



Sonoma Developmental Center

Annual Report

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BACKGROUND

The 2019 Budget Act provides General Fund support for the continuing costs of security and maintenance during the closure of the Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC). The Department of General Services (DGS) requested \$43.7 million over a period of three fiscal years: 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22.¹ The request was based upon data provided by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS).

The Budget Change Proposal also authorized a unique partnership with Sonoma County that provides \$3.5 million to expedite a planning process. This facilitates the quicker disposition of the property and avoids additional operating costs for the campus.

In addition to the funding provided in the Budget Act, Government Code Section 14670.10.5 was created to outline the priorities of the administration and Legislature. Particularly, the statute recognizes the state's commitment to affordable housing and protection of the open space surrounding the core campus at the former SDC.

Given the unique circumstances of the former SDC, the Budget Act of 2019 requires DGS to submit an annual report to the Legislature on the status of the disposition of the campus by March 1 of each year through 2022. This is the second annual report, which includes Sonoma County's progress toward meeting goals and the center's decommissioning progress.

JURISDICTION AND OPERATIONS

Although this is not the department's typical approach for handling surplus property, DGS agreed to take jurisdiction of the campus during its disposition process. However, pursuant to the agreement, DDS is still responsible for the operations and maintenance of the campus during shutdown. On June 28, 2019, DDS and DGS entered into an interagency agreement that outlines the roles and responsibilities for operations of the former SDC. DDS formally transferred jurisdiction of the SDC property to DGS on July 1, 2019.

¹[Link to DGS' Budget Change Proposal](#)

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

Operations

In keeping with DGS' 2019 Budget Change Proposal and the subsequent interagency agreement with DDS, existing DDS staff were to be retained to operate the campus. As time progresses and attrition occurs, if DDS is unable to backfill vacancies, the state would supplement the staff with contracted resources, particularly for fire protection and campus security. In addition to DDS personnel, DGS assumed that some general maintenance work would be contracted out, and that supplemental security measures (via staffing or contract) would be required.

Generally, these assumptions have proven accurate, and the campus is being maintained as represented in the 2019 budget act. DDS staff continue to maintain the campus, and DGS entered into a contract with the California Conservation Corps in September 2019 for general maintenance services, including clearing vegetation surrounding the dams, fire fuel reduction, and trash and litter pickup.

With respect to security, due to the number of instances of theft, vandalism, and trespassing that have occurred, DDS has recommended increasing the number of officers assigned to the campus. DDS' Office of Protective Services continues to evaluate and recruit staff to meet the security needs of the property.

Given the already low number of state firefighters at SDC as of July 2019, attrition – coupled with challenges in recruitment – resulted in concerns over insufficient shift coverage. Accordingly, while DDS continues to attempt to backfill vacancies, DGS entered into a contract with the Sonoma Valley Fire District (formerly known as the Valley of the Moon Fire District) in November 2019. The district is providing supplemental shift coverage for fire, rescue, and emergency medical services at SDC. This arrangement has worked out well by improving coordination between the SDC's fire personnel (also known as Eldridge Fire) and their counterparts in the local fire district.

Maintenance

While DDS generally continues to maintain the campus in accordance with the state's spending assumptions for the site, two significant changes to the site have occurred since July 2019, as reported in the 2020 annual report: the closures of the central utility plant in August 2019 and the water treatment plant in September 2019.

In addition to these more significant changes to the campus, a number of other activities are also underway. These include:

- Reducing the inflow and infiltration of stormwater into the sanitary sewer system in cooperation with the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District.
- Contracting for removal of aboveground and underground fuel storage tanks.
- Evaluation of options to address maintenance and repairs needed for the Lake Suttentfield spillway, sanitary and storm sewer systems, water distribution systems, street lighting systems, Harney Bridge, and other health and safety issues.

