

# Prosperity! 2018

## Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

2018-2023

Humboldt County  
California





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## A Summary of Humboldt County’s 2018 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, or CEDS, is a plan that helps guide local economic development efforts. It is also required for a region to be eligible for certain federal grants. Goals in writing a CEDS include deciding on and prioritizing economic development initiatives and helping to plan for a vibrant and resilient economy. Humboldt County produces a new CEDS every five years.

In the past, this document has focused on several “industry clusters.” Industry clusters are related by industry, geography, shared workforce needs, transportation issues, or other factors. Certain clusters, named the “Targets of Opportunity” gained attention because they each fit a number of criteria including providing good jobs, sending exports outside the region, and producing growth over time. The Targets of Opportunity were:

- Diversified Health Care
- Specialty Food, Flowers & Beverages
- Building & Systems Construction
- Investment Support Services
- Management & Innovation Services
- Niche Manufacturing

In addition to the six industries above, two additional industries that did not fit all of the criteria were selected for additional focus: **Tourism** and **Forest Products**.

Previously the CEDS focused on identifying and taking advantage of strengths and opportunities related to the clusters, while addressing, as much as possible, weaknesses and threats. The 2018 CEDS process was initiated with a focus on these still-promising industry clusters. However, stakeholder and community input consistently revealed that the region’s most pressing economic issues and promising opportunities cut across industry clusters. These include enhancing our workforce, addressing transportation and infrastructure limitations and more. As a result of these findings, 2018 CEDS is organized around cross-industry themes and strategies.

### 2018 CEDS

Organizers conducted over 70 stakeholder interviews, several strategy sessions and distributed 18,000 surveys to Humboldt County citizens seeking their input on the local economy.

Consultants and staff working for the County of Humboldt and the California Center for Rural Policy then analyzed the input and distilled an analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT).

This analysis revealed the need for two overarching strategies:

- Strategy 1: Support Efforts to Address Infrastructure Needs, especially for Transportation and Broadband
- Strategy 2: Support Efforts to Improve Workforce Development Programs for all Industries

More detailed strategies are presented in Parts I and II of Prosperity! 2018.

The 2018 CEDS also addresses two other areas: Alternative Agriculture and Tourism, Arts and Culture. Alternative Agriculture was consistently noted as a significant economic driver and cultivation, changes in the state regulatory

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framework and anticipated changes to the local economy received a lot of attention. This industry is referred to in the CEDS as “Alternative Agriculture” because it remains illegal at the federal level and the CEDS is submitted to a federal agency. The intersection of arts/culture and tourism were also noted as important in the local economy. While the previous CEDS document addressed tourism, it did not significantly address the value of arts and culture and the opportunities offered by this industry cluster.

The CEDS is a shared plan. All Humboldt County residents have a stake in our economy and where it, and we, are going. This plan will guide our actions in economic development for the next five years. Therefore, all are welcome to participate and be heard.

To read the full document, visit this link: <https://humboldt.gov/154/Economic-Development>

To provide public comment, you may give input online or attend a public meeting on September 13, 2018 from 6pm-8pm at the Sequoia Conference Center.

Humboldt County Economic Development Specialist Kenneth Spain can be reached at (707) 445-7745.

To reach your County Supervisor, visit this link: <https://humboldt.gov/167/Board-of-Supervisors>



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## PART I: INTRODUCTION

### **CEDS PURPOSE**

This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs) serves as a guide for economic prosperity and resiliency and outlines the policies, programs, and investments that we believe will strengthen the economy of Humboldt County. It builds upon the original CEDs, adopted in 1999, and the updated version, Prosperity! 2012. Prosperity! 2018, is the culmination of a year-long regional planning process designed to bring the public and private sectors together to create an economic road map, or plan, to diversify and strengthen regional economies in a concerted and collaborative effort for the benefit of all. Humboldt County updates the CEDs every five years.

### ***Findings***

In order to build a strong and resilient economy, economic development efforts need to:

- Build on regional strengths
- Address cross-industry and industry-specific barriers to growth and prosperity
- Anticipate and address evolution in industry needs, technology, workforce demands and changes in the economy

This requires a coordinated, regional effort that:

- Addresses infrastructure gaps and deficiencies
- More effectively builds and retains workforce that responds timely to industry needs
- Strengthens and supports promising emerging industries
- Highlights and promotes the region's strengths and opportunities

Two new areas of interest were identified by stakeholders, Alternative Agriculture and Tourism/Arts and Culture, as strong economic drivers and priority areas of interests. Both are examined in detail in this report.

### ***Summary of Implementation Plan***

The CEDs Strategy Committee, comprised of representatives from private industry, economic development elements of local governments, non-profits and the public, guided the CEDs process from launch to completion. Moving forward, it is recommended that this Committee be expanded and strengthened to ensure:

- More comprehensive Tribal, industry and regional representation
- Mechanisms are in place to prioritize and implement recommended strategies

The CEDs Strategy Committee will also evaluate progress, collect and analyze relevant data and submit annual reports to the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). These reports will help guide policy making, investment decisions in infrastructure, and the pursuit of grants and loans to support desired outcomes.

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## **Summary of the CEDS Development Process**

### **Approach**

Previously, the CEDS development process and reports focused on several promising “industry clusters” that were related by industry, geography, shared workforce needs, transportation issues, or other factors. These “Targets of Opportunity” met certain criteria that included providing good jobs, sending exports outside the region, and producing growth over time. They were:

- Diversified Health Care
- Specialty Food, Flowers & Beverages
- Building & Systems Construction
- Investment Support Services
- Management & Innovation Services
- Niche Manufacturing

In addition, **Tourism** and **Forest Products** were also highlighted as significant economic contributors to the region.

The 2012 CEDS update focused on identifying and taking advantage of strengths and opportunities related to the clusters, while addressing, as much as possible, weaknesses and threats. The 2018 CEDS process was initiated with a focus on these still-promising industry clusters. However, stakeholder and community input consistently revealed that the region’s most pressing economic issues and promising opportunities cut across industry clusters, so the 2018 report reflects these findings.

### **Information and Input Gathered**

The CEDS Strategy Committee, comprised of county, state and non-profit organizations lead by an ad-hoc committee of the Workforce Development Board, utilized over 70 one-on-one interviews, several focus groups, surveys and more to reach out to more than 18,000 households, businesses, local governments, Tribes and non-profit organizations to gather information for a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis. That input and analysis formed the basis for the strategies outlined in this report.

### **Introduction to the Full 2018 CEDS**

The CEDS planning process is designed to promote inclusiveness, guide investments that will support the region’s economy and provide resilience to economic shocks originating within and outside the region, including natural disasters and state, national and even global changes in the economy. The CEDS provides a vehicle for individuals, organizations, local and Tribal governments, education, and private industry to engage in meaningful conversation about what capacity building efforts would best serve economic development in the region.

Ultimately, the CEDS analyzes the local economy and serves as a guide for establishing regional goals and objectives, developing and implementing a regional plan of action, and identifying investment priorities and funding sources.

The CEDS will be monitored and reported on annually to ensure regular engagement of partners and stakeholders and progress toward relevant and critical strategies for achieving and maintaining regional economic prosperity.



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## TARGETED STRATEGIES

Specific focus areas and targeted strategies were identified that will strengthen the local economy, allow the region to mitigate weaknesses and threats and capitalize on strengths and opportunities. To provide public comment, you may give input online or attend a public meeting on September 13, 2018 from 6pm-8pm at the Sequoia Conference Center.

### ➤ **Focus Area: Build, Attract, Retain and Grow Industry**

To foster economic growth and prosperity, the region needs to successfully build, attract, retain and grow industry. In the current market, decisions regarding where to establish, locate or relocate a business are driven by access to talent, customers, industry networks, quality of life for the principal owner and key company talent as well as other factors. The following strategies seek to support an economic environment that draws and retains business in the region.

#### **Strategies**

1. Build a business support and response system
2. Market area assets and opportunities to businesses.
3. Provide business support, collaboration and education
4. Support efforts to address Infrastructure needs, especially focused on investments and other efforts designed to eliminate barriers and increase the resources needed for businesses to grow and prosper in the region.
5. Support efforts to address social barriers to industry attraction and workforce development, access to affordable housing and healthcare, crime rates, and blight.



### ➤ **Focus Area: Workforce**

To foster business success and overall prosperity, the region needs to develop and support skilled workforce. The following strategies were identified to build, develop, attract and retain workforce that is responsive to employer needs.

#### **Strategies - Build Workforce**

1. Develop a more integrated workforce development system that includes employers, economic development and workforce development professionals, educators/trainers and other relevant stakeholders to ensure efforts address local employer needs with a special focus on target occupations and industries.
2. Change messaging and better highlight local employment opportunities, including those that emphasize specialized skills and trades.

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## Strategies - Attract and Retain Workforce

1. Reframe community narrative to refocus attention on community strengths and decrease the prevalence of negative messaging on social media and in the community—to inspire pride and investment and make the area more inviting to incoming workforce.
2. Support efforts to address infrastructure needs, including related to housing (quantity and quality), access to healthcare, reliable transportation, upgraded and accessible technology/broadband and more.
3. Support and promote assets that support community health and wellness, enrichment and culture (arts, entertainment, education, recreation).

### ➤ **Focus Area: Alternative Agriculture**

Alternative Agriculture has been recognized as a significant economic driver in the region for decades. The industry is going through a transition from an underground economy to a legal economy at the state and local levels. Federal laws remain an obstacle to complete transition. State legislative and local changes can have a measurable impact on this transition, and related industry sectors, prompting an interest in supporting related businesses.

## Strategies

1. Identify, fund and empower an industrywide organization to represent the Alternative Agriculture cluster charged with creating a vision and strategic plan to navigate through the ever-changing transition in the industry.
2. Support industry (both business and workforce) education.
3. Support integration with mainstream business community.

### ➤ **Focus Area: Tourism / Arts & Culture**

Tourism does not meet the Targets of Opportunity cluster criteria but has been identified as a significant economic driver and was examined extensively in the 2014 Redwood Coast-Targets of Opportunity Report prepared by the California Employment Development Department. Like Tourism, the Arts and Culture cluster does not meet the Targets of Opportunity criteria, but related businesses and professionals contribute significantly to the local economy, helping to attract and retain workforce and foster a higher quality of life for residents. In addition, community Arts and Cultural assets and projects catalyze community revitalization and increase the competitiveness of emerging and mature industries. This contribution to the economic vibrancy warrants its inclusion and detailed examination in the 2018 CEDS.





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## Strategies

1. Develop a plan for long-term viability of Arts and Culture.
2. Create a cohesive regional brand & plan to promote Tourism & the Arts.
3. Develop centralized, common tools for sharing arts and culture information.



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## REGIONAL/COUNTY OVERVIEW

### Economic Conditions

The US economy has grown over 4 percent in 2018 and is expected to continue to grow, though at a slower pace, for the next several years. According to the Humboldt Economic Index produced by Humboldt State University (HSU), the future of Humboldt County is not as clear. In May 2018, the Composite Index, which tracks four leading indicators, including unfilled orders for manufactured goods, number of initial unemployment insurance claims, building permits and help wanted advertising was up .02 points over the prior month and down .01 percent over the same period last year. While the index drop is not significant, it does highlight the need for continued efforts to strengthen the economy in the coming years.

### Key Elements of the Regional Economy

#### Targets of Opportunity

A Targets of Opportunity 2004-2014 update prepared by the Labor Market Information Division (LMID) of the California Employment Development Department provides the five-county region, consisting of Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, Siskiyou, and Trinity, with a resource for workforce development and strategic planning. This report studied previously identified Target of Industry Clusters, which are economically interdependent groupings of companies with related business activities.



In the five-county regional economy, the Targets of Opportunity industry clusters demonstrate the greatest opportunity for the region's residents and together exhibit a combination of:

- Expanding opportunity (job and/or firm growth)
- Job quality (wage growth)
- Improving competitiveness (strong or growing specialization, concentrated employment)
- Career potential (job opportunities at entry, mid, and high wage levels)

Using the above criteria, in 1999 the Humboldt County Workforce Development Board identified the following Target Industry clusters:

- Diversified Health Care
- Specialty Food, Flowers & Beverages
- Building & Systems Construction
- Management & Innovation Services
- Niche Manufacturing
- Investment Support Services

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In 2014, the Targets of Opportunity industry clusters accounted for 66.9 percent of the region’s total private sector employment and 72.3 percent of the region’s total private sector wages. Altogether, the Targets of Opportunity outperformed the regional economy in most respects, adding employment, wages, and employment concentration.

In addition to these six emerging industries, Forest Products and Tourism were also identified in previous work as industry clusters of interest. Though they do not meet all of the criteria of the Targets of Opportunity, they are significant contributors to the local economy.

Arts and Culture

Although not identified as a Target Industry Cluster, the local Arts community contributes significantly to the local economy while providing enrichment for residents, career opportunities for practitioners and a draw for tourists and visitors.

Previously, Arts was grouped as an industry under Tourism but multiple stakeholders requested that this report examine this industry more closely.

Emerging Industries

There are a number of Emerging Industries, such as alternative energy generation, that present opportunity for the region, though at this time they do not meet the Targets of Opportunity criteria.

Alternative Agriculture has been a major aspect of the Humboldt County economy for more than 50 years and estimates put the economic contribution of this industry in the hundreds of millions of dollars. Recent legislative changes are altering the economic landscape though this industry continues to demonstrate great promise. Emerging Industries, including Alternative Agriculture, will be discussed more extensively later in this report.

Entrepreneurship Capacity

New firm creation is another key element of the regional economy. Data indicates strong entrepreneurship capacity and this asset was often noted in interviews and strategy sessions. In fact, many of the region’s largest private sector employers began as nonemployer firms (self-employed firms with no employees). The county continued to experience substantial and continued growth of nonemployer firms despite the impacts of the recession, with a net increase of 1,884 new nonemployer firms from 2004-2014, representing a growth rate of 20 percent. Entrepreneurship capacity was examined more extensively in the Targets of Opportunity 2004-2014 report.





