



HUMBOLDT 2025 GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

Building Communities A Discussion Paper for Community Workshops



Prepared by

DYETT & BHATIA
Urban and Regional Planners

February 2002

HUMBOLDT 2020
GENERAL PLAN

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Introduction

This “Building Communities” report is the first step of Phase II of the General Plan Update. This second stage of updating the General Plan entails gathering data, examining the changed situation since the most recent General Plan update, and preparing to look ahead to the year 2025.

BACKGROUND

Humboldt County last revised its General Plan in 1984. In the Spring of 2000, the County initiated a comprehensive General Plan Update, with a multi-phased work program. Phase I, which was completed in early 2001, focused on an extensive public outreach effort to engage the public in the General Plan effort. Through a series of over 40 public meetings, public input was received on land use issues and policy concerns. Additional public outreach efforts included development of a web site, newsletter publication, and community survey. Phase I culminated in a compilation of public concerns and issues entitled the *Critical Choices Report*. The issues identified in the Critical Choices Report provide the direction for the current Phase II data collection and analysis.

As stated in the Executive Summary of the Critical Choices Report, the public desires a solid information base for General Plan decision making. The work conducted under Phase II will provide this base by developing accurate information on current conditions, thoroughly assessing issues, and identifying a range of practical policy options.

FOCUS

This report describes existing conditions, trends, opportunities, and constraints related to the “Building Communities” theme of the County General Plan Update. The Building Communities theme includes analysis of population, employment, housing, existing and projected land use development, and public services (e.g., water and sewer, schools, and other physical facilities) in order to plan for future population changes and associated community development needs. This paper provides an assessment of:

- Current conditions – growth rates, housing, employment, land uses, and public services;
- Historic trends in the past 15 years (since the last General Plan update) with regard to population and employment growth, land use development, and housing;
- Projected growth in population, employment, and housing and expected growth areas to the year 2025;
- Future land demand, based on projected growth;
- Opportunities and constraints related to future land use development; and
- Policy issues and options.

Existing conditions, trends, and future projections are organized by topic. Thus, chapters are provided on population, housing, employment, land use, and public services. A separate

summary of opportunities and constraints is provided in Chapter 6, and the existing General Plan policy framework related to the Building Communities theme is summarized in Chapter 7. Specific key questions or issues identified in the Critical Choices Report are analyzed in Chapter 8, which includes a preliminary list of policy options to address these issues.

The report focuses on opportunities in unincorporated areas, so most information and calculations relate to the unincorporated areas of the county. Figure I-1 shows existing city limits; Figure I-2 shows community planning areas.

SOURCES

The primary sources for this paper have been the US Census and the California Departments of Finance and Employment Development. Other institutions contributing information are the California State University at Chico Center for Economic Development, the Humboldt County Community Development Services Department (which includes the Building and Planning divisions and the Office of Economic Development), RAND California, the cities of Arcata, Eureka, and Fortuna, the US Bureau of Economic Affairs, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Claritas Inc.

In numerous instances, accurate data are not available for years later than 1990; these cases are noted at the beginning of each chapter. As analyses from the 2000 Census continue to be published, these gaps can be filled. Maps for the paper have been prepared using County GIS data. It is important to note that the County GIS database is still in the process of being refined. New data are still being made available and will continue to refine our understanding of the County's current conditions.

NEXT STEPS

Consistent with the themes in the Critical Choices Report, several additional reports will be prepared over the next six months: Moving Goods and People, Managing Natural Resources, and Planning for Hazards. In addition, "sketch plans" will be developed, depicting alternative land use scenarios and circulation patterns for the County. The primary purpose of these reports and plans is to solicit public review and comment.

After public input, information in the various individual reports and plans will ultimately be incorporated into one comprehensive Phase II Report, which will provide policy options for each of the General Plan themes. The Phase II Report will be presented to the public and County decision makers.

