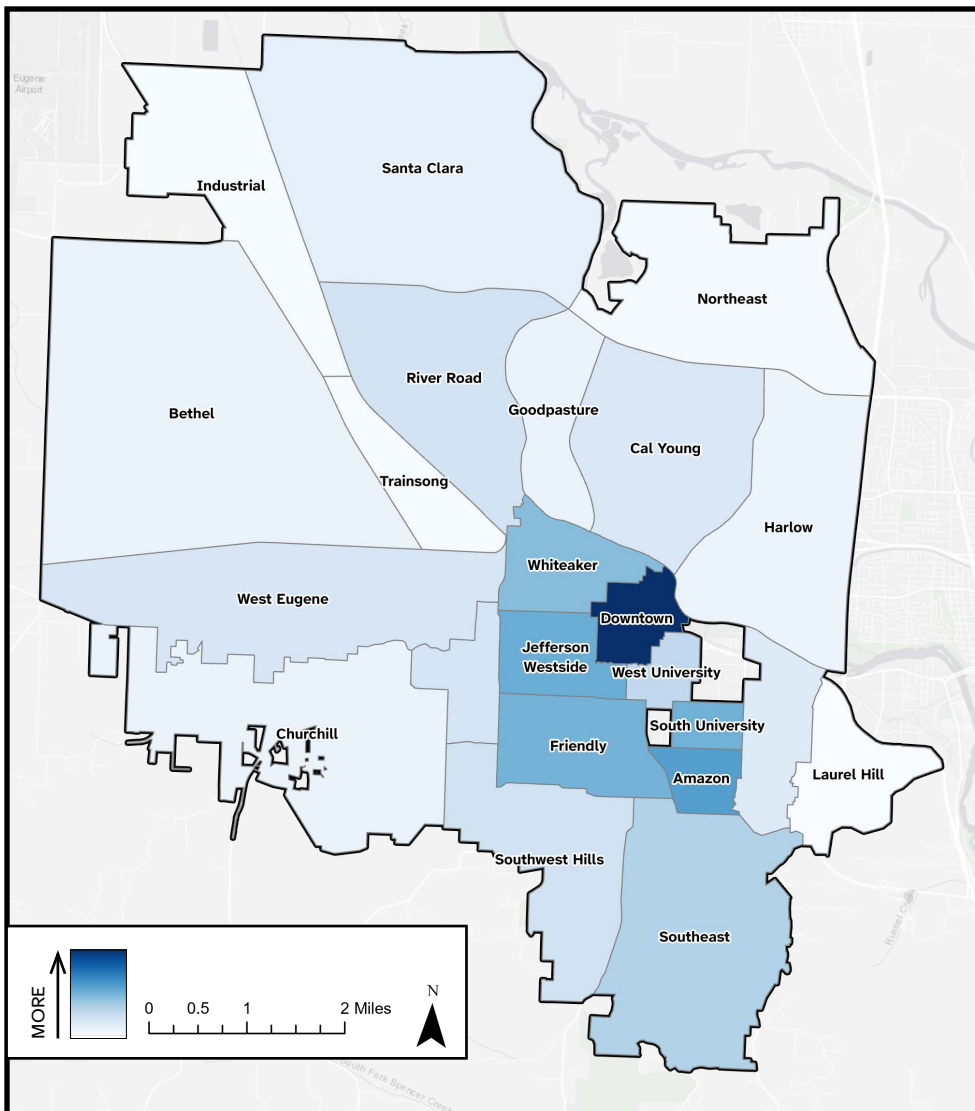
The horizontal bar chart to the left shows the strong support respondents expressed for a publicly funded sidewalk system supported by a modest fee paid by all residents of Eugene.

Overall, 89% of respondents said that they would support a system similar to the one used in Corvallis. Only 5% answered that they would oppose a fee-based system. This was a critical question to ask because the underlying barrier to publicly funding sidewalks is funding; **a fee might be the solution**.

## REPRESENTED AREAS

The map below describes the neighborhoods respondents were likely referring to in their survey feedback. While it seems to have reached people all across Eugene, most opportunities to distribute were near the heart of the city. The central core of Eugene is the most walkable area by density, so it would logically follow that more people are walking on the sidewalks in that area.

Downtown was the most popular neighborhood among respondents, likely because it contains the most central public buildings and pedestrian-friendly commercial areas, including the Saturday Market. The survey did not ask where respondents live, but it is likely that most people walking around Downtown travel there, which would explain why the majority listed multiple neighborhoods. While this map should not necessarily be interpreted as a priority map, it does suggest that Downtown and connecting pathways are central pedestrian areas.



