



# COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION  
DRIVE, ROOM 102A  
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

## SUMMARY REPORT

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**Agenda Date:** 12/16/2022

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**To:** Sonoma County Board of Supervisors  
**Department or Agency Name(s):** Permit Sonoma  
**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Brian Oh, (707) 565-1931  
**Vote Requirement:** Majority  
**Supervisorial District(s):** First

**Title:**

**10:00 AM-** Sonoma Developmental Center Specific Plan and Final Environmental Impact Report (Adoption)

**Recommended Action:**

1. Hold a public hearing for the Sonoma Developmental Center Specific Plan Project and Final Environmental Impact Report
2. Certify a Final Environmental Impact Report for the Sonoma Developmental Center Specific Plan, and adopt a statement of overriding considerations and findings of fact pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (Attachment 1)
3. Adopt General Plan amendments to maps and policies of the Land Use Element and other elements to enable the Sonoma Developmental Center Specific Plan, adopt the Specific Plan, and approve zoning code and map changes (Attachment 2)
4. Adopt Zoning Code amendment (Attachment 3)

**Executive Summary:**

In December 2018, the State of California closed the Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC), a residential care facility that had been in operation for 125 years. During the closure process, the State in 2019 enacted a statute authorizing the County of Sonoma to adopt a specific plan guiding redevelopment of the 945-acre campus. The statute prescribes that the plan focus on: 1) open space preservation; 2) housing, prioritizing affordable housing and homes for individuals with developmental disabilities; and 3) economic feasibility. The statute provides three years from enactment to complete the process by 31 December 2022.

Anchored by SDC's Community Engagement Strategy, the Specific Plan planning effort included a series of community workshops, a Board of Supervisors workshop in January 2022, focus groups, and public review of draft content as key input to the draft Specific Plan and Environmental Impact Report, which was released on August 10, 2022. A Final EIR and key Specific Plan policy revisions were published on October 18, 2022.

On November 07, 2022, the Sonoma County Planning Commission voted 4-1 in favor of recommending that the Board of Supervisors certify the final Environmental Impact Report, adopt a statement of overriding considerations and findings of fact pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. Additionally, the Commission voted 4-1 in favor of recommending that the Board of Supervisors adopt general plan

amendments, the Sonoma Developmental Center Specific Plan, and zoning code and map changes, as recommended by the Planning Commission.

**Discussion:**

**Project History**

In December 2018, the State of California closed the Sonoma Developmental Center, a residential care facility that had been in operation for 125 years. During the closure process, the State enacted a statute authorizing the County of Sonoma to adopt a specific plan guiding redevelopment of the 945-acre campus. The statute prescribes that the plan focus on: 1) open space preservation; 2) affordable housing, including units serving people with developmental disabilities; and 3) economic feasibility. The statute provides three years from enactment to complete the process no later than 31 December 2022 (Attachment 5).

Following the closure of the SDC facility, the California State Legislature enacted Government Code Section 14670.10.5 that outlines the State's goals and objectives for the SDC Specific Plan and authorizes Sonoma County to lead the planning process with a one-time \$3.5M funding allocation to complete work by December 2022. In light of the statewide affordable housing crisis, State law stipulates that the SDC Specific Plan prioritize housing, especially affordable housing and housing for individuals with developmental disabilities. The legislation also acknowledges the importance of the significant open space areas of the SDC site and requires permanent protection of the SDC site's open space and natural resources, along with protection of the Eldridge Cemetery located on the property. Other required components of the planning process include involvement of the community in order to reduce uncertainty, increase land values, expedite marketing, and maximize interest of potential purchasers, and ensuring economic feasibility. The legislation contemplates that these efforts will require environmental review and amendments to the County's General Plan and zoning ordinances.

In early 2020, the County of Sonoma started a community engagement process to establish the following Vision and Guiding Principles for redevelopment of the Sonoma Developmental Center. This vision and guiding principles were further refined at a workshop with the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors in January 2021.

**Vision Statement**

The former SDC site has emerged as a culturally and ecologically vibrant and resilient community. A core 180-acre developed area is surrounded by a vast protected open space of oak woodlands, native grasslands, wetlands, forests, creeks, and lakes that provide habitats and wildlife movement corridors; agricultural land; and recreational open space integrated with the surrounding park systems. The developed core area comprises a complementary mix of housing, commercial, and institutional uses. The SDC site is financially independent and supporting infrastructure is up to date and well maintained. A variety of housing-including affordable, workforce, mid-income, and market-rate housing; senior housing; housing for people with developmental disabilities; and in new and adaptively re-used buildings-will foster a diverse and inclusive community. New development complements the adjacent communities of Glen Ellen and Eldridge. Residents enjoy pedestrian access to essential services and parks, and seamless connections to surrounding open spaces. Employment opportunities reflect the site's legacy of care and emphasize innovation, research, education, environment, and ecology, together with supporting commercial and visitor-serving uses. Sonoma

Valley's former largest employment hub is reinvigorated as a regional model for sustainable development.

