

*If you spend any amount of time on social media, then you've probably seen that article. It's gotten a lot of attention, as friends, of friends--and their friends share it on their social media platform of choice.*

*It's got a sensational title, so it's understandable, why: Eureka is one of the most dangerous cities in California. The article doesn't provide much evidence, but it does point out that violent crime in Eureka is high and that property crime, per capita is really high.*

*That's a shocking thing to say, and I don't know if it's true. The particular article has been out for several years now, and still manages to pop into my facebook newsfeed.*

*I can accept that Eureka probably is worse than most other places in the state. If you base this listing on the number of criminal drug addicts roaming our streets, then the article is probably right.*

*And the Property crime stats are dramatically short of where they should be, because Prop 47 and 57 have given shoplifters the ability to steal without consequence.*

*Last month I took some time and visited with the Eureka Police Department, and we talked about the high number of criminal drug addicts and what was being done about it. It was a great conversation and we covered quite a bit of ground.*

*I wanted them to know, that because the city recently closed a notorious Heroin and Meth commerce center about one block away from my place of business, that the number of drug deals I was seeing had gone from several to zero. Overnight.*

*I wanted to encourage the Eureka police department, as well as the city, to continue identifying and closing down these slums. There are still a lot more to go. It's important because the less drug-dealing zones in Eureka, the harder it is for a criminal drug addict to continue their lifestyle.*

*A fairly new element that is increasing the number of criminal drug addicts, are the local, insane, Needle Sharing Programs. Groups like Humboldt Harm Reduction are handing out needles like candy, with the idea that it somehow limits the spread of disease. The results of this program are nothing short of disastrous, as several local community groups have been going out into the woods, the zoo, the parks to clean up these thousands of needles. These needles are a bio hazard to kids and adults, and also make it that much easier for criminal drug addicts to get their fix.*

*Another part of this strategy has to be the enforcement of camping ordinances. Somehow, over the years, the word got out that Humboldt is a very welcoming place for the transient Criminal Drug Addict lifestyle. The good news is, the Eureka Police Department has a big increase in citations, many of which have to do with camping. Unfortunately, there is still a lot more work to do, before our area can overcome the widespread rumor that Eureka "values its bums more than it's businesses."*

*(THE PARAGRAPH BELOW EDITED OUT DUE TO TIME CONSTRAINTS)*

*I believe the only way Eureka can reduce the number of criminal drug addicts, is to raise it's standards. By not letting addicts sleep behind bushes and in the front doors of businesses, and by cutting down the number of acceptable places to do meth and heroin, we can work toward creating new rumors, like Humboldt is no longer a place for Happy Homeless, and is certainly not a place that will let you sleep anywhere you want. I don't think there is a silver bullet solution, we are way too deep in the crisis for that, but taking proactive actions every day should push the problem back, and maybe, get Eureka off, of the "top 10 most dangerous cities in California."*