

# **ACTION ALERT**

## **Show Your Support for the Future of the Sonoma Developmental Center this Saturday, July 18!**

### **CALL TO ACTION**

Governor Brown directed the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to close the Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC) by 2018, and submit a closure plan to the Legislature by October 1, 2015. DDS is holding a mandatory public hearing on "[Transformation of Sonoma Developmental Center](#)" **this Saturday, July 18, 2015 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Sonoma Valley High School. In order to be most effective, we need to show DDS that we care, that we share a common vision, and that we are organized and able to turn out in large numbers.**

This Action Alert provides information about the hearing, the process for submitting oral or written comments, and suggested talking points.

### **LET'S ALL SHOW UP TOGETHER!**

It is crucial that we come together Saturday and deliver a unified message that the DDS closure plan for SDC must yield a thoughtful and practical strategy that protects the residents, employees, and natural lands of this irreplaceable treasure in our Sonoma Valley.

### **Please join us for a strong turnout at the beginning of the meeting!**

**When:** Arrive between 9:30-10:00 a.m.  
**Where:** Sonoma High School, 20000 Broadway, Sonoma  
**Questions:** Call or email John McCaull at (707) 526-6930, ext. 112 or [johnm@sonomalandtrust.org](mailto:johnm@sonomalandtrust.org)

### **PUBLIC COMMENT INSTRUCTIONS**

DDS is seeking public comment from interested persons and organizations. They will record testimony, but will not answer questions or engage with the public. These comments will be summarized in the closure plan, which will then be submitted to the Legislature for approval.

#### **There are three ways to get your concerns and questions into the record:**

1. Everyone will have up to 5 minutes to speak at the hearing,
2. If you can't attend you can still speak! Call in to the Conference Call Line: (800) 230-1059.
3. Submit written comments to [DDS through their website until September 1, 2015](#). Do this even if you are speaking this Saturday.

### **SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS**

For your testimony on Saturday, focus on 3-4 key points that are most important to you and include your questions for DDS about the closure/transformation process. After the public hearing, follow up by submitting your comments and questions in writing!

- Ask for a **collaborative process** between Sonoma County and the State, one that allows us to shape the future of SDC together through dialogue, compromise and a willingness to be innovative and take the necessary time to get things right.
- Emphasize that **on-site housing and health care services for existing clients** should be developed concurrently with closure.
- The strategy to **protect the invaluable natural resource** land of SDC should be developed **concurrently** with the closure process.
- Ask DDS to include a vision and mission statement for a “transformed” SDC in the closure plan that reflects the community vision expressed at the May 2<sup>nd</sup> Transform SDC Workshop. This vision includes:
  - Create a public-private partnership driven by community ideas and values that showcases the site’s history, maintains critical services for the developmentally disabled and preserves the natural resources and open space of the site.
  - Maintain on-site health care and residential services for special needs patients in order to sustain the greater autonomy and safety of this vulnerable community.
  - Broaden the impact of SDC’s expert staff and customized therapies and mobility devices to continue to be a specialized facility and critical statewide hub to address the needs of developmentally disabled patients.
  - Ensure that future uses of SDC preserve the distinctive character of the Valley’s rural communities and preserve the historical and architectural integrity of SDC.
  - Preserve SDC’s open space, natural resources, and scenic values to support wildlife corridor habitat and for future generations to enjoy.
  - Promote SDC site uses that diversify and enhance the Valley’s economy and establish a model for self-sufficiency.

### **Resources for Developing Your Testimony**

Links to all of the following documents to help you prepare your talking points and written comments. can be found under the “**Get Involved**” menu on the [Transform SDC website](#).

- Parent Hospital Association: “[Essential Elements for a Closure Plan](#)”
- Sonoma Land Trust, the Sonoma County Preservation and Open Space District and the Sonoma Ecology Center prepared the [SDC Draft Resource Assessment](#) that documents the significant natural, cultural and recreational resources of the SDC land.
- [Synthesis of the May 2<sup>nd</sup> community planning workshop](#) We suggest you focus on the “Community Vision” section of the summary, and talk about which of the guiding principles speak most personally to you.

**Finally, come to the public hearing this Saturday and show the State that we care about SDC – the people and the place. We will not succeed without you!**

**See you this Saturday!**