



# Yolo LAFCo

2024 Commissioner Handbook



# Why LAFCo?

Local Agency Formation Commission

- ▶ 1940s and 1950s population boom
- ▶ Land speculation
- ▶ Increased car mobility moved population out of cities
- ▶ Developers seeking special districts as means to provide services
- ▶ Shift from rural ag-focused districts to urban services
- ▶ Deteriorating city revenues created annexation land grabs
- ▶ State concern about misuse of land resources
- ▶ 1961 State Boundary Commission created (and failed)

# Need for LAFCOs

1961 State Boundary Commission created (and failed)

1962 Assembly Committee on Municipal and County Government Hearings:

1. To preserve the essence of "home rule" (i.e. local control) the problem had to be dealt with at the local county level;
2. Whatever institution was formed had to have decisive, regulatory power to realistically have a beneficial effect; and
3. Local answers to the problems of urban sprawl and proliferation of local agencies within each county required equal participation by the county and the cities because only then would workable, practical solutions be derived

LAFCOs represent a unique California experiment in rationalizing growth and development through local control of the formation, expansion and alteration of agencies within each county

Shortly after LAFCOs' creation, Governor Brown summarized their potential when he heralded the Commissions as California's "test of the capacity of local government to deal effectively with urban growth"

# LAFCo Independence with Accountability

- ▶ LAFCo is an independent governmental entity, separate from Yolo County and the Cities
- ▶ Its decisions are not appealable to any higher governmental authority
- ▶ Commissioners are accountable to the voters, and most changes in organization are subject to protest procedure and potential election by voters and/or landowners of the affected territory

# Balanced Membership

- ▶ The Legislature has established a balanced membership on LAFCO consisting of City, County, Public and Special District members
- ▶ Commissioners are not, however, appointed to be representative of a particular "city", "county" or "special district" viewpoint. The mixed membership is to ensure that various backgrounds and appreciations are reflected on the Commission
- ▶ Special Districts have not opted to participate in Yolo LAFCo thus far, but that could change in the future



# Commissioners are countywide decision-makers

Commissioners represent the interests of the countywide public as a whole, not the interests of any appointing agency.

The members of the Commission establish public policy in the areas of governmental boundaries, urban form, the provision of public services and jurisdictional relationships between local agencies.

This requires each LAFCO Commissioner to weigh evidence and render:

- ▶ Policy decisions regarding such matters as urban sprawl, agricultural preservation and orderly governmental boundaries; and
- ▶ Technical decisions based upon factors such as the need and adequacy of public services, compatibility of proposals with adopted plans and the effects of alternate actions.





# LAFCo's Legislative Intent

- ▶ “Discouraging urban sprawl, preserving open-space and prime agricultural lands, efficiently providing government services and encouraging the orderly formation and development of local governmental agencies based upon local conditions and circumstances...”

*Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act (a.k.a. “CKH” or “LAFCo Law”)*

# How do LAFCos achieve this intent?

- I. **Function as a think tank or research institute to help shape the evolution of local government countywide**

*"make studies and to obtain and furnish information which will contribute to the logical and reasonable development of local governments in each county and to shape the development of local governmental agencies so as to advantageously provide for present and future needs of each county and its communities."*

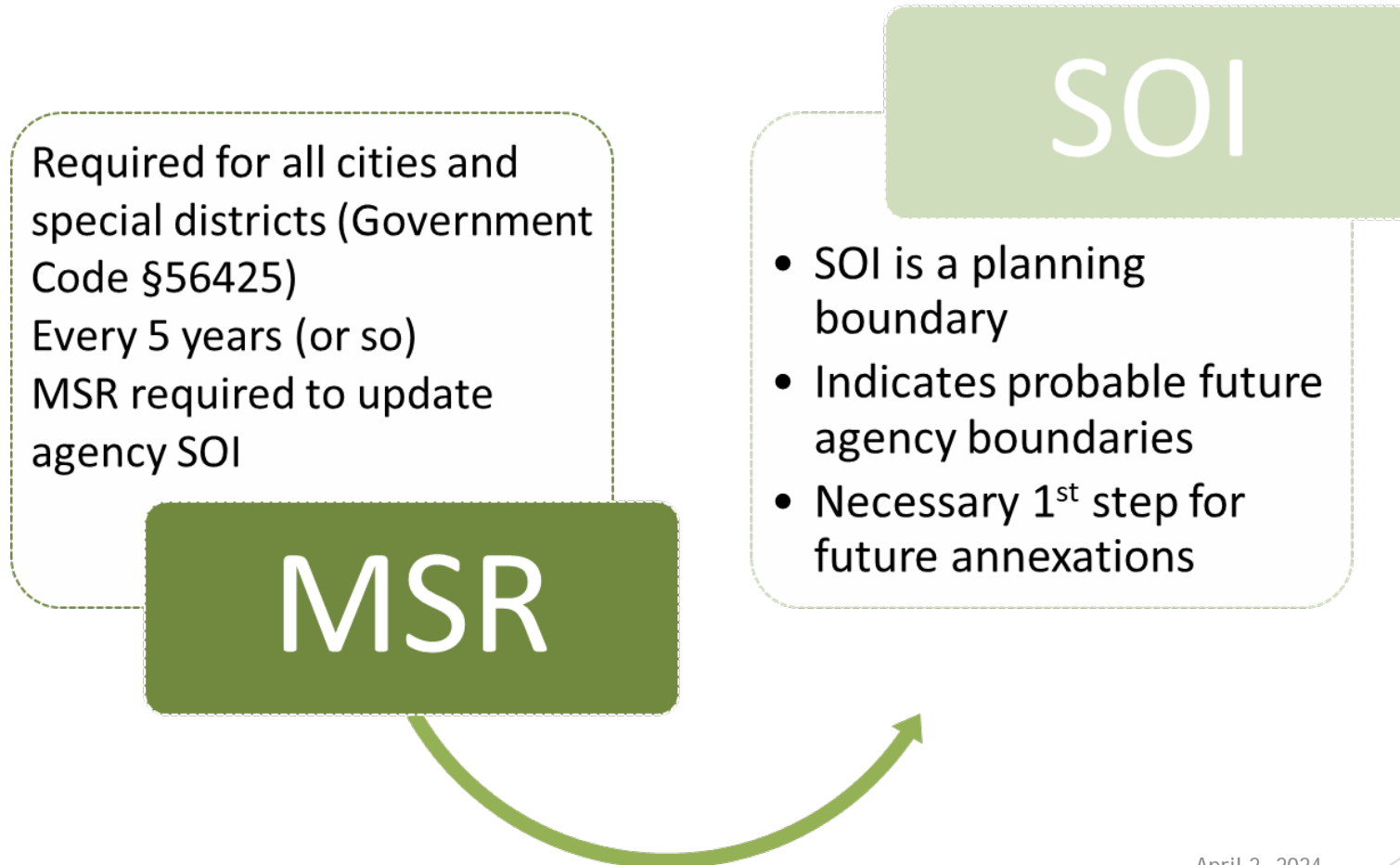
*We do this via our **Municipal Service Reviews (MSRs) and Sphere of Influence Updates (SOIs) for every city and district every 5 years or so***



# What is a Municipal Service Review (MSR)?

- ▶ Typically looks at common service across multiple agencies, i.e., fire protection or flood protection services
- ▶ Provides inventory and analysis of agency services
- ▶ Capacity, financial ability, and accountability in doing so (for now and foreseeable future)
- ▶ Based on existing information and trend analysis
- ▶ Evaluates structure, governance, and operation and possible areas for improvement and/or coordination
- ▶ Provides information and analysis to support SOI Update, if needed
- ▶ Seven (7) required “determinations” per state law
- ▶ Results in recommendations, not requirements

