

## Willowbank County Service Area Advisory Committee

### Minutes

Meeting of Wednesday, September 21, 2016, 7:00pm

Marguerite Montgomery Elementary Multipurpose Room  
1441 Danbury Street, Davis CA

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Committee Chair Cooluris called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Kent Calfee, John Cooluris, Marcia Kreith, Dick McCapes, Joanne Roy, and Olin Woods.

**ABSENT:** Bill Corliss

**INTRODUCTIONS:** Cooluris introduced Anna Louzon, with the County Administrator's Office support team as the new CSA/County staff liaison and welcomed her to the Advisory Committee meeting.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Maureen Poole, Secretary, Jim Provenza, Yolo County Supervisor, Richard Reed, Deputy to Supervisor Provenza, Anna Louzon, CAO Support Team, Terry and Susie Miller, Don Gueffroy, , Marybeth Buechner, Michael Dahmus, Gail Cooluris, Pam Eisele, John Eisele, John Klisiewicz, Laura Schmidt, Mike and Mary Anne Skeels, Mike and Kathleen Rockwell, Jeff and Nicole Slaton, Linda Clevenger, Anne Tolgham and others.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:** The minutes of March 9 and July 6, 2016 were unanimously approved as presented.  
MSC: Calfee/ McCapes.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Cooluris invited anyone interested to address the Committee on subjects not related to the agenda items. One community member addressed the Committee.

**MEMBER COMMENT:** There was no member comment.

**COUNTY REPORT:** Supervisor Provenza welcomed Anna Louzon and provided a brief background of her experience. Provenza announced that Yolo County received an \$800,000 grant from the Federal Government to finish the Habitat Conservation Plan through the Yolo Conservancy. He further explained that this will allow Yolo County to have control of the location of new habitat mitigation and that it is complimentary to agriculture. The Board of Supervisors is voting on a budget at the next meeting. The County is in good fiscal shape and will be adding again to the reserve and contingency funds this year.

**WASTE REMOVAL AFTER COUNTY'S AGREEMENT WITH DAVIS WASTE REMOVAL ENDS IN 2019:** Cooluris presented this item because of the interest in alternatives for green and solid waste removal in the future. He suggested that a subcommittee be formed to decide whether or not waste removal is an additional power that we would want the Board of Supervisors to consider. Cooluris stated that Bill Corliss has expressed interest in being on the subcommittee. Louzon stated that the CAO's office would be more than happy to provide staff support to the subcommittee in compiling data and options to bring back to the Committee.

The motion was made to create a new subcommittee for the purpose of considering waste removal as an additional power of the Willowbank County Service Area subject to the Board of Supervisors approval. MSC: McCapes/Woods. The motion passed by the following vote: Ayes: (5); Noes: None; Abstain: (1, Roy); Absent: (1, Corliss).

Cooluris asked for volunteers to be on the subcommittee: Corliss, Kreith, and McCapes volunteered.

**WILLOWBANK'S IRRIGATION WATER OPTIONS:** Cooluris started by thanking Gregg and Joanne Roy for their report, which was distributed at the meeting (see Attachment A). It is comprised of comments responding to the Wood Rodger's Technical Memorandum of August 26, 2016, "Willowbank CSA Irrigation System Separation Feasibility Study." Cooluris then reviewed water usage data included in the Wood Rodgers (WR) report. Discussion regarding water usage, conservation, and City of Davis rates resulted.

Louzon suggested that we ask the County Counsel to continue to examine the water rates proposed for next year (2017) and at the first of the year to consider requesting an audit and challenge the rates under Prop 218. She explained that to challenge rates under Prop. 218 you can either challenge the rate (a) when Prop. 218 is noticed for public comment; (b) or when rates are set you have 120 days after the established date; (c) or each time the rate changes one has 120 days after that date to challenge the fees.

It was proposed we look at the usage data, understand rates, and come back with as much information as we can to supplement the WR report and educate the neighborhood prior to making a decision about proceeding further with a separate irrigation project or not. Luzon offered staff could make a list and research questions and/or concerns that require further clarification eg. water reduction and cost savings if rates were reduced, backflow certification requirements if the irrigation system is separate from the domestic supply, County code requirements and the cost to hook up to the system need to be addressed at a public meeting with Woods Rogers. In addition, Provenza thought staff could informally request to talk to City staff about their expectations on future rates and rate structure. In this regard, Brady's question whether current rates are based on actual bond costs is germane.