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## Population, Labor Force, Unemployment

The US Census listed Humboldt County's total 2017 population as 136,754, a 1.6 percent increase over 2010. This relatively low population density, low traffic congestion and quick commute times contribute to a high-quality rural lifestyle. Eureka, the county seat and population hub, houses approximately 28,000 residents. Arcata, the second most populated city in the county is home to more than 17,000 residents and Humboldt State University, one of the largest employers in the county. It is followed by Fortuna, the third largest incorporated city with nearly 12,000 residents. Rio Dell is home to approximately 3,400, and Ferndale has nearly 1,400. Trinidad, the smallest incorporated city, has about 300 permanent residents and Blue Lake has 1,265. The population of unincorporated Humboldt County is 70,063. McKinleyville is the largest unincorporated community with just over 15,000 residents; and, Garberville (the hub of Southern Humboldt County) has a population of 900. Willow Creek, in eastern Humboldt County, has about 1,700 residents and Scotia, at the southern end of the Eel River Valley, has a little less than 1,000 inhabitants.



## Education

Humboldt County residents have reached higher levels of educational attainment than surrounding counties. About 90 percent of the county's age 25 and older population have high school diplomas or GEDs (compared to about 82 percent for the state) and 28 percent have Bachelor's Degrees or higher.

## Labor Force Participation

Slow population growth and an older than average population (close to 17 percent of the population is over age 65 compared to less than 14 percent for state of California) are thought to be contributing factors to the region's historically low unemployment rate of under 3.2 percent (May 2018). This is a full point lower than California's unemployment rate of the same period. These factors may also help to explain the current workforce shortages discussed later in this report.

## Housing

Quality affordable rental housing and opportunities for homeownership offer long-term social and financial benefits, making housing an important economic influencer. The county's median home price of \$308,000 is rising but is still significantly less than the statewide median price of \$564,830. Rental costs in the region are also rising but remain much lower than in more urban areas of California, especially along coastal communities near the major cities.

Home construction remains sluggish compared to pre-recession levels. Municipalities and organizations continue to identify and address barriers to construction, incentivizing the building of new market rate, low cost and HUD supported affordable housing.

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## Challenges and Opportunity

While the Targets of Industry Clusters and many emerging industries offer significant opportunity for the region, feedback gathered from industry leaders, subject matter experts and other stakeholders revealed that Humboldt County faces significant challenges such as:

- Difficulty in attracting and retaining qualified workforce
- Limited, unreliable, and/or compromised infrastructure
- Geographic isolation and resulting conditions, including transportation challenges

Fortunately, Humboldt County also contains several assets that bolster the region's economic strength and resilience and offset many of these challenges. Among these are:



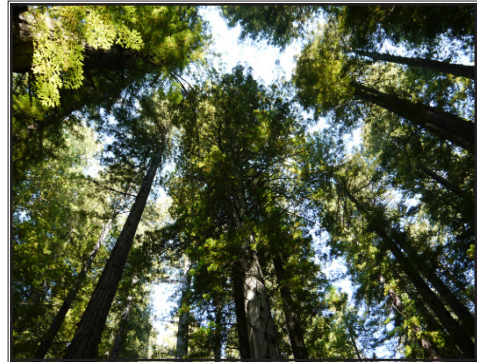
- A culture of entrepreneurship where people start businesses to live here and proactively address challenges to ensure long term growth and prosperity
- Small town, rural quality of life with many outdoor recreational opportunities that attract educated, talented and creative individuals who want to live, work and play in a healthy, vibrant community
- Humboldt Bay, with the harbor, a deep-water port and essential facilities, provides a productive environment for aquaculture and other industries with expansion potential. The Port of Humboldt Bay is California's northernmost deep-water shipping port and the only port between San Francisco (258 miles south) and Coos Bay, Oregon (180 miles north)
- The Redwoods as an international icon drawing locals and visitors alike
- Visual and performing arts, and cultural assets that are integral to Humboldt County's identity, enhance the quality of life for residents, and contribute to innovative businesses and vibrant communities. Many of the region's successful international companies have merged arts with industry, including jewelry maker Holly Yashi, Marimba One and more

Additional assets that contribute to the strength and resilience of the region include:

- Highly productive agricultural land with a long growing season and many micro-climates. Humboldt County produces grass-fed beef, excellent quality wine grapes, flowers and many other products
- Abundant water and delivery infrastructure for industrial use that offer a unique and valuable asset
- Humboldt State University (HSU) and College of the Redwoods (CR) that are large employers and draw individuals into the area, infusing the county with over \$300 million annually. Additionally, HSU and CR train talented people, many of whom become valued area employees or entrepreneurs
- Highly productive forests for harvest and renewal. Humboldt County is one of the few places in the world where redwood, a premiere, niche wood product, grows well

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- Regional airport with recently expanded service to Los Angeles
- Two Highways--HWY 101 travels north to south and Hwy 299 travels east to west, linking to Interstate 5 at Redding, approximately 145 miles from the Coast of Humboldt County. HWY 299 was recently upgraded to accommodate STAA (Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982) trucks, increasing the opportunity to transport goods and services in and out of the county at a lower cost. Caltrans has a pending realignment project (Richardson Grove Project on US 101) that would allow HWY 101 to accommodate STAA trucks as well.



## VISION

Throughout the CEDS process, stakeholders envisioned a region that capitalizes on the county's strengths and opportunities while mitigating, as much as possible, identified weaknesses and threats; a region where mutual support and collaboration between individuals, businesses, agencies and communities is fostered to create economic prosperity for all.

## Goals

To achieve this vision, the goals identified in the previous CEDS update, Prosperity! 2012, were reaffirmed and included:

- Diversified, growing industries that export goods and services
- A strong local economy that maximizes use of locally produced goods and services
- Constant creation of new firms and jobs with wages that support a family
- A business climate that welcomes and nurtures entrepreneurship, business expansion and strategic community-based problem-solving
- Quality of life that supports enjoyment of nature, small town rural life and connection to community

## Strategies to accomplish the Vision and Goals

The 2018 CEDS process identified a need to support a coordinated, regional effort to achieve identified goals with a focus on:

- Addressing infrastructure gaps and deficiencies
- More effectively building and retaining workforce that responds to industry needs
- Strengthening and supporting promising emerging industries
- Highlighting and promoting the region's strengths and opportunities



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To further these efforts and build resilience in the regional economy, the County Board of Supervisors has restructured the Economic Development Division of County Government to include a newly added Director of Economic Development. The person in this position will play a collaborative role in a coordinated regional economic effort that supports the implementation of identified strategies.

A primary goal of EDA in funding the development and ongoing updates to the CEDS is to generate dialogue between the public and private sectors. As a result of this process, greater communication and the desire for greater cooperation between business and government is anticipated to result in a more coordinated regional approach and greater economic success.



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## PART II: FOCUS AREAS AND STRATEGIES

### OVERVIEW

During the last 40 years, Humboldt County has experienced a dramatic restructuring of its economy. Historically, the local economy was built primarily on natural resource extraction, such as timber and fishing. These served as the county's export base, bringing in dollars that helped grow the rest of the economy. Environmental regulations, resource depletion and market changes, however, have prompted dramatic diversification. As previously noted, the original CEDs, conducted in 1999, analyzed the economy and identified Target industry clusters that have evolved to offer the greatest opportunity for the region's residents and together exhibit a combination of:

- Expanding opportunity (job and/or firm growth)
- Job quality (wage growth)
- Improving competitiveness (strong or growing specialization, concentrated employment)
- Career potential (job opportunities at entry, mid, and high wage levels)

These "Targets of Opportunity" include:

- Diversified Health Care
- Specialty Food, Flowers & Beverages
- Building & Systems Construction
- Investment Support Services
- Management & Innovation Services
- Niche Manufacturing

In addition, Forest Products and Tourism were also recognized as significant economic drivers in the region.

The 2018 CEDS process initially focused on identifying opportunities and barriers to growth in the Target Industries. However, consistent feedback from industry experts and other stakeholders indicate that most barriers and opportunities cross industry lines. By addressing common challenges across industries, such as transportation bottlenecks and workforce shortages, efforts will benefit multiple industries across the region.

### The difference between industry and clusters:

*Industries* are known by their main products or services.

*Industry clusters* are groups of similar and related firms in a defined geographic area that share common markets, technologies, worker skill needs, and are often linked by buyer-seller relationships.

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## INDUSTRY - BUILD, ATTRACT, RETAIN AND GROW

### Entrepreneurship Capacity

Humboldt County has long been recognized for its strong entrepreneurship capacity. In fact, many of the region's largest private sector employers began as nonemployer firms (self-employed firms with no employees). A regional culture with a proclivity for innovation makes local businesses more resilient and able to respond to economic threats. Many continue to survive and thrive, developing new products and services, even in challenging economic times.

### Assets

Humboldt County offers a number of assets to develop, attract and retain industry in Humboldt County. In addition to the assets identified in Prosperity! 2012, efforts are underway to develop the new transpacific fiber optic cable and build out broadband access along Highway 299 (the Digital 299 project). The following is a brief discussion of existing and new assets identified by respondents during the CEDS process.

#### Creative Culture

The region's creative culture and rich, rural quality of life draws entrepreneurs to the region and inspires them to develop new businesses in order to stay. Innovation has led to the creation of many successful niche manufacturers, specialty food and beverage producers, resource and conservation consultancies and arts/culture-based businesses and more.

#### Business Support/Education Infrastructure

Organizations like the Small Business Development Center, Humboldt Made and College of the Redwoods offer educational and business training to entrepreneurs focused on helping them establish and grow businesses in the region. The Workforce Development Board guides the use of State and Federal funds, supporting organizations and institutions that train workers in various trades and other occupations. K – 12 schools partner actively with employers in areas such as career technical education and with programs such as the Education at Work initiative.

#### Natural Resources

Many traditional industries, such as fishing and forest products, have had to adjust to changes in regulations and raw material availability, in order to survive. Industries like agriculture and aquaculture, which capitalize on the region's rich natural resources, continue to grow.

#### Timber

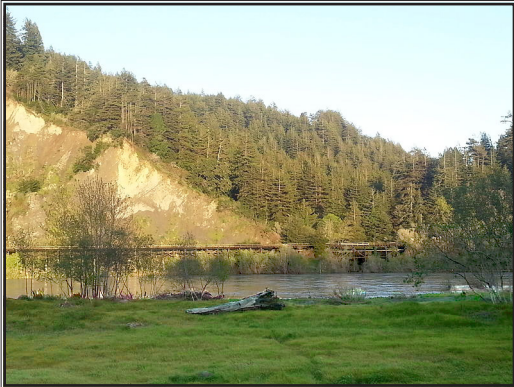
The timber industry supplies raw logs for export and produces lumber and byproducts such as wood chips in the milling process. There is also a significant fiber basket, or inventory of availability of timber, in the region. The Redwoods are an invaluable asset offering opportunities for timber production, tourism, outdoor recreation and more. In 2018, demand for local forest products hit a 10-year high. Longer term, more sustainable logging practices and advances in technology have reduced the industry's size and employment but have brought stability and resiliency to the industry.



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## Water

The community has an abundance of available, high-quality fresh water, approximately 35 million gallons per day. Finding users for the water, especially those that would ship out of the port, is a potential opportunity. Other options such as selling water via a pipeline to areas outside the Region and dedicating some portion to enhance in-stream flows are also being considered.



## Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation, and Conservation District (Harbor District)

One of Humboldt County's greatest assets is Humboldt Bay. The Harbor District and various agencies and jurisdictions are working collectively to determine how best to take advantage of the opportunities that exist, while maintaining and enhancing environmental stewardship and fostering economic prosperity for the region.

The Samoa Peninsula historically housed some of the largest industrial facilities in the County. There are still many usable buildings left after closing the former pulp mills. Some of the buildings have been renovated and others are in need of repair and upgrades. Now-vacant land, previously used for heavy industry, also provides an additional opportunity for economic development.

Many industrial and commercial businesses are currently in transition on those former mill sites. Most of the environmental contamination has been addressed and some of the property is now utilized for aquaculture/mariculture (the cultivation of shellfish, finfish, aquatic plants or other marine life for food).

The property, surviving buildings, roads and a City of Eureka owned airport also form an asset base with the ability to support expansion in the Timber industry, Tourism, Recreation, Aquaculture, Mariculture and Commercial development.

The new transpacific fiber optic lines coming into the Harbor will be a significant asset to the entire Region, increasing broadband bandwidth and speed. This project takes advantage of the 1.5 mile long discharge line owned by the Harbor District. The existing docks are also valuable assets that accommodate the import and export of materials by ocean going vessels and barges.



Miles of waterfront property also offer multiple opportunities for development. The oyster industry and other aquaculture and mariculture businesses have located on the peninsula. The Harbor District and private land owners are working with the California Coastal Commission and County Planning staff on land use issues.

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On the east side of the bay, the City of Eureka and private landowners are planning the rezoning of areas for potential multiple new developments.

The cruise ship industry has expressed interest in the area and has completed a successful “test” visit. In addition, the bay offers multiple recreational opportunities for both tourists and residents.

## **Challenges**

Incoming, established and emerging markets face many of the same challenges when operating on the North Coast, including:

- Geographic Isolation
- Insufficient or compromised Infrastructure (transportation, broadband, etc.)
- Lack of zoning clarity
- Difficulty in attracting and retaining workforce
- A lack of regional strategies to bolster industry clusters as a whole
- Insufficient planning with respect to potential disasters and economic resiliency
- Social/quality of life issues related to homelessness
- Blight and crime
- Community attitudes

### Geographic Isolation and Infrastructure

Geographic isolation can be viewed as both an asset and a liability. The isolation helps to foster an attractive slower paced, rural quality of life, but distance to markets makes it challenging and expensive for industries to move goods and services in and out of the area. These challenges are compounded by a lack of affordable, reliable transportation infrastructure other than via the port. And, depending upon which dock is used, port facilities may also require dock repair or possible replacement.

### **Roads**

Transportation by road is perhaps the single largest issue to address when it comes to the long-term health and economic resilience of the North Coast region.

Highway restrictions are reported as a concern by every industry in the region and are a substantial and serious constraint to economic growth and sustainability. Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) qualified trucks are not permitted through a critical transportation artery at the southern end of Humboldt County, which makes the import and export of goods more expensive, time consuming, and sometimes impossible.

Caltrans has completed improvements to allow interstate trucks along the entire length of Highway 299



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from the Redding area to Arcata. However, slides and fires have hampered the availability of the route and transportation north of the county using Highway 101 is in constant jeopardy because of an on-going slide known as the “Last Chance Grade”. Additionally, local roads often suffer from deferred maintenance, which can affect the transportation of goods and services within the region.