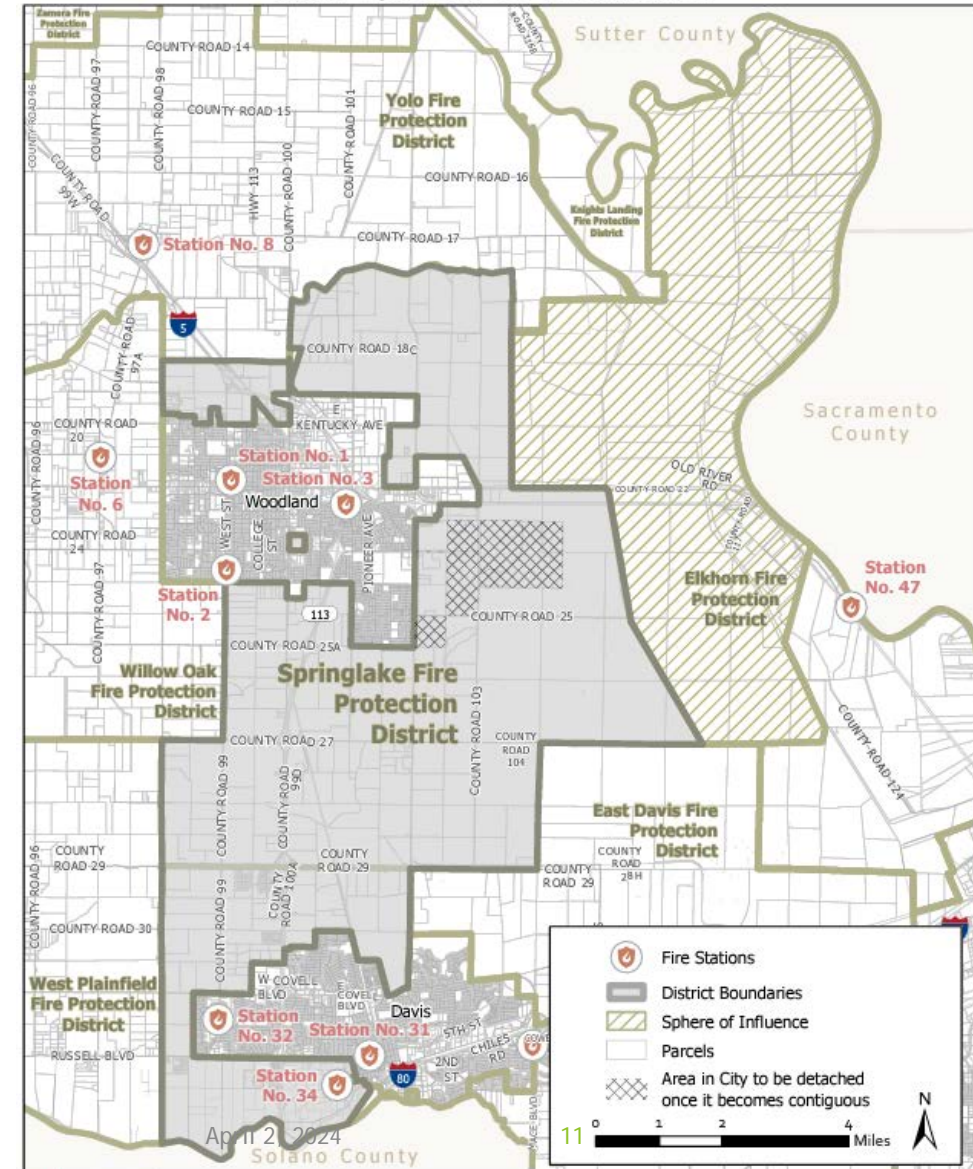
# MSRs inform agency Spheres of Influence



# Example of how SOIs are used

- ▶ LAFCo adopted this SOI for Springlake FPD in 2022
- ▶ Because the Fire MSR recommended Elkhorn FPD be dissolved for poor performance
- ▶ The SOI anticipates and illustrates how Elkhorn FPD territory should be divided and annexed for service coverage

Springlake Fire Protection District Boundary and Sphere of Influence



# How do LAFCos achieve this intent?

- II. Implement “changes of organization” (often as anticipated or suggested by MSR/SOI studies) as requested or LAFCo can initiate them
  - ▶ *Create new or dissolve outdated districts (formation/dissolution)*
  - ▶ *Expand or decrease size of agencies (annexations/detachments)*
  - ▶ *Clean up and simplify districts (mergers/consolidations)*
  - ▶ *Change authorized services for districts*
  - ▶ *Authorize extending services outside agency boundaries (in certain situations where needed)*

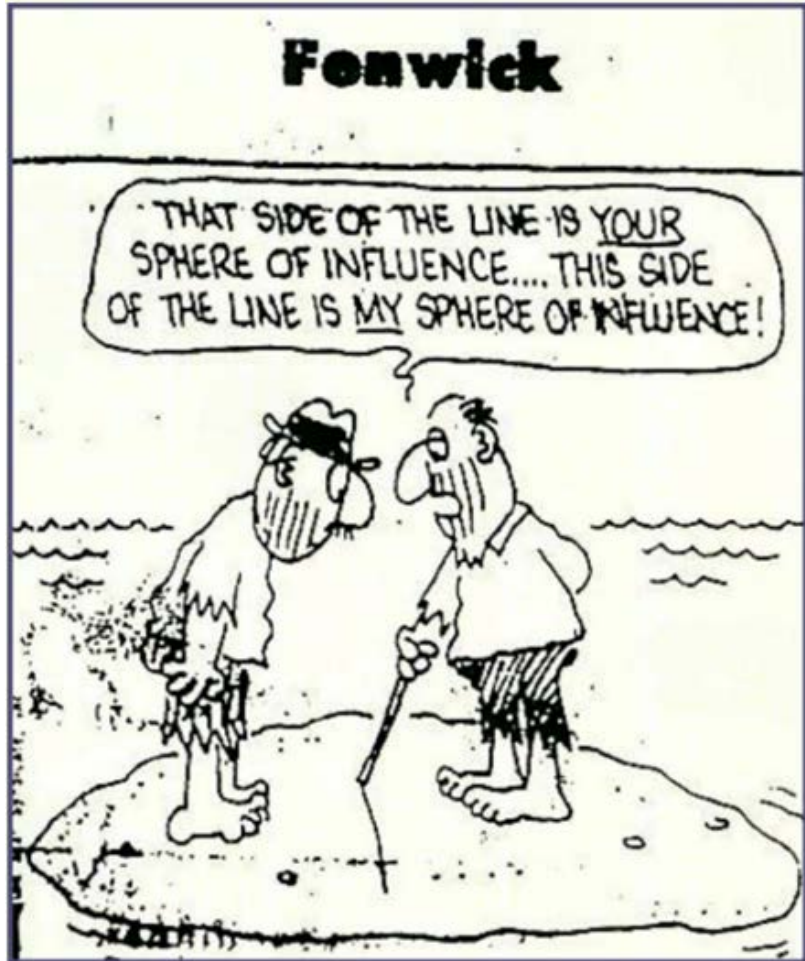
*LAFCo decisions affect local government structure/efficiencies, urban form, public services, infrastructure, and government finances*

*If 100% of affected landowners have not signed-on to the change, LAFCo decisions are subject to a protest process to determine any amount of protest (and acts accordingly)*

# What other things does Yolo LAFCo do that supports our mission?

## III. Shared Services

- ▶ Other informational studies:
  - ▶ Yolo County Animal Services Governance Study (2013)
  - ▶ Yolo Broadband Strategic Plan (2015)
  - ▶ MSRs on certain Joint Powers Authorities (began 2017+)
  - ▶ Agency Website Transparency Scorecard (began 2017+)
- ▶ Act as a convener to facilitate collaborative conversations:
  - ▶ YED-Talks (began 2012+)
  - ▶ Bring local agencies together as-needed to resolve agency issues