**YOLO LAFCO MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW/SPHERE OF INFLUENCE STUDY:** Woods reported several members of the WCSA Advisory Committee and others, including John Cooluris, Marcia Kreith, Gregg and Joanne Roy, and Kent Calfee either submitted written comments to LAFCo prior to the LAFCo hearing and/or attended the hearing on July 28, 2016. When adopting the Final MSR/SOI, the Commission accepted some of the recommendations but not all. It was noted that LAFCo's role in the Municipal Services Review process is like an auditor to make recommendations and the County and the Board of Supervisors may choose whether to implement them. Woods provided copies of the LAFCo report and offered to answer any questions (See Attachment B for summary of LAFCo's Willowbank CSA-Specific Recommendations. The entire final LAFCO report on the MSR/SOI is at <http://www.yolocounty.org/home/showdocument?id=6320> .)

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:** Willowbank's Irrigation Water Options and new waste removal subcommittee.

**NEXT MEETING: November 16, 2016**

**ADJOURNMENT:** 8:43PM **MSC:** (Calfee/Woods) Unanimously approved.

Minutes unanimously approved as amended on November 16, 2016. **MSC:** (Corliss, McCapes).

Attachment A: Comments on Wood Rodgers Technical Memorandum dated August 26, 2016 submitted by Gregg and Joanne Roy at the Willowbank CSA Advisory Committee meeting on September 21, 2016.

Attachment B: August 19, 2016 letter from Christine M. Crawford, AICP, Executive Officer Yolo Local Agency Formation Commission to Supervisor Jim Provenza, Chair, Yolo County Board of Supervisors regarding LAFCo's July 28, 2016 MSR recommendations.

**COMMENTS ON  
WOOD RODGERS TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM:  
“Willowbank CSA Irrigation System Separation Feasibility Study”  
Dated August 26, 2016**

**Submitted by Gregg and Joanne Roy  
at the Willowbank CSA Advisory Committee meeting on September 21, 2016**

**This technical memorandum (TM) is not a “feasibility study”.**

- ***Expectations vs. what the TM provides.***
  - ***Proposition 218 Election Notification (October 7, 2014) and contract between Wood Rodgers and Yolo county (February 25, 2015).*** The wording of the Prop. 218 notice that accompanied the support/protect ballot clearly indicated that the assessment was for “water and irrigation feasibility study services” (Oct. 7, 2014). However, the scope of services developed by Wood Rodgers did not stipulate that they would be providing a complete feasibility study but only information supporting a feasibility study. This is supported by the conclusion on Page 10 of the TM, dated August 26, 2016, that suggests that “Willowbank advance this project to the preliminary design phase in order to confirm some of the assumptions and develop refined system layouts and costs.” This simple wording at the end suggests the \$28,200 assessment was never sufficient funding to complete a feasibility report on the proposed irrigation project. The wording was also open ended in that it didn’t stipulate which elements of the Wood Rodgers report would need to be confirmed and there is no conclusion brought forth by Wood Rodgers about the actual feasibility of the project.
  - ***Wood Rodgers cost estimate and scope of work.*** The Wood Rodgers cost estimate and scope to prepare the TM did not include enough capacity or scope to cover all of the issues needed to be addressed in a feasibility study. The notion that a \$26,000 contract is adequate funding to provide a comprehensive study reflects a certain naivety on part of the Willowbank CSA Advisory Committee and Yolo County staff responsible for entering into the contract with Wood Rodgers. As an example, an average billing rate of \$150/hour equates to approximately 175 hours of labor. The Wood Rodgers TM included two authors, which suggests, if that effort is evenly divided between the two staff, equals only 80 hours of effort each.

Finally, the Wood Rodgers scope is so broad and vague that almost every task is open to interpretation – it would not be surprising if this has led to

disagreements between the contractor and Yolo County. Was this a factor in why the TM has taken so long to be released?

- **Page 8, Table 5: Estimated Annual Costs of Each Alternative.** Including an annual cost for “No Action” and “Individual Homeowner Wells” is misleading at best and disingenuous at worst. These are costs that would be totally born by individuals and not a project or condition that is the responsibility of the Willowbank CSA or Yolo County. Making presumptions about how individuals will respond to certain economic or environmental conditions is not the purpose of a feasibility study and in fact suggests that Wood Rodgers, the Willowbank CSA Advisory Committee, and Yolo County have some unique and validated insight into economic welfare theory that the residents of Willowbank do not. These two values are misleading to the public and appear to be purposely included in the TM as a means to solely validate the costs of Alternative 3 and 4. *Requiring this was a flaw in the Wood Rodgers contract with Yolo County.*
- **“Feasibility Study”.** What is Yolo County’s definition/understanding of a feasibility study? This term seems to be used randomly with little understanding of what a feasibility study is and what it should conclude. In fact, the Willowbank CSA advisory committee and Yolo County should dispense with the constant reference to this TM as a feasibility study for the subject project because that term suggests a level of detail and precision that the Wood Rodgers TM does not attain.

