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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 15, 2018

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Town Clerk

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Special Study Session Town Council Meeting on District Elections

Windsor, California – On November 28, 2018, the Town Council will hold a special study session meeting at 6pm in the Civic Center Council Chambers to discuss and hear public comment on a proposed challenge to the Town's at-large election system. No action will be taken at this meeting.

On October 22, 2018, the Town received a letter from the law firm of Shenkman & Hughes alleging a violation of the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA). This letter claims that the Town's current at-large election system dilutes the ability of Latino voters to elect candidates of their choice or otherwise influence the outcome of Town Council elections. Specifically, the letter states that (1) in the 2016 election someone ran for Town Council and lost despite receiving support of Latino voters in the Town; and (2) Latinos comprise approximately 31.8% of the Town's population but no Latino has served on the Town Council. The letter threatens litigation if the Town declines to voluntarily change to a district-based election system.

Currently, the Town has an at-large election system whereby the voters throughout the entire Town choose each of the five Councilmembers. In district elections, the Town would be physically divided into separate districts, with each district represented by one Councilmember who must reside in that district.

If the Town elects to transition to district elections, there may be additional discussion on whether the Town is interested in retaining a rotating mayor selected by the Council or having the mayor be elected at-large by residents Town-wide, and whether the number of seats on the Town Council should be changed.

For questions or further information, please contact districtelections@townofwindsor.com. You may also contact Town Clerk Maria De La O at mdelao@townofwindsor.com or 707-838-5315. A special District Election Information webpage has been created on the Town's website: <https://www.townofwindsor.com/1149/District-Election-Information>.

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