## **Air Service**

The California Redwood Coast-Humboldt County Airport (Arcata Airport) provides the primary passenger service for the county but offers direct flights only to Los Angeles and San Francisco, which limits professional and personal travel in and out of the region. Efforts are underway to expand routes and to continue to improve the airport facilities.



Despite limitations, air service provides a critical backbone. Passenger use of the recently-added Los Angeles service from the primary airport has been high. Fast, reliable air service is also crucial for transporting critical products like blood. Murray Field, a small airport just north of Eureka, is the busiest airport in terms of the number of operations and provides FedEx with a shipping hub. Rohnerville and Kneeland airports provide Cal Fire and the U.S. Coast Guard (respectively) with facilities for important regional protection. The County of Humboldt recently completed a study of the airport system. In view of the importance of this infrastructure, County Supervisors created an Aviation Department and filled a newly-created position of Director of County Aviation.

## **Rail**

While there is local interest in establishing a rail line and service in and out of the region, studies are on-going. Currently transportation of materials and goods must be done by truck, air or sea.

## **Broadband**

Broadband speed and service is limited in the area, especially in the more rural areas. Reliable service with built in redundancy is necessary to operate in the modern technology-based economy.

## **Barriers to development and expansion**

Many centralized communities are “built out” with little commercial property available for development and have low commercial vacancy rates. The resulting competition for prime commercial property raises costs and limits opportunities for business growth.

## Community/Culture

The community suffers from higher than average rates of substance abuse, mental illness and poverty and can be perceived as resistant to change. Stakeholders noted a perception that area residents focus on the challenges rather than appreciating and highlighting the region’s many assets. Focusing on the negative can be a deterrent to recruiting and retaining businesses.

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## Inability to attract and retain workforce

Throughout the CEDS process, employers expressed frustration at their inability to attract and retain a workforce, which impedes their ability to grow and thrive in the region. Barriers and strategies to address this issue are covered in more detail in the section on Workforce. It must also be recognized that these same issues can affect the region's ability to attract and retain new industry. Many entrepreneurs assess quality of life when deciding where to locate or relocate.

## Lack of pre-disaster planning

Despite recent fires and the region's prevalence of storms, slides and other disasters, many businesses still lack pre-disaster plans that would help to protect employees, secure assets, and provide the resilience needed to get businesses back up and operational as soon as possible.

## Competition with Emerging Industries

The underground economy has been estimated to generate anywhere from 25 to 40 percent of the income activity in the Region. That economy is undergoing significant changes in regulations, zoning and product development and pricing. Stakeholders from that industry noted they now have the same workforce related issues as other industries. It would not be surprising to see Humboldt's 2023 CEDS focusing heavily on the outcome of that transition.

## **Opportunities**

Based upon the strengths of the Region and in spite of challenges, Humboldt County still has many opportunities to build, attract and retain businesses. The lure of the beautiful, laid-back atmosphere is known worldwide. County residents are seen from outside the area as friendly, intelligent, forward thinking, innovative, resilient, artistic, creative and productive. So the question arises, what is it that is making it difficult to attract and retain businesses?

## Need to refine our branding/marketing message and focus on diversity

The region hosts many assets, but stakeholders recognize a need to better understand, package and market these assets to prospective industry. Many also feel that rather than targeting and anticipating one "big" industry coming in to the area to replace timber or other transitioning industries, strategies should focus on diversifying the economy by drawing and supporting a number of different industries. This diversification adds economic resilience to the region.

## Draw for workforce and entrepreneurs

With quality of life as a competitive advantage, Humboldt County is positioned to attract and grow entrepreneurs and businesses with products and services marketed through the Internet. Already, the County is home to numerous companies organized this way, and with employees and consultants who telecommute. The same is true for the niche manufacturers who identified their need for additional broadband capacity.

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## Involvement Youth – evolving expectations

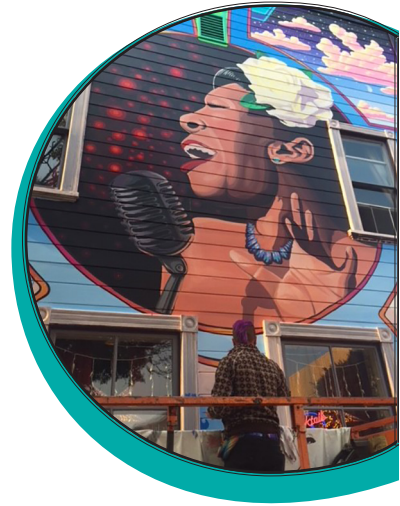
Many stakeholders felt that increasing involvement with younger members of the community in community planning and decision-making could help to identify previously unrecognized opportunities in the area.

## Tourism, Arts and Culture, Outdoor recreation

The Targets of Opportunity 2004-2014 update identified Tourism as a significant economic driver, with great potential for expansion in the region. As previously stated, the Tourism industry is examined extensively in that document.

As noted elsewhere in this report, the merging of Arts and Industry in the region has resulted in many successful niche manufacturers and the resurgence of community interest and municipal support in local arts, which also increases opportunities for new and existing industries in the region.

A growing interest in outdoor recreation could provide market opportunities and an additional draw for tourists and residents.



## Niche manufacturing

The expansion of broadband capacity and continued support from business training programs offered through the Small Business Development Center, HSU and CR, will allow niche manufacturers to have the resources they need to innovate new products, create jobs and expand the industry cluster.

## Water

Clean, fresh water is a precious resource, especially in drought-ravaged California. The region has approximately 35 million gallons per day in excess capacity, which presents significant opportunity for the right industrial user.

## Emerging Industry and Technology means opportunity

Emerging industries and technologies offer many opportunities for the region. Opportunities specific to alternative agriculture are discussed in a later section.

In addition, expansion of broadband access and capacity eliminates some of the barriers currently presented by geographic isolation and technology limitations and will open up opportunities for new markets while supporting the growth and expansion of existing operations. Businesses that may take advantage of the additional broadband capacity are engineering firms, financial servicing companies, banks and other high capacity users, such as IT professionals and telecommuters. Recruiting employees who want to telecommute should assist businesses in recruiting, especially those with Information Technology (IT) training and skills.

## Port and Harbor

As previously noted, Humboldt Bay and the accompanying assets offer many opportunities for economic

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development in the region, including miles of coastline, thousands of square feet of commercial space, and the only deep-water port between San Francisco and Coos Bay, Oregon. Thriving aquaculture and mariculture industries are well positioned for expansion.

## Energy Production

Projects are currently underway to move the County from an energy importer to energy neutral, and potentially, an eventual energy exporter. These efforts are supported by the County's General Plan Energy Element and could become a significant economic driver for the region.

Becoming at least energy neutral will also boost the region's resilience, making the area much less likely to suffer from failures of infrastructure. There is, for example, one natural gas pipeline into the County that provides both the natural gas used in the region, and the primary power source for the region's generation of electricity.

The Humboldt County coastline has been identified as the only site where offshore wind turbines will be allowed on the West Coast of the United States from the Mexican border to the Canadian border. Efforts are currently underway to pursue this opportunity and explore strategies for infrastructure development. On-shore wind energy generation is also being explored.

The Blue Lake Rancheria, in partnership with Humboldt State University's Schatz Energy Research Center, Siemens, the Idaho National Laboratory and additional partners, has installed the first phase of a multi-phase Micro grid development and is anticipated to function as a catalyst for future solar development projects.

## **Projects In Progress and Planned**

The Harbor District has multiple projects in process at various stages, mostly around Humboldt Bay. Projects such as the new deep water well and accompanying infrastructure to support the aquaculture/mariculture industries; dredge material dewatering facility; and new dock to support offshore wind development, are just a few examples. Please see Appendix A.

## **Strategies**

Based on research for the CEDS and other input, four primary strategies have been selected. These recognize that, for many businesses, proximity to raw materials is not a primary consideration. Decisions regarding where to locate or relocate are driven by a variety of other factors including access to talent, customers, industry networks, and quality of life for the principal owner and key talent of the company.

### Strategy 1: Create Marketing Package and Supports

- Create informational packets (online and in hard copy) that outline opportunities and assets for businesses interested in relocating to the area.
- Build a database of industrial properties in the County to assist businesses wanting to expand, locate or relocate their operations.

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- Develop a cooperative, nimble and fast regional process that can help prospective businesses evaluate resources and locations county-wide and support them in finding the most suitable location to locate.

## Strategy 2: Provide Business Support, Collaboration and Education

Develop cluster-based organizations to promote products/services; provide support for these organizations from local government.

These organizations can actively work to:

- Assess, identify and address barriers to industry growth
- Identify opportunities for collaboration and innovation
- Provide guidance to policy makers focused on increasing cluster and regional prosperity, address infrastructure needs and more
- Identify and provide needed professional and workforce development training
  - Support the creation of special economic development zones



## Strategy 3: Support Efforts to Address Infrastructure Needs

These efforts should be focused on Infrastructure investments and other efforts designed to eliminate barriers and increase the resources needed for businesses to grow and prosper in the region. These include:

- Transportation
- Land use policies
- Continued broadband expansion

Utilizing the additional broadband capacity provided by the new fiber optic line that is coming in the latter half of 2018 and 2019 will provide major opportunities for recruiting new businesses. Developing strategies to exploit this opportunity is essential and will be a focus of multiple entities.

Please see Infrastructure list in Appendix A.

## Strategy 4: Address Social Barriers to Industry Attraction and Workforce Development

Many business owners consider the same issues as individual workers when deciding where to locate/relocate, including access to affordable housing and healthcare, crime rates, and blight. These issues are covered more extensively in the Workforce Section of this document and should also be addressed to help facilitate greater attraction and retention of entrepreneurs and businesses in the area.

Strategy 4 is the most multi-dimensional of the primary strategies. Please see the workforce sections below for a deeper dive into workforce considerations and planning.

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## Efforts under way

The County of Humboldt Economic Development Division is adding a new Division Director position that will play a key role in coordinating and bringing together various groups, both public and private, to promote the Region's businesses, products, and services nationally and internationally. The hiring for this position is anticipated to be completed in September of 2018.

## OVERVIEW OF WORKFORCE (BUILD, ATTRACT AND RETAIN)

Workforce issues were identified by employers as presenting particular difficulty. Strategy 4: Address Social Barriers to Industry Attraction and Workforce Development, is multifaceted. In this section, we break this strategy into two main blocks. The first block looks at building our current population into the workforce employers need. The second block addresses attracting and retaining workers, including those from outside the area. Both blocks cover issues that also pertain to attracting, building and retaining businesses, as many issues that affect the choices of workers affect the choices of owners and managers.

### Local climate

Humboldt County is currently experiencing a record low unemployment rate (under 4 percent). In addition, 17 percent of the county's population is over 65 (compared to the state average of 14 percent) and employers have historically competed for workforce with an underground industry that often offered higher than average wages. Predictably, many employers are struggling to find enough skilled workers and this challenge is predicted to continue as skilled baby-boomers retire in greater numbers. To address this issue, communities can focus on building workforce, attracting workers from out of the area and/or retaining workforce, which can support the success of the first two workforce strategies. The CEDS process highlighted a need to implement and support all of these approaches.

Sufficient, qualified workforce is key to business development and economic growth. Business and community leaders in Humboldt County have long recognized the benefits of aligning economic and workforce development, and in having workforce development initiatives be informed by and responsive to employer needs.

In a recent employer survey, many organizations indicated that they experienced hiring difficulties due to:

- Insufficient Number of Applicants (66%)
- Candidates Lacked Relevant Work Experience (70%)
- Candidates Lacked Hard/Soft Skills (49%)

### **Additional Assets**

Humboldt County has numerous assets that can help the region grow, attract and retain workforce. Though the area is isolated and rural, it hosts a number of diverse industries with various employment opportunities. The region's exceptionally strong entrepreneurial network means that new businesses are established regularly, which also serves to attract and retain qualified workforce.



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## Education and Training Institutions

Local educational institutions and training programs, including College of the Redwoods, Humboldt State University, the Job Market, Humboldt County 's Employment Training Division, Humboldt County Office of Education (kindergarten through 12th grade) and an active Workforce Development Board provide ample opportunities to develop, train and retrain workforce. These institutions are already collaborating on several initiatives to build qualified workforce for the Region.

The region's education and training institutions and their programs are described in greater detail in Appendix B.

## Rural, Collaborative Culture and Quality of Life

Humboldt County 's rural nature, featuring lower population density, low traffic congestion and slower pace in a beautiful and diverse natural environment draws and retains workforce. Numerous outdoor recreation opportunities, a rich visual and performing arts community and more also add to resident quality of life. The Region also enjoys a culture of collaboration and cooperation. In short, this region is a place where many people would choose to live if they could figure out how to do it.

Employers, economic development and workforce professionals, educators and other stakeholders recognize local workforce challenges, share a desire to address the gaps and are working together proactively to better address the needs.

## **Challenges**

Despite numerous assets, negative community messaging often dominates social media and other communication networks. This can discourage young people from remaining in the region and deter new workers from moving in. In addition, while some individuals appreciate the isolation and slower pace of rural communities, the culture is not an appropriate fit for everyone.

## **BUILDING WORKFORCE – TRAINING/EDUCATION (STRATEGY 4A)**

### **Assets**

Many educators, employers and other stakeholders recognize the need to develop and support skilled workforce and are working together to develop shared strategies to address the issue. These efforts are possible, in part, because of the local education and training institutions previously mentioned. Many current initiatives are also designed to combine workforce development with local industry needs more directly.

### **Challenges**

Stakeholders indicated a too common belief (and messaging in schools) that Humboldt County offers only limited (or no) career opportunities for young people and "To succeed is to leave." In addition, many educators and families communicate that college offers the only viable career path and discount the trades, though many jobs in the construction industry and more, offer good, living wage jobs and are in high demand.

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It must be recognized, however, that geographic isolation can limit traditional and on-the-job training opportunities due to infrastructure gaps like a lack of countywide high-speed broadband and unreliable transportation. Rural areas also host fewer businesses than urban areas, which can further limit opportunities for internships, apprenticeships, and entry-level work experience.

Local wages are consistently lower than the state average in many fields, yet housing and other living costs continue to rise. Many local youth believe their opportunities for higher wages, home ownership, and more increase with out-of-the-area employment.

### Gaps between education/training and employer needs

Many employers expressed frustration regarding the gaps between needed skills and applicant qualifications. These include critical soft skills (showing up on time, providing good customer service, etc.) and technical, specialized skills. Employers can also have difficulty finding employees that meet sobriety/drug testing requirements. In addition, many employers believe that educational institutions are not effectively training local workforce for occupations in demand and that youth lack clear pathways from educational institutions to local industry.