### **Guiding Principles**

**Promote a Vibrant, Mixed-Use Community.** Promote a diverse and integrated mix of residential development and employment uses, including research, education, office, retail, and small businesses, to promote optimal development patterns and site revitalization in the Core Campus, and provide economic opportunities for Sonoma Valley communities.

**Emphasize a Cohesive Sense of Place and Walkability.** Establish a cohesive visual landscape with consistent streetscapes and improved sidewalks within the Core Campus. Locate land uses and enhance the existing street network to encourage development of a walkable and pedestrian-friendly environment with gathering spaces, diverse activities, and connections within and to surrounding communities and regional trail systems. Ensure that new development complements the adjacent communities of Glen Ellen and Eldridge.

**Integrate Development with Open Space Conservation.** Promote a sustainable, climate-resilient community surrounded by preserved open space and parkland that protects natural resources, fosters environmental stewardship, and maintains and enhances the permeability of the Sonoma Valley Wildlife Corridor for safe wildlife movement throughout the site. Support the responsible use of open space as a recreation resource for the community.

**Balance Redevelopment with Existing Land Uses.** Use recognized principles of land use planning and sustainability to gauge how well proposed land uses protect public trust resources and fit the character and values of the site and surrounding area, as well as benefit local communities and residents.

**Promote Sustainability and Resiliency.** Promote sustainable development practices in building and landscape design. Plan infrastructure efficiently and sustainably, conserving water and creating opportunities for water reuse and recharge. Proactively plan for community safety in natural disasters, especially ensuring that emergency plans and egress routes are in place with adequate capacity, and landscapes and buildings are designed with fire defenses.

**Support Housing Development and Provide a Variety of Housing Types.** Promote housing to address Sonoma County's pressing housing needs and the State's key development objectives for the site. Support a range of housing opportunities, including affordable housing, workforce housing, mid-income housing, housing for individuals with developmental disabilities, senior housing, and market rate housing.

**Balance Development with Historic Resource Conservation.** Preserve and adaptively reuse the Main Building and the Sonoma House complex, conserve key elements of the site's historic landscape, and strive to maintain the integrity of the historic district to the west of Arnold Drive by adaptive reuse of contributing buildings where feasible. Support a cohesive community feel and character, while allowing a diversity of architectural styles.

**Promote Multi-Modal Mobility.** Promote car-free circulation within the site and promote transportation connections between the SDC site and the larger Sonoma Valley and Bay Area, including through transit access, safe sidewalks and crossings, and regional bicycle routes. Ensure that new development takes into consideration resultant traffic and levels of transportation activity from when SDC was operational.

**Ensure Long-Term Fiscal Sustainability.** Ensure that the proposed plan is financially feasible and sustainable, as financial feasibility is essential to the long-term success of the project. Ensure that the proposed plan supports funding for necessary infrastructure improvements and historic preservation while supporting the Sonoma Valley community's needs and galvanizing regional economic growth.

**Embrace Diversity.** Accommodate the needs of people of diverse backgrounds, interests, and income levels, creating an inclusive, accessible, inviting, and safe place that preserves SDC's legacy of care and creates opportunities for marginalized communities.

Over the next year, staff completed work needed to complete the development of a Specific Plan. In January 2022, the Board of Supervisors received a project update, which included a project description framework. The framework advanced critical concepts focusing on: 1) expansion of the wildlife corridor; 2) greater protection of riparian corridors; 3) increased distance of development from the wildland urban interface; 4) a higher concentration of housing types in west campus; 5) enhanced and better-connected inner campus green spaces; and 6) a better coordinated mobility system, including emphasis on non-auto travel through campus and creation of a new vehicular connection to extend Harney Drive to Highway 12.

At this meeting, the Board provided comments for staff to incorporate into the Specific Plan planning process. Staff received comments and proceeded to prepare a draft Specific Plan and draft Environmental Impact Report.

Staff continued its community engagement strategy between January 2022 and July 2022, which directly informed the draft goals and policies in the Specific Plan. During that time, staff completed its community engagement phase, including seven Planning Advisory Team (PAT) meetings, two general public workshops on Specific Plan policy development, two focus group meetings with disability advocates, two focus group meetings in Spanish with Sonoma Valley Latino residents, and a workshop with Sonoma County's Human Rights Commission. Based on this input, staff completed a draft Specific Plan and draft EIR to evaluate potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. Both documents completed a 45-day public review on September 26, 2022, and during that time, staff received valuable input from a wide range of sources: the general public, the Sonoma County Planning Commission, Sonoma Valley Fire District, the City of Sonoma, Sonoma County Landmarks Commission, tribal partners and local community groups such as the Sonoma Valley Community Advisory Commission, the North Sonoma Valley Municipal Advisory Committee and the Springs Municipal Advisory Committee.

