



# 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.<sup>1</sup> 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 first 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.

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<sup>1</sup>[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 to the Legislature. 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 from the dam faces, 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 is working to obtain those officers. Should DDS be unable to recruit candidates, DGS will contract with a security firm for additional patrols. As an additional aid in deterring vandalism of the site and trespassing, DDS has implemented additional physical security measures such as gates, signage, and cameras to prevent and deter unlawful entry into buildings and the property.

Given the already low number of state firefighters at SDC as of July 2019, attrition – coupled with challenges in recruitment – has resulted in concerns over insufficient shift coverage. Accordingly, while DDS continues to attempt to backfill vacancies, DGS entered into a contract with the Valley of the Moon Fire District (otherwise known as the Sonoma Valley Fire and Rescue Authority) in November 2019. The district is providing supplemental shift coverage for fire, rescue, and emergency medical services at SDC.

## 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.

### 1. Central Utility Plant Shutdown

Heating at SDC was designed to be primarily provided through a central utility plant through gas-fired boilers. These boilers are past their useful life and do not meet emissions standards. Accordingly, the site has been served with ongoing enforcement actions by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, including the levying of fines. Given the potential cost of the daily fines, as well as the prohibitive costs of replacing the boilers themselves, DGS shut down the central utility plant in August 2019. Alternate heating arrangements have been made for those buildings still occupied by DDS staff.

### 2. Water Treatment Plant Shutdown

With staff attrition, DDS was unable to appropriately staff the water treatment plant at SDC. This resulted in enforcement actions taken by the State Water Resources Control Board's Drinking Water Division. DGS consequently shut down the water treatment plant in September 2019. Water is now being provided by the Sonoma County Water Agency under an existing agreement. A formal decommissioning process is underway.

In addition to these more significant changes to the campus, a number of lesser repairs/evaluations are occurring. These include:

- Reducing the inflow and infiltration of stormwater into the sanitary sewer system in cooperation with the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District.
- Preparing plans and specifications for the removal of aboveground and underground fuel storage tanks.
- Evaluation of options to address the repair of the various infrastructure items such as the Lake Suttentfield spillway, and sanitary and storm sewer systems.

## 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.

### County Planning – To Date

The following represents a summary of the planning actions taken to date by Sonoma County.<sup>2</sup>

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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. The PAT will meet with county staff on a monthly basis.

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<sup>2</sup> While the Budget Act did not take effect until July 2019, Sonoma County began administrative efforts related to the site as early as May 2019.

4. In mid-December 2019, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors authorized the formal commencement of developing the Specific Plan.
5. 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.

## County Planning – Next Steps

Sonoma County will continue with community engagement throughout the entirety of the planning effort, and has begun its review of existing background reports. As the California Environmental Quality Act process is the critical path task for the Specific Plan, the county will then focus on those activities, including EIR scoping, development and presentation of project alternatives, identification of a preferred alternative, development of a water supply assessment, development of the draft specific plan, and completion of the draft and final EIR.

## PROJECT EXPENDITURES

### Department of Developmental Services

Based upon an accounting of costs from DDS, for the period of July 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019, DDS has expended \$2,066,714. This consists of staffing costs of \$1,538,531 and operating expenses of \$528,183.

Based on DGS' understanding of the historic costs at SDC and the state's practices of payment in arrears, DGS expects receipt of additional invoices for expenses incurred on or before December 31, 2019 and through the end of fiscal year 2019-20 that are not reflected here.

While these costs may appear to be trending lower, compared to estimates provided to the Legislature, DDS' vacancy rate has been higher than expected. Additionally, as the central utility and water treatment plants have both been shut down, DGS anticipates lower-than-budgeted utility costs for the campus in general.

### 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, 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 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 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 will be renewed to ensure appropriate fire and rescue coverage. The annual cost is approximately \$510,000 to cover one-third of the monthly shifts.
- c. DGS is finalizing a three-year contract with Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District for \$300,000 to reduce inflow and infiltration of stormwater into the sanitary sewer system.
- d. DGS encumbered \$300,000 for the evaluation and scoping for the repair of the Lake Suttentfield 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 \$86,465 for civil engineering support for annual regulatory compliance.

### **2. Site Evaluation and Planning Related to Decommissioning SDC**

- a. DGS encumbered \$750,000 to develop plans and specifications and an initial budget for removal of several of the aboveground and underground fuel storage tanks.
- b. DGS has encumbered \$100,000 for Phase I and Phase II Environmental Assessments related to its decommissioning activities.
- c. DGS has encumbered \$7,500 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 encumbered \$351,960 to prepare Historic American Building Survey/Historic American Engineering Record documentation of the historic resources.



## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, DGS, in conjunction with DDS, continues to maintain the SDC campus. Although it was necessary to shut down the central utility plant and water treatment plant, DGS has worked diligently to mitigate the impacts by making alternate heating arrangements for DDS staff and utilizing water through an existing agreement with the Sonoma County Water Agency. In addition, Sonoma County is progressing with their planning, has engaged the community in the process and is working toward a specific plan in a timely fashion.