Figure I-1

Incorporated Cities and Spheres of Influence

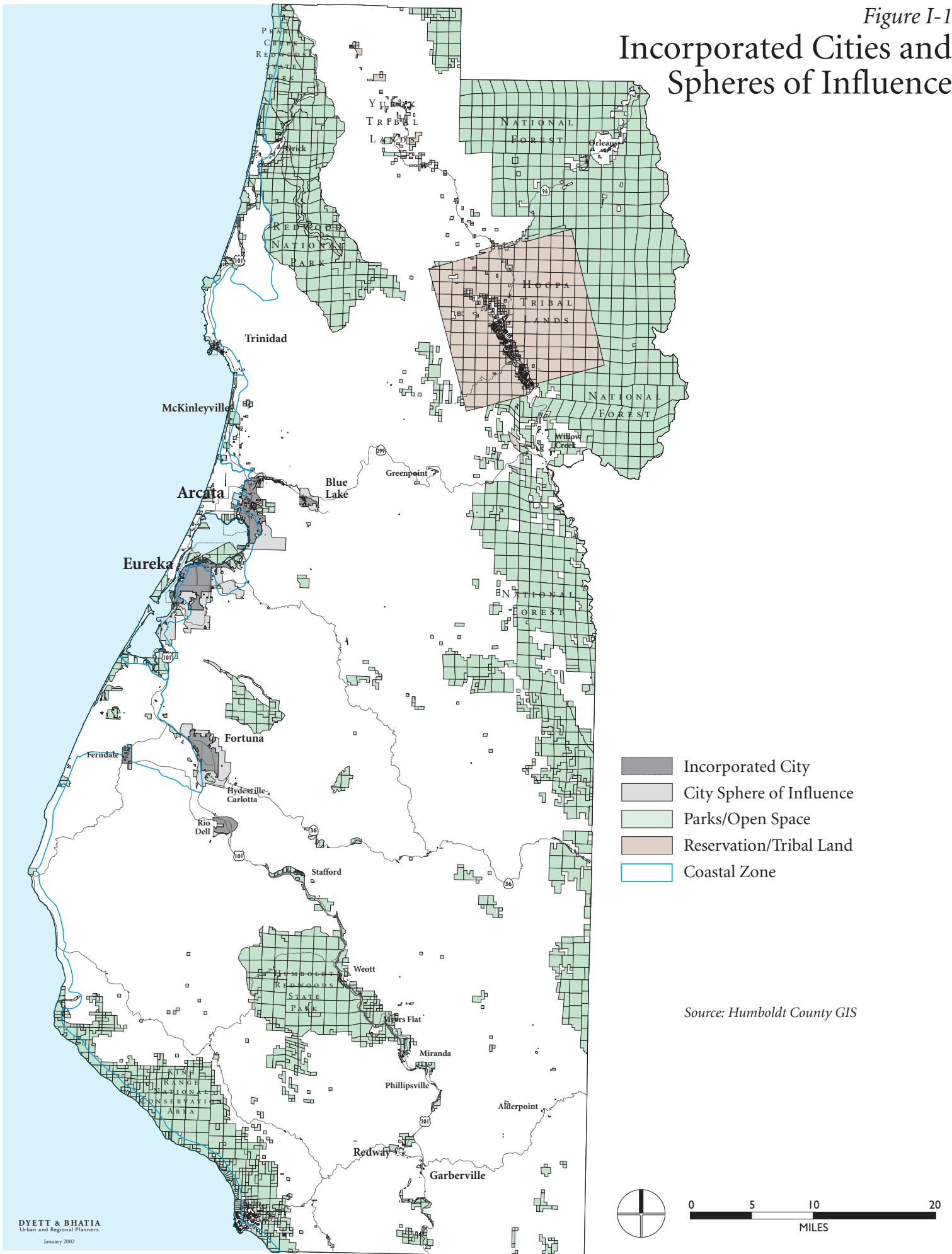
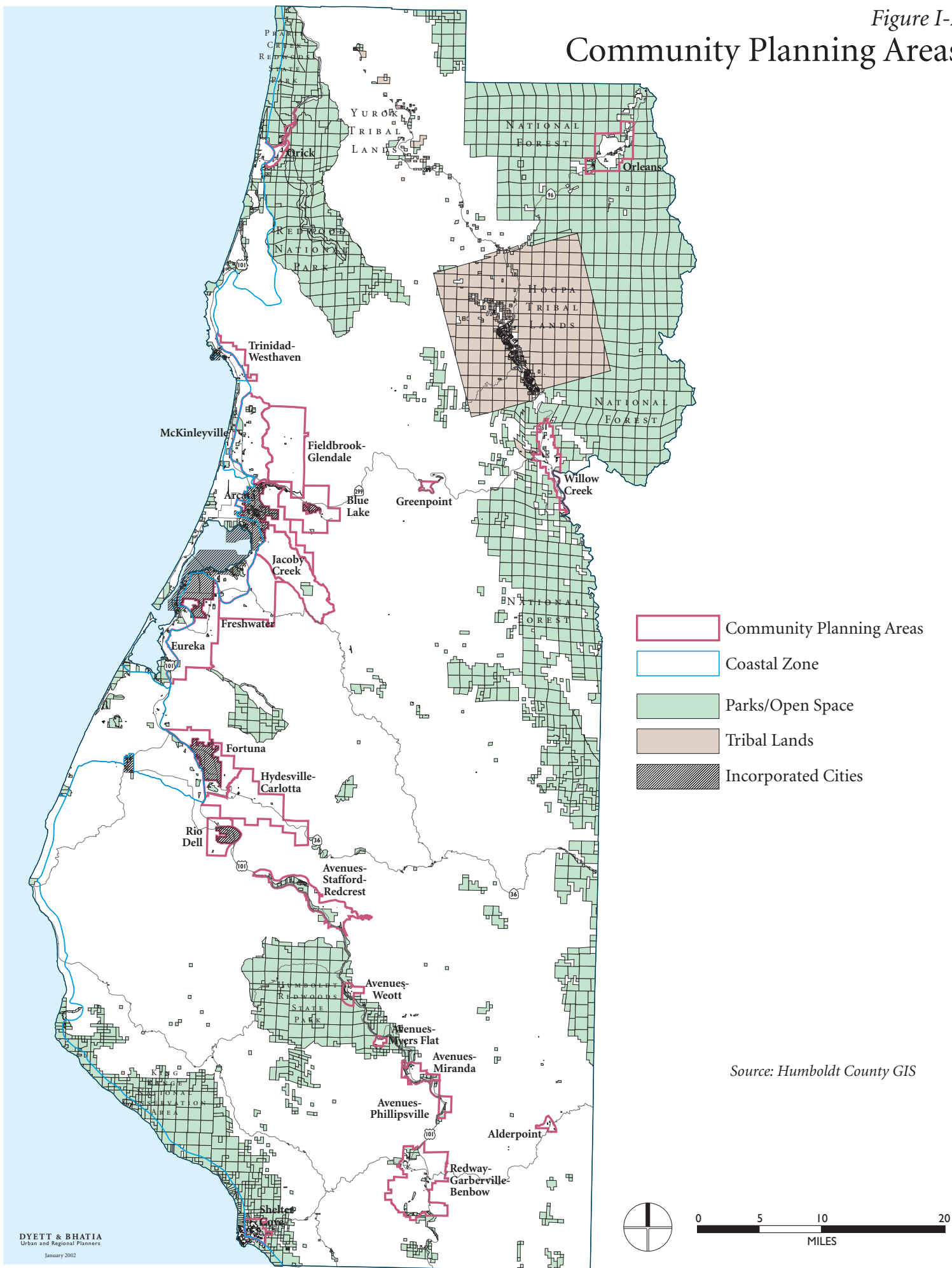


