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DMH DIRECTORS OFFICE - CAMARILLO

CA GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

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GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

**GOVERNOR WILSON TO ANNOUNCE TASK FORCE ON CAMARILLO
TRANSITION SITE TO NEW USE***Team to work closely with local community to development plan for site***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Friday, May 17, 1996

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SACRAMENTO – Governor Pete Wilson today announced that as part of the plan to phase out the use of Camarillo State Hospital and Developmental Center, the Administration is forming a task force to be lead by the California State and Consumer Services Agency to transition the site to a new use.

"Closing the Camarillo facility reflects the change toward treating mentally and developmentally disabled Californians in their own communities rather than in large state institutions," Wilson said. "Given the tremendous overhead costs being incurred by taxpayers to maintain this facility far below capacity, and given that services can be provided more efficiently locally, closure is the responsible thing to do."

"The facility has been an integral part of the Camarillo community for many decades," Wilson said. "I have directed the State and Consumer Services Agency to work with Senator Wright and Assemblyman Takasugi in leading a state task force to work with the local community in developing a plan for reuse. This team will work with local government agencies and private sector groups to examine future uses of the land and building that would reflect local preferences and community needs. I am directing the task force to consider all proposals and recommendations and look forward to their guidance."

The task force will include the State's Consumer Services Agency, the Trade and Commerce Agency, and the Health and Welfare Agency. The State Consumer Services Agency will take the lead in developing the plan.

The task forces activities will include: establishing alternatives for determining appropriate uses; examining real estate options; reviewing zoning restrictions and existing city development from both the business and non-profit communities, including universities, hospitals, county government and State agencies; and participating in developing a Request for Proposal to solicit detailed proposals for the use of the property.

- more -

GOVERNOR PETE WILSON • SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814 • (916) 445-2841

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A similar approach was used very successfully in planning for the future of the Stockton Developmental Center property when that facility was closed. This process allowed all segments of the Stockton community to express their concerns about potential uses of the property and generated a range of ideas. Ultimately, California State University, Stanislaus was selected as the future owner of the Stockton campus.

The planned closure of Camarillo State Hospital and Developmental Center was announced in January 1996 in the Governor's Budget. The Department of Mental Health (DMH) and the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) each submitted reports to the Legislature in February 1996 recommending the closure of the facility. On March 29, 1996, both Departments submitted a plan to close Camarillo State Hospital and Developmental Center to the Legislature. The task force will be convening a meeting with the local community within the next 30 days.

To date, local legislators, DMH and DDS have held several meetings and public hearings exploring possible future options for the use of the Camarillo property. A "mixed used" forensic facility serving both DMH's forensic population and individuals with mental health needs from correctional institutions was the option receiving the most support. However, this type of forensic facility was found to be not feasible because DMH's forensic population has not increased as much as earlier projected, and DMH has sufficient bed capacity to accommodate its projected population in its four existing state hospitals. In addition, the California Department of Corrections determined that it did not need additional licensed beds for its population, especially since the cost of such beds would have been more than twice the average cost of serving inmates.