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Greetings Eureka Community,

I don’t think any of us could have predicted the many challenges we have faced this year. Still, I am deeply proud that our City has continued to innovate and leverage current resources to meet our community needs and so much more. We continue to make strategic decisions and support our strong community values and continued advancement. An example is this document, the Economic Development Strategic Plan Update.

Two pieces of context are essential with this plan. The first is its history. In 2015, the City of Eureka adopted an Economic Development Strategic Plan. The plan was designed to function as the implementation tool that complements the more general goal and policy framework established by the Economic Development Element of the General Plan. These documents were meant to be developed in parallel; however, the Economic Development Strategic Plan proceeded faster than the General Plan Update. Accordingly, the Economic Development Strategic Plan needed to be revised and tailored to ensure consistency with the Economic Development Element, giving us this document, the Economic Development Strategic Plan Update.

The second piece of context is the reorganization of departments within the City. Economic Development has moved into the City Administration office. It acts as the glue between our business community and all of our departments and is a priority of our City Council and our leadership team. I believe that all City departments play a role in economic development. I want to make sure that every department’s contribution to economic development is well coordinated and planned to achieve the best results. We have expanded our staffing levels in Economic Development and will continue to expand the services we provide for the business community.

As Eureka’s City Manager, I want to thank the Mayor and City Council, our community and City staff for their resilience and commitment to Eureka. This year has proven that the Eureka community is ready to respond and take care of each other no matter what happens. I look forward to seeing the goals of this strategic plan become reality.

In Service,

Miles Slattery
City Manager
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to outline a range of economic development strategies and implementing actions that will guide the City’s short and medium-term efforts to promote local economic development.

As a shorter-term implementation tool, the City can use the Economic Development Strategic Plan Update to develop annual work plans and progress reports. It should be updated periodically to reflect progress towards implementation, as well as changing economic conditions.

This Economic Development Strategic Plan Update encapsulates multiple strategies implemented in tandem with other recommendations over many years, such that benefits accrue from concerted, ongoing, and synergistic efforts.

To ensure successful implementation, the Economic Development Commission and City Council will need to continue their leadership role in local economic development by providing policy guidance and direction to the City Manager and staff on specific economic development activities. Under the City Manager's direction and in collaboration with stakeholders from both inside and outside of the City and County governments, City staff will be responsible for implementing the Economic Development Strategic Plan Update. City staff will provide the Council with updates on economic development issues regularly.
ACTION PLAN

The City of Eureka Economic Development Strategic Plan Update describes the specific strategic initiatives and implementing actions that the City Council, Economic Development Commission, staff, and other partners should undertake to achieve the assorted goals and policy objectives delineated in the Economic Development Element of the General Plan.

Under each of the strategies are narrative descriptions that outline the recommended implementation action steps.

City staff will accomplish some actions through the course of their regular duties, while others will require specific action on behalf of the City Council, City staff, or strategic partners. Some actions will require little more than changes to existing policies and procedures, while others may require one-time expenditures for studies, consultants, or infrastructure; others may require ongoing budgetary support, such as hiring new staff or consultant services. In many cases, the City will have the option to scale efforts to match the available resources. In contrast, in other cases, the City and its partners will need to pursue supplemental funding, possibly in grants, bonds, or even new financing districts. There will also be opportunities to leverage municipal funds to secure outside resources, such as contributions from cooperating businesses and other entities with sympathetic local economic development objectives.
GOALS

The Strategic Plan framework is centered on a single overarching goal:

IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR EUREKA'S RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES AND EMPLOYEES, AND VISITORS THROUGH POSITIVE ACTIONS TO ATTRACT, RETAIN, AND EXPAND BUSINESSES WITHIN THE CITY.
This goal encompasses four sub-goals, each with an assortment of supporting strategic initiatives and implementing actions. Following are the sub-goals:

**SUB-GOAL A: MAINTAIN AND CREATE HIGH QUALITY JOBS**

High-quality jobs will provide economic opportunities for individuals who reside in the community to support themselves and their families. They can provide for their own needs and have the means to lead fulfilling lives and contribute to the community's betterment. Under this strategy, high-quality jobs are defined to include those with wages that equal or exceed the area median wage.

**SUB-GOAL B: BUILD EUREKA'S COMMUNITY ASSETS**

Building community assets, including recreational amenities, cultural resources, public services, and infrastructure and public facilities that facilitate business growth and residents' everyday activities, will increase the value of Eureka as a place to live, work, and visit. These improvements will make Eureka more economically competitive. They will also help to attract and retain a diverse, high-quality workforce, young families, and innovators, and creative entrepreneurs, which themselves are critical assets for local economic development.
SUB-GOAL C: CREATE A DIVERSE & RESILIENT ECONOMY

Increasing the local economy’s diversity will reduce the reliance on individual businesses or industry sectors, which are inevitably buffeted periodically over time, either by competitive forces, disruptive technologies or policies, or natural disasters or other occurrences beyond control. The "multiplier effects" of a given business will be more significant when the local economy is diverse. There are many opportunities for business-to-business spending within the local area. A mixed economy will be better positioned to adapt as legacy industries fade and new industries emerge within the regional, national, and global economies.

SUB-GOAL D: STRENGTHEN THE CITY'S REVENUE BASE

Economic development helps grow the local tax base to generate revenues that support essential community services, such as police, fire, parks, and recreation services. High-quality public community services are a vital ingredient in the local quality of life. While many forms of economic development can be beneficial to the community at large, the City of Eureka should seek to promote economic growth, to the extent possible, in sectors of the economy that provide financial benefit to the City.
STRATEGIES

Several economic development strategies emerged in response to issues, challenges, and opportunities identified by analyzing existing conditions and trends within the Eureka area. The strategies are organized according to the sub-goals that they support, and the rationale for each of the different approaches is explained within the each action item.