Figure I-2

Community Planning Areas



Source: Humboldt County GIS

1 Population

This chapter examines past and future changes in Humboldt County’s population and its composition, the geographic distribution of people with respect to cities and unincorporated areas, the County’s growth relative to the California average, the accuracy of past projections, and household arrangement trends. Special attention is given to population growth centers, growth trends, and future growth projections, as a basis for framing General Plan policy options. One of the questions identified in the Phase I Critical Choices Report is: What are desired and sustainable population levels in rural communities?

U.S. Census numbers are used as the standard wherever possible. Since the U.S. Census does not do population projections, the California Department of Finance (DOF) Demographic Research Unit is usually cited as the most authoritative source for projections. Humboldt County’s Planning and Economic Development Departments have also contributed supporting data. Projections for 2020 and 2025 are included for data covering the county as a whole. The cities’ population projections were produced independently of total County population projections and may not reflect their true proportion of County growth.

1.1 COUNTY POPULATION TRENDS

According to the 2000 Census, the total population in Humboldt County was 126,518. The distribution of people within the County is illustrated graphically in Figure 1-1. Humboldt County’s population growth rate increased in the late 1980s and early 1990s and has since returned to a level more consistent with historic growth rates over the past 20 years. Between 1985 and 1990, the County grew by about 8,000 people (7.3 percent), with an average annual increase of 1.4 percent (see Table 1-1). Figure 1-2 shows generally where population growth has occurred, using Census statistical boundaries to illustrate these trends. The current annual growth rate is about 0.6 percent. California DOF projections indicate an anticipated total compounded growth of 13.1 percent over the next 25 years (to 2025), which is lower than the growth experienced in the past 20 years (16.6 percent).

Table 1-1: Historic and Projected Population Growth in Humboldt County, 1980-2025

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Average Annual Increase</i>	<i>Percent Change</i>	<i>20-Year Change</i>
1980	108,500	-	-	
1985	111,050	0.47%	2.4%	1980 to 2000: 16.6%
1990	119,100	1.41%	7.2%	
1995	122,800	0.61%	3.1%	
2000	126,500	0.60%	3.0%	2000 to 2020: 11.5%
2010	135,600	0.70%	7.2%	
2020	141,100	0.40%	4.1%	
2025	143,100	0.28%	1.4%	

Sources: US Census 1980-2000, projections from California Department of Finance (1998)

