

# The Todd Trust:

A report on the community of Sonoma Valley and  
generally Sonoma County

Prepared by Genevieve Taylor  
Global Genesis

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Section Overview

Following is a description of the Todd Trust bequest and its background, a description of the Phase I steps the Community Foundation Sonoma County (Community Foundation) has taken to meet the stipulations of the bequest, the “Proposed Goal and Priorities” that have been formed as a result of those steps, and Phase II and III next steps. This summary was developed by the team entrusted to explore the stipulations of the bequest as it relates to Sonoma Valley; the final report that follows was prepared by Global Genesis and Community Foundation staff.

### Background of the Todd Trust

In late 2009, Community Foundation Sonoma County received notice from the estate of Roland and Hazel Todd that the Community Foundation was the beneficiary of the Todd Trust, which is estimated to be valued at about \$8.5 million. For the first five years, the Trust’s investments are being managed by Wells Fargo and the trust payout is designated for distribution to the Community Foundation Sonoma County. After the five year period, Wells Fargo will turn management of the Trust fund over to the Community Foundation. At that time, the Trust will be equally divided between a permanent endowment and an expendable capital fund.

The bequest instructs that both funds are to be used as follows: “...to support charitable activity primarily in the Sonoma Valley of Sonoma County, California, but also secondarily in Sonoma County generally, in the following areas:

- A. Health and human services, especially for the sick, needy and elderly;
- B. Governmental services which are underfunded, such as local fire, library, and healthcare districts; but not to include services provided by cities or counties;
- C. Open space, specifically land and trail acquisition.”

Currently, the payout available for carrying out the Todd Trust’s instructions is between \$250,000 and \$300,000 annually.

In order to assess community needs in Sonoma Valley and determine a goal for use of the Trust in line with the Todds’ instructions, the Community Foundation convened a group, known as the Todd Trust Team (the Team), whose members represent the Community Foundation, the Sonoma Valley Fund and the Valley community. Team members include Barbara Hughes, Dianne Edwards, Ted Eliot, Harriet Derwingson, Donna Halow, David Stollmeyer, George Rathman, Loretta Carr, Joe Valentine and Robert Judd.

We began work in July of 2010 and are now far enough into the process of determining how to best use Todd Trust funds to see this as involving three phases: a Phase I of indentifying and assessing priority issues for the Sonoma Valley, which is completed; a Phase II of engaging with community resources to prioritize use of Todd funds; and a Phase III of commencing work to achieve our goals, evaluating our results and adapting our plans based on what we’ve learned. In

order to bring the benefit of the Trust to the community as quickly as feasible, some elements of Phases II and III may happen simultaneously.

### **Phase I: Identify Priority Community Issues**

Below is a summary of what we have done and learned in Phase 1, as well as our working goal and strategies to achieve that goal as of summer, 2011, a result of this process.

#### ***What We Have Done***

##### ***Step 1:***

The Todd Trust Team has completed the initial phase of gathering and assessing information, perspectives and ideas from the community through developing a structured interview process that was conducted with approximately 60 individuals and another 15 follow up meetings. We recorded what we heard and those notes have been compiled into a “Final Report” (following) by Global Genesis and the Community Foundation staff. In addition, the Team engaged the Sonoma County Economic Development Board to provide a Sonoma Valley Community Profile detailing significant demographic, employment and education data and trends that are specific to the Springs communities. The Profile is available in Appendix A.

##### ***Step 2:***

We completed an initial assessment of the responses we received and organized those into a series of:

- a. Key findings
- b. Potential impact areas
- c. General strategies

##### ***Step 3:***

We then shared these findings through meetings with our original key informants to confirm the accuracy and completeness of what we heard.

##### ***Step 4:***

Based on informant responses and our team’s assessment, we sought further input on findings from additional informants and refined our assessment into a statement of a broad, long-term working goal for the use of the Todd Trust.

##### ***Step 5:***

Based on that goal statement, we have developed a set of Todd Trust priorities for action, as described below

##### ***Step 6:***

Simultaneous with the above steps, and taking advantage of the Sonoma Valley Fund’s earlier nine month study involving 60 interviews and resulting in the creation of a Youth Initiative that has produced impressive outcomes, we committed \$77,000 of Todd funds as a challenge grant to support the Youth Initiative in 2011.

***What We Have Learned***

From our conversations with more than 75 people who live in or are involved with the Sonoma Valley, we know that the **principal challenge before us is to improve the health and well-being of low-income people living in the communities of the Springs area (Agua Caliente, Boyes Hot Springs, Fetters Hot Springs and El Verano).** There are the multiple barriers imposed by differences primarily between Anglo and Latino residents. These differences include: language; cultural customs and values; trust and understanding between cultures and generations; as well as physical barriers of distance; and barriers caused by lack of income and education. In short, for low-income persons, especially those of Hispanic language and culture, there is a pervasive lack of access to the resources provided for the larger county and Sonoma Valley community.

The Working Goal (below) we have developed includes the terms ‘health’ and ‘wellbeing.’ When we speak of health and well-being, we mean these terms in the largest, interrelated sense of the words: very broadly, we are referring to what it means ‘to be well.’ We include commonplace aspects such as basic needs for food, shelter, health, education, employment, recreation, socialization, and more. We also include factors such as a sense of being accepted and heard; of having hope; of meeting one’s basic needs for self and family; and to make a difference to others.

Based on what we’ve learned, we have formulated the following working statement of our goal for how Todd funds are used.

***Our Working Goal***

***To improve the health and well-being of residents of the Sonoma Valley so that they, and succeeding generations, are healthier and have more opportunity to succeed at their life goals and to experience the fulfillment of contributing to the well-being of their community.***

With this single goal, it is possible for us to cover all three of the Todd’s focus areas (health and human services, under-funded government services, and open space acquisition) **by simply broadening our perspective to include increasing the access of sick, needy and elderly residents to the community’s resources.** Our goal then is not limited to increasing access to just the community’s health and social services; it also includes increasing access to the community’s physical space and facilities (including open space and trails) for engaging all people within the community in cultural, recreational and social activities, as well as supporting those aspects of under-funded government infrastructure that provide and sustain essential elements of the community’s well being.

### *Achieving Our Goal*

Our interviews have suggested that we should think big and we have agreed that we want to do something that the community will notice and long remember. These big assumptions, and the long time and large resources it takes to change social values and behaviors, suggest that we should envision working on our goal over a long time period, perhaps as much as ten to fifteen years. We should think of our engagement in the Springs as creating something that, in the minds of future donors, can define our capacity to effectively and fully implement a donor's dream for how their contribution will be used.

There are a number of existing organizations and well established processes in place in the Springs dealing with community issues, including the Community Health Center, the Redevelopment Advisory Committee, the Springs Community Alliance, the La Luz Center (La Luz), and Nuestra Voz to name a few. In addition, while all these groups do represent Springs community interests to some degree, there is a need to increase the participation of those who live in the Springs. In response, our immediate job is to get better connected both to existing organizations and to those people in the neighborhoods who want to have a role in building access to the larger community's resources.

The goal of being better connected is to assess how the Todd Trust Team can most effectively work with existing structures using the trust and relationships we have built combined with the resources provided to us by the Todds to carry out the Todd's wishes.

**As we assess what our role (or roles) should be, we need to keep in mind the following main priority and two supporting priorities:**

- 1) *Improving Access:* Our **main priority** and focus includes increasing access physically (such as a possible move of the Sonoma Valley Community Health Center to a Springs location and/or increasing access to community services, as well as decreasing cultural barriers faced by Springs residents (such as language, trust, family structure, literacy). It will also include the creation of nearby open space and community spaces, as well as local community control of what happens in the Springs.
- 2) *Improving Collaboration and Developing Shared Goals:* In addition to our main priority, as the Community Foundation and the Sonoma Valley Fund develop their role and relationships within the Springs, we should be a role model for listening, collaborating and facilitating a process of reaching agreement on common values, as well as encouraging all participants to adopt a common set of outcomes.
- 3) *Increasing Community Contribution and Ownership:* Further, our engagement with increasing access can also provide a means of building local leadership while reaching out to the Springs communities, by helping local organizations to include Latinos and low-income residents in the process of determining what might be successful ways of increasing health and human services access. At the same time, both we and local service providing organizations need to develop better trust

especially with Latino residents and accept a responsibility for being accountable with residents for what (and how) these efforts take place in their communities.

Finally, we need to be mindful not only of ‘our’ goals as we work with local individuals and groups, but also think in terms of goals that are shared by the community and are consistent with the Todd’s instructions to us. We should aim to produce measurable outcomes within three years. As specific outcomes and a timeframe are established, we should also create a means of evaluating progress and establish a goal of doing a major review by the end of three years. As the evaluation is completed, we can use its results to inform the next stage of meeting community goals for improving health and well-being for Springs residents.

### **Phase II: Engage With Community Resources to Develop Shared Goals**

We have significant Phase II short term goals. In 2011, we will:

1. In the short term, be aware of opportunities for the Community Foundation and the Sonoma Valley Fund to support the work of other groups in the Springs whose plans are consistent with the Team’s goal and priorities and the Todd’s wishes.
2. Evaluate how the Team can work most effectively with existing community resources while building relationships of trust, including an effort to:
  - a. Expand the Team to include up to three bilingual/bicultural local residents
  - b. Add a part-time bilingual/bicultural staff to keep the Team’s work moving as expeditiously as possible
  - c. Identify individuals, groups, and organizations that are already engaged with the same priorities as ours. For example:
    - i. Participate in the Health Roundtable
    - ii. Attend the Redevelopment Advisory Committee meetings
    - iii. Identify other public gatherings such as the Springs Community Alliance
    - iv. Continue to develop relationships with organizations such as FISH, Nuestra Voz, the Community Health Center, Burbank Housing, the School District, La Luz, St. Leo’s Church, as well as individuals such as Alejandra Cervantes, Gabriel Navarro, Mario Castillo, Kara Reyes, Noris Binet and others that are active in the Springs
  - d. Identify each group’s agenda for and contributions to the Springs, note similarities and differences in their priorities, membership and goals and assess their fit with the Team’s priorities
  - e. Assess each group’s work, openness to partnering, as well as their effectiveness.
3. Determine what next steps the Team can take using Todd funds to partner with the groups in achieving shared outcomes.
4. Develop work plans, budgets and evaluation tools for the partnerships.

Ultimately, we plan to make enough progress in this phase by the end of 2011 to be able to propose a three-year plan of involvement with the Springs to the Community Foundation and Sonoma Valley Fund boards by February of 2012.

### **Phase III: Commence Work on Improving Access and Evaluate Results**

As work plans are implemented and we assess what happens, we will adapt our strategies to take advantage of our experience to improve our outcomes.

#### ***Conclusion:***

In general, we see this process as one of exploration and adaptation; we are strongly committed to our working goal and priorities, we know that we must take these steps in tandem with the community, modeling the kinds of collaboration, trust, and respect that all of us know are important for the success of the venture and Sonoma Valley.

The following report is the result of our attempt to understand the issues, the systems, the dynamics, and the people of Sonoma Valley through the lens of the Todd Trust interest. We expect (and hope) that our understanding will continue to grow as we begin implementation.

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## PURPOSE & METHODOLOGY OF REPORT

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### ***Purpose of Report:***

In September, 2010, Community Foundation Sonoma County (Community Foundation), in conjunction with its regional affiliate, the Sonoma Valley Fund, launched an effort to discover and document the strengths, challenges, and possibilities facing Sonoma Valley communities and citizens in relation to the receipt of and the stipulations of a \$8.5 million bequest received from Roland and Hazel Todd, former residents of Sonoma Valley.

The stipulations for use of Todd Trust funds are the following:

*“...to support charitable activity primarily in the Sonoma Valley of Sonoma County, California, but also secondarily in Sonoma County generally, in the following areas:*

- 1) Health and human services, especially for the sick, needy and elderly;*
- 2) Governmental services which are underfunded, such as local fire, library, and healthcare districts; but not to include services provided by cities or counties;*
- 3) Open space, specifically land and trail acquisition.”*

An important note about the Todd Trust: at the fifth year anniversary of receipt of the funds it is to be divided into an endowment and an expendable capital fund. This means that the Community Foundation may make capital investments at that time. The Community Foundation and Sonoma Valley Fund are still determining what implications that will have for these efforts.

### ***Approach and Methodology:***

It was decided that in order to gain clarity about the challenges, needs, and possibilities within Sonoma Valley (the Valley) the Community Foundation would interview a cross-section of the Valley’s professional and residential populations; people who would most likely know the issues and challenges in the valley, the causes behind them, and some creative possibilities for addressing them. The Todd Trust Team was formed that included members of the Foundation and Sonoma Valley Fund to conduct these interviews. Todd Trust Team members include Loretta Carr; Harriet Derwingson; Dianne Edwards; Ted Eliot; Donna Halow; Barbara Hughes; George Rathman; Dave Stollmeyer; Joe Valentine. Finally, a consulting company, Global Genesis, was engaged to help guide this work and assist in preparing a final report.

The Todd Trust report was created as a result of over 50 interviews with approximately 75 informants from Sonoma Valley and Sonoma County. (A list of informants is in Appendix B). Informants were chosen for two reasons: 1.) to give their unique perspective on Sonoma Valley’s needs and strengths, and 2.) to better understand the specific areas that the Todd’s were interested in, both in the Valley and more broadly in Sonoma County.

Emphasis was placed on the exploration of a broad range of perspectives on living conditions within the Valley from people with varying ethnic, gender, educational and social differences. The list of informants included professionals in health, human services, open space and land management, education, police and emergency services both in Sonoma Valley and Sonoma

County; and executive directors and staff of significant nonprofits in Sonoma Valley, citizens of Sonoma Valley, and a variety of Sonoma Valley volunteers and donors.

The Team used questions related to strengths and assets, challenges and needs, and potential solutions as well as innovative ideas that informants might have. (See Appendix C for a copy of the interview questions). Informants were encouraged to think creatively in their responses. Most interviews were between 45-60 minutes, and some included additional staff people. Interviewers all reported new insights as well as furthering new and old relationships through the course of these interviews.

The final Todd Trust report was prepared by Global Genesis and Community Foundation staff. Global Genesis is an organizational development consulting firm, who worked with the interview team to create the questions, collected the data, and then summarized it. Confidentiality was maintained. Any quotes were obtained with permission from the informants.

In addition, the Director of the Sonoma County Economic Development Board (EDB) Ben Stone, was asked to provide a report analyzing key demographic and socio-economic data pertaining to the Sonoma Valley population. The “Sonoma Valley Community Profile” (EDB Profile) is included as Appendix A. The EDB Profile answered important questions, particularly about the Springs, that had arose as a result of the interview process.

### ***How the Report is Organized:***

The report is organized into four sections: 1.) a description of Sonoma Valley; 2.) a section on each of the Todd Trust stipulations, 3.) a section on identified issues outside of the scope of the Todd Trust, and 4.) conclusions drawn from the data.

Each of these sections is organized as follows: an overview of the topic, process, and approach; interview results which lays out identified challenges, strengths, and potential responses; and finally, key implications for the Todd Trust.

### ***Definitions and Language:***

The language we use throughout the document, such as the term “needy,” may not necessarily reflect the authors first choice in language; however, as this report is an effort to understand and respect the Todds’ request, we have used language such as this throughout the report.

Thus, for the purposes of the report, a few definitions:

- ***“The Needy”:*** We will define the “needy” as those who are below 200% of the Federal poverty line. This is based on the Living Wage Coalition of Sonoma County’s analysis, which estimates \$62,000 is needed for an adequate standard of living for a family of two adults and two children. In contrast, Insight Center for community Economic Development estimates that \$50,000 is needed for one adult with two children. This is in sharp contrast to the federal poverty line for a family of four, which is \$22,050. 200% of

the Federal Poverty Line is \$44,100, which while low, still allows us to understand more this population.<sup>1</sup>

- ***“The Sick”***: This term bears further consideration and definition; however, we propose that it be along the lines of what the Department of Human Services terms as “persons in frail health.” The Community Foundation might also consider whether those termed “disabled” would fall under this category.
- ***“The Elderly”***: we will use the standard term “seniors” as replaceable with “elderly”, and consider it be persons over 65.
- ***“Anglo”*** and ***“White”*** are used interchangeably.<sup>2</sup>
- ***“Latino”*** and ***“Hispanic”*** are used interchangeably. The U.S. [Office of Management and Budget](#) currently defines "Hispanic or [Latino](#)" as "a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race."<sup>3</sup>
- ***“Health Services”*** includes public health services (including primary care and dental care), environmental health, mental health, substance abuse, emergency care, and animal welfare. Services are provided through the County Health Services Department and delivered in Sonoma Valley through La Luz, Nuestra Voz, local radio & newspapers, Sonoma Overnight, Adult Treatment Services, and some home visits. Additionally, primary health care services in Sonoma Valley are provided through the Sonoma Valley Hospital, the Sonoma Valley Community Health Center, a mobile clinic through St. Joseph’s, and private practice.
- ***“Human Services”*** includes public assistance, Medi-Cal, food stamps, child welfare, adult protective services, services for the aged, employment and training – these services are provided primarily in Santa Rosa.
- ***“Health”***: The Todd Team defined health as the following: “When we speak of ‘health and well-being’, we mean them in the largest, interrelated sense of the words: very broadly, we are referring to what it means ‘to be well’. We include commonplace aspects such as basic needs for food, shelter, health, education, employment, recreation,

<sup>1</sup> Source: Sonoma Valley Community Profile, p.3 (Economic Development Board, Sonoma County, 2011)

<sup>2</sup> As this article points out about the US Census, “white” refers to race, and “Hispanic/Latino” refer to ethnicity that respondents self-select. We have used these two terms in the same way. They are meant to illuminate challenges that informants pointed to.

“Race and ethnicity in the United States Census, as defined by the Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the United States Census Bureau, are self-identification data items in which residents choose the race or races with which they most closely identify, and indicate whether or not they are of Hispanic or Latino origin (ethnicity). The racial categories represent a social-political construct for the race or races that respondents consider themselves to be and “generally reflect a social definition of race recognized in this country.”[3] The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) defines the concept of race as outlined for the US Census as not “scientific or anthropological” and takes into account “social and cultural characteristics as well as ancestry”, using “appropriate scientific methodologies” that are not “primarily biological or genetic in reference.”[4] The race categories include both racial and national-origin groups.”

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Race\\_and\\_ethnicity\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States\\_Census](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Race_and_ethnicity_in_the_United_States_Census)

<sup>3</sup>Source: OMB, Revisions to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity (1997)

[http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg\\_1997standards](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg_1997standards)

socialization, and more. We also include factors such as a sense of being accepted and heard; of having hope; of meeting one's basic needs for self and family; and to make a difference to others.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Source: Todd Trust Team, Goal & Priorities Statement v.12 (May, 2011)

## SECTION II: DESCRIPTION & GENERAL ISSUES FACING SONOMA VALLEY

### Section Overview:

Below is a description of Sonoma Valley, including the geographic and economic makeup of Sonoma Valley; poverty, employment, and education; a description of poverty in the Latino community of the Springs, and interview results that pointed to general issues that affected all of Sonoma Valley, and would have an impact on how the stipulations of the Todd Trust are met.

### Geographic & Economic Make-up

The Sonoma Valley, also known as the Valley of the Moon, is located 46 miles northeast of San Francisco along Highway 12, and approximately 30 miles east of Santa Rosa (the seat of Sonoma County.) The Sonoma Valley is comprised of the City of Sonoma, Kenwood, Glen Ellen, and unincorporated areas referred to collectively as the “Springs” (Boyes Hot Springs, El Verano, Feters Hot Springs, and Agua Caliente), and separately the unincorporated communities of Eldridge, Schellville, and Vineburg<sup>5</sup>. Unincorporated areas are governed by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors. A map of the area can be found in Appendix A, on page 13 & 14 of the EDB Profile.

Sonoma Valley is defined by its rural nature. Industry in Sonoma Valley includes construction, manufacturing, finance, and educational/health services; however, tourism, retail and agriculture both define and drive the Sonoma Valley economy. Sonoma Valley receives the second most revenue of any locale in the county in transient occupancy taxes (TOT), consistently providing at least 10% of the county total TOT.<sup>6</sup>

*SonomaValley4Biz* describes Sonoma Valley as:

*“Surrounded by rolling oak meadows and draped with vineyards, the Valley, birthplace of California’s famed wine industry and home to more than 40 wineries, is a destination favored by visitors from around the world for its wine, food, culture, and vitality. It is estimated that well over half a million visitors each year are attracted to Sonoma Valley’s wineries, art galleries, historical sites, spa facilities, restaurants, and special events.”<sup>7</sup>*

The largest private sector employers in Sonoma Valley include Infineon Raceway, Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn and Spa, St. Francis Winery, The Lodge at Sonoma Hotel and Spa, Sonoma Market/Glen Ellen Village Market, MacArthur Place Hotel and Spa, and Sebastiani Winery. Other major employers include the Sonoma Developmental Center, Sonoma Valley Unified School District (SVUSD), and Sonoma Valley Hospital. A growing number of employers can be

<sup>5</sup> Source: City of Sonoma’s website: <http://www.sonomacity.org>

<sup>6</sup>Source: Comment by Sarah Deming, EDB, preparer of Sonoma Valley Community Profile (2011)

<sup>7</sup> Source: SonomaValley4Biz website: <http://www.sonomavalley4biz.com/economic.html>

found in the Valley's light industrial corridor along Eighth St. East.

Finally, there are a large number of businesses along the Highway 12 corridor that serve residents of the Springs. The majority of local employers are small; more than 60% of Sonoma's jobs are found in businesses with fewer than five employees. There is a large and active home-based business sector in Sonoma Valley.<sup>8</sup>

### ***Sonoma County Trends Relevant to Sonoma Valley:***

The recently published Sonoma County Indicators of 2010<sup>9</sup> laid out several important trends for Sonoma County. Following is a list of demographic and economic trends that are particularly relevant to Sonoma Valley and the topics explored by the Todd Trust:

1. ***Quickly growing age sectors: young Latinos and aging Anglos.*** Age distribution by ethnicity depicts Sonoma County's ethnic demographic composition by age group. The data reflects the county's rapidly growing young Hispanic population and the increasingly aging Caucasian population. In Sonoma County, 41 percent of Hispanic residents are under the age of 18, compared to only 18 percent of white residents. County-wide, the Anglo population currently composes 16% of those over 65, as opposed to less than 4% of the Latino population.<sup>10</sup>
2. ***Our population is becoming much more diverse.*** Birth rates for the most populous ethnicities mirror state trends toward increasing diversity. The Hispanic birthrate in Sonoma County is twice the county average. The Anglo birthrate is the lowest among those compared in the US. The number of Latino, Asian, and African-Americans has grown substantially since 2000. Between 2000 and 2015, the Hispanic, Asian, and African-American populations are expected to grow by 85%, 95%, and 45% respectively. The Anglo population is projected to decline slightly over the same period.

### **Poverty, Employment, and Education**

The population of Sonoma Valley is 40,608 according to the 2010 Census. Sonoma Valley's population by ethnicity includes 69% white residents, 26% Hispanic or Latino, 1.9% multi-race, 2% Asian, and 1% other.<sup>11</sup> About 1/3 of the population lives in the City of Sonoma, while the others are spread throughout the Valley. Boyes Hot Springs, El Verano, and Fetters Hot Springs/Agua Caliente have significantly larger portions of the Latino population. There are also significantly more young people in these areas: 36-39% of the Springs population are under the age of 25, vs. 27% in the Valley as a whole. This is because the Latino population in general tends to be younger.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Source: Sonoma Valley 4 Biz website: <http://www.sonomavalley4biz.com/economic.html>

<sup>9</sup> Source: Sonoma County Indicators (Economic Development Board, 2010)

<sup>10</sup> Source: Sonoma County Indicators, (Economic Development Board, 2010)

<sup>11</sup> Source: (p.2) (Economic Development Board, Sonoma County, 2011)

<sup>12</sup> Source: (p.2) (Economic Development Board, Sonoma County, 2011)

The Todds were very interested in working with the “sick, the needy, and the elderly” in Sonoma Valley. Our key informants identified the Springs area as an area that experienced a high amount of poverty (and hence where our efforts around the “needy” should be focused), and this insight was confirmed by the EDB Profile. Based on the profile, it is quite clear that the majority of low-income residents of Sonoma Valley live in the Springs.

While more detail can be found in Appendix A, a few key facts are useful to point out here.

- 1) **Poverty:** In Sonoma Valley, there are 7.4% more of the Hispanic population in poverty than the Anglo population. However, when comparing the Springs to Sonoma Valley, there is a striking difference. In the Springs, between 30.6% to 32.5% of all households are at or below the 200% federal poverty line. **In Fetters/Agua Caliente, 62% of Hispanic residents live in poverty, as opposed to 25% of white residents in Fetters.<sup>13</sup> This is compared 10% that live in poverty in Sonoma County as whole.<sup>14</sup>**
- 2) **Unemployment:** Unemployment in the Springs Area has been significantly higher than the unemployment rate in the City of Sonoma for the last 10 years, hitting a recent high in February of 2011 (15.2% in Fetters Hot Springs, 13.5% in El Verano, 10.2% in Boyes Hot Springs, and 8.2% in the City of Sonoma.)<sup>15</sup>
- 3) **Employment:** The EDB Profile points out that the highest paying jobs in Sonoma Valley are in Construction and Manufacturing, while the lowest paying jobs are those in “Other services” and “Agriculture.” There are a higher percentage of workers in lower-paying jobs in the Springs Area than in Sonoma Valley as whole.<sup>16</sup>
- 4) **Education Gap amongst Latino Adults:** Another significant finding is the education gap amongst Latinos over the age of 18. The EDB Profile states the following: “There is a clear discrepancy in adult educational attainment between Hispanics and whites in Sonoma Valley. **Only 8.2% of Anglos in Sonoma (Valley) have less than a high school diploma while the majority (51.1%) of Hispanics have less than a**

<sup>13</sup> Quote: “These statistics are based on examining both the Federal Poverty line as well as household who have 200% of the Federal poverty line. The EDB report states that “The poverty line is the minimum level of income deemed necessary to have an adequate standard of living for a given family size. For example, the federal poverty line for a family of four is \$22,050. Because of the high cost of living in Sonoma County, an adjusted poverty rate may be much higher. The Living Wage Coalition of Sonoma County estimates \$62,000 is needed for an adequate standard of living for a family of two adults and two children. Insight Center for community Economic Development estimates that \$50,000 is needed for one adult with two children. For this reason, the percentage of households living beneath 200% of the poverty level is also measured here. There are 9,710 Sonoma Valley households, or 25% of the population living under the 200% level of poverty is in the Springs area, which as significantly higher levels of poverty than the whole of Sonoma Valley.” See p.3 of Appendix A for more information. (Economic Development Board, Sonoma County, 2011)

<sup>14</sup> Source: American Communities Survey (based off the US Census) (2005-2009)

<sup>15</sup> Source: (p.5) (Economic Development Board, Sonoma County, 2011)

<sup>16</sup> Source: (p.6) (Economic Development Board, Sonoma County, 2011)

**high school diploma.** Also, just 18.5% of Hispanics have a Bachelor's degree of higher while 41% of whites do.<sup>17</sup>

- 5) ***Trends in Education for Latino Youth:*** Sonoma Valley has also seen an increase of English Learners in the Sonoma Valley Unified School District (SVUSD), for a total of 32.6% of total enrollment in 2009-10, while the number who has gained English proficiency during that time has stayed steady. There is also data to indicate an achievement gap between Latinos and learners of other ethnicities.<sup>18</sup> There are also fewer Latinos who are completing the required courses necessary to continue within a four-year university program. This pattern is continued with a gap in high school dropout rates: 13.1% of Hispanics drop out, compared to 5% of Anglos.<sup>19</sup>
- 6) ***Positive Trends in Education:*** On a more positive note, SVUSD has seen a 50% decrease in the number of high school dropouts over the past 6 years, as well as an increase in graduation rates. Moreover, the dropout rates listed above are both well below the state and county average of 21.5%<sup>20</sup>
- 7) ***Low levels of Poverty for People over 65:*** Another positive discovery is that only about 5% of people over 65 living in Sonoma Valley live in poverty. This varies depending on what part of Sonoma Valley, with the highest percentage residing in the City of Sonoma (8% in the City of Sonoma, 6% in El Verano, 5% in Boyes Hot Springs, and less than 0.5% in Eldridge and Fetters Hot Springs.<sup>21</sup>) There are less seniors living below the poverty line in Sonoma Valley than in Sonoma County as a whole: about 6% of the 65+ population live in poverty in Sonoma County.<sup>22</sup>

### **About Poverty and the Latino Community in the Springs:**

It is evident to the Todd Trust Team that the low-income residents of the Springs community should be the focus of their efforts, not only through the statistical analysis and trends identified by the EDB Profile, but also through the consistent and strong messages from the informants. Given that, a description of the Latino community in the Springs seems like an important place to start.

