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MEDIA RELEASE

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Windsor Water District Initiates Potential Annexation of Portion of Sonoma Water’s Airport Larkfield Wikiup Sanitation Zone

Windsor, California (February 8, 2024) – At its meeting on February 7, 2024, the Windsor Water District (WWD) Board of Directors, took the first step toward the potential annexation of a portion of Sonoma Water’s Airport Larkfield Wikiup Sanitation Zone (ALWSZ). The purpose of expanding WWD’s service area via annexation would be to provide for maximum efficiency of operations for both agencies, offer a significant increase in available storage for recycled water, and gain a greater level of beneficial reuse of recycled water, thus preserving potable water for other uses.

The WWD Board (comprised of the Town Council of the Town of Windsor) authorized the Windsor Town Manager to issue a letter to the Sonoma County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) requesting expansion of the WWD sphere of influence and annexation of a specified portion of the ALWSZ service area. Authorizing the Town Manager to issue the letter is not a final approval of the annexation – such approval from the Board of Directors of the WWD will be sought later, once applications and further studies are complete.

The WWD proposes to annex a portion of the ALSWZ service area that is currently served drinking water by the WWD, and, in addition, provide sewer service to the remainder of the area via a contract with Sonoma Water. It’s important to note that the proposal would annex a portion of the ALWSZ into the WWD service area - not into the Town of Windsor.

The annexation process is expected to take at least 12 months. In the meantime, the WWD and Sonoma Water are negotiating an agreement by which WWD would provide wastewater collection and treatment for all of ALWSZ area on a contractual basis, prior to completion of the annexation.

“We’re very motivated to fully explore this possible consolidation, which will benefit Sonoma Water, Windsor Water District, and the communities served by both agencies” said Grant Davis, General Manager of Sonoma Water. *“We expect this project will increase operational efficiencies and expand recycled water use, and serve as an outstanding example of inter-agency collaboration for the greater good.”*

Town of Windsor Mayor Rosa Reynoza stated, *“This effort underscores Windsor’s Net Zero goals, and highlights our ability to collaborate with our neighbors and partners in responsibly managing our precious water resources.”*

Sonoma Water’s ALWSZ treatment plant needs significant upgrades and expenditures to maintain its operations. It currently operates at a significant deficit to the County of Sonoma and lacks the service area necessary to sufficiently increase sewer rates to meet the required operational and capital expenses identified. The Windsor Water Reclamation Facility currently has enough excess rated capacity to fully treat all flows and loadings from the ALWSZ.

These factors point to a wastewater treatment system that could be more efficient, economical, and beneficial to all parties and the ratepayers, through consolidating services. This project is expected to provide increased storage of recycled water, which in turn would help boost the beneficial reuse of that water, and contribute toward Windsor’s net-zero discharge goal. Maximizing regional resources in this collaborative manner will help increase the availability of recycled water for use at costs below potable water rates, and will help foster sewer rate stabilization. Consolidation will provide an estimated 250 million gallons of additional recycled water.

More information about how the Windsor’s efforts to achieve net-zero status at its Water Reclamation Facility is available on the [Town’s website](#).

The Town of Windsor is located 63 miles north of San Francisco in Sonoma County’s Russian River Valley, part of the Northern California wine country. It encompasses an area of 7.3 square miles, and has a population of about 26,000. Windsor draws visitors from around the world to enjoy the area’s extraordinary natural beauty, first-rate lodging, and abundance of world-class wineries. Visit www.townofwindsor.com.

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