

L. Population and Housing

Environmental Setting

Population

The City of Eureka is the largest city in Humboldt County (measured by population), with a resident population of approximately 26,097 in 2007, according to the California Department of Finance (2007). Between the years of 1990 and 2000, there has been an overall decrease in the City's population, by approximately 2 percent. Future population projections indicate a reversal of this downward trend in population within the City, with the City's population projected to increase by an annual average growth rate of about 0.3 percent between 2005 and 2010, and about 0.5 percent between 2010 and 2020 (CBRE Consulting, 2006). The City of Eureka accounts for approximately 20 percent of Humboldt County's population, surpassed by the number of persons residing in unincorporated County areas, which accounts for approximately 53 percent of the County population. Over the period between 1990 and 2005, the countywide population has been increasing steadily, and this trend is projected to continue through 2020. Table IV.L-1 presents population trends for the City of Eureka, other cities within Humboldt County, and the unincorporated territory of Humboldt County.

**TABLE IV.L-1
POPULATION TRENDS IN HUMBOLDT COUNTY**

Jurisdiction	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
City of Eureka	27,025	27,564	26,128	26,346	26,544	27,261	27,998
City of Arcata	15,211	15,812	16,651	17,271	17,818	18,299	18,793
City of Fortuna	8,788	9,693	10,498	11,238	11,542	11,854	12,174
City of Rio Dell	2,997	2,847	3,174	3,236	3,333	3,423	3,515
City of Ferndale	1,331	1,238	1,382	1,448	1,449	1,488	1,528
City of Blue Lake	1,235	1,246	1,137	1,177	1,183	1,215	1,248
City of Trinidad	362	363	312	371	319	327	336
Remainder of Humboldt County	62,169	65,437	67,236	70,158	72,598	74,559	76,574
Total	119,118	124,200	126,518	131,191	134,785	138,427	142,167

SOURCES: California Department of Finance, 2006 and CBRE Consulting, 2006.

Housing

The California Department of Finance provides estimates for the number of housing units and the average household size within California cities and counties. In 2005, there were an estimated 11,765 housing units within the City of Eureka. Although during the period between 1990 and 2005, there has been some fluctuation in the number of housing units, the number of housing units in the City in 2005 is approximately the same as the number of housing units in 1990. Countywide, the number of housing units has increased over the past 15 years, and this upward

trend in the number of housing units countywide is similar to the population trend. Table IV.L-2 presents the number of housing units between 1990 and 2005 in the City of Eureka, other cities within Humboldt County, and the unincorporated territory of Humboldt County.

**TABLE IV.L-2
 HOUSING TRENDS IN HUMBOLDT COUNTY**

Jurisdiction	Number of Housing Units			
	1990	1995	2000	2005
City of Eureka	11,781	12,086	11,637	11,765
City of Arcata	6,309	6,803	7,272	7,455
City of Fortuna	3,711	3,995	4,414	4,729
City of Rio Dell	1,231	1,268	1,434	1,466
City of Ferndale	595	627	663	695
City of Blue Lake	540	561	557	578
City of Trinidad	200	204	228	233
Remainder of Humboldt County	26,767	28,965	29,707	31,104
Total	51,134	54,509	55,912	58,025

SOURCE: California Department of Finance, 2005.

In 2005, the estimated percentage of vacant housing units in the City of Eureka, as identified by the California Department of Finance, was about 5.8 percent and about 8.4 percent in Humboldt County (California Department of Finance, 2005).

The City of Eureka has an average household size of approximately 2.26 persons per household, which is lower than the county average of 2.39 persons per household. The average number of persons per household has been decreasing over the past 15 years in the City of Eureka and the county as a whole, although some cities (Fortuna and City of Rio Dell) have experienced slight increases or fluctuations in the average number of persons per household over this period (California Department of Finance, 2005).