ACTIONS

The actions associated with each strategy explain the steps necessary for the City and its partners to make progress toward implementing the strategies in working towards the over-arching goal and sub-goals. This format is intended to ensure consistency with the General Plan over time while allowing the City and other local stakeholders to select among strategies and actions for implementation at a given point in time, as dictated by changing economic conditions, community concerns, and resource availability. Thirty-one actions are identified to make progress towards implementing the strategies in working towards the over-arching goal and sub-goals. Table 1, on the following page, provides a high-level summary of the Strategic Plan Update’s Goals, Strategies, and Actions. The narrative contained on the subsequent pages offers more details on each of the Strategies and their constituent Actions. Appendix A presents a summary matrix that provides a quick reference for the identified strategies and their corresponding actions, including the recommended timing, relative costs, implementation responsibilities, and opportunities for public and interagency partnerships for implementation.
**TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF GOALS, SUB-GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND ACTIONS**

Goal: Improve the quality of life for Eureka’s residents, businesses and employees, and visitors through positive actions to attract, retain, and expand businesses within the city.

**Sub-Goal A: Maintain and create high quality jobs**
- Strategy 1: Develop community consensus on desired growth
  - Action 1A: Align all Economic Development efforts with guiding documents
- Strategy 2: Support local business growth and success
  - Action 2A: Digitize business license applications and collect business data
  - Action 2B: Inventory business needs, wants, and requirements
  - Action 2C: Streamline regulations and processes to support a business-friendly reputation
  - Action 2D: Implement a business retention and recruitment program
  - Action 2E: Create Economic Development webpage and social media strategy
- Strategy 3: Maintain and improve goods movement to and from Eureka
  - Action 3A: Improve goods movement to and from locations outside the region
  - Action 3B: Partner to create distribution/cold storage facility

**Sub-Goal B: Build Eureka’s community assets**
- Strategy 4: Make improvements that increase Eureka’s attractiveness as a tourism destination
  - Action 4A: Create a Beautification Master Plan
  - Action 4B: Implement and fund Façade/CPTED program
  - Action 4C: Implement informational workshops regarding Zero Waste
- Strategy 5: Encourage investment in broadband infrastructure
  - Action 5A: Create a Broadband Plan for Eureka
- Strategy 6: Strengthen Eureka’s position as a center for regional medical services
  - Action 6A: Identify and plan for medical center expansion
  - Action 6B: Develop a strategy to establish Eureka as a center for destination healthcare
  - Action 6C: Include telehealth as a focus of the Broadband Plan
- Strategy 7: Initiate long-range planning processes for areas with high development/redevelopment potential
  - Action 7A: Create specific plans for waterfront, Broadway, Wabash and Samoa airport
- Strategy 8: Support new investment in Eureka’s Opportunity Zone
  - Action 8A: Market Eureka’s Opportunity Zone to local and outside investors
**Table 1: Summary of Goals, Sub-Goals, Strategies, and Actions, Continued**

**Sub-Goal C: Create a diverse and resilient economy**
- Strategy 9: Modernize coastal zoning
  - Action 9A: Certify Local Coastal Program amendment
- Strategy 10: Maintain and expand the City’s role as a regional office hub
  - Action 10A: Identify strategies for expanding existing office-based businesses and institutions
- Strategy 11: Exercise a common vision for the maintenance and expansion of Port activities
  - Action 11A: Coordinate land use planning in the Port area with Humboldt County and the Humboldt Bay Harbor District
  - Action 11B: Secure facilities for the commercial fishing fleet
  - Action 11C: Evaluate the market for commercial cruise ship visitation
- Strategy 12: Support the expansion of aquaculture activities in the Humboldt Bay
  - Action 12A: Provide by-right zoning for commercial fishing/processing, aquaculture, marine shipping, and related support businesses
  - Action 12B: Establish a modern cold storage facility within the City limits
- Strategy 13: Keep pace with the rapid evolution of commercial cannabis in California
  - Action 13A: Update current cannabis ordinance
- Strategy 14: Develop a local business resiliency framework for emergency response
  - Action 14A: Create Resiliency Plan to support businesses during emergencies
- Strategy 15: Ensure Eureka has a voice in rural advocacy efforts at a state and regional level
  - Action 15A: Determine what Rural Advocacy Planning efforts are currently underway within Humboldt County and integrate Eureka

**Sub-goal D: Strengthen the City’s revenue base**
- Strategy 16: Strengthen Eureka’s role as a hub for retail sales activity on the North Coast
  - Action 16A: Implement commercial corridor/district revitalization projects
- Strategy 17: Strengthen and expand the City’s tourism sector
  - Action 17A: Promote Eureka as the cultural, artistic, and economic center of the Humboldt County and North Coast Region of California
  - Action 17B: Support visual and performing arts programing, festivals and other events
  - Action 17C: Continue implementing the Strategic Arts Plan
SUB-GOAL A: MAINTAIN AND CREATE HIGH QUALITY JOBS

Strategy 1: Develop community consensus on desired growth

The City recognizes that there are a variety of perspectives within the community regarding the amount of growth necessary to produce a vibrant economy and ensure the efficient delivery of municipal services.

Action 1A: Align all Economic Development efforts with guiding documents

The Economic Development Strategic Plan Update is designed to function as an implementation tool that complements the more general goal and policy framework established by the Economic Development Element of the General Plan, Eureka’s updated Zoning Code, Strategic Arts Plan, Housing Element, Eureka Family and Children Initiative, and the Diversity Plan that is underway. These documents identified the City’s overarching goals and established a broad policy framework intended to guide the City’s actions over the long term. This document represents a near-to-medium-term work plan that identifies initiatives and activities that will help the City support established policies and achieve the long-term goals identified in the guiding documents.
Strategy 2: Support local business growth and success

The City of Eureka recognizes that its area businesses’ success is of critical importance to the long-term health of the local economy. Companies provide essential income for area workers and tax revenues for local government; they also contribute to community character and quality of life. With a long history of home-grown businesses, the City of Eureka recognizes the value of retaining existing businesses, which maintain close ties to the community, over the recruitment of new companies, which can sometimes extract value from the community. Where possible, the City should provide opportunities to expand the economic base by encouraging local businesses to grow and by attracting new businesses that complement and support the existing and desired economic specializations and competitive advantages of the Eureka community.