Informants told the Team that most families in Sonoma Valley are from the three agricultural states of Michoacán, Jalisco, and Guerrero. By and large, these immigrant families came here with a dream of a better life, to create a home here in the United States or to support their families back in Mexico. Having come originally from extremely rural and mostly agricultural

<sup>17</sup> Source: (p.4) (Economic Development Board, Sonoma County, 2011)

<sup>18</sup> Source: (p.7) (Economic Development Board, Sonoma County, 2011)

<sup>19</sup> Source: (p.7) (Economic Development Board, Sonoma County, 2011)

<sup>20</sup> Source: (p.7) (Economic Development Board, Sonoma County, 2011)

<sup>21</sup> The population size was so small that reliably identifying the ethnic population of those under 65 in poverty was difficult; however, given all other trends, it is likely that most of this population are Anglo.

<sup>22</sup> Source: American Communities Survey, based on the 2010 Census.

parts of Mexico, many are illiterate or poorly educated, with an average of a 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade education.<sup>23</sup>

These immigrant workers and families tend to find jobs in the service industry (as house cleaners, landscapers, or in restaurants and hotels), in the agricultural industry as farm workers, and in wine-industry manufacturing facilities, engaged in activities such as bottling, corking, labeling, warehousing, etc. According to the EDB Profile, while manufacturing and construction are the highest paid industries in Sonoma County, **services and agriculture are amongst the lowest paid in Sonoma County.**<sup>24</sup>

Thus, families who are entirely dependent on service industry jobs have a harder time making ends meet. A top indicator of that is when looking at housing: **In Fethers Hot Springs/Agua Caliente, more than 60% of the populations spends more than 40% of their income on housing;** in El Verano, about 45% spend more than 40% of their income, and in Boyes, more than 37% spend more than 40% of their income.<sup>25</sup> This signifies a precarious balance between the ability to produce income and the ability to meet basic needs of shelter, clothing, food, and health.

This is confirmed in a recent La Luz/Proyecto Enlace survey<sup>26</sup> conducted of 100 immigrant families of Sonoma Valley, they discovered that the top three needs (in order of priority) of these families were the following:

- 1) Low-income housing
- 2) Nourishing food for free or at low prices
- 3) Medical insurance

Families are also are faced with basic barriers in the form of a lack of education, variability and quality of work (particularly for those who work seasonally), and for some a lack of US documentation or citizenship.

Poverty takes a toll on families and relationships: the Valley of the Moon Children's Center reported that 70% of children in Sonoma County who enter the child welfare system (i.e., child protective services) have a low enough income to be federally eligible to receive a foster care payment if they are placed with relative. This means that the income of their families have incomes that are about ½ the federal income poverty level.<sup>27</sup> About 38% of these children are Latino (as opposed to about 50% who are white.) In Sonoma County, 33% of children who are

<sup>23</sup> Zuli Baron, St. Joseph Health System, Interview, Fall 2010. Quote used with permission.

<sup>24</sup> Source: Sonoma Valley Community Profile, p.6 (Economic Development Board, Sonoma County, 2011)

<sup>25</sup> Source: Sonoma Valley Community Profile, p.11 (Economic Development Board, Sonoma County, 2011)

<sup>26</sup> Source: National Latino Research Center-CSU San Marcos-Proyecto Enlace, conducted by La Luz volunteers (Jan-Feb, 2011), 99 of 100 respondents were Latino Spanish speaking immigrant families and 1 family was an Asian (Filipino) farm worker family. Respondents lived in all parts of Sonoma Valley; 3% Schellville, 5%Kenwood, 16% City of Sonoma, 29% Agua Caliente, 27% Boyes Hot Springs, 11% El Verano, 9% Glen Ellen.

<sup>27</sup> The Federal Poverty line for a family of four is \$22,050. If the maximum that a child's family could make to receive aid is \$858, this indicates that their yearly income is less than \$12,000 per year. That means that 70% of these children's families are at about 1/2 of the federal poverty line. Not only that - the Living Wage Coalition of Sonoma County says that the poverty line is closer to \$62,000 in Sonoma County based on higher living costs, telling us that these families are at about ¼ of the actual living wage in Sonoma County.

in child protective services were placed there because of substantial risk for abuse, 32% suffered neglect, 15% emotional abuse, and 12% physical abuse.<sup>28</sup> Other informants linked poverty and domestic violence together, at least anecdotally.

The other strong dynamic affecting this group is a process of cultural integration. While even 20 years ago, many households were composed of single male transient workers, now most households are families with children, some of whom are US citizens, having been born here.

More and more families have one or two generations of children, which presents its own set of challenges. (See Section VI: Issues outside the Todd Trust). Informants told us that a significant number of young adults who have been in the United States for years are still rooted in the same poverty of their parents. These next generations are also navigating two different identities (that of a Mexican, and that of a Mexican-American) and differences in assumptions based on gender. There are very different expectations of daughters versus sons in how they demonstrate success in the world. As a woman, to be a young mother is common and education is secondary to family and work. As a man, work is the core to success. College is unfamiliar to many immigrants from Mexico, and its value in comparison to a steady paycheck is hard for this group to identify.

Another insight is that while the Latino community is less transient and now has more families and other stabilizing influences, it does not feel unified. In a December 3, 2010 article in the Sonoma-Index Tribune Noris Binet describes that dynamic:

*“The Latino population in Sonoma is not the cohesive altogether community it seems to be when viewed from the outside. In reality, it is a community “in the process of becoming;” it is alive, growing and transforming. The essential parts of the community are in place, evolving in different stages and not yet completely integrating with each other. This is very normal when human groups, moving from one geographical location to another, are culturally and linguistically different. This process has been happening throughout history all over the world.”<sup>29</sup>*

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This is a dynamic process; one that immigrants all over the world and throughout history have experienced. The stabilization and lessening of transience in the low-income residents of the Springs could indicate that it is ripe for empowerment, change, and community building.

Overall, the larger picture created both by the Sonoma Valley Profile as well as the Sonoma County Indicators report is one with hopeful notes and identifies many challenges.

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<sup>28</sup> Source: Meg Easter Dawson, Valley of the Moon Children’s Center, Sonoma County Human Services Department (Spring 2011). She also noted that 50% of these children are Anglo, 38% are Hispanic, 5% are African-American, 5% are American Indian, .5% is Asian, and 1% is unknown.

<sup>29</sup> Excerpt from Article: “Valley Forum: The Latino community in transition” By Noris Binet, The Sonoma Index-Tribune December 3, 2010 (Permission to use by author and the Sonoma-Index Tribune)

### *Interview Results*

Below is a description of both the **strengths and assets** of Sonoma Valley, as well as two major, overarching challenges as described by the informants: **1.) the economic downturn, and 2.) a sense of physical and cultural divide.**

### Sonoma Valley Strengths and Assets

The major asset in Sonoma Valley and in the Springs was easy for informants to identify: its people. Named again and again was its “community spirit,” the “sense of caring for one another,” its commitment, and passion. Several named diversity as a strength, as well as the sense of family that the Latino community brings. Also mentioned were its active volunteerism and philanthropy: one informant said enthusiastically, “People step up and do what’s right; they volunteer time, they give money, they make things happen.” Volunteers create a long-term base for organizations to draw from; they are dedicated and genuinely willing to help. The community benefits from a strong network of partnerships and service clubs.

Local philanthropists are willing to come forward to fund projects if they see a clear need and a clear way to make a difference; along with the rest of the community, they are willing to rally around a common vision.

There is significant expertise to tap into as well: retirees with a valuable set of skills; experts in their field. In general, informants noted that the quantity of talent that was available in the area was an important asset.

People also like living in the Sonoma Valley. One informant said Sonoma Valley has a “small-town” feeling, another noted that “it feels safe.” Others noted that there is a consciousness about health and food, it is a beautiful place that in and of itself creates opportunities for health in its residents, and it is “green and clean.” Many children grow up, leave for college, and are likely to return to Sonoma.

It is also perceived as one of the “premier” areas in Sonoma County. However, informants noted that, while wine and tourism were important, they are not the only economic drivers in the Valley. There is an industrial/technical development area located on and around 8<sup>th</sup> street in the City of Sonoma. Several other “place-based assets” were also mentioned. This includes its size and geographic boundary: it is a “workable area,” meaning it is possible to engage in a project and see the impact it makes.

Politically, it was noted Sonoma Valley is set up well to do land and ground-water management, with a progressive city council in the City of Sonoma, a clear geographic boundary, and communities that care. Moreover, the Springs is designated as one of three special redevelopment areas in the county, a designation which creates opportunities for funding and special attention which Sonoma Valley is already taking advantage of through its Redevelopment Agency.<sup>30</sup> For example, the Redevelopment Agency has recently added in sidewalks in the

<sup>30</sup> The purpose of the Redevelopment Law (as it pertains to the Plan) is to 1) eliminate areas experiencing economic dislocation and disuse; (2) facilitate the re-planning, redesign and/or redevelopment of areas which are stagnant or improperly utilized, and which would not be accomplished by private enterprise acting alone without public

Boyes Springs area along Highway 12, a major improvement for a highly pedestrian area. Other plans include building a plaza for the Springs area, an idea that is of major interest to the residents of the Springs.

### Sonoma Valley Challenges: The Economic Downturn

**The Economic Downturn has had multiple impacts, some of the most significant being state and county budgetary problems according to the informants.** These challenges significantly impact the ability of Sonoma Valley to provide the human and health services needed for its more vulnerable populations, including low-income residents and their families, seniors, and youth. Health and Human Services in Sonoma Valley are not only funded by the city and county; they are also funded by the state and federal government, and cuts and caps in these programs have already had an impact on the county as well as Sonoma Valley. Several informants noted that as the State of California was unable to fund programs and Federal matching funds were no longer available, compounding the impact. **Vulnerable programs specifically mentioned were mental health, job training, and adult education.**

Informants also noted that support from the City of Sonoma as well as the county has diminished over time. Infrastructure is failing, particularly roads, and people noted that the Springs area was a particular area of neglect. Facilities that have formerly been free to the public, for example, are now being funded through rentals and other forms of outsourcing, making them less accessible.

Informants noted other impacts from the downturn in the economy: a lack of jobs, particularly those that provide a “living wage” (a wage that makes it possible to pay basic bills and get ahead.) Some noted that “even with the downturn,” they were surprised by the fact that affordable housing stock<sup>31</sup> did not appear to be increasing. The nonprofit La Luz, one of several core providers of human services to low-income residents in the Springs, reports that there has been a change of demographics in their weekly food donation line; whereas the lines used to be fully Latino, they are currently about 90% Latino and 10% Anglo. The economic downturn has hit the poor in Sonoma Valley squarely.

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participation and assistance; (3) protect and promote sound development and redevelopment of blighted areas and the general welfare of citizens of the County by remedying such injurious conditions through the employment of appropriate means; (4) install new or replace existing public improvements, facilities, and utilities in areas that are currently inadequately served with regard to such improvements, facilities and utilities; and (5) develop and rehabilitate improved housing opportunities in the Project Area and the surrounding areas of the County for low- and moderate-income persons and families. 151\12\440642.7 5 The plan includes goals related to the street environment, housing development and preservation, business attraction and retention, community character and identity, natural environment and recreation, and encouraging programs, services, and neighborhood organizations. (Sonoma County Community Development Commission, 2008)

([http://www.sonoma-county.org/cdc/rd\\_sv\\_redevelopment\\_plan.htm](http://www.sonoma-county.org/cdc/rd_sv_redevelopment_plan.htm))

<sup>31</sup> The Sonoma County Indicators report noted the following about the stock of affordable housing: “The national mortgage crisis has hit Sonoma County particularly hard. Home prices in Sonoma County have dropped more than in other comparable counties and the state. However, poor housing affordability, which has hindered economic growth in recent years, improved significantly in 2009. The percent of residents able to afford a median-priced home increased from 26% to 44% between mid-2008 and mid-2009. “

[http://www.sonoma-county.org/edb/pdf/2010/sotc\\_indicators.pdf](http://www.sonoma-county.org/edb/pdf/2010/sotc_indicators.pdf)

### **Potential Responses to the Economic Downturn**

Informants were quick to point out solutions, however. They looked to not only economic development, but the personal and professional development of the youth and business people in Sonoma Valley.

#### ***Long-term economic development, leadership, and entrepreneurship***

Important business trends that informants thought could improve the economic conditions in the Valley included digital technology, animation, medical technology, and “green and clean” technology, artisanal/specialty/organic foods and wine, e.g. cheese, bread etc; international foods and the like; specialty “experience” tourism; green buildings/retrofits; “destination wellness” programs, and other exciting ideas.<sup>32</sup> These areas could provide opportunities for economic growth in Sonoma County, and by extension, Sonoma Valley that includes many levels of education and backgrounds. With a thriving economy, local government agencies would have more access to funding and be more able to provide services to Sonoma Valley.

For the Valley to fully take advantage of these opportunities, many informants pointed to a central idea: **encourage entrepreneurship, empowerment, and leadership at the grass-roots level.** Several ideas were put forward to help achieve this effort:

#### ***1) Provide Skills, Opportunity & Mentorship for Youth:***

- a. Create a Junior Achievement program to encourage design in subjects such as robotics, inspiring creative thinking and other skills useful to students.
- b. Provide “Skills for Life” training that helps students lead successful lives as adults.<sup>33</sup>
- c. Provide economic opportunity through job creation. This is particularly important for young adults who are between the ages of 18-30. Entry-level work is hard to find these days, and contributes to talent “leaking” out of Sonoma Valley. It was noted that helping youth find and cultivate a sense of purpose through valued work would have many beneficial impacts in the community.

#### ***2) Foster entrepreneurship & economic development in the Springs:*** While there is a lot of economic activity in the Springs, several informants stated that Springs businesses had low access to and participation in business networking and training. Visioning a greater future for their business is not common. However, several informants did express an interest in starting their own business in the Springs. To that end, several ideas were suggested:

- a. Create a program on how to run a successful small business for Springs residents;
- b. Develop a micro-loan program to support entrepreneurship for women.

#### ***3) Conduct an assessment based on community indicators,*** perhaps modeled on the Sonoma County Indicators program or the HealthAction program. This could help to understand both trends and the changes in Sonoma Valley as whole, and poverty in

<sup>32</sup>Source: Ben Stone, Executive Director, Economic Development Board. (Fall 2010)

<sup>33</sup> UNICEF lists Life Skills as the following: 1) Interpersonal and Communication Skills, 2) Decision-Making and Problem-Solving Skills, and 3) Coping & Self-Management Skills.  
[http://www.unicef.org/lifeskills/index\\_whichskills.html](http://www.unicef.org/lifeskills/index_whichskills.html)

particular, as well as to track what efforts are creating success in Sonoma Valley. Currently, most indicators are at the county level and lacking at the Valley level.

- 4) **Empowerment and leadership development:** Many people saw entrepreneurship and economic opportunity as a form of empowerment and leadership development. One participant stated that “kids need hope for the future;” adults have the same need. Fostering leadership development, entrepreneurship, and the success of small business was seen as fundamentally connected to economic and community development in the area.

### Challenge: Divide between Culture & Communities

Another major challenge identified throughout many of the interviews was the theme of a **cultural, geographic, and economic divide**. Below discusses both the challenges and the opportunities to “bridge the gap” suggested by the informants.

**Cultural Divide:** Informants noted that the Latino community and the Anglo community<sup>34</sup> do not tend to mingle in Sonoma Valley. Informants speculated about why this might be: perhaps because they are stymied by the difference in language; or because they have fears or concerns. This sense of division, which is shared by both segments of the community, is one that keeps the communities of Sonoma Valley separated and burdens its attempts to make significant change.

When they enter the US, many of these young, rural Latinos are faced with significant challenges: cultural differences and isolation, finding financially sustainable work (many have more than one job), and a fear of deportation. These fears inhibit their desire (and perhaps ability) to interact, advocate, or contribute to their community.

The issue of legal status creates a fundamental obstacle to the Latino community: it affects who can drive, who can find steady work, and how; as well as their ability to feel safe while receiving services, or participating in the larger community. It was noted by an informant that there are stories of human trafficking in Sonoma Valley, where managers would go to Mexico, solicit workers, and then charge travel fees that essentially keep this population in an ever-increasing cycle of poverty.

Basic transportation is a critical need for the new Latino immigrant, and continues to be as they make a life here. Basic services are located in Santa Rosa, at least 30 minutes by car from Sonoma Valley. Many don’t drive legally (as they are undocumented), so cars can be impounded, resulting in financial loss and no transportation to work and other basic needs. Once that has happened, it is hard to break out of that cycle: money is spent not on their families, but on lawyer’s fees. At its worst, a situation like that can separate families. Informants clearly stated that low-cost bilingual legal services are needed as much as any other service.

<sup>34</sup> *Note from Preparer:* There are a number of terms to use in describing the ethnic differences in Sonoma Valley. In this report, we have chosen to use the term “Latino” (as interchangeable with Hispanic in this context), and “Anglo” to describe the obvious differences in the two communities. It should be noted that there are residents that are Asian American and African American, and likely others, in Sonoma Valley; while their realities are quite likely different, and worth exploring, they do not face the kind of community divide we discovered through our interviews.

*Fear and dependence is at the heart of the cultural divide.* A sentiment that was expressed by some Springs residents, can be boiled down to 1) a sense of frustration of being kept dependent on Anglos while being prevented from or discouraged about becoming empowered; 2) a belief that immigrants have skills and experience that are not being recognized or used, but can be used to build community; and, 3) a sense of frustration, bordering on despair, about perceived uncaring treatment of their children, especially by the schools and police.

The undertone to all this is a sense of fear about speaking up to Anglos combined with a sense of not being understood by Anglos when they do speak up. For these reasons, Latinos who are afraid to speak will not come to meetings that are about programs and services for them or about help that is offered by the schools or others. Following are some specific examples:

1. The Springs Latino community does not have a place that is “theirs”.
  - a. Latinos are always dependent on Anglo organizations and their facilities and spaces to conduct activities that Latinos want to run for their community. They are always in someone else’s place.
  - b. They essentially feel “homeless” because, although they can often use Anglo-owned or run facilities, they cannot control how or when the facilities get used and they are sometimes asked to give up spaces so that they can be used by Anglos.
  - c. Often, even when access is possible, fees for rental or day use fees at the Aquatic Center are simply beyond the capacity of families to afford.
2. Local nonprofits are not always perceived to be responsive to Latino needs or interests.
3. Springs residents want their own open space for events, for children’s activities – soccer has no place to practice, especially in the winter. (This extends to martial arts classes and the Ballet Folkloric dance group)
4. Larson Park is controlled by gangs, and it is unsafe to gather there.

The end results create internal psychological barriers for Latinos (especially those who are undocumented) to integrate into a larger community. This feeds into a general unwillingness and feeling of inability to engage in the community at large. Children are particularly vulnerable, as they have parents that are ill-equipped to advocate for them in the school system.

In another article written by Noris Binet, a Sonoma Valley resident and bilingual sociologist, she says the following about the cultural division:

*“The situation here (in Sonoma Valley) is the very challenge inherent when two or more cultures meet, interact, and co-exist, with one being the dominant host culture. Latino immigrants have not developed a true sense of belonging, in the Latino community itself...The (emotional and psychological stresses characteristic of an immigrant culture, sic) include language barriers, cultural and geographical differences, economic limitations, the issues around procreation and raising children, cultural and artistic deprivation, the loss of their extended support system – whether from their families, villages, or tribes*

*– and, for many Latinos in the Valley, carrying the relentless burden of being undocumented persons.”<sup>35</sup>*

Now, there are second and third generations of Latinos living in Sonoma Valley who, while they have more opportunity as US citizens, are as yet caught in the cycle of poverty and dependence.

Ultimately, informants pointed out that the cultural divide clouds the strengths inherent in the communities of Sonoma Valley and this group in particular.

***Geographic Divide:*** Informants identified Verano Ave as the marker between the Springs and the City of Sonoma. While this marker may or may not be visible to those outside the community, to residents it marks where one community ends and the other begins, even though the community of El Verano extends West and well-beyond Verano Ave. In a follow-up conversation with informants on March 21, the Todd Trust team was surprised to learn that there are college-age children who grew up in the Springs, but have never visited the historic plaza in the City of Sonoma. While this may not be a common occurrence, a separation of 4-6 miles seems to be a much larger distance in the minds of some Springs residents.

Some informants perceived that the geographic divide is also felt in the relationship between Sonoma Valley and the rest of Sonoma County. To those living inside Sonoma Valley, there was a feeling of not being represented at the county level and not being able to access important services that are only available along the 101 corridor. For those outside of Sonoma Valley, it can feel like Sonoma Valley “has a wall up around it,” and is not open to working with those outside of the Valley. Either way, the lack of connection between Sonoma Valley and the rest of the county seems to be apparent to all.

***Economic Divide:*** Informants reported indirectly to a sense of “economic isolation” in the Valley, caused by a disparity of wages and income (see demographics in on page 15), less investment in areas such as the Springs, and less of the economic opportunity that comes with a robust network of the community and greater education. Informants view high school dropout rates and the achievement gap noted on page 17 with concern; they are concerned that the community, whether it is workers who are unable to find jobs, or employers who can’t find skilled labor, will be negatively affected in the long-term. See Section 6 for more discussion on the developing the future viability of the workforce.

### **Potential Responses to the Geographic, Cultural, and Economic Divide**

There were many ideas from throughout the interviews about how to overcome the perceived divide. Here are a few themes:

***Extend trust and respect:*** One direct request was that the Community Foundation (and other Anglo groups) **should talk to the Springs community and get its response *before* creating new programs to serve the Springs.** Anglos and Latinos can work together, can partner, but

<sup>35</sup> Excerpt from “Understanding the Latino Community – Beginning a conversation”, by Noris Binet, Special to the Index-Tribune, Oct. 19, 2010, (Permission to use by author and the Sonoma-Index Tribune)

the **Anglos need to trust the Latinos** to decide how to run the programs. Latinos want a sense of ownership in what happens to them.

***Remove barriers to grass-roots leadership:*** There are people in the Springs that are much more qualified than they are recognized for, but (due to regulations and/or discrimination) are not allowed to exercise those skills in the US. These are the people who have the ability to be community leaders, if only there weren't so many barriers to their empowerment. There also needs to be a Latino organization in the Springs, run by Latinos and using people who have the knowledge and understanding of Latino (Mexican) culture to work successfully with Latinos.

***Listen:*** Some informants stated that Latinos don't come to meetings because they don't feel safe. They are frustrated with not being listened to so they feel like giving up.

***Build community connection – within Sonoma Valley***

Many informants wanted all parts of the community to embrace one another and the rich diversity of the Valley. Informants pointed to many solutions that would bring different parts of the community together, whether it was through collaboration between different organizations, developing places that would also build a sense of community and connection, or connecting the Valley with the rest of the county by providing services locally, building hiking trails and biking paths, or increasing public and private means of transportation. Many pointed to the recent addition of sidewalks along Highway 12 in the Springs area as an important and gratifying step in the right direction.

***Create a “there” there:*** In the Springs, there are many small businesses<sup>36</sup> lined along Highway 12, near the large business of the area, the Sonoma Mission Inn. There is little continuity or cohesiveness in how these stores appear; and it was noted that in the Springs as a whole, there is not a place for the community to gather, have events, or even sit with friends. In essence, there is no “there” there. **Informants pointed out that without a place to connect *with*, there is little to connect *to*.** They also point out that without a place of their own, they are always dependent on other organizations, without the autonomy to schedule classes, events, or other functions.

Thus, many spoke of building a safe, central place for the community to gather, so all parts of the Valley, but particularly the residents of the Springs, feel welcome. More than that, informants imagined that this plaza would be a place of economic and social vitality; an attractive place that residents can be proud of, that provides for their needs, and that visitors would want to visit. The Redevelopment Agency has included a plaza in its plan for just this purpose, and nonprofits in the Springs are eagerly dreaming about how they might participate in that plaza once it is built, with ideas such as a multi-service center, a day labor center, or other ideas.

Informants also spoke of creating a recreational and sports complex that would be attractive to all parts of the community, would be used by all ages, and would be located centrally (between

<sup>36</sup> The Team would like to do more research on these small businesses, both in hearing from small business owners in that area, as well as understanding what their needs and opportunities are from their perspective.

the City of Sonoma and the Springs) and would solve some of the lack of recreational facilities mentioned later in this report.

Clearly fundamental to these efforts was the desire of creating a shared vision for the Springs by its residents. This would suggest that some informants believe that a “place” by itself is not enough. It must have the support of diverse people with common cause for isolation to be vanquished.

#### *Build community connection – between the county and the Valley*

Several informants, both those located outside as well as inside of the Valley, talked about finding ways to connect the Valley with the rest of the county. This was discussed both in providing easier access to basic health and human services (discussed in the section on health and human services), connecting the two areas with trails and better transportation, and to have more Sonoma Valley representation in county activities.