## LAFCo's work with Yolo cities:

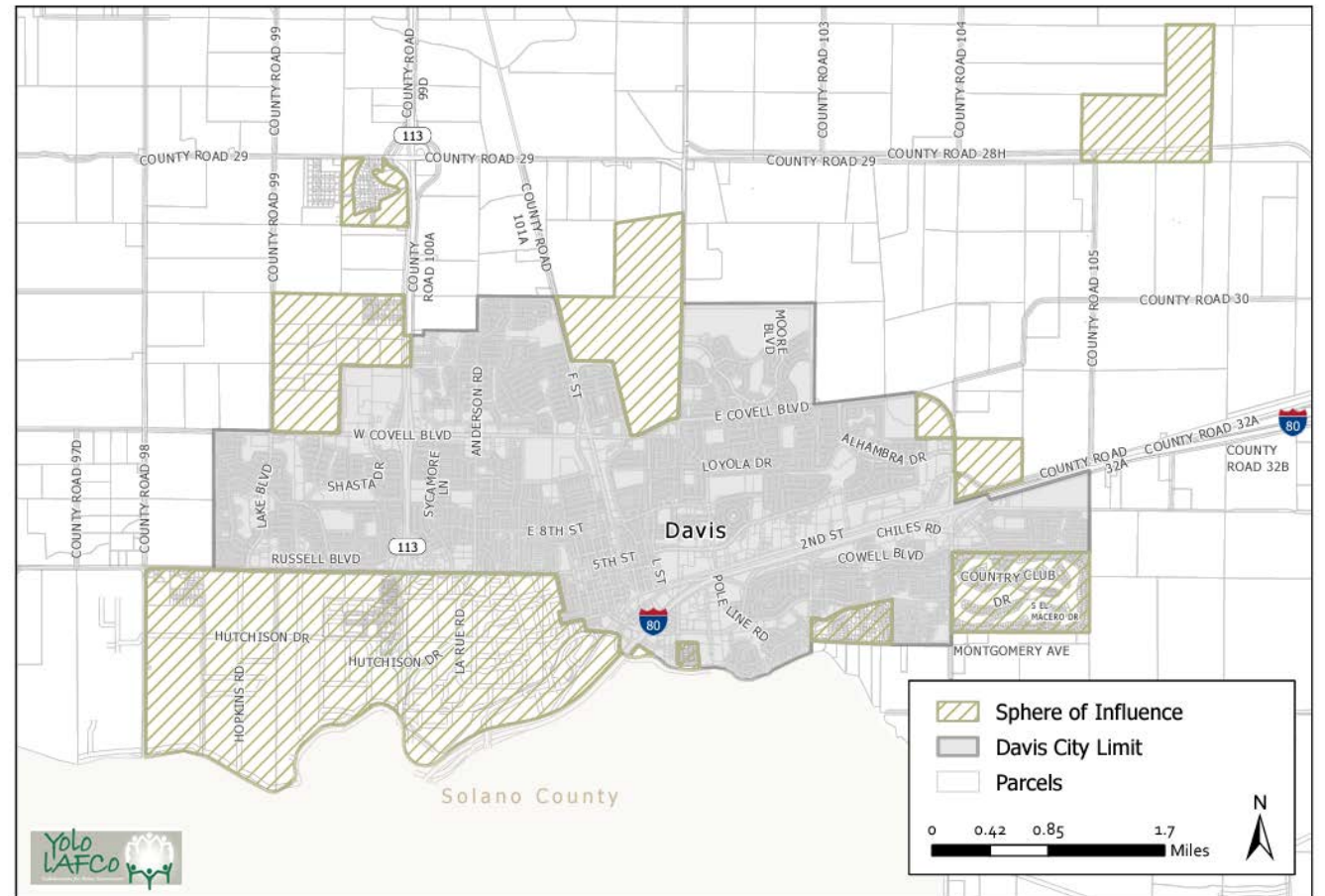
- ▶ Managing city-county interface
- ▶ Growth
- ▶ Municipal services
- ▶ Authorizing extended services outside cities (in certain circumstances)



# City of Davis Growth

- ▶ Voter approved growth measure requires any land use change to urban development must be approved at an election
- ▶ Even lands within SOI must go to a vote, so purpose of an SOI is somewhat weakened
- ▶ Davis is experiencing significant growth pressure
- ▶ Housing is very constrained and expensive
- ▶ State HCD recently approved City's Housing Element (after 3 tries)
- ▶ General Plan Land Use Element adopted 2001 (City launched update process)

### City of Davis Boundary and Sphere of Influence



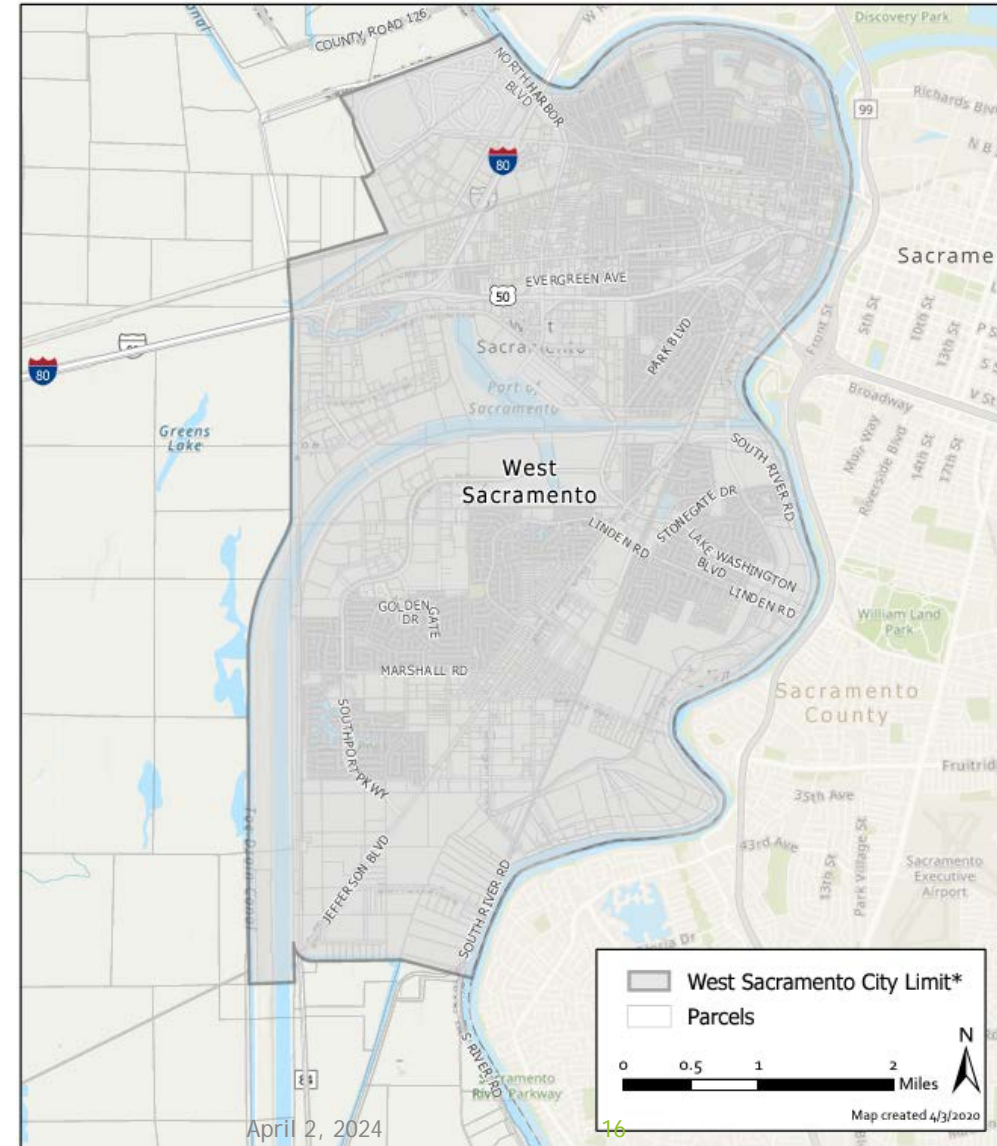
Adopted by Yolo LAFCo on May 26, 2022



# City of West Sacramento Growth

- ▶ Incorporated 1987 with room to grow
- ▶ Most recent 2035 General Plan Update (adopted 2016) does not need to expand City boundaries
- ▶ City is physically constrained by ring levee for flood protection
- ▶ So unlikely to annex additional territory anytime soon (or maybe ever)

## City of West Sacramento Boundary and Sphere of Influence



# City of Winters Growth

- ▶ General Plan Land Use Element dates back to 1992 (in need of updating)
- ▶ Receives growth overflow from Davis
- ▶ In 2020, voters approved new growth measure that requires any land use change to urban development be approved at an election
- ▶ And requires any new development area to be master planned (and paid for) by City (when typically funded by developers)
- ▶ Even lands within SOI must go to a vote, so purpose of an SOI is somewhat weakened