While some employers address these gaps with internal training, other employers limit on the job training opportunities, likely fearing turnover that would negate the investment.

It must also be recognized that while educational and training institutions want to provide training for in-demand occupations, they cannot create student interest in programs just because there is industry demand.

A lack of qualified applicants and the need to invest more time, energy and money in training is stifling business, economic and job growth.

Studies indicate that many individuals currently entering the workforce place a greater value on work/life balance and that employers willing to evolve their business practices, like implementing flexible work hours and/or allowing telecommuting, will be better able to meet their workforce needs.

Numerous distance-learning programs allow local workforce to access training and educational opportunities beyond what is offered locally. Humboldt County also has a number of smaller firms - with diverse workforce needs, which create exceptional opportunities for internships, apprenticeships and entry-level workforce.

A culture of entrepreneurship and the regular establishment of new firms in existing and emerging industries are creating demand for skilled workforce and many high wage, professional jobs. There are a number of local initiatives designed to increase the regional inventory of qualified workforce by creating unique training programs, career pathways and more.

There are also many special populations with untapped workforce, including those with physical or developmental disabilities, ex-offenders and teens. Special recruitment and training programs can be developed to better utilize these resources.

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### Current And Planned Initiatives

As previously noted, workforce and economic development professionals strive to work more closely with employers to address employer needs. There are a number of local initiatives designed to increase the regional inventory of qualified workforce by creating unique training programs, career pathways and more. A number of these programs are described in greater detail in Appendix B.

### Priority Strategies

*Strategy 4a1: Develop a more integrated workforce development system.*

Many educational and training institutions already work very effectively with employers to identify and address workforce needs but these programs can be supported and expanded, where appropriate, to build upon previous successes. These programs should continue to include employers, economic development and workforce development professionals, educators/trainers and other relevant stakeholders to ensure efforts address local employer needs with a special focus on target occupations and industries.

#### Engage industry

In addition, fostering strong relationships between local schools/education programs and local industry can:

**Workforce Development**  
The goal of workforce development is to enhance the skills of those already in the workforce as well as provide tangible and relevant skills to those looking for employment. From courses at a community college to certificate programs at a technical school to on-the-job training, individuals can find a diverse selection of workforce development opportunities to meet their professional goals.

- Identify opportunities for training partnerships and ensure training programs are designed to address skill gaps
- Identify which industries are anticipating or currently experiencing a shortage of qualified workers
- Allow partners to pool financial resources to expand training opportunities
- Help partners share ideas and best practices

It is critical that stakeholders analyze workforce gaps and identify causes before developing strategies to ensure those strategies are addressing the issue. For example, a lack of skilled trades workers may be caused, in part, by a recent

emphasis on 4-year colleges as the best (or only) career path, a lack of awareness regarding opportunities offered in certain occupations or lack of general interest in a particular career.

#### Continue to build Career Pathways

Pathways have been or are being established in K-12 schools focused on healthcare, trade occupations and more. Educators should continue to work with industry to identify opportunities to develop additional pathways to address workforce needs.

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## Provide Student Services, and Soft Skills Training

Build on Northern Humboldt Unified School District College and Career Advisory Center to provide wrap-around student services in all County high schools that offer better, stronger career and educational planning support to help students plan effective transitions from education to career.

In addition, schools can offer hands-on educational opportunities to help teach students the technical and interpersonal skills needed for success in the workforce. These training programs simulate actual work conditions as closely as possible, emphasizing both hard and soft skills (such as selecting business attire, showing up on time, or working on teams).

### Additional Recommendations:

- Support the teacher task force convened by the Humboldt County Office of Education and Humboldt State University to address the shortage of well-qualified teachers.
- Accelerate the Humboldt Regional Trades Project (H RTP), which will increase awareness of living wage opportunities and a recognition that Trades careers are a viable, credible option and provide a direct pipeline for students interested in entering these career fields.
- Foster Chamber of Commerce youth ambassador and mentor programs to help to develop needed skills.

### Strategy 4a2: Change Messaging and Better Highlight Local Employment Opportunities

Strategies can be developed to increase awareness and understanding of local job opportunities. Many local youth and area job seekers appear unaware of local job and training opportunities, even those with high earnings potential. While the emphasis on academics and college as the only post-high school/graduation option appears to be shifting, it is advisable to develop strategies to continue to foster the cultural shift and increase acceptance of career paths that emphasize specialized skills or trades.

### Additional Strategies to Build Workforce

- Provide employer trainings on best hiring practices
- Adjust hiring practices to address timing differential
- In rural areas with fewer employers and employees, employee readiness/availability and employer need for specific positions do not always line up. Employers can educate applicants on various employment opportunities and internal career paths, interview for company fit, support hired employees to eventually attain their career goals (model after Arcata Economic Development Corporation's "Workforce Weekend")



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- Identify and develop untapped (or underutilized) resources (ex-offenders, those with physical or developmental disabilities, etc.)
- Continue to support first line supervisor and mid-management training and other certificate programs that provide needed training without the time commitment required by a formal degree
- Better publicize the Job Market and other workforce development programs
- Use Labor Market Data to Drive Decisions
- Further promote the Targets of Opportunity Occupations report which provides information on in-demand and high paying occupations, which can help guide job-seekers
- Trends in the job market, often combined with industry feedback, can help to identify future in-demand occupations; workforce agencies can then adjust their programs accordingly
- Enhance and promote on-line distance learning opportunities, acquiring degrees and/or certificates, particularly in rural learning centers to overcome travel distance obstacles
- Continue to stimulate and support new entrepreneurship among youth, students and career adults
- Encourage art education and academic art programs to emphasize community engagement, heritage awareness and entrepreneurship to increase community benefits

## **WORKFORCE - ATTRACT AND RETAIN (STRATEGY 4B)**

### **Overview**

As previously noted, low employment and an aging population have hampered employers' ability to attract and retain needed workforce. Employers indicate that jobs requiring advanced skills and education are the hardest to fill. There are also shortages in middle-skill trades, those requiring more than high school but less than a bachelor's degree. Increasingly, too, there are labor shortages in manufacturing, building, aquaculture, horticulture and other highly physical industries and other living wage, entry-level jobs not requiring post-high school education.

This workforce shortage fits a current national pattern. Fortunately, Humboldt County has many programs, supports, opportunities, cultural amenities, etc. to help attract workforce and keep them in the region.

### **Assets**

Research shows that job opportunities and quality of life are often equally considered in relocation decisions. Individuals and families seek a sense of safety, open space, access to recreation, neighborhood character, short commute times, and opportunities for feeling socially engaged and connected to their community. Surveys indicate that many employees are willing to accept a lower salary in order to live in an ideal community. Fortunately, the region offers an abundance of desirable attributes.

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## Communities

Humboldt County hosts many small communities, with populations ranging from approximately 30,000 (Eureka, Humboldt County seat) to 300 (Trinidad), with rural settlements throughout the region. Many communities are adorned with historic and culturally significant architecture and offer a slower paced, rural quality of life.

## Arts and Culture

The National Association of Counties recognizes that the arts can be used as a means to improve economies, enrich cultural and intellectual life, build more aesthetically pleasing communities, promote lifelong learning, protect national heritage and historic preservation, help children succeed, and more. The region supports an active arts community, hosting many institutions that support the arts. There are many community initiatives designed to support public art, communitywide festivals and other art-related activities.

## Natural environment, beauty and outdoor recreation

Humboldt County's beautiful and diverse natural amenities appeal to visitors and residents and provide outdoor recreational opportunities including cycling, surfing, backpacking, hiking, kayaking, and more. The region's rich agricultural lands provide many opportunities to "eat local", which is attracting growing interest locally, nationally and internationally.

## Business climate and job opportunities

Despite (or because) of the region's geographic isolation, the county hosts a diverse entrepreneurial network. Local companies offer exciting employment opportunities with a number of innovative companies in niche manufacturing, specialty food and beverages and more.

The region also hosts two significant educational institutions, Humboldt State University and College of the Redwoods, which offer professional development and personal enrichment opportunities.

## **Challenges**

Additional factors that professionals and prospective workforce consider when determining where to locate include cost and quality of housing, crime, access to health care and quality of K-12 education. Unfortunately, our rural region experiences challenges in these areas.

## Infrastructure

Like the rest of California, Humboldt County is experiencing a tight housing inventory and rising costs. Securing adequate affordable housing can be difficult. A shortage of healthcare professionals can interfere with timely access to quality health care. There are, however, local initiatives already underway to help address both of these issues.

Though efforts are underway to expand air service, the region has limited options for personal and professional travel. Existing air service can be expensive and unreliable, due to inclement weather and other challenges, and natural disasters, like fires, floods and landslides, can limit road travel as well. Limited public transportation



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throughout the county can make local travel more challenging for those without a vehicle or with other limitations that prevent or limit their ability to drive.

A lack of reliable county-wide broadband can make employment in the area challenging for tele-commuters and/or those whose professions rely heavily on the internet.

Humboldt County's high rates of mental illness, homelessness, and addiction can compromise feelings of safety and security and create blight, which are all potential considerations and deterrents for incoming workforce. While there are initiatives underway to help address many of these infrastructure challenges, solutions will take time.



### Compensation compared to cost of living

Humboldt County wages in many professions are consistently lower than in other regions, making it more difficult for employees to meet basic needs. This puts the region at a disadvantage by making the area less attractive for existing and incoming workforce.

### Business culture slow to change/evolve to meet needs of current workforce

Studies have shown that many younger working adults put more emphasis on a work-life balance and some employers may have difficulty adapting to changing expectations, like more flexible hours, more in-house training opportunities and/or other accommodations. A high demand for employees, however, may require businesses to evolve their business models to attract and retain this needed workforce.

Many local employers also report using traditional recruiting mechanisms, like newspaper ads and word-of-mouth, while studies show that much of the job-seeking workforce uses newer tools like online job search engines. Young professionals who lack networking skills may never learn about appropriate employment opportunities unless employers update their recruitment methods.

An additional challenge, employers report, is that much of the available workforce fails to meet basic expectations like demonstrating a strong work ethic, and showing up on time with a positive attitude, ready to work and learn. Employers state that many applicants also lack needed technical skills.

### Social Infrastructure

While rural communities offer many benefits over congested urban areas, Humboldt County lacks significant cultural and ethnic diversity and communities can be perceived as "cliquish"- offering new residents limited ability to socially integrate and learn about employment and other opportunities. This feeling of disconnection seems more prevalent among young professionals, minorities and new arrivals to the area.

While the area may appeal to professionals that enjoy a rural, outdoor environment, those seeking vibrant

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nightlife and extensive shopping opportunities may not be satisfied. In addition, some of the high quality arts and cultural activities may be financially inaccessible to younger, lower income individuals.

## Negative Community Image/Messaging

Many self-formed community groups focus on and highlight the region's challenges and others seem unaware or lack appreciation of many of the region's positive attributes. This can project an image of undesirability and make current and prospective community members more pessimistic about the future of the region.

## Other

While access to childcare was not a primary theme in discussions with industry, childcare is an essential piece of workforce infrastructure and continues to be a challenge for working parents. Lack of employment opportunities for spouses or domestic partners, especially those with specialized skills, can also make it difficult for incoming professionals to remain in the area.

## **Opportunities**

Though housing prices have increased locally, local costs are still lower than in much of California, which may drive home-seeking workforce to the region. Urban crowding, traffic congestion and social isolation also have many seeking a higher quality of life in rural communities. Rising temperatures, wildfires and other natural disasters may also make the North Coast more attractive for relocating workforce.

The recently secured direct flights to Los Angeles and ongoing efforts to secure additional air service also open up opportunities for businesses and professionals requiring more transportation options in and out of the area.

An increasing interest in successfully attracting and retaining workforce has led to a number of initiatives, with interest in implementing more, to address the workforce shortage.

## **Strategies**

There are a number of initiatives underway to address infrastructure and other challenges in the region. Additional strategies have also been identified to help support the attraction and retention of local workforce.

### Strategy 4b1: Reframe Community Narrative - Refocus on the Positive

Reframe the community narrative to decrease the prevalence of negative messaging on social media and in the community to inspire pride and investment and make the area more inviting to incoming workforce.

Develop a campaign that:

- Engages community leaders in the effort
- Identifies and better highlights community assets, amenities and "good news"
- Includes regular patterns of positive messaging to residents and visitors using social media, traditional and online press, etc.

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- Includes a marketing strategy targeting prospective workforce that outlines the positive “offerings” of the region

## Strategy 4b2: Support efforts to address infrastructure needs

Many efforts are already underway to address infrastructure needs. Economic and workforce development professionals should continue to monitor and support activities and seek ways to more proactively address infrastructure needs around:

- Housing (quantity and quality)
- Access to Healthcare
- Reliable transportation
- Upgraded and accessible technology/broadband
- Safety, by proactively engaging in activities that address social problems and decrease blight (empty buildings, homelessness, poverty, addiction and crime)

## Strategy 4b3: Support and Promote Assets That Support Community Health and Wellness, Enrichment and Culture (Arts, Entertainment, Education, Recreation)

Efforts are also underway to foster and promote community health and wellness, enrichment, arts and culture. These should be supported and can be augmented by promoting and supporting greater access to arts and culture for all community members, including those with lower income or transportation challenges. This could include more “free days” for arts events, performances, zoo admission, movie nights, etc.

Health care has received extensive attention in the years since 2012, when the previous CEDS was written. Several advances include a newly announced physician residency program at St. Joseph’s Hospital, as physicians tend to practice within 50 miles of where they performed their residency. St. Joseph’s has successfully recruited a number of new doctors as well. Open Door, a regional clinic system, is soon to open a modern new facility in Fortuna. At Humboldt State University and College of the Redwoods, work is occurring to restart and sustain nursing degree programs. The Humboldt County Office of Education has also launched a pathway and field-based education program for allied health careers.

## Other Strategies

- Employers can provide more in-house/employer training opportunities
- Employers can provide more job flexibility
- Employers can consider hiring unconventional or underutilized workforce (e.g., ex-offenders, those who have physical or developmental challenges, etc.)