#### *Implications for the Todd Trust*

The results and trends listed above create the following conclusions:

- 1) There are significant strengths and assets in Sonoma Valley and Sonoma County.
- 2) There is significant community engagement in volunteering and philanthropy to address community needs and to support nonprofit work.
- 3) There are multiple barriers imposed by differences primarily between Anglo and Latino residents. These differences include: language; cultural customs and values; trust and understanding between cultures and generations; physical barriers of distance; and barriers caused by lack of income and education. **In short, for low-income persons, especially those of Hispanic language and culture, there is a pervasive lack of access to the resources provided for the larger Valley community.**
- 4) There is a gap in education in the Latino community that is significant, and without attention to it, the cycle of poverty will likely continue. This is not only for the youth, but very significantly is for the adult, Hispanic, low-income residents of the Springs.
- 5) When considering potential efforts, the Community Foundation might look for ways to encourage entrepreneurship, empowerment, and leadership at the grass-roots level through whatever efforts they engage in.
- 6) The Community Foundation understands that it must include additional residents of the Springs area in its committee processes to determine how best to address local needs and opportunities.
- 7) More exploration of the needs, challenges and opportunities from the perspective of the small businesses on Highway 12 could be undertaken.
- 8) Population centers within Sonoma County are widespread and primarily focused on their own needs and issues, rather than expressing a county-wide view. This creates a barrier to collaboration between entities. Likewise, the Community Foundation may look at how to deepen connection culturally, geographically, and economically between the Latino and Anglo populations in any of their efforts.

Below is the list of the three goals that were developed by the Todd Trust Team in their efforts to look for high leverage ways to affect change towards the three Todd Trust stipulations.

- 1) *Improving Access:* Our **main priority** and focus includes increasing access physically (such as a possible move of the Sonoma Valley Community Health Center to a Springs location and/or increasing access to community services, as well as decreasing cultural barriers faced by Springs residents (such as language, trust, family structure, literacy). It will also include the creation of nearby open space and community spaces, as well as local community control of what happens in the Springs.
- 2) *Improving Collaboration and Developing Shared Goals:* In addition to our main priority, as the Community Foundation and the Sonoma Valley Fund develop their role and relationships within the Springs, we should be a role model for listening, collaborating and facilitating a process of reaching agreement on common values, as well as encouraging all participants to adopt a common set of outcomes.
- 3) *Increasing Community Contribution and Ownership:* Further, our engagement with increasing access can also provide a means of building local leadership while reaching out to the Springs communities, by helping local organizations to include Latinos and low-income residents in the process of determining what might be successful ways of increasing health and human services access. At the same time, both we and local service providing organizations need to develop better trust.

## SECTION III: HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

### Section Overview

The Todd Trust stipulates that its funds will be used to provide for “*health and human services, especially for the sick, needy and elderly.*” Thus, the interview team has paid close attention to not only health and human services, but also the three different potential populations identified: the sick, the needy, and the elderly. Organizations as well as some stakeholders were identified to help uncover the challenges and opportunities in this category. In our explorations, it became clear that there is a “web of care” that extends throughout Sonoma Valley, to the county and region beyond.

Summarized below are results relating to that broad theme, detailing in particular 1)an overview of the “web of care” in Sonoma Valley; 2) challenges and potential responses relating to health and human services that face all members of Sonoma Valley, 3)challenges and potential responses in serving the Latino community in the Springs, which many identified as a group with the greatest needs, 4) challenges and potential responses in serving the senior population in Sonoma Valley, and 5)implications for the Todd Trust.

### Health & Human Services in Sonoma Valley

The “web of care” – the network of county agencies, hospitals, clinics, private practitioners, and nonprofits that works with the Sonoma Valley population has a number of strengths as well as challenges. The County Department of Health Services and the County Department of Human Services provide an array of basic health and human services that are the foundation of care for vulnerable populations in Sonoma County. Interviewers were impressed by the dedication and store s of knowledge to be found in these pivotal departments.

An aside - Sonoma Valley has about 14% of the county population. Their usage of Services is approximately equal to that--Sonoma Valley residents use about 14% of county medical services, 12 % of food stamps, 10% of general public assistance (cash assistance)<sup>37</sup>, and about 11% of WIC services (Women Infant & Children’s Assistance).<sup>38</sup> It was also noted that approximately 50% of all births in Sonoma Valley are WIC eligible.

Below is a brief description of both of these county departments as well as the status of primary care in Sonoma Valley, and a description of the health and human services provided by Sonoma Valley Hospital, the Sonoma Valley Community Health Center, La Luz, Nuestra Voz, as well as identifying other non-profits that informants identified as critical supports to low-income residents.

<sup>37</sup> Source: Marion Deeds, Director, Economic Assistance Division, Human Services Department (Interview, Fall 2010)

<sup>38</sup> Source: Peter Rumble, Director of Health Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Sonoma County Health Services (June, 2011)

***Department of Health Services in Sonoma Valley:*** The mission of the Department of Health Services is to “work with individuals and communities to achieve and preserve health and well being.” Services related to the interests of the Todds include alcohol and other drug services; environmental health, mental health, public health and prevention, and the WIC program. However, they are also found in such areas as food safety; animal control; HIV planning; etc.

Their goal is county-wide: to make Sonoma County the healthiest county in the state by 2020.<sup>39</sup> To do this, they have undertaken a well-received “Health Action” effort, with first steps focused on effective local action to increase consumption of healthy food, increase physical activity, and connect all residents with prevention-focused primary health care. Specific initiatives include: iWalk, a county-wide walking initiative; the Medical Home Collaborative, to help patients find a medical home through working with practitioners; the iGrow initiative, a county-wide effort to help residents grow more of their own food; the Food System Alliance to work on systems-change around food; the Healthy Students Initiative, “Aimed at transforming the school culture towards physical exercise and healthy eating;” the Safe Routes to School initiative, helping students find safe ways to walk and ride to school; and the Worksite Wellness initiative, to support employer wellness programming.<sup>40</sup>

In Sonoma Valley, the Department of Health Services provides prevention, early intervention, and treatment services to residents in the Springs. Services and activities, including outreach, education, home visits, support groups, nursing, and rehabilitation are provided either by contract (Nueva Vida) or directly by staff, with such partners as Nueva Vida, Nuestra Voz, La Luz, VetConnect, and Sonoma Overnight Services. Services focus on prevention and early intervention for individuals, children, youth and families, and treatment services for adults and children, youth and their families.

In June, 2011 Peter Rumble, Director of Health Policy, Planning and Evaluation at Sonoma County Health Services, also emphasized they are “keenly interested and indeed working on ways to make services more accessible to residents of Sonoma Valley, and are looking for opportunities to partner and work creatively to address health issues in new ways.”

***Department of Human Services:*** At the Department of Human Services, their goal is “To protect and improve the well-being of the individuals and families who reside in Sonoma County – especially those who cannot protect themselves.” They provide many different forms of assistance, including employment services, in-home support to aging and disabled individuals, Veteran’s services, foster care, food stamps, cash assistance, and eligibility for medical services. In addition to operating the Valley of the Moon Children’s Home, an emergency shelter for children who need temporary refuge because of neglect or abuse, they operate 24-hour emergency telephone lines for reporting incidents of suspected child and/or adult abuse. These services, in addition to Department of Human Services’ partnerships with the community, contribute to the safety and security of thousands of children and families during times of financial hardship or family distress.

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<sup>39</sup> County Department of Health Services: <http://www.sonoma-county.org/health/>

<sup>40</sup> *Priorities for Action: Summary Project Recommendations for Health Action, a 2020 vision for Sonoma County.* [http://www.sonomahealthaction.org/resources/pdf/summary\\_of\\_project\\_recommendations\\_april%202009.pdf](http://www.sonomahealthaction.org/resources/pdf/summary_of_project_recommendations_april%202009.pdf)

Marion Deeds, Director of the Economic Assistance Division, also emphasized that they were “enthusiastic about making resources more available to Sonoma Valley residents.” (May, 2011.)

**Private practice in Sonoma Valley:** Private practice is also available in Sonoma Valley, although according to the Sonoma County Primary Care Capacity Report (Mary Maddux-Gonzalez, 2011) Sonoma Valley has received the federal designation of “Health Professional Shortage Area.” A region could receive this “HPSA” designation for several reasons: geographic (a county or service area), demographic (low-income population,) or institutional (availability of a comprehensive health center, federally qualified health center, or other public facility.” Given what our informants have told us, we might infer that the HPSA designation relates directly to the lack of care for the low-income population. The Sonoma County Primary Care Capacity Report also tells us that 64% of primary care practices in Sonoma County are located in Santa Rosa, and 68% practice in large or very large practices.<sup>41</sup> Some residents do go to Napa and/or Petaluma for service.

**Nonprofit Support for Health & Human Services:** The nonprofits in Sonoma Valley are also an important aspect of the web of care there. They provide vital services ranging from basic sustenance and health care, to senior, youth, and Latino support. A few key providers of health and human services for low-income residents of Sonoma Valley should be mentioned:

***Sonoma Valley Hospital:***

The Sonoma Valley Hospital’s mission is to “*maintain, improve and restore the health of everyone in our community,*” and provides services in birthing, medical imaging, cardiopulmonary services, occupational health, an emergency department, rehabilitation services, a home care program, a skilled nursing unit, integrative medicine, surgery, laboratory services, travel medicine, and women's services.<sup>42</sup> Likely they serve the Springs extensively as an emergency department.

***Sonoma Valley Community Health Center (SVCHC)***

SVCHC is the largest private practice clinic in Sonoma Valley. In 2010, they saw over 7,000 patients, with over 27,400 visits. Of these patients, 46% were at the federal poverty line, and 36% were children (approximately 2,250 total). 53% were Hispanic and 46% were Anglo; the vast majority from the Springs area. Their focus is on comprehensive, preventative care, and includes among other things primary care, physicals, immunizations, family planning, women’s health, pregnancy and delivery care services, some specialty services, behavioral and mental health, pharmacy services, and assistance with finding insurance or assistance with medical costs. SCVHC sends one mobile van 4 days per week (Mon-Thurs) to La Luz for Pediatrics, Flowery School, El Verano Elementary, and Springs Village. Mental health counseling and substance abuse support is available Monday through Friday by referral.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup> (Mary Maddux-Gonzalez, Sonoma County Primary Care Capacity Report, 2011)

<http://www.sonoma-county.org/health/ph/data/pdf/primarycare20110110.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> Source: Sonoma Valley Hospital Website (June 2011) <http://www.svh.com/departments.html>

<sup>43</sup> Source: SCVHC Newsletter, March-May 2011. [http://www.svchc.org/home/svchc/March-May\\_2011\\_Newsletter.pdf](http://www.svchc.org/home/svchc/March-May_2011_Newsletter.pdf)

*La Luz Center (La Luz)*

La Luz Center is a family resource center with a mission to empower our community through education, leadership, and self-advocacy. With program areas in education, (including child development, computer literacy, ESL classes, and GEDs in Spanish), family services (emergency assistance, one-on-one support, assistance and access to health & social services, and mental health support groups), and leadership, they served over 25,000 individuals last year.<sup>44</sup> In terms of health services, they host a St. Joseph's van once/week, a pediatric van from SCVHC once/week, and provide dental screenings 2x/year.<sup>45</sup> They also collaborate with the Departments of Health Services and Human Services to help clients access support.

*Nuestra Voz*

The mission of Nuestra Voz is "To develop leadership among the Latino community of Sonoma Valley." They engage in community building, health education and also provide communications training for couples and families, opportunities for healthy exercise, and other leadership promoting activities in the Springs. They work with the County Department of Health Services and Human Services to deliver some of their services, particularly around mental health and health education and outreach.

Other important nonprofits and services providers in Sonoma Valley include: the Boys and Girls Club, FISH, St. Vincent's, the Vintage House, Meals on Wheels, Sonoma Community Center, Redwood Empire Food Bank, the Teen Center, Nuestra Voz, Sonoma Valley Museum of Art, Vineyard Workers Services, the Sonoma Valley Unified School District and the Sonoma Valley Adult School, the Sonoma Valley Fire and Rescue authority, the Common Bond Foundation, and the Sonoma Overnight Support(SOS) shelter.

Important programs include the Teen Safety Ride Program and Teen Services, Sonoma Valley Mentoring Alliance, St. Leo's migrant encampment, shadowing opportunities provided for parents and youth, and the Sonoma Valley Fund's Youth Initiative.

Exciting collaborations noted were:

- 1) The Sonoma Valley Health Roundtable, a collaboration between many prominent nonprofits, government agencies, and community citizens to promote health in Sonoma Valley, with a focus on the prevention and treatment of diabetes; a "virtual wellness center," a Sonoma Valley resource guide; and iWalk.
- 2) The "Food three-way" between Redwood Empire Food Bank, Catholic Charities and La Luz;
- 3) The Springs Community Alliance and the Garden Coalition at Larson Park;
- 4) Partnerships between the Sonoma Valley Unified School District and other nonprofits such as SCVHC, the Sonoma Ecology Center, the Sonoma Valley Museum, and the Adult School.

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<sup>44</sup> Source: La Luz Center website (June, 2011) <http://laluzcenter.org/about-la-luz.html>

<sup>45</sup> Source: Interview with Kara Reyes, Family Services Director at La Luz Center, (June, 2011).

Many of these non-profits work hand-in-hand with the Departments of Health Services and Human Services to create a Sonoma Valley “web of care.”

At the county level, a community resource directory called 2-1-1 is operated by the Volunteer Center of Sonoma County that helps residents find information about crucial social services.<sup>46</sup> 2-1-1 details the vast majority of health and social services in the county, both public and voluntary, making it much easier for health and human services practitioners as well as residents to find and access these services. 211 is a public-private partnership supported by the county, the United Way, the Community Foundation and the Volunteer Center.

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<sup>46</sup> 2-1-1 offers its phone services fully translated in over 175 languages, and there are Spanish-speaking persons on staff.

## Interview Results

An important understanding was developed throughout the interviews and other conversations: **many informants believe that health is not just about sickness prevention.** As the Team deliberated, they concluded that they should define health in the following way:

*“...when we speak of ‘health and well-being’, we mean them in the largest, interrelated sense of the words: very broadly, we are referring to what it means ‘to be well’. We include commonplace aspects such as physical, mental and dental health, nutrition, education, recreation, socialization, and more. We also include factors such as a sense of being accepted, of having hope, to meet basic needs for one’s self and family, and to make a difference to others.”<sup>47</sup>*

Thus, “health” is not limited to those who are directly working in “health and human services”; instead, it includes a broader array of organizations and also different approaches to creating “health.” That being said, there are immediate challenges that provide limitations to receiving basic services, to be summarized in two ways: 1) insufficient transportation, and 2) a lack of services and facilities in Sonoma Valley. This was congruent for all of the populations listed in the Todd Trust stipulations: the sick, the needy, and the elderly.

### Challenge: Health Care for the Needy

Informants, both from the county perspective as well as the non-profit perspectives identified several major areas of care that are lacking specifically for the “needy”. As we discussed earlier, the “needy” in Sonoma Valley, while not limited to Latinos in the Boyes Springs area, were certainly the population of focus for many of the nonprofits there, and do experience a lack of health and human services.

Many noted that basic health care needs are provided for through the Sonoma Valley Community Health Center and the Sonoma Valley Hospital, in conjunction with hospitals and urgent care facilities along the 101 corridor as well as in Napa County. What was top of mind for informants are the following:

- 1) *Access to dental health for the needy, particularly for children.* As of June, 2011, there are no Denti-Cal providers in Sonoma Valley; reimbursements are reported to be so low now that dentists cannot provide for their own costs. While not all children are recipients or users of Denti-Cal, over half of Sonoma Valley’s children are eligible for that program.<sup>48</sup> Currently, a dentist does come with the St. Joseph’s health van once a week to Nuestra Voz in Springs Village, and La Luz collaborates with Pediatric Dental Institute (of Windsor) for two screening days/year, where they serve up to 60 children. At La Luz,

<sup>47</sup>See the Executive Summary for more on the Team’s thinking.

<sup>48</sup>Denti-Cal and Medi-Cal are made available based on the same income bracket that free and reduced-price lunch programs at schools are made available. According to the Sonoma Valley Community Profile, (p.8, (Economic Development Board, Sonoma County, 2011), 2,382 students or 52% of the 4,671 students, are eligible for free or reduced-price meals in Sonoma Valley.

of 50 that were served at their last screening day, 29 of 50 had some form of cavities, 19 of 29 had severe rotting.<sup>49</sup> **There are children, said informants, who at age 10 or 12 have never had a physical or a dental check up.** While physicals and health care is available, dentistry is sorely lacking. A separate but important note: dentistry is also needed for needy seniors, particularly as they receive dentures or other interventions.

- 2) ***Mental health services are sorely lacking:*** Many informants mentioned the need for mental health services in the Latino community. *“The differences in lifestyle from Mexico and the US result in stress, domestic violence, a stress on emotional and mental health. Parents work longer hours and are raising children; mental health needs to focus on strengthening and healing the pillars of the family unit, the parent.”*<sup>50</sup> It was noted that there is significant depression and some suicides. Suicides are a phenomenon that is uncommon in the Latino community.<sup>51</sup> Informants believed that there is a need for more prevention and intervention services and that those who deliver this type of support need to speak Spanish and be familiar with the particular cultures in Sonoma Valley. Currently, mental health services are provided by a county staff person in a branch office of the City of Sonoma Police Department; by a psychologist that attends low-income Spanish speaking patients once/week at La Luz (when there is funding,) a psychologist that is available only for uninsured clients at SVCHC, and several county-sponsored programs that are available, as funding permits, through Nuestra Voz. The need far outstrips the availability. **There was also a sense that “mental health” is connected to a sense of “wellbeing,” similar to what the Team is defining as health and wellbeing.**
- 3) ***Need for more capacity to conduct preventive and urgent health care:*** While there is a full-scale Emergency Room at the Sonoma Valley Hospital, it was noted that Sonoma Valley also needs more services related to urgent/emergency health issues, along with a gerontology department.
- 4) ***Public recreation facilities are sorely lacking in Sonoma Valley as a whole, as well as in the Springs.*** This was an important point for many of the informants: many believed that it is through these mutual opportunities for enjoyment and recreation that a united and participative community could be shaped; that problems with gangs and youth could be averted; that health could be maintained for the seniors living in Sonoma Valley. Informants pointed to several specific needs:

- a. There are no “all-weather” fields for youth; currently, soccer fields are not usable during the rainy season, and children must drive to Santa Rosa and participate in private clubs to gain access to soccer fields during wet weather. It was noted that soccer is the main outdoor sport for Latino children, and has many side benefits of engaging parents, particularly fathers, in their community.
- b. The high school swimming pool is closed, leaving no public swimming pool available.
- c. There is no community center that provides space for recreation, education (low-cost art classes, theatre, etc.), and exercise for all parts of the community.

<sup>49</sup> Source: Interview with Kara Reyes, Director of Family Services at La Luz, (June 2011.)

<sup>50</sup> Source: Interview with Alejandra Cervantes and Gabriel Sanchez, Nuestra Voz, Interview, (Fall 2010).

<sup>51</sup> Source: Interview with Zuli Baron, Community Organizer, St. Joseph’s Health Center (Fall, 2010).

- 5) *Need for increased access to human services:* Human Services covers a large gamut of services, from economic assistance for basic needs of food, shelter, and clothing, to job training, GED completion, English as a Second Language classes, and legal assistance. It can even include leadership development, cultural competency training and mentorship, support for entrepreneurship and innovation, or communication skills for working with family members. While all of these things are available to the “needy” of Sonoma Valley, a few challenges were listed by our informants:
- Many services are only available in Santa Rosa.
  - Some services are available in Sonoma Valley, but are significantly affected by funding availability. For example, adult education that helps residents take their GED, improve language skills or increase computer literacy has decreased in tandem with state and county budget cuts. Likewise, popular programs for family communication skills, sponsored by the Sonoma County Mental Health Department, could happen more frequently with better funding.
  - Some services are available in Sonoma Valley, but participants have a hard time accessing, due to location or transportation. For example, while residents may be able to procure food, they may be challenged to find a way to take it home.
  - There is also a need for help in legal and financial advising for individuals on topics of immigration, taxes, tax credits, and financial health. There are many check-cash stores in the Springs area, whose practices tend to reinforce poverty, and the recently acquired WestAmerica Bank in the area has reduced its hours, making it less accessible to many of its customers.
  - Several mentioned that those in need had a hard time accessing or transporting food from distribution site to home, procuring low-cost housing, or paying basic utilities, such as water.
  - Finally, families may have options, such as food stamps, available; but their willingness to apply may be hampered if they must do so in a place where they feel it is risky because of their legal status.

### **Challenge: Insufficient Transportation**

While many informants discussed the issues described above at length, it is important to note that **access and transportation was named as both the most significant short-term and long-term challenge** by a noteworthy number of informants.

Informants noted that the distances between the rest of Sonoma County and the Valley, and having adequate public transportation, were a significant challenge. To put this in perspective: the seat of the county is in Santa Rosa, and so the services for its most vulnerable populations are located between 40-60 minutes away by car (depending on traffic). Sonoma County Transit takes about 11 trips back and forth each day between Santa Rosa and Sonoma Valley,<sup>52</sup> but they leave every 1 to 1 1/2 hours, and the journey just to downtown Santa Rosa is about that length.

<sup>52</sup> Schedules can be seen at <http://sctransit.com/SchedulesMaps.aspx>

Further, Sonoma Valley is sorely lacking in *local* public transportation. There is no local (Sonoma Valley specific) bus system, or shuttle system. It was noted that large buses are mostly empty and are not regular enough; transportation needs to be more flexible and responsive to travelers' needs. In particular, transportation needs to do a good job of connecting the Springs with the rest of the Sonoma Valley. Informants were specifically sensitive to the needs of those unable to drive, and the burden that placed on them to take care of basic needs within Sonoma Valley as well as in Sonoma County in general.

Informants depicted the Sonoma Valley Community Health Center (SVCHC) and the Sonoma Valley Hospital as primary health resources, particularly for low-income residents. However, SCVHC's current location is about 2 miles from the Springs – a 5 minute drive for many, but over a one hour walk for many Springs residents who travel on foot. The Center is about one-half mile closer to the Springs than the Hospital.<sup>53</sup> The Center does have plans to build a new Health Center, and their preferred site is in the Boyes Springs area.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> The Sonoma Valley Community Health Center is located at 430 W Napa St # F, Sonoma, CA 95476; the Sonoma Valley Hospital is located at 347 Andrieux St, Sonoma, CA 95476.

<sup>54</sup> Source: County of Sonoma Community Development Commission Land Acquisition document (September 29, 2009) [http://www.sonoma-county.org/board/meetings/meeting\\_20091006/meeting\\_20091006\\_item29.pdf](http://www.sonoma-county.org/board/meetings/meeting_20091006/meeting_20091006_item29.pdf)

### **Potential Responses for Improving Access & Service Delivery**

Many of our nonprofit informants are working actively on ideas **to improve access** to both health and human services. Following are a summary of ideas that were offered to help those who most need them, starting with several ideas that were broadly mentioned by the informants, and followed by ideas that focused specifically on the needs of the needy, the elderly, and the sick, as the Todds requested.

#### ***Create a multi-service center located in the Springs***

Many informants talked about the idea of having a “one-stop shop” where both human and health services could be provided in the Springs. They cited several reasons: the neediest were located there; this particular group will only come to places where they know they are safe; to help them feel “safe”, they need to be in a place that they are familiar with and working with people that they trust. This could be a place where the County could work in partnership with Sonoma Valley agencies and nonprofits. One effort that is already underway is the building of a new Sonoma Valley Community Health Center.

In Board Meeting Minutes dated October 6, 2010, the following description is provided:

*“The Sonoma Valley Community Health Center is now actively planning for a new 20,000 square foot, “green” building facility to accommodate its expanding operations... The increase in space will allow SVCHC to expand its family practice, obstetrics and gynecology, and mental health services, and will allow SVCHC to provide new services, such as child and adult dental care. While this facility will be fully utilized as a Health Center, there may be ways to “attach” other human services in adjoining facilities.”<sup>55</sup>*

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Further rationale and creative ideas for this approach are detailed in the following section: *Focus on the Needy: Serving the Latino Community*” on page 38.

#### ***Improve public and private means of transportation.***

Informants recommended several ideas for improving Sonoma Valley transportation, including restarting a program like “Caravan” which existed in Sonoma until 10 years ago. Caravan was a small-sized bus that made a loop around the valley each hour. Informants noted that there was also a “Dial a Ride” element to it in which a person could call to be picked up along the route. Most similar to this service currently is one that the Vintage House Senior Center offers, called “LIMO.” It helps seniors with needs for transportation to doctor’s appointments, shopping, etc. Teen Rides is another service currently offered that supports safe teen transportation.

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<sup>55</sup>Project Description from Sonoma Valley Community Health Center Board Meeting Minutes(October, 2009, p.2): [http://www.sonoma-county.org/board/meetings/meeting\\_20091006/meeting\\_20091006\\_item29.pdf](http://www.sonoma-county.org/board/meetings/meeting_20091006/meeting_20091006_item29.pdf)

*Continue to develop online access and relationships*

Informants noted that there were several other ways where local groups could receive support and offer support to residents. Several ideas were offered here:

- 1) Use video conferencing by experts in other parts of the county to provide support services in Sonoma Valley.
- 2) Continue the efforts around creating access to registration for services via the internet. La Luz has a computer lab which they use to teach computer literacy courses that they plan to use for more independent learning and applications for services.<sup>56</sup>

*Focus on the Needy: Serving the Latino Community*

We discuss the complexities facing the Latino community on page 17. However, there are further difficulties in providing health and human services to the Latino community. Following is a summary of what we learned:

- 1) Nonprofits and local agencies who work with the Latino community of the Springs find that trust is hard won. For those who come to the US without documentation, they are constantly worried about deportation. “Institutions” are viewed with suspicion compounded by a lack of knowledge about the purpose and function of different institutions. Trust tends to be extended to those who are seen working there every day; that are recommended by trusted community members, etc.
- 2) In particular, agencies from outside Sonoma Valley have found that their efforts to work with this group have been only somewhat successful, and tend to be most successful when they “show up” or “subcontract,” having trusted entities in the community provide those services.
- 3) Decisions are made differently in the Latino family unit: Western culture emphasizes individual choice, while decisions in Latino families are likely to be made in conjunction with its eldest member. Latino culture also defines “immediate family” differently, including grandparents, aunts and uncles. This is an important cultural difference; in the US, most services are oriented towards caring for the individual, as opposed to the family.
- 4) Many members of this community are unable to read, even in Spanish, so written communications have not been found to be effective.