City of Winters Boundary and Sphere of Influence

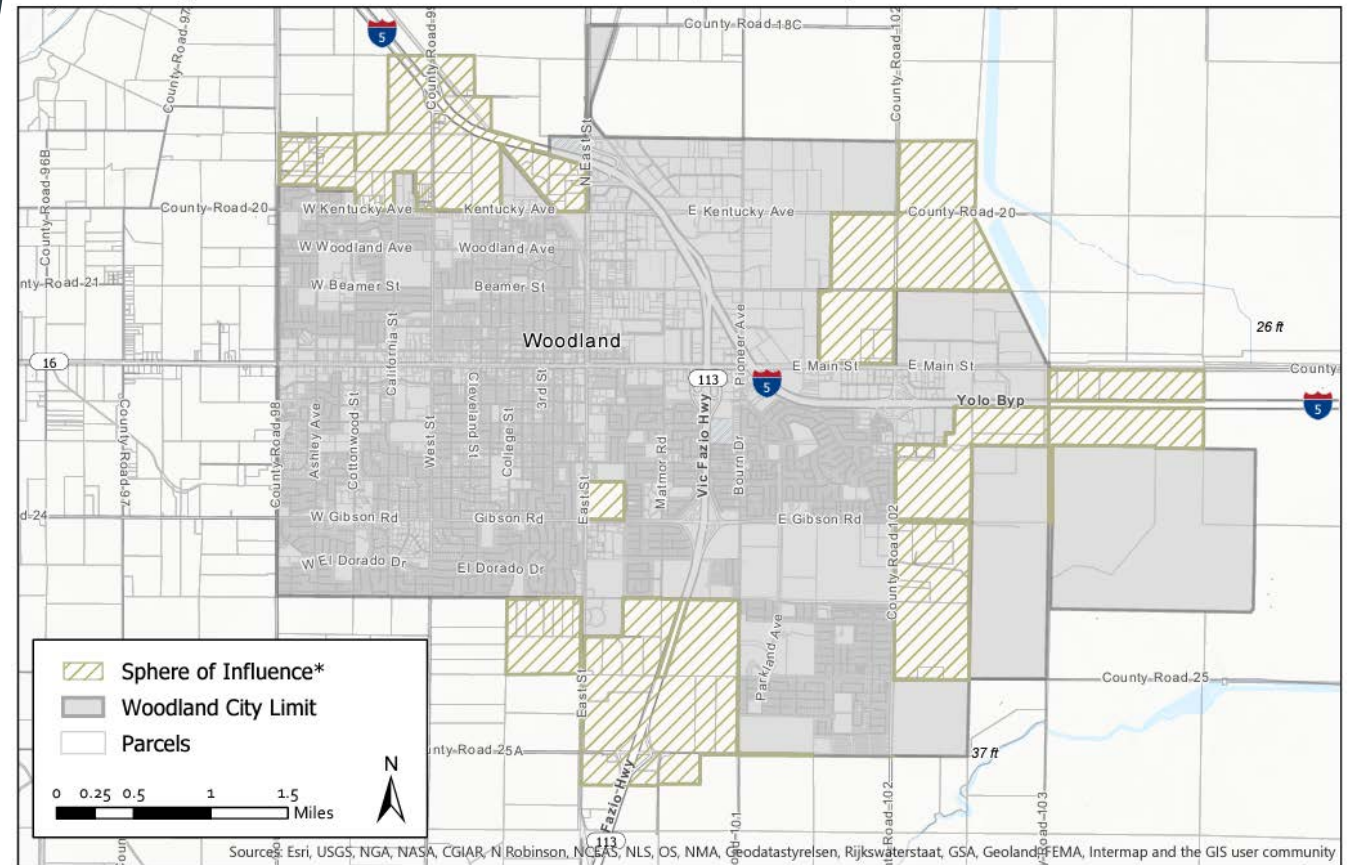


Adopted by Yolo LAFCo on September 22, 2008

# City of Woodland Growth

- ▶ Voter approved an Urban Limit Line in 2006
- ▶ Allows room to grow
- ▶ City Adopted a comprehensive 2035 General Plan Update in 2017
- ▶ LAFCo aligned the City's SOI with its Urban Limit Line in 2018

## City of Woodland Boundary and Sphere of Influence



\*City of Woodland Urban Limit Line is coincident with the Sphere of Influence

Adopted by LAFCo on December 6, 2018

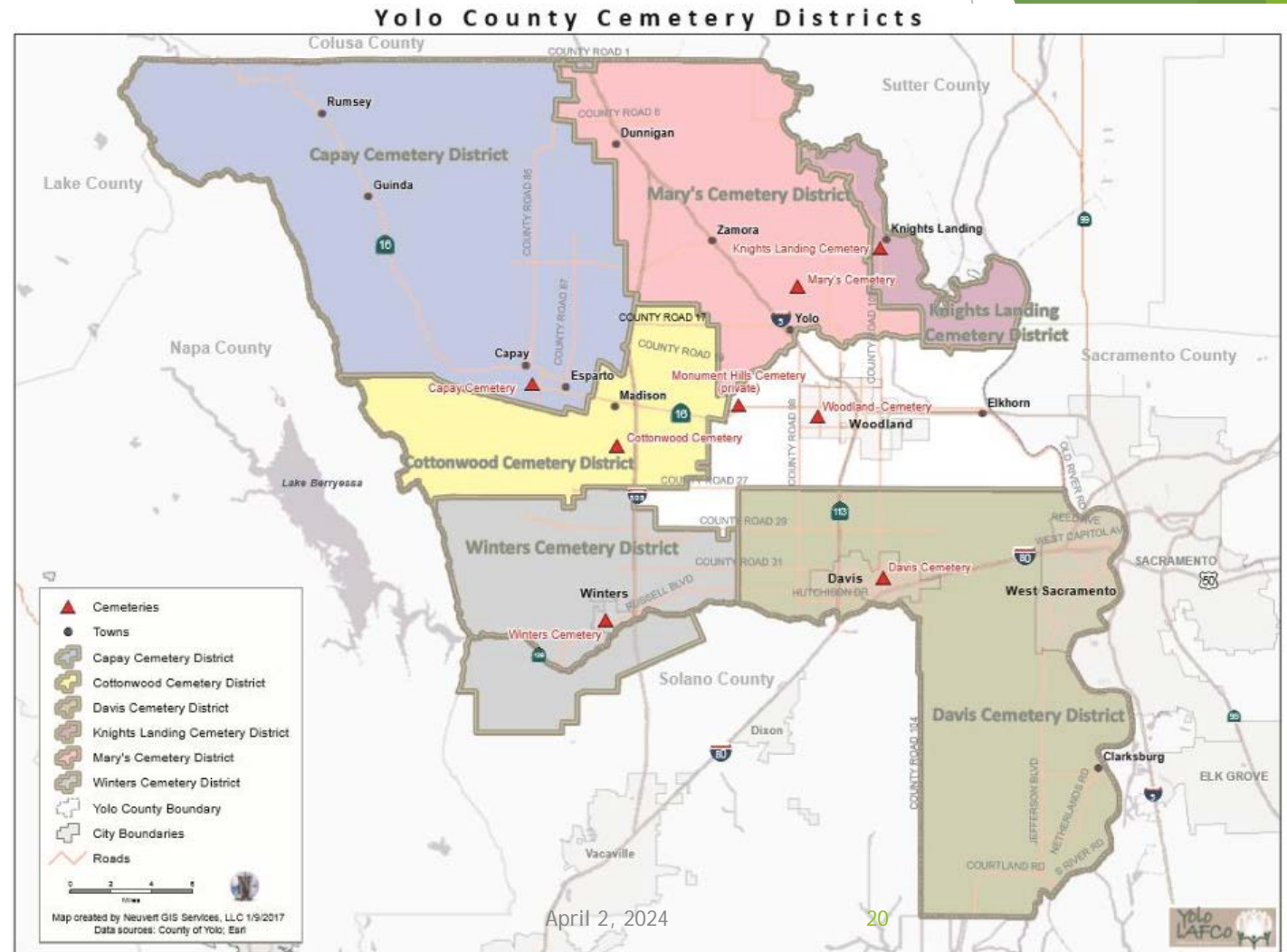
# Special Districts Overseen by LAFCo

- ▶ Cemetery Districts (6)
- ▶ Community Services Districts (4)
- ▶ County Service Areas (7)
- ▶ Drainage District (1)
- ▶ Fire Protection Districts (15)
- ▶ Reclamation Districts (10)
- ▶ Resource Conservation District (1)
- ▶ River Port District (1)
- ▶ Water Districts (2)
- ▶ **Total Special Districts = 47**