State law establishes that regional councils of government identify for each city and county a “fair share allocation” for the provision of housing at all income levels within its jurisdiction. The determination of the local share of regional housing must take into consideration factors including market demand for housing, employment opportunities, availability of suitable sites and public facilities, commuting patterns and the type and tenure of the housing. In 2003, the Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) adopted the *Regional Housing Needs Plan for Humboldt County* (Regional Housing Needs Plan) for the period between January 2001 and June 2008. The HCAOG’s Regional Housing Needs Plan identifies the “fair share allocation” for the provision of housing at all income levels within its jurisdiction, which are defined as follows:

- Very Low Income is defined as less than 50 percent of the median income;
- Low Income is defined as 50 to 80 percent of the median income;

- Moderate Income is defined as 80 to 120 percent of the median income; and
- Above Moderate Income is defined as greater than 120 percent of the median income.

The Housing Element of the Eureka General Plan uses the Regional Housing Needs Plan to project housing needs within the City. The total regional housing needs allocation for the City of Eureka is 544 housing units, distributed among the four income categories. Of these 544 housing units, 90 residential units were issued building permits between the start of the Regional Housing Needs Plan (January 2001) and the time of the adoption of the City's Housing Element (2004). Thus, the adjusted regional housing needs allocation for the City Eureka is 125 residential units in the very low income category, 82 in the low income category, 36 in the moderate income category and 214 in the above moderate income category.

Employment

The City of Eureka is the county seat for Humboldt County, and has the highest number of employed residents in the county, with about 11,100 members of the labor force employed in 2005 (State of California Employment Development Department (CED), 2008). The city's labor force includes professional, technical, production, transportation, and service occupations. With an estimated labor force of about 12,000, about 93 percent of the city's labor force was employed in September of 2008, consistent with the countywide average, also 93 percent. In California, about 92.5 percent of the state's total labor force was employed in September 2008 (CED).

According to the *General Plan* Housing Element, employment characteristics in the City of Eureka have followed employment trends similar to Humboldt County (City of Eureka, 2004). Manufacturing employment declined between 1990 and 2000 from 1,378 to 597 jobs (a 130 percent decrease), as did retail trade jobs, from 2,381 to 1,507 jobs (a 37 percent decrease). The trend in retail jobs during this period contrasts with growth in the previous decades. There was job growth in a number of sectors between 1990 and 2000, including a 27 percent increase in educational, health, and social jobs (2,101 to 2,662 jobs); an 84 percent increase in arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services jobs (640 to 1,179 jobs); and a 22 percent increase in public administration jobs (477 to 613 jobs). Job growth through 2020 is predicted for the wholesale/retail, fire, and services and government sectors. Manufacturing jobs are expected to decrease as are transportation and utility sector jobs. Farming, mining and construction are expected to remain at current levels.

The median household income for the City of Eureka in 2000 was \$25,849, which is lower than the \$31,226 median household income identified for Humboldt County. Eureka households earning less than \$25,000 annually decreased from 62 percent of all households in 1990 to 49 percent in 2000. Households earning over \$50,000 annually have increased since 1990 when 14 percent of households earned this amount compared to 23 percent in 2000 (City of Eureka, 2004).

Within the City of Eureka, the unemployment rate in September of 2008 was about 7.2 percent, increased from the 2007 estimate of about 6.4 percent. The city's unemployment rate is higher than the countywide September 2008 unemployment rate of 6.8 percent although the upward

change between 2007 and September 2008 is consistent on the City and County levels (see Table IV.L-3) the average unemployment rate in Humboldt County and Eureka are currently lower than the statewide rate of about 7.5% percent (CED). The average unemployment rate in Humboldt County is about 5.8 percent, higher than the statewide rate of about 5.4 percent (EDD, 2006). On average, unemployment within the County declines from August through October. This trend is generally explained by seasonal jobs attributed to the tourism and timber industries, but is also driven by an increased spending on goods and services, and the jobs necessary to meet this demand, by seasonally employed residents (CED, 2006).

