Mobility on Demand Strategic Plan
Humboldt County
Community Demographic Profile

IBI

Prepared for HCAOG
by IBI Group

May 2, 2019

Table of Contents

Introduction

This technical memorandum provides an analysis of the demographic profile for Humboldt County that will serve to identify trends that may impact future demand and the potential market for mobility services. In particular, this profile focuses on communities with unmet transit and mobility needs. Understanding demographic characteristics is critical in determining levels of mobility dependency and beneficial in developing successful services tailored to the specialized mobility needs of the community.

This memo uses data taken from the U.S Census American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates.

Presented herein are:

- Section 1: Community Demographic Profile;

- Section 2: Transit Dependent Populations; and

- Section 3: Conclusions.

1   Community Demographic Profile

Humboldt County is located in Northwest California, 270 miles north of San Francisco (Figure 1.1). The County totals 4,052 square miles and is home to 135,490 people. The key metrics reviewed from U.S. Census American Community Service (ACS) include population growth, age, race/ethnicity, number of households, median household income, vehicles per household, and transportation mode choice.
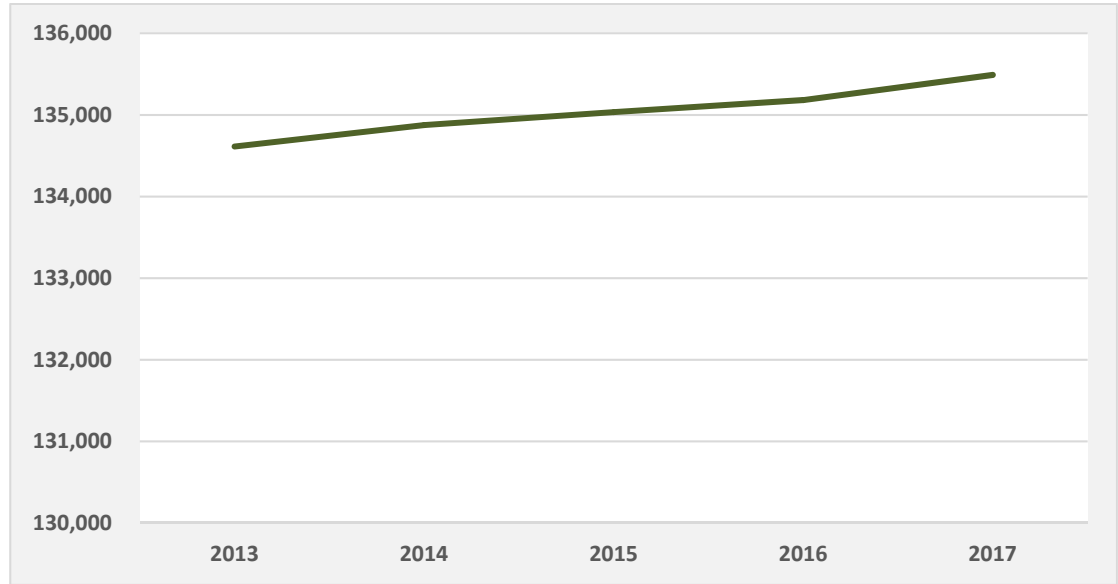
Figure 1.1: Humboldt County Location
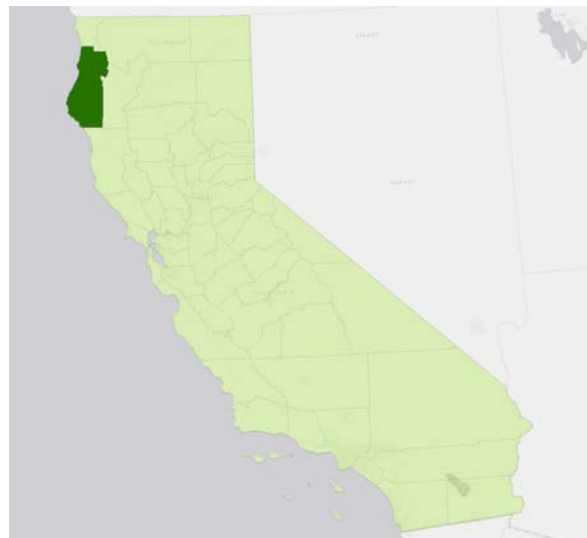
1.1   Population Change

The population of Humboldt County is 135,490 (2017). The population has been fairly steady since 2013, experiencing a slight increase of 877 people, a 1% population change. Figure 1.2 illustrates this population change from 2013 to 2017.

**Figure 1.2: Humboldt County Population Change (2013-2017)**

1.2 Age

Age is a critical factor in determining transit dependency, which is the population of people for whom mobility may be limited, either by access to private automobiles or the ability to drive independently. Typically, transit dependent age groups include the elderly (those over 65 years of age), and youth (those under the age of 18). Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) highlights older citizens as transit dependent in the *Unmet Transit Needs Report of Findings for FY18-19*.