# Cemetery Districts (6)

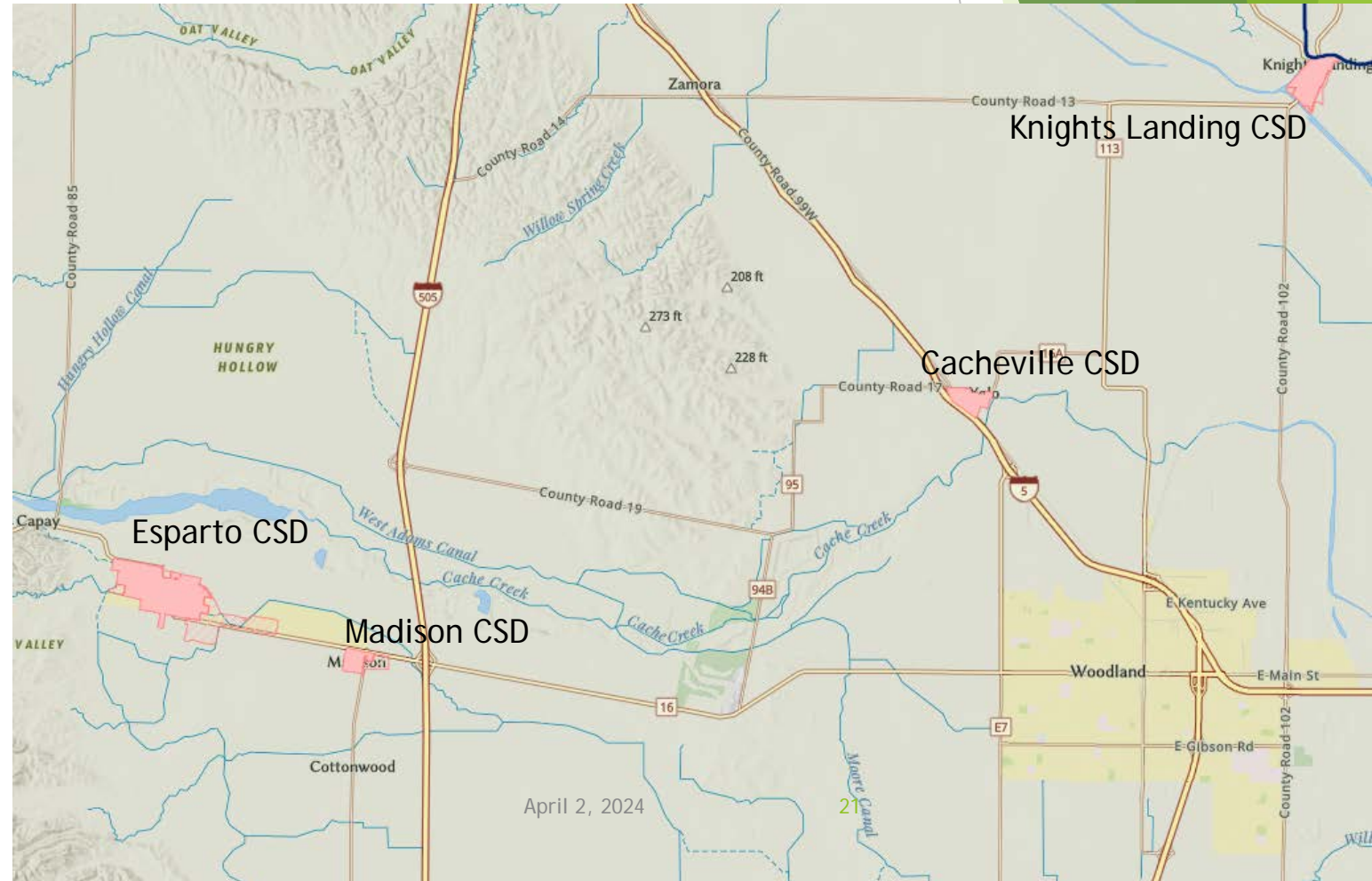
- ▶ Davis and Winters have larger budgets and dedicated FT staff
- ▶ Capay, Cottonwood, Knights Landing, and Mary's have small budgets and are volunteer-run
- ▶ Woodland also has a cemetery, but it's part of the City
- ▶ Monument Hills Cemetery is private



# Community Services Districts (4)

Mostly Water, Sewer, and Parks Services

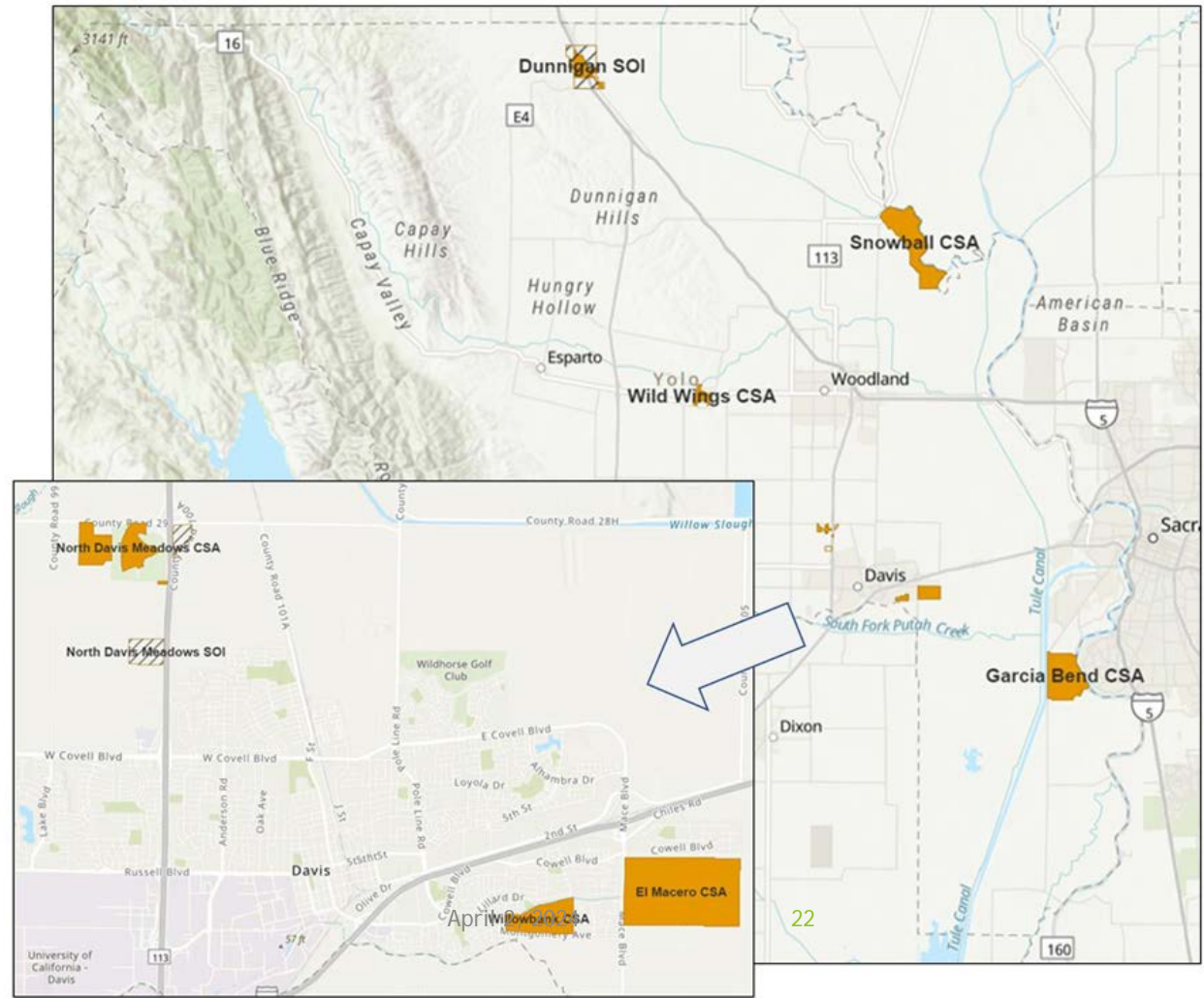
- ▶ **Esparto** (976 water/sewer connections) is largest with 7 FT positions. Provides parks services too.
- ▶ **Cacheville** (126 water connections) struggles with PT staff
- ▶ **Knights Landing** (287 water/sewer connections) struggles with PT staff
- ▶ **Madison** (160 water/sewer connections, + migrant center) has 1 FT general manager. Provides parks services too.