Action 2A: Digitize business license applications and collect business data

To apply for a City of Eureka business license, the business owner must come into City Hall and pay their fees at the water billing counter. In addition to an outdated application process, the business licenses’ information is kept and maintained in an outdated way. The City should allow for business licenses to be applied and paid for online and create a database of information on the businesses in Eureka. At every level, economic development decisions are driven by numbers. Having data on Eureka’s enterprises and contact information allows staff to make informed decisions and the ability to communicate programs to Eureka’s businesses.
Action 2B: Inventory business needs, wants and requirements

To identify areas of improvement and possibly additional action items for inclusion in later versions of this plan, the City should work with the business community to inventory the needs of businesses. The purpose of this action is to ensure that there is open and ongoing communication between the City of Eureka and the local business community and that the City is pursuing a proactive approach to addressing the evolving needs of business. This action includes two distinct components that are oriented toward encouraging new business creation and the retention and expansion of existing ones, respectively. Furthermore, the first item is oriented towards identifying the business community’s needs, as seen from their perspective. The second is oriented towards the administrative processes that businesses must comply with to operate within the City limits, only some of which are under the City of Eureka’s control.

- Inventory what is needed to encourage business growth and expansion – This may include a listing of items that the City could act on or support that would promote business retention and development. Items included in the inventory could be intended to support the business community at large or intended to support a specific sector of the business community, such as the commercial fishing industry. Items included in the inventory may range from infrastructure items, such as water, sewer, or streetscape improvements, to changes to the City’s permitting processes or the creation of new business support programs.

- Identify what is needed for someone to open a business in Eureka. This component is intended to identify those actions that prospective entrepreneurs must take before opening or establishing a business in the City of Eureka. The inventory is designed to provide clear and streamlined guidance. This may include a listing or matrix that identifies the necessary permits that must be acquired and the forms that must be submitted. This inventory may be categorized as appropriate by type of business or by other factors to disseminate information to the business community efficiently.
To develop and update these inventories on an ongoing basis, the City should consider:

- During the business license renewal process, the City should conduct an initial survey of local businesses to identify broad-based business retention and expansion needs. Then, to maintain an up-to-date inventory of business concerns and issues, the City should conduct more targeted surveying on an annual basis in conjunction with the annual license renewal process.

- Conduct outreach and interviews with critical businesses – In addition to ongoing survey work, the City should conduct targeted interviews with companies that represent vital strategic economic assets, to maintain a pulse on their satisfaction with the local business environment and to obtain early warning of the expansion or retention needs of essential businesses. Also, in those cases where companies chose to leave Eureka, the City should conduct exit interviews to identify the factors that led to their closure or relocation.
Action 2C: Streamline regulations and processes to support a business-friendly reputation

The City should develop a streamlined permitting process that supports creating a business-friendly reputation. This can be done by reviewing all pertinent rules, regulations, and processes and making revisions and adjustments to respond to businesses’ stated needs throughout the community. The City should eliminate redundancy, reduce confusion, and remove administrative and policy barriers to doing business within the City. This should take the form of a detailed internal review that leverages close relationships with key representatives of the local business community. This could also include the establishment of performance standards for City staff for permitting and other administrative services.
Action 2D: Implement a business retention and recruitment program

The purpose of this action is to establish a pro-active business retention and recruitment program that focuses on strengthening at-risk businesses who might otherwise close or relocate outside of the area and specializes in the attraction of new business establishments that complement the City’s existing and desired economic specializations and competitive advantages. Although the City may continue to lose some businesses due to changes in the broader economic environment, the City should utilize what tools are at its disposal, in cooperation with key community partners, to retain existing businesses for as long as reasonably possible, especially those that are locally based. Similarly, as the area continues to experience economic readjustment, the City should proactively recruit businesses that complement its existing business environment and support the establishment and growth of business clusters with prospects for growth, such as aquaculture, education, and health care.

Also, the City should perform a vacancy rate analysis and have an inventory of vacant and underutilized properties. This data should be used for incentive programs and recruitment efforts, along with a possible vacancy tax for chronically vacant properties.

Action 2E: Create Economic Development webpage and social media strategy

The organization and presentation of a city’s information is a key element in making your city attractive to potential developments. Information should be easy to find, up-to-day and thorough. A city’s Economic Development website should convey that your city is ready and willing to work with developers on any issue that may arise. This is a city’s chance to show potential investors that your city is organized and ready to help make their project a success.
Strategy 3: Maintain and improve goods movement to and from Eureka

Transportation is a critical component of business success, particularly for those goods-producing industries, such as timber processing, commercial fishing, and manufacturing. Market analysis and interviews with key community stakeholders suggest that maintenance of existing transportation connections will play a critical role in retaining existing businesses and allowing them to expand within the region. However, the local and regional transportation options remain underdeveloped. To ensure that local businesses can grow while maintaining operations within the City of Eureka, the City will need to pursue additional transportation improvement efforts of various kinds. The actions discussed below are intended to address the full breadth of transportation issues, ranging from maintaining access from the Broadway-Highway 101 corridor to existing commercial sites throughout the City to the maintenance of the Port of Humboldt Bay and the pursuit of new options for goods movement, such as a marine highway service.
Action 3A: Improve goods movement to and from locations outside the region

The challenges associated with transporting goods to and from locations outside of the North Coast region are an essential barrier to economic development in Eureka. Limited access to broader commercial distribution networks can create a challenge to local manufacturing operations that rely on suppliers located out of the area. Similarly, the cost and logistical complications of shipping finished products out of the region can also be barriers to retention and expansion, particularly manufacturers and other goods-producing enterprises. The City should support efforts to maintain the region’s existing extra-regional transportation connections while simultaneously encouraging new linkages to address this. More specifically, this plan suggests that the City consider taking at least the following steps:

- Take a leadership role in advocating for regional highway improvements. As the dominant urban and governmental center on the North Coast, the City of Eureka is in a solid position to support, in collaboration with other North Coast communities, to improve the regional highway network. Although the City has direct influence only over those portions of the highway system that fall within, or adjacent to, its boundaries, the City’s economic solid and governmental role places it in a position to participate in planning discussions with Caltrans regarding the more extensive North Coast highway network.
Encourage maintenance of the Port of Humboldt Bay. The existing Port facilities represent a vital strategic asset since they represent one of the only efficient methods for transporting bulky goods into and out of the North Coast region. Although the port has seen considerable declines in total cargo handled, it is in the community's strategic interest to maintain the port facilities for future use. This can be done through coordination with the Harbor District regarding the maintenance and upkeep of existing facilities, the development of new port support facilities, and the retention of existing businesses/industries that utilize the port facilities. Work with other regional partners to maintain and improve commercial air service – commercial air services, both for passengers and cargo, are provided via the Arcata/Eureka Airport (ACV). Due to prevailing weather conditions, air service is occasionally unreliable. The City should work with other regional stakeholders to facilitate continued and expanded commercial air service via ACV to promote business and leisure travel to the North Coast and Eureka and commercial shipments sent via ACV.

Monitor developments regarding a proposed maritime highway – the City, should remain abreast of any developments concerning a potential marine highway system along the West Coast of the U.S. As one of the few deep-water ports located along the West Coast, Eureka should advocate being designated as a maritime highway terminal. Any of the previously mentioned transportation improvements would help make Eureka a more attractive marine highway terminal location. The addition of regularly scheduled shipping services through the Port of Humboldt Bay could provide a practical, reliable, and cost-effective link to national and international shipping networks for businesses located in Eureka.
Action 3B: Partner to create distribution/cold storage facility

The challenges associated with transporting goods to and from locations outside of the North Coast region are an important barrier to economic development in Eureka. Limited access to broader commercial distribution networks can create a challenge to local manufacturing operations that rely on suppliers located out of the area. Similarly, the cost and logistical complications of shipping finished products out of the region can also be a barrier to retention and expansion, notably manufacturers and other good-producing enterprises.

In addition to the challenges regarding distribution, the loss of cold storage in our area significantly increased the costs of doing business. Lastly, the addition of a co-packing or co-bottling facility should be considered to meet the region’s needs for manufacturing space for growing food businesses, second-stage processing capacity (packing and bottling), storage and distribution, and food innovation. A feasibility study should be conducted to analyze the potential for a cross-dock/distribution hub, ice and cold storage, co-packing, or co-bottling facility, potentially in partnership with Humboldt County and Humboldt Made.
SUB-GOAL B: BUILD EUREKA’S COMMUNITY ASSETS

Strategy 4: Make improvements that increase Eureka’s attractiveness as a tourism destination

Tourism is a significant contributor to the Eureka economy, and it is vital that the City maintain and increase its share of tourism activity. It is essential that the City of Eureka and local partners work to increase the size of the local tourism pie so that when new hotels are built, or existing hotels are expanded, the additional hotel rooms do not simply result in a reallocation of the same number of visitor nights, which would cause a dilution of the market for existing hoteliers.
Action 4A: Create a Beautification Master Plan

The need for beautification and blight removal are key priorities to improve the local environment for tourism. The Economic Development Department should take the lead on a Beautification Master Plan, organizing citywide priorities while working with various partners to accomplish the agreed project list.

Action 4B: Implement and fund Façade/CPTED program

The Façade Improvement Rebate and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Grant Program is a pilot program intended to improve the appearance of commercial buildings in designated business areas within the City limits of Eureka, while promoting building security for Eureka businesses through the use of rebates for costs associated with improvements to building exteriors. The pilot program is proving successful, and the eligible areas should be expanded citywide.

Action 4C: Implement informational workshops regarding Zero Waste

The City of Eureka should provide technical assistance and training and advocate for sustainable materials management and Zero Waste policies for our businesses. Zero Waste is a philosophy of sending as little as possible to the landfill and ensuring waste materials are reduced, reused, recycled, or repurposed. The City of Eureka should implement informational workshops regarding Zero Waste and work with neighboring businesses on dumpster consolidation and security.
Strategy 5: Encourage investment in broadband infrastructure

Eureka realizes the importance of broadband and fiber infrastructure to serve the City, business community, residents, schools, hospitals, and utilities. Broadband infrastructure promotes economic growth and development that drive innovation, provides access to education, and encourages well-being while supporting healthcare providers and public safety communication systems. Through the use of public policy, Eureka can offer the development of more excellent broadband connectivity.

Action 5A: Create a Broadband Plan for Eureka

With strategic goals for long-term economic development, the City’s role in encouraging broadband investments will help bridge the digital divide and be instrumental in developing infrastructure to support economic growth. Cities have several options to help “promote” broadband in their communities.

The City should create a Broadband Plan for Eureka that provides an incremental approach, outlining an overall strategy for broadband implementation throughout the City, including policy decisions and overall development costs.
Strategy 6: Strengthen Eureka’s position as a center for regional medical services

High-quality advanced medical services are an essential community asset. Eureka is fortunate to have established itself as a regional medical center for the North Coast region. Although not commonly targeted as an economic development strategy, retirees’ attraction can have economic benefits because retirees usually bring with them their financial resources and contribute to the local economy when they purchase real estate, goods, and services. Access to good medical care is a crucial consideration for the elderly.

Action 6A: Identify and plan for medical center expansion

The City should establish an ongoing dialogue with St. Joseph’s Medical Center and other healthcare leaders to ensure that the City is aware of any expansion needs and can work with the medical center and related entities to identify appropriate sites and process entitlements and building permits in a timely fashion. This would include projects involving the main campus and any satellite facilities such as outpatient clinics, labs, and physician’s offices that could be located elsewhere in the community.
Action 6B: Develop a strategy to establish Eureka as a center for destination healthcare

Leverage the area’s high-quality medical facilities to establish Eureka as a destination medical center for the North Coast region. The City should pursue additional research, in collaboration with St. Joseph’s Medical Center and the greater Eureka healthcare community, to identify the potential market for such services, inventory the infrastructure and programmatic needs of such an effort, and lay out a plan for developing the market.