### Cost savings...For whom?

- **Accruing more debt to save money? Current debt balance: \$435,000.** The Willowbank CSA Advisory Committee has never mentioned the fact that the neighborhood is still paying off the remaining principal of \$435,000.00 of the \$1,010,000.00 bond from 2000 to put us on the current water system. Approximately 79 neighbors pay \$1,192.52/year on our property taxes for the Willowbank Assessment District – the bond pays for the infrastructure of our current water system. In addition to the principal and interest, most of us pay an annual \$68.75/parcel bond annual administration assessment as well as a \$16/parcel annual administration assessment.

Although not mentioned in the TM, perhaps it would be more transparent and accurate to show that for most water users in our neighborhood, there is an additional, annual cost of \$1,192.52 currently paid on our property taxes for the Willowbank Assessment District. With this additional cost, it seems highly unlikely that neighbors who pay \$1,192.52 each year would actually save 30% on water costs with this proposal since we still owe \$435,000 for our current system. Rather, it seems the proposal would impose a bigger financial burden on a majority of neighbors.

- **Subsidizing the water use of others.** The proposal implies neighbors, who use less water, will subsidize the water usage of neighbors who use more water. Is this fair?

- ***What's the tipping point for affordability?*** The TM assumes that all of the property owners will join the proposed irrigation water well & distribution system. However, this is not necessarily the case. How many properties can this proposed system afford not to have hooked-up in order to still remain viable and cost effective? At what point does the cost of operating and maintaining the system become unviable for those who are burdened with it? And if this does become unviable for those who do hook-up, how will they obtain water for their outdoor use and how much will that cost?

**Additional fiscal considerations.**

- ***More costs to keep in mind.*** Some costs not included in TM, but may be worth keeping in mind:
  - Connection fee for each house and replumbing to disconnect from potable water system.
  - Reserve and contingency fund necessary to create and maintain for repairs and emergencies.
    - How much should this be?
    - How will the reserve be funded?
    - Should the allocation of costs be based on parcel size?
    - Bond assessment, including incidental and finance expenses.
  - Cost to conduct Proposition 218 process for additional study.
  - Cost to conduct Proposition 218 process for construction.
  - Do environmental permitting costs include CEQA compliance?
  - Annual testing for each house for backflow/cross-connection.
  - Billing: Third party to meter account and bill customers.
- ***What's the tipping point for non-viability?*** How many residences can the proposed system afford to *not* have hooked-up in order for it to survive or be cost-savings for residences that choose to hook-up to the system? Water systems that had the money to get built can also be shut down if operations & maintenance costs cannot be supported by the ratepayers. For example, rates can increase even when residents are using less water due to fixed costs that need funding. There are fixed costs and usage costs that need to be considered for how many users need to participate in order to make this water system cost-effective.
- ***Direct and overlapping bonded debt.*** The ability of a property owner within the neighborhood to pay a bond assessment for the proposal could be affected by the existence of other taxes and assessments imposed upon their property. In addition, other public agencies whose boundaries overlap those of the CSA, without consent of the County, may impose additional taxes or assessment liens on the property within the CSA to finance public improvements to be located inside of or outside of the CSA.

- ***Current direct and overlapping tax and assessment debt property owners in Willowbank are paying:***
  - Local agencies: property tax
  - Davis JUSD 2000 BD
  - Los Rios CCD 2002 BD
  - Davis Jt. Unif. 2012 Measure C
  - Davis Jt. Unif. 2013 Measure E
  - E. Davis Fire
  - Willowbank CSA
  - Willowbank A D
  - DVS Spec. Library Tax
  - Davis Jt. Un. CFD #1
  
- ***Another potential cost to individual homeowners: Measure H.*** Also, please keep in mind that on November ballot is Measure H, which would add \$620/year parcel tax for the next 8 years. If enacted, that is a cost that most property owners in the neighborhood must pay (unless senior or disabled).

For individual homeowners in the neighborhood, particularly for those who already pay almost \$3,000/annually in assessments on top of their property tax, is it fiscally prudent to add on an additional \$1,000+ assessment for a water well & distribution system when our current system is in good condition and when we can take more immediate and economical actions to reduce the cost of our water bills?

#### **Are there components in the TM missing?**

- ***Reserve and contingency funds needed.*** Reserve and contingency funds do not appear in the TM. In order to ensure continuing service, reserve and contingency funds are needed. For example:
  - Operating costs: 3-6 months in bank.
  - Debt: 1 year's worth in the bank.
  - Long-term capital: ?
  