*Potential Responses for Serving the Latino Community*

*Leveraging the strengths of the Latino community*

While the challenges facing this group are many, several informants were also quick to point out the success the Latino community had achieved, and how the Community Foundation might build on those assets. First of all, they pointed out that the Latino community in the Valley is much more stable than it was even 20 years ago; families have moved in, and are staying to raise their children. Informants talked about students who were graduating; and about Latino leaders who were important role models. They mentioned programs like the English Learner Advisory

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<sup>56</sup> Source: Yvonne Hall, Executive Director, La Luz Center (June, 2011)

Committee(ELAC), a way for parents to become active in their children's lives through advocacy, and other supportive programs. "Shadowing experiences" have also been successful, where parents were brought out to visit college campuses and learn how to better support their children. Informants from Nuestra Voz talked about celebrating important cultural holidays, of writing and performing theatre; of the enthusiasm for soccer which brings the whole community out. They told stories of people of this community showing up for events, providing potluck dinners, music and dancing. They pointed to the enthusiasm of gardeners who built twenty "salsa gardens" in 2010 as part of the county-wide 350 Garden Challenge. Classes in communication for couples, led in Spanish and held through the Department of Health Services and Nuestra Voz are helping couples be better partners as well as better parents. Likewise, a group of women is regularly convened to develop their individual capabilities.

A success story was described by Kara Reyes, Family Services Director at La Luz. There, a group of twelve women and men from their community decided to form into a new committee which eventually they called "Poder Popular." Poder Popular now not only helps to organize the food lines (a weekly event where hundreds of people line up to receive food donations), but have grown into taking action on matters of health, housing, leadership, and surveys. This group is self-managed, autonomous, committed to each other, and is made up of people who themselves receive some of the services that La Luz provides. The impetus for this committee rose in response to the heavier demands that the community placed on La Luz during the economic crisis. What seems to be the lesson here is that grassroots leadership will arise if the community sees how and where they can make a contribution, and are given the resources to be able to do so.<sup>57</sup>

*Successful Outreach to the Latino Community:* The Latino community has in place several radio stations, which are easier to manage than television and is an effective way to reach a goodly percentage of the local population. These programs include: a program founded by Bill Hammett, and run by Nuestra Voz on Saturday mornings; KBBF which has senior programs in Spanish (although limited to the Sonoma Plaza); and the bilingual KSBY 91.3 FM (range is again limited to Sonoma Valley, extending to some parts of Napa and Petaluma). Nuestra Voz has also just started a "magazine" that will be a "bilingual graphical tool," and along with nonprofit announcements and descriptions of services, will have articles on health, family, sports, services, etc. They also plan to connect with teens via Facebook and Twitter.

Informants also emphasized that the Latino community, while it may need support, does not want to be viewed as "needy"; rather, they want to be seen for their vibrant participation, and to build on the assets they have.

### *Working with the Family*

Many of the informants suggested that whether the intended focus is youth, parents, or seniors, it is very important to work with the family as whole, making services easily accessed for the entire family, and educating the entire family. **To this end, it was suggested that as we look at health and human services, that Sonoma Valley would be well advised to create integrated efforts that provide for the family as a unit, that includes children, parents, grandparents,**

<sup>57</sup> Source: Interview with Kara Reyes, Family Services Director, La Luz (June, 2011)

**and extended family members.** This theme is seen throughout the report, and presents exciting ideas for nonprofits and agencies, including: creating an inter-generational family resource center in the Springs; and developing schools as community centers, providing training, support and community activities for parents, elders, and children.

### *Education for the Latino Community*

It was noted again and again that here, as in other places, education must be part of the solution. Literacy in Spanish is a challenge for some members of this community and English is a challenge for others; the lack of GEDs for the Latino community is really astounding (over 51% for Latinos over the age of 18). This not only provides skills, but a sense of purpose, connection, and ease in the US. For this reason, **informants identified classes in English as a Second Language, as well as Spanish for Spanish Speakers, as being important.**

These kinds of opportunities exist in the Sonoma Valley Adult School that works with La Luz, to provide ESL, computer classes, GEDs, and other educational resources for this group. Mentoring provides another pathway for orienting people who are navigating a new culture and its system.

It was pointed out that the Sonoma Valley Unified School District has property in Boyes Springs next to the Teen Center that at one point was slotted for use by the Sonoma Valley Adult School, an important resource for adult education and other human services in Sonoma Valley. Re-invigorating this opportunity could provide a place for a variety of human services vital to improving the lives of the “needy” in Boyes Springs.

Some informants connected the idea of promoting entrepreneurship, and the accompanying skills for success (self-initiative, self-improvement, leadership, networking, vision) as being an important pathway for change. See page 22 for ideas on fostering entrepreneurship.

### *Focus on Development and Empowerment, not Crisis Intervention and Dependence*

Several informants noted that many services provided by Sonoma Valley nonprofits and agencies focused on “crisis intervention” or basic sustenance such as health care, food, and economic assistance. Indirectly connected, it was also noted that business owners in this group usually tend only to their business, and do not renew their vision, their entrepreneurship, and their skills. Informants made the point that if the Latino community is really going to thrive, **the scope of services must expand from “crisis intervention” to “developing capacity”.** There must be opportunities to build leadership development, personal development, and a feeling of community integration to allow a shift toward a personal sense of vision, hope, and connection. Further, the Latino community wants to feel ownership in its solutions, and trust from the larger community to design solutions that will work for them.

### *Focus on the Elderly: Special Needs for Seniors in Sonoma Valley*

This following quote made by one of the informants sums up the themes discovered about seniors in Sonoma Valley: “The graying of Sonoma, along with the rest of the country, is also an

issue. Their needs are very different from those of the previous generation as they are living longer and are increasing as a percentage of our community.”<sup>58</sup>

Informants noted that while seniors do tend to have special needs (identified below,) seniors in Sonoma Valley tend to be active, engaged, and healthy much later into life. Nineteen percent of Sonoma Valley is over the age of 65 (as opposed to twenty percent in Sonoma County.) As we noted earlier, seniors also tend to be Anglo: the Sonoma County 2010 Indicators report noted that 16% of the Anglo population is over 65, as opposed to less than 4% of the Latino population.<sup>59</sup> Poverty is much less widespread for seniors in Sonoma Valley: poverty is at its highest for seniors in the City of Sonoma at 8%, hovering between 5-6% in the Springs, and is below .5% in Eldridge.<sup>60</sup>

That being said, there are vulnerable populations of seniors in both the Anglo and Latino populations that are on a fixed income or do not receive services that they could, for various reasons. Low-income Latino seniors may be better off than Anglo seniors, as they tend to stay and live with their families and basic needs are taken care of there. Anglo seniors, on the other hand, may live alone and need to look elsewhere for assistance with basic needs, and could be on fixed incomes without much outside support.

Informants pointed out that seniors in Sonoma Valley have special needs, listed below, which range from health concerns to changing usage needs, to institutional trust. As this group is only predicted to grow, Sonoma County is already working on initiatives to meet those needs. Adult and Aging Services, a division of the Human Services Department, has the goal of helping seniors live independently in their homes, and while continuing to have the choices they are accustomed to for support and assistance. Thus, they are focused on case management, nutrition, and skilled care. The Older Adult Collaborative MHSA grant funds senior services agencies including the Linkages program which helps seniors who are suicidal or depressed. While no longer funded by the state, Linkages is now operated using Mental Health Services Act funding in Sonoma County.<sup>61</sup>

They also offer a bilingual radio program for seniors as well as a senior resource guide online, in paper, and in Spanish. They have also added a bilingual staff person, and have seen a big increase in service usage since then. Another effort in place is the Seniors Health Initiative, based out of the Health Department, which addresses issues such as access to food, nutrition, information and assistance, and serves people who 50 years of age or older.

*Special needs for seniors in Sonoma Valley are:*

- 1) **Chronic health issues:** This includes dementia, diabetes, asthma, depression, and cancer, with a need for different services to be located in Sonoma Valley. Depression

<sup>58</sup> Source: Interview with Cynthia Scarborough, Executive Director, Vintage House (Fall 2010)

<sup>59</sup> Source: Sonoma County Indicators (Economic Development Board, 2010)

<sup>60</sup> Source: American Communities Survey, Poverty & Age Data (2010)

<sup>61</sup> Source: Diane Kalijian, Director of Adult & Aging Services Division, Department of Human Services (Interview, Fall 2010)

- is a common and treatable ailment for seniors that typically can be helped with small changes including engagement, access to food or social activities, etc.
- 2) **Dental health for low-income seniors:** As seniors age, they have increasing need for dental services. Dentures are one such change that requires dental care. However, low-income seniors face the same challenges discussed for other low-income residents: as of June, 2011, there are no Denti-Cal providers in Sonoma Valley.
  - 3) **Who to trust:** Segments of the senior population, such as undocumented or LGBT seniors rarely if ever go to government institutions for help. Some service providers we interviewed struggle with “finding” these seniors to provide them with important services. Citizenship and language issues for undocumented seniors can keep them from finding help they need. Both populations share a suspicion of government institutions, and tend to trust nonprofits over government agencies.
  - 4) **Relevance of services:** It was related that congregate dining halls, an effective way in the past to distribute meals to seniors, is no longer popular. Informants also stated that their services weren’t being used, even when they were locally available. Informants indicated a need to identify relevant services and the best way to deliver them.
  - 5) **Fixed income, rising prices:** Some seniors live on a fixed income and struggle to pay their essential living costs such as water bills. At food distribution sites, it has been observed that there is an increase in the number of seniors receiving food.
  - 6) **Lack of access to service:** While there is a wide-range of services available, most are available along the 101 corridor. This is particularly hard for seniors with disabilities or those unable to drive.
  - 7) **Lack of caregivers:** Caregivers are typically found along the 101 corridor, and less willing to come out to Sonoma Valley. There are caregivers available in Sonoma, but many only speak Spanish, and non-Spanish speaking seniors can be reluctant to work with them.
  - 8) **Lack of access to skilled nursing:** It is challenging to find skilled nursing without having to go to the hospital, or to Santa Rosa.
  - 9) **Independence vs. care:** Case managers can help seniors stay in their homes and out of institutions; however, seniors, particularly those who can pay for it, are resistant to having case managers, who can help them navigate the system. They typically feel they don’t need it. This raises important issues about how seniors can receive the care they need without feeling that they are losing dignity and self-reliance.

### Potential Responses to Serving the Needs of Seniors

There were many potential approaches that could help seniors remain independent, enjoy the care they need, and live the life they wish to.

Suggestions from informants included:

- 1) **Making services available in Sonoma Valley.** While there are advantages to consolidation in one spot in Santa Rosa, the lack of mobility for this senior population would make a centralized location for services in Sonoma Valley attractive. There is openness to exploring that idea on the part of the county health & human services departments.

- 2) *The Village-to-Village program for seniors*. For an annual fee, the program offers “cooperative care groups” that serve as a form of concierge for seniors, so they get the kind of quality help they need, from lawn-mowing and groceries to in-home assistance.
- 3) *Develop all-inclusive adult day care health programs*, which, through an innovative use of Medicare, provide a way for seniors to receive medical care while staying at home.
- 4) *Create intergenerational resource centers for Latinos*, ideally in the Springs area that co-locates other family resources that could significantly increase participation for this group. It was noted that these services could be provided in conjunction with an “inter-generational, multi-service center,” which could be at a health clinic, or even at schools. Service providers would not need to be co-housed but could use common space to provide on-site services on certain days of the week.

### ***Focus on the Sick: Adults of Vulnerable Health in Sonoma Valley***

Informants did not talk much about the “sick” except within the context of the “needy” or the “elderly.” That being said, there was some mention of vulnerable adult populations in Sonoma Valley, specifically:

- 1) Adults in frail health between the ages of 45-59, who are not eligible for Medicare. This could include cancer patients to people with chronic diseases. This population typically needs services that are mostly available only along the 101 corridor, as opposed to Sonoma Valley.
- 2) The Sonoma Valley disabled community is served by Becoming Independent, a nonprofit based out Santa Rosa. While there is a staff person located in Sonoma Valley, Becoming Independent will be the first to tell you that they are funded mostly by the state, and much of that funding is at risk right now.

It may behoove the Todd Trust to do more research into these specific populations, and further define the “sick” referenced by the Todds.

### ***Improving Health and Health Care in Sonoma Valley***

There were also many ideas to build a healthy community in Sonoma Valley. They spoke to fundamental approaches to creating health, productive people. Themes fell into three major areas: approaching health holistically, encouraging coordination and collaboration amongst health and human service providers, and building on current organizational efforts.

#### ***Approach health holistically***

It was pointed out that for better health – mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional - people have to feel good about themselves, and that health efforts should be fundamentally focused on creating optimal health for everyone. Several informants pointed out that until the internal conditions change that lead to stress and violence, those behaviors would not change. Many informants also believed that there is a connection between personal development (“leadership training,” “personal improvement”, “health education” or “stress reduction”) and being able to create health for themselves. Specific ideas for promoting holistic health include:

- 1) Help people understand how to manage their stress through tools like diaphragmatic breathing
- 2) Help parents and couples develop communication skills that will reduce tension and stress in the family unit.

- 3) Create forms of recreation that are fun and bring the community together, like a soccer tournament for youth or cultural dance events.
- 4) Offer classes and events on wellness and health in the healing environment along with medical services indicated above, specifically in the Boyes Hot Springs Area.<sup>62</sup>

***Encourage coordination and collaboration amongst health and human service providers:***

A desire to collaborate, plan, and coordinate efforts was indicated several times by participants. Several ideas were named in response to support this idea:

- 1) Create a forum for planning among hospitals, cities, and foundations with county departments.
- 2) Regularly come together with other organizations (convene them) to partner and jointly plan, set goals, create a vision for working together. HealthAction, led by the Sonoma County Department of Health Services, First Five's Early Prevention strategy and United Way's Schools of Hope are all good examples for doing this.
- 3) Create a calendar of events to better coordinate efforts. There are many organizations but they need better communication. They need to more consciously work together.
- 4) Expand and continue to develop collaborative efforts like the Sonoma Valley Health Roundtable and the Mental Health Coalition.
- 5) The county departments are willing to explore ways to bring their services more locally. One example to emulate is at the City of Sonoma Police Department, where the Department of Health Services located a branch office.
- 6) Work with programs that already exist by creating capacity, adding services, encouraging collaboration.

***Build on current organizational efforts and resources:***

- 1) La Luz has facility space that can be used by other agencies, and is already highly used by Catholic Charities, Redwood Food Bank, St. Joseph's Health Center, Narcotics Anonymous, the Springs Community Alliance, local women's groups, etc.<sup>63</sup>
- 2) Some informants suggested considering schools as community centers, where not only health and human services might be offered, but the performing arts and sports are made accessible to the community as well.

***Implications for the Todd Trust***

The Todd Trust states that it is intended to support charitable activities in (amongst other things): "Health and human services, for the sick and needy, especially the elderly." This raises several questions:

- 1) When this project first began, the Team spent much time considering how to define this stipulation. The definition of health it now uses is broad, and implies a strategy will lend strength to the community as a whole.

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<sup>62</sup> These ideas came from individual interviews conducted in Fall, 2010 with Kelly Mather, Sonoma Valley Hospital; Patricia Talbot, Sonoma Valley Community Health Center, and Alejandra Cervantes and Gabriel Sanchez, Nuestra Voz.

<sup>63</sup> Source: Yvonne Hall, Executive Director, La Luz Center (Spring, 2011)

- 2) That being said, it may bear thought on how to provide specifically for the needs of the “sick” and the “elderly” as plans evolve.
- 3) Some mention was made of the “poor (Anglo) elderly”; this group was under-represented in the interviews. It would be worth exploring this more (perhaps by reaching out to areas where they may live – mobile home parks, low-cost apartments, etc.)

Of the many ideas that issue from this section of the report, there are a few that seem to have greater import to and support from the informants. Listed below are those that made themselves visible to the preparer.

*Ideas to consider for the Todd Trust:*

- 1) **Improve access:** Improving access was an anthem for many informants; all of them felt like that was a major challenge for Springs residents.
- 2) **Co-locate services.** Creating an “inter-generational family resource center located in the Springs” was an ideal for many, and it was thought that a center like this would be much more accessible and friendly to the elderly as well as low-income residents of the Springs.
- 3) **Encourage further collaboration and coordination** was a major theme throughout the report, and was a goal for many of the nonprofits and agencies working directly in health and human services.

The desire to increase access seemed to cut across many specific groups; the elderly, the young, and the Latino community. Another clear point was to expand offerings of “developmental” services alongside “crisis intervention.” Linking reliable and accessible transportation with co-location of services could do much to reduce the challenges these groups face.

## SECTION IV: OPEN SPACE IN SONOMA VALLEY

### Section Overview

The Todds were specifically interested in “*Open space, specifically land and trail acquisition.*” The themes below are derived both from interviews and conversations with the experts in Sonoma County and Sonoma Valley who work on those topics, as well as observations made by other informants. The following results were collected from one-on-one interviews with key informants, as well as a meeting with key informants that took place on March 21, 2011.

### Description of Open Space in Sonoma Valley

There are fourteen Sonoma Valley properties conserved through the Sonoma Land Trust; seven regional parks in Sonoma Valley; about a dozen small parks and amenities in the City of Sonoma, of which two include basketball courts and other recreational amenities. There are two state parks in Sonoma: the Jack London State Park and the Sonoma Historic Park (a series of unique historical buildings, including the Sonoma Mission, that border the City Plaza) and two that are closely connected to Sonoma Valley: Annadel State Park and Sugarloaf Ridge. Several additional properties are protected through the Open Space District. (Please see Appendix D for a full listing of parks and open space in Sonoma Valley). Schools also provide “open space” if one considers them in terms of recreation and facilities for use by the community. There are several trails in Sonoma Valley as well; please see Appendix D for a partial listing.

The Sonoma Ecology Center<sup>64</sup> says the following about the Sonoma Creek Watershed:

*“The Sonoma Creek watershed is a 166-square-mile valley 45 miles north of San Francisco. A beautiful, largely rural watershed, Sonoma Valley boasts some of the finest parks, forests, grasslands, and vineyards in the San Francisco Bay Area. Upland areas are drained by Sonoma Creek—which, along with its tributaries, is home to a run of endangered steelhead trout, as well as Chinook salmon and California freshwater shrimp.”*

<sup>64</sup> Source: Sonoma Ecology Center Website

[http://www.sonomaecologycenter.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=section&layout=blog&id=5&Itemid=7](http://www.sonomaecologycenter.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=section&layout=blog&id=5&Itemid=7)

### ***Interview Results***

Informants made very clear the unique nature of Sonoma Valley – noting that *“There is no other place in the state that has what this county has. Sonoma Valley has three organizations working on both acquisition and science. It is also one of the most species rich places in the country. What Sonoma Valley has is phenomenal.”*

They also reversed the notion that eco-system needs are incompatible with human needs.<sup>65</sup> They were clear that the fate of the natural world and the human community were intertwined, and clearly pointed out the benefits that a thriving eco-system gives to the human community. One informant said that, *“There are very few open space projects that could not include public recreation.”* He went on to say that, *“If you have a population that is in love with their open space, possibilities are unlimited.”*

### **Needs for Open Space in Sonoma Valley:**

Informants were drawn to describing a positive vision for a vibrant, connected Sonoma Valley and watershed. However, they did make clear some very important guidelines, challenges and needs for acquiring open space and trails, including **1) a need to increase linkages of various kinds, 2) a need for planning support, and 3) other kinds of support.**

#### ***Need for increased linkages between land and land.***

“Creating linkages” is both a physical initiative (literally, connecting pieces of land together through acquiring land that is close to other open spaces,) and in practice (i.e., creating opportunities for land managers and owners to share best practices, coordinate their restoration and management efforts, open pathways intended for people and “critters”, etc.)

**Creating linkages as a key strategy: it is much easier to manage eco-systems and open space as a connected system.** Informants said that linkages leverage restoration efforts by focusing efforts, resources, and habitat connectivity.

#### ***Need for increased linkages between people and land.***

Informants were also keenly aware of the need for people to have access to these natural spaces, citing both practical connection (the ability to move from one part of the Valley to another in forms other than automobile), as well as the other advantage that a population that is aware of, using, and appreciating the land around them will be much more likely to care for it in the present and future.

<sup>65</sup> Informants discussed a concept called “Eco-system services and functions.” Wikipedia contains a good overview of that concept: *“Humankind benefits from a multitude of resources and processes that are supplied by natural ecosystems. Collectively, these benefits are known as ecosystem services and include products like clean drinking water and processes such as the decomposition of wastes. While scientists and environmentalists have discussed ecosystem services for decades, these services were popularized and their definitions formalized by the United Nations 2004 Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA), a four-year study involving more than 1,300 scientists worldwide.[1] This grouped ecosystem services into four broad categories: provisioning, such as the production of food and water; regulating, such as the control of climate and disease; supporting, such as nutrient cycles and crop pollination; and cultural, such as spiritual and recreational benefits.”* Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecosystem\\_services](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecosystem_services) (June 26, 2011)

There are no good pedestrian/bicycle linkages in Sonoma Valley; right now there are only two bike paths to traverse the Valley. There are also very few places to access parks from residential neighborhoods by foot.

*Need for different kinds of planning support:*

Some informants identified a **gap in planning the “micro-scale” vs. the “macro-scale.”** For example, if they were to plan a linkage between the Annadel State Park and the Jack London State Park, they would need time to talk with private landowners, to achieve an understanding what landowners want, before any of the formal planning process could take place. This requires extra paid staff time, which given this economy, there is little of. Also, providing for trail assessment, design, and analysis as early as possible would be helpful.

Other informants identified the need for **planning support that was focused on the long-term**, asking such questions as:

- a. *What are we going to do when funding from Prop 84 goes away?* Informants noted that states won’t be able to back up those funds. It seems like an important step to convene funders and perhaps State representatives to discuss this.
- b. *In the face of the state budget crisis, how will the community, and specifically nonprofits and local agencies, organize to support the maintenance of trails, open space, and parks?* Informants pointed out that there is a necessity for nonprofits and local agencies to organize to support the maintenance of trails, open space and parks over time. The community needs to consider how to leverage partnerships between public and private agencies and create a new model for funding and fundraising.

Informants also pointed to the **need to plan trails for environmental stewardship, including good trail design as well as designing for eco-system resilience.**

*Trails:* It is important – and costly – to design trails so that they do not erode sediment into streams. Currently, that planning only occurs on a grant by grant basis, and is not always covered in trail-building grants.

*Eco-system resilience:* Long-term environmental planning that helps both humans and “critters” thrive is an important component of any solution. Eco-systems are innately tied together; the flora and fauna work together with natural elements (water, wind, sun, etc.) to form healthy relationships that in turn provide critical services and functions for the human community, including flood control, groundwater filtration, carbon sequestration, erosion control, oxygen production, drinking and agricultural water, food, recreation, beauty, etc. (see footnote on page 46 for a definition of “eco-system services.”)

Currently, there are efforts through consortiums of environmental nonprofits and government agencies, like the North Bay Climate Adaptation Initiative, to maintain eco-system resilience of both the formal and informal open spaces of Sonoma Valley that could be supported by the Community Foundation.

### **Needs and Challenges: Open Space in the Springs**

Access to open space and the natural world in general is a challenge in the Springs area for two reasons: 1) there are only two parks<sup>66</sup> in the Springs (Maxwell Park and Larson Park) along with several schools, and 2) maintenance and safety of those parks is an issue. It should be noted that while Sonoma Valley does Larson Park is widely known to be used by gangs as a meeting place, and residents feel that safety is an issue.

Larson Park struggles with a lack of investment, most noticeable in a need for new play equipment, its generally unkempt appearance, and recurring gang activities.

Finally, many residents talked about the need for better recreation and outdoor places for gathering: a plaza, all-season soccer fields, etc.

### **Need: Facilitating Trail & Open Space Acquisition and Maintenance**

There were a number of other issues that were discussed by informants, including the need for “local matches,” maintenance of operations funding, needs for specific projects, a need for short-term funding, support for water conservation and climate adaptation planning, and a need for support in outreach.

#### ***Hard to find “Local Matches”***

Creating trails is an expensive endeavor, but grants are available, and many of our conservation organizations are able to bring in those grants. However, grants from other larger foundations always need a “local match” of up to 50%. While 50% may be a challenging level to reach with some of these multi-million dollar grants, informants said that even a \$50,000 match would go a long way.

#### ***Maintenance and Operation (M&O) of Trails/Open Space***

The informants also pointed out that in some ways, acquisition of land and trails is the easy part; it is the maintenance and operations – where a long term source of funding is needed - which can drag a project off course. There is a need for maintenance and operations funding.

#### ***Specific projects that are in various stages of acquisition, design and construction:***

There were several projects that were identified, including funding needs for:

- 1) Beginning acquisition/construction of the North slope trail, located near Bennet Valley/Sonoma Mountain. Acquisition would be about \$500,000, with construction costs of about \$10.5 million. Suggested local match would be \$50-\$100,000. It is very helpful to have an initial lead funder.
- 2) Planning for East Slope project. There are still two more phases in which funding is undetermined, including a construction phase with community involvement and trail building, and a second phase of Operations and Maintenance (O& M).

<sup>66</sup> There are only two parks in the Springs area: Maxwell Park, and Larson Park, along with access to a couple of trails. Maxwell Park, located on Verano Ave, contains Soccer fields, little league fields, a playground, a group picnic area, and trails. Larson Regional Park, located in Boyes Springs, contains tennis courts and hardball courts, a little league/softball field, a multi-use field, a children's playground, picnic tables, and restrooms.

- 3) Construction and O&M of Calabazas Creek trail; the initial planning phase is already underway.

*Need help to take advantage of short-term opportunities in land acquisition*

Informants talked about how at times, they need access to “quick funds;” for example, a landowner will offer them land that they have been waiting for, and they need to show their seriousness by paying for an appraisal, or by putting down an option price. Suggested funds would be \$5-10,000.

*Sonoma Valley water conservation and climate change*

Sonoma Valley, and Sonoma County in general, has a number of top experts who are working in land management and open space acquisition, restoration, and ecological education. From this group, a significant theme arose: climate change creates a variety of threats to Sonoma Valley. Its ability to source water locally and protect water supplies was the number one concern named – “for food, for play, for critters.” Also listed were changing habitat, flooding, particularly in Schellville, and an increased danger of wildfire in a climate made drier by climate change.

Separate from climate change but also mentioned was a decreasing ability for Sonoma Valley to recharge its groundwater, a key strategy for sourcing water locally. Policies around energy use and water conservation must be implemented in tandem with educating the public in terms of specific behavioral change. Reducing the need for water is a related key strategy; it was noted that watering lawns is the largest user of water in the Valley. Some informants were of the opinion that the county does not adequately enforce the General Plan on conservation and environmental matters, likely due to funding constraints.

*Need to continue public outreach:*

Referring back to the desire for “a population in love with their open space,” some informants talked about creating an ongoing forum that interacts with the broader community. These organizations are looking for ways to market programs to make them really exciting and to highlight the natural assets of Sonoma County. A high priority for nonprofits focused on environmental issues was **environmental education**. Informants wanted to solidify public support for the environment of Sonoma Valley, and identified school programs, **particularly in early education**, as being important. By educating students about the environment, as well as creating public access to protected lands through trails and educational programs, they hoped to help shape support for the environment long into the future. Informants also identified **a need to have a larger, more diverse community working on and understanding these issues**.