# County Service Areas (7)

Fund additional services in unincorporated communities (under County)

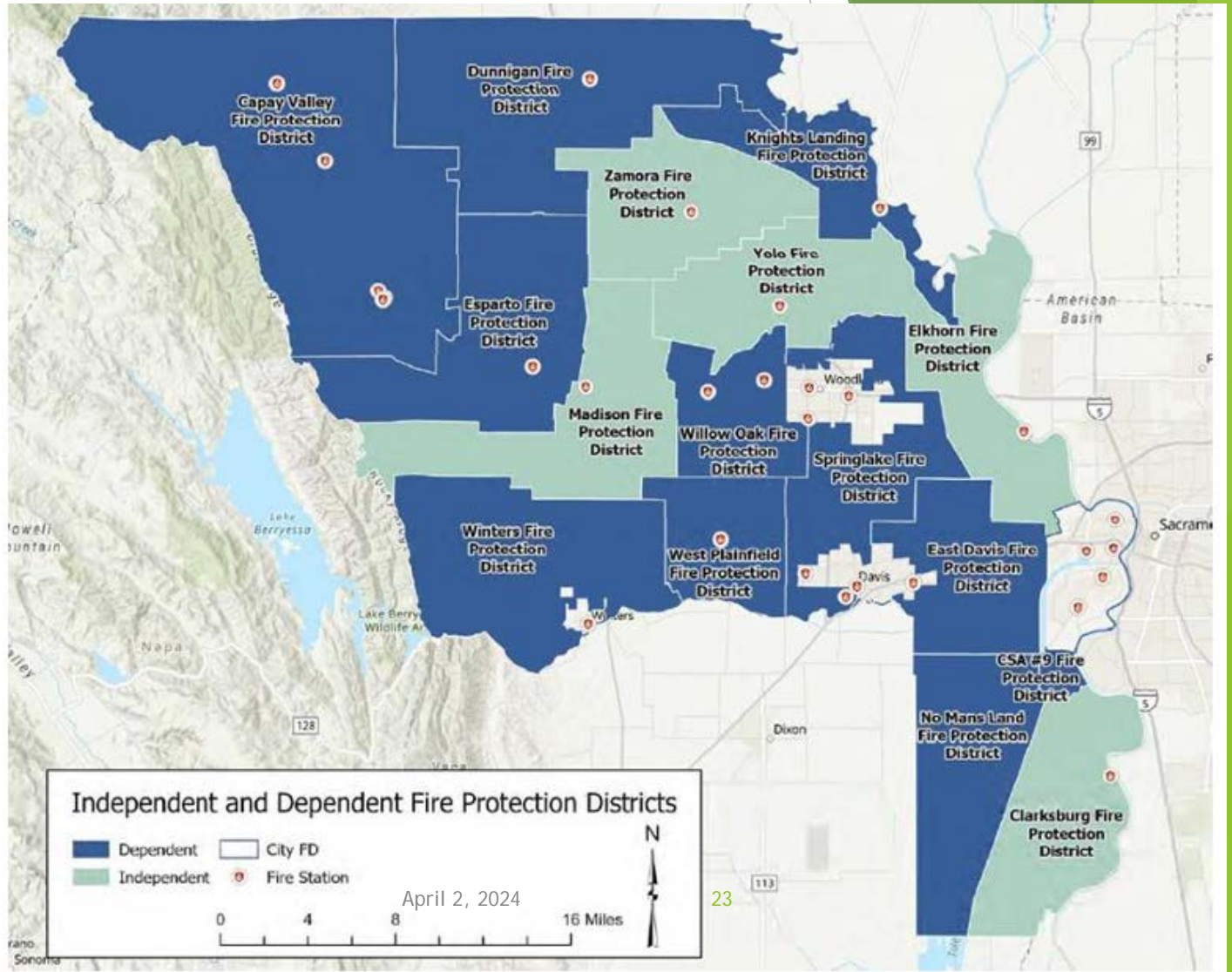
- ▶ Dunnigan (streetlights only by PG&E)
- ▶ Snowball (flood protection only)
- ▶ Wild Wings (water, sewer, and golf course)
- ▶ Garcia Bend (fire protection by West Sacramento)
- ▶ North Davis Meadows (water/sewer by Davis, landscaping, and drainage)
- ▶ El Macero (water/sewer by Davis, streets, and landscaping)
- ▶ Willowbank (none)





# Fire Protection Districts (15)

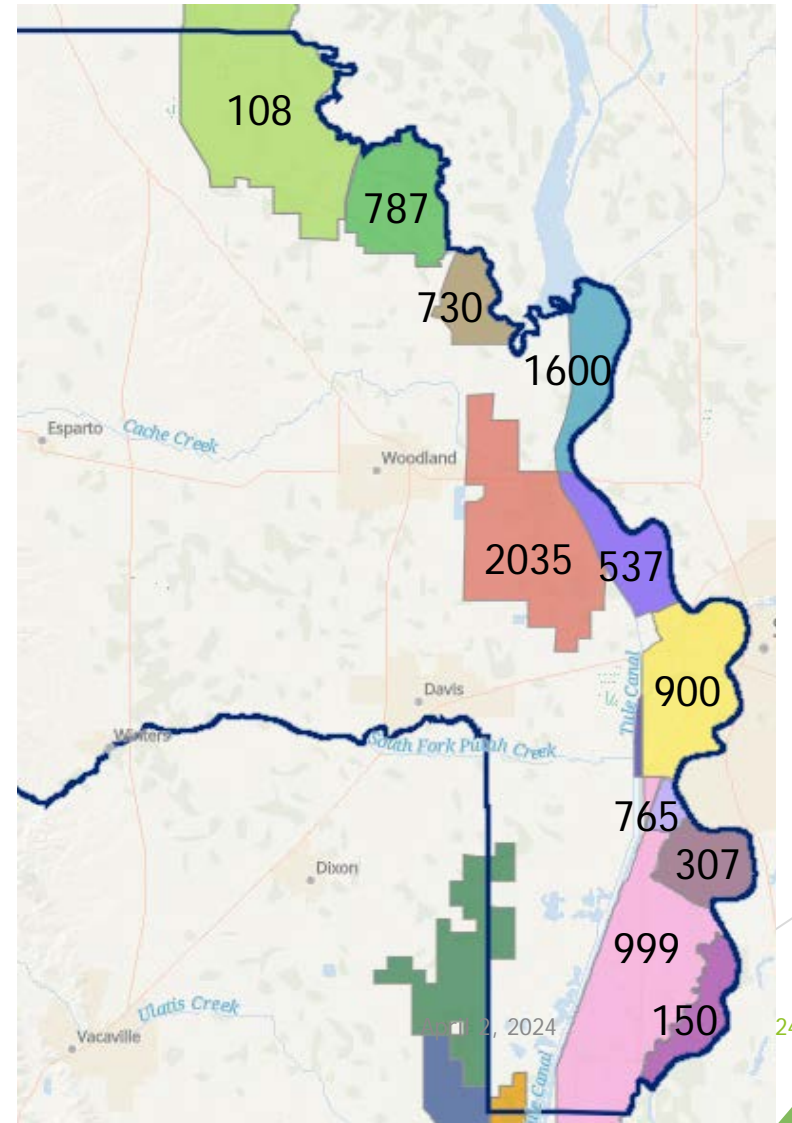
- ▶ 10 dependent to Yolo County/5 independent
- ▶ 11 provide direct services/4 contract with cities
- ▶ Rural FPDs struggle with volunteers and budget
- ▶ Yolo County recently acted to provide additional ongoing funding
- ▶ Latest MSR in 2022 recommended Elkhorn FPD be dissolved due to poor performance



# Reclamation Districts (10)

Maintain levees, drainage pumps, and a few provide ag irrigation water

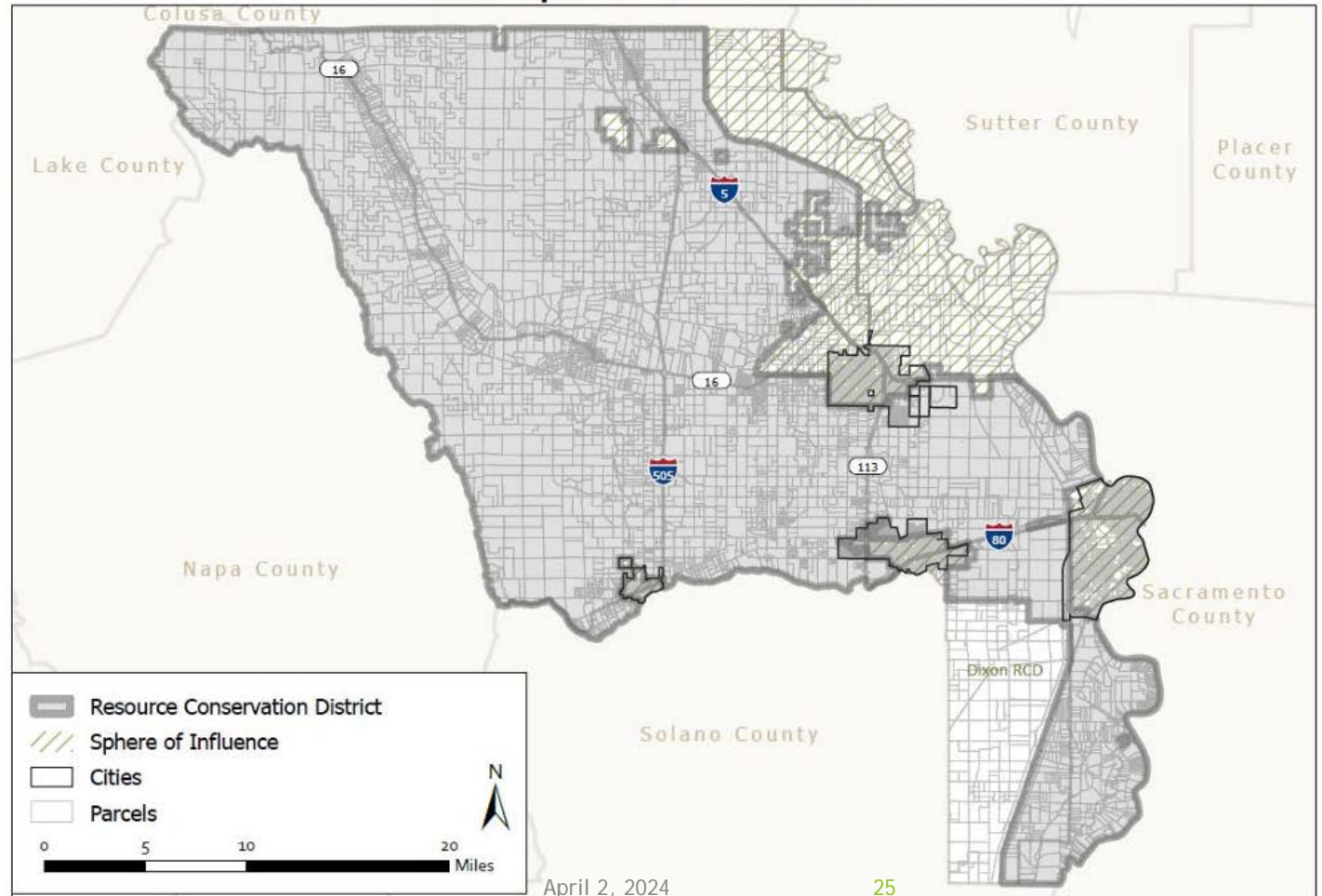
- ▶ Significant reorganizations in 2019:
  - ▶ RD 785 and RD 827 annexed into RD 537 (Lower Elkhorn)
  - ▶ RD 900 boundary aligned with COWS and made subsidiary district to the City
- ▶ Knights Landing Ridge Drainage District (not shown) operates like an RD
- ▶ RD 108 is not included in the (10) because Colusa County is this district's "principal county"