On October 26, 2022, the Sonoma Valley Community Advisory Commission (SVCAC) voted in favor of rejecting the Sonoma Developmental Center Specific Plan and Final Environmental Impact Report. SVCAC is a joint advisory agency with representation from the County of Sonoma and the City of Sonoma to share responsibility for local planning in the Sonoma Valley. It was created in 1993 to provide a regular forum for citizen participation in the formation of public policy, consider issues concerning the Sonoma Valley, evaluate solutions to these issues, advise elected officials and other decision-makers, and form a bridge for communication between the various governmental agencies and the general public. Furthermore, the SVCAC voted in favor of supporting the Historic Preservation Alternative, which is one of the project alternatives that was evaluated in the Final EIR. After consideration of public testimony, including SVCAC's advisory vote, the Sonoma County Planning Commission completed its public hearing and deliberations on the Specific Plan and Final Environmental Impact Report on November 07. The Planning Commission voted 4-1 in favor of the

Specific Plan and Final EIR, as amended by the Planning Commission and outlined in Attachment 4.

### **Sonoma Developmental Center Specific Plan**

A Specific Plan is a comprehensive planning and zoning document for a defined geographic region. Under California law, a Specific Plans creates a framework for development for a defined geographic region and establishes a link between implementing policies of the general plan and the individual development proposals in that defined region. All subsequent public works projects, zoning regulations, subdivision and development must in turn be consistent with the Specific Plan.

The SDC Specific Plan is organized in seven chapters across six topics:

- Open Space and Resources, and Hazards
- Mobility and Access
- Land Use
- Community Design
- Public Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure
- Implementation and Financing

The plan calls for:

- Open space protection for 700 acres and preservation of Sonoma Creek
- 1,000 housing units with 283 units of affordable housing
- More than 900 jobs that will provide diverse living-wage jobs across 410,000 square feet of non-residential development
- Walkable core with transit, pedestrian and bike paths to provide alternatives to automobile use
- Institutional uses focusing on research and education driving employment
- Commercial, recreational, and civic uses for residents, employees and the greater Sonoma Valley
- New road connection between Arnold Dr and SR-12
- New public facilities such as a fire station and community center

### **Final Environmental Impact Report**

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared to address the new environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the Proposed Plan. The EIR serves three purposes: analyze and mitigate the environmental impacts of the Project, identify a

set of reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Plan, and inform the public of the impacts prior to the adoption of the Specific Plan. According to CEQA Guidelines 15021 (d), “CEQA recognizes that in determining whether and how a project should be approved, a public agency has an obligation to balance a variety of public objectives, including economic, environmental, and social factors and in particular the goal of providing a decent home and satisfying living environment for every Californian. An agency shall prepare a statement of overriding considerations as described in Section 15093 to reflect the ultimate balancing of competing public objectives when the agency decides to approve a project that will cause one or more significant effects on the environment.”

On October 18, 2022, County staff published a Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR), which includes three additional components: a summary of the changes included in the FEIR, County responses to comments received during the public review period, and an errata (new information added to clarify, amplify or make insignificant modifications to the Draft Environmental Impact Report).

The Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) reaffirms the environmental analysis completed for the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR), which addresses environmental impacts associated with the proposed SDC Specific Plan that are known to the County of Sonoma, were raised during the Notice of Preparation process, or identified during preparation of the DEIR. The DEIR discusses significant and potentially significant impacts in terms of several environmental categories including, but not limited to, aesthetics, greenhouses gases, noise, transportation/circulation, and vehicle miles traveled, and cumulative impacts. These impacts are summarized in the Executive Summary of the DEIR, which includes a table outlining the level of potential impacts, and where further discussion can be found in the document. The FEIR, the DEIR and the DEIR Appendices can be accessed on the project website at <https://www.sdcspecificplan.com/documents>. The DEIR studies and describes potential impacts on the environment and measures that could mitigate impacts. It also evaluates what would happen if the project were not adopted, known as a No Project Alternative, as well as alternative projects that may have lesser environmental impacts. The following table provides a high-level summary of the alternatives.

**Proposal Studies by the DEIR**

Plan/Alternative	Population	Housing (units)	Jobs	New road connecting Arnold Drive and SR 12
Proposed Plan	2,400	1,000	940	Local road connection
No Project: Low Development Alternative	1,800	750	700	Emergency access connection only
No Project: High Development Alternative	3,000	1,250	940	Local road connection
Reduced Development Alternative	1,800	750	600	Emergency access connection only
Historic Preservation Alternative	1,080	450	600	No

The DEIR studied 62 project impacts to the environment, and the FEIR reaffirms that 60 of 62 impacts are less than significant, and the following two impacts are expected to be significant and unavoidable.

1. Transportation (Significant and unavoidable impact; project and cumulative) Implementation of the Proposed Plan would conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b) pertaining to Vehicle Miles Traveled (Impact 3.14-2).

