

## SDAT Final Report– An Overview

The foundation of the AIA's SDAT program is the premise that public participation is the foundation of good community design. At the end of an intense three day visit the SDAT team presented their preliminary recommendations to over five hundred people in the High School gym. Examining current issues and the relationships between issues, goal was to help Healdsburg find sustainable balances between visitors and residents; between small town charm and a highly successful tourism industry; between affordable, middle class, and upper scale housing.

Connectivity was a recurring theme throughout the report, suggesting it is critical to a sustainable future for Healdsburg. While conservation and urban boundaries are well developed in the region, they prescribed improving connections between river, parks, neighborhoods and the Plaza. Increasing connectivity provides solutions, both environmental and social.

The Arts and Culture section focused on increasing social and physical connectivity through three lenses: existing cultural entities, community based art projects and art in public spaces. Evaluating existing conditions through each lens identified opportunities and pointed to potential actions.

The next section focused on growth. It warned: "Healdsburg faces a stark choice today." They predict current trends lead to a City in which most existing residents and their children will not be able to afford to live. A sustainable growth scenario needs a systemic approach: social equity, local needs, and further diversifying the economy must be considered in every decision. The secret is not to reject the growth engines of the past four decades, but to build on that success. The apparent diversity in the economy is deceptive – agriculture, wine, and tourism are strongly linked.

Healdsburg faces a "demographic bomb" – seventy percent of home owners are over 55. Housing between 60% and 120% of AMI is "missing." This fact must be the balanced focus of all housing policy and practice to serve the needs of residents and the local workforce. Resolving this shortfall does not require any change to current growth management regulation. Constraints on housing begin with changes to the General Plan. The capacity of our limited land is variable and based upon zoning and building codes, affecting density, height limits, parking requirements, etc.

They believe Healdsburg has a strong planning foundation for going forward, based upon the Housing Action Plan, the Design Guidelines, and the recommendations of the Community Housing Committee. Twelve specific recommendations for action were enumerated.

The Team perceived a “dangerous” level of division in Healdsburg’s civic life. Key to achieving sustainable solutions are processes that bring citizens and civic leaders together to work toward common interests. “In small towns, this can be tough work,” however, they believe Healdsburg is well-positioned to build civic collaborations.

Your response to the SDAT recommendations is important! On Sunday, January 13 at 5:00 pm in the High School gym, the community will come together to share those thoughts. The task of prioritizing and implementing these recommendations requires wide community participation. Some recommendations will be City driven, some by the private sector, and others will naturally be public/private partnerships. How Healdsburg evolves over the next 20 years is up to all of us.

Five Working Groups (Master Plan, Housing, Connectivity, Arts and Culture and Social Fabric) formed after the SDAT presentation in August have been meeting. These are open, self-managed groups, focused on the five areas. Join one that calls to you.

Healdsburg 2040 Stewards

*Dick Bugarske, Richard Burg, Carla Howell, Ariel Kelley, Lacey Scott, Will Seppi, Tim Unger*