### Eugene Heat Map

Map of Eugene with color-coded neighborhoods generated with ArcGIS. Shading correlates with the number of respondents who reported walking in each neighborhood.

Downtown was, by far, the most popular neighborhood, but each one was referenced by at least three people. Below is the full list of neighborhoods in order of popularity among respondents.

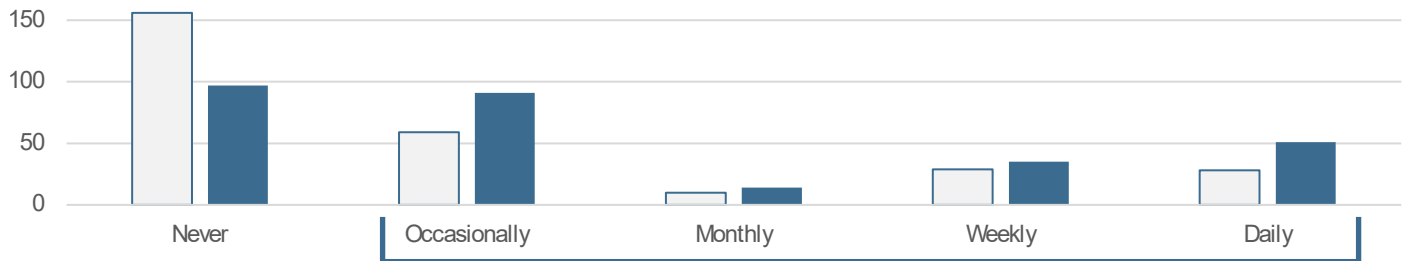
Downtown  
 Amazon  
 Jefferson Westside  
 South University  
 Friendly  
 Whiteaker  
 West University  
 Southwest Hills  
 River Road  
 Chambers Westside  
 West Eugene  
 Cal Young  
 Fairmount  
 Santa Clara  
 Bethel  
 Churchill  
 Goodpasture  
 Harlow  
 Northeast  
 Industrial  
 Trainsong  
 Laurel Hill

## SIDEWALK USE AND SATISFACTION

Of course respondents notice broken sidewalks! Zero reported never noticing them, 55% said they **notice broken sidewalks in Eugene on a daily basis**, and 86% notice them at least monthly. The more pressing matters are that many respondents avoid sidewalks, especially at night, and broken sidewalks impede them.

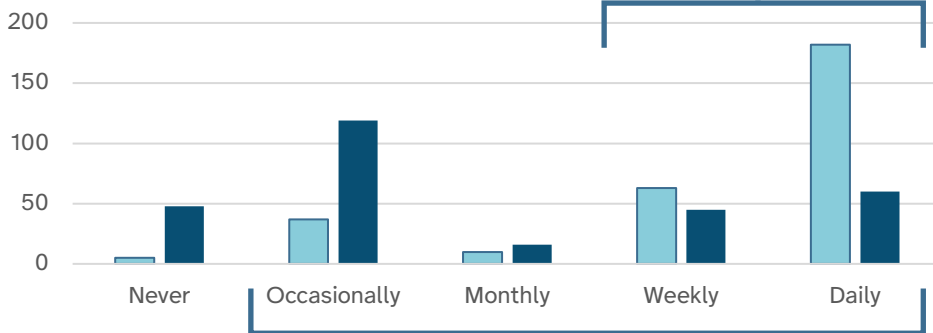
### Sidewalk Avoidance

The bar chart below shows the frequency respondents reported avoiding using the sidewalks in Eugene because they are broken. Most people who avoid the sidewalk only do so occasionally, but on a **weekly basis** 19% avoid the sidewalk during the day and 29% do at night.



42% Said they Avoid Using Sidewalks During the Day 64% Said they Avoid them at Night