Figure 1-1

Population Distribution - 2000

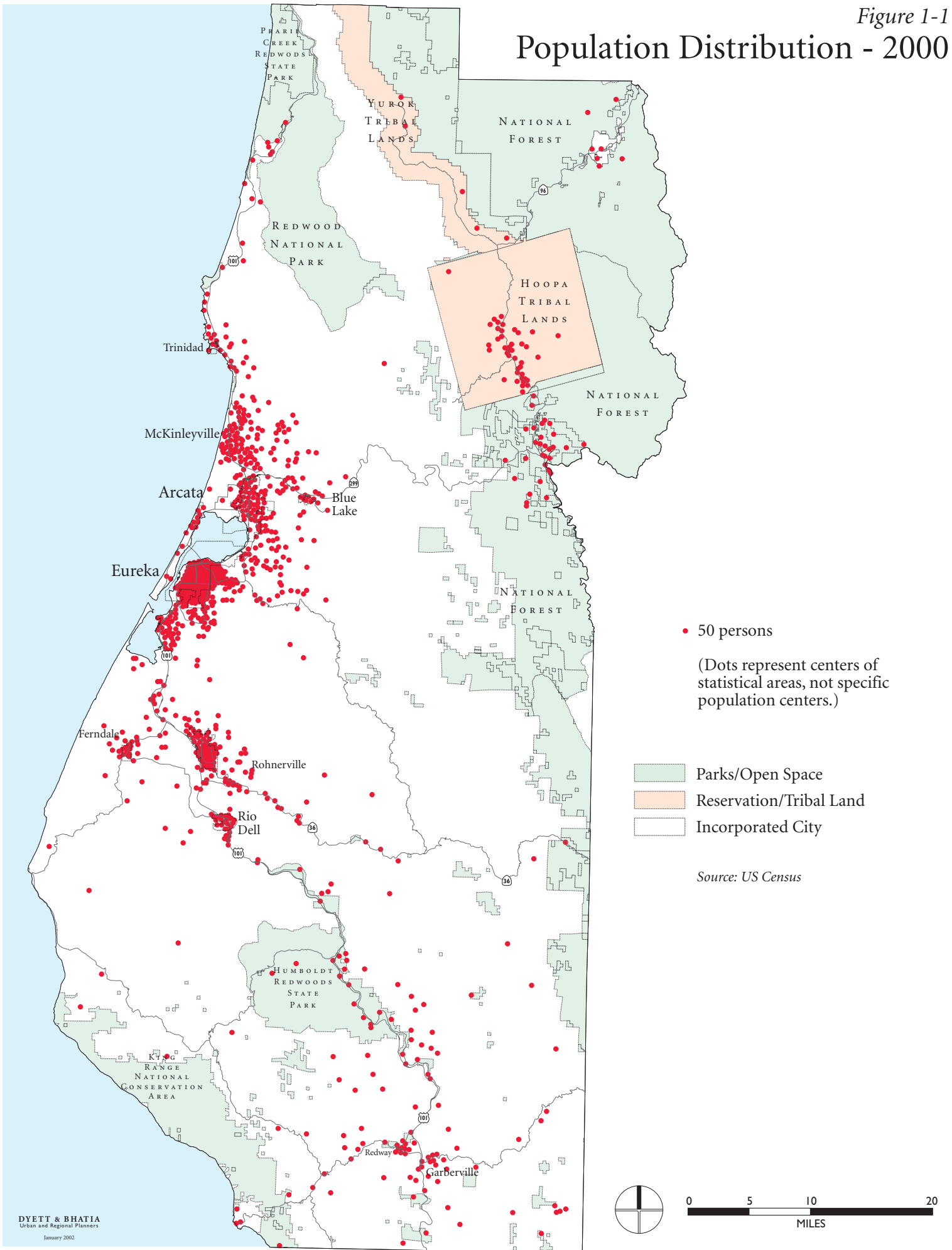
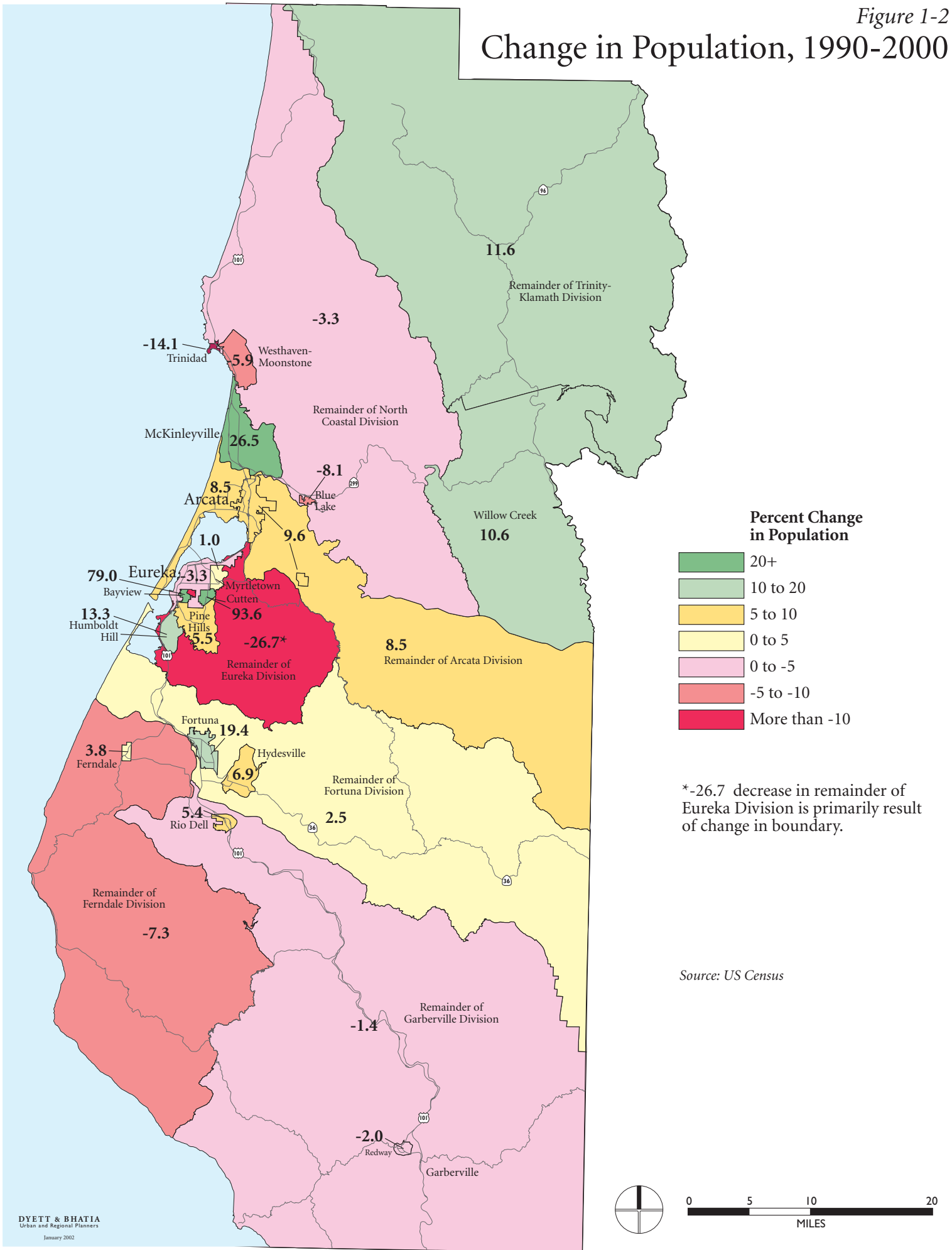