**Potential Responses for Open Space in Sonoma Valley:**

Informants described an array of approaches for ways that the Community Foundation could address challenges to open space and trail acquisition, including 1) environmental planning, 2) connecting people to land, and land to land, 3) investing in local parks and trails in the Springs area, 4) being the local anchor for trail and land acquisition in Sonoma Valley, and 5) supporting traditional and non-traditional partnerships.

***Environmental planning:***

In order to manage open space for optimum results in the eco-system and for its residents, environmental planning is a must. Politically, it was noted Sonoma Valley is set up well to do land and ground-water management, with a progressive city council, a clear geographic boundary, and a community that cares.

Informants noted that an opportunity to work with the State Park System to create an overarching road and trails plan for Sonoma Mountain would be terrific; planning for habitat restoration, groundwater recharge and management along with erosion control could create important progress for people and the planet. Part of this process would be to identify the most important areas to protect groundwater recharge, ensuring enough water flow in summer as well as what are the best spots for flood control and natural water percolation in the winter. They noted that in Sonoma Mountain, building access and habitat restoration could increase the exciting potential of black bears, warblers, bob cats, and other important endemic species. These ideas could easily be married with ways to incorporate human use. They also noted that there are grants available for groundwater recharge.

***Connect land with land, and people with land:*** Informants were clear that connecting people with land as well as connecting land with land would create a slew of synergistic benefits. By connecting land with land, these properties can be managed as a whole, maximizing the benefits of limited resources as well as helping them to be managed as an eco-system as opposed to disparate pieces of an eco-system. Likewise, connecting people to land would help them feel more connected to the natural world, with obvious health and environmental benefits, as well as foster a sense of appreciation and connection to the natural and human community they reside in. The creative question was asked: what does “ecotopia” (ecological utopia) look like when thinking about human recreation and habitat restoration?

There were many exciting ideas to create linkages of different kinds:

- 1) ***Connect land to residents:*** It was noted that in general, the public relates to the landscape through trails, parks, and small farms. Ways to foster this connection include:
  - a. Create “feeder trails” into neighborhoods: Sonoma Valley could have a series of trails at different elevations around the Valley that are directly connected to the neighborhoods, so that people can experience wilds on a regular place – informants felt that it is vital that people see the value of the natural world on a daily basis.
  - b. Create Sonoma Valley Central trail plan for bikes and pedestrians. This plan has been talked about for 20 years, and has some funds earmarked for the Springs. A number of key parcels are in place, and the trail plan could be done with easements. Informants noted that the Central Trail Plan is identified in the Sonoma Valley Key Trails Plan and the Outdoor Recreation Plan, and ideally could link all the way to Santa Rosa. Informants noted that hopefully it will be incorporated to general plan. Currently planning partners don’t have funding for working with landowners. Informants asserted that once it is complete, these

kinds of pathways are never regretted. Eventually, the trail could reach all the way from Sonoma to the coast.

- c. Increase trails and parks in Boyes Springs, which was identified as having limited trails and underutilized, under- maintained parks and open spaces. (See section on page 54 for more ideas about the Springs.
  - d. Connect Bayer Farm in Santa Rosa with a similar garden space in Sonoma Valley via a hiking trail.
  - e. Link recreation lands together and create a “hut-to-hut” trail throughout Sonoma County, including Sonoma Valley (i.e., Annadel, Hood Mt, and Sugar Loaf). It was noted that like Cinque Terra in Italy<sup>67</sup>, this could create a tourist attraction and economic benefit for the area as well.
  - f. Create public access and manage the Montini trail north of the city. The property was bought by the Open Space District, and there has been an ongoing discussion about access and management, involving the District, the City and the Sonoma Ecology Center.
- 2) **Connecting land to land:** There were several trails mentioned that would connect important conservation lands (parks, open space properties, etc.) Those which could specifically benefit from support by private funding include:<sup>68</sup>
- a. Completing (planning and constructing) the 1.6 mile long East Slope Sonoma Mountain Ridge Trail which will connect with and lengthen the existing 8 miles of Ridge Trail in Jack London Historic State Park (4 miles are connector trails to the staging area) and connect with the 4.5 mile North Slope Ridge Trail segment currently under construction.
  - b. Connecting (planning and constructing) 5 Ridge Trail miles from (and including) Calabazas Creek Open Space Preserve to Sugarloaf Ridge State Park (involves State Parks and Open Space District owned lands and private land easements). This is the original list’s #3 -- Connecting the Sonoma Mountain to Mayacamas Range. Informants discussed eventually linking into other counties - up the mountain and all the way over. Likewise, connecting Mayacamas Trails would be a great addition.
  - c. Connecting Jack London Historic State Park to Annadel State Park. Acquire and plan a 4 mile long segment on private lands which will connect North Slope Ridge Trail et al with Annadel State Park creating a continuous 12.5 miles of trails for hikers, bicyclists and equestrians when complete. This trail segment will help connect Sonoma Valley with Oakmont as well as with the Mayacamas.
  - d. The Old Padre Trail is an important goal as well and the Ridge Trail has plans to have a trail connecting our primary trail alignment (all of the above are primary trails) with the Town of Sonoma and the Old Padre Trail would be an ideal trail to include in that alignment.

<sup>67</sup> Cinque Terra is a popular hiking trail in Italy where enthusiasts can walk from B&B to B&B in the lovely mountains of Italy.

<sup>68</sup> The following list of trails were brainstormed during a March 21, 2011 meeting with informants focused on Open Space. Later, (July, 2011) Dee Swanhuysen, North Ridge Trail helped to flesh out our understanding of the specific needs regarding the top four trails, from the perspective of the needs of Sonoma Valley as a whole, as opposed to only the North Ridge Trail.

- e. Other ideas include:
  - a) Connect Sugarloaf Ridge State Park to Robert Louis Stevenson Regional Park
  - b) Create a trail that spans Highway 12 from Bouverie Preserve via land trust and easement acquisitions
  - c) Connect the Miwok trail from Sonoma Coast to the Great Basin, Nevada.

***Invest in local parks in the Springs Area:***

There are several exciting ideas for open space and access to the natural world in the Springs, including:

- 1) Building a community garden: Nuestra Voz, the Sonoma Ecology Center, and a number of other local nonprofits and government agencies are currently building a community garden at Larson Park. This will create many benefits: along with creating a food source, the shared work will increase community ownership and cohesiveness, and will also create more “eyes-on” for Larson Park (which is known to decrease riskier elements.)
- 2) Increasing parks and trails in the Springs, including:
  - a. Developing the trail system along Agua Caliente creek corridor in Boyes Springs Area
  - b. Creating a “Hillside park” to the east of Boyes Springs area
  - c. Connect the Springs to the rest of the Valley through a central Sonoma Bike/Pedestrian pathway.

Larson Park could also be used to further conservation and education goals for the community. Several informants talked about how changing the recreation activities available, engaging community to “reclaim” it from gangs, and involving local activists could all be pathways to revitalizing Larson Park.

Informants also thought about ways to leverage that effort. For example, a community garden would not only foster community and produce food; it could also recharge groundwater and become a part of a larger water conservation plan. Alternatively, a multi-agency demonstration project on groundwater recharge, tying together flood control, recharge and creek restoration could be created. There is openness to collaboration between the Regional Parks Department, the Open Space District, the Ecology Center and the Land Trust. By building a groundwater recharge demonstration site, the community could create a form of environmental education while also enhancing restoration in that location.

In the variety of environmental agencies and nonprofits focused on these topics, many indicated that they are very willing to work together to achieve community goals, from community gardens to water conservation.

***Be the “local anchor” for land and trail acquisition:***

There were several ways that informants discussed how the Community Foundation could be an anchor to efforts around trail and land acquisition. These included:

- 1) **Provide stewardship funds**, which could help trail planners think through questions of access, how to create connections, and how to foster biodiversity. Ideally, this is in the range of several hundred thousand dollars.
- 2) **Support relationship building with strategic land owners.** Thus, when an opportunity arises, they have the relationships in place to “land” those acquisitions.
- 3) **Provide quick-access funding for land and trail acquisition.** This was discussed above; a revolving fund \$5-10,000/year or per agreement could be very beneficial.
- 4) **Leverage ongoing linkage efforts between open spaces and preserves in Sonoma Valley.** There is momentum already to link open spaces like the Bouverie Preserve with other open spaces. Support for those efforts could quickly progress linkages for the eco-system.
- 5) **Be a “local partner” for large conservation efforts:** The informants talked about the advantages of having a solid local partner for larger efforts, showing local support for a conservation initiative. \$50,000 was suggested for these matches.

#### *Support traditional and non-traditional partnerships*

Informants were clear that partnership – whether with the “tried and true” partners of the past, or with new partners, takes time and is underfunded. They also said that there was opportunity to work with new, non-traditional partners, particularly in the efforts where human benefit is easy to see. The following list was a brainstorm of potential partners for Sonoma Valley efforts.

#### *Potential Partners for Todd Trust Efforts include:*

- 1) **State Parks**, specifically about the State Park Trails Plan;
- 2) **Napa County**, as has been done in the past with the trail plan through Sugar Ridge State Park;
- 3) **Private Foundations:** Informants noted that grants are really tailored to each project. Thus, each organization has a long list of potential funders, but each project really requires a collage of partners. Some traditional partners include:
  - a. Coastal Conservancy
  - b. Gordon Moore Foundation
  - c. Marin Community Foundation
  - d. Silicon Valley Foundation
  - e. Goldman Foundation
  - f. Packard Foundation
  - g. Nature Conservancy
  - h. National Audubon
- 4) **City/County/State Agencies & Citizens:** There are several groups that would be important to contact to understand community concerns.
  - a. There is a groundwater citizen advisory committee of a cross-section of citizens dealing with groundwater. One way to approach them would be to present a suite of projects, and find out what interests them.

- b. Springs Redevelopment Agency is an important partner for any effort in the Springs.
  - c. State Parks: As we all know, they are currently closing many local parks due to the state budget crisis; however, they might be able collaborate with local organizations and agencies. Some efforts are already being made to come up with a cooperative model for “smart stewardship” of State Parks, and to engage a corps of citizens to do what State Parks can’t do. Parks will be closed unless we come up with a solution.
  - d. The Board of Supervisors, on putting the Parks and Recreation plan into the General Plan.
- 5) **Non-Traditional Partners:** Informants were very excited about collaborating with different types of partners for different ideas. For example:
- a. Collaborate with Tourism & Winery Partners on a walking vacation tour through Sonoma Valley, visiting wineries, restaurants, hotels, and of course Sonoma Valley open space.
  - b. Collaborate with Sonoma Valley Hospital and tourism industry for marketing Sonoma Valley as a healing destination spot.
  - c. Organize around needs for the whole communities as opposed to only conservation goals, i.e., create a trail that children could walk on to school, and include such partners as schools, wineries, public health, and home-owners associations.

### *Implications for the Todd Trust*

Our key informants were enthusiastic about the impact that the Community Foundation could make on connecting the open space in the Valley to each other and to the community. There are also significant ways that these efforts could simultaneously support the other interests of the Todds – the health and well-being of its most vulnerable populations.

The reality of land and trail acquisition is that the cost is prohibitive for direct funding. Even with the ability to make capital expenditures that will occur at the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Todd Trust bequest, those efforts somewhat limited.

That being said, there are exciting and very powerful opportunities for the Community Foundation to perform a critical role in land and trail acquisition. By focusing on the core principle of making linkages (i.e., connecting people to land, and land to land,) the Community Foundation can support not only the activities of local conservation agencies, but also their vision and values.

## SECTION V: GOVERNMENT SERVICES

### Section Overview

The third Todd Trust stipulation stated that support should be given to “*Governmental services which are underfunded, such as local fire, library, and healthcare districts; but not to include services provided by cities or counties.*” Healthcare is discussed through the other stipulations in this report, but the Team did explore library services, emergency services, and the Water District in Sonoma Valley.

This section is organized differently from other sections of the report. Below are brief descriptions of the services, needs, challenges, and potential responses indentified through interviews on 1) library services in Sonoma Valley, 2) Sonoma Valley emergency services, challenges, and potential responses; 3) the Valley of the Moon Water District, challenges, and potential responses; as well as implications for the Todd Trust, including ideas for exploring other “underfunded governmental services.”

### The Sonoma Valley Library:

The Library District is a joint powers authority that is supervised and appointed by the Board of Supervisors. It is an independently directed organization, but organized along the same lines as the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors Districts. Commissions are appointed by each of the five County Supervisors. Books are shared throughout the county between each district. The Sonoma Valley Library is on West Napa Street about one-half mile from downtown Sonoma. The library is about 3 miles from the Springs, which like other Sonoma services, represents an extensive walk from the Springs to those who do not have access to transport by automobile. In the Springs, the library works with the Sonoma Valley Unified School District to provide a book mobile.

In August, 2011 the Library will begin a \$2.5 million remodel with Redevelopment Agency funding.<sup>69</sup> The library will move into a local church so that they can continue services during that remodeling time.

### Emergency Services:

Emergency Services in Sonoma County provide services in fire prevention and operations, dealing with natural disasters (most commonly floods), hazardous materials, and management of emergency response through an Emergency Operations Center. Emergency Services partners with the Sonoma Valley Fire and Rescue Authority, which has primary responsibility for most of the Valley. The principal exception is the Mayacamas Fire District, which the county is responsible for.

<sup>69</sup> Source: *Sonoma Spends 16 million in Redevelopment Projects*, by Ted Appel, Press Democrat, (Feb 23 2011)(<http://www.watchsonomacounty.com/2011/02/cities/sonoma-speeds-16-million-in-redevelopment-projects/>)

The Sonoma Valley Fire and Rescue Authority cover the “territory” of Sonoma Valley well. Emergency Services, also organized by “districts” determined by the City and County, are funded by taxes.

Informants discussed a concern that as Sonoma Valley becomes more populated, and continues to shift from rural needs to suburban needs, the Fire & Rescue Authority will need to increase its level of service. It was noted that the current way of funding these districts in general is unsustainable, and should be addressed in tandem with new developments.

The largest risk for Emergency Services is that of the “Big Earthquake” scenario, where services could be disrupted for more than 72 hours and multiple fires are likely. The capacity to respond to multiple fires at once is becoming more of a concern as the population gets denser.

Volunteers, through the Community Emergency Response Team model (CERTs), already formed in Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, and other parts of the county, provide a good form of organizing for emergencies, and are a model that could be expanded. This would allow for a much more organized approach, and would be particularly helpful given the rural nature of many parts of Sonoma Valley.

### Valley of the Moon Water District:

This is excerpted from the Valley of the Moon Water District website:

*“The Valley of the Moon Water District serves approximately 23,000 water hookups throughout the Valley from northern Glen Ellen to Temelec. There are two sources for water: from the Sonoma County Water Agency via the Russian River, and from groundwater wells, including five wells owned by the Valley of the Moon Water District, along with private wells throughout the Valley. Sonoma Valley sources provide about 1/7 (about 490 acre feet/year) of total water for the Valley. The success of the water district is directly tied into the health of the watershed.”<sup>70</sup>*

Several challenges were identified by the Valley of the Moon Water District.

#### Water for Low-Income Seniors

As mentioned earlier, an important challenge is the growing body of seniors with special needs in Temelec that cannot consistently meet their living expenses. When residents are unable to pay, they lose access to water until they pay a penalty fee to restart the water, which they usually can’t afford. The cycle then starts all over. While no immediate solutions were offered to help seniors in Temelec or other areas that might be experiencing this challenge, it certainly bears exploration. Likely, these are seniors who are getting by only on social security, and thus are struggling to pay their water bills.

<sup>70</sup> Source: Valley of the Moon Water District website (Spring, 2011) <http://www.vomwd.com/about.html>

### *Groundwater Recharge*

The section on Open Space discussed recharging water into the watershed as a large concern. Their goal is to both increase groundwater and to improve the quality of the groundwater. They pointed to the chronic flooding that occurs in the Schellville area and its linkage to the slowing of groundwater recharge. Increasing public awareness about the value and approaches for recharging groundwater was identified as an important solution. Perhaps creating a multi-agency recharge demonstration site (as mentioned earlier, in conjunction with a possible community garden) could be part of that approach.

### *Implications for the Todd Trust*

#### Regarding the Sonoma Valley Library

Libraries are free resources to the community, and can be incredible educational tools for all ages. It also does not ask for legal status, but only proof of residency; thus, it is a tool that is easier to use for all parts of the population. The Community Foundation may want to explore how to help the Springs, particularly its low-income, Spanish-speaking, poorly educated population, to have greater access to the library to help solve the gap for human services, the adult education gap, and other challenges in the Springs region.

#### Regarding Emergency Services

Of the information provided, supporting a Community Emergency Response Team might be an avenue to explore, as it supports emergency services in the Valley and could contribute to other goals of building community, neighborhood by neighborhood. It might take on particular relevance if an effort is made in areas where “the less privileged” and/or “elderly” reside.

Another question to consider might be how to prevent fire, flooding, and increase preparedness in Sonoma Valley given the Big Earthquake scenario. Perhaps bringing together open space professionals, environmentalists, city planners, and emergency responders could be beneficial for the community and for emergency response.

Another potential next step is to continue efforts in gaining a better understanding of specific fire prevention needs in Sonoma Valley.

#### Regarding the Water District

The Water District cited two challenges (low-income resident inability to pay, and groundwater recharge) that are both larger community issues. The Community Foundation may want to consider how other Todd Trust efforts can support these two challenges.

#### Regarding other Underfunded Government Services:

**It seems that further research into what other “underfunded government services” might be worthy of exploration.** This category also overlaps well with the other two Todd Trust stipulations, and the Team is looking at how to have this stipulation be fulfilled, at least in part, through the other two Todd Trust stipulations.

## SECTION VI: ISSUES OUTSIDE OF THE TODD TRUST SCOPE

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### *Section Overview*

Several fundamental issues emerged that, while related, were outside the direct scope of the stipulations of the Todd Trust. These issues were of great concern to many of the participants, for reasons including the long-term economic viability of Sonoma Valley, its ability to effectively solve many of the challenges indicated above, and because of their fundamental impact on the quality of life and the strength of the community in Sonoma Valley.

The issues named were:

- 1) Gangs, drugs, and a lack of identity in Latino Youth
- 2) The need to cultivate a viable future workforce in Sonoma Valley
- 3) A sense of fear and dependence by the Latino community on the Anglo community
- 4) The need for diversification of leadership and Latino leadership development in Sonoma Valley
- 5) The need to create and connect community to cross cultural divides.
- 6) The need to build effectiveness of Sonoma Valley and county nonprofits & agencies

Below you will find both a description of each of those needs, as well as possible responses to address those needs and challenges.

### *Interview Results*

#### **Issue 1: Gangs, Drugs, and a Lack of Identity in Latino Youth**

The fall-out from the challenges facing the Latino community is most visible in its youth, and their troubles affect the whole community. Communities struggle with gang activity, falling high school graduation rates, along with alcohol and drug use among youth. The EDB Profile mentions several troubling statistics: a high level of harassment across all high school grade levels (around 25%); nearly 5% of all grades reported carrying a gun to school; and 50% of Grade 11 students reporting usage of alcohol in the last month.<sup>71</sup> It was mentioned that over the course of the 2010-2011 school year, there had been over 100 incidences related to substance in the school district, of which the vast majority were for marijuana.<sup>72</sup> Gangs are typically organized around illegal sales of drugs; and Chief of Police Bret Sacket reported that over the last three years there has been an obvious increase in the number of crimes associated with drugs and alcohol (from about 18% in 2007-08, to 58% in 2010-11.)

There were diverse opinions about why youth faced these problems. Some said that it was a lack of advocacy by adults, some pointed to an identity crisis in children functioning “in-between”

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<sup>71</sup> Source: (p.10) Sonoma Valley Community Profile (Economic Development Board, Sonoma County, 2011)

<sup>72</sup> Source: Chief of Police, Bret Sacket, City of Sonoma Police Department (June, 2011)

two cultural backgrounds, and others said that appropriate examples were not being set by the community around alcohol and drugs.

Regardless of why, it is clear that many Latino children likely experience a “tug-of-war” that is confusing, hard to navigate, and has serious consequences for the family unit and for the child’s long-term success. Parents may not know or understand those needs, and while they may understand the dangers to their children, they may not know how to help them.

Education, counseling, and mentoring could more adequately provide for Latino youth by focusing on the “identity issues” through educating young Latinos about their cultural heritage, and also working to build community among Anglo and Latino youth. In particular, some informants noted, “Boys are getting lost.” Boys who have difficulties in school or who get into trouble are abandoned by the schools (*with a zero tolerance policy*): there appear to be no programs that can help them.

These youth are not gaining all they could from their education because they are not receiving enough support in these fundamental areas. Further, counseling and mentorship programs that are adapted to the needs of Latino families (as whole units) are lacking.

### **Issue 3: Need to cultivate a viable future workforce**

When informants discussed youth and education, many were concerned both about the ability of young people to succeed, as well as the ability of Sonoma Valley and Sonoma County to succeed. There were several trends and needs identified:

- 1) *There is an educational achievement gap between Latinos and Anglos in Sonoma Valley.* This is directly supported in the EDB Profile, which indicated a significantly higher rate of dropouts amongst Latino youth when compared to Anglo youth: **a 13.1% high school drop-out rate amongst Latino high school students in the 2008-09 school years, as opposed to 5.3% amongst Anglo students.**<sup>73</sup> This is matched by another striking statistic: **over 50% of Latino adults lack a high school diploma.**<sup>74</sup> While graduation rates have been increasing over the last 6 years (a highly encouraging trend), there are still serious implications of an achievement gap. Another data point relays that while the number of English learners in SVUSD is rising (about 32% in 2010), the number that are actually being “redesignated” as proficient in English are remaining approximately the same (about 8%).<sup>75</sup> The concern is that because of a lack of English and of education, many youth and adults are unable to take advantage of local, higher-paying economic opportunities. If they wish to stay in Sonoma County, lower paying jobs are the only option. Others also pointed out that this gap is very likely to significantly affect the economic competitiveness of Sonoma Valley, as employers are unable to find employees able to take jobs, and students are unable to find higher-level jobs with their degree of skill or no high school diploma. It was pointed out that the gap in educational achievement is

<sup>73</sup> Source: Sonoma Valley Community Profile, p.7 (Economic Development Board, Sonoma County, 2011)

<sup>74</sup> Source: Sonoma Valley Community Profile, p. 4 (Economic Development Board, Sonoma County, 2011)

<sup>75</sup> Source: Sonoma Valley Community Profile, p. 8 (Economic Development Board, Sonoma County, 2011)

directly connected to the cultural and economic divide between Latinos and Anglos, mentioned in Section II. One informant summarized the sentiment by stating, “Latino youth are not prepared to be main-lined in the community.”

- 2) *There is a need to encourage small business development for women.* Informants expressed a desire to start their own businesses, and knew others who also wanted to start their own businesses.
- 3) One informant noted *that more could be done for leadership development and succession planning* throughout the organizations in Sonoma Valley (from business to government to non-profits). Special care needs to be taken to facilitate inclusion of diverse populations in community leadership.
- 4) *Education could provide better for a larger range of learners:* Several also mentioned a dearth of vocational education and summer schools.

In the long-term, the combination of these challenges will make a fundamental impact on Sonoma Valley’s ability to find local, employable workers to sustain their businesses.

### Issues 2 & 3: Potential Responses

Building on “what works” is a sentiment shared by many of the informants. Below is a list of programs that are already part of “what works” for youth in Sonoma Valley, as well as innovative new ideas that have worked in other areas. Supporting these initiatives could create exciting, sustainable possibilities for the community and address the fundamental need to cultivate a viable future workforce in Sonoma County. These are all direct recommendations from informants.

#### *Create alternative forms of education:*

Several different efforts and programs that have already proved successful were mentioned:

- 1) The Sonoma Valley Fund’s Youth Initiative, a summer school program that involved students with low-income and a history of not succeeding in school, was cited as a successful example several times. The Youth Initiative combined a variety of educational trips along with other types of learning; teachers were amazed by the enthusiasm these students had for the program when they returned to school that fall. As of January 2011 there are now six after-school classes supported by the Youth Initiative along with after-school classes provided by the SVUSD.
- 2) Another success story mentioned was the Boys & Girls’ club, which for a low yearly fee provided a safe space after school with opportunities for students to take classes, play sports, access computers. Over 50% of its participants are Latino.<sup>76</sup>
- 3) The Teacher Support Network (TSN), a program in SVUSD, brings in community members to teach to children – everything from pottery to science. Retirees are an ideal source for participation in this and other community involvement initiatives.
- 4) The Sonoma Valley High School is focusing on career *and* college readiness as a primary goal; in that way they are helping students identify the multiple avenues available to them after high-school.

<sup>76</sup> Source: Dave Piers, Executive Director, Boys & Girls Club (June, 2011)

*Working with gangs:*

- 1) The City of Sonoma's Youth Diversion Program has been very effective. In 2010-2011 school year, 74 of 125 were successfully diverted from the juvenile court system.<sup>77</sup>
- 2) GREAT (Gang Resistance Education And Training), offered by the Boys & Girls' club in tandem with Community Service Officers, is a program that could be expanded.

*Use schools to build bridges:*

- 1) Schools can potentially provide a safe locale for families, including grandparents, to receive support regardless of their legal status. **Several informants discussed using schools to provide health and human services for more than children, starting with children, expanding to parents and then on to the rest of the community.** The Sonoma Community Health Center's van at El Verano and Flowery elementary schools are already providing some access to these services, and could be expanded to ESL training, legal services, county services, etc., and services to help parents learn how to support their children as learners.
- 2) **School sites could fill gaps in the community for services such** as a performing arts center and a community swimming pool, assets that would be attractive to all parts of the community and could serve as a platform for bridging cultural divides.
- 3) Using the classroom to build bridges by enhancing teacher training could help bridge the divide within classrooms. Another idea to this end was to not separate children who speak English as a second language from children who speak English as a first language.

*Work with identity & mindset by tailoring education to needs of Latino youth:*

- 1) Informants suggested that working proactively with first generation identity issues, culture clash, differences between family and societal expectations through providing bi-lingual mental health services, ethnic studies, heritage Spanish, and Mexican history could help Latino youth be proud of their identity and connected to their history. One idea mentioned at least twice was to establish a charter school with an emphasis on the Latino culture and the Spanish language.
- 2) Informants also stated that youth need to be mentored towards shared values, and expect that these youth can and will be successful. One informant stated that "We should prepare, encourage, and motivate the youth. Latino youth need support: they need tutoring, enrichment activities, field trips, after school programs, meals."
- 3) Create more and different educational opportunities, like summer school with enrichment activities, field trips; as well as classes in computers, ESL, etc.
- 4) Provide opportunities for multiple learning styles, including vocational training, mentorship with community members and experts, field trips, arts, and other opportunities. Counseling in schools needs to be focused on advocating for the student.