The VMT modeling results produced by the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) travel demand model indicate that residential uses in the Plan area with implementation of the Proposed Plan would on average generate 15.2 VMT per capita, which is a decrease from the existing average of 20.0 VMT per capita. Under future conditions with buildout of the Proposed Plan, the VMT per capita would further reduce to 14.9. While these metrics indicate improvement in residential VMT per capita compared to existing development, they fall short of the applied 13.2 VMT per capita threshold of significance.

2. Historic Resources (Significant and unavoidable impact; project) Impact 3.5-2 Implementation of the Proposed Plan would cause a substantial adverse change to the significance of a historic district, as defined as physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the historic district or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of the historic district would be materially impaired pursuant to § 15064.5.

The Proposed Plan includes policies and actions that encourage the preservation of the historic character of the Core Campus. This includes retention, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of buildings, structures, and landscape features in the Core Campus area, as well as the prioritization of preserving historically contributing resources. Although some of the historic character would be preserved, demolition of some contributing resources to the historic district are assumed in the Proposed Plan. Additionally, a number of Specific Plan policies would help reduce these impacts to the maximum extent practicable, but there are no mitigation measures available to avoid impacts entirely. As such, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

### Alternatives Comparison

The Reduced Development Alternative, No Project Low Development Alternative, and No Project High Development Alternative have the same outcomes of significance. The Historic Preservation Alternative would also have similar outcomes, except with less than significant historic resources impacts. Overall, the Historic Preservation Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, although significant impacts of the Proposed Plan and the two alternatives are largely comparable, and the Historic Preservation Alternative would be less superior in some environmental features such as energy use, biological resources, and wildfire risks. The Historic Preservation Alternative would result in less than significant impacts regarding Energy, Climate Change, and GHG Emissions; Biological Resources; and Wildfire which is equivalent to the Proposed Plan. While these impacts are less than significant, indirect emissions associated with electricity consumption, waste and wastewater generation, and water use, would likely be more than those of the Proposed Plan because of the inefficiency of the existing buildings, and the difficulty in updating existing construction to match current standards for energy efficiency and GHG emissions. Under the Historic Preservation Alternative, creek corridors and the wildlife corridor will also not be expanded which would negatively impact wildlife movement compared to the Proposed Plan. Further, the lack of Highway 12 direct access may lead to slightly longer evacuation times compared to the Proposed Plan. Moreover, the Historic Preservation alternative would not support key project objectives related to increased housing supply, varied housing opportunities,

community vibrancy, and long-term fiscal stability to the same degree as the Proposed Plan.

The Proposed Plan fulfills the project objectives most completely, including providing greater levels of housing including affordable housing, and superior financial feasibility, with overall environmental impacts that are largely comparable between the Proposed Plan and the alternatives, with the exception of greater preservation of historic resources in the Historic Preservation Alternative.

### **General Plan Consistency**

In the words of the California Supreme Court, the general plan serves as “the land use constitution” for the community. It guides the county’s land-use policy balancing environmental protection and sustainable development for the next generation. Adopted in 2008, the County General Plan includes a number of goals and policies to inform redevelopment of the SDC campus. Staff has completed a General Plan analysis and concludes that the Specific Plan is consistent with the County General Plan, with amendments to the maps and policies of the Land Use Element and other elements as needed to enable enactment and implementation of the Specific Plan. The Specific Plan expands preservation of open space and natural resources, allows for a manageable amount of population and growth with a mix of housing types and affordability, and provides essential amenities to the Sonoma Valley area. The Plan reaffirms the General Plan’s commitments to maintaining growth, development and conserving resources, particularly in Sonoma Valley with its unique characteristics by conforming with a number of key General Plan policies such as:

#### Land use

- Policy LU-20ff: Consider future public uses of the Sonoma Developmental Center and Skaggs Island properties as a priority if they are declared surplus and offered for sale to local agencies, particularly park, recreation, and open space uses and affordable housing.
  - County of Sonoma is achieving this policy through completion of the terms defined by the State and County partnership to complete planning and disposition of SDC.
- Figure LU-2i: Amend the land use map to include a new land use designation called Sonoma Developmental Center Specific Plan (SDC). The proposed designation would replace the existing Public/Quasi-Public Facilities designation (P/QP).
  - The proposed amendment more accurately reflects the proposed land uses with the Sonoma Developmental Center Specific Plan.
- Goals LU-2 and LU-3: Accommodate the major share of future growth within the nine existing cities and their expansion areas and within selected unincorporated communities, which are planned to have adequate water and sewer capacities; Locate future growth within the cities and unincorporated Urban Service Areas in a compact manner using vacant "infill" parcels and lands next to existing development at the edge of these areas.
  - The proposed plan is consistent with the stated General Plan goals for city-centered growth, and within unincorporated Urban Service Areas and lands next to existing development at the edge of these areas. The Core Campus east of Arnold Dr. is within an existing Urban Service

Area, while the Core Campus west of Arnold Dr. is at the edge of the Urban Service Area. Moreover, the proposed plan will be redeveloped in a compact manner, is planned to have adequate water and sewer services, and achieves the intent of Policy LU-20ff for redevelopment of the Sonoma Developmental Center.