The age bracket with the highest population is those 20 to 34 years old with numbers holding fairly steady since 2013. The age group that has seen the largest increase in age has been those who are over 65, increasing by 18% from 18,000 to 21,500 between 2013 and 2017. Figure 1.3 illustrates population by age from the years 2013, 2015, and 2017.

Figure 1.3: Humboldt County Population by Age (2013, 2015, 2017)
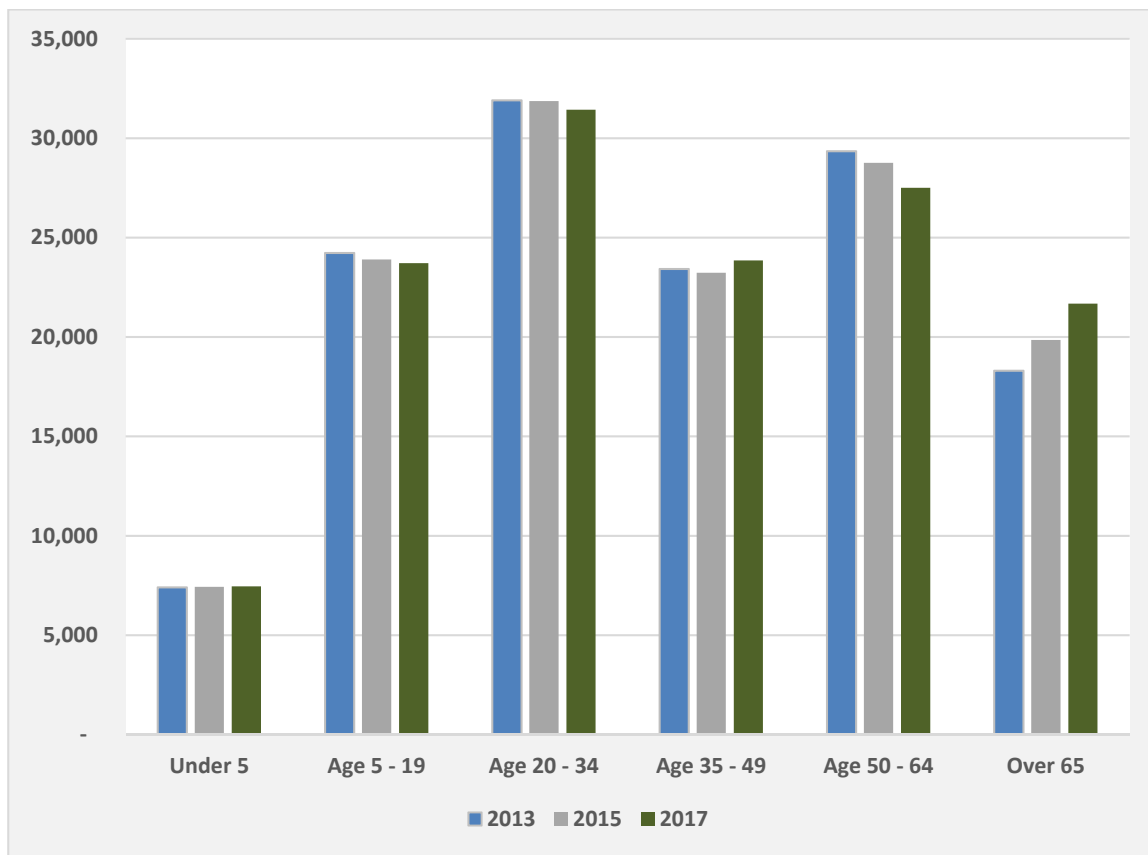
1.3   Race and Ethnicity

Humboldt County is a majority white community, (75% in 2017) despite a slight decline as a percentage of the total population, from 77% to 75% between 2013 and 2017. Hispanic or Latino communities are the next largest ethnic group at 11% of the total population, followed by Native American (American Indian and Alaska native) communities which make up 5% of the total population. Figure 1.4 shows the race and ethnicity of Humboldt County is 2013, 2015, and 2017.

