



June 14, 2021

Board of Directors
Marin Municipal Water District
220 Nellen Ave.
Corte Madera, CA 94925

RE: Potential Moratorium on Housing Water Hookups

Honorable Board Members:

Sustainable San Rafael is an all-volunteer group of community members that *educates and advocates* for local government action to curb climate change and advance sustainability, including economic vitality and social equity. We recognize that Marin Water is in a tight spot. The District is confronting one of the many weather transitions being experienced around the world due to human-made climate change.

At the same time, we are acutely aware that there is a workforce housing crisis in San Rafael and throughout Marin. The magnitude of the housing shortage was highlighted during the past year as Marin had to import healthcare workers and the number of people living in vehicles nearly doubled.

The proposal to enact a moratorium on water hookups for new housing will not achieve the goal of making a significant cut in water usage. Marin's workers are already here and using water, even if living outside the district. New units are built with water-efficiency. The number of units that would be built in the next few years would be an inconsequential increase in overall customers.

With no new units, there will be an exacerbation of the housing crisis, the hiring challenge, the challenge of homelessness, and of climate change from the loss of GHG reductions otherwise achievable. MW knows the hiring difficulties caused by the lack of housing; currently the district has three openings for professionals, as well as openings for interns and summer workers. The housing crisis affects us all.

We urge you to defer the hookup ban until the Board has explored all other options. *At the very least, exempt developments that meet local affordable housing requirements.* Options to explore include:

- more and better tracking of daily and monthly water use by type and location of customers,
- more substantial incentives to reduce current water use,
- a temporary ban on new landscaping and irrigation, except those reducing water use,
- an expansion of the use of recycled wastewater and residential grey water for landscaping,
- temporary water importation,
- increased water storage and water recycling, in an environmentally responsible manner, and/or
- a solar- and wind-powered desalination plant, again in an environmentally responsible manner.

The social cost of Marin Water prohibiting new housing is enormous, compared with the miniscule future increase in water use. We need to address the water shortage without increasing the housing crisis. Thank you for not moving forward with the moratorium at this time.

Sincerely,

William Carney
President