#### Circulation

- Policy CT-7qq: Consider intersection improvements such as signalization and left turn lanes at various intersections along Arnold Drive to reduce congestion, provided that the improvements are consistent with the designated road classifications.
  - SDC Specific Plan is requiring intersection improvements consistent with the designated road classification at Arnold Dr. and Harney Ave.

#### Public facilities and services

- Policy PF-1f: Avoid extension of public sewer services outside of either a sphere of influence or Urban Service Area. To the extent allowed by law, consider exceptions to this policy only: (1) Where necessary to resolve a public health hazard resulting from existing development, or (2) Where appropriate to allow farmworker housing or an affordable housing project providing exclusively lower income housing on properties adjoining urban service boundaries.
  - The Core Campus parcels east of Arnold Dr. are in an existing urban service area.
  - The Core Campus parcels west of Arnold Dr. have existing public sewer services, and therefore do not require an extension of service.
- Policy PF-2c: Use the following standards for determination of park needs: Twenty acres of regional parks per 1,000 residents countywide and five acres of local and community parks per 1,000 residents in unincorporated areas. A portion of State parklands may be included to meet the standard for regional parks.
  - The Specific Plan exceeds the minimum standards for both regional, local and community parks for the proposed plan.
- Policy PF-2g: Require dedication of land or in-lieu fees as a means of funding park and fire services and facilities.
  - The Specific Plan requires dedication of land, or in-lieu fees as a means for funding park and fire service and facilities.

#### Open space and resource conservation

- Policy LU-10a: Establish maximum densities and/or siting standards for development in designated Community Separators, Scenic Landscape Units, Scenic Corridors, Biotic Habitat Areas, Habitat Connectivity Corridors, and Riparian Corridors.

- The Specific Plan proposes design and development standards, including maximum densities. Additional standards are proposed in alignment with Arnold Dr., which is a Scenic Corridor. The area is also identified as a Habitat Connectivity Corridor. Policies, design and development standards are proposed to allow movement across the landscape by expanding the wildlife buffer, preserving critical open space resources within the wildlife corridor, and ensuring permeability of the campus for a critical linkage between Sonoma Mountain and the Mayacamas Range. Additionally, the Plan proposes expansion of the existing Riparian Corridor for both Hill Creek and Sonoma Creek.
- Community Separator Policies: The boundaries, land use designations, and densities of lands within the Community Separator cannot be amended unless approved by the voters, except when the amendment falls into a category that is exempt from voter approval (Policy OSRC-1k). Further, amendments to increase residential density should be avoided (Policy OSRC-1a) as should commercial and industrial uses other than those that are allowed in the agricultural and resource land use categories (Policy OSRC-1b). Additionally, Urban Service Areas of unincorporated communities cannot be amended to include lands within the Community Separators (Policy LU-3e).
  - The Specific Plan proposes to change the land use designation in the Community Separator from Public/Quasi-Public to SDC Preserved Parkland and Open Space. The new land use designation, plus the policies of the Specific Plan applicable to the Community Separator lands, would greatly reduce the allowed intensity of development. The new land use designation removes the allowance for many commercial and industrial uses, and does not introduce new residential uses or increase residential density. The amendment to the land use designation is exempt from voter approval because it reduces the allowed intensity of development and is consistent with the policies governing Community Separators.
  - *Planning Commission voted in favor of retaining the existing Public/Quasi-Public land use designation while recommending the proposed permitted uses in the Preserved Open Space zoning designations.* The Specific Plan maintains the Public/Quasi-Public land use designation in the Community Separator and not increase the density or intensity of allowed development. Further, the SDC Preserved Parkland and Open Space Combining District is combined with the existing Public Facilities zoning which, in conjunction with the policies of the Specific Plan applicable to the Community Separator lands, greatly reduces the allowed intensity of development. The new combining zone removes the allowance for many commercial and industrial uses that are not owned and operated by the County, and does not introduce new residential uses or increase residential density. The Specific Plan adds approximately 19 acres to the Community Separator on the north end of the Core Campus in order to expand and protect the wildlife corridor, and removes an equivalent acreage adjacent to the southeast corner of the Core Campus. The amendment of the boundaries of the Community Separator are exempt from voter approval because there is no net loss in land and consistent with the intent of the Community Separator protections. The Specific Plan extends an existing Urban Service Area on the east side campus to include the area on the west side of campus intended for development. The Urban Service Area as amended would not include lands within the amended Community Separator.