Action 6C: Include telehealth as a focus of the Broadband Plan

Broadband is facilitating the development of several cutting-edge approaches to healthcare, many of which are expected to lead to vast individual and national cost savings and an increase in the availability of quality health solutions. Moreover, broadband-enabled telemedicine services are shifting healthcare by enabling in-home care and real-time patient monitoring and focusing on disease prevention by enhancing personal wellbeing. However, telemedicine service providers and consumers must have access to robust broadband connections. The City should include policies in the Broadband Plan that encourage further investment, innovation, and deployment of next-generation broadband network infrastructure.
Strategy 7: Initiate long-range planning processes for areas with high development/redevelopment potential

A Specific Plan is a planning document that implements the goals and policies of the General Plan. These plans contain detailed development standards and implementation measures to which future projects within a specified geographic area must adhere. Specific plans are a popular form of a land-use overlay. Eureka has several areas with high development/redevelopment potential; the City should initiate long-range planning processes to develop these specific areas over time.

Action 7A: Create specific plans for waterfront, Broadway, Wabash and Samoa airport

The City of Eureka should develop specific plans to develop the waterfront, the Broadway corridor, the neighborhood surrounding Wabash Avenue, and the City-owned Samoa Airport.
Strategy 8: Support new investment in Eureka’s Opportunity Zone


Action 8A: Market Eureka’s Opportunity Zone to local and outside investors

Opportunity Zones are census tracts that the IRS defines as “an economically-distressed community where new investments, under certain conditions, may be eligible for preferential tax treatment.” The City of Eureka has a designated Opportunity Zone. The City should create an educational and marketing plan to promote our zone and leverage development opportunities.
SUB-GOAL C: CREATE A DIVERSE & RESILIENT ECONOMY

Strategy 9: Modernize coastal zoning

The California Coastal Act imposes significant constraints on the types of development and businesses located in the Coastal Zone. However, in 2019 the City of Eureka adopted an updated Zoning Code, consistent with the 2040 General Plan. The City should certify its Local Coastal Program to align with the inland Zoning Code, modernizing coastal zoning in Eureka.

Action 10A: Certify Local Coastal Program Amendment

The City of Eureka’s recently adopted Zoning Code update is principally inspired by Eureka’s traditional development patterns. The guiding priorities of the Zoning Code include regulations that are economic-development-centric and business development friendly. Certification of an updated version of the Local Coastal Program will extend these guiding priorities into the Coastal Zone.
Strategy 10: Maintain and expand the City’s role as a regional office hub

As the largest population concentration on the North Coast and a significant center for local and state government activities, financial services, and legal services, Eureka is an office hub for the region. The Eureka economy benefits from real estate demand, jobs, and business and personal income. The City should take proactive steps to identify the most significant local office tenants, develop an understanding of their projected office needs, and work with them to ensure that they can remain in Eureka over the long term.
Action 10A: Identify strategies for expanding existing office-based businesses and institutions

The City should engage with the community of office users to identify opportunities for retention and expansion. The City should seek to identify barriers to office renovation, construction, and occupancy, as well as broader issues affecting office demand. This may also include research intended to identify the primary cause behind high vacancies within each primary zoning category (including office and other land-use types). The goal of these efforts should be to determine a course of action that would promote long-term stability and growth in the office sector, and that would provide opportunities for expansion of office-based businesses and other office users, such as government agencies and non-profit organizations. Also, providing technical improvement incentives to property owners to renovate existing office space should be considered.
**Strategy 11: Exercise a common vision for the maintenance and expansion of Port activities**

The port is one of Eureka’s unique assets for economic development. Humboldt Bay is the only deep-water port located along the 400-mile stretch between San Francisco and Coos Bay, OR; thus, it is a resource of regional significance and local importance, which should be maintained.

**Action 11A: Coordinate land use planning in the Port area with Humboldt County and the Humboldt Bay Harbor District**

A key issue identified for the City of Eureka’s upcoming Local Coastal Program Update is providing adequate land for Coastal Dependent Industrial (CDI) Uses and the Non-Coastal Dependent Industrial (Non-CDI) uses. The provision of suitable land for CDI is vital to the Port of Humboldt Bay’s long-term economic health and the economic benefits that Eureka can realize when the Port is thriving. Simultaneously, Eureka may miss out on opportunities to accommodate Non-CDI economic growth if it does not have adequate land available for those uses or when existing CDI land is limited to only CDI uses. Because a substantial portion of the Port's CDI land is under the County’s jurisdiction on the Samoa Peninsula, Eureka must continue to collaborate with the County on land use planning for the Samoa Peninsula. The City and County should remain united in presenting a coordinated land use plan for all the property under their respective jurisdictions around the Port to ensure sufficient CDI land around the Port to accommodate long-term needs, by identifying specific parcels that will retain CDI designation, parcels that can be re-designated as Non-CDI, and parcels that can allow both CDI and Non-CDI uses.
Action 11B: Secure facilities for the commercial fishing fleet

Continue to provide facilities for the commercial fishing fleet along the Eureka Waterfront between Commercial Street and C Street and at Woodley Island by adopting goals and policies and zoning to support commercial fishing. For any industry, uncertainty about future conditions is a primary factor in disinvestment. The Humboldt Bay Commercial Fishing Fleet is uncertain about its ability to continue to operate out of Humboldt Bay and is particularly concerned about the future availability of the facilities at Woodley Island for commercial fishing and related activities. The Fisherman’s Marketing Association recommends the City of Eureka help secure the commercial fishing fleet’s home base at Woodley Island and along the Eureka Waterfront by considering adoption of goals, policies, and zoning through the Local Coastal Plan Update to enact protective zoning to ensure the future availability of facilities at both Woodley Island and the Eureka Waterfront from Commercial to C Streets for commercial fishing and other closely related activities.