**TABLE IV.L-3
2000 AND 2005 UNEMPLOYMENT RATES**

Jurisdiction	Annual Unemployment Rates	
	2007	September 2008
City of Eureka	6.4	7.2
Humboldt County	6.0	6.8
California	5.4	7.5

SOURCE: EDD, 2006.

Environmental Analysis

Significance Criteria

For the purposes of this EIR, implementation of the proposed project would have a significant effect on population and housing if, based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, it would:

1. Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and/or businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure);
2. Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere; or
3. Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

Regulatory Framework

The following standards and regulations govern population and housing and are used to measure impacts.

General Plan and Local Coastal Program

The City of Eureka's adopted General Plan and adopted Local Coastal Program together formalize a long-term vision for the physical evolution of Eureka and they outline the policies, standards, and programs that guide day-to-day decisions concerning Eureka's development in the

coastal zone. The Policy Consistency Analysis, found in Section IV.I, *Land Use and Planning*, provides an evaluation of the Marina Center project's conformity with the policies of the adopted General Plan and Land Use Plan portion of the adopted Local Coastal Program.

Coastal Zoning Regulations

The Coastal Zoning regulations, which implement the policies of the Land Use Plan portion of the adopted Local Coastal Program are codified in Chapter 156 of the Eureka Municipal Code (EMC), and are also referenced as Article 29, Part 1, Section 10-5.29 et. seq. of the zoning regulations of the City for the coastal zone.

Zoning Regulations

The Zoning Regulations of the City of Eureka are found in Chapter 155 of the EMC and are adopted pursuant to the City Charter to protect the public health, safety, peace, comfort, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare.

Project Impacts

Impact L-1: Would the Marina Center project induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and/or businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

The proposed project would result in new residential development and employment opportunities on the project site. Assuming the California Department of Finance reported average household size in Eureka of approximately 2.26 persons per household for each housing unit, the proposed 54 residential dwelling units could result in a population increase of approximately 122 persons. This represents approximately 0.5 percent of the City's 2005 population and about 0.5 percent of the estimated 2010 population (see Table IV.L.1). Even though the Marina Center project would contribute to the City of Eureka achieving its fair share of regional housing needs through the provision of new housing, 0.5 percent would not be considered a substantial percentage of Eureka's existing or projected population/population growth.

The proposed project would include on-site infrastructure improvements to accommodate the proposed project. These on-site improvements, including new water and wastewater system extensions, storm drainage facilities, and underground electrical and gas service, would be designed to serve the project site and would not extend utilities or roadways to undeveloped areas outside of the project site. Thus, the project would not indirectly induce substantial population growth in the project vicinity.

The proposed project would generate approximately 1,246 jobs at project build out, anticipated to be year 2010 for the purposes of this study. Table IV.L-4 presents the projected new jobs by land use. According to the *Economic Impact and Urban Decay Analysis* conducted by CBRE, while the project would increase employment on the project site, the project could result in job losses in Humboldt

**TABLE IV.L-4
PROPOSED JOB ESTIMATE BY LAND USE**

Proposed Land Use	Amount of Space	Square Feet per Job	Total Jobs
Retail			
– Home Improvement Store	132,000 sq. ft.	500 sq. ft. per job	264
– Other Retail	195,500 sq. ft.	500 sq. ft. per job	391
Office	104,000 sq. ft.	250 sq. ft. per job	416
Museum	12,500 sq. ft.	1,000 sq. ft. per job	13
Light Industrial	70,000 sq. ft.	500 sq. ft. per job	140
Residential	72,000 sq. ft.	0	0
Property Management	N/A	N/A	22
Total	586,000 sq. ft.		1,246

SOURCE: CBRE Consulting, 2006.

County and the City of Eureka. Under a worst-case scenario, 267 jobs could be lost at existing county retailers, and 154 jobs could be lost at existing city retailers (CBRE, 2006). Taking into account potential job loss as a result of the project, the proposed project could result in 1,092 net new jobs within the City of Eureka, and 979 net new jobs within Humboldt County. New jobs generated as a result of the proposed project would be within various business sectors, and would provide a mix of employment opportunities and wages.