*Work with parents and family:*

Informants noted that involving parents is critical to the success of the child, and the earlier they are involved in their education, the more likely the child is to receive the parental support they need. Some ideas they discussed included:

- 1) When working with the Latino community, it should be tailored to the needs of the Latino youth and ideally involve the whole family.

<sup>77</sup> Source: Chief of Police Bret Sackett, Sonoma Valley Police Department (June 2011)

- 2) Creating a mentoring program specifically designed for immigrant Latino teens with non-English-speaking parents who are not acculturated to the US and who don't understand what their children are experiencing could help bridge the gap between parents and children. Many noted that this was a significant challenge for working with teens.
- 3) Create a Parent University (similar to a program in Napa County) to help parents understand what college is about, and how to help their children achieve college education
- 4) Provide parents an opportunity to meet their educational needs along with children. Several informants noted that as children begin experiencing success in school, parents are also influenced and encouraged to pursue education. Taking advantage of that impetus could significantly curtail the cycle of poverty.

#### *Focus on early education and young children*

- 1) One informant mentioned the "Sandbox Investment," a study done by David Kirp, showed that children who received preschool and early education had significantly higher earning potential and lower rates of incarceration.
- 2) Several informants, in and out of the field of education, talked about the importance of creating good early educational experiences for children, saying that early childhood is when attitudes about learning are set for children, and when influencing the parent can really make a significant impact.
- 3) They also noted that maintaining health in this younger age group will also have a significant impact on their success as students later on.
- 4) Two programs were identified to explore further: the Community Action Partnership program of "prevention and early intervention"; and Avance, a parent-child education program for children in the preschool age.

#### Issue 4: Need for diversification of leadership and Latino leadership development in Sonoma Valley

Many different informants noted that there is a significant need for leaders from the Latino community and from youth to join the nonprofit boards, volunteer efforts, and city government. Latinos are historically under-represented in the institutions which have (and could have) direct impact on their lives. They noted that there were few people who are "telling the story" of the Latino community in Sonoma Valley, and that they needed to "find the voice" for that group of people.

There were several reasons informants cited as to why this might be, and it seems to be tightly wound with the feelings of fear and dependence noted earlier. Some also noted the limited formal education that some portion of Latinos had; another noted that there was no "model of community leadership," where leadership from the community could be heard and cultivated more effectively.

#### Issue 4: Potential Responses

A combination of mentorship and training in leadership development, along with creating opportunities "to lead", was mentioned as people talked about this challenge. **Latinos could**

**benefit from an approach which combines direct mentorship and training on leadership with opportunities to contribute materially to the success and development of the community** by becoming role models, volunteering in programs like the Teachers' Support Network, or simply becoming business owners.

For those who are working currently in leadership development for the Latino community, this meant connecting all of those dots, including training in interpersonal communication skills; a sense of cultural identity, particularly for youth; creating a strong family unit; fostering a sense of personal vision and entrepreneurship; and developing a sense of community with all members of Sonoma Valley. They pointed to many empowered success stories: creating events where participants all contributed a small part - food, labor, performance - that created a larger good; or organizing a student-led, unofficial soccer tournament where Latinos, Anglos and others joined based on merit and desire, resulting in a decrease in violence at their school; or working together to improve the food lines at La Luz.

While diversifying nonprofit boards may be an end result; any strategy for empowerment needs to be owned by the community. **Entrepreneurship was seen as being directly connected to helping inspire grander vision and a way to reach out to a larger community.**

### **Issue 5: Build effectiveness of Sonoma Valley Nonprofits & Agencies**

There were several different perspectives about the effectiveness of collaboration in Sonoma Valley amongst its various organizations.

While many noted the willingness of nonprofits to work together, the “bond of cohesiveness” that is felt, and the effective networking between nonprofits, it was also noted that there could be more collaboration among nonprofits and agencies. Informants noted that many of the services were not coordinated in the Springs area, particularly from the perspective of service recipients.

Informants also noted that in order for the “big problems” being faced by the Sonoma Valley to be solved, ones that require a lot of resources, skills, and creativity to address, the capacity for effective collaboration would be crucial.

### **Issue 5: Potential Responses**

Below are several different ideas for encouraging collaboration:

***Encourage collaboration and coordination amongst county and city agencies, nonprofits, volunteers, and community groups.***

“The future has to be about public/private partnerships; coming together in new ways – there is no place in the future for stand-alone organizations.” An important nuance that was pointed out: while the benefits to collaboration are easy to see – relationship, shared effort, greater impact, there are also costs to collaboration in time, autonomy, and effort. These collaborations should be thoughtfully established to meet specific goals, as multiple collaborations are time intensive. A few other ideas along these lines were mentioned:

- 1) Regularly come together with other organizations to partner and jointly plan, set goals, and create a vision for working together. HealthAction, led by the Sonoma County Department of Health Services, First Five's Early Prevention strategy and United Way's "Schools of Hope" are all good examples for doing this.
- 2) Create a calendar of events to better coordinate efforts. There are many organizations but they need better communication. They need to more consciously work together.
- 5) Expand and continue to develop collaborations like the Sonoma Valley Health Roundtable, the Springs Community Alliance, and the Mental Health Coalition.
- 6) Require collaboration. Philanthropists and Foundations can require collaboration in their grants.
- 7) Find the conveners. Look for the strong organization that can bring people together.

#### ***Leadership & board development:***

Many informants stated that the organizations working in Sonoma Valley would be well-served to support the continued development of their boards, to have leadership training in areas of organizational development and board effectiveness, and to help nonprofits find ways to work together. It was noted that there are many cross-overs in services provided, and not enough coordination.

Another area of board development may be training in cross-cultural collaboration, to facilitate effective boards that reflect the diverse nature of Sonoma Valley.

#### ***Engage in efforts that are "significant and holistic"***

The ultimate impact for the community should be focused by nonprofits and agencies. How many people are served? What will be the results for the whole community? Efforts must engage the community and build on existing organizations' efforts. Informants suggested that doing something that best serves the community, "*With a concentrated effort in turning the tide on social problems.*" Informants pointed to the Buck Institute, where a substantial grant created one of the great institutions on aging. Informants asked nonprofits to think about how to create the most benefit from their projects: like a community garden that is also a water conservation demonstration site and a groundwater recharge site; or a service center that provided for many different aspects of wellness and living.

#### ***Need to shift fundraising model***

It was noted that Sonoma Valley – both its donors and its nonprofits – tend to be "event-centric" in how funds are raised. It was advised that nonprofits should target their ideal donor profiles, and reach out to them – even if they are outside of Sonoma Valley. Helping these nonprofits find ongoing sustainability through providing program services, as opposed to focusing on big events, is a change that a few noted would be important for nonprofits.

#### ***Build on organizations and efforts that are already in place. Build leadership and capacity.***

This was a theme that resounded throughout the interviews; there are many assets in place at the city and valley level, as well as from the county. Work with programs that already exist by creating capacity, adding services, and encouraging collaboration

***Implications for the Todd Trust***

While many of these ideas are not specifically in the scope of the Todd Trust, the Community Foundation is crafting an approach that would not only fully address the stated intent as well as the spirit of the Todd's bequest, but also have a positive impact on these issues. They have already committed \$77,000 to continuing the Youth Initiative.

Many of the potential responses for most of the issues outlined in this section have a central theme: they revolve around building trust, respect, empowerment, and understanding within and between the different sides of the Sonoma Valley community. That strategy is certainly one that the Community Foundation can model, facilitate, and encourage in its projects as it moves forward. The Community Foundation may also be able to play a role as a "convener" in the Community, creating a safe and neutral space for some of these conversations to take place.

While it goes almost without saying, by taking into account these approaches and concerns, the Community Foundation will ultimately be able to have much greater long-term impact in the community.

## SECTION VII: CONCLUSION

Below are a summary of broad, high impact strategies expressed in the report.

- 1) Encourage collaboration and coordination amongst county and City Agencies, nonprofits, volunteers, community groups, and residents.
- 2) Build on organizations and efforts that are already in place; build leadership and capacity.
- 3) Co-locate services and design towards bringing together community
- 4) Build community connections
- 5) Create efforts that are “significant and holistic”. Services need to expand scope from “crisis intervention”.
- 6) Encourage entrepreneurship, empowerment, and leadership at the grass-roots level.

One of the challenges for the Community Foundation in putting the Todd bequest to best use is both to respect the letter and spirit of their stipulations, while also being mindful of the messages the informants were attempting to communicate. To that end, the Team has created the following goals:

- 1) ***Improving Access:*** Our **main priority** and focus includes increasing access physically (such as a possible move of the Sonoma Valley Community Health Center to a Springs location and/or increasing access to community services, as well as decreasing cultural barriers faced by Springs residents (such as language, trust, family structure, literacy). It will also include the creation of nearby open space and community spaces, as well as local community control of what happens in the Springs.
- 2) ***Improving Collaboration and Developing Shared Goals:*** In addition to our main priority, as the Community Foundation and the Sonoma Valley Fund develop their role and relationships within the Springs, we should be a role model for listening, collaborating and facilitating a process of reaching agreement on common values, as well as encouraging all participants to adopt a common set of outcomes.
- 3) ***Increasing Community Contribution and Ownership:*** Further, our engagement with increasing access can also provide a means of building local leadership while reaching out to the Springs communities, by helping local organizations to include Latinos and low-income residents in the process of determining what might be successful ways of increasing health and human services access. At the same time, both we and local service providing organizations need to develop better trust.

### **Next Steps: Phases II and III**

This report represents the culmination of Phase I. Following are a description of next steps, as they have been outlined in May, 2011.

#### ***Phase II: Engage With Community Resources to Develop Shared Goals***

We have significant Phase II short term goals. In 2011, we will:

5. In the short term, be aware of opportunities for the Community Foundation and the Sonoma Valley Fund to support the work of other groups in the Springs whose plans are consistent with the Team's goal and priorities and the Todd's wishes.
6. Evaluate how the Team can work most effectively with existing community resources while building relationships of trust, including an effort to:
  - a. Expand the Team to include up to three bilingual/bicultural local residents
  - b. Add a part-time bilingual/bicultural staff to keep the Team's work moving as expeditiously as possible
  - c. Identify individuals, groups, and organizations that are already engaged with the same priorities as ours. For example:
    - i. Participate in the Health Roundtable
    - ii. Attend the Redevelopment Advisory Committee meetings
    - iii. Identify other public gatherings such as the Springs Community Alliance
    - iv. Continue to develop relationships with organizations such as FISH, Nuestra Voz, the Community Health Center, Burbank Housing, the School District, La Luz, St. Leo's Church, as well as individuals such as Alejandra Cervantes, Gabriel Navarro, Mario Castillo, Kara Reyes, Noris Binet and others that are active in the Springs
  - d. Identify each group's agenda for and contributions to the Springs, note similarities and differences in their priorities, membership and goals and assess their fit with the Team's priorities
  - e. Assess each group's work, openness to partnering, as well as their effectiveness.
7. Determine what next steps the Team can take using Todd funds to partner with the groups in achieving shared outcomes.
8. Develop work plans, budgets and evaluation tools for the partnerships.

Ultimately, we plan to make enough progress in this phase by the end of 2011 to be able to propose a three-year plan of involvement with the Springs to the Community Foundation and Sonoma Valley Fund boards by February of 2012.

#### ***Phase III: Commence Work on Improving Access and Evaluate Results***

As work plans are implemented and we assess what happens, we will adapt our strategies to take advantage of our experience to improve our outcomes.

***Conclusion:***

In general, we see this process as one of exploration and adaptation; we are strongly committed to our working goals, we know that we must take these steps in tandem with the community, modeling the kinds of collaboration, trust, and respect that all of us know are important for the success of the venture and Sonoma Valley.

We also expect (and hope) that our understanding will continue to grow as we begin implementation.

***Acknowledgements***

The Community Foundation and Sonoma Valley Fund would like to extend special thanks to the many key informants who have contributed their time and ideas to this effort. We will continue to seek their participation. Another critical part of this report was the composition and analysis of census data completed by the Economic Development Board of Sonoma County. Our special thanks to Sarah Deming, Jeff Boland and Ben Stone.

## APPENDICES

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### *Appendix A: Sonoma Valley Community Profile*



## Sonoma Valley: Community Profile Spring 2011



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## Demographics of Sonoma Valley

### Population by Area

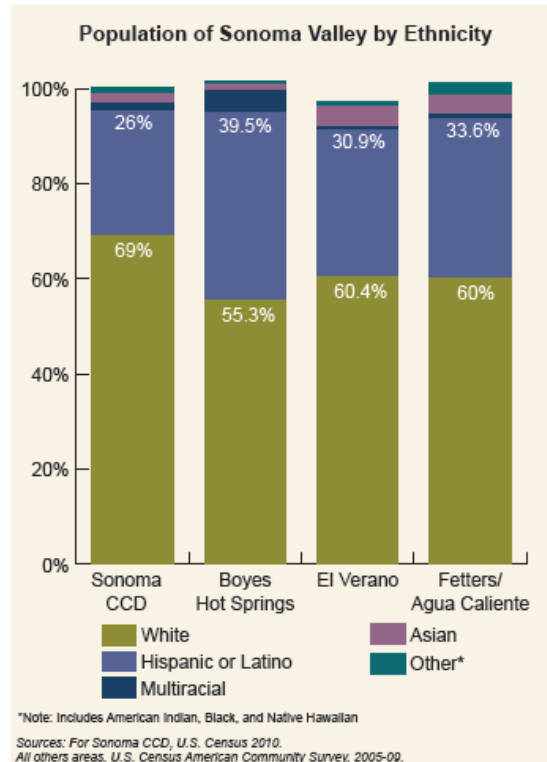
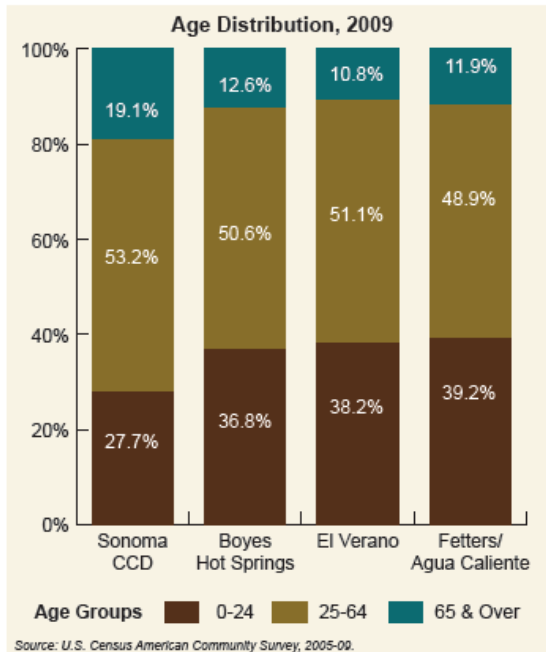
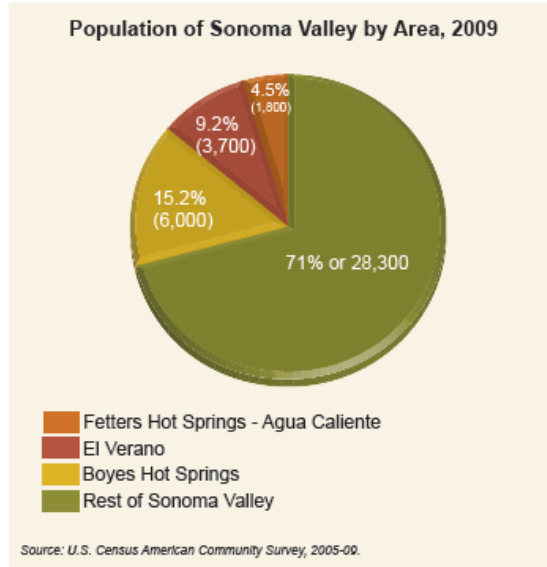
The areas of Boyes Hot Springs, El Verano, Fethers Hot Springs-Agua Caliente make up 28.9% of Sonoma Valley's population. Areas included in the rest of Sonoma Valley are Kenwood, Glen Ellen, Temelec, Eldridge, and the city of Sonoma. This data was collected by the Census from 2005-2009. According to the 2010 Census, the total population of the Sonoma Valley, designated as Sonoma Census County Division (CCD), is 40,608. However, 2010 data is not available for sub-county areas.

### Population by Ethnicity

Sonoma Valley's population is made up of 69% white residents, 26% are Hispanic or Latino, 1.9% multirace, 2% Asian, and 1% other. Boyes Hot Springs, El Verano, and Fethers Hot Springs-Agua Caliente have significantly larger portions of the Hispanic/Latino population. These figures are from the 2005-09 American Community Survey, it is likely from the updated 2010 figure for the entire Sonoma CCD, that there is even a larger number of Hispanics in these communities.

### Age Distribution by Area

There are significantly more young people (under age 25) in Boyes Hot Springs, El Verano, and Fethers Hot Springs-Agua Caliente and a smaller senior population (those over age 65). The discrepancy is largely because the Hispanic population, which is more concentrated in the springs area, is younger. The smaller amounts of seniors may have to do with smaller incomes and lower access to health care.



## Economy

### Households Living in Poverty

The poverty line is the minimum level of income deemed necessary to have an adequate standard of living for a given family size. For example, the federal poverty line for a family of four is \$22,050. Because of the high cost of living in Sonoma County, an adjusted poverty rate may be higher. The Living Wage Coalition of Sonoma County estimates \$62,000 is needed for an adequate standard of living for a family of two adults and two children. Insight Center for Community Economic Development estimates that \$50,000 is needed for one adult with two children. For this reason, the percentage of households living beneath 200% of the poverty level is also measured. There are 9,710 Sonoma Valley households or 25% of the population living under the 200% level of poverty. The highest concentration of poverty are in the springs area, which has significantly higher levels of poverty (ranging from 30.6% to 32.5% of all households) than the whole of Sonoma Valley.

### Poverty Rate by Ethnicity and Area

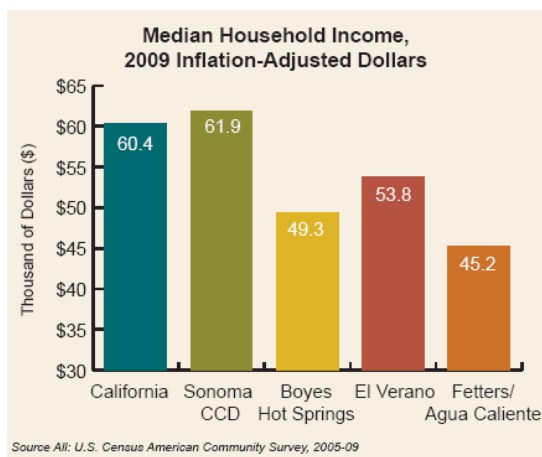
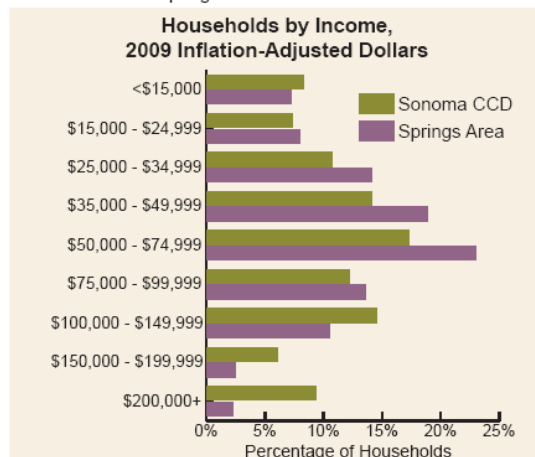
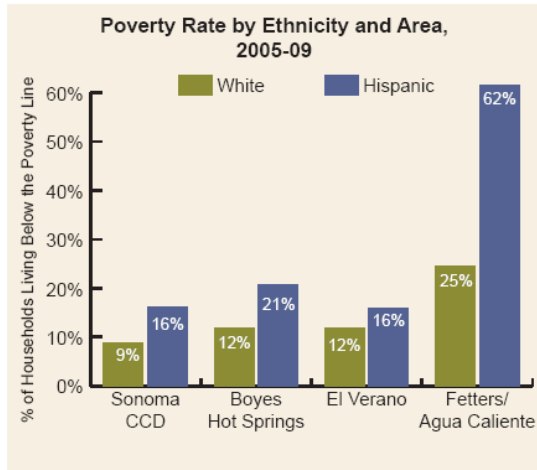
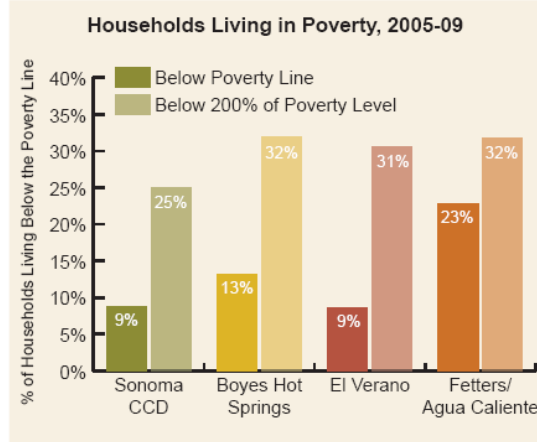
There is a clear racial gap in poverty levels. The poverty rate for Hispanics is 7.4 percentage points higher than for whites. In Fetters more than half of residents who are Hispanic live in poverty.

### Median Household Income

Median household income is the income level at which half of the area's households earn more and the other half earn less. Median household income evaluates income levels among all economic classes, higher levels of median household income indicates expansion across a full range of incomes. The springs area has far lower median incomes than the rest of Sonoma Valley and California. The median household income in Fetters Hot Springs-Agua Caliente of \$45,244 is 27% lower than Sonoma CCD, Boyes Hot Springs follows with \$49,324 (20% lower), and El Verano with \$53,813 (13% lower).

### Households by Income

There is a larger middle-class and smaller upper-class in the springs area compared to Sonoma Valley. Nearly 30% of households in Sonoma CCD earn \$100,000 or more while only 15.2% of households in the springs area earn the same amount.



Source All: U.S. Census American Community Survey, 2005-09

## Society

### Citizenship Status by Area

Boyes Hot Springs and Fetters Hot Springs-Agua Caliente have the highest percentage of non-citizens with 15.9% and 17.6%, respectively. El Verano has the highest percentage of U.S. citizens by naturalization (10.2%), possibly indicating that the Hispanic population has been there longer than in other areas. Data about citizenship is self-reported and recorded by the U.S. Census, American Community Survey, so it may be understated as non-citizens may fear identifying themselves as so.

### Non-U.S. Citizens by Area

The Census estimates 3,677 non-citizens living in Sonoma Valley, the majority of which live in Boyes Hot Springs, El Verano, or Fetters/Agua Caliente. Only 52.4% live in other areas compared to 71% of the total population.

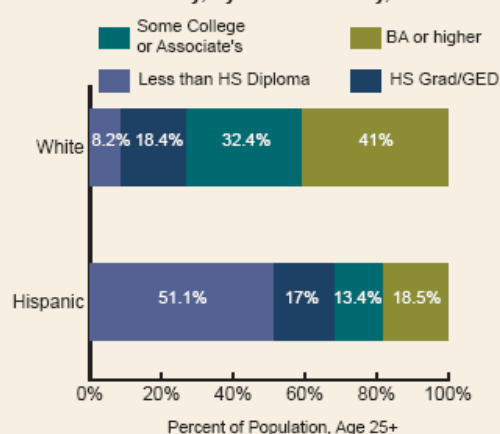
### Household Type with Children under Age 18

For those households with children, families with a married couple is the most common type of household in Sonoma Valley. The largest discrepancy is with Fetters, in which only 62% of households are married couples as opposed to El Verano, which is made up of 77.8%. There are a surprising number of households solely headed by a male in El Verano (13%) compared with the Sonoma Valley average (8.6%). Boyes Hot Springs and Fetters have a larger portion of single female heads of household.

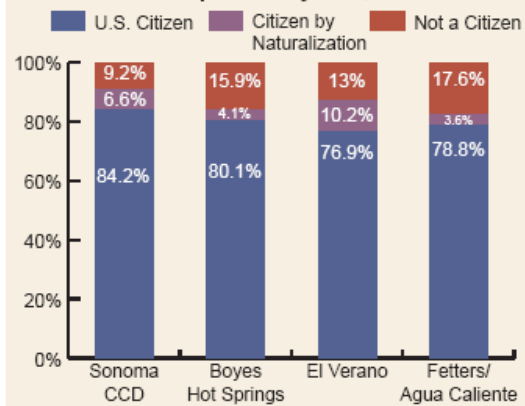
### Adult Educational Attainment by Race/Ethnicity

There is a clear discrepancy in adult educational attainment between Hispanics and whites in Sonoma Valley. Only 8.2% of whites in Sonoma CCD have less than a high school diploma while the majority (51.1%) of Hispanics have less than a high school diploma. Also, just 18.5% of Hispanics have a Bachelor's degree or higher while 41% of whites do. It is important to understand the education level of adults because many of them are parents to children in the Sonoma Valley school district.

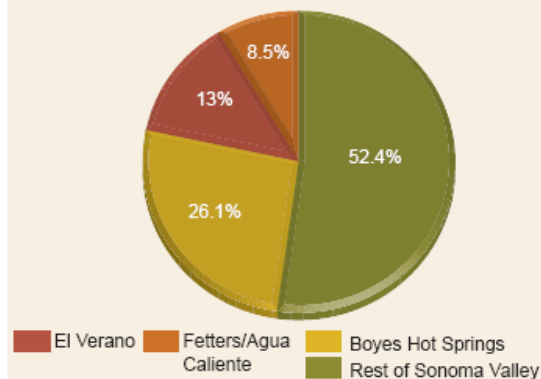
**Educational Attainment Population Age 25+, Sonoma Valley, by Race/Ethnicity, 2005-09**



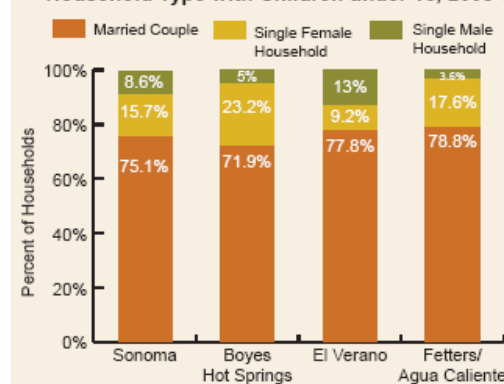
**Citizenship Status by Area, 2005-09**



**Non-U.S. Citizens by Sonoma Valley Area, 2005-09**



**Household Type with Children under 18, 2005-09**



Source All: U.S. Census American Community Survey, 2005-09.