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- Business and community leaders can seek solutions and methods to grow the pool of leadership talent (e.g. senior management, general managers, chief financial officers and marketing executives)
- Business and community leaders can strive to provide more resident quality of life and tourist-serving amenities, such as land and water trails, rehabilitation of historic and culturally significant buildings and sites, streetscape beautification and public art programs
- Business and community leaders can recognize the value of dependent care to a workforce and support initiatives to increase access to affordable, quality dependent care (e.g. child and elder care)

## Current And Planned Initiatives

There are a number of efforts designed to address infrastructure and community issues that create barriers to attracting and retaining workforce. For example:

- The Redwood Region Economic Development, partnering with St. Joseph Health System and the California Center for Rural Policy, has launched the Redwood Region Housing Initiative, designed to better identify and address barriers to housing development in Humboldt County.
- The city of Arcata is developing a Housing Strategic plan.
- The City of Eureka is hosting a workshop to help homeowners understand how they can build Accessory Dwelling Units on their property.
- Many community initiatives are underway to address homelessness and substance abuse in the region, including the California Community Health Initiative and RX Safe Humboldt.

In addition to the planning above, CEDS project participants chose to focus on two industry areas. These are:

- Alternative Agriculture, which deals with Humboldt County's longstanding industry and changes brought by state legalization, and
- Tourism, Arts and Culture. While tourism has been examined in previous CEDS, the intersection of tourism with Humboldt's vibrant arts and culture scene have not been examined in detail in earlier CEDS planning.

## ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE

### Overview

Humboldt is known internationally as an innovator in emerging industries. No serious discussion of Humboldt's overall economy can omit an examination of alternative agriculture, which has been a significant economic driver for years. Recent changes in state legislation have many experienced sector professionals and other entrepreneurs seeking and pursuing opportunities while others express concern that increased competition through the state could impede the region's ability to compete and prosper in the market. Most agree that the region's economic future will be greatly influenced by how local businesses adapt to changes in the industry.

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### Assets

The Alternative Agricultural industry benefits from many of the same assets as other industry clusters, including a beautiful and diverse natural environment, diverse entrepreneurial network, an innovative “maker” culture, and rural quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

In addition, the community is home to many individuals with decades and/or multi-generations of experience, many with specialized expertise. Industry leaders are adaptable and creative problem solvers, committed to growing and producing quality products. This has helped ensure that Humboldt County is nationally and internationally known for exceptional output.

### Challenges

This industry also faces many of the same challenges and constraints experienced by other industries in Humboldt County. These include difficulty in attracting and retaining workforce, in transporting goods and materials in and out of the area, in accessing appropriate real estate/commercial facilities, in working with poor and aging infrastructure, and in dealing with limited technology/broadband and more.

#### Costs of Doing Business

In addition, recently enacted regulations and new tax structures have required significant financial investment for many in the industry and have presented a very steep learning curve—creating significant challenges for many of these evolving businesses. Unfortunately, the community currently lacks the resources needed to help these new and emerging entrepreneurs gain the skills they need to navigate the new business landscape. Employees in this industry may also have trouble transitioning and learning required skills as the industry and technologies evolve. They may also lack skills and work experiences that allow them to transition to other parts of the economy. Displacement is a very real concern—and can be especially significant for workers who do not have a financial safety net.

#### Regulations

As can be typical in rural areas, Humboldt County also struggles to maintain a voice and influence over state regulations to ensure the region maintains a competitive advantage in the ever-changing marketplace. Industry representatives must, however, become leaders in compliance and support others to do the same so that all operate from the same, level, playing field. This will also help to mitigate and address environmental damage and other negative impacts associated with the industry.



#### Entrenched Community Attitudes and Industry Culture

It is typical for communities and industry members to experience resistance to growth and change but unfortunately, an absence of industry cohesion, lack of a regional strategy and on-going social stigma and



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community resistance to change will only slow this industry's ability to prosper.

## Opportunities

Despite identified challenges, the industry's many assets create opportunities for the region. Legal and regulatory changes mean that cluster experts can more actively seek partnerships and collaborate with industry partners, municipalities and more on various opportunities focused on business and economic development. The industry's innovators and problem solvers can be more specifically focused on supporting existing operations and industry diversification. Possibilities include:

- Value added manufacturing - potential for innovation
- Testing
- Tourism and other recreational opportunities
- Material/waste management and reuse
- Continuing to build the regional brand and further strengthening local product positioning in the market

## Strategies

Strategy AA1: Identify, Fund and Empower One Lead Organization for Industry

### Bring community together, create industry vision and strategic plan

- Utilize a new industry model to
  - *Bring towns/communities together*
  - *Promote industry partners*
  - *Collaborate on skills/ideas*
- Develop mechanism to prioritize strategies to avoid redundancy, build and support existing efforts
- Ensure plan includes strategies to address future legal and regulatory changes
- Leverage plan into action

### Strategy AA1a: Support Industry Education

- Provide business education
- Create workforce certifications

### Strategy AA1b: Support integration with mainstream business community

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- Industry and individuals continue to integrate with traditional business community; join and support service clubs, etc.
- Develop de-stigmatization campaign

## Other Alternative Agriculture Strategies

- Reallocate industry tax revenues to fund long term planning, branding and environmental remediation
- Re-purpose underutilized infrastructure, e.g., mill sites, for alternative industrial use (addressing environmental concerns)
- Recruit firms or create opportunities (incubator) for Research and Development
  - o Pharmacology, manufacturing, genetic, medical
  - o Make Eureka a “hub”
  - o Partner with local educational institutions whenever possible
- Create trade shows or other events – which could focus on research and development, offer education credits, etc.
- Create revolving, non-federal loan fund (could be supported by jurisdictions)
- Continue to support development/establishment of appellations

## **TOURISM / ARTS & CULTURE**

### **Overview**

Though Tourism does not meet the criteria to be considered a “target industry,” it is recognized as an essential part of the region’s basic economic foundation, providing significant (if lower wage) employment opportunities and importing significant revenue. It also serves as an important workforce training ground.

Each year, approximately 1.5 to 2 million visitors come to Humboldt County, spend approximately \$70 million (2016 estimate) and stay an average of 2.7 days. Regional, state, national, and international visitors are attracted to the redwoods & California coast, parks, rivers, and other natural and scenic settings, outdoor recreation and vibrant visual and performing arts community. Tourism is examined extensively as an independent Industry Cluster in the Redwood Coast Targets of Opportunity Report, 2004-2014.

The region regularly receives positive media coverage of the quality of the visit experience. For example, in 2018 Lonely Planet named the California Redwood Coast its #1 destination. Local travel boosters such as the Humboldt County Convention and Visitors Bureau, are expert in promoting such coverage and capitalizing on it when possible.

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## Outdoor Recreation

The region is becoming more known for a plethora of outdoor recreational activities, including cycling, surfing, backpacking, hiking, kayaking, rafting, whale watching, birding, rock-climbing and more. This was noted in the CEDS process and it is recommended that the potential of this industry cluster be examined more closely in a future report.

## Arts And Culture

Like Tourism, the Arts and Culture cluster does not meet the Targets of Opportunity criteria, but related businesses and professionals contribute significantly to the local economy, helping to attract and retain workforce and foster a higher quality of life for residents. In addition, community Arts and Cultural assets and projects catalyze community revitalization and increase the competitiveness of emerging and mature industries. Many successful local companies have achieved international success by merging arts with industry, including niche manufacturers like jewelry maker Holly Yashi, Marimba One and more.

### Arts, Culture and Tourism

Research shows that Arts and Cultural activities are strong secondary draws for visitors, leading people to stay longer and spend more dollars, while increasing exposure and opportunity for artists. Feedback throughout the CEDS process indicated many economic opportunities presented by supporting the symbiotic relationship between the tourism and arts and culture industries. Because the previous Targets report extensively examined the Tourism Industry cluster, much of the following is focused on sustaining and growing an already vibrant arts and culture industry cluster.

## Assets

The area enjoys a beautiful and diverse natural environment with abundant natural resources and historic and culturally significant architecture. It also serves as a gateway community to the redwoods. While geographic isolation makes transportation more challenging, the remote rural nature of the area proves a significant draw for many visitors. Once here, visitors enjoy a rural, "small town" atmosphere, with less congestion and a slower pace.

Several local communities have been recognized nationally and internationally for their art and cultural assets. Eureka, for example, was recently named one of the 100 Best Small Art Towns in America and in 2017 was awarded one of 14 Cultural Arts Districts in California. Humboldt County is said to host the highest number of artists per capita in the United States. A prevalence of creative residents and artists translate into a vibrant arts culture enjoyed by visitors and residents alike. A number of non-profit organizations support high quality performance venues, local, national and internationally known performers, community arts events, and more. Local



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municipalities capitalize on these assets by forming Arts Districts, hosting community-wide festivals and spotlighting the community’s spectacular historic architecture.

### Challenges

#### Shared with other industries

Many of the challenges in the Arts and Culture industries are shared by other industry clusters. Employers experience difficulty in attracting and retaining workforce, many positions offer low wages compared to the cost of living and employees struggle with a shortage of affordable housing.

#### Challenges specific to Arts and Culture

Primary challenges identified by industry representatives include a lack of inter-agency communication and fragmentation within the cluster, which has resulted in a lack of comprehensive and strategic regional planning.

Limited financial/funding resources also mean that area organizations sometimes compete for needed funds.

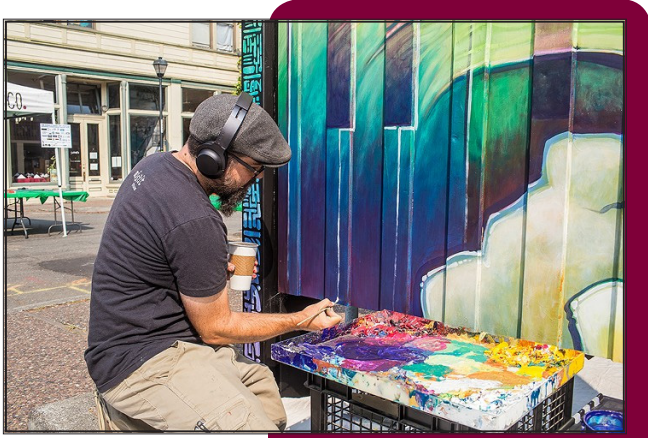
Negative messaging, previously noted, also impacts this industry by perpetuating the impression that Humboldt County is not a desirable place to live, work or visit.

### Opportunities

Because the tourist season, and tourist dollars, are limited, local arts and cultural organizations should be viewed and supported as essential community infrastructure. Research has shown that sustaining these organizations supports economic development, contributes to workforce attraction and retention and fosters a greater sense of community, thereby benefiting the region’s residents while also sustaining these assets to support the tourism industry.

Fostering an industry culture of cooperation, mutual support, resilience and collaboration with both traditional and untraditional partners (e.g., alternative and specialty agriculture), municipalities and the arts community could lead to greater opportunity and prosperity for all. Expanding and supporting a broader definition of “Art” to include cultural art, graffiti, industrial art, specialty food and beverages and more could also create additional opportunity.

The region has been repeatedly recognized for its arts and cultural vitality though a surprising number of residents remain unaware of these assets. Increased promotion of area assets to visitors and residents would build awareness, increase tourism, enhance the visitor experience and increase resident quality of life.



The City of Eureka hosted a Street Art Festival. Muralists from the local area as well as from out of town completed over a dozen murals in a weeklong effort to revitalize the city’s Opera Alley.

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## **Current Efforts To Support Tourism, Arts, Culture (As Economic Drivers)**

There are many efforts focused on increasing arts and culture assets, increasing tourism and enhancing the visitor experience. For example, the city of Eureka is executing their strategic arts plan, the city of Arcata is actively developing and promoting its Creamery District “where art and commerce meet” and the Fortuna Chamber of Commerce is launching a public art program for the city. For additional examples, see Appendix C.

## **Strategies**

### Strategy TAC1: Develop Plan for long-term viability of Arts and Culture

As previously noted, the tourist season (and tourist dollars) are limited. A comprehensive strategy could be developed to bring long-term sustainability to the cluster. This should support and promote Arts and Culture as a cohesive industry cluster and include a more coordinated approach to funding acquisition. This could decrease competition and increase opportunities to benefit multiple organizations in the community.

### Strategy TAC2: Create a Cohesive Regional Brand & Plan to Promote Tourism & The Arts

#### **Utilize a new industry model that**

- Recognizes shared interests and brings communities and related industries together; invites more diverse representation (millennials, cultural diversity, etc.) to the planning process
- Develops a shared, regional brand, while also promoting unique community assets

#### **Develop Plan to promote Tourism and Arts/Culture**

- Gather current data; determine where money and visitors come from
- Identify target audience(s), local and visitors
- Identify brand pillars, or critical draws, that will attract more people to the area; package and promote those assets
- Encourage and support annual community arts events to unify communities; utilize multiple organizations/disciplines and cross-promote (e.g., theater, music, arts, food and beverages, etc.)
- Identify underutilized buildings/community assets and re-purpose (e.g., old mill sites)

### Strategy TAC3: Develop centralized, common tools for sharing arts and culture info

Develop comprehensive, user-friendly website that informs residents and visitors of regional arts and culture events. Augment this with a comprehensive plan to share this information via other online “tools” such as social media, community calendars, and more. Consider establishing community kiosks that also provide detailed information about local arts and culture events.



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## Other activities that will support Tourism/Arts and Culture

- Address blight
- Review Tourism Cluster Work Plan and identify promising/priority strategies to implement
- Address empty buildings-re-purpose, incentivize owners to address, use as phantom art galleries, use window clings
  - *Could provide itineraries/docents for visitors, increase engagement*
- Central calendar
- Low income housing, housing with art spaces
- Fix Last Chance grade, the perennially sliding section of Highway 101, that represents Humboldt's critical connection to Oregon
- Railroad, currently unused, re-purpose to the "Great Redwood Trail," a planned world class hiking and biking trail



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## PART III: IMPLEMENTATION/NEXT STEPS

### A Coordinated Regional Effort

1. The CEDS Strategy Committee should be reconvened within 3 months of the CEDS adoption and Economic Development Administration (EDA) approval to discuss CEDS findings and recommendations and develop a plan, with timelines, to successfully implement recommended strategies, including improving cooperation among government, Tribal and business leaders throughout Humboldt County.
2. The Strategy Committee should be expanded to include individuals that represent each of the Target and emerging industries. These cluster representatives should actively engage industry peers and work to represent shared interests. This will allow the Committee to work on cross-cluster goals (such as improving transportation infrastructure) while also addressing cluster-specific priorities like site location/zoning solutions. It should be noted that similar efforts are occurring in many industries (e.g. health care), with much success.
3. Stakeholders also recommended that representatives from County senior economic development staff, cities and Tribes form a working group that meets regularly to discuss and proactively work to develop strategies to meet the on-going needs of business. This group will communicate and coordinate with the Strategy Committee and report back to their respective elected officials.
4. Representatives should identify funding streams that can be used to implement recommended strategies, as well as metrics to measure project success and return on investment.
5. The Strategy Committee should also evaluate stakeholders' recommendation to develop and maintain a regional inventory of usable buildings and spaces. This is recognized as a long term project and would assist elected officials in projecting future demand and assessing the need for zoning changes.

