

Hi, Fred Nelson for Community Comment,  
Upon learning of my age, a person asked me the other day what Eureka was like many years ago, especially the neighborhoods. He also asked me if there were lots of trees in the city. Even though Eureka was built on the site of a forest, I must say there were few trees (comparatively speaking) back in the 1930s.. Many ornamental trees have been planted over the years so I would venture to say that Eureka is a lot 'greener' than it used to be. As for the neighborhoods the one that has changed the most would be the area bordered by West Harris Street on the south, Fairfield Street on the west, Spring Street on the east and Creighton Street on the north. When I was a kid during the 1930s, the whole area was one large vacant space with Henderson Street running through the middle. The western section was fairly flat with open fields and was used as a location for both visiting carnivals and the circus when they came to town. That area is now occupied by Ocean avenue, its homes and a fire station and the businesses fronting the west side of Central Avenue. East of that, the terrain became a bit rough with underbrush and willow trees. The area now occupied by Winco Foods was brushy with foot trails and rutted paths made by autos. Unlit at night, it was Eureka's 'lovers lane'. To a kid like me, it was just plain spooky (even during the day). When World War Two started and Chicago Bridge and Iron built a yard to construct floating dry docks, the whole area was cleared and a Federal Housing Project was built to accommodate those moving to Eureka to work on the War effort. The project was built in record time and consisted of both one and two story units that looked more like barracks than apartments. Except for a couple of units located on Spring Street near Creighton the project's mail was delivered by a mounted letter carrier by the name of Gene Girard who used his own private vehicle for delivery. Named "Marine View Terrace", the project also included an elementary school which operated into the 1960s. Two of my four children attended the school until the shutdown moved them to Lincoln Elementary school. After the War, when the building boom began, Ernest Pierson Building Company built the shopping center which serves us today plus many residential homes. I don't think that any other neighborhood in Eureka had so many drastic changes. Speaking of changes, my heart goes out to those unfortunate people who lost property and homes in the recent tragic Carr Fire in the Redding area. Thank you firefighters and first responders for you splendid work in saving lives and property. Also a 'Thank You' to Redding T.V. station K.R.C.R. for the continuous coverage and information they made available to their audience for the better part of a week.

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