- ***Bond and associated costs.*** Bonds cost money and have assessment and administrative costs associated with them. This is a significant cost missing when considering feasibility.
  
- ***What kind of well is this exactly and what requirements apply?*** There are specified requirements (e.g. setbacks) for different types of wells, such as drinking water systems and agricultural irrigation water systems. This proposal seems to fall somewhere in between because of where the end use of the water goes and how it gets there. It would be helpful to know how this well may be designated in order to comply with the

corresponding requirements.

- **Why no mention of a hydropneumatic tank?** A tank likely may be necessary to build and maintain adequate pressure – In order to provide efficient water supply, hydropneumatic tanks regulate system pressures to quickly meet system demand. The compressed air creates a cushion that can absorb or apply pressure as needed. If this well & distribution system is to serve all of the individual residences in Willowbank, it seems like such a tank may be necessary. However, the TM makes no mention of one.
- **Why no mention of backflow requirements?** A dual system will certainly require backflow and cross-connection precautionary measures, which may include annual testing for each residence. Why is backflow prevention not mentioned in the TM? Backflow-cross connection would be required for every connection. Also, testing costs may be \$150-200/connection (e.g. each house). How often does testing need to occur? Is this annually? If so, that is another yearly cost an individual homeowner must pay to use this system.
- **CEQA.** Does “Environmental Permitting” include an environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)? As a discretionary action, this proposal requires CEQA compliance.

**Questionable statements in the TM.**

- **\$1,500/year O&M costs seem too low.** No doubt that Wood Rodgers knows what an agricultural well would cost to maintain. However, this is not purely an agricultural well from the standpoint of where and how the water flows – these are residential properties where humans live, which increase the need for public health safety considerations and requirements. For comparison, North Davis Meadows well system O&M costs are \$120,000/year, which the City of Davis operates and maintains. It seems that the O&M costs for this proposal would likely be more than 1.25% of known O&M costs for North Davis Meadows. Also, a question arises as to what these costs include – For example, do they include regular testing, administrative, bond-related, and billing costs?
- **Alternative 4B irrigation well with new irrigation main (Sliplining option) – Seems to conflict with Yolo County requirement for visible purple pipe.** This alternative appears to be in violation of *Yolo County Improvement Standards, Section 8 Water Systems* under section 8-17 *Recycled Water and Non-Potable water Distribution Mains*. Section 8-1 states, “These Improvement Standards shall apply to water supply and distribution facilities to be maintained by a CSA Service Area (CSA) providing extended water services. These standards are minimum criteria.” Special provisions for non-potable water distribution mains include:

- Avoid cross connection of the potable and non-potable water systems, non-potable facilities shall be clearly marked through appropriate coloring of pipe materials and above ground appurtenances. Coloring shall be purple unless otherwise directed.
- Pipe color shall be purple and embossed or integrally stamped/marked “CAUTION: NONPOTABLE WATER – DO NOT DRINK.” Valve and meter boxes shall be colored purple and have the words “NONPOTABLE WATER” stamped into the face.
- Non-potable water mains and valve actuators will be located in the center of traffic lanes or on traffic lane lines.

It appears as if sliplining would violate Yolo County’s own standard as the outside of the sliplined pipe would not be purple. This begs the question as to why Wood Rodgers and Yolo County wasted money investigating an alternative that would violate county requirements. Identifying these types of potential fatal flaws is one of the primary purposes of a feasibility study. It also begs the question – what other requirements, water supply standards, quality standards, or permits may have been ignored in this TM?

- **“Outdoor” water use.** The report makes reference to “outdoor” water use and demands. What does this term entail? If it includes uses such as filling up pools or hot tubs, then it should be noted that such uses mandate potable water. Nonpotable water is not allowed for such purposes due to potential public health risks. If such “outdoor” uses are part of the calculations for “outdoor” use in the TM, then the numbers in the TM are inaccurate.

**Wood Rodgers TM (August 26, 2016), Line Review.**

- **Bibliography.** The Wood Rodgers TM does not include a bibliography. This is an important element that provides reviewers access to background and baseline information that was used to support the analysis and TM conclusions/recommendations. This is an indispensable item in conducting a review of any technical document.
- **Report authors.** The Wood Rodgers TM does not include background information regarding qualifications of Mr. Lodge and Mr. Patchett. In addition, if any modifications were made to the TM by CSA advisory committee members or County staff, they should be noted – this would help insure transparency and public confidence.
- **Page 1, BACKGROUND, Line 2.** The phrase, “Willowbank residents pay a premium” is a subjective statement that should be deleted. There is nothing in the record that suggests that Willowbank residents pay more for or will pay more for their water than



other water service customers in the City of Davis water service area. Willowbank residents may pay more for their water than other service area customers as a result of debt service on the bonds sold to pay for the construction of the potable water distribution system, but not at a higher CCF rate.