Figure 1.4: Humboldt County Ethnicity (2013, 2015, 2017)
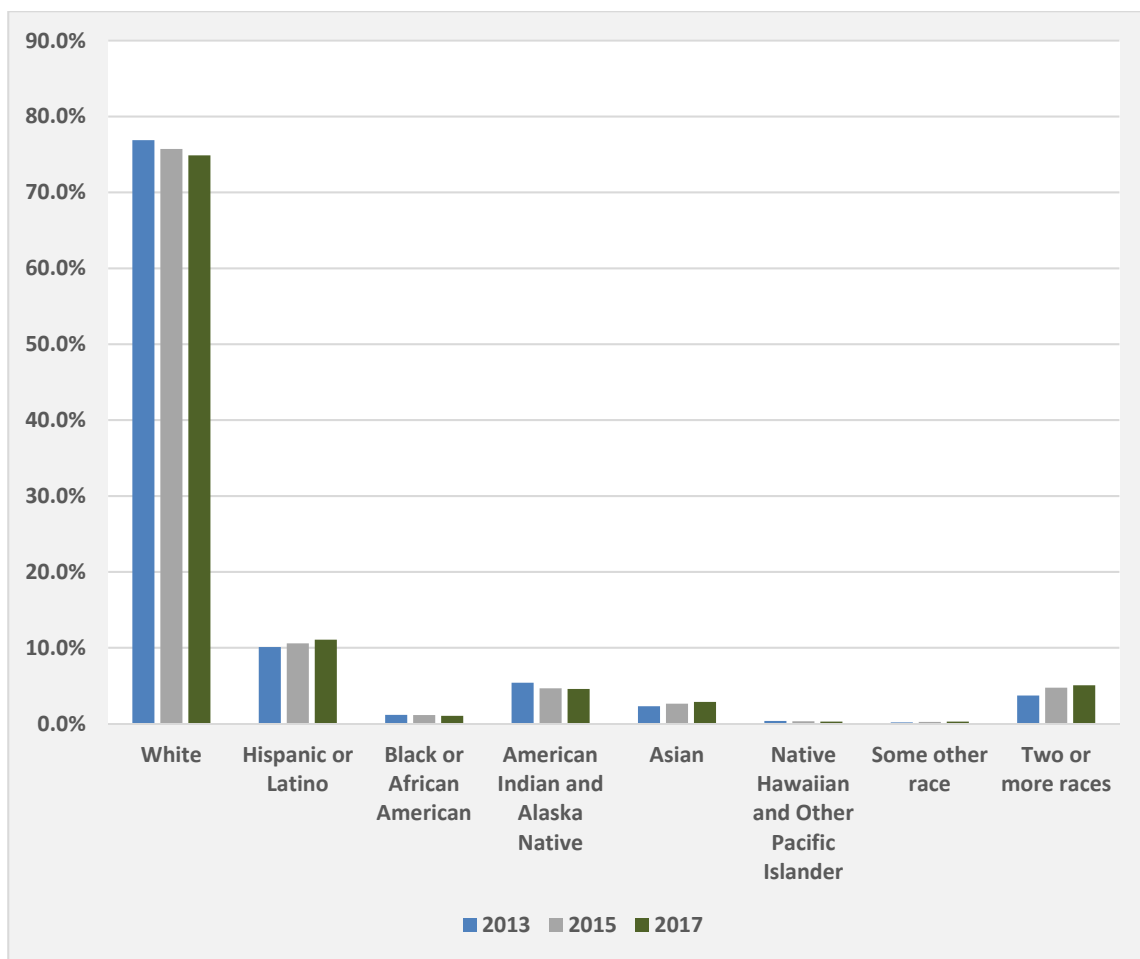
1.4   Number of Households

As presented in Figure 1.5, the number of households in Humboldt County is almost 54,000. This number has increased from a recent low of 53,000 in 2015. Overall, there has been limited increase in households in Humboldt County since 2013, similar to the limited increase in population over that same period.

**Figure 1.5: Humboldt County Households (2013-2017)**
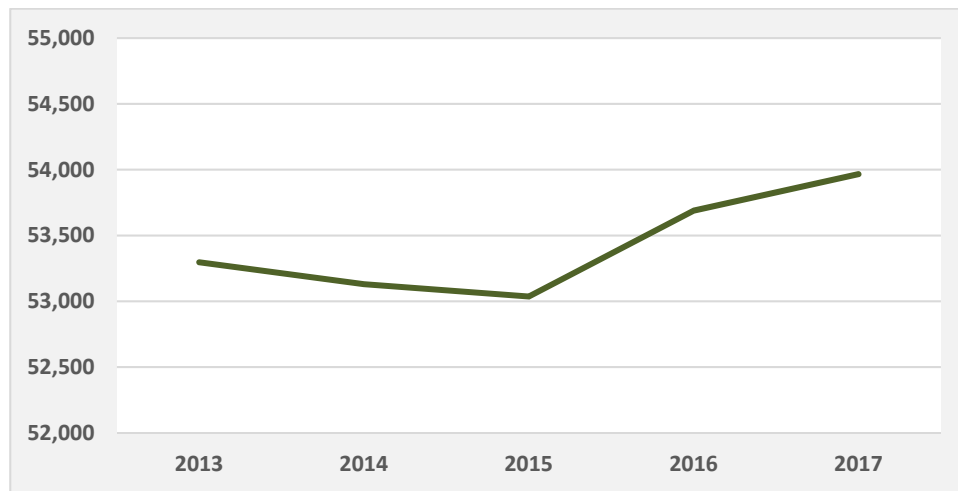
1.5   Median Household Income

The ability to afford private transportation and vehicles impacts an individual's propensity to use public transportation. Typically, those who lack access to private transportation are more dependent on alternative modes of transportation.