Action 11C: Evaluate the market for commercial cruise ship visitation

Additional analysis of the economic impacts and feasibility of attracting cruise ships to stop in Eureka regularly is needed to fully assess Eureka’s potential to serve as a port of call for cruise ships. Such analysis would document west coast cruise ship activity, existing ports of call, considerations for adding Eureka as a port of call, Eureka’s competitiveness relative to other ports, and Eureka’s potential investment for improvements. The analysis should include a marketing strategy and project the number of ships per year that could be attracted, their anticipated passenger counts, passenger spending patterns, and projected local economic impacts from cruise ship visits.
Strategy 12: Support the expansion of aquaculture activities in the Humboldt Bay

Humboldt Bay possesses unique attributes that make it suitable for aquaculture. There are opportunities to expand aquaculture activities in the Bay itself and opportunities to take advantage of seafood processing, shipping, and marketing activities on land adjacent to the Bay.

Action 12A: Provide by-right zoning for commercial fishing/processing, aquaculture, marine shipping, and related support businesses

Conduct a review of existing zoning categories (waterfront commercial, water dependent industrial) and their locations and acreage, coupled with interviews of waterfront property owners, tenants, and users, to identify modifications to existing zoning that would be necessary to facilitate commercial fishing, aquaculture, and marine shipping activities. This should include the identification of long-term needs for harbor infrastructure that so that appropriate zoning provisions can be put in place to facilitate infrastructure development.

Action 12B: Establish a modern cold storage facility within the City limits

The loss of Eureka Ice and Cold Storage in 2008 significantly reduced the competitiveness of commercial fishing, agriculture/food processing, and related industries in the Humboldt Bay area and significantly increased the cost of doing business. The construction of a replacement facility would allow for considerable cost savings for local businesses, which must currently transport their fresh produce to alternative facilities outside of Humboldt County. Establishing a replacement ice and cold storage facility would also facilitate the retention and expansion of area fishing and aquaculture businesses and other agricultural and food processing businesses that would benefit from access to a cold storage facility. One possible approach could include identifying publicly owned land that could be purchased or leased at below-market cost.
Strategy 13: Keep pace with the rapid evolution of commercial cannabis in California

California voters passed the Adult Use of Marijuana Act, or Proposition 64, on November 8, 2016. It established sales and cultivation taxes and legalized the sale, possession, growing, and consumption of cannabis for adults 21 and older for non-medical purposes. On September 20, 2016, the City of Eureka passed Chapter 158: Medical Cannabis: Cultivation, Processing, and Distribution.

Action 13A: Update current cannabis ordinance

Since 2016, the City has been managing and licensing many cannabis facilities. However, in the future, the City should update its cannabis regulations to continuously improve, enhance economic vitality, minimize adverse impacts, and allow for a more efficient permitting process. Also, many California cities are still navigating cannabis regulations. The City of Eureka’s ordinance should be promoted as a resource for other cities.
**Strategy 14: Develop a local business resiliency framework for emergency response**

In response to COVID, local economic development and business support organizations have formed the COVID Economic Resilience Consortium (CERC). CERC is focused on supporting North Coast businesses through the COVID 19 pandemic by ensuring the coordinated delivery of critical information, resources, and services to local companies experiencing an economic injury.

**Action 14A: Create Resiliency Plan to support businesses during emergencies**

While the CERC framework has been appropriate for COVID, a thoughtful regional resiliency plan to help businesses during emergencies should be developed.

**Strategy 15: Ensure Eureka has a voice in rural advocacy efforts at a state and regional level**

The COVID 19 pandemic has demonstrated the importance of a voice in rural advocacy efforts at a state and regional level. Too often, decisions are made that do not reflect Eureka’s position.

**Action 15A: Determine what rural advocacy efforts are underway within Humboldt County and integrate Eureka**

It needs to be determined what rural advocacy efforts are already underway in Humboldt County and integrate Eureka in meaningful ways.
**SUB-GOAL D: STRENGTHEN THE CITY’S REVENUE BASE**

*Strategy 16: Strengthen Eureka’s role as a hub for retail sales activity on the North Coast*

The City of Eureka is particularly dependent upon retail sales tax as a source of municipal revenues. Fortunately, Eureka is well-positioned to serve as a regional shopping hub for the North Coast region and has attracted substantial retail development. Because of its dependence on retail sales tax revenues, the City must maintain its position and expand it, if possible.

*Action 16A: Implement commercial corridor/district revitalization projects*

Almost all of Eureka’s commercial corridors and districts or nodes could benefit from revitalization efforts. Because of limited resources, the City should consider focusing efforts in a limited number of locations at a time. Areas suffering from the highest vacancy levels may also represent important targets for support. Focus on the corridors should be a coordinated effort, and City partners and part of the Beautification Master Plan.
Strategy 17: Strengthen and expand the City’s tourism sector

Although the tourism sector is not known for providing an abundance of high-paying jobs, it does provide a source of entry-level jobs for recent immigrants and young people. The tourism sector’s primary benefits to the City include the generation of transient occupancy tax revenue for the City through hotel bookings and generating retail sales taxes through visitor expenditures in local retailers and restaurants.

Action 17A: Promote Eureka as the cultural, artistic, and economic center of the Humboldt County and North Coast Region of California.

In collaboration with the City’s marketing agency of record, Eddy Alexander, the City of Eureka launched a new brand in 2020 that is designed to allow the City of Eureka to step more fully into its role as the anchor city for the region.

The development of the new brand identity was a community-led process, engaging citizens to develop a professional new brand system that is both authentic and aspirational.

In May of 2021, following the COVID-19 pandemic, the city will once again begin active promotion of the City as a tourist destination - pursuing advertising, earned media, and influencer opportunities at scale. These initiatives are designed to help stimulate economic recovery as well as fund and sustain local citizen priorities including beautification, placemaking, and asset development.

