

# SIDC future a hot topic for state officials

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After years of regarding the future of Staten Island Developmental Center as a big question mark, the fate of the Willowbrook facility should finally be resolved by the end of 1985.

Encompassing almost 390 acres, more than 50 buildings, plus some of the best woodlands left on Staten Island, the Willowbrook campus is now in a state of transition.

Gov. Mario Cuomo announced last year his intention to close SIDC, which has been an institution for the mentally retarded for more than 30 years. Under the state's plan, the 900 clients presently residing at Willowbrook will be placed in residential facilities around the state, leaving only native Islanders — who will be housed in the proposed Richmond Complex, two 12-bed and two 24-bed homes to be built on an undeveloped tract of the SIDC grounds.

The Richmond Complex, along with the state Institute for Basic Research in Mental Retardation and group homes on the southeast corner of the campus, will form a 90-acre area of the SIDC property to be retained by the state Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities. The remaining 300 acres — including the imposing brick dormitories which once housed more than 6,000 patients — will be redeveloped for other uses.