- **Page 2, METHODOLOGY, Lines 1 and 6.** Line 1 of the TM indicates that Wood Rodgers collected data on Willowbank water use for the 2008 through 2014 period from the City of Davis. On line 6, Wood Rodgers opts to only apply data from 2014. This begs the question – Why did they just use the 2014 data and not the seven-year time series? A longer time sequence is a more accurate reflection of a range of meteorological conditions and hence outdoor water use.
- **Page 2, METHODOLOGY, Line 11.** The application of the indoor use of 75 gallons per capital per day for Willowbank residents needs to be cited. From what source was the value derived? This is important in that it sets the stage for the estimated outdoor water use applied in the TM.
- **Page 3, METHODOLOGY, Line 1.** The assumption that watering occurs only three days per week needs to be supported and explained why it was applied to the analysis. Table 1 of the report, it was assumed that watering was applied uniformly over all days of the month. This assumption is very important in that it suggests that the elements of the proposed irrigation system (pump size, well depth, distribution pipeline diameter, etc.) that served as the basis for estimating costs would not meet the daily estimated usage reported in Table 2, but could if irrigation was restricted to three days a week.

This begs the question – What additional elements would be required to fully meet the Willowbank irrigation demand as reported in Table 2 of the Wood Rodgers TM? Discussions with engineers not affiliated with the project suggest that to meet the irrigation demands shown in Table 2, then additional, required equipment may include a water storage tank, higher capacity well pump, larger diameter distribution pipe, and booster pumps along the main water distribution system.

- **Page 4, METHODOLOGY, Line 7.** The application of the “...static head lift of 130-feet was assumed on the suction side of the pumps to account for varying source water levels.” Further explanation is needed. Why was 130-feet selected?
- **Page 4, METHODOLOGY, Line 8 and Last Paragraph.** Pump horsepower and energy needs: This is another example of additional work that needs to be performed as part of a complete cost estimate for an irrigation project.
- **Page 5, Basis for Costs, Line 6.** The TM indicates that land acquisition costs could total \$150,000, yet the report is silent on where and why land acquisition would occur.

**Public health risks.**

- ***Shouldn't kids be able to play in their own yard's sprinklers without risking their health?*** Providing nonpotable, irrigation water for residences is not the same as for typical uses of nonpotable, irrigation water, such as golf courses, parks, and cemeteries. Although this proposal is meant for "irrigation" purposes, does the fact that the system is to serve residences, where vulnerable populations such as pregnant women and children live, create a need to take precautionary measures to ensure public health safety? For example, it seems reasonable to believe that a person could take a drink out of hose bib on the side of their house, fill a kiddie pool using a hose bib in their yard, let their children play in the sprinklers on a hot summer day, or fill a hot tub or pool. But what risks and liabilities is the CSA Advisory Committee and the County willing to take? Considering that the proposed water system is to be used on individual, residential properties, rather than more typical, allowed uses of nonpotable, irrigation water systems, how will there be assurances for public health safety on individual residential properties? The TM makes no mention of any consideration regarding such matters.

**Inconsistencies and compliance with local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and policies.**

- ***Compliance and consistency.*** Compliance with rules and regulations, and consistency with policies related to, public health, groundwater, water quality, and land use, of the county (e.g. General Plan, Yolo County Environmental Health Division) and state (e.g. California Department of Public Health, and State Water Resources Control Board) need to be looked at. For example:
  - How should inconsistencies with the Yolo County General Plan be addressed? Policies could be considered completely ineffectual if all developed properties could obtain supplemental water to serve existing developments.
  - How should conflicts with the Public Utilities Act be addressed? The proposal circumvents the findings BY LAFCo that adequate water services and resources are available and do serve this neighborhood. The proposal for a separate irrigation well and distribution system does not improve or address any genuine service need or mandate, and could be viewed as an unnecessary duplication of services.
- ***Setting questionable precedent.*** If the water well is allowed to be constructed and operated, it will indicate to all future development that water wells may be used to compensate for the required rationing of water resources during the ongoing drought. As such, the precedential value of the County's action is extremely significant.
- ***Water shortage emergency.*** If a water shortage emergency is declared, how will the County monitor and enforce restrictions? For such purposes, at the very least, metering

is essential.