As illustrated in Figure 1.6, median household income in Humboldt county has increased steadily from 2013 to 2017, increasing by 6% ($2,300). Over the same period of time, median household income for the State of California has increased 10% ($6,100). Overall, Humboldt County has a lower median income than the State of California by over $20,000.

**Figure 1.6: Median Household Income (2013-2017)**
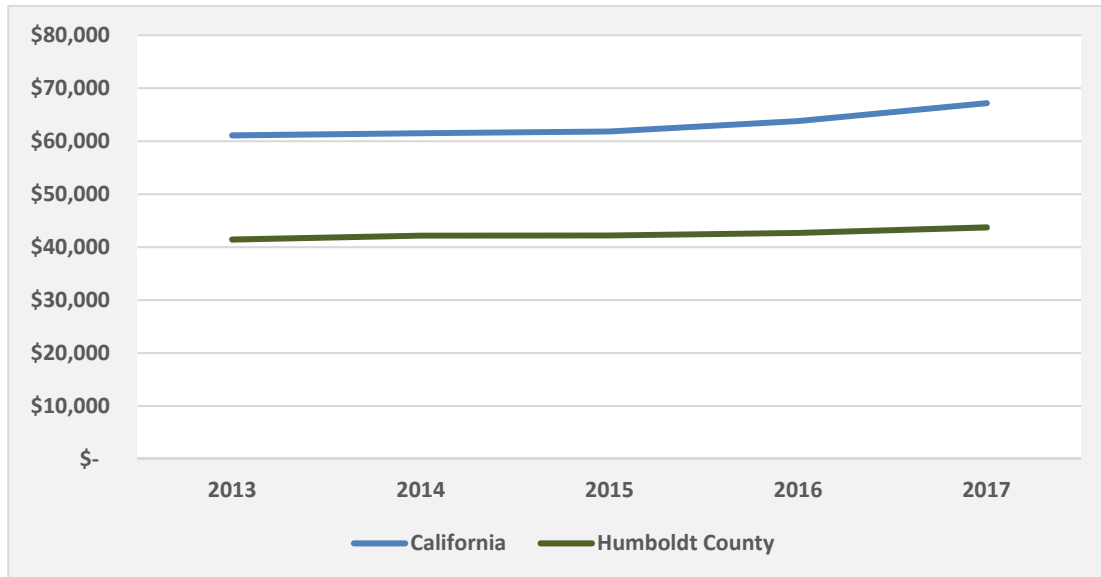
1.6 Vehicles per household

Transit dependency is often correlated with access to private transportation and automobiles. Those with limited or no access to private transportation are typically more dependent on public transportation as their primary mode of travel.

As presented in Figure 1.7, 36% of households have two vehicles available, 35% have one vehicle available, and 14% have three vehicles available. 7% of households do not have access to a vehicle.

Figure 1.7: Vehicle Ownership (2017)
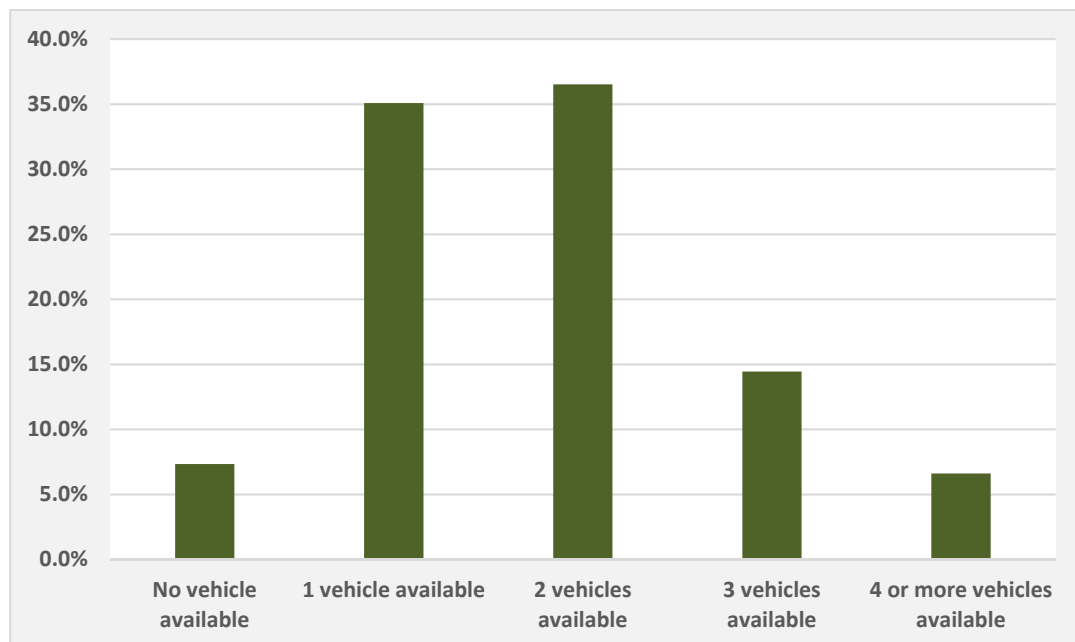
1.7   Journey to Work

In Humboldt County, the majority of the community drives alone to work (72.5%), although this has declined slightly from 2013 (73.1%). Over the same period there has been a slight increase in those using public transit (1.2% in 2013 to 1.8% in 2017). The largest increases in mode choice to get to work have been those who walk (5.5% in 2013 to 6.5% in 2017), and those who work from home (6.3% in 2013 to 7.3% in 2017). This data is presented in Figure 1.8.