82% Said they Still Use Sidewalks at Least Weekly

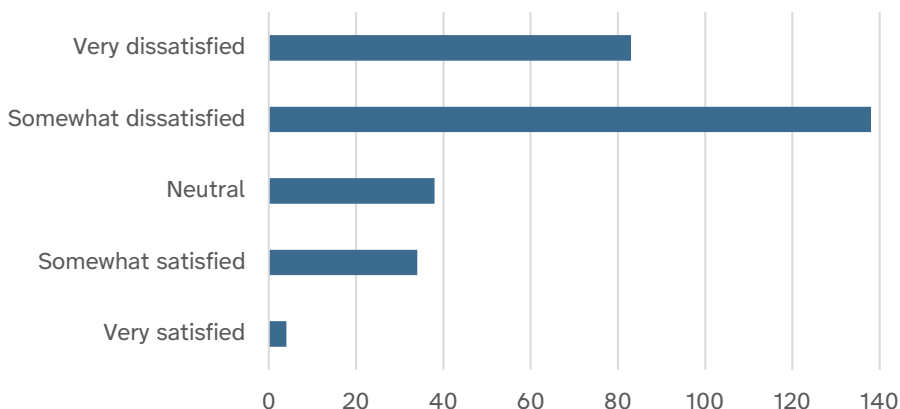


### Sidewalk Use and Broken Sidewalk Impact

The bar chart to the left shows the frequency respondents reported using the sidewalk and how frequently they reported being impeded by broken sidewalks.

Broken Sidewalks Impede 81% at Least Occasionally

13% are Satisfied with the Sidewalks, 74% are Dissatisfied



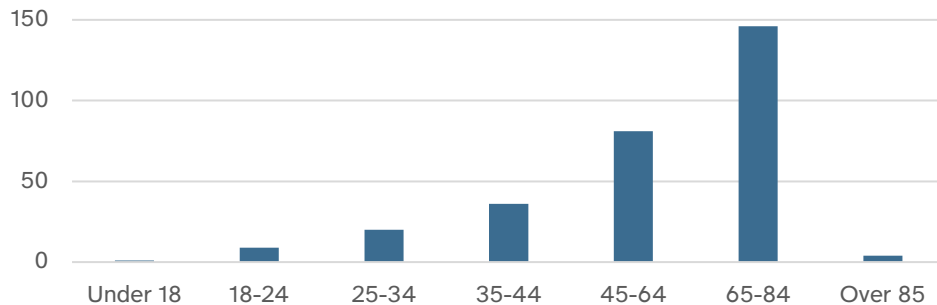
### Sidewalk Satisfaction

The horizontal bar chart to the left shows respondents' level of satisfaction with Eugene's sidewalks. Most are at least somewhat dissatisfied, but 13% are at least somewhat satisfied, **including respondents who have tripped and fallen on broken sidewalks** and/or know someone who has. Those who see the positives in Eugene's sidewalks may appreciate that this city is still incredibly walkable, with **full coverage around much of the city's heart**. However, fixing the broken sidewalks is necessary to allow people to embrace that benefit.

## RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

To provide context, the survey began by asking respondents for their basic demographics.

Demographic asymmetry is expected, because some groups are more likely to respond to any survey, but this information will help CURBS know where to do more outreach in the future. All survey questions were optional, but the vast majority answered most, if not all, demographic questions.



### Respondents' Reported Age

Bar chart showing respondent counts by age. About half of respondents were 65-84, likely because people in this age group are the most active in the groups and meetings where the survey was distributed. Note that 50% of survey respondents were 65 and over, compared to an estimated 17.8% of Eugene's overall population (census.gov).

## OTHER DEMOGRAPHICS

- **Gender** - 58% Women, 36% Men, 2% Nonbinary, 4% Other/Prefer not to say
- **Race** - 88% White/Caucasian, 9% All Other Races, 3% No Response  
*Only 76.8% of Eugene's overall population is white alone (census.org).*
- **Ethnicity** - 3% Hispanic/Latin American, 97% Other  
*11.7% of Eugene is Hispanic/Latin American (census.org).*
- **Disabilities that affect respondents as pedestrians**  
72% None  
12% Impaired Mobility  
4% Impaired Sight  
4% Impaired Coordination  
4% Multiple Disabilities  
3% Other (i.e. temporary disability)  
2% No Response
- **Mobility Device Use** - 16% Use a Mobility Device  
*The most common devices described were wheelchairs, walking sticks, and sight canes.*
- **Non-drivers** - 15%
- **Property Ownership** - 63% of respondents seem to own property in Eugene, 26% stated they do not own property in Eugene, and 11% did not respond to the question related to property ownership.

### Survey Demographic Note

In general, women, non-hispanic white/Caucasian people, and older adults are more likely to self-select and answer surveys (surveypractice.org). This is why demographic asymmetry is to be expected for any survey. Even so, CURBS plans to reach out more to under-represented demographics in the future.