In last spring/early summer of 2021, the City of Eureka will also officially open the Redwood Sky Walk at Sequoia Park Zoo. This multi-million-dollar community investment is already attraction attention locally, regionally and nationally and is expected to be a significant driver of visitor interest in the area over time.

Eddy Alexander and the City of Eureka are also working with the Eureka Arcata airport to welcome two new airlines to the region in 2021. American Airlines will begin flying direct from Phoenix on June 3, 2021 and Avello, a new budget carrier, will begin flying direct from Burbank in May. Alongside these routes, additional resources will need to be developed to
ensure the airport can serve as the physical hub for visitation. New branded city brochures, photos, and videos have been shared with the airport and Eddy Alexander is partnering with the various airline public relations and marketing teams to prepare publicity plans for the region that extend into new feeder markets as well as get shared nationally to key demographics as well.

VisitEureka.com continues to be the central hub for news and information about events, activities, restaurants, accommodations, and things to see and do in both the city and surrounding areas. This recently redesigned site is designed to share more about what the city has to offer with deeper content, more targeted storytelling, and more channels for local businesses to engage and promote their offerings.

Beyond the VisitEureka website, Eddy Alexander is also working to improving Eureka’s digital presence and accessibility via social media as well as technical infrastructure. Over the coming months, they are working closely with the city on ways to collaborate with different OTAs (Online Travel Agencies) to help improve increase online book-ability and distribution of local assets, improve review trends, and increase search engine optimized promotional content.

On an ongoing basis, Eddy Alexander also conducts extensive research on travel and visitation patterns in our area, and reports out on shifting feeder market demographics, traveler activity and route preferences, and emerging opportunities for economic impact. They goal is to continuously identify new and emerging opportunities for the city to leverage their tourism and placemaking investments more efficiently over time.

In the months ahead, the city and their partners are pursuing opportunities to increase visitor length-of-stay over time by moving travelers around the city in a more thoughtful, coordinated, and strategic manner by using wayfinding and cross promotion. In early summer 2021, the City will update the exiting wayfinding kiosks throughout downtown with a focus on beautification, brand implementation, and traveler information access. This work
is being done in collaboration with several important local groups including City Staff, Project Eureka, The Sequoia Park Zoo Foundation, Caltrans, and more. The summer 2021 Eureka Street Art Festival will also feature a Wayfinding theme which will support these efforts.

Action 17B: Support visual and performing arts programing, festivals and other events

In addition to contributing to local character and quality of life, visual and performing arts can be significant visitor attractions. Eureka’s events calendar currently has open dates, particularly during the “off-season” between Labor Day and Memorial Day; promoting new events during the offseason presents the opportunity to bring visitors into the community at shoulder season times when seasonal staff might otherwise be laid off. To encourage a consistent calendar of events, the City, in cooperation with the local arts community, should develop an inventory of available venues that offer the necessary facilities (e.g., restrooms, electrical connections, stage space, etc.) and regulatory structure (e.g., zoning, noise regulations, maximum occupancy limits, etc.) to host significant events of various types. The City should also work with area arts and tourism organizations to identify funding sources that can be used to advertise and host events, with the understanding that the economic benefits of arts programs, festivals, and events go far beyond ticket sales and can often include an increased number of hotel stays and retail sales, among other positive impacts.

Action 17C: Continue implementing the Strategic Arts Plan

In 2017, the City of Eureka developed and adopted a Strategic Arts Plan. The document was created to effectively leverage our unique artistic and cultural assets and address some of our major issues. The mission of the document is to use art as a vehicle for community impact in Eureka. The document lays out actionable goals to support the arts by both the City and the community. With this ever-increasing community involvement and growing momentum, the Strategic Arts Plan continues to grow and evolve. The goals of the documents should continue to be pursued, evaluated, and updated.
APPENDIX A: SUMMARY MATRIX OF ACTIONS
2021

- Action 1A: Align all Economic Development efforts with guiding documents
  - Timing: In progress
  - Relative cost: $
  - Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  - Potential partnerships: All City departments and County of Humboldt

- Action 2A: Digitize business license applications and collect business data
  - Timing: In progress
  - Relative cost: $
  - Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  - Potential partnerships: Eddy Alexander

- Action 2D: Implement a business retention and recruitment program
  - Timing: Short-term
  - Relative cost: $
  - Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  - Potential partnerships: Eureka Main Street, Eureka Chamber, Humboldt Made, SBDC

- Action 2E: Create Economic Development webpage and social media strategy
  - Timing: Medium-term
  - Relative cost: $$$
  - Implementation responsibility: Existing staff and Eddy Alexander
  - Potential partnerships: Eddy Alexander

- Action 4A: Create a Beautification Master Plan
  - Timing: Medium-term
  - Relative cost: $
  - Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  - Potential partnerships: Community Services, Planning, Eureka Police Department, Eddy Alexander, Eureka Chamber, Eureka Main Street, Humboldt Made, Project Eureka, Keep Eureka Beautiful