Figure 1.8: Journey to Work (2013, 2015, 2017)
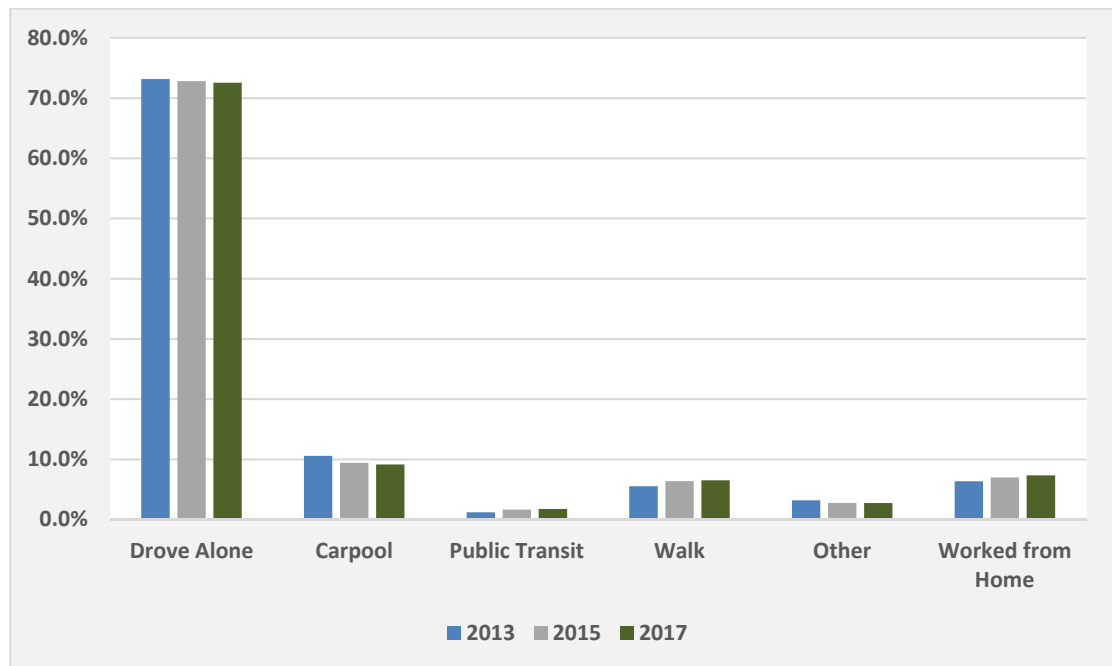
2 Transit Dependent Populations

Annually, HCAOG must complete an unmet transit needs assessment as part of the responsibility as a Regional Transportation Planning Agency. This assessment identifies the following groups with a greater propensity to be transit dependent:

- Those unable to operate a vehicle and those without a vehicle (Carless individuals)
- Older citizens (over 65)
- People with disabilities
- People of limited means (People living below the poverty line)

For the unmet needs portion of this memorandum, data for each transit dependent group was analyzed at the census tract level. Data was obtained from the U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS) 5 year estimate for 2017 and analyzed in ArcGIS.

Population Without Access to a Vehicle

Overall, Humboldt County has a low percentage of residents without access to a vehicle. The census tracts with the highest percentage of population with no car are Census Tracts 2,5, and 1 (Eureka, 10.9%, 10.7%, 8.6% and Census Tract 109.01 (Fortuna, 7.1%). The following Census tracts have no residents without access to a vehicle: Census Tracts 104 and 105.1 (McKinleyville), Census Tract 9400 (Hoopa Reservation), and Census Tract 115 (Miranda). Figure 2.1 illustrates the distribution of the population without access to a vehicle across Humboldt County.