# Resource Conservation District (1)

- ▶ Yolo County RCD
- ▶ Provides soil conservation and natural resource management services
- ▶ Administers Yolo Fire Safe Council
- ▶ Receives some property tax revenue, but is mostly grant funded

Yolo County Resource Conservation District Boundary and Sphere of Influence



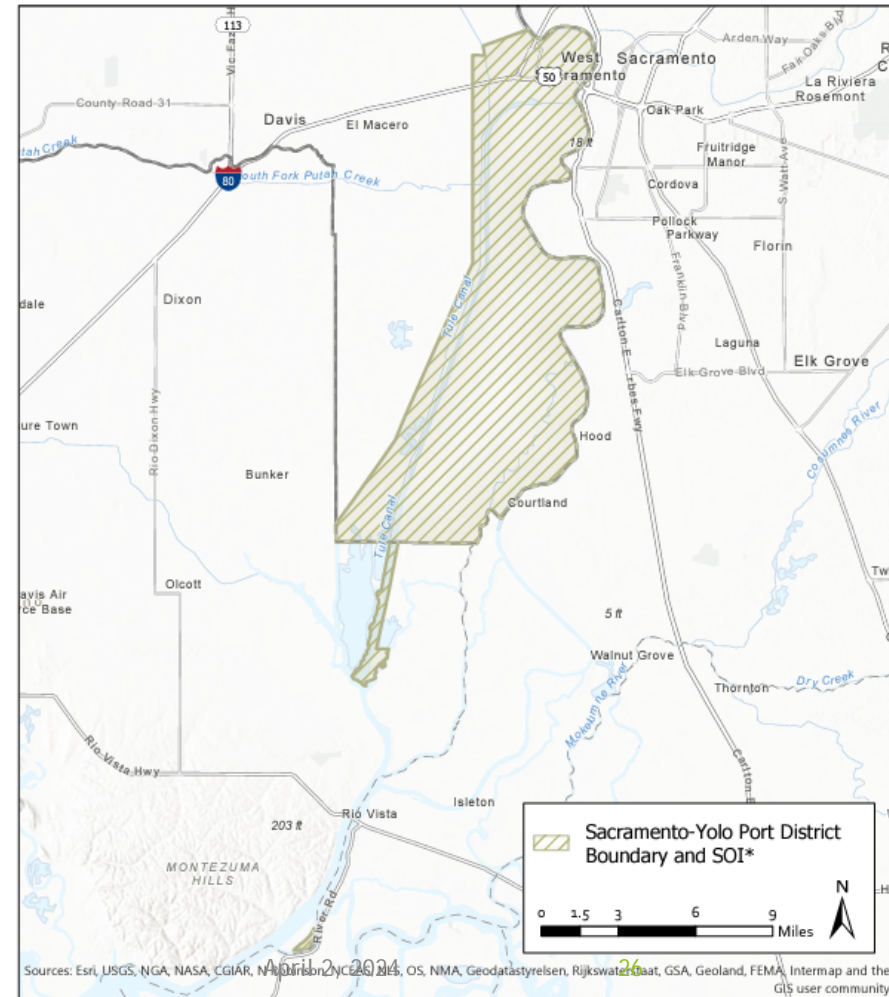
Adopted by Yolo LAFCo May 12, 2008



# Sacramento -Yolo Port District (1)

- ▶ Operates the port
- ▶ Also owns and redevelops land surrounding it
- ▶ Operates like a subsidiary district to the City of West Sacramento

**Sacramento-Yolo Port District  
Boundary and Sphere of Influence**



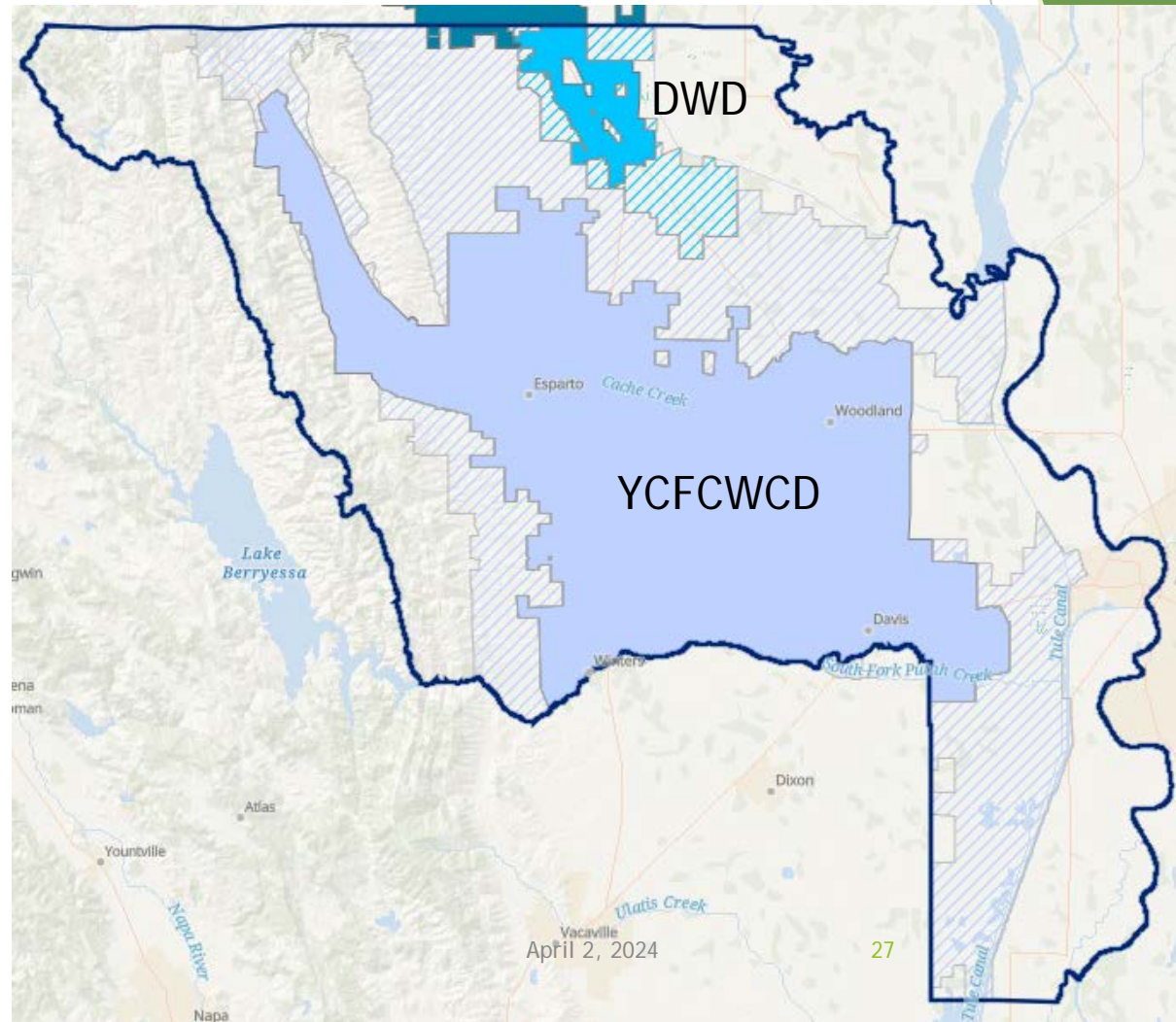
\*Sacramento-Yolo Port District Boundary is coterminous with the Sphere of Influence

