

07/10/2025 Press Dem LTE Padi Selwyn

Letter to the Editor

The Sonoma Developmental Center is the heart of our Valley. It's a place of history, beauty, and community spirit—and it deserves a future that reflects those values, not a developer's balance sheet.

Yet the County's current plan—nearly 1,000 homes plus a resort hotel—would overwhelm our community. It would choke our roads with traffic, endanger lives in wildfire evacuations, stretch our limited water, and replace rural character with sprawl. Worst of all, it puts luxury housing and tourism ahead of local families, seniors, and workers.

We know there's another way. Community voices and independent planners alike envision a scaled-back plan: about half the size, centered on affordable housing, open space, cultural gathering places, and sustainability. This is the kind of development that could make the SDC a model for the state—a community that strengthens Sonoma Valley instead of tearing at its fabric.

This is a once-in-a-generation chance. If we allow this plan to go forward, we won't get a second one. We urge the County to truly listen this time: scale back the project, honor the land, and build a future that reflects the soul of Sonoma Valley.

Padi Selwyn

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