Population Over 65

As discussed in the section above, Humboldt County is aging and the portion of the population over 65 is growing at the fastest rate. Census Tract 115 (Miranda) has the highest percentage of over 65's (26.3%), followed by Census Tract 102 (Orick, 25.4%), and Census Tract 106 (Freshwater, 24.7%). The areas with the lowest percentage of population over 65 are Census Tract 10 (Arcata, 8.6%), Census Tract 1 (Eureka, 9.6%), and Census Tract 9400 (Hoopa Reservation, 10.2%). Figure 2.2 illustrates the distribution of the population over 65 across Humboldt County.
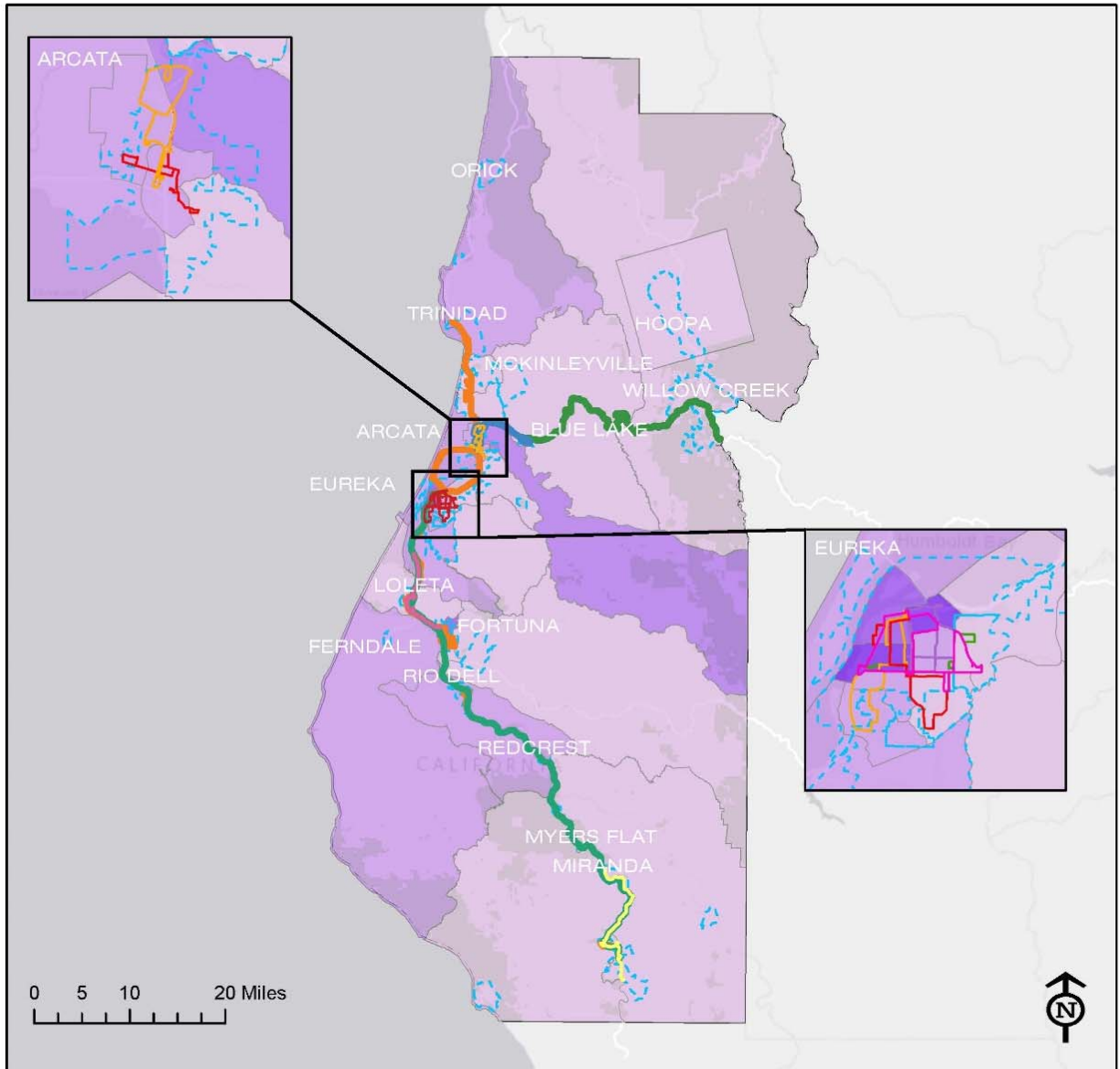
Population with Disabilities

The area of Humboldt County with the highest percentage of people with disabilities is Census Tract 1 (Eureka, 27.3%), followed by Census Tract 109.01 (Fortuna, 22.7%), and Census Tract 101.02 (Willow Creek, 22.1%). The areas of Humboldt County with the lowest percentage of people with disabilities are Census Tract 10 (Arcata, 8.8%), Census Tract 104 (Feldbrook, 9.3%), and Census Tract 9 (Arcata and Indianola, 9.9%). Figure 2.3 illustrates the distribution of the population with disabilities across Humboldt County.