PLANNING AND DISPOSITION

Agreement Between DGS and Sonoma County

The Budget Act of 2019 provided \$3.5 million in funding to expedite Sonoma County's planning process. While DGS and the county agreed that a written agreement that specified roles and responsibilities was in the public interest, both parties recognized that such an agreement should not delay the county from beginning its planning work. As such, the county began its planning process concurrent to finalizing the agreement with DGS. In December 2019, DGS and the county executed the agreement, and DGS provided the budgeted funding. Pursuant to the agreement, the county is required to provide DGS with quarterly reports in arrears that include the county's costs for land use planning services (including consultant costs and staff time), and provide an overall progress report.

The agreement stipulates that the county will prepare a Specific Plan in an expedited process to facilitate the disposition of the property within a three-year period. The agreement also requires that the county provide quarterly reports to the state for annual reporting, including the county's costs for land use planning services (including consultant costs and staff time), and a progress report that compares the current status with the project schedule and includes a list of deliverables completed and the estimated dates for completion of the remaining deliverables.

County Planning – To Date

On May 24, 2019, the county issued a Request for Proposals for Consultant Services to prepare a Specific Plan and a Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the site.

The county selected Dyett and Bhatia as its consultant and began initial preparations for the Specific Plan. This included developing an outreach strategy, given how essential local participation is with respect to the long-term success of the final disposition of the property.

As part of the county's outreach strategy, the county established a Planning Advisory Team (PAT). The purpose of the PAT is to represent community interests; review Specific Plan-related materials and documents; share information and encourage public participation in the planning process; and to perform an advisory role as an extension of the planning team.

In mid-December 2019, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors authorized the formal commencement of developing the Specific Plan.

The state hosted a county-led staff kickoff meeting and tour of SDC with the county's consultant on January 24, 2020. Following the meeting and tour, the county held the first meeting of the PAT at the site. Originally scheduled to occur monthly, the PAT subsequently met on April 3, 2020, September 4, 2020, and September 11, 2020.

Due in part to circumstances beyond the county's control, including the 2020 Glass Fire and COVID-19 pandemic, the Specific Plan is falling behind schedule. The community engagement strategy was modified in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and in-person group meetings were shifted to virtual online meetings. The first public workshop scheduled for September 30, 2020 had to be rescheduled due to the Glass Fire, which forced the evacuation of thousands of residents from the Sonoma Valley, including from the SDC site and nearby communities. The Glass Fire was fully contained on October 20, 2020, and the workshop was rescheduled and held on November 14, 2020.

Posting the state's request for proposals (RFP) is dependent on the county's release of a draft Specific Plan for public review (Draft Plan). The original schedule called for the release of the Draft Plan in March 2021 and for posting the RFP in May 2021. Currently, the county plans to release the Draft Plan in October 2021. Therefore, posting the state RFP will be delayed five to seven months.

The schedule for land use planning and disposition per the agreement between DGS and the county is shown in the Gantt chart below. The table that follows shows the current status of contract deliverables through the third quarter of 2020:

Status of Contract Deliverables

Contract Deliverable	Complete	Percent Complete	Estimated Date for Completion
A. Robust Community Engagement Strategy (and implementation thereof)	No	60%	Strategy complete; implementation ongoing throughout project
B. Comprehensive Conditions Report on the property and its setting	No	80%	March 2021
C. Economic Market Demand Report	No	75%	March 2021
D. Water Supply Assessment and coordination among Water Agencies	No	20%	September 2021
E. Project Conceptual Alternatives & a Preferred Plan Framework	No	10%	May 2021
F. Draft Specific Plan with Infrastructure and Financing Strategies	No	0%	October 2021
G. Public Draft Initial Study and Notice of Preparation	No	0%	October 2021
H. Public Draft Environmental Impact Report	No	0%	November 2021
I. Draft Final Environmental Impact Report and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program	No	0%	December 2021
J. Final Draft Specific Plan and Environmental Impact Report	No	0%	December 2021
K. Public hearings for EIR certification and Specific Plan adoption, including any General Plan and zoning amendments identified as necessary for consistency	No	0%	February 2022

PROJECT EXPENDITURES

Department of Developmental Services

Based upon an accounting of costs from DDS, for the period of July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020, DDS has expended \$4,492,664. This consists of staffing costs of \$2,974,964 and operating expenses of \$1,517,700. For the period of July 1, 2020 through October 31, 2020, DDS has expended \$719,532. This consists of staffing costs of \$621,035 and operating expenses of \$98,497.

