

Dear Board of Supervisors,

I'm writing this email to you because I may not be able to phone in my comments...the mechanics of doing so too raw in this, the beta stage of teleconferencing, apparently. I hope it will be read during the COVID-19 discussion and/or printed out for each of you, and entered into the minutes.

I write to ask you do do whatever you can to look at the "big picture" of this COVID-19 situation and help direct whoever is making decisions (the County Health Director I believe) into a wiser policy about what should and should not be open during this coronavirus time. I believe the current policy is far, far too conservative and restrictive.

We all understand the health threat – and we're all comfortable taking those precautions to minimize illness and deaths.

But there are side consequences to this that absolutely do need to be factored into this. The closing down of most businesses is creating devastating economic, psychological, and social fabric consequences.

So many people are at the edge, economically. Loss of jobs and income is foremost in their minds. Many of those able to temporarily weather the economic storm are nonetheless suffering severe fear and anxiety reactions. I'm sure you all know of people "at the edge" because of this. Add in cabin fever and loss of normal "quality of life" activities...and life is increasingly unraveling for many.

I don't think this has to be. We can make simple adjustments that will help economically and socially.

Prime examples: opening trails and parks – and letting small retail stores (like the bike shop, Botanical Gardens, boutiques, etc.) re-open.

We can do this with all the necessary safety precautions. Have the Health Director create a reasonable "If you do this, you can reopen" policy. Require safe-distancing, maybe hand-sanitizers at the door, disinfecting counter spaces, gloves, even just so many in the store at one time. You'll be giving employees badly needed jobs back, possibly saving those businesses from permanently closing, giving customers shopping pleasures and an important reinsituting of "normalcy." You'll be generating some badly needed tax revenues as well.

Open trails and parks again. Yes. Don't worry about hordes coming in from elsewhere...our closed motels will prevent that. But let us go out and enjoy nature and exercise – now more needed than ever.

The libraries could easily be reopened with health precautions; at worst, let them do curbside book/video pick-ups the way bookstores are allowed.

In conclusion, I hope you'll do *whatever you can* to take a more wholistic approach to this health crisis. Yes, make health safety paramount – but not the only determinant. Economic sustenance, social fabric, and quality-of-life for the 95% of us who won't be directly affected by coronavirus need equal consideration.

Rick Childs, Mendocino, CA 95460