**NO environmental benefit.**

- ***Saving surface water?*** Using less surface water *could* help riparian ecosystems *as long as no one else uses the water instead*. HOWEVER, they do. As the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers are currently operated, not one drop more than the regulatory minimum makes it out of the Delta. So, the reality is that if this neighborhood (via City of Davis) does not use the surface water, someone else will. Net impact on the environment from one diverter (e.g. City of Davis; more specifically Willowbank) reducing surface water diversions? ZERO. Has anyone talked to the Davis-Woodland joint agency?

In addition, the groundwater and surface water systems are likely hydrologically connected. How would this proposal save surface water? In fact, could operation of the well draw down groundwater otherwise available to provide base flows to streams and riparian habitat?

- **Proposal allows for circumvention of water conservation efforts.** The proposal allows residents to avoid conserving water by circumventing rationing and providing irrigation for water-intensive landscaping on properties that already receive water service. It avoids the need for residents to conserve water consistent with State and County rules as well as intent and policies on water use restrictions during water shortage emergencies.
- **Urban growth.** This proposal encourages and would subsidize urban growth.
- **Subsidence issues?** Are there issues with the potential for subsidence? As noted in the County of Yolo 2030 Countywide General Plan, subsidence:
  - Can cause permanent loss of aquifer capacity when upper soil layers collapse.
  - Can compromise wells, irrigation canals, levees and highways.
  - The Yolo Subsidence Monitoring Project, a collaboration of local, state, and federal agencies, has determined that land subsidence due to overdraft of the shallow aquifer is a significant concern in the East Yolo sub-basin.

Subsidence issues would be much costlier in the long-run rather than simply staying with the current water system.

**Potential next steps.**

The open ended conclusion of the Wood Rogers TM (Page 10) raises concerns regarding potential next steps to completing a feasibility study, should the exploration into this proposal

continue.

- **Who is responsible for completing a feasibility study?** The Wood Rodgers TM is not a feasibility study in that its only focus is on estimating the costs of the four alternatives discussed in the TM. Will Willowbank residents be asked to provide additional funding through the Proposition 218 process to answer the questions raised by the Wood Rodgers TM? If so, would it be prudent to at least show and consider that the Proposition 218 process is an additional cost to each resident?
- **Comprehensive study needed.** The County should conduct a comprehensive study with the ultimate goal of providing Willowbank residents and Yolo County officials a full understanding of the total costs of an irrigation project. As currently structured, the Wood Rodgers TM only partially estimates project costs.
  - The goal of the comprehensive study should include the following results:
    - **Groundwater.** Although the Wood Rodgers report from last year looked at water quality as a general issue, questions that need to be answered in more detail include: Is there groundwater in abundance and quality that will meet Willowbank water demand for the foreseeable future? What is the hydrologic condition of the aquifer? Are there or would there be conflicts with other existing or planned wells? What are the water quality requirements for water provided through a municipal irrigation system and what are the costs in meeting those permit requirements? The County should specify restrictions on the amount and/or rate at which groundwater may be extracted from the well.
    - **Pricing structure.** How will the water pricing structure be established? Presumably the County will install meters and create and manage a billing entity for the irrigation system. The Wood Rodgers TM makes no mention of this important element if in fact an irrigation system is placed in service.
    - **Connection costs.** The Wood Rodgers TM is silent on direct costs that will be incurred solely by property owners if they opt to connect to the irrigation distribution system. Examples of such costs include: installing the connection pipeline across their property, decoupling their irrigation system from their potable water supply, certification by the City of Davis that the irrigation system is decoupled from the potable water supply, and other ancillary plumbing requirements. Also, backflow prevention at every potable water connection point (each house) as well as annual testing is a cost not included in the TM.

- **Study objectivity.** The oversight of any ongoing or additional study should be directed by County staff and not the Willowbank CSA Advisory Committee or subcommittee. The Willowbank CSA Advisory Committee's role should be strictly limited to review and comment on a draft and final report. This will help ensure that the County and the CSA Advisory Committee members avoid any perceived or actual conflicts of interest or formation of any prejudicial conclusions in the report.

**A practical, easy, and immediate solution to the proposed issue of saving on water rates: Conservation by individual residences.**

- **Conservation seems to be merely a last minute thought in the TM; but it is a solution right in front of us to address water costs.** The report fails to mention any statistics about conservation efforts during this time of drought in the area. In fact, in a year-over-year comparison for the City of Davis (which includes Old Willowbank), overall consumption in July 2016 *decreased* 20.93% over the past 4 years (based on reports submitted to the State Water Resources Control Board). Have we reached a point where individual property owners have exhausted all of their conservation options?