Figure 1-2

Change in Population, 1990-2000



-14.1
Trinidad

5.9
Westhaven-Moonstone

11.6

Remainder of Trinity-Klamath Division

-3.3

Remainder of North Coastal Division

McKinleyville

26.5

-8.1

Blue Lake

Arcata

8.5

9.6

Willow Creek

10.6

79.0
Eureka

3.3

Myrtlewood

Cutten

93.6

1.0

Pine Hills

5.5

-26.7*

Remainder of Eureka Division

8.5

Remainder of Arcata Division

13.3

Humboldt Hill

Bayview

3.8

Ferndale

19.4

Fortuna

6.9

Hydesville

2.5

Remainder of Fortuna Division

5.4

Rio Dell

-7.3

Remainder of Ferndale Division

-1.4

Remainder of Garberville Division

-2.0

Redway

Garberville

The primary growth areas of the county are the community of McKinleyville and the cities of Arcata and Fortuna, which accounted for 32.3 percent of the population in 2000, up from 29.3 percent in 1990 (see Table 1-2).¹ By comparison, according to the U.S. Census and DOF, Eureka’s population dropped slightly in the 1990s, with growth occurring in the surrounding communities of Cutten, Bayview, and Humboldt Hill.

Table 1-2: High- and Low-Growth Regions of Humboldt County, 1990-2000

	<i>McKinleyville</i>	<i>Arcata</i>	<i>Fortuna</i>	<i>Eureka</i>	<i>Garberville Area*</i>
2000 Population	13,599	16,651	10,497	26,128	4025
Percent Change 1990-2000	26.0%	9.6%	19.4%	3.4%	-4.5%
County Share 1990	9.1%	12.8%	7.4%	21.9%	3.5%
County Share 2000	10.8%	13.2%	8.3%	21.4%	3.2%
Change in County Share	1.7%	0.4%	0.9%	-0.5%	-0.3%

* Sum of Census block groups 060230113004, -005, -006, and -007.

Source: US Census 1990-2000

The total unincorporated population of the county grew 18.6 percent between 1980 and 2000, rising from 56,688 to 67,242 people (see Table 1-3). Census designated places are shown in Figure 1-2. Population growth was overall fastest in the years from 1980 to 1990, but growth patterns are not consistent from place to place. The Garberville Census County District, for example, grew by nearly half its 1980 population during the ensuing decade, then declined slightly from 1990 to 2000. Cutten, by contrast, nearly doubled in the 1990s; the change between 1980 and 1990 shown in Table 1-3 is not comparable due to a change in the statistical area. McKinleyville has been the most consistently high-growth unincorporated community in Humboldt County for the past 20 years, averaging nearly three percent growth per year.

¹ www.co.humboldt.ca.us/profile.htm. The Garberville area is also listed as a growth center, but according to the Census this area has declined in population since 1990.

Table 1-3: Humboldt County Unincorporated Community Populations, 1980-2000¹

<i>Division</i>	<i>1980</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>Percent Change, 1980 to 1990</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>Percent Change, 1990-2000</i>	<i>Average Annual Growth Rate, 1990-2000</i>	<i>Average Annual Growth Rate, 1980-2000</i>
Bayview CDP ²	-	1,318	-	2,359	79.0%	6.0%	-
Cutten CDP ²	-	1,516	-	2,935	93.6%	6.8%	-
Humboldt Hill CDP ²	-	2,865	-	3,246	13.3%	1.3%	-
Hydesville CDP	933	1,131	21.2%	1,209	6.9%	0.7%	1.3%
McKinleyville CDP	7,765	10,749	38.4%	13,599	26.5%	2.4%	2.8%
Myrtle town CDP	3,959	4,413	11.5%	4,459	1.0%	0.1%	0.6%
Pine Hills CDP	2,686	2,947	9.7%	3,108	5.5%	0.5%	0.7%
Redway CDP	1,094	1,212	10.8%	1,188	-2.0%	-0.2%	0.4%
Westhaven-Moonstone CDP	808	1,109	37.3%	1,044	-5.9%	-0.6%	1.3%
Willow Creek CDP	1,290	1,576	22.2%	1,743	10.6%	1.0%	1.5%
Remainder of Arcata CCD	6,550	5,490	-16.2%	5,954	8.5%	0.8%	-0.5%
Remainder of Eureka CCD ²	11,575	5,750	-50.3%	4,216	-26.7%	-3.1%	-4.9%
Remainder of Ferndale CCD	1,929	1,968	2.0%	1,824	-7.3%	-0.8%	-0.3%
Remainder of Fortuna CCD	4,285	4,397	2.6%	4,506	2.5%	0.2%	0.3%
Remainder of Garberville CCD	5,563	7,944	42.8%	7,832	-1.4%	-0.1%	1.7%
Remainder of North Coastal CCD	4,988	4,474	-10.3%	4,326	-3.3%	-0.3%	-0.7%
Remainder of Trinity-Klamath CCD	3,263	3,309	1.4%	3,694	11.6%	1.1%	0.6%
Total	56,688	62,168	9.7%	67,242	8.2%	0.8%	0.9%

¹ CDPs, or Census Designated Places, are communities specifically delineated for analysis in the Census. CCDs are Census County Districts, seven geographical divisions of the county's total area—the remainders are those regions not included in incorporated cities or CDP boundaries.