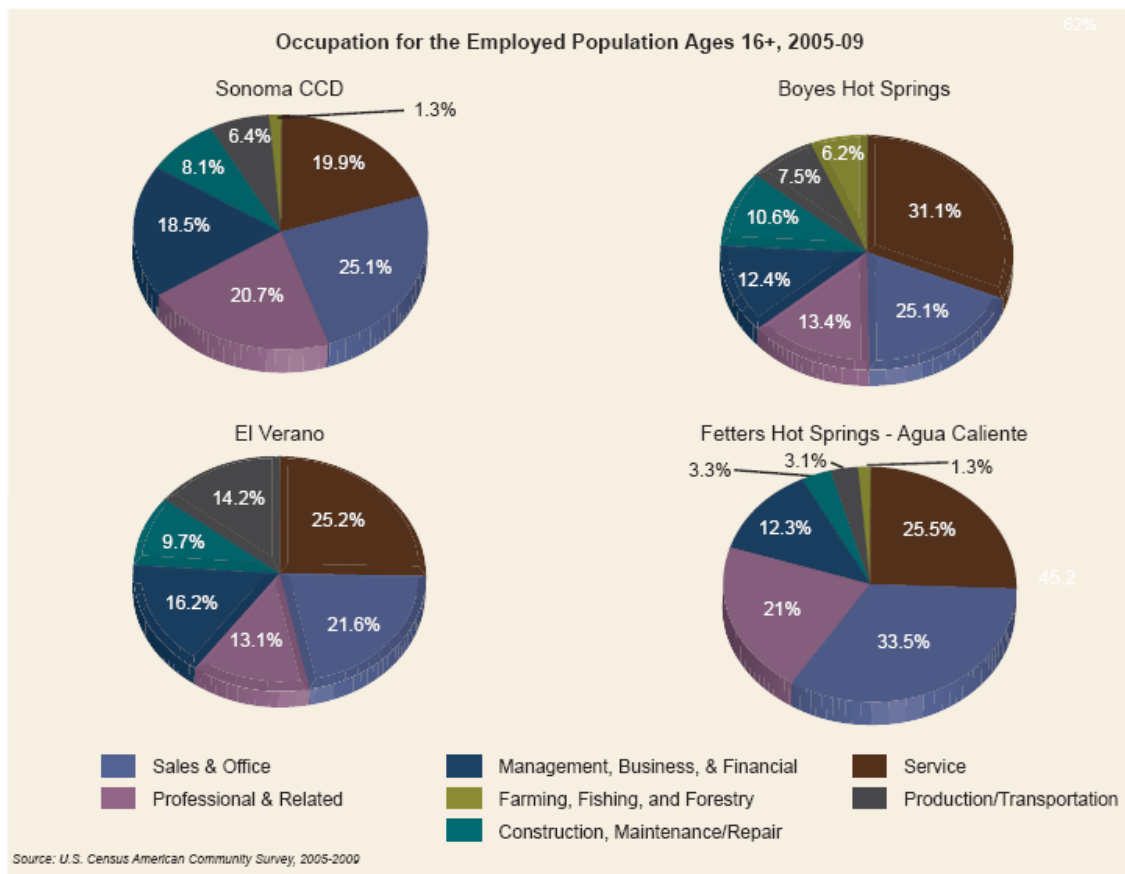
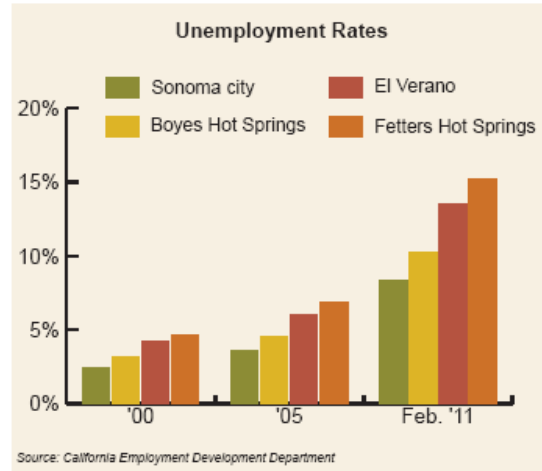
## Workforce

### Unemployment Rate

For the past ten years, the unemployment rate in Boyes Hot Springs, El Verano, and Fethers Hot Springs-Agua Caliente has been significantly higher than the unemployment rate in the city of Sonoma. The most recent unemployment figures from February 2011 are highest in Fethers Hot Springs (15.2%), followed by El Verano (13.5%), Boyes Hot Springs (10.2%), then the city of Sonoma (8.3%).

### Occupations for the Employed Population

The set of pie graphs below show the occupation make up of the employed population (ages 16+) in each area. There is a higher concentration of those with "Service" occupations in Boyes Hot Springs (11.2 percentage points higher than Sonoma CCD), El Verano (5.3 percentage points higher), and Fethers (5.6%). Service occupations tend to be lower paid and require less education; examples include healthcare support, protective service, cleaning services, and food preparation and serving. Sonoma Valley has, on average, five percentage points more employed in Management, Business & Financial; and Professional & Related occupations.



## Workforce

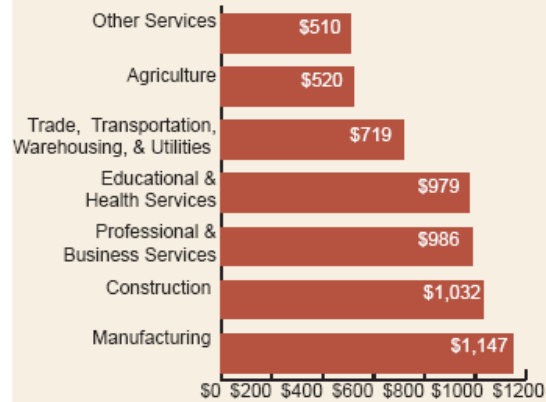
### Average Weekly Wage for Selected Clusters

The highest average weekly wages for prominent clusters in the Sonoma Valley are in Manufacturing and Construction. The largest industries in the Sonoma Valley are Educational & Health Services, Other Services, Retail Trade, Construction, and Manufacturing. are some of the highest paid industries in the county, with average weekly wages of \$1,147 and \$1,032 respectively. The county average weekly wage is \$822. There is no specific wage data available for Sonoma Valley, but wages would be similar to the county.

### Industry for the Employed Population

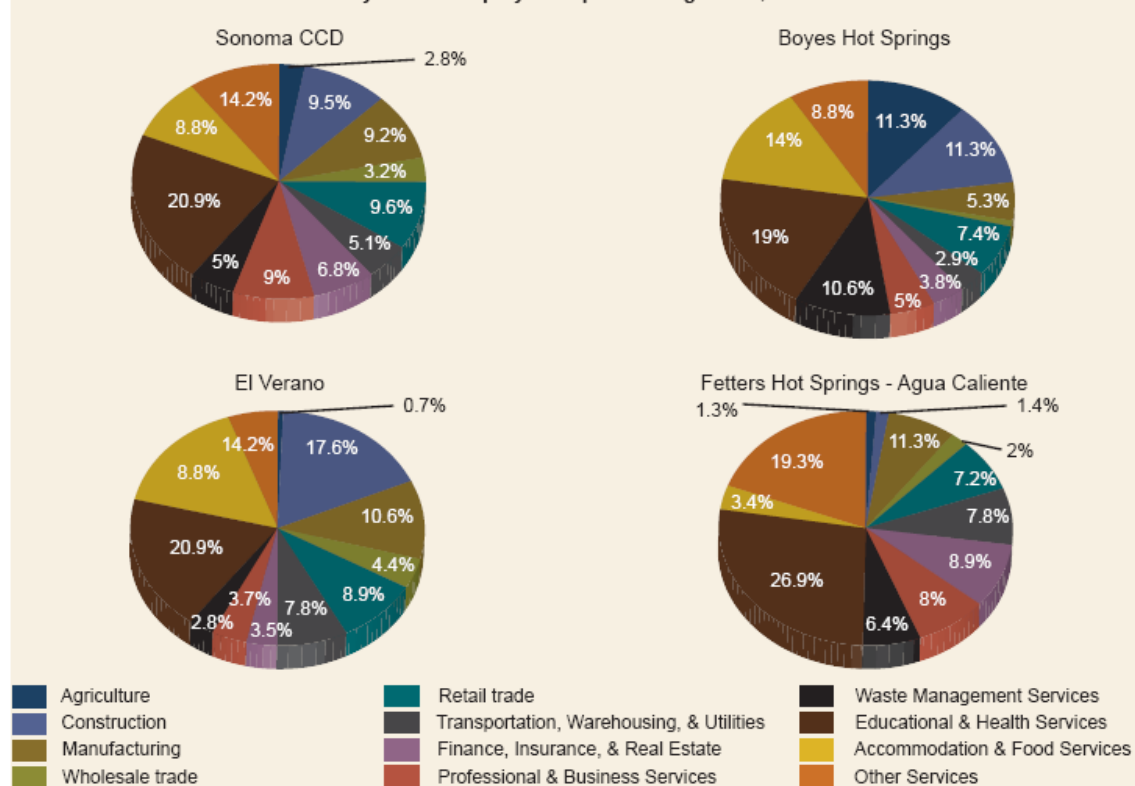
The set of pie graphs shows the industry make up of the employed population (ages 16+) in each area. There is a higher percentage of those working in "Accommodation & Food Services" in Boyes Hot Springs (5.2% higher than Sonoma CCD) and El Verano (6.9% higher). There are also fewer people employed in "Professional & Business Services" in the three sub regions, Boyes Hot Springs (4% less), El Verano (5.2% less), and Fetters (.9% less). Employment in construction is much higher in El Verano and much lower in Fetters compared to the Valley average.

### Average Weekly Wage for Selected Industries, Sonoma County Q3 2010\*



\*Note: Wage for Agriculture is the 2009 annual figure, all others are preliminary from Q3 2010.  
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

### Industry for the Employed Population Ages 16+, 2005-09



Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey, 2005-2009

[www.sonomaedb.org](http://www.sonomaedb.org)

## Education

### School Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

The Sonoma Valley Unified school district is composed of 14 schools with total enrollment of 4,671. Hispanics are the largest group in the school district with 48.3% of total enrollment, 11 percentage points higher than the county average (38.1%) and right around the state average (50.4%). Even though Hispanics are not the largest overall population group in Sonoma Valley, it is expected that they have a high number of students because of their substantially younger population.

### High School Dropouts

Sonoma Valley's high school dropout rate has been decreasing over the past six years. Twenty-six high school students dropped out in the '08-'09 school year and the dropout rate was 7.1%, half the dropout rate of '03-'04 (16.6%).

### Graduation Rate

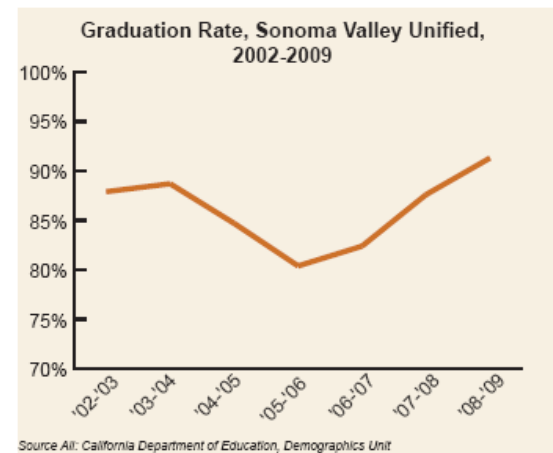
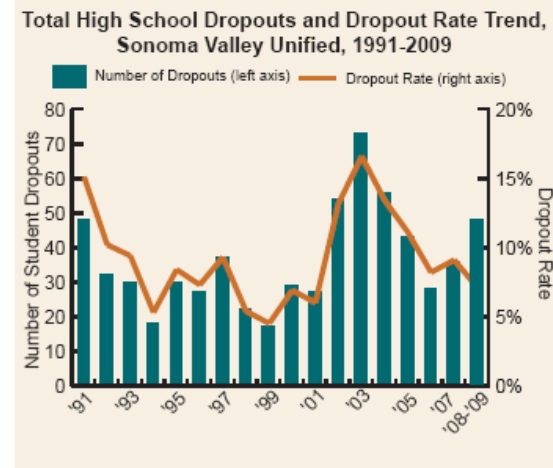
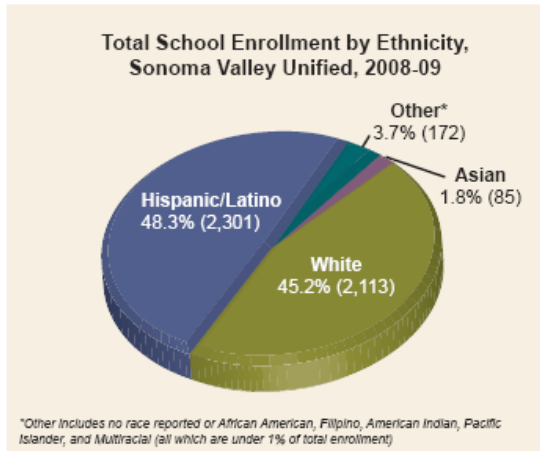
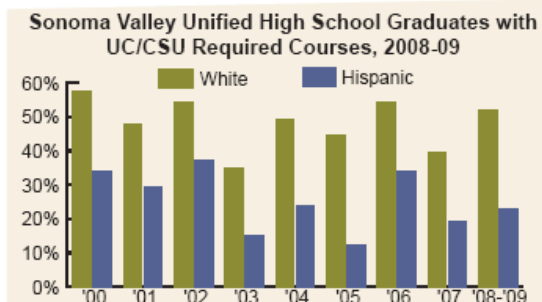
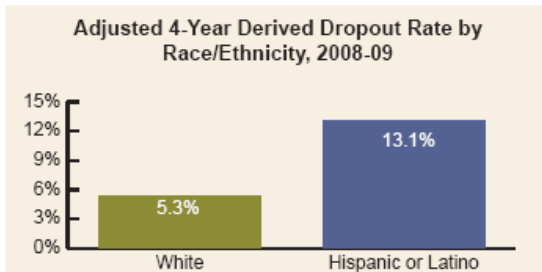
Graduation rates have been increasing over the past three years, reaching a decade high of 91.3% in 2008-09. This rate is much better than the state average of 78.6%.

### High School Graduates with UC/CSU Required Courses

There are far fewer Hispanics from Sonoma Valley school district completing the required courses necessary to continue with a four-year university program.

### Adjusted 4-Year Derived Dropout Rate by Ethnicity

There is a clear racial gap in dropout levels. The adjusted dropout rate for Hispanics (13.1%) is nearly eight percentage points higher than for whites (5.3%). However both dropout rates are well below the state and county average (21.5%).



## Education

### English Learners

The percent of English learners in the Sonoma Valley school district has increased 12 percentage points in the past ten years, making up 32.6% of total enrollment in 2009-10. English learners who have been designated English proficient through testing or other language measurements are categorized as "redesignated English proficient (REP)". This indicator has stayed between 8-10% for the past seven years. A higher percentage of REP is ideal because language acquisition is a large determinate of education and income levels.

### English Learners by Grade

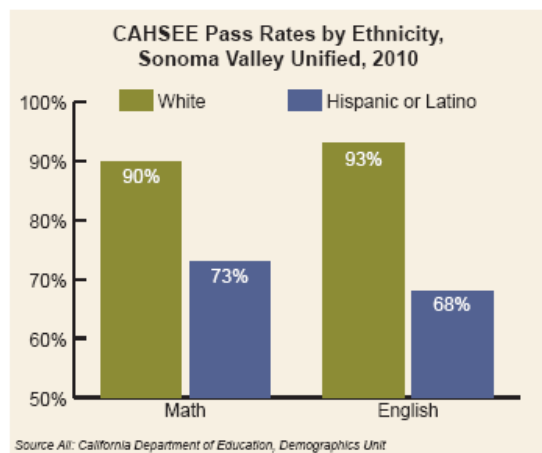
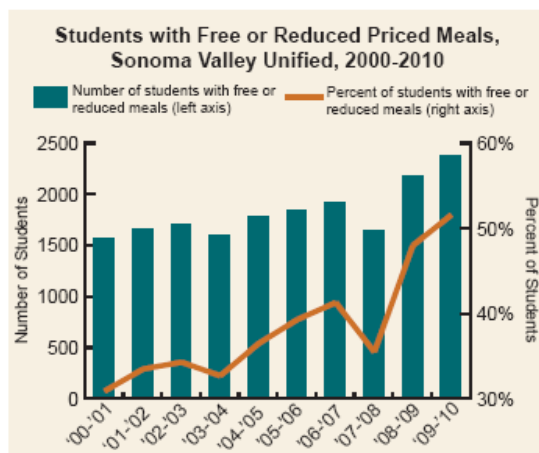
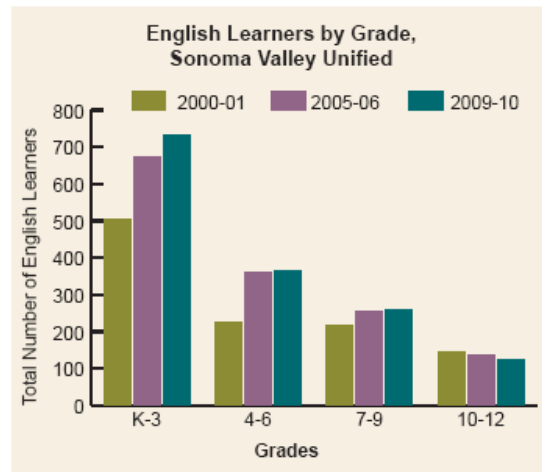
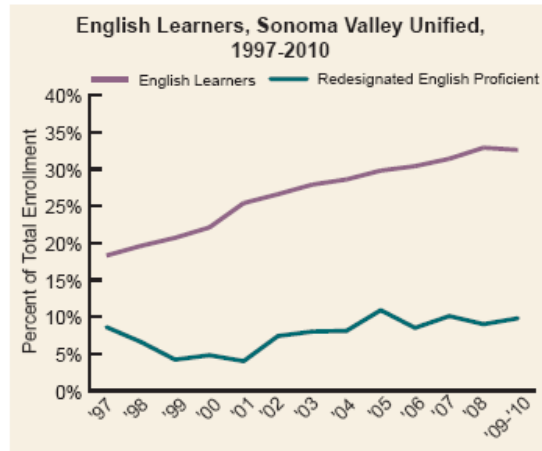
The graph shows the number of Spanish-speaking English learners in each grade group for the '00-'01, '05-'06, and '09-'10 school years. The highest number of English learners are in Kindergarten through grade 3 because as students grow older, most are redesignated English proficient. Because of the high number of English learners in earlier grades, it is important for support services to be available for younger students.

### California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) Pass Rates by Ethnicity

Each year, sophomores at California public high schools are required to take the CAHSEE, which measures English and math ability. Students must pass this test to graduate from a public institution. The data suggests an achievement gap exists among Hispanics.

### Students with Free or Reduced Meals

There are 2,382 students eligible for free or reduced-price meals, a key indicator of household poverty. Meals are provided as part of the National School Lunch Program and/or the School Breakfast Program. It is concerning that nearly 52% of Sonoma Valley students are eligible for free or reduced meals, and the percentage of students receiving these meals is increasing.



## Education

These indicators are results from the Department of Education's Safe & Healthy Kids program survey for elementary schools in the Sonoma Valley Unified school district. The survey is intended to guide improvement of academic, health, and prevention programs. The survey was completed by 212 students in grade 5 (70% participation rate). This page is a summary of their report, and all survey responses are from students in grade 5 in the Sonoma Valley school district.

### Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Use

Alcohol is by far the most widely used substance. Inhalants (glue, paint fumes, etc.) are often the most widely used of illicit drugs because of their availability. Although many students may have only experimented with substance use one time or with a small amount, those that do at such a young age are especially at risk of later involvement.

### School Safety

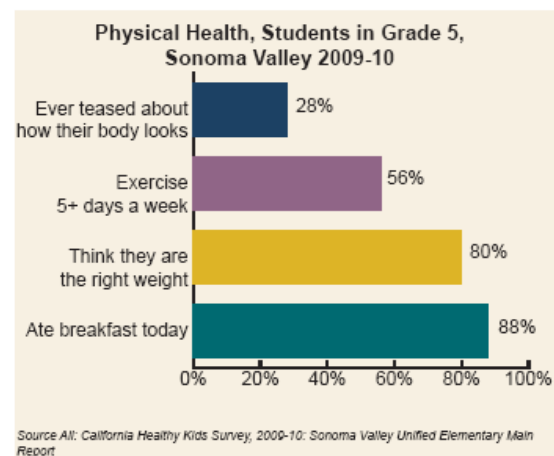
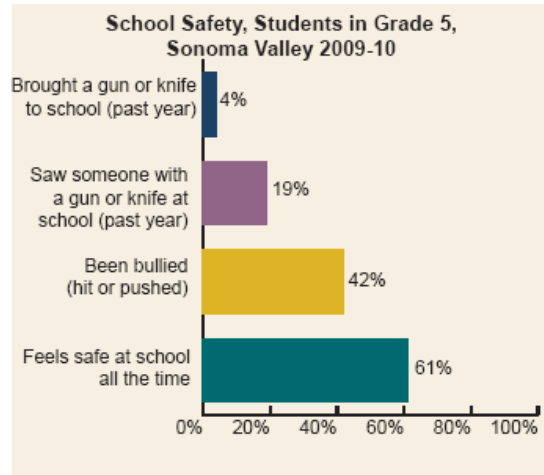
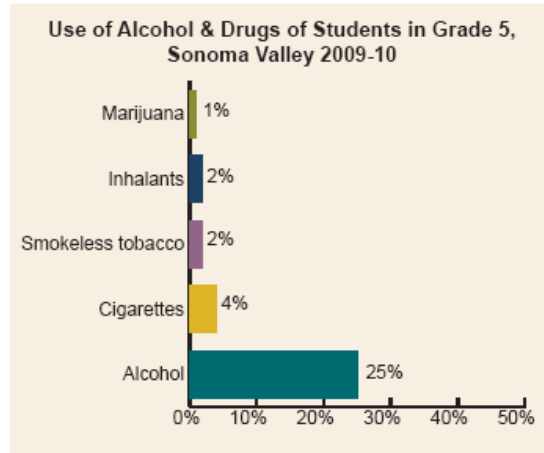
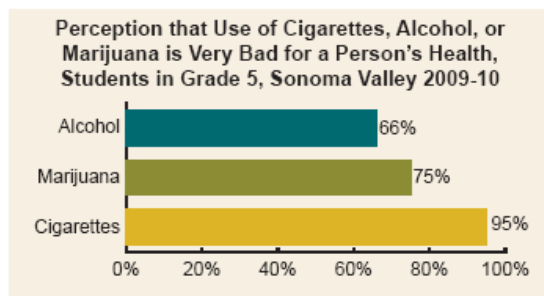
Bullying is an abusive behavior common among elementary youth. It instills vulnerability, isolation, and fear in its victim. If not confronted, it can lead to isolation from friends, family and school, depression, and risky behavior. Feeling safe is a basic need that must be met in order for students to succeed in school and in life. Forty-two percent of students reported being physically bullied and sixty-one percent reported feeling safe at school all of the time.

### Physical Health

To measure nutritional habits, the survey asks students if they had breakfast on the day of the survey. Students who attend school hungry or malnourished may experience compromised health, well-being, and school performance. The survey asks about body image because a poor body type image can negatively influence self-esteem and school performance. Regular physical activity is associated with the prevention of disease, lower risk behavior rates, better school performance, and fewer mental health problems. The fitness of children can be significantly affected by the physical education programs in public schools.

### Perception of Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Use

Attitudes toward drug use among elementary-age youth are generally very negative. Most students found cigarettes harmful (95%), while fewer found marijuana and alcohol harmful.



## Education

These indicators are results from the Department of Education's "California Healthy Kids" survey. The survey for secondary students was completed by 253 students in grade 7 (80% participation rate), 253 students in grade 9 (70%), and 237 students in grade 11 (84%), and accurately reflect the school's enrollment. For more information, see their complete report.

### Current and Past Use of Alcohol and Drugs

This indicator shows students who have tried a full drink of alcohol, inhalants, or marijuana; and students who have used these substances in the past 30 days (current use). Alcohol is most widely used with 50% of students in Grade 11 reporting use in the past month, in addition to 28% of 9th graders and 15% of 7th graders. Inhalants are more widespread in Grade 7 and 9 than in Grade 11, likely because inhalants are more accessible than marijuana to younger students.

### Safety Incidents on School Property

There is a high level (around 25%) of harassment across all grade levels. Another troubling indicator is that 24% of students in Grade 9 feared being beaten up and nearly 5% of students in all grades reported carrying a gun to school (at least once).

### High Risk Behaviors

The number reported being in a gang likely decreases with age because of the increased dropout rates for gang members.

### School Safety

Around 20% of students in Grade 11 and Grade 7 and 15% in Grade 9 reported feeling very safe in school. This figure strongly departs from the 61% of 5th graders who reported feeling safe all the time at school.

### School Misconduct

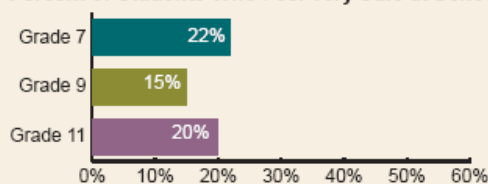
Note: these figures are reported by the school district.

#### School Misconduct, Sonoma Valley 2009-10

Number of Truants*	527
Truancy Rate	11.6%
Violence/Drug: Expulsions	21
Violence/Drug: Suspensions	173
Overall Expulsions	21
Overall Suspensions	330

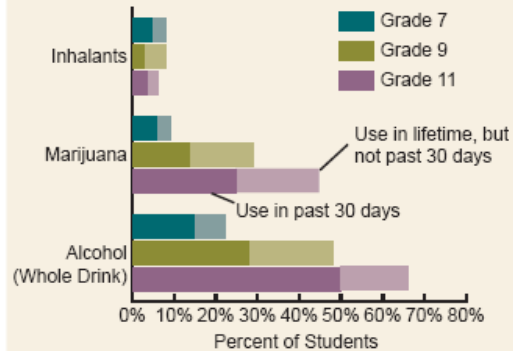
\*Note: Truants are defined by students with more than 3 unexcused absences or tardies  
Source: California Department of Education, Demographics Unit

#### Percent of Students Who Feel Very Safe at School

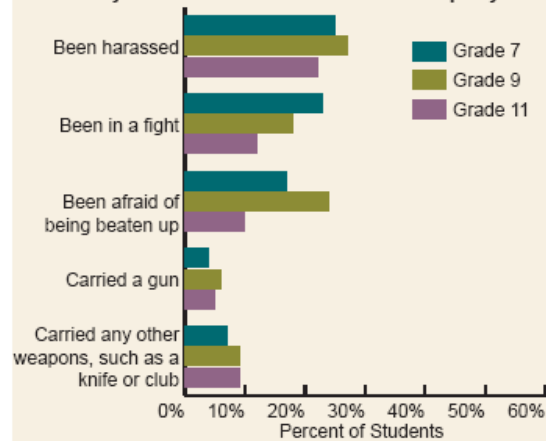


Source: California Healthy Kids Survey, 2009-10: Sonoma Valley Unified Secondary Complete Report.