Population Living in Poverty

The area of Humboldt County with the highest percentage of people living in poverty is Census Tract 9400 (Hoopa Reservation, 41.5%). This is followed by Census Tracts 10 and 11.01(Arcata, 37.7%, 36%). The areas of Humboldt County with the lowest percentage of people living in poverty are Census Tract 106 (Freshwater, 8.3%), Census Tract 109.02 (Dinsmore, 9.7%), and Census Tract 104 (Feldbrook, 10.1%). Figure 2.4 illustrates the distribution of the population living in poverty across Humboldt County.
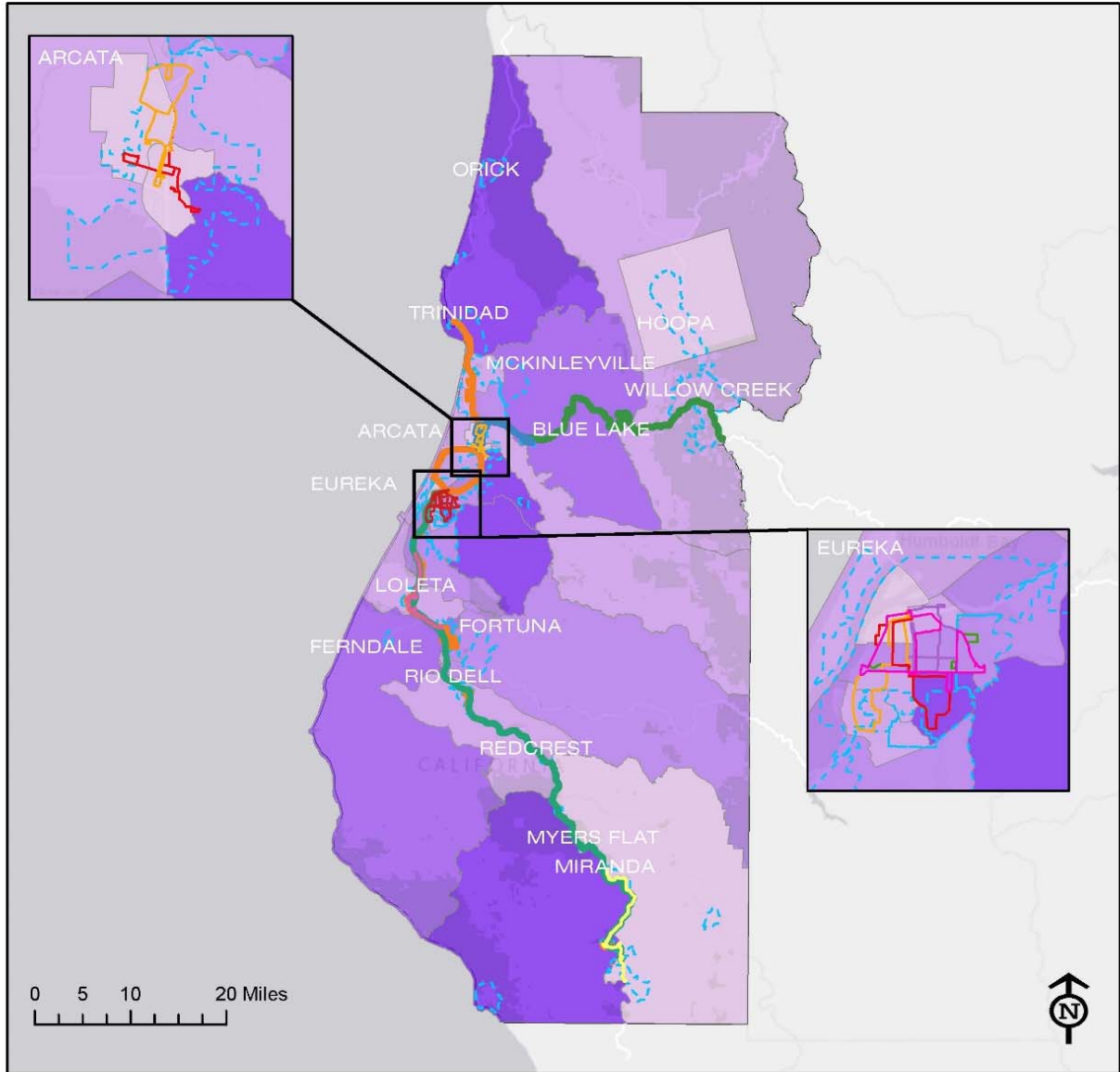
Figure 2.1: Humboldt County Population Without Access to a Vehicle

Figure 2.2: Humboldt County Population Over 65 Years Old

Figure 2.3: Humboldt County Population with a Disability

Legend

- Eureka Transit Service
- Tish Non Village Transit
- Arcata and Mad River Transit System
- Southern Humboldt Local Transit
- Blue Lake Rancheria
- Willow Creek
- Southern Humboldt Intercity Transit
- Redwood Transit System

Percent Population with a Disability
- 8.8 - 12.5%
- 12.5 - 16.2%
- 16.2 - 19.9%
- 19.9 - 23.6%
- 23.6 - 27.3%