As discussed in more detail under the *Setting* section, the City of Eureka, and Humboldt County as a whole, has a higher unemployment rate than the statewide unemployment rate. This level of unemployment indicates that there is an increasing unmet demand for employment, and that new jobs that would result from the proposed project could be absorbed within the City of Eureka, other nearby cities and unincorporated county areas. Therefore, it is not expected that the project would result in a substantial impact with respect to population growth based on the projected new employment opportunities.

Based on the above, the proposed project and its associated infrastructure improvements would not induce population growth in an area, either directly or indirectly, and would result in a less-than-significant impact.

Mitigation

None recommended.

Finding of Significance

The potential for the Marina Center project to induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and/or businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure), would be a *less-than-significant* impact.

Impact L-2: Would the Marina Center project displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The project site is a vacant brownfield that has been occupied from time to time by unauthorized houseless transients illegally camping on the site. In 2007, the property owners erected a temporary eight-foot-tall chain link construction fence around the perimeter of the property, which served to reduce the number of houseless transients occupying the property. However, based on police and fire response calls, there still remain an unknown number of unauthorized houseless transients occasionally illegally camping on the site.

The development of the Marina Center project would permanently displace all unauthorized houseless transient camping on the site. The numbers of houseless transient people “displaced” could not reasonably be considered substantial.

Mitigation

None recommended.

Finding of Significance

The potential for the Marina Center project to displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere, would be a *less-than-significant* impact.

Impact L-3: Would the Marina Center project displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The project site is vacant and does not contain any residential structures. Thus, implementation of the proposed project would not displace any on-site dwelling units and would not necessitate the construction of replacement housing.

Mitigation

None recommended.

Finding of Significance

The Marina Center project would not displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere; therefore, there would be *no impact*.

Cumulative Impacts

Impact L-4: Would the Marina Center project, in conjunction with other development in the area, result in cumulatively substantial population growth?

As discussed above, the project would increase the on-site resident population by approximately 122 persons. Future development within the project vicinity could occur to the east and south of the site, but would not be expected to occur in areas to the west and north of the site. There are a number of approved, but not yet constructed, residential and non-residential projects in the vicinity (see list in *Section IV.N, Transportation*, Figure IV.N-8 and Table IV.N-3) that would result in population growth, and future new development within Eureka and the surrounding areas would be subject to development guidance contained within the General Plan.

As noted in the *Setting*, which relies on the Department of Finance projections for respective jurisdictions, the resident population within Eureka is estimated to increase only slightly (approximately 6 percent) between 2005 and 2020. Likewise with employment growth, Eureka, according to the General Plan, will continue to grow, shifting industry focuses. Retail, services, government, and art will be the predominant growth industries in Humboldt County over the next several years. The historically dominant timber industry is expected to continue a downward trend. The shift to a more service-oriented economic structure mirrors projected changes for the State. This follows the overall trend in population and employment growth throughout Humboldt County as Eureka is the County Seat and the largest city in the County. Thus, residential and employment development of the project site could be considered consistent with anticipated development trends.

The Marina Center project and any planned or future projects in the vicinity are considered infill development, and therefore the construction of infrastructure to support the new development would not, in itself, introduce a substantial population growth into the area. The basic infrastructure, including roads and utilities, already exists in the area, and the new development(s) would only be extending or improving the infrastructure on the property being developed. Thus, roads and utilities would not be extended into undeveloped areas facilitating development that could not occur otherwise.

Mitigation

None recommended.

Finding of Significance

The project would have a *less-than-significant* impact on population and housing conditions and would not make a cumulatively considerable contribution to cumulative population and housing impacts.

References – Population and Housing

- City of Eureka, *City of Eureka General Plan Final Housing Element*, adopted May, 2004.
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- City of Eureka, *Eureka Municipal Code*, adopted May 1966, amended through April 2008
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