Also, considering that the proposal would burden many more than others, conservation can be tailored to individual homeowners needs and preferences without imposing additional costs on others.

- **Has the Willowbank CSA done enough to promote water conservation?**
  - Something as simple as referring people to County's "WATER CONSERVATION INFORMATION" webpage, or the County's "DROUGHT RESOURCES" webpage, which both contain useful information and links related to water conservation.
  - El Macero CSA, North Davis Meadows CSA, and Wild Wings CSA, all in conjunction with the Yolo County Resource Conservation District, have conducted Water Conservation Workshops for outdoor and water use. Why haven't we?
  - There are other ways to save financially, such as the state offers rebates to help property owners replace turf grass with more drought-tolerant plants. See <http://saveourwaterrebates.com/turf-replacement-rebates.html>.

**Conclusion.**

The Wood Rodgers TM, dated August 26, 2016, is not a true feasibility study. Several key components are missing, skewed, or inaccurate in this report, which makes its conclusions

about the cost-effectiveness of each alternative questionable at best.

If the conclusion of the TM is that building a water well & distribution system will “save” 30% costs in water, then wouldn’t it be simpler, less cumbersome, and actually cheaper for individuals to simply reduce the amount of water they consume through means such as replacing high-water need plants with low-water need plants, switch to drip irrigation, or change out older model toilets with water-saving ones? The simple solution is for individuals to take control of their own water use rather than tear up the streets, create more risk to public health and additional liability, and create a system where some subsidize the water use of others. As shown in our current drought state of emergency, people are well equipped to reduce their water consumption in order to save on their water rates.

A question arises as to the prudence in seeking more debt and a more complex, dual water system with potential liability and public health risks, for a neighborhood with its current system in good working condition. The requirements of supplying water in a sufficient quantity, quality, and pressure to satisfy domestic, irrigation, and emergency fire flow for the CSA are met. The actual cost savings of the proposal based on the TM is questionable. Would the benefits justify the potential costs?

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August 19, 2016

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Yolo County Board of Supervisors  
625 Court Street, Room 204, Woodland, CA 95695

Re: LAFCo Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Study for the City of Davis, El Macero CSA, North Davis Meadows CSA and Willowbank CSA (LAFCo № S-044)

Dear Supervisor Provenza,

On July 28, 2016, the Yolo Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) adopted the 2016 Municipal Service Review (MSR) and Sphere of Influence (SOI) Study for the City of Davis, El Macero County Service Area (CSA), North Davis Meadows CSA and Willowbank CSA. Attached for your records is LAFCo's resolution adopting the Final MSR/SOI. The Final MSR/SOI can be downloaded at [www.yololafco.org](http://www.yololafco.org).

The purpose of an MSR in general is to provide a comprehensive inventory and analysis of the services provided by local municipalities, service areas, and special districts. It evaluates the agency's structure and operation and discusses possible areas for improvement and coordination. To conclude LAFCo's process, the MSR analysis for these CSAs resulted in the following recommendations for your consideration. The recommendations are as follows:

**General CSA Recommendations:**

1. In order to enhance transparency of the CSA's operations, it is recommended that individual financial reports be compiled by County staff that clearly defines the operations being financed by each fund, and the reserve balances for restricted and unrestricted uses.
2. The CSA Manager should continue to monitor the County's CSA financial practices to ensure that they adhere to countywide financial policies and best practices and that CSA finances are transparent and easy to follow for the advisory committee and constituents.
3. Yolo County should develop and establish financial policies specific to CSA operations, including contracting, purchasing, reporting, Capital Improvement Plans (CIPs), reserves, and fund tracking mechanisms, to enhance clarity of CSA finances.
4. Complete the process of having the Department of Financial Services take over the management of all CSA accounting, in order to augment reliability of CSA fund tracking and regular financial reports.

5. Begin reporting to the State Controller's Office based on the accrual method of accounting to more accurately portray the financial transactions of the CSA from year to year.
6. County staff should provide quarterly financial reports for each CSA that clarify in details the various funds, fund balances, sources of revenue for each fund, and a more detailed list of expenditures in each fund or for each service, and provided to the Board of Supervisors and the advisory committees.
7. The County should formalize policies and procedures and apply them consistently across the CSAs to clearly define certain advisory committee processes, such as means to conduct outreach, when advisory committees are needed or should be disbanded, term limits, how officers are to be chosen, who develops an agenda, how an agenda is developed, requiring agenda items to directly relate to services provided by CSA, and how meetings are to be run with such specifics as how much time will be allotted to each member of the public for comments.
8. The CSA Manager should adhere to the County Code of Ordinances and ensure the advisory committees annually select a chairperson as required, or change the policy to every two years as is more commonly practiced. Additionally, the County should consider reinstating term limits for the advisory committee members to encourage more resident involvement in the activities of the CSA.
9. County staff should compile an email distribution list for all residents (separate from the HOA) and/or provide direct mailings in order to ensure that all residents are kept informed of CSA Advisory Committee activities. Residents could be given an option to opt-out of this service, if desired.
10. The County's CSA website should be updated to post all available information, including financial reports specific to the particular CSA, municipal service rates, all minutes of advisory committee meetings, and agendas and announcements for the next meeting in a readily apparent location.