Figure 2.4: Humboldt County Population living in Poverty

Legend

- Eureka Transit Service
- Tish Non Village Transit
- Arcata and Mad River Transit System
- Southern Humboldt Local Transit
- Blue Lake Rancheria
- Willow Creek
- Southern Humboldt Intercity Transit
- Redwood Transit System
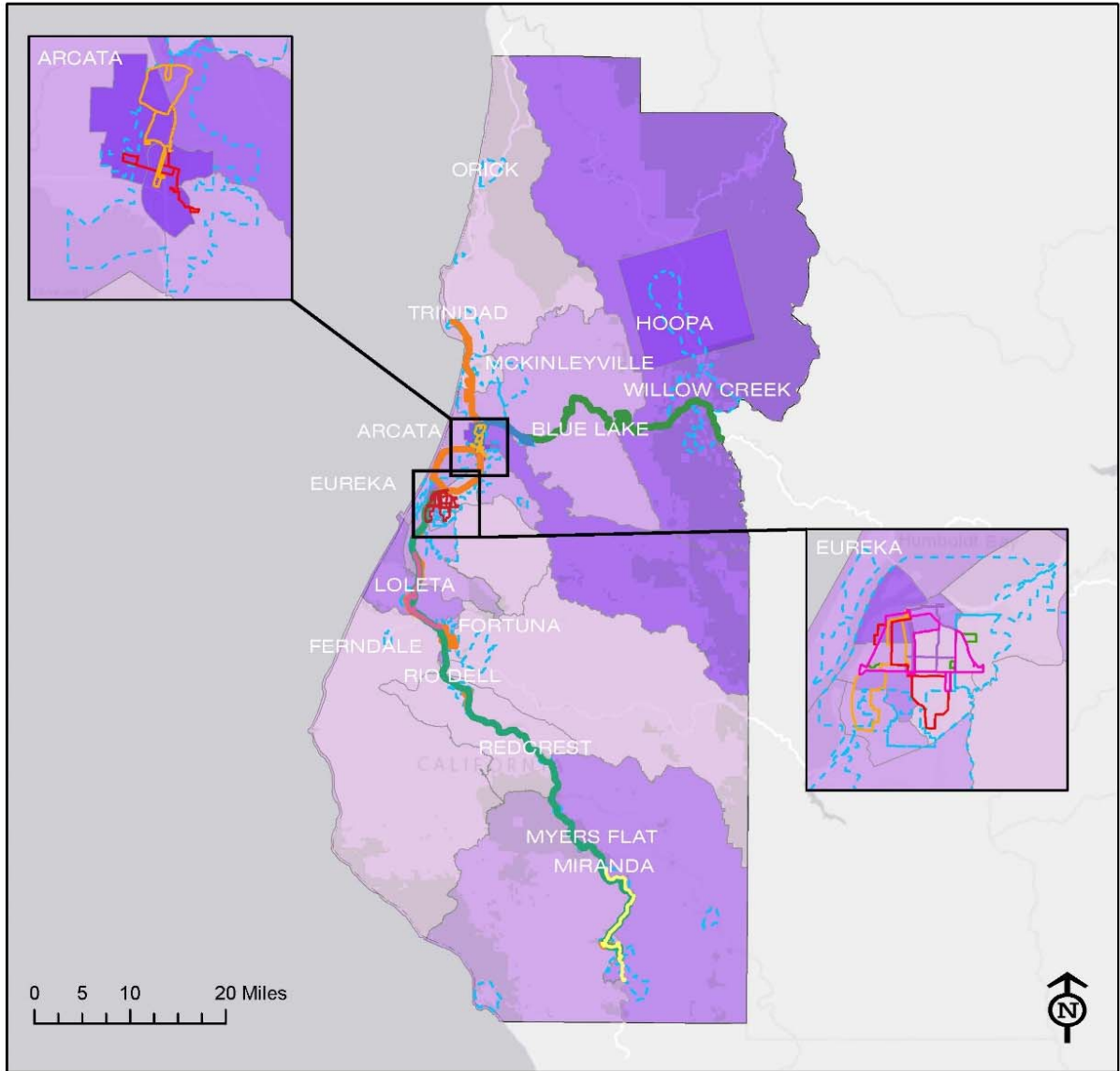
Percent Population in Poverty
- 8.3 - 14.9%
- 14.9 - 21.6%
- 21.6 - 28.2%
- 28.2 - 34.9%
- 34.9 - 41.5%

3   Summary

The demographic profile of Humboldt County demonstrates that Humboldt County has had a stable population of 135,000 people. The largest grouping of people is between 20 to 34 years old, and the fastest growing sector of the population is the over-65 age bracket. The majority of residents are white, followed by Hispanic/Latino and Asian residents. Both Hispanic and Asian communities are growing while the number of white residents is slightly declining. The number of households has been stable at 54,000 households and the median income is $44,000, below the statewide average of $67,000. Most households own at least one vehicle, reflected by commute types as over 70% of households drive alone for their commute.

For unmet needs in the county, there are relatively high percentages of people with disabilities, people living in poverty, and people over 65. There are lower percentages of people without access to a vehicle.