Throughout the CEDS process, it was recognized that problems and concerns that affect one industry generally affect all industries throughout the County. Communication is essential in reducing and eventually eliminating information silos and increasing cooperation and collaboration throughout the region. The County, cities, Tribes and other jurisdictions can serve as key collaborators in facilitating partnerships across sectors and jurisdictions for the community of Humboldt as a whole.

### Evaluation Plan

The CEDS Strategy Committee will guide the annual process of evaluating progress towards achieving the vision of building a collaborative regional economy and implementing supporting strategies. The Committee will collect and analyze the necessary data and submit a report to the EDA. This is a requirement of funding and necessary to qualify for further EDA assistance. The update is also a prerequisite for designation as an Economic Development District (EDD) by EDA, should the Strategy Committee and jurisdictions pursue this option.

External data will provide information on the direction of the overall economy, spotlight potential opportunities and offer notice of potential disruptions (shocks) in domestic and foreign markets. It will be useful in identifying activities

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and trends that may affect the local economy. For example, changes in the rate of new construction nationally can impact our region, which depends significantly on the export of forest products.

Examples of data to include:

- Consumer Price Index
- Purchasing Manager's Index
- US Census Bureau Business & Industry (USCB-B&I) data sets Retail e-commerce Sales
- USCB-B&I Export and Import Statistics
- US Department of Commerce-Bureau of Economic Analysis
- US Trade & Development Agency links to export opportunities for US companies

Local economic data will provide a greater sense of how the Region is performing relative to the greater economy and may identify economic opportunities. Internal data may include:

- The number of business startups/new business licenses issued
- Building permit issuances, residential and commercial
- Business expansions
- Business recruitments (successful or not, and if not-why)
- Disposable income
- Job creation
- Numbers of persons trained by local educational institutions
- New programs designed and implemented at CR and HSU
- SBDC training program participation numbers
- Alternative Agriculture specific industry performance measures
- Average income
- Population increases/decreases by area in the County of Humboldt
- Sales tax revenue
- Property tax revenue
- Economic index published by Humboldt State University

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Additional factors to consider may include social data such as:

- Crime rates
- Recidivism rates
- Numbers of homeless persons
- Funding dedicated to social programming

While comparing local economic performance to that of the state, national and global economies can provide a guide for answering “How are we doing?” The County’s limited population, geographic isolation and somewhat unique economy must also be considered in the evaluation process.

## **Annual Report**

The Strategy Committee will present a draft annual report for public comment. Community feedback will be incorporated into the draft and a final report submitted to the County of Humboldt Board of Supervisors for review and approval. The report will then be disseminated electronically and made available in hard copy.

The annual report will help guide policy making, investment decisions in infrastructure, and the pursuit of grants to support desired outcomes. The report will also track and assess the need for improvements in responding to:

- Legislative changes
- Changes in the greater economy
- Industries specific changes
- Technological changes
- Being ready to take advantage of unplanned opportunities when they arise

This CEDS is designed to support efforts that capitalizes on the county’s strengths and opportunities while mitigating, as much as possible, identified weaknesses and threats; a region where mutual support and collaboration between individuals, businesses, agencies and communities is fostered to create a resilient economy and prosperity for all.

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## APPENDIX A: 2012 PROJECT STATUS

### Projects listed in Prosperity 2012 CEDS

Jurisdiction	Project	Project Completed	Project In Process	Project Planned	Project No Longer A Priority
Arcata	Happy Valley Business Park		x		
Arcata	Community Life Wellness Campus			x	
Arcata	Samoa Blvd Business Redevelopment Project		x		
Arcata	Aldergrove Industrial Condominium Project		x		
Blue Lake	Industrial Pretreatment			x	
Eureka	Fisherman's Terminal Cafe & Retail Counter	x			
Eureka	Food/Beverage Bottling Line			x	
Eureka	Biosolids-to-Energy Facility				x
Eureka	Commercial Street Fuel Facility & Dock Upgrade			x	
Eureka	Ice & Cold Storage Facility			x	
Eureka	Dock B Reconstruction			x	
Eureka	Railroad Alternative Route				x
Fortuna	John Campbell Memorial Parkway		x		
Fortuna	Mill District		x		
Fortuna	Thelma Street/Hwy 36 Connection		x		
HBHR&CD	Water Trails - Improved Access for Boaters		x		
HBHR&CD	Samoa Industrial Waterfront Development		x		
HBHR&CD	Northern CA Alternative Highway Project				x
HBHR&CD	Acquisition of Freshwater Property	x			
HBHR&CD	Fields Landing Marine/Industrial Development			x	
HBMWD	15" Samoa Peninsula Pipeline Replacement	x			
HBMWD	Ranney Collector 1, 2 & 4 Replacement	x			
HBMWD	Chlorine System Upgrade to Hypochlorite			x	
HBMWD	Hydro-Electric Plant			x	
Humboldt County	Red Cap Road Shoulder Improvement				
Humboldt County	Downtown Garberville Improvements		x		
Humboldt County	Hoopa Corridor Improvement		x		
Humboldt County	Hammond & Annie Mary Trail		x		

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## Projects listed in Prosperity 2012 CEDS

Jurisdiction	Project	Project Completed	Project In Process	Project Planned	Project No Longer A Priority
Humboldt County	Arcata/Eureka Trail		X		
Humboldt County	McKay Tract to Harris Connector		X		
Humboldt County	Broadband Infrastructure		X		
McKinleyville	Upgrade Wastewater Management Facility	X			
McKinleyville	Design of Water Management Facility	X			
McKinleyville	Purchase of New Water Tank Property			X	
McKinleyville	Design & Installation of Water Supply Tank			X	
McKinleyville	Teen Center Construction	X			
McKinleyville	New District Office/Town Center				X
McKinleyville	Acquisition of School Road Park Property	X			
NCRA	South Fork to Samoa Line				X
Orick	Community Wastewater Treatment System		X		
Orick	Gateway Project				X
Orick	Water System Improvements		X		
Orick	Telecommunications Project		X		
Weott	Well Development			X	
Weott	Collection System Upgrade			X	
Willow Creek	Downtown Wastewater System Project		X		

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## 2018 Project List: The following are current projects underway

### CITY OF ARCATA

Check out the City's website at: <https://www.cityofarcata.org/413/Current-City-Construction-Projects>.

<p>2018 Sanitary Sewer Infiltration Project</p>	<p>The City of Arcata has contracted with G.R. Sundberg Construction, Inc., for the 2018 Sanitary Sewer Infiltration project. The project involves the replacement and/or the rehabilitation of existing sewer lines to eliminate water intrusion into the City's sewer collection system due to storm events and high ground water.</p> <p>For more information on this project, click on the above link.</p> <p>Construction for this project begins Monday, June 18, 2018 and should be completed by Fall 2019.</p>	<p>In progress, scheduled completion May 2019.</p> <p>For more information, contact Assistant City Engineer Netra Khatri at 707-825-2173.</p>
<p>Little Lake Redevelopment</p>	<p>Redevelopment of former mill site to create a mixed use project and public amenities, including park and shared parking. The project is currently in progress and is undergoing environmental site evaluation and clean up.</p>	<p>This project is in planning.</p> <p>Contact Jennifer Dart Deputy Director at 707-825-2045.</p>
<p>Strategic Infill Plan – Samoa to Alliance Corridor</p>	<p>This project is largely a planning project that will result in principally-permitted, high-density, mixed-use development along the Samoa and K Street Corridor to Alliance. The program is currently in planning.</p>	<p>This project is in planning.</p> <p>Contact Jennifer Dart Deputy Director at 707-825-2045.</p>
<p>Foodworks – Phase II</p>	<p>Expand the foodworks culinary center and add a copacking facility.</p>	<p>This project is in planning.</p> <p>Contact Jennifer Dart Deputy Director at 707-825-2045.</p>
<p>Digital 299/Data Center</p>	<p>Locate a data center for the Digital 299 project in Arcata.</p>	<p>This project is in planning.</p> <p>Contact Jennifer Dart Deputy Director at 707-825-2045.</p>

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## CITY OF BLUE LAKE

Powers Creek Mixed Use Redevelopment Project – Former Blue Lake Industrial Park

Powers Creek Mixed Use Redevelopment Project	Redevelopment of the former Blue Lake Industrial area.	Planning and development activities are underway.
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## CITY OF EUREKA

### Development Services

Check out the City's website at: [http://www.ci.eureka.ca.gov/depts/development\\_services/default.asp](http://www.ci.eureka.ca.gov/depts/development_services/default.asp)

Marina Way Market	The proposed development will be located on City-owned land at Marina Way and Waterfront Drive, adjacent to Eureka's public marina. The proposed facility is intended to meet the region's needs for manufacturing space for growing food businesses, second-stage processing capacity (packing and bottling), storage and distribution, food innovation, and exposure to local and visitor markets.	In Process.
Municipal Auditorium Renovation	Built in 1936, the Municipal Auditorium is one Eureka's largest venues. In addition to the auditorium, the building also includes a historic grade school that has been converted into office spaces. Portions of the facility can currently be rented, but a lack of accessibility limits the full utilization of the property. The purpose of the renovation is to maximize accessibility and to improve certain aspects of the interior that will make the auditorium a more marketable location.	In process.
C2F Development	The vacant area located on Eureka's waterfront between C and F streets is one of the community's greatest development opportunities. Approximately three city blocks in size, for most of the city's history it served as Eureka's front door. While the project is still in the conceptual phase, it consists of three main components: A traditional 3-story building along First Street, a waterfront park/greenspace/event space along the bay, and a long, thin, unobtrusive parking lot between the First Street buildings and the waterfront park.	In Process.



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Redwood Canopy Walk	The Redwood Canopy Walk will educate and engage tourists and regional residents alike in an educational eco-adventure like no other. Several ancient redwood trees still stand in Sequoia Park and display complex canopy growth and structure unique to this species and ecosystem. A walk through the trees at mid-canopy level, to learn about the life cycle and bio-importance of these magnificent and ancient trees, will be the ultimate, universally-accessible expedition high in this urban redwood forest.	In process.
Cold Storage Facility	Construction of a cold storage facility in Eureka to serve the local fishing industry.	
Dock B Reconstruction	Reconstruction or possible alternatives of the dock located on Marina Way.	Planned.

## CITY OF FERNDALE

Downtown Revitalization	Historical Renovation of several buildings in Ferndale. The Lentz building is complete and The Paine Building is under renovation.	This project is in planning .
Tourism-Trail Enhancement	Replacement of sections of trail from town to new bridge that crosses Francis Creek to Fireman’s Park, through park across Francis Creek on another bridge up to Eugene Street ending on western side of Russ Park.	This project is underway in initial sections and in planning stage for additional sections.

## CITY OF FORTUNA

Rotating Art Installation	Rotating Art Installation at the Fortuna Chamber of Commerce.	Project underway.
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## HOOPA VALLEY TRIBE

Contact Joe Davis at Hoopa Valley Tribal Planning Department at:

<https://www.hoopa-nsn.gov/the-tribal-government/departments/1490-2/planning-department>

The work of the Planning Department can be divided into 4 main categories: Economic Development, Grant Writing, Administration of the HIP Program, and working with the Land Commission

Grocery Store Project	The Tribe is under construction on a new grocery store. The Arcata Economic Development Corporation has assisted the Tribe in acquiring funding for the new facility. The AEDC and County's Headwaters Fund are two of the several partners in the project. See AEDC website for full list of funding sources.	Construction to be completed in December 2018 with opening in early 2019.
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## HUMBOLDT BAY HARBOR, RECREATION & CONSERVATION DISTRICT (HBHR&CD)

One of the most valuable assets Humboldt County has is Humboldt Bay.

The Harbor District has multiple projects in process at various stages, mostly around Humboldt Bay.

For a current list of projects in the permitting stage see <http://humboldt-bay.org/documents>.