While these costs continue trending lower, compared to estimates provided in the 2019 budget change proposal, DDS' vacancy rate has been higher than expected due to attrition. Additionally, as the central utility and water treatment plants have both been shut down, utility costs for the campus have declined.

Department of General Services

As DGS is not directly maintaining the campus, most of its expenditures differ in type from those of DDS. While DGS has already transferred \$3.5 million in planning funds to the county and is responsible for payment of utilities and regulatory permits and fees, most of the other DGS costs summarized below are more accurately described as encumbrances. These encumbrances can be categorized as maintenance/operations and site evaluation/planning related to decommissioning the SDC.

1. Maintenance and Operations

- a. DGS previously entered into a three-year contract for \$600,048 with the California Conservation Corps for clearing vegetation from the dam faces, fire fuel reduction, trash and litter pickup, and other general maintenance work.
- b. DGS previously entered into a contract with Valley of the Moon Fire District, doing business as Sonoma Valley Fire and Rescue, for \$344,255 for the 8.5 months remaining in the 2019-20 fiscal year (at the time of contract initiation). The contract was renewed for fiscal year 2020-21 and will be renewed in 2021-22 to ensure appropriate fire and rescue coverage. The annual cost is approximately \$510,000 to cover one-third of the monthly shifts.
- c. DGS finalized a \$300,000 contract with Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District to reduce inflow and infiltration of stormwater into the sanitary sewer system.

- d. DGS entered into a contract for \$40,000 for the evaluation, scoping, and providing cost estimates for the repair of the Lake Sutterfield spillway. This repair was identified in a dam inspection report by the Department of Water Resources' Division of Safety of Dams.
- e. DGS has encumbered \$48,640 for civil engineering support for annual regulatory compliance.

2. Site Evaluation and Planning Related to Decommissioning SDC

- a. DGS awarded a contract for \$623,938 to remove several aboveground and underground fuel storage tanks, to backfill overexcavation of structures burned in the 2017 Nuns Fire, to fill a swimming pool that presents a public safety hazard, and to remove freon in the chillers that could leak out and contribute to global warming.
- b. DGS entered into a contract for \$145,240 for Phase I and Phase II Environmental Assessments related to its decommissioning activities.
- c. DGS entered into a contract for \$7,494 for the review of inspection findings issued by the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board to determine if further action is required.
- d. DGS entered into a contract for \$328,600 to prepare Historic American Building Survey/Historic American Engineering Record documentation of SDC's historic resources.
- e. DGS has encumbered \$239,447 for civil engineering and environmental services support for decommissioning activities.

3. Pending Contracts

- a. DGS anticipates entering into the following contracts by the end of the fiscal year 2020-21:
 - i. Hazardous materials testing as part of decommissioning activities.
 - ii. Tree maintenance to address deferred tree maintenance in the core campus, including removal of trees that present a hazard.
 - iii. Groundskeeping to reduce fire hazards.
 - iv. Evaluation of electrical systems and repair of existing street lighting systems required for public safety.
 - v. Evaluation of the sanitary sewer system and assistance with regulatory compliance.

- vi. Evaluation of the water distribution system to reduce the number of water line failures.
- vii. Evaluation and recommendations for repairs and inspection protocols for infrastructure flagged in regulatory inspection reports, i.e., dams and bridges.
- viii. Safety evaluation of building flagged in Tier 1 seismic report.

Sonoma County

Through October 31, 2020, the county has expended \$383,093 on activities related to the Specific Plan.

CONCLUSION

DGS, in conjunction with DDS, continues to maintain the SDC campus. In addition, Sonoma County, although delayed by the Glass Fire and the COVID-19 pandemic, is progressing with its planning, has engaged the community in the process and is working toward a Specific Plan.