² The Bayview, Cutten, and Humboldt Hill CDPs were not designated until after the 1980 U.S. Census; they are included in the 1980 Eureka CCD total.

Source: Humboldt County Planning Department (2001)

The natural increase in population has slowed since 1990. This has occurred because the birth rate has decreased, while the death rate has stayed constant (births outnumbered deaths by 682 in 1990 and by 303 in 2000). Interestingly, California DOF projections indicate that Humboldt County is the only non-metropolitan county in the state likely to experience a further decrease in births from 2000 to 2010.² Net migration has been largely negative since 1994, meaning more people are leaving than moving to the County, but past migration has been highly variable and will therefore be difficult to project. In order to maintain the current population growth rate, migration must be positive to offset the continuing decline in births. This will occur if the County’s employment opportunities and quality of life continue to attract people.

Humboldt County’s projected growth in population is slower than the projected growth of the state as a whole. While the state is projected to grow by an average of 1.4 percent per year over the next 25 years, Humboldt is only projected to grow by 0.6 percent per year. Table 1-4 summarizes Humboldt County’s share of California’s projected population over the next 25 years.

Table 1-4: Humboldt County’s Share of California Population, 1985-2025

Year	California Population	Average Annual Increase	Humboldt County Share
1985	26,403,000	-	0.42%
1990	29,760,000	2.42%	0.40%
2000	33,871,650	1.30%	0.37%
2010	40,262,400	1.74%	0.33%
2020	45,821,900	1.30%	0.31%
2025	49,029,400	1.36%	0.29%

Source: US Census 1980-2000

1.2 GROWTH PATTERNS AND PROJECTIONS³

Today, as in 1980, the cities of Eureka and Arcata contain about a third (34 percent) of the County’s population. More than half the County’s residents live in unincorporated areas. McKinleyville, the County’s third-largest community, is unincorporated and accounts for 11 percent of the County population, while 13 percent of Humboldt County residents live in the other five incorporated communities and 42 percent live in the balance of the county.

The historic and projected population figures for Arcata, Eureka, and Fortuna are shown in Table 1-5. The balance of the county is projected to grow more slowly than the major cities (except

² Los Angeles County and the Bay Area Counties of San Francisco, San Mateo, and Marin also are projected to have fewer births in 2010 than in 2000. California Department of Finance, *Actual and Projected Births by County, 1970-2010* (August 2001).

³ This analysis of urban areas within Humboldt County focuses on its three largest incorporated communities, Arcata, Eureka, and Fortuna.

Eureka, which is near buildout) due to declining populations in rural communities, which will offset the gains in areas like McKinleyville and suburban Eureka. New employers and any resultant in-migration will likely be concentrated in the cities and the growth areas around Humboldt Bay, where public facilities and services are already available.

Table 1-5: Historic and Projected Population Change in Humboldt County’s Major Cities, 1980-2025

Year	Arcata		Eureka		Fortuna		Balance of County		Total
	Population	Annual Change	Population	Annual Change	Population	Annual Change	Population	Annual Change	
1980	12,388	-	24,153	-	7,591	-	64,382	-	108,514
1990	15,197	2.06%	27,025	1.13%	8,788	1.48%	68,108	0.56%	119,118
2000	16,651	0.92%	26,126	-0.34%	10,497	1.79%	73,244	0.73%	126,518
2025	19,500	0.63%	27,250	0.17%	13,000	0.86%	83,350	0.52%	143,100

Source: Humboldt County (2002)

In looking forward to the year 2025, City planning staff in Arcata do not profess concern about reaching full buildout in the foreseeable future; Eureka is already near full buildout and has seen new residential growth nearly halt; and Fortuna expects continued rapid growth and admits annexations in the interim may be necessary.

Arcata is projected to have a population of 19,500 for the year 2025, but has no estimate for full buildout. This projection assumes an average of 0.6 percent annual increase, a rate one-fifth faster than the county as a whole.

Eureka is at or near full buildout in nearly all accessible areas and population within the city limits has remained fairly constant for decades. The 1997 Background Report for the Eureka General Plan notes that the City’s most recent annexation, in 1988, added only 0.2 acres to the City and the Community Development Department has added that there are currently no development projects proposed in the city. The majority of development in the Eureka area has been outside the city limits, and the population of this area is nearly equal to that of the city proper. Further development is expected to occur in unincorporated neighborhoods.

Fortuna does not have projections for total buildout. The Fortuna General Plan (1993) states that “Since there is an adequate supply of land and public facilities for urban land use, the growth rate of the City should remain high compared to the rest of the county”; however, the Planning Department states that Fortuna will probably develop the remainder of its vacant residential land before 2025 and will need to annex more land in the interim. The projected population of 13,000 in 2025 assumes an average of 0.84 percent annual increase, 70 percent higher than the total county.

Table 1-6 provides population projections for unincorporated portions of the County.