### Note on Disability Statistics

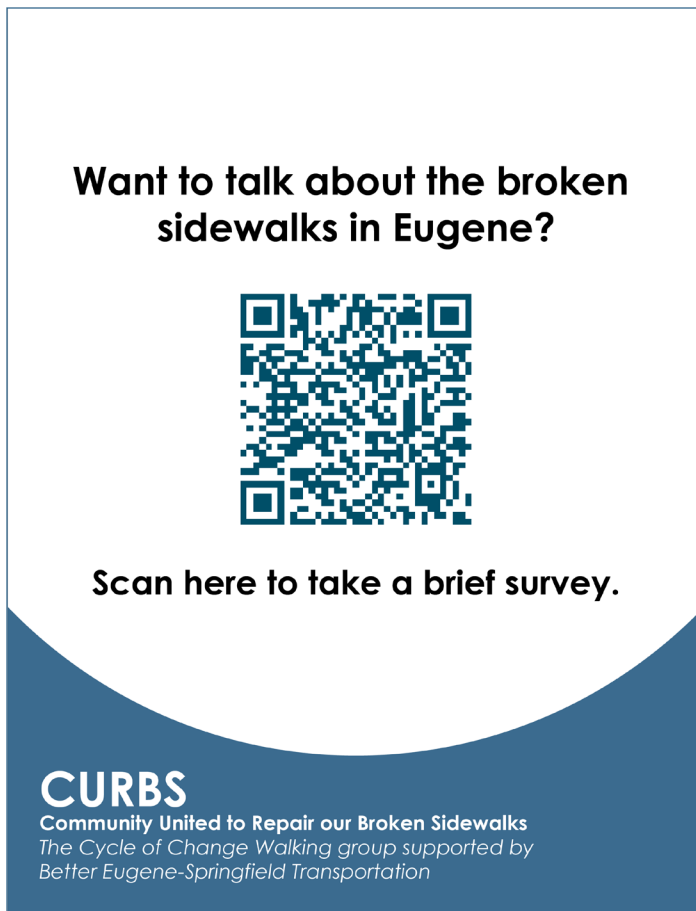
The U.S. Census estimates that 12.4% of Eugene's population under 65 has a disability, but this is likely an under-estimate of disability across Eugene (census.gov). Disability becomes increasingly common with age. **Across the U.S., 43.9% of adults 65 and over report having a disability (cdc.gov).** Self-reported disability also varies for a variety of reasons; most disabilities are invisible and people do not always claim that label.

### Note on Property Ownership

The U.S. Census estimates that 47.9% of homes are owner-occupied in Eugene, indicating that property owners likely had higher representation in this survey compared to the overall population (census.gov).

## DESCRIPTION OF SURVEY DISTRIBUTION

The survey was distributed online and with physical flyers, which were distributed at community events, neighborhood council meetings, and disability advocacy group meetings. The survey was also promoted in two articles written by Larry Craig.



### LookOut Eugene-Springfield Article

Screenshot of the headline "Eugene's sidewalks are finally getting attention. Let's make it last." by Larry Craig, published April 27, 2026 in LookOut Eugene-Springfield.

### Eugene Weekly Article

Screenshot of the headline "Save Our Sidewalks, Save our Street Trees" by Larry Craig, published July 9th, 2026 in the Eugene Weekly.

### CURBS Survey Flyer

Image of the flyer distributed throughout Eugene to reach respondent starting in March 2026.

The message reads "Want to Talk about the Broken Sidewalks in Eugene?" followed by a QR code and "Scan here to take a brief survey." The bottom shows CURBS full organization name and notes that CURBS is supported by BEST, Better Eugene-Springfield Transportation.

## CONCLUSION

We are **deeply thankful to everyone** who took the time to fill out this survey, city staff who have listened to the summaries we've shared over email and in person, and those who have read this document. Anyone who would like to learn more about CURBS is encouraged to join the mailing list! See <https://best-oregon.org/coc/walk/> for more information.

*Sincerely,*

Alejandro Bechtle-Hanson

Nancy Buffum

Mary Christensen

Larry Craig

Sheridan Gates

Seth Sadofsky

Peter Simmeth

Sue Wolling

## REFERENCES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2024, July 16). CDC data shows over 70 million U.S. adults reported having a disability. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2024/s0716-Adult-disability.html>

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Ziegenfuss, J. Y., Easterday, C. A., Dinh, J. M., JaKa, M. M., Kottke, T. E., & Canterbury, M. (2021, August 26). Impact of demographic survey questions on response rate and measurement: A randomized experiment: Published in survey practice. Survey Practice. <https://www.surveypractice.org/article/26126-impact-of-demographic-survey-questions-on-response-rate-and-measurement-a-randomized-experiment>