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Windsor, Determined to Be a FIT Town!

WINDSOR, CALIF., SEPTEMBER 4, 2012... A representative from Kaiser Permanente will be attending the next Town Council meeting on Wednesday, September 19 at 6:00 p.m. to recognize the Town as being a “Fit