## **Zoning Ordinance**

The current base zoning designation for the 5 parcels that encompass the Sonoma Developmental Center is Public Facilities (PF). Additionally, each parcel has a set of combining zones described below.

### Base Zone

- Public Facilities, which serve the public or community needs

### Combining Zone

- B7 Combining District, which restricts subdivision of lots
- Historic Combining District, which applies to the property west of Arnold Drive, requires County Landmarks Commission approvals for any alterations or demolition of buildings within the boundaries of a historic district
- Floodplain Combining District, applied to properties which lie within the one hundred-year flood hazard area, specifies development standards and flood protection regulations
- Riparian Corridor Combining Zone, which seeks to protect critical habitat area along riparian corridors and prohibits grading, vegetation removal, agricultural cultivation, structures, roads, utility lines, and parking lots within any stream channel or conservation area
- Scenic Resources Combining District, which applies to most of the property, specifies that land within community separators and scenic landscape units should site structures below ridgelines, be screened by vegetation, and that development should be clustered
- Valley Oak Habitat Combining District, which applies to most of the Core Campus area, requires protection of valley oak trees and replacement of any large trees removed
- Local Area Development Guidelines for Taylor/Sonoma/Mayacamas Mountains, which are intended to reduce visual impacts of residential development, and contain standards for siting, screening, grading, landscaping, and architectural design of residential structures

The Specific Plan requires the three following changes to ensure that the zoning and Specific Plan are consistent.

1. Amend the base zoning designation from Public Facilities (PF) to Special Purpose Zone, Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC) for Core Campus parcels
2. Change from B7 to B6 for Core Campus parcels
3. Replace Local Area Development Guidelines (LG/MTN) with Sonoma Developmental Center Specific Plan - Development and Design Standards for Core Campus parcels

The General Plan amendments and zone text and map amendments are described in greater detail in

Attachment 2.

The Planning Commission voted to recommend the following changes to the Proposed Plan discussed above:

Open space preservation

1. Expand riparian corridor setback from 50 to 100 feet top of bank, or the nearest existing roadway, for Sonoma Creek.
2. Amend the boundaries of the Core Campus and add and remove lands from the community separator (with no net loss) as follows:
  - a. Add the community separator designation to the approximately 19 acres of already-developed Core Campus land, including Paxton, Thompson, Bane, Residences 138 and 139.
  - b. Remove an equivalent acreage from the community separator of already-developed land east of Railroad adjacent to the southeast corner of the Core Campus. This expansion of the Core Campus shall be zoned as Buffer Open Space.

Community Separator Policies: The boundaries, land use designations, and densities of lands within the Community Separator cannot be amended unless approved by the voters, except when the amendment falls into a category that is exempt from voter approval (Policy OSRC-1k). Further, amendments to increase residential density should be avoided (Policy OSRC-1a) as should commercial and industrial uses other than those that are allowed in the agricultural and resource land use categories (Policy OSRC-1b). Additionally, Urban Service Areas of unincorporated communities cannot be amended to include lands within the Community Separators (Policy LU-3e).

- The Specific Plan maintains the Public/Quasi-Public land use designation in the Community Separator and not increase the density or intensity of allowed development. Further, the SDC Preserved Parkland and Open Space Combining Zone is combined with the existing Public Facilities zoning which, in conjunction with the policies of the Specific Plan applicable to the Community Separator lands, greatly reduces the allowed intensity of development. The new combining zone removes the allowance for many commercial and industrial uses that are not owned and operated by the County, and does not introduce new residential uses or increase residential density. The Specific Plan adds approximately X acres to the Community Separator on the north end of the Core Campus in order to expand and protect the wildlife corridor, and removes an equivalent acreage adjacent to the southeast corner of the Core Campus. The amendment the boundaries of the Community Separator are exempt from voter approval because there is no net loss in land and consistent with the intent of the Community Separator protections. The Specific Plan extends an existing Urban Service Area on the east side campus to include the area on the west side of campus intended for development. The Urban Service Area as amended would not include lands within the amended Community Separator.

3. Retain the general plan land use designation of the open space as Public/Quasi-Public Facilities, allow

for permitted uses identified in Specific Plan and any future park planning

- a. Remove Buffer Open Space identified outside of the Core Campus.
- b. Create a Preserved Parkland and Open Space Combining District that limits the allowed uses in the open space, but still allows all facilities owned and operated by the county.