Redwood Marine Terminal-II Innovation Center	<p>When the Harbor District first acquired the property it was vacant, blighted, and had no jobs. The Harbor District has invested over \$4.5 million and has over 65 living wage jobs.</p> <p>The District hopes to create an Innovation Park to provide economic stability and resiliency to the communities surrounding Humboldt Bay and Humboldt County. The Innovation Center has the potential to possess a Public Cargo Dock, Aquaculture Production, Energy Production and Research, and Marine Research.</p> <p>All aspects of the Innovation Center have the potential to help to ensure that Humboldt County can compete in a competitive global market and to help protect Humboldt County from the occurrence of economic shocks caused by unforeseen natural disasters. Disasters such as fires, severe winter storms, flooding, and mudslides can cut off road routes connecting Humboldt County to the outside world. With the development of a Multipurpose Dock, trade will be able to continue in the event of a natural disaster that cuts off other relied upon trade routes.</p>	<p>Planning stage.</p> <p>The Harbor District worked in conjunction with the Humboldt County Planning Department to successfully amend the Coastal Commission approved Local Coastal Plan to allow interim uses. The Harbor District submitted an application to the County Planning Department which is currently under consideration.</p>
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<p>Offshore Wind Energy Upland Assembly &amp; Multipurpose Dock</p>	<p>The Harbor District has plans for a 50 acre development with a deep draft terminal. The dock would need to be massive compared to those now in the harbor. It is estimated to be 820 feet long, up to 165 feet wide and have a MLLW draft of 32+ feet. Cranes would need to lift 500-600 tons.</p>	<p>The Harbor District lacks the matching funds to secure an EDA grant to develop the preliminary engineering plans and CEQA initial study for the project. This would be a great project for either Headwaters or CDBG grant funds.</p>
<p>Sea Level Rise Material Beneficial Reuse Site</p>	<p>In order to protect our developed and natural areas from the impact of climate change and sea level rise, the Harbor District has acquired and permitted an upland Dredge material dewatering facility. Permit conditions require that the site be limited to prevent salt water from entering the ground water. Once the facility is lined up to 60,000 cubic yards, clean dredge material will be able to be processed each year. Reutilizing this material will create jobs in the restoration and construction sectors and indirectly retain valuable, agricultural, commercial, and industrial lands and jobs.</p>	<p>The District is under contract to prepared the conceptual engineering. A permit amendment should be submitted to the County Planning within a month to allow the site to be lined and a discharge pipe installed back to the bay.</p>
<p>Hi-tech Center</p>	<p>By renovating the existing 17-story building that was formerly part of a pulp mill, the center would have unobstructed 360-degree views of ocean, bay, and mountains. The center would be located at the confluence of the new fiber optic lines that are planned to go along Highway 299 (the Digital 299 Project), the proposed transpacific lines which would land at the foot of the 17-story building. This new high-tech center would have access to markets in Asia and throughout America.</p>	<p>The Harbor District has an exclusive right to negotiate a lease with a firm to install transpacific fiber optic lines. The company is in the process of applying for permits.</p>
<p>Mariculture Upland Pre-Permitting</p>	<p>The District plans to have pre-permitted space for up to 200,000 square feet of upland aquaculture. This will require permits that include a coastal development permit, Water Quality Control Board permit for use of effluent discharge out ocean outfall, fresh water intake from main industrial line; salt water intake form salt water well, ocean, and bay.</p>	<p>The Harbor District included an upland pre-permitting component in the Conditional Use Permit Application as described above. The County Planning did not include the aquaculture project in what is currently being considered by the Planning Commission.</p>

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Mariculture Facility	Renovate 30,000 sq. foot former machine building at Redwood Marine Terminal II (RMTII) to support aquaculture operations.	See above. This use was specifically listed in the project description and site plan, but County Planning did not include it in the project being considered by the Planning Commission.
Samoa Industrial Waterfront Transportation Improvement Project	Roadway and rail to docking facilities: design, permitting, construction.	10% construction drawing have been prepared.
Fields Landing Marine/Industrial Development	Heavy haul out (500+ tons), dry stack storage and boat ramp.	The Harbor District is in the process of considering leasing the site to a on shore wind energy company that needs the site to barge in wind equipment and redeploy in areas permitted in the County.
Harbor Dredging Support Equipment (new)	Tug, crane, flat top and dump barges.	Permits will be applied for within two months.
Water Trails	Docks and Access.	Preliminary planning stage.
Dredging	The Harbor District works closely with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers to keep the entrance to the Harbor dredged.	The USACOE just completed the 2018 dredging. They removed approximately 600,000 cubic yards of material from the Bay entrance.

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<p>Shelter Cove Commercial Fish Processing Facility</p>	<p>A 3 phase project to build a facility for commercial fishing industry to clean and make ready for sale fish catch. This would replace the existing facility retrofit the existing fish cleaning station and retain it in its current location and/or relocate and replace the existing fish waste disposal system with a new approximately 2,500 square foot facility constructed in one to three phases. Phase 1 of the proposed project will relocate and replace the existing fish cleaning station system and change the method of fish offal disposition. The second phase of the proposed project will house two tractor work bays, and a shop/office/storage space. The third project phase will be market/retail space development. This building will be constructed adjacent to the other two phases.</p>	<p>The Harbor District is working with the Shelter Cove Resort Improvement District to assist the local commercial and recreation fisherman to create a non profit Fisherman’s Association. The goal is that the non profit will take over the tractor launch, fish cleaning operations and construct/operate a value added fish market in Shelter Cove.</p>
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**HUMBOLDT BAY MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT (HBMWD)**

See Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District (HBMWD) Implementation Plan at:  
<https://www.hbmwd.com/files/2ede6868a/Final+Report+8-10-10.pdf>.

<p>12 kV Switchgear Relocation Project</p>	<p>Project will relocate our existing 12kV switchgear at our Essex facility out of the flood plain.</p>	<p>In process. Scheduled for completion by end of 2020.</p>
<p>Blue Lake Fieldbrook Pipeline Crossing</p>	<p>Project will consist of the installation of a new 14-inch interior diameter pipeline underneath the Mad River.</p>	<p>Construction is complete. Final project close out expected by Feb. 2019.</p>

**HUMBOLDT COUNTY**

**Department of Public Works**

See Humboldt County General Plan at <https://humboldt.gov/205/General-Plan> for information regarding such items as studying the supply and demand for land for employment, the conversion of prime employment lands, and cleanup and redevelopment of brownfield properties.

<p>Honeydew Bridge Replacement</p>	<p>Replace the 386 foot long bridge built in 1920.</p>	<p>Construction projected for 2021-2022.</p>
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Americans with Disability Act (ADA) Related Projects	Multiple ADA access related projects in conjunction with CalTrans.	Ongoing.
Hoopla Downtown Project	Street improvement project.	2 year design time.
Orleans	Trail through town.	Orleans in right-of-way study phase
Fortuna connectivity to Highway 36	Feasibility study of new road connecting airport to either Hwy 101 or Hwy 36.	Study stage.
County Airport	Study potential electrical grid at County Airport	Construction in 2020.

## MCKINLEYVILLE

Check out the Community's website at: <http://mckinleyvillecsd.com/news>.

Reformation of Central Avenue Open Space Maintenance Zone (OSMZ)	Consistent with the Land Scope and Lighting Act, MCSD updated the OSMZ for Central Avenue. The Maintenance Plan and assessment will allow for the landscaping within the County right of way from Anna Sparks Way to Babblers Road on commercial area of Central Avenue be maintained for the aesthetic value of the commercial area of Central Avenue.	Assessment completed and approved, in effect until 2022. Additional work underway.
McKinleyville CSD Wastewater Management Facility (WWMF) \$15 million Upgrade	Due to more stringent state and federal regulatory requirements MCSD planned, design and upgraded its WWMF to meet requirements for its recently approved state permit. The upgrades will allow McKinleyville to consistently meet current standards for introducing treated effluent back into the environment. Commissioning of this facility will protect the environment and reduce the potential for fines and penalties that would have to be borne by the community.	WWMF was completed in November 2017 and has a service life of roughly 30 years. Project nearly complete.

## ORICK

Wastewater Related	Community Wastewater Treatment System improvements.	Planned.
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## NORTH COAST RAIL AUTHORITY (NCRA)

<p>Recent Legislation - Great Redwood Trail Bill signed into law</p>	<p>Senator McGuire’s bill to create “The Great Redwood Trail” will become an economic driver for the rural North Coast communities it winds through. California outdoor recreation is one of the fastest growing economic sectors of the Golden State’s economy. It generates over \$92 billion a year here in California, is responsible for nearly 700,000 jobs with over \$30 billion in wages, and brings over \$6 billion in tax revenues back to state and local communities. Once completed, the trail could attract hundreds of thousands of locals and visitors alike to hike this spectacular landscape and inject needed funds into our small, rural economies.</p> <p>The State Transportation Agency, along with the California Natural Resources Agency, will begin the master planning process for the Great Redwood Trail by examining potential trail alignment, trail construction and long-term management costs, terrain suitability, rail banking potential, property easements and the possible governance structure of the trail. The planning process could take two years to complete.</p>	<p>Governor Brown signed the bill.</p>
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## CITY OF RIO DELL

<p>Humboldt-Rio Dell Business Park</p>	<p>Development of former Eel River Sawmills property along US-101. Project includes: Water infrastructure expansion; Value added Alternative Agriculture Manufacturing; Alternative Agriculture based Tourism; Environmental remediation.</p>	<p>Project in process.</p>
<p>Eel River Riparian Recreation Trail (ER-3 Trail)</p>	<p>Creation of dedicated bike and pedestrian path along the Eel River from Edwards Street to Davis Street.</p>	<p>Project seeking financing.</p>
<p>Rio Dell Community Center and Plaza</p>	<p>Development and implementation of community center space with facilities to permanently house the Rio Dell Library and open space to hold public events.</p>	<p>Planning stage.</p>
<p>Public Infrastructure: Continued investment in a Sustainable Rio Dell</p>	<p>Projects and Funding Needs: Water storage and pipeline grants; Wastewater collection system grants; Street repair projects; Active Transportation Program grant projects; Continued stormwater improvements.</p>	<p>Projects in various stages of planning and development.</p>

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Public Art Installations-Tourism	Investment in public art displays and murals.	Project in process.
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## REDWAY COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Solar Power Installation	Utilizing district property for solar power generation to offset our power needs reducing the rates we charge our customers allowing more resources for economic growth.	Status.
Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades	Funding secured for current phase.	In planning, engineering will be completed as funded.
Water Availability Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploratory local well drilling, expected completion within one year.</li> <li>• Pocket treatment plant at spring.</li> <li>• Regional storage project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion expected within one year.</li> <li>• Planning suspended.</li> <li>• Not yet started.</li> </ul>
Water Treatment Plant Upgrades	Second clarifier, office/parking rebuild not started. The upgrades and availability projects allow us to serve the growth and associated increase in economic activity projected for our area.	Not yet started.

## SOUTHERN HUMBOLDT COMMUNITY PARK (Non-Profit Organization)

Southern Humboldt Community Park (Non-Profit Organization)	With a mission to promote community values, health and economic development of the immediate area and region by providing additional safe, attractive and convenient recreational opportunities. Currently seeking funding to develop ballparks/soccer fields and improvements to frisbee golf and other community recreational facilities that generate revenue for the continued management and improvements to the park.	EIR has been approved. Permitting for ball fields were recently approved, now fund raising for final engineering and construction.
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## CITY OF TRINIDAD

Check out the City's website at: <http://trinidad.ca.gov/planning-and-building-services>

Local Coastal Program Update	The City of Trinidad is in the process of completing a comprehensive update of its entire Local Coastal Program (LCP). This consists of portions of the General Plan and Zoning, Grading, Building and Subdivision Ordinances.	Underway.
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## TRINIDAD RANCHERIA

Visit the following website for more specific information: <https://trinidad-rancheria.org/enterprises/>

The Trinidad Rancheria is a proud and active member in the local business community. The Rancheria is building a diversified economic base through various business enterprises including: the Seascope Restaurant and Pier, the Sunset Restaurant and the Cher-Ae Heights Casino. These enterprises allow the Trinidad Rancheria to build a self supporting community for today and tomorrow.

## WEOTT COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

No projects listed at this time.

## WILLOW CREEK COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Wastewater System Project	Downtown wastewater treatment project	Planned.
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## APPENDIX B: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT - CURRENT AND PLANNED INITIATIVES

### **Workforce Development Board (WDB)– Overview**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) went into law in 2014. WIOA is the replacement to the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and is meant to better “match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.” WIOA offers a real platform to allow economic developers to engage with local Workforce Investment Boards in a new and more comprehensive way.

The county has a very active Workforce Development Board (WDB) focused on bringing together resources that meet employer and employee needs and advance the prosperity of our communities. Through regional collaborative efforts, the WDB brings together community members from the private sector, local government, non-profits, labor unions, education, and public agencies to:

- Catalyze leadership to collaborate and focus attention on Target industry needs, particularly preparing a skilled workforce for successful careers in those Target industries.
- Demonstrate and articulate the career pathways of demand occupations in the Target industries to youth and adults. Increase the number of high school students who graduate prepared for post-secondary vocational training, further education and/or a career with advancement opportunities in the Target industries. Focus on at-risk youth and those from low income communities. Enroll 90% of adults in training that leads to employment in demand occupations in the Target industries.
- Support system alignments, service integration, and continuous improvement in the utilization of Target industry data for evidence-based strategic planning, policy-making, and deployment of resources within the greater workforce system, as well as guidance for youth and adult job seekers and employers.

### **WDB Current Initiatives**

#### *Healthcare Slingshot Initiative (supported by California Center for Rural Policy)*

- Humboldt County Office of Education and the Health-Careers Exploration Summer Institute hosted a three-week session at St. Joseph Hospital in 2017 and 2018.
- Humboldt State University, State legislature, and College of the Redwoods (CR) are forming a partnership to bring back Basic Skilled Nursing (BSN) program. Consultants hired from other BSN programs are working on curriculum.
- The Region is also working with the K-12 system and SlingShot funding will purchase Health and Science Pipeline Initiative (HASPI) Toolkits for high-schools including Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry, Anatomy and Physiology.
- Region provided 1st career pathway training in the high schools beginning in spring 2018 and 2nd in fall 2018.
- Will continue a health care industry group has asked College of the Redwoods to look at innovative methods to increase training opportunities starting with the Medical Assistant program.

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## Humboldt Trades

- Develop a Regional Trades Marketing Campaign. Marketing materials will be developed and pushed out through media, social media, classrooms, school counselors and the Education at Work program.
- Develop a Regional Trades Training Program. Dynamic discussions are occurring between industry leaders and education, however preliminary and exploratory at this point, the model may include:
  - Freshman (introductory course) - Career exploration, laying the foundation for the pathway
  - Sophomore (concentrator course) - Continued career exploration and hands-on learning in shop classes
  - Junior and Senior (capstone courses) – Part classroom teaching and part on-site rotations at a variety of industry worksites. Ideally, courses would include dual enrollment and pathway alignment with College of the Redwoods.
- Hired a Regional Industry/Education Trades Liaison to provide ongoing coordination and support for the Humboldt Regional Trades Project.
- Pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs. The NCCER program was determined to be the most appropriate model for Humboldt.
- Create career track alignment between K-12 and College of the Redwoods. Efforts will take place to identify dual enrollment opportunities and create improved alignment.
- A trailer and truck were purchased to make the trades classroom mobile.

## College of the Redwoods

College of the Redwoods is a public community college and serves students ages 15 and above. The main campus is located on the north coast of California. Serving Del Norte and Humboldt counties, and parts of western Trinity County, CR has one of the largest service areas in California. These courses and programs cover a broad range of topics and subjects in everything from plant science, bookkeeping, computer science, woodworking, and dental assisting, to game art and animation, early childhood education, restaurant management, manufacturing technology, and nursing. The College offers A.S. and A.A. degrees, as well as numerous certificate options.

### **Workforce & Community Education**

The Community Education department partners with the community to contribute to the economic vitality of the region, provides workforce training to support local employers' needs, and provides lifelong learning opportunities within the District.