**Boundary Adopted by the  
State of California September 2006**

# Water Districts (2)

Provide ag irrigation water and channel maintenance

- ▶ Dunnigan Water District (DWD)
- ▶ Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (YCFCWCD)



# Significant LAFCo Past Projects

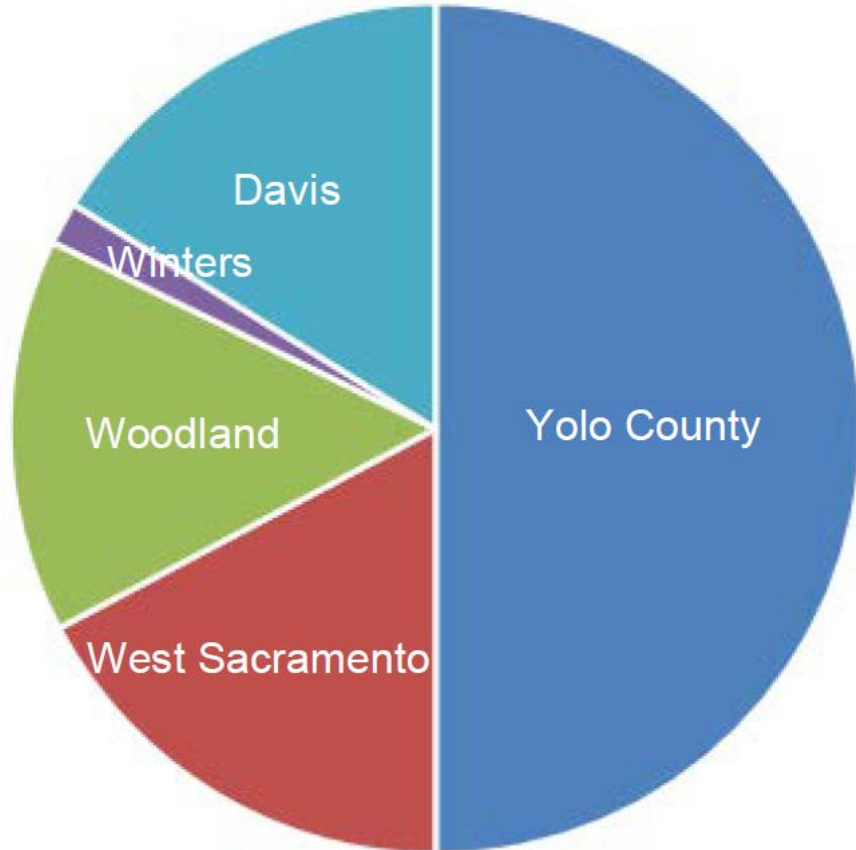
- ▶ 1966/68 formed Madison and Knights Landing CSDs
- ▶ Formed Snowball, North Davis Farms, Wild Wings, and Willowbank CSAs (various years)
- ▶ Detached 2 areas of Elkhorn FPD (service issues)
- ▶ Consolidated 3 FPDs in West Sacramento (prior to incorporation)
- ▶ **1987 Incorporated City of West Sacramento (governance)**
- ▶ Dissolved numerous defunct reclamation districts (RDs) (inactive)
- ▶ Dissolved Yolo-Zamora Water District (inactive)
- ▶ Consolidated Madison and Esparto CSAs, and then later dissolved handing over services to Esparto CSD and YCFCWCD (due to agency conflict)
- ▶ **2019 Established RD 900 as subsidiary district to City of West Sacramento (due to agency conflict and realignment to City boundary)**
- ▶ **2019 Combined Lower Elkhorn RDs under RD 537 (due to bypass setback project and to achieve critical mass)**
- ▶ **2020 Established Springlake FPD as dependent district to Yolo County (governance issues)**
- ▶ Numerous annexations to cities of Davis, Winters and Woodland over the years

# Current Issues 2024

- ▶ Forthcoming County application to dissolve Elkhorn FPD - Plan for Services (by cities of West Sac and Woodland)
- ▶ CSD County consolidation study/shared services/GM staffing issues/need plan for infrastructure replacement (3 smaller CSDs don't have sufficient critical mass to function well)
- ▶ MSR/SOI for Flood Protection Agencies - in process - potential to recommend RD consolidation in Clarksburg Basin
- ▶ County studying providing water/sewer services in Dunnigan via Cal-American (private system)
- ▶ Sites Reservoir Zone of Benefit (for Dunnigan Water District and RD 108 farmers)



## LAFCo Apportionment



# LAFCo Budget

Must adopt final budget by June 15<sup>th</sup> each year

Budget for FY 2023/24 is \$549,686

Per state law, our budget is funded

- ▶ 50% by Yolo County
- ▶ 50% by cities (apportioned by tax revenues and population)
- ▶ (If special districts were added, they would share costs too)

# LAFCo Composition

- ▶ County Members (2 regular, plus 1 alternate) are County Supervisors
- ▶ City Members (2 regular, plus 1 alternate) are City Council Members appointed by the “City Selection Committee”, i.e. a meeting among city mayors

In Yolo since the City of West Sacramento incorporation, an agreed-upon rotation cycle has occurred as follows:

- ▶ 2 years as alternate city member (as onboarding)
  - ▶ 4 years as regular city member (serving)
  - ▶ 2 years on hiatus from LAFCo (but we still include in weekly update emails)
- ▶ Public Member (1 regular, plus 1 alternate) goes through application process and is selected by the Commission

*4-year terms expire on February 1 of the given year*

# Who are current LAFCo members (terms)?

## Regular Members

- ▶ Bill Biasi, City Member (2026)
- ▶ Lucas Frerichs, County Member (2026)
- ▶ Gloria Partida, City Member (2028)
- ▶ Oscar Villegas, County Member (2027)
- ▶ Olin Woods, Public Member (2027)

## Alternate Members

- ▶ Richard DeLiberty, Public Member Alternate (2025)
- ▶ Tania Garcia-Cadena, City Member Alternate (2028)
- ▶ Jim Provenza, County Member Alternate (2028)



# Meetings

- ▶ LAFCo regular meetings are held the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month at 9:00 am in the County Administration Building (BOS Chambers)
- ▶ We do not meet in August as a summer recess
- ▶ November and December meetings are combined on 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday in December
- ▶ The Commission elects a Chair and Vice Chair for 1-year terms (at February meeting)

# Campaign Contributions

- ▶ Form 700s - countywide
- ▶ Commissioners are subject to the Levine Act and are disqualified and not able to participate in any proceeding involving an "entitlement for use" if, within the 12 months preceding the LAFCO decision, the Commissioner received \$250 or more in campaign contributions from the applicant or an agent of the applicant

# LAFCo Memberships



- ▶ CALAFCO - State Association of LAFCos  
Annual Conference each fall  
Tenaya Lodge (Yosemite) Oct 16-18, 2024 ←



**California Special Districts Association**  
*Districts Stronger Together*

- ▶ CSDA - CA Special Districts Association

# Local Policies

- ▶ Yolo LAFCo has 2 sets of local policies: administrative and project-related
- ▶ Links to our policies and procedures online are below:

<https://www.yololafco.org/yolo-lafco-policies-procedures>



# Questions/Staff Contact Info

- ▶ **Christine Crawford, Executive Officer**  
Mobile: (916) 798-4618
- ▶ **Terri Tuck, LAFCo Administrative Specialist II**  
Office: (530) 666-8048
- ▶ **Eric May, LAFCo Counsel**  
Office: (530) 666-8278

Website: [www.yololafco.org](http://www.yololafco.org)



Yolo LAFCo is:

A subtle, yet powerful collaborative agency striving to create a healthy local governance fabric for the present and evolving municipal service needs in our communities countywide

Thank you for joining our Commission!