*Staff analysis: Planning Commission recommendation to expand the riparian corridor setback will not have a significant impact to the vision of the Specific Plan.*

*Planning Commission recommendation to amend the community separator may be considered by the Board of Supervisors and can be accomplished based on existing General Plan policies. However, the recommendation includes replacing 19 acres of already-developed land that is proposed for critical housing redevelopment in exchange for equivalent acreage zoned Buffered Open Space, which proposes a limited number of permitted uses. Additionally, the proposed relocation area only includes approximately 6 acres of already developed buildings that are primarily agricultural and ancillary as a historic use. Further, development outside the core campus to the southeast was not studied in the EIR and staff would recommend additional analysis prior to approval.*

*Planning Commission recommended to retain the proposed permitted uses within the Preserved Open Space as listed in Table 4-3 of the Specific Plan and retain the existing general plan land use designation of Public/Quasi-Public Facilities and existing Public Facilities zoning. In order to achieve both recommendations, staff proposes creating a Preserved Parkland and Open Space Combining District to apply to land identified as open space in the Specific Plan.*

*The Preserved Parkland and Open Space designation is intended to preserve open spaces outside of the Core Campus for habitat, active and passive recreation and minor park amenities, ecological services, water resources, and agricultural uses. This space also contains some infrastructure, including water infrastructure, that is important for the continued functioning of local water systems. This Combining Zone would be combined with the Public Facilities base zone. The uses listed in Table 4-3 control over Table 14-1 of the Sonoma County Zoning Code. The remainder of the base zone regulations remain in effect, including that any facilities owned and operated by a city or the county are permitted.*

#### Housing

1. Retain total number of housing units of 1,000 with a 25% inclusionary requirement with the following changes:
  - a. reduce base number of housing units from 733 to 650 to help ensure total number of units does not exceed 1,000.
  - b. increase county-led number of 100% deed-restricted affordable units from 100 to 200.
  - c. limit at least 90% of the market rate units to no more than 1,800 s.f. (~80 units).

*Staff analysis: While reducing the base number of housing units does not significantly impact the vision of the Specific Plan, it is an additional constraint for future redevelopment of the site as development*

*costs would be factored on fewer units. The Specific Plan identifies a number of financing tools that may be utilized to address this constraint. Shifting an additional 100 units of deed-restricted affordable housing to be built on-site, potentially as part of a separate project, does achieve a long-standing desire from the community to have more affordable housing at the Sonoma Developmental Center.*

*There are a growing number of state laws intended to increase residential development and density, including statutes addressing density bonus and accessory and junior accessory dwelling units, which were discussed as part of Planning Commission deliberations. Density bonus law allows a developer to increase residential density and receive incentives or concessions that increase economic feasibility, such as relaxing site development standards. The increase in density or number of incentives/concessions is based on the number and type of restricted units (level of affordability, senior housing, student housing, etc.). By setting the base number of units at 733, the Specific Plan estimate of 1,000 units assumes a certain level of density bonuses provided as a result of compliance with the 25% inclusionary requirement. Because the potential density bonus calculations vary widely, it is difficult to calculate or predict other density bonus outcomes. Further, because there is already a 25% inclusionary requirement (higher than usually required under county code), it is not highly likely a developer would earn additional density bonus beyond that already factored in. Because density bonus is a right provided under state law, the County cannot limit or otherwise control density bonus, though the Board may factor the law's potential effect into the allowed number of base units to achieve the desired overall density.*

*State law requires that accessory and junior accessory dwelling units be allowed in any zone that allows single- or multi-family residential dwellings. Similar to density bonus, the County cannot prohibit accessory or junior accessory dwellings (with limited exceptions), though the potential effect of these laws may be factored into the allowed number of base units. However, staff does not anticipate a significant number of accessory and junior accessory dwelling units to be built based on a number of Specific Plan constraints - no vacation rentals, maximum lot size of 5,000 square feet, Floor/Area Ratio maximum of 2.0, and a residential building height limit of 30'.*

2. Table 4-2.1: Minimum and Maximum Unit Percentages by Housing Type (Market Rate Units)
  - a. Single family (detached): 10-30%
  - b. Single family (attached): 20-40%
  - c. Multifamily: 40-60%

*Staff analysis: While adding minimum and maximum unit percentages by housing type does not significantly impact the vision of the Specific Plan, it is an additional constraint for future redevelopment of the site. The Specific Plan envisions a wide range of housing types that are either naturally or income-restricted affordable housing.*

3. Dedicate no less than a total of 1 acre of land for the development of homes for individuals with developmental disabilities.

*Staff analysis: Adding a minimum total number of acres of land to be developed as homes for*

*individuals with developmental disabilities does not significantly impact the vision of the Specific Plan. However, it would require a Specific Plan adjustment in the maximum lot size of homes for individuals with developmental disabilities from 5000 square foot lots to 8,712 square foot lots. One option for the Board of Supervisors to consider could be to accept the Planning Commission recommendation of 1 total acre, retain the Specific Plan single-family residential maximum lot size of 5,000 square foot, and increase the number of homes from 5 to 8.*

#### Mobility

1. A preferred alignment for the future Hwy 12 local road to run along the southern property line, if feasible.

*Staff analysis: Planning Commission comment on a preferred alignment does not significantly impact the vision of the Specific Plan. A preferred alignment is not contemplated as part of the adoption of the Specific Plan, and will require future study and engagement with the community, as outlined in the Specific Plan.*