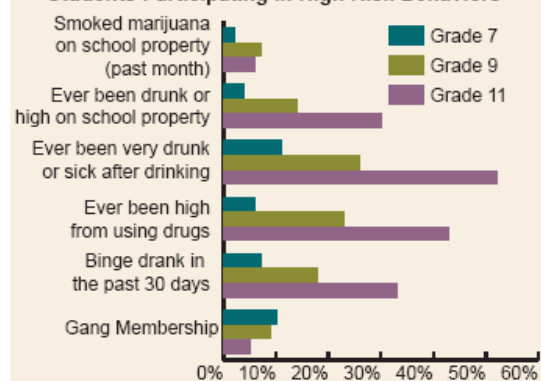
#### Alcohol and Drugs Current Use or at Least Once in Their Life, Sonoma Valley 2009-10



#### Safety-Related Incidents on School Property



#### Students Participating in High Risk Behaviors



Source All Right Column: California Healthy Kids Survey, 2009-10: Sonoma Valley Unified Secondary Complete Report.

## Housing

### Rent & Owned Housing

This indicator shows the percentage of households that are owner-occupied or renter-occupied. The largest percentage of renter-occupied housing is in Boyes Hot Springs (43.5%) and El Verano (42.4%). The highest amount of owner-occupied homes are in Fetters Hot Springs - Agua Caliente (80.7%) and the overall Sonoma Valley (66.2%).

### Percentage of Income Spent on Rent

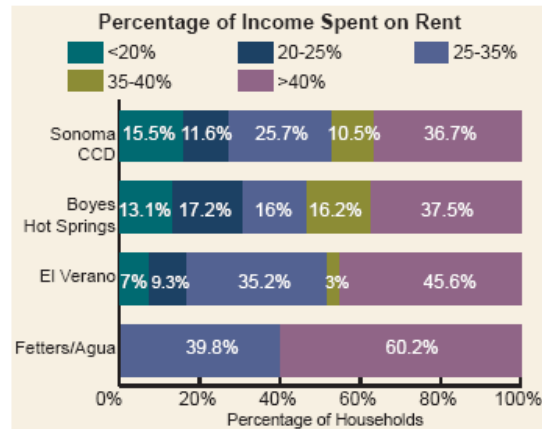
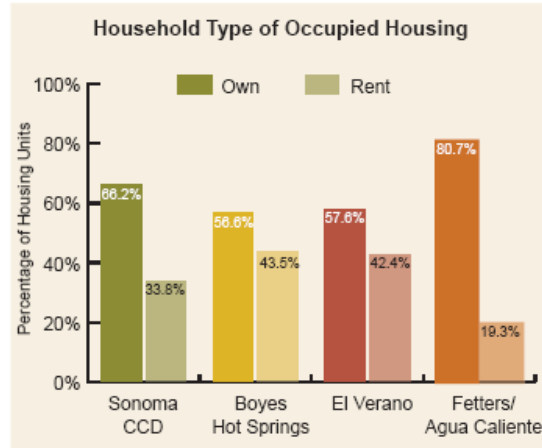
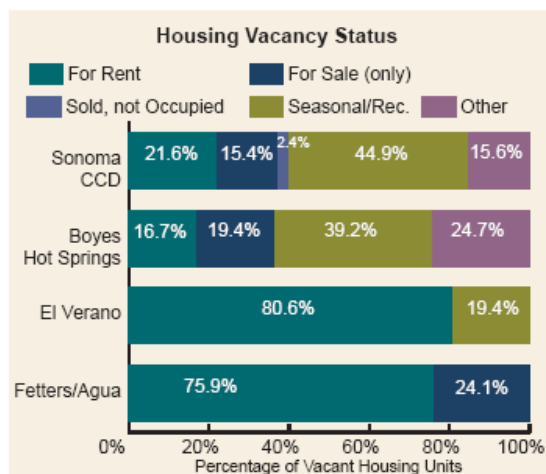
Only 13.1% of households in Boyes Hot Springs and 7% in El Verano spend less than 20% of their income on rent, while the average for the entire Sonoma Valley is 15.5%. The amount of households spending above 40% of their income on rent is slightly higher in Boyes Hot Springs (37.5%), El Verano (45.6%), and Fetters Hot Springs-Agua Caliente (60.2%) than the entire Sonoma Valley (36.7%). Households on the lower end of the economic scale tend to pay a larger portion of their incomes on housing. Without the addition of affordable units, rents will increase faster and consume more of renters' income. The data for Fetters/Agua is from a very small sample size which has a large margin of error, so should not be considered statistically significant.

### Vacancy Rates

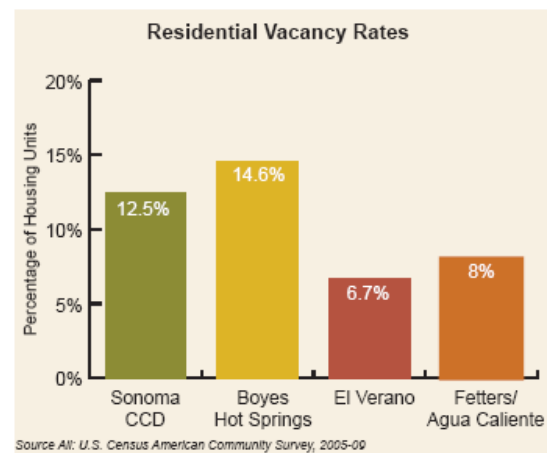
This indicator measures the proportions of housing units that are vacant. Typically higher vacancy rates suggest excess capacity and will likely result in a slowdown in new construction, while lower rates signal demand for new housing units.

### Housing Vacancy Status

It is not surprising that there are many recreational and seasonal homes in the Sonoma Valley, and most are located outside of the springs area. This graph shows the status of vacant housing units by area. The majority of vacant housing units are for rent in El Verano (80.6%) and Fetters-Agua Caliente (75.9%), which is much higher than Boyes Hot Springs (16.7%) and the entire Sonoma Valley (21.6%).



\*Because of the small sample size for Fetters/Agua, there were large margins of error associated with this data, and it should be considered statistically unstable.



Source All: U.S. Census American Community Survey, 2005-09

## Health Care

### Births by Race/Ethnicity

The number of Hispanic women having children exceeds the number of white women. The percentage of white mothers has decreased from 48.2% in 2005 to 42.7% in 2009. It is logical that the Hispanic birth rate would be comparably higher because of the younger Hispanic population.

### Births by Age

Thirty teens (8.2% of all births) gave birth in Sonoma Valley in 2009. Most births (consistently between 75% and 79%) are of mothers between the ages of 20 and 35.

### Infant Birth Weight

Low birth weight indicates the general health of newborns, and a key determinant of infant survival, health, and development. Infants with low birth weight are at a greater risk of dying during the first year of life and of developing chronic health problems.

### Prenatal Care

Most women (around 85%) had prenatal care in the first trimester. Few new mothers did not receive any prenatal care, making up fewer than 0.5% of all who gave birth. In 2009, 98.5% of mothers had prenatal care in either the first or second trimester. Prenatal care is important in order to keep mothers and their baby healthy; without prenatal care it is more likely to have an infant with a low birth weight or have a still birth.

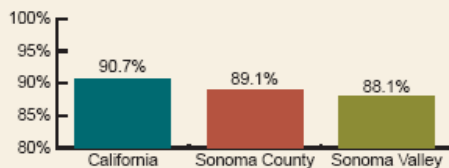
### Kindergartners with Required Immunizations

The assessment measures immunization coverage among students entering kindergarten in the Sonoma Valley Unified school district, Sonoma County, and California.

### Leading Causes of Death

Leading causes of death data is useful to determine the overall health of a population and helps to examine the burden of mortality from specific causes.

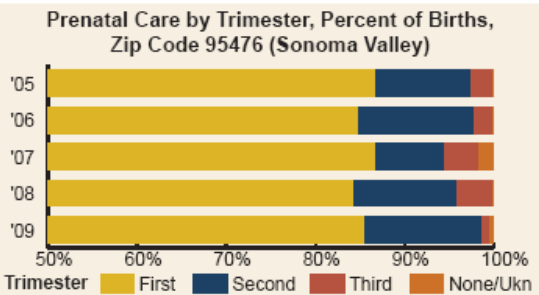
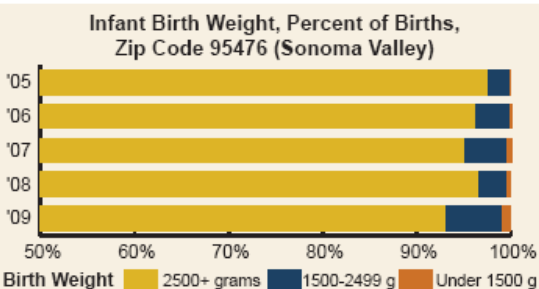
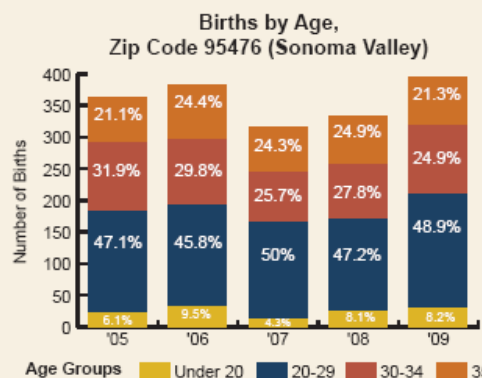
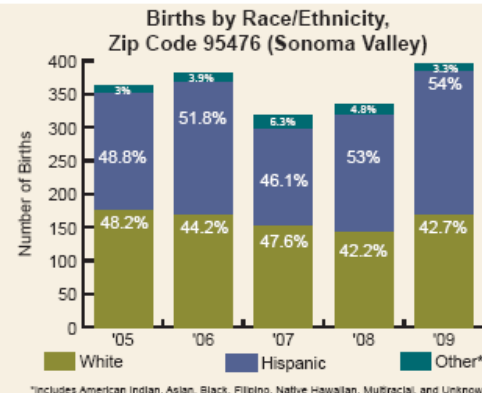
#### Kindergartners with Required Immunizations, 2010



#### Leading Causes of Death, 2008

Cause	Sonoma Valley %	California %
Cancer	25.5%	23.3%
Heart Disease	25.0%	25.9%
Stroke	8.0%	5.9%
Accidents	4.8%	4.6%
Alzheimer's	4.5%	4.3%
Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	3.5%	5.7%
Diabetes	3.2%	3.1%
Pneumonia and Flu	3.2%	2.8%
Suicide	1.6%	1.6%

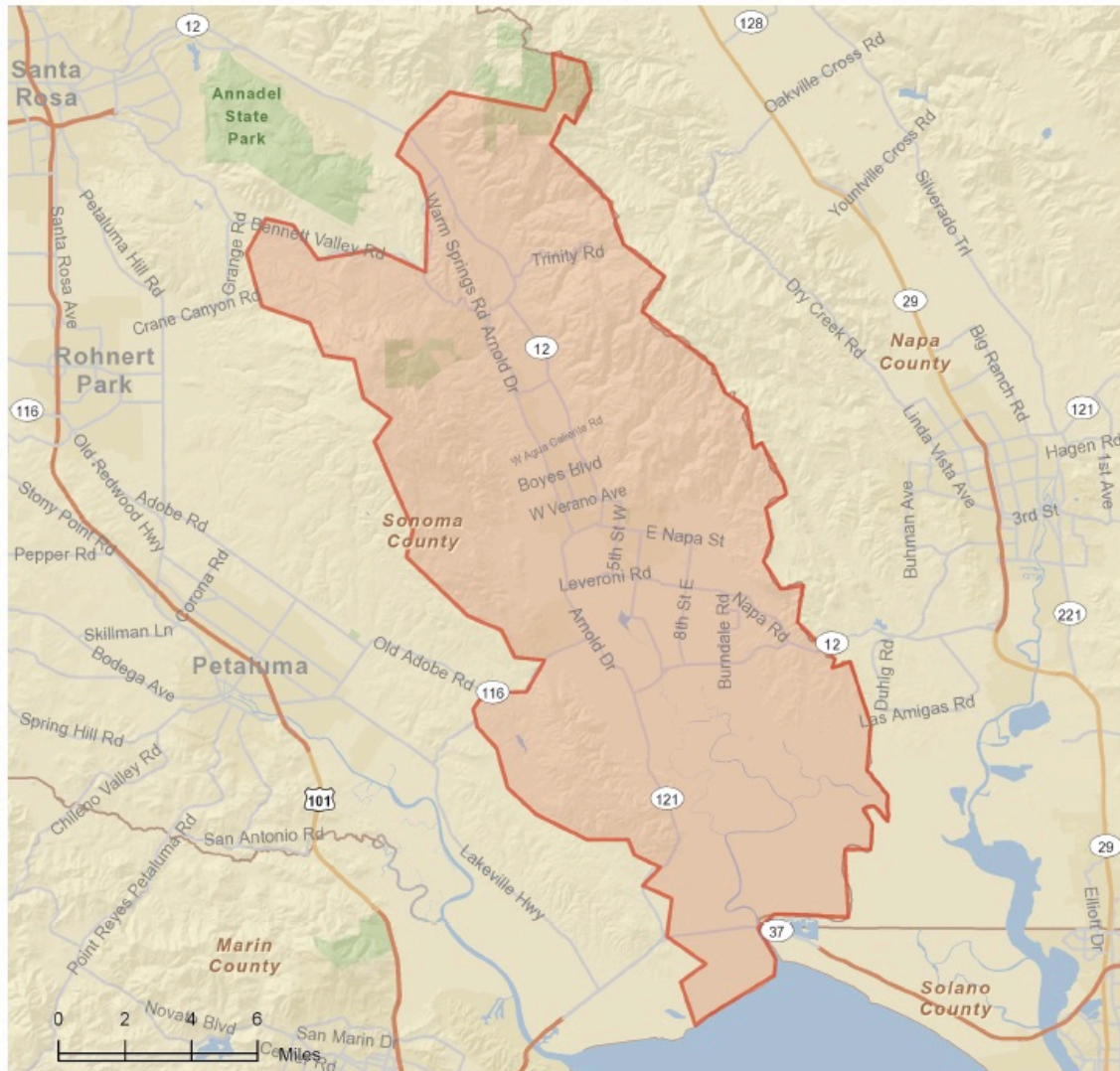
Source All: California Department of Public Health



www.sonomaedb.org

## Appendix

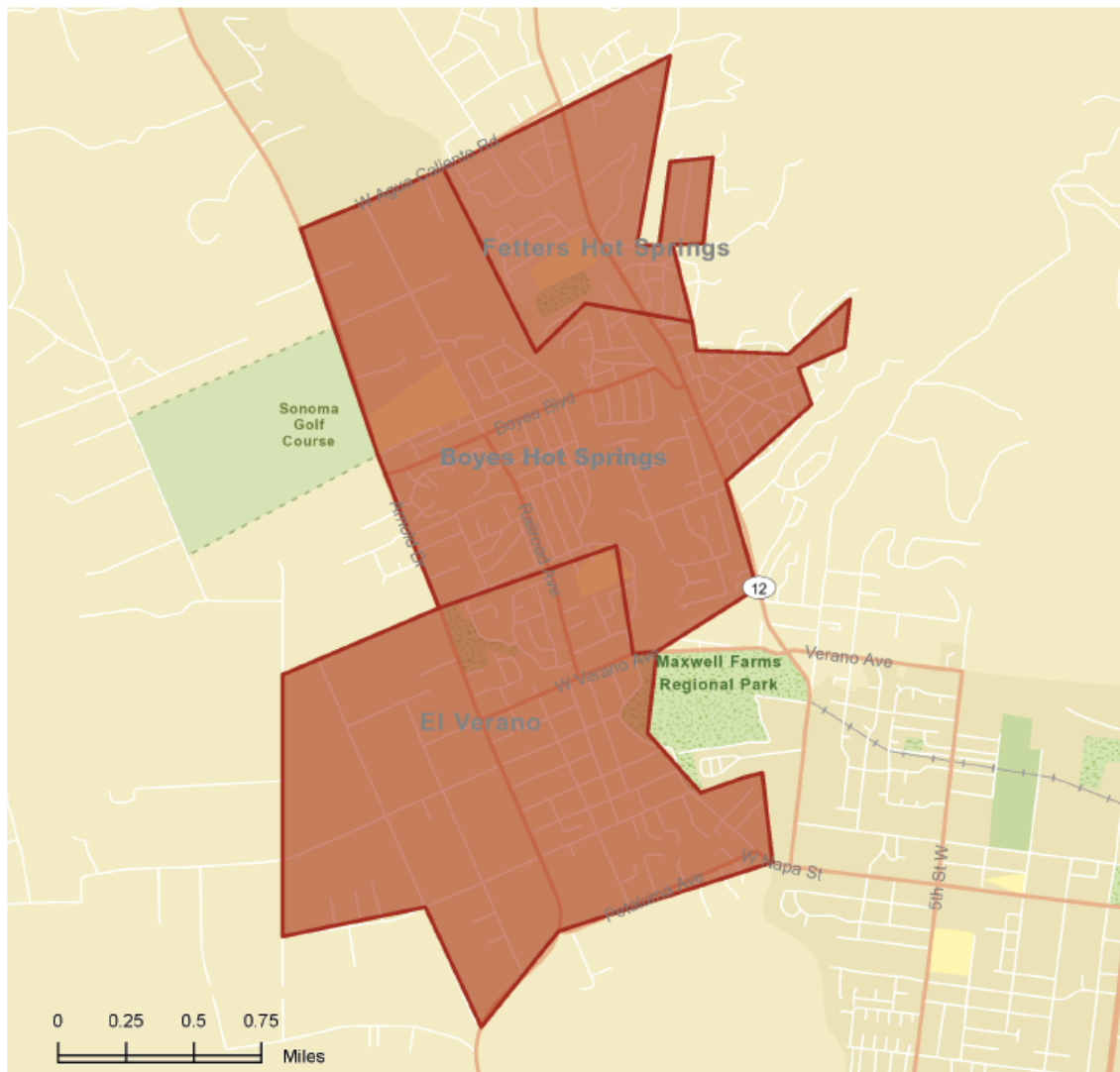
### Sonoma CCD (Sonoma Valley)



Source: ESRI Business Analyst

## Appendix

### **Springs Area** (Boyes Hot Springs CDP, El Verano CDP, and Fethers Hot Springs-Agua Caliente CDP)



Source: ESRI Business Analyst

## ***Appendix B: Key Informants***

*Informants are listed in alphabetical order by their last name.*

1. Mary Evelyn Arnold, Commissioner Sonoma Valley Library System
2. Mark Aston, Director, Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services
3. Zuli Baron, Community Organizer, St. Joseph Health System
4. Helen Bates, President, Sonoma Mountain Preservation Group
5. Ralph Benson, Executive Director, Sonoma Land Trust
6. Noris Binet, Bilingual Sociologist
7. Jeff Boland, Research Director, Economic Development Board
8. Ellen & Drew Bradley, philanthropists and community members
9. Ken Brown, City Council, City of Sonoma
10. Valerie Brown, Supervisor – District 1, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
11. Cary Hart, Director, Sonoma County Regional Parks System
12. Lizbeth & Janet Cabrera, Nuestra Voz Program Participants and Springs Residents
13. Louann Carlomagno, Superintendent, Sonoma Valley Unified School District
14. Mario Castillo, Vineyard Workers Services
15. Alejandra Cervantes and Gabriel Sánchez Navarro, Nuestra Voz Lideres del Valle de Sonoma
16. Oscar Chavez, Executive Director, Community Action Partnership Sonoma County
17. Niels Chew, philanthropist and community member
18. Steve Cox, Chair of the Springs Community Alliance; Appointee to Springs Redevelopment Advisory Committee
19. Pilar Cruz, Springs Resident
20. Richard Dale, Executive Director, Sonoma Ecology Center
21. Marion Deeds, Director, Economic Assistance Division of the Sonoma County Human Services Department
22. Christine Dohrmann, Co-Founder, Impact 100
23. Dick Drew, Chair of Sonoma Valley Fund Youth Initiative
24. Meg Easter-Dawson, Executive Director of Valley of the Moon Children's Center
25. Karen Fies, Director, Employment & Training, Sonoma County Human Services Department
26. Tony Garcia, Owner, Sonoma Materials
27. Pam Garramone, Principal Sonoma Valley Unified School District Adult School
28. Jacqueline Gillespie, Supervisor, Sonoma County Foster Care
29. Yvonne Hall, Executive Director, La Luz Bilingual Center
30. Caryl Hart, Director, Jim McCray, Deputy Director and Elizabeth Tyree, Department Analyst at Sonoma County Regional Parks
31. Peter Haywood and Maggie Salinger-Haywood, philanthropists and community members
32. Rebecca Hermosillo, Executive Director, Sonoma Valley Teen Services
33. Jesse Irizary, Division Director, Juvenile Division, Sonoma County Probation Department
34. Diane Kaljian, Director, Area Agency on Aging
35. Bill Keene, General Manager, Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District
36. Krishna Kumar, General Manager, Valley of the Moon Water District

37. Cristin Lawrence, Jean Hopeman, Sonoma Valley Teen Services
38. Kelly Mather, CEO, Sonoma Valley Hospital
39. Marianne McBride, President and CEO, Council on Aging of Sonoma County
40. Kathleen McGrath, Sister, Catholic Charities Rural Food Program Director
41. Victor Mejia, Nuestra Voz Program Participants
42. Bill Myatt, Director, "211", Volunteer Center
43. Gary & Marcia Nelson, philanthropists and community members
44. Jesse Irizary, Juvenile Division Director, Sonoma County Probation Department
45. Steve Page, President, Infineon Raceway
46. Bob Rice, Owner, Breakaway Café
47. Bret Sacket, Chief, Sonoma Police Department
48. Cynthia Scarborough, Executive Director, Vintage House
49. Rita Scardaci Director and Dennis Rose, Manager of Health Policy & Planning, Sonoma County Department of Health Services
50. Margaret Spaulding, Chair, Sonoma Mountain Preservation Group
51. Ben Stone Executive Director, Economic Development Board
52. Patricia Talbot, CEO Sonoma Valley Community Health Center
53. Ken Ubaldi, Chief, Kenwood Firemen's Association
54. Les & Judy Vadasz, Vadasz Family Foundation
55. Paco Villaseñor, Vice President, WestAmerica Bank
56. Jennifer Yankovich, Executive Director, Sonoma Chamber of Commerce

### ***Appendix C: Interview Questions***

*The Team modified questions depending on the informant.*

1. Describe the role that your organization plays in Sonoma Valley. (Tell me a bit about your history with Sonoma Valley and your organization.)
2. Challenges:
  - a. What do you see as the challenges facing the community of Sonoma Valley?
  - b. Which one to you is the most immediately pressing? Why?
  - c. Which one is the most significant in the long-term? Why?
  - d. What are the issues in the county that you think could have impact in Sonoma Valley?
  - e. Are there other issues outside of Sonoma County that you think could have local impact?
  - f. (optional) Do you have any data/reading that would be helpful for us to understand these issues as they pertain to Sonoma Valley?
3. Strengths:
  - a. What do you see as the real strengths and assets of the communities of Sonoma Valley that we can build on? Why? Do these strengths differ in different communities?
  - b. What specific examples do you have that illustrate those strengths?
  - c. What opportunities could we at the Community Foundation take advantage of?
4. What are the most important things you would do to build on what you and other organizations are doing if you had more resources (time, money, or volunteers)? (For example: Where would voluntary efforts be directed? What partnerships would you create or further build? What programs would you fund?)
5. If you could do something that has not been done for Sonoma Valley that would leverage its strengths and/or address its challenges, what would it be?

### Appendix D: Parks and Open Space in Sonoma Valley

Following are lists of Sonoma Valley Regional Parks, City of Sonoma Parks and Amenities, and a list of other Open Spaces and Agricultural Preserves.

#### Sonoma Valley Regional Parks:

In Kenwood: Kenwood Plaza Park, Shaw Park;  
In Sonoma Valley: Larson Park, Maxwell Park, Moran Goodman Park, Sonoma Valley Regional Park; Tom Schopflin Fields

#### City of Sonoma Parks & Amenities:

<http://www.sonomacity.org/uploads/4338.pdf>

City of Sonoma Parks & Amenities													
Name	Location	Park Size (acre)	Picnic Tables	BBQ's	Benches	Basket Ball Court	Play Structure	Bocce Ball	Gazebo	Train Museum	Public Restrooms	City Hall	Visitors Bureau
Madera (Fryer Creek)	#1 Fryer Creek Drive / Todd	2.9	X										
Olsen Park	569 Linda Drive	2.0	X	X		X	X						
Depot Park	270-284 First Street West	4.6	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		
Hertenstein Park	1055 Berryessa Drive	0.8	X	X			X						
K.T. Carter Park	1135 Fryer Creek Drive		X	X	X	X	X						
Nathanson Creek Park	1221 Dewell Drive	2.8	X		X		X						
Grinstead Park	135 Austin	0.1											
Plaza Park	#1 The Plaza	8.5	X		X		X				X	X	X
Armstrong Park	550 Patten Street	1.5	X	X			X						
Pinelli Park	433 France Street	0.5	X	X			X						
MacArthur Park	758 Elliot Street	0.7	X	X	X		X						
Sonoma Valley Oaks	440 Engler Street	1.0			X								
Dog Park	151 First St. West	0.3	X		X								
Juen Vineyard Park	300 Leveroni Road		Vineyard										
El Prado		0.75	Common Green										
Class 1 Bike Paths		4.0	Located throughout the City										
Sonoma Overlook Trail	90 First St. West	1.5	Upper mountain cemetery overlook trail.										
Sonoma Garden Park	19996 7th St. East	7.0	Community Garden managed by the Sonoma Ecology Center (SEC)										

*Sonoma Valley Open Spaces and Agricultural Preserves include:*

(List from [http://www.sonomaopenspace.org/Content/10139/view\\_by\\_supervisorial.html](http://www.sonomaopenspace.org/Content/10139/view_by_supervisorial.html)):

- 1) Bouverie Preserve
- 2) Vallejo Adobe
- 3) Calabazas Creek Open Space Preserve
- 4) Cook Ranch
- 5) Crane Farm
- 6) Cresta Ranch
- 7) Doerksen
- 8) Eliot and Lupine Hill
- 9) Frieberg/Henshaw
- 10) Geary
- 11) Glen Oaks Ranch
- 12) Grossi
- 13) Hayfork Ranch
- 14) Hood Mountain Regional Park and Open Space Preserve
- 15) Jack London State Park Addition
- 16) Keegan & Coppin
- 17) Keen
- 18) McCormick
- 19) McCrea
- 20) McCullough
- 21) Montini Open Space Preserve
- 22) Nathanson Creek
- 23) Nicholas
- 24) Saddle Mountain
- 25) Skiles
- 26) Sonoma Mountain Ridgetrail Corridor
- 27) Sonoma Valley Regional Park Addition
- 28) St. Francis Vineyards
- 29) Van Hoosear Wildflower Preserve
- 30) Wilroth