El Macero CSA-Specific Recommendations:

1. The County, in consultation with the CSA advisory committee, should to develop options for future maintenance and improvements to roads, including a feasibility and cost/benefit analysis of potentially privatizing the El Macero road system for maintenance by the HOA. The analysis should review the potential for any unintended consequences to this change in service structure, in particular with respect to homeowner costs, public safety enforcement and solid waste collection.
2. LAFCo recommends that County staff compile a long term capital improvement plan for the CSA with a focus on anticipated street needs over the next few decades to ensure that the assessment being charged is sufficient to finance projected costs.
3. The reserve level of El Macero CSA should be reviewed to determine if it is appropriate to the needs of the CSA and the service structure after a capital improvement plan is developed to determine all capital needs of the CSA.
4. In order to enhance transparency, it is recommended that the County develop a worksheet or bill that can be distributed to the residents at the same time as the property tax bill to clearly demonstrate how the charges are determined.
5. The County, in consultation with the CSA Advisory Committee, should consider amending the County-City contract to provide for direct billing for services by the City of Davis to El Macero residents to further enhance efficiency and transparency and save the CSA in administration fees to the County for billing. This recommendation assumes



the existing sewer rate that has already been agreed upon by the City and the County would be retained for the duration of the existing term of agreement and future rates would continue to be negotiated between the CSA and the City of Davis, as necessary.

Willowbank CSA-Specific Recommendations:

1. The County should consider a long-term plan for services and determine if there is a desire to add additional services to the Willowbank CSA in the future.
2. LAFCo recommends that an advisory committee for the Willowbank CSA is warranted at this time to address whether a separate irrigation system is desired. However, once a decision has been reached regarding the irrigation system, the County should consider whether an advisory committee is still needed.
3. If additional services are not anticipated, the County should consider dissolving the Willowbank CSA because it is no longer needed and would promote more efficient government services.
4. If the County determines that the CSA will remain per the Accountability, Structure and Efficiencies section recommendations, review Willowbank CSA's assessment to ensure it is adequate to continue covering the CSA's administration costs. Simultaneously, Willowbank CSA's expenditures should be reviewed to ensure they are appropriate to the amount of work attributed to the CSA, and to determine whether an advisory committee is necessary given the amount of administrative costs to oversee its minimal functions.
5. Account for the Willowbank Water Assessment District as a separate entity from the Willowbank CSA to accurately represent where liability for payment of the debt lies.

North Davis Meadows CSA-Specific Recommendations:

1. The County CSA Manager should conduct an analysis of the existing fee structure to ensure that fees continue to cover necessary costs of all services provided. In particular, there are no fees specific to the drainage, landscaping, and street lighting services. The cost of providing these services should be reviewed and fees set accordingly.
2. Funding for the drainage, landscaping, and street lighting services should be tracked and accounted for separately in the North Davis Meadows CSA's financial reports.
3. The County CSA Manager should develop an annual drainage maintenance plan. The plan should include a schedule and a map to identify current conditions, critical locations, and problems such as timing in regard to wildlife or other considerations, and establish a regular maintenance schedule to ensure adequate maintenance occurs on an ongoing basis.
4. The potential for outsourcing or transferring drainage and flood control services to the Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District should be evaluated by the CSA Manager, in consultation with the advisory committee.
5. The County should account for the North Davis Meadows Assessment District as a separate entity from the North Davis Meadows CSA to accurately represent where liability for payment of the debt lies.
6. The CSA Manager should pursue an agreement with the City to bill North Davis Meadows residents directly for water services.

LAFCo will be reviewing your agency's status regarding these recommendations prior to any future LAFCo approvals and/or prior to the next Municipal Service Review for these CSAs tentatively scheduled for fiscal year 2019/20. Thank you for working with us during the MSR/SOI process. Please feel free to contact me with any questions at (530) 666-8048 or [Christine.Crawford@yolocounty.org](mailto:Christine.Crawford@yolocounty.org).

Best regards,



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Executive Officer

cc: Supervisor Don Saylor  
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Encl: LAFCo Resolution 2016-05