#### Land use

1. Hotel as a permitted use
  - a. Extend policies and maps to extend the flex zone and hotel overlay to include the Porter Admin Building and its surface lot
2. Preservation of existing mature trees fronting Sonoma Ave by moving building setback line south of the Main Building to west of the existing grove of mature trees

*Staff analysis: Planning Commission recommendation does not significantly impact the vision of the Specific Plan.*

#### Historic preservation

1. Prepare a historic preservation plan, prior to removal of any of the buildings based on desired development and suitability of buildings for adaptive reuse
2. Remove requirement to remove/demolish any buildings except the two individually significant structures - Main Building and the Sonoma House, prior to completion of a historic preservation plan

*Staff analysis: Planning Commission recommendation clarifies that the plan must be prepared prior to the removal of any buildings, and does not significantly impact the vision of the Specific Plan.*

#### Additional Planning Commission recommendations

1. Modify Guiding Principle #9 to track with State legislation and to remove any implication that economic feasibility is guaranteed.
  - a. Pursue fiscal sustainability over the long-term using a combination of reduced costs and public

and private funding for site work, infrastructure, services, and community benefits.  
(PROPOSED)

- b. Ensure Long-Term Fiscal Sustainability. Ensure that the proposed plan is financially feasible and sustainable, as financial feasibility is essential to the long-term success of the project. Ensure that the proposed plan supports funding for necessary infrastructure improvements and historic preservation while supporting the Sonoma Valley community's needs and galvanizing regional economic growth. (EXISTING)

*Staff analysis: While modifying Principle #9 from ensure fiscal sustainability to pursue fiscal sustainability does not make a significant change to the Specific Plan, the guiding principles were developed with the community, the Planning Advisory Team, with feedback from the Board of Supervisors at its January 2022 workshop.*

2. Extend Urban Service Area to include Core Campus west of Arnold Dr.

*Staff analysis: The Core Campus east of Arnold Dr. is within an existing Urban Service Boundary. The Board of Supervisors may consider extending the Urban Service Boundary to include the Core Campus west of Arnold Dr. To accomplish this, the Board of Supervisors could consider an update to the Urban Service Boundary identified in the Land Use Element, LU-2i, to include the Core Campus west of Arnold Dr.*

3. Consideration of a community benefits agreement as part of a development agreement.

If a developer and the County intend to enter into a development agreement in accordance with Sonoma County Code Chapter 26 Article 100, the developer must meaningfully and in good faith engage with the local community and the developer and the County must consider community benefits as part of the development agreement, including the provision of or support for the following: living wage and other worker protections, local and targeted hire policies, workforce housing, community gardens, public parks and recreation, local small business support/opportunities (e.g. allocate commercial storefronts for local small businesses, economic support for start-up costs, etc...), funding for job training, commitment to economic and educational opportunities for individuals with developmental and/or physical disabilities, local ad and outreach programs for affordable housing, application assistance programs, partnerships with local Affordable Housing organizations and land trusts, among other community benefits.

*Staff analysis: While a development agreement is voluntary and could occur once a future project proponent is identified, the recommended language could be added to the Specific Plan to guide a potential future agreement and ensure the developer engages with the community on what types of community benefits may be incorporated.*

Staff concludes that excluding the Planning Commission's community separator boundary amendments which requires further environmental analysis, the Planning Commission recommended changes to the Specific Plan would not change any of the significance of findings. Therefore, no changes would be required for the already-published EIR, and has been documented as Supplement 3 to the FEIR. All EIR documents can be accessed digitally on the project page at <https://www.sdcspecificplan.com/documents>.

**Strategic Plan:**

N/A

**Prior Board Actions:**

On December 17, 2019, the Board of Supervisors Authorized the Director of Permit Sonoma to (1) execute an agreement with the State of California and accept \$3.5 million from Department of General Services to prepare a Specific Plan and associated environmental impact report for the SDC site; and (2) execute an agreement with Dyett and Bhatia to prepare the Specific Plan and Environmental Impact Report in of the amount of \$1,475,949.

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

N/A

**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**

N/A

**Attachments:**

1. Resolution - Certify the Final EIR for the Sonoma Developmental Center Specific Plan Project and adopt findings and a statement of overriding consideration pursuant to CEQA
  - a. Findings of Fact
  - b. Statement of Overriding Consideration
2. Resolution - Adopt the SDC Specific Plan, and approve amendments to the General Plan and Map, and Zoning Ordinance
  - a. Sonoma Developmental Center Specific Plan
  - b. General Plan Amendments
  - c. General Plan consistency analysis
3. Zoning Ordinance Amendments
4. Planning Commission Resolution - Final EIR
5. Planning Commission Resolution - Specific Plan, General Plan Amendments, Zoning Ordinance
6. Government Code Section 14670.10.05
7. SDC Community Engagement Strategy
8. Staff PowerPoint

**Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:**

N/A