Community Education courses are not-for-credit classes offered in addition to the College's academic program. Classes include:

- Business Training & Emerging Leaders Institute
- Health and Wellness



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- Computer & Office Skills
- Construction & Workplace Safety
- Fire Training Courses
- Food Handling
- Personal Enrichment & Art
- Real Estate
- Security Guard Training
- Wildland Fire School

Various Health Care programs (such as the Medical Assistant certificate program) are offered free of charge thanks to a partnership with Humboldt County Workforce Development Board and Slingshot Health Grant.

Programs like Auto Body Collision Repair and Truck Driving were developed in direct response to industry needs and in partnership with industry partners who sponsor students, offer scholarships, provide externship opportunities, and more. Students completing these programs have the academic and hands-one experience needed to start their careers in an in-demand industry with one of many local employers.

## **Certificate programs**

CR offers many certificate and for-credit programs from Dental Assisting to Cyber Security.

## **Personal Enrichment Classes**

CR offers numerous personal enrichment classes, which help to attract and retain professionals. These range from Aikido to Pickleball and more.

## Humboldt State University

Humboldt State University offers a number of standard degree programs. In addition, the University Service Learning & Career Education Center for Community Based Learning has a number of initiatives designed to better match educational offerings with local workforce needs, including:

- Increasing on campus recruitment efforts by bringing local employers onto campus to meet with students through panels or interviews.
- Working with local Chambers of Commerce to create a bridge between HSU and local employers.
- Increasing internship offerings, service learning courses and community based projects to better connect students to community needs and create a better understanding of student and industry strengths.
- Hosting local employer panels every semester for various majors.
- Partnering with Arcata Economic Development Corporations "Workforce Weekend" designed to create more employment opportunities by encouraging local employers to consider a broader range of majors when hiring and students to look for employers with the right cultural fit and not just the right job description.
- Worked with the County Economic Development Department to create a Target of Opportunities handout specifically for HSU students to spotlight careers with strong and growing opportunity.

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In addition, HSU's School of Business has many programs and initiatives designed to better educate students to meet local workforce needs, including:

- Year round Internship program with support from local foundations to place 30-40 students per year, with an additional 14 Volunteer Income Tax Assistants (interns) per year.
- Continuing participation in Venture Collaborative with CR, HCOE, Blue Lake Rancheria, and SBDC to build a seamless entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- Host a Google (or other) Start Up weekend.
- Participate in Regional Business Concept Competition called the Future Four and More.
- Host Accounting/Finance and Marketing/Management mixers for students and businesses.
- Establish solid connections with Rotary clubs, Chambers of Commerce, Workforce Investment Board and more.
- Partner with HCOE's Education at Work program.
- Partner with HSU-CR Get Ready Humboldt program.
- Partner with HealthCare initiatives- Nursing, Pharmacy, oral health etc.

**Get Ready Humboldt** - Supported by Innovation Award funding, Get Ready Humboldt is a campaign to increase college participation in Humboldt County. Get Ready Humboldt is a collaboration between HSU, CR and HCOE to promote college at all levels to local high school and middle school parents and youth. The campaign will include ambassadors from our business community who will advocate for the importance of college and the job opportunities available for each step in the educational pathway. In addition, student ambassadors who are currently enrolled in college will promote a real-world view of the college experience via social media and events. The campaign will launch in fall 2018 and is planned to be an ongoing effort.

**Venture Collaborative** - Sponsored by CR via Strong Workforce funds, the Venture Collaborative is a partnership between CR, HSU, HCOE, SBDC and Blue Lake Rancheria with the goal of creating an entrepreneurial ecosystem in Humboldt County that provides wrap-around support for startup businesses and training and development opportunities for future managers in Humboldt County. Additionally, the Collaborative aims to increase transfers between partner institutions via programs related to entrepreneurship and/or intrapreneurship (entrepreneurial thinking within existing organizations). The effort is currently underway with a formal launch planned for spring 2019.

#### Humboldt County Office of Education (HCOE)

HCOE has a number of initiatives designed to prepare youth for the local workforce and more.

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## **Decade of Difference**

The Decade of Difference is a ten year initiative to prepare local youth to be contributing and productive members in our society, community and economy. The initiative includes strategic efforts focused on:

- Early literacy in reading and math, financial literacy.
- College and career planning focused on the targets of opportunity.
- Creative and innovative entrepreneurship activities.
- Teacher training and professional development.
- Parent, business and community engagement.

## **Career Frontiers and Student Career Exploration Programs 2017-2018**

These programs offer opportunities to gain career insight and perspective by connecting students with workplace mentors in our community, including:

- Career Panels
- Workshops
- Field Trips
- Job Shadows

## **Innovate**

INNOVATE! Business Challenge is a high school competition to create an idea for a business startup. Winners receive thousands of dollars in cash and prizes to help get their business off the ground!

## **Career Technical Education in all schools**

Career Technical Education (CTE) programs offer both academic and career-oriented training. These programs prepare youth and adults for a wide range of high-wage, high-skill, and high-demand careers.

## **Education at Work Initiative**

This program offers exposure to employment opportunities prior to high school graduation and allows students to explore various career options. The Education at Work Program:

- Generates awareness of opportunities available within the local business community.
- Gives businesses the ability to communicate directly to students and groom future employees.
- Allows students to identify and relate their interests, skills, and aspirations to local job market opportunities.

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- Promotes hands-on career exploration, preparation and training.

## **Humboldt Maker Program**

Maker Nights offer hands-on activities that incorporate the elements of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) with the opportunity for family exploration, collaboration, and creativity.

## **Health Careers Exploration Program**

Health Careers Exploration Project (HCEP) is a new program for local high school students to explore the different healthcare career options in Humboldt County. This is a great chance to learn more about healthcare and investigate health career opportunities in our local Humboldt County communities.

## **Trades Academy**

The purpose of the Trades Academy is to enhance existing Career Technical Education programs and to support high school students with opportunities to explore career options available in our local trades industries.

## Employment Training Division

The Employment Training Division (ETD) is a division of the Social Services Branch of Humboldt County's Department of Health and Human Services. ETD's mission is to empower people to believe in and to achieve their career goals. ETD provides workforce services for several Social Service programs, including CalWORKs, General Relief, Transitional Age Youth, Independent Living Services, and Helping Humboldt, as well as for the Probation and Sheriff's Department through the Humboldt 2nd Chance Program, which works with ex-offenders. Workforce services provided by ETD for job seekers include:

- Labor market information and career counseling.
- Work readiness training through softs skills workshops and hands-on work experience.
- Vocational skills training.
- Job search preparation and assistance.
- Job recruitment opportunities, job placement assistance and job retention supports.

ETD also provides workshops for local employers to help them with recruiting, job posting, interviewing and retention. Both job seekers and employers benefit from the wage subsidy programs – Work Experience and On-the-Job Training – and through hiring tax credits and state bonding information ETD provisions for DHHS and Probation.

## **Additional Recommended Strategies to Build Workforce**

- Provide employer trainings on best hiring practices.
- Adjust hiring practices to address timing differential

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- o In rural areas with fewer employers and employees, employee readiness/availability and employer need for specific positions doesn't always line up. Employers can educate applicants on various employment opportunities and internal career paths, interview for company fit, support hired employees to eventually attain their career goals (model after Arcata Economic Development Corporation's "Workforce Weekend").
- Identify and develop untapped (or underutilized) resources (ex-offenders, those with physical or developmental disabilities, etc.).
- Continue to support first line supervisor and mid-management training and other certificate programs that provide needed training without the time commitment required by a formal degree.
- Better publicize the Job Market and other workforce development programs.
- Use Labor Market Data to Drive Decisions
  - o The Targets of Opportunity Occupations report provides information on in-demand and high paying occupations, which can help guide job-seekers
  - o Trends in the job market, often combined with industry feedback, can help to identify future in-demand occupations; workforce agencies can then adjust their programs accordingly
- Enhance and promote on-line distance learning opportunities, acquiring degrees and/or certificates, particularly in rural learning centers to overcome travel distance obstacles.
- Stimulate and support new entrepreneurship among youth, students and career adults.
- Encourage art education and academic art programs to emphasize community engagement, heritage awareness and entrepreneurship to increase community benefits.



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## APPENDIX C: TOURISM, ARTS AND CULTURE

### Current Efforts to Support Tourism, Arts and Culture

There are a number of initiatives designed to support Tourism, Arts and Culture in the Community. These include:

- A Eureka Strategic Arts Plan, which includes
  - Eureka as Arts District with related activities (e.g., Friday Night Market)
  - Mural Fest
  - Opera Alley Strategic Plan (40 projects)
- Humboldt County Convention and Visitor's Bureau's on-going promotion
- Ink People support of multiple projects
- Active recruitment of cruise ships
- An active Film Commission
- A Culture Asset Plan for the City of Arcata and Arcata Creamery District neighborhood arts with connection to the Marsh
- Rio Dell/Eagle Prairie Arts Activities
- Grass roots international artistic support through the Ink People (10 events)
- Ferndale Repertory Theater National project
- Fortuna Multi-Generational Center arts and culture activities offered for youth through seniors
- Dell Arte International School of Physical Theater
- Blue Lake is developing an industrial/mixed use area focus specialty food and beverages, arts and crafts, etc.
- Musician Julie Fulkerson is developing a website to highlight local classical music events
- Arcata is renovating a visible historic home which will
  - Showcase renovation potential
  - Inspire other renovations
  - Assist in educating building owners about the Mills Act, which offers incentive to preserve historic buildings



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- The city of Eureka Historic Preservation Committee is developing a website of all historic buildings that will offer suggested tour routes.
- The Eureka Veterans Memorial Hall is getting a significant (\$7M) restoration. The project includes restoration of the 1930s façade, installation of a new elevator, decorative painting, ADA compliant upgrades and more. The American Legion Post 212 and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1872 use the hall but also make it available as a community space for concerts and events.



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## APPENDIX D: LINKS TO SOURCE DATA

### FEDERAL LINKS

ACS	American Census Survey	<a href="https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/about.html">https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/about.html</a>
BLS	US Bureau of Labor Statistics	<a href="https://www.bls.gov/bls/infohome.htm">https://www.bls.gov/bls/infohome.htm</a>
DOL	US Department of Labor	<a href="https://www.dol.gov/">https://www.dol.gov/</a>
EDA	Economic Development Administration	<a href="https://www.eda.gov/">https://www.eda.gov/</a>
HUD	US Department of Housing & Urban Development	<a href="https://www.hud.gov/">https://www.hud.gov/</a>
SBA	US Small Business Administration	<a href="http://www.sba.gov">www.sba.gov</a>
SBDC	Small Business Development Center	<a href="http://northcoastsbdc.org">http://northcoastsbdc.org</a> ; <a href="https://www.sba.gov/tools/local-assistance/sbdc">https://www.sba.gov/tools/local-assistance/sbdc</a>
USDA	US Department of Agriculture	<a href="http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/Home.html">http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/Home.html</a>

### STATE LINKS

CWDB	California Workforce Development Board	<a href="https://cwdb.ca.gov/">https://cwdb.ca.gov/</a>
CA-EDD	California Employment Development Department	<a href="http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/data/labor-market-data-library.html">http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/data/labor-market-data-library.html</a>

### ORGANIZATIONAL LINKS

CALED	California Association for Local Economic Development	<a href="https://caled.org/">https://caled.org/</a>
IEDC	International Economic Development Council	<a href="https://www.iedconline.org/index.php">https://www.iedconline.org/index.php</a>
NDC	National Development Council	<a href="https://ndconline.org/">https://ndconline.org/</a>

### REPORTS

Redwood Coast Targets of Opportunities Report	<a href="https://www2.humboldt.edu/acac/sites/default/files/Targets%20of%20Opportunity%20Report.pdf">https://www2.humboldt.edu/acac/sites/default/files/Targets%20of%20Opportunity%20Report.pdf</a>
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## APPENDIX E: ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>ACS</b>	American Community Survey - It is the premier source for detailed population and housing information about our nation. It is an ongoing survey that provides vital information on a yearly basis about our nation and its people. Information from the survey generates data that help determine how more than \$675 billion in federal and state funds are distributed each year
<b>BLS</b>	The Bureau of Labor Statistics division of the US Department of Labor that is the principal federal agency responsible for measuring labor market activity, working conditions, and price changes in the economy
<b>California EDD</b>	State of California Employment Development Department. The EDD - Labor Market Information Division (LMID) - each month releases revised and preliminary civilian labor force, unemployment rates, and industry employment by geography for California statewide, metropolitan areas, counties, and sub-county areas
<b>CALED</b>	California Association for Local Economic Development
<b>CEDS</b>	Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
<b>Census</b>	US Census Bureau
<b>Cluster</b>	A business cluster is a geographic concentration of interconnected businesses, suppliers, and associated institutions in a particular field
<b>CR</b>	College of the Redwoods
<b>CWDB</b>	California Workforce Development Board
<b>Diversification</b>	An economy with varied industries comprising its base; avoiding over-reliance on any one sector
<b>DOL</b>	US Department of Labor
<b>EDA</b>	Economic Development Administration - a division of the US Department of Commerce
<b>EDD</b>	Economic Development District (normally one or more counties united to form a regional economic development organization)
<b>FFO</b>	Federal Funding Opportunity
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product-a monetary measure of the market value of all final goods and services produced in a period of time
<b>Great Recession</b>	A period of time generally accepted to have begun with the Financial Crisis of 2007-2008 and, depending on the area of the US and World Economies, lasted through 2010-2014

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<b>HSU</b>	Humboldt State University
<b>HUD</b>	US Department of Housing and Urban Development
<b>IEDC</b>	International Economic Development Council
<b>MSA</b>	Metropolitan Statistical Area - a geographical region with a relatively high population density at its core and close economic ties throughout the region, it is designated by the Federal Government
<b>NDC</b>	National Development Council
<b>Nonemployer</b>	Business with no employees
<b>PCI</b>	Per Capita Income (Total income divided by Total Population)
<b>PWEDA</b>	EDA's Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965
<b>Resilience</b>	A community's ability to prevent, withstand, and recover from a major economic disruption/shocks
<b>SBA</b>	US Small Business Administration
<b>SBDC</b>	Small Business Development Center
<b>Sector</b>	A sector is an area of the economy in which businesses share the same or a related product or service. A Sector can also be thought of as an industry or market that shares common operating characteristics
<b>STEAM</b>	Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math
<b>STEM</b>	Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
<b>SWOT</b>	A strategic planning tool used to identify an area's economic Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.
<b>WDB</b>	Workforce Development Board