Table 1-6: Projected 2025 Population in Humboldt County Unincorporated Areas

<i>Area</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2025</i>	<i>Percent change, 2000-2025</i>	<i>Average Annual Growth Rate</i>
Bayview CDP	2,359	3,000	27.17%	0.97%
Cutten CDP	2,935	3,425	16.70%	0.62%
Humboldt Hill CDP	3,246	3,700	13.99%	0.53%
Hydesville CDP	1,209	1,400	15.80%	0.59%
McKinleyville CDP	13,599	15,750	15.82%	0.59%
Myrtle town CDP	4,459	4,550	2.04%	0.08%
Pine Hills CDP	3,108	4,650	49.61%	1.62%
Redway CDP	1,188	1,350	13.64%	0.51%
Westhaven-Moonstone CDP	1,044	1,300	24.52%	0.88%
Willow Creek CDP	1,743	1,900	9.01%	0.35%
Arcata CCD Remainder	5,954	6,500	9.17%	0.35%
Eureka CCD Remainder	4,216	5,000	18.60%	0.68%
Ferndale CCD Remainder	1,824	1,850	1.43%	0.06%
Fortuna CCD Remainder	4,506	4,600	2.09%	0.08%
Garberville CCD Remainder	7,832	9,400	20.02%	0.73%
North Coastal CCD Remainder	4,326	4,775	10.38%	0.40%
Trinity-Klamath CCD Remainder	3,694	4,000	8.28%	0.32%
Total Unincorporated	67,242	77,150	14.73%	0.55%

Source: Humboldt County GIS

1.3 POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

AGE

While the birthrate continues to fall, DOF projections point toward a rapidly aging population in Humboldt County (see Table 1-7). Humboldt County’s median age is projected to rise from 36 to 41 over the next 25 years while California’s median age is expected to remain stable at 33-34, due to continued high birthrates.

In 1990, there were 2.4 times as many youths as elderly persons in Humboldt County, decreasing to 2.2 in 2000 and projected to drop to 1.2 in 2025. In California, there will be 2.1 youths per elderly person in 2025, down from 2.9 in 1990. From 1990 to 2020, the number of residents of retirement age in Humboldt County will nearly double.

Table 1-7: Humboldt County and California Population by Age, 1990-2025

Year	Humboldt County				California			
	0-19	20-64	65+	Median Age	0-19	20-64	65+	Median Age
1990	29%	59%	12%	33	29%	61%	10%	31
2000	27%	60%	13%	36	31%	58%	11%	33
2010	24%	63%	13%	39	31%	58%	11%	34
2020	23%	58%	19%	40	30%	56%	14%	33
2025	23%	56%	21%	41	31%	54%	15%	34

Source: California Department of Finance Population Projections 1990-2040 (1998)

ETHNIC BREAKDOWN

Humboldt County's population is largely white, though one with a notable Native American population on its three reservations (Table Bluff, Hoopa Valley, and Yurok), four Rancherias (Big Lagoon, Trinidad, Blue Lake, and Bear River Band of Rohnerville), and other scattered lands. According to County sources⁴, the Native American population may be acutely undercounted as well. All minority racial and ethnic groups have been growing consistently in population share, and none, apart from Native Americans, appears to be concentrated in one specific area (see Table 1-8).

Table 1-8: Humboldt County Population by Ethnicity, 1985-2025

Year	White	Black	Native American	Asian/Pacific Islander	Hispanic origin
1985	88.9%	0.7%	5.1%	1.5%	3.9%
1990	87.9%	0.8%	5.2%	1.9%	4.2%
2000	85.2%	0.9%	5.7%	2.8%	5.4%
2020	79.2%	1.0%	6.9%	4.4%	8.5%
2025	77.6%	1.1%	7.1%	4.8%	9.4%

Source: California Department of Finance (2001)

1.4 CURRENT AND PAST PROJECTIONS

ACCURACY OF PROJECTIONS

The current General Plan, adopted in 1984, projected the 2000 population of Humboldt County to be 125,635— not far from the 2000 Census figure of 126,518 (see Table 1-9). Humboldt County's population has grown 16.6 percent in the past 20 years, from the 1980 Census figure of 108,514, an average annual growth rate of 0.8 percent. The baseline projections used for this

⁴ Lois Card, "Native American Communities in Humboldt County" in *Regional Workforce Preparation Mapping and Survey Project*. Eureka, California, June 2000.

report, released by the California Department of Finance in 1998, project the Humboldt County population in 2020 to be 141,100, an 11.5 percent increase from 2000. This projection shows the average growth rate slowing to 0.5 percent per year.

The range of projections summarized in the table below suggests that, if the U.S. Census figures are assumed as a standard, the tendency for both the County and the DOF has been to overestimate population. The DOF adjusts its estimates upward based on perceived Census undercount. The complete range of estimates for 2020 is only about 2100, a conservative spread on the order of 1.5 percent over the lowest projection.

ASSUMPTIONS AND METHODOLOGIES

The following paragraphs describe the assumptions and methodologies used for DOF projections listed in Table 1-9, to the extent that information is available for these past projections. Differences among projections are largely accountable to the origins of methodologies, which range from birthrates and migrations to number of households to employment figures.

DOF E-2: County populations were estimated independently of the entire state, using population change models benchmarked to 1990 and 2000 Census counts with added estimates of undercounts based on ethnic group distribution. Counties are estimated by relative proportions based on driver licenses, enrollments, and labor force numbers.