- Action 4B: Implement and fund Façade/CPTED program
  - Timing: In progress
  - Relative cost: $$$$
  - Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  - Potential partnerships: Eureka Police Department, Eureka Main Street
• Action 4C: Implement informational workshops regarding Zero Waste
  ■ Timing: Short-term
  ■ Relative cost: $
  ■ Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  ■ Potential partnerships: Community Services, Recology, HWMA
• Action 16A: Implement commercial corridor/district revitalization projects
  ■ Timing: Long-term
  ■ Relative cost: $$
  ■ Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  ■ Potential partnerships: Eureka Main Street, Eureka Chamber, Rescue Mission, Humboldt Made, Project Eureka, Keep Eureka Beautiful
• Action 5A: Create a Broadband Plan for Eureka
  ■ Timing: Long-term
  ■ Relative cost: $$$
  ■ Implementation responsibility: Existing staff and consultant
  ■ Potential partnerships: Public Works, County of Humboldt, Humboldt State University
• Action 6C: Include telehealth as a focus of the Broadband Plan
  ■ Timing: Long-term
  ■ Relative cost: (part of the Broadband Plan)
  ■ Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  ■ Potential partnerships: Public Works, St. Joseph Health, North Coast Open Door, County of Humboldt, Humboldt State University
• Action 9A: Certify Local Coastal Program amendment
  ■ Timing: Long-term
  ■ Relative cost: $
  ■ Implementation responsibility: Planning staff
  ■ Potential partnerships: Humboldt Bay Harbor District, City of Arcata
• Action 12A: Provide by-right zoning for commercial fishing/processing, aquaculture, marine shipping, and related support businesses
  ■ Timing: Long-term
  ■ Relative cost: $
  ■ Implementation responsibility: Planning staff
  ■ Potential partnerships: Humboldt Bay Harbor District, Fisherman's Marketing Association
• Action 13A: Update current cannabis ordinance
  ○ Timing: In progress
  ○ Relative cost: $
  ○ Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  ○ Potential partnerships: Humboldt County Growers Alliance, County of Humboldt

2022
• Action 2B: Inventory business needs, wants, and requirements
  ○ Timing: Medium-term
  ○ Relative cost: $
  ○ Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  ○ Potential partnerships: Eureka Main Street, Eureka Chamber, Humboldt Made

• Action 2C: Streamline regulations and processes to support a business-friendly reputation
  ○ Timing: Medium-term
  ○ Relative cost: $
  ○ Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  ○ Potential partnerships: All departments

• Action 6A: Identify and plan for medical center expansion
  ○ Timing: Medium-term
  ○ Relative cost: $
  ○ Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  ○ Potential partnerships: Planning, St. Joseph Health, North Coast Open Door

• Action 6B: Develop a strategy to establish Eureka as a center for destination healthcare
  ○ Timing: Medium-term
  ○ Relative cost: $
  ○ Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  ○ Potential partnerships: St. Joseph Health, North Coast Open Door

• Action 10A: Identify strategies for expanding existing office-based businesses and institutions
  ○ Timing: Medium-term
  ○ Relative cost: $
  ○ Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  ○ Potential partnerships: Eureka Main Street, Eureka Chamber
• **Action 11C: Evaluate the market for commercial cruise ship visitation**
  - Timing: In progress
  - Relative cost: $
  - Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  - Potential partnerships: Humboldt Bay Harbor District, Eureka Main Street

2023

• **Action 3A: Improve goods movement to and from locations outside the region**
  - Timing: Long-term
  - Relative cost: $$
  - Implementation responsibility: Existing staff and consultant
  - Potential partnerships: County of Humboldt, Humboldt Made, SBDC

• **Action 3B: Partner to create distribution/cold storage facility**
  - Timing: Long-term
  - Relative cost: $$$$$
  - Implementation responsibility: Existing staff, consultant, partners
  - Potential partnerships: North Coast Growers Alliance, Food for People, Fisherman's Marketing Association, Humboldt Made, County of Humboldt

• **Action 12B: Establish a modern cold storage facility within the City limits**
  - Timing: Long-term
  - Relative cost: $$$$$
  - Implementation responsibility: Existing staff, consultant, partners
  - Potential partnerships: Humboldt Bay Harbor District, Nordic Aquafarms, Fisherman's Marketing Association

• **Action 14A: Create Resiliency Plan to support businesses during emergencies**
  - Timing: Medium-term
  - Relative cost: $
  - Implementation responsibility: Existing staff and partners
  - Potential partnerships: RREDC, AEDC, Eureka Main Street, Eureka Chamber, SBDC

• **Action 15A: Determine what Rural Advocacy Planning efforts are currently underway within Humboldt County and integrate Eureka**
  - Timing: Short-term
  - Relative cost: $
  - Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  - Potential partnerships: County of Humboldt, CalForward, GO-Biz, CALED
2024

- **Action 7A: Create specific plans for waterfront, Broadway, Wabash and Samoa airport**
  - Timing: Long-term
  - Relative cost: $$
  - Implementation responsibility: Planning and existing staff
  - Potential partnerships: Planning, adjacent business owners, Keep Eureka Beautiful

- **Action 8A: Market Eureka’s Opportunity Zone to local and outside investors**
  - Timing: Short-term
  - Relative cost: $
  - Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  - Potential partnerships: Humboldt Association of Realtors

*Ongoing*

- **Action 11A: Coordinate land use planning in the Port area with Humboldt County and the Humboldt Bay Harbor District**
  - Timing: Ongoing
  - Relative cost: $
  - Implementation responsibility: Planning
  - Potential partnerships: County of Humboldt and Humboldt Bay Harbor District

- **Action 11B: Secure facilities for the commercial fishing fleet**
  - Timing: Ongoing
  - Relative cost: $
  - Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  - Potential partnerships: Community Services, Humboldt Bay Harbor District, Fisherman’s Marketing Association

- **Action 17A: Promote Eureka as the cultural, artistic, and economic center of the Humboldt County and North Coast Region of California.**
  - Timing: Ongoing
  - Relative cost: $$$
  - Implementation responsibility: Existing staff and Eddy Alexander
  - Potential partnerships: Eddy Alexander, Humboldt County Convention and Visitors Bureau
• Action 17B: Support visual and performing arts programming, festivals and other events
  ○ Timing: Ongoing
  ○ Relative cost: $
  ○ Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  ○ Potential partnerships: Art & Culture Commission, Community Services, Ink People, Film Commission

• Action 17C: Continue implementing the Strategic Arts Plan
  ○ Timing: Ongoing
  ○ Relative cost: $$
  ○ Implementation responsibility: Existing staff
  ○ Potential partnerships: Art & Culture Commission, Community Services, Ink People, Humboldt Arts Council, Redwood Art Association, Eureka Street Art Festival, Project Eureka

• Cost Key
  ○ $ = $0-$5,000
  ○ $$=$5,000-$20,000
  ○ $$$=$20,000-$50,000
  ○ $$$$$=$50,000-$100,000
  ○ $$$$$$=Over $100,000