

Transform SDC

**Community Workshop #1 Synthesis Report
May 2, 2015**

Dream, Create, Transform.

Introduction

A diverse partnership comprised of the County of Sonoma, the Parent Hospital Association, the Sonoma Land Trust, the Sonoma Ecology Center and other local groups have come together to create a comprehensive and inclusive 18-month planning process to explore options for the future of the Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC) that preserve the unique human health, community and natural resources provided by SDC. On Saturday, May 2nd, more than 200 people participated in the first community workshop to kick-off the Transform SDC planning process. The theme of the workshop focused on empowering the community to begin to establish a vision to Dream, Create, Transform the site. This document synthesizes the community's input which defined initial elements of a community vision for the future of SDC, explored possible re-use options, and identified areas for further inquiry and investigation.

The Community's Vision for SDC

There were three break-out sessions that took place during the May 2nd workshop. Participants provided both verbal and written comments throughout the sessions. The key points from those comments are summarized below and reflect elements of a draft vision statement that represent guiding principles for the community-based Transformation Plan.

- 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 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, quiet community and preserve the historical and architectural integrity of SDC.
- Preserve SDC’s open space, valuable 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.

Exploring Complementary Uses

Throughout the workshop, participants placed their ideas, questions and comments on *Dream, Create, Transform* display boards that were stationed throughout the facility. The following central themes emerged for complementary/re-use options and opportunities for SDC. Several of the ideas within these themes intersected and overlapped across thematic areas and offered an integrative vision for multiple uses. If you would like to receive a more detailed summary list of the re-use ideas listed below, please view the document titled [Transform SDC Community Workshop #1 Re-use Ideas](#).

- **Health Services and Wellness**
- **Open Space, Recreation, and Scenic Values**
- **Education, Training and Research**
- **Housing**
- **Food and Farming**

Funding/Financing

Many comments focused on possible funding and/or financing vehicles and options. The following summarizes that key ideas brought forward by workshop participants.

Participants suggested different organizational models that could provide SDC with a structure and a governing framework to raise funds, such as the formation of a charitable or public trust, a private foundation or a 501 c3 non-profit organization. Such organizational vehicles could allow Transform SDC to engage in fundraising campaigns that could generate income through major donors and individual gifts, capital campaigns, and fundraising events. These organizational models would also allow Transform SDC to pursue and receive grant awards. In addition to fundraising or fund development recommendations, participants also suggested establishing a public/private partnership, where Transform SDC could leverage public funds with private investor financing. Leasing options, such as ground leasing and flexible leasing arrangements such as those that place the responsibility of building improvements and renovations on Lease holders were also raised. Other income-generating ideas included establishing a solar collective at the site.