DOF E-4: County estimates are controlled to state estimate and benchmarked to the 2000 Census. The Housing Unit method was used to estimate county populations: number of occupied housing units was multiplied by household size averages and added to independently gathered non-household population numbers.

DOF E-5: County estimates are controlled to state estimate and benchmarked to the 1990 Census. The Housing Unit method was used to estimate county populations: number of occupied housing units was multiplied by household size averages and added to independently gathered non-household population numbers.

DOF Detail 2040: Based on 1990 Census. Fertility trends are applied by ethnicity, statewide survival rates are applied to each county, migrations assumed to be like historical data with recent years being anomalous, special populations (e.g., university or incarcerated) are projected separately and added last. Depicts recent trends, with state merging toward national trends.

DOF Interim 2020: A modification of the Detail 2040 projections, with state population projected based on births, deaths, net migration starting from 2000 Census; county estimates as proportions of State population.

CSU Chico: Population for counties is based on employment projections by Woods and Poole Economics; previous trends in population per job are tracked and assumed to level out over time. The Center for Economic Development (CED) states that projections tend to lose accuracy beyond 10 years in the future.

Table 1-9: Estimates and Projections for Humboldt County's Population, 1980-2025

Source Data	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2025
DOF Intercensals 80-90 (no date)	108,900	119,600				
Humboldt General Plan Projection (1984)	108,024	118,600	125,635			
CSU Chico Center for Economic Development, Humboldt County 2001 Economic and Demographic Profile Jan 1980-2010 (2001)	108,400	118,400	127,600	140,400		
Humboldt County Office of Economic Development. Prosperity: The North Coast Strategy ¹ (1999/2000)	108,400	118,400	128,100 ²	131,600	140,000	
DOF 2040 Detail Projections July 1990-2040 (Dec 1998)		119,500	128,400	135,600	141,100	143,400
DOF E-5 County/State Estimates Jan 1990-2000 (May 2000)		119,100	127,600			
DOF E-2 County Estimates/ Intercensals July 1990-2000 (May 2001)		122,600	127,700			
DOF E-4 Historical Adjusted County/State Apr 1990-Jan 2000 (Sept 2001)		122,400	127,400			
DOF Interim Projections July 2000-2020 (June 2001)			127,700	136,500	142,100	
U.S. Census (1980-2000)	108,514	119,118	126,518			

¹Prosperity cites the DOF 2040 projections as source.

²1999 datum.

Humboldt 1984 GP: Projections for 2000 were based on DOF projections through 1990. Current (2000) trends in demographic composition, such as the aging population and declining birthrate, had begun before 1980 and may have been factored into earlier estimates.

1.5 HOUSEHOLDS

A total of 51,238 households existed countywide in 2000, with an average of 2.39 persons per household (see Table 1-10). The number of households in the county has grown 10.4 percent since 1990, compared to the population increase of 6.2 percent. Accordingly, the average number of persons per household has declined 4.0 percent (from 2.49) since 1990 and 6.3 percent (from 2.55) in 1980.

Household size is expected to continue to decline over the next 25 years but at a slightly slower rate. Using a projected household size of 2.4 persons per unit, there would be 57,542 households in the County in 2025. This projection also assumes that the non-household population will

remain at 5000. The non-household population refers to those residents who live in housing operated by a supervisory institution, e.g., a university, prison, or nursing home.⁵

Table 1-10: Humboldt County Household Composition, 1990 and 2000

	1990		2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total households	46,420	100%	51,238	100%
Family households	30,086	64.8%	30,645	59.8%
Married couple	23,472	50.6%	22,074	43.1%
Female alone	4914	10.6%	6022	11.8%
Householder alone	12,156	26.2%	14,826	28.9%
Householder over 65	4166	9.0%	4689	9.2%
Persons per household		2.49		2.39

Source: U.S. Census 1990, 2000

Family households dropped 4.5 percent as a share of overall households, with married couples declining by 7 percent of total households over that period, correlating with the slight fall in persons per household overall. Households with children accounted for 39.7 percent of households in California overall in 2000, but only 31.4 percent in Humboldt County, and is likely to decline further in the county.

OCCUPANCY AND TENURE

Related to the continued numerical majority of County residents living in unincorporated areas, vacancy rates have risen an average of 0.6 percent in incorporated areas since 1990 while in unincorporated areas over the same time span, vacancy has declined in both unincorporated areas (2.3 percent) and the County overall (0.8 percent). Housing tenure, or home ownership, has dropped slightly (see Table 1-11).

⁵ While the population in nursing homes can be expected to rise with the total retirement-age population, the population in dormitories and correctional facilities in the County is not expected to increase so greatly.

Table 1-11: Housing Occupancy and Tenure in Humboldt County Divisions, 1990 and 2000

Area	Households		Housing Unit Vacancy Rate		Percent Owner-Occupied	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Humboldt County	46,420	51,238	9.2%	8.4%	58.8%	57.6%
Arcata	6,073	7,051	3.6%	3.0%	43.2%	37.5%
Eureka	11,137	10,957	5.5%	5.8%	50.7%	46.5%
Fortuna	3,531	4,185	4.9%	5.2%	62.2%	62.3%
Incorporated	23,132	24,670	5.1%	5.7%	51.4%	48.1%
McKinleyville	4,010	5,277	4.9%	3.9%	65.5%	65.3%
Unincorporated	23,288	26,449	13.0%	10.7%	65.7%	66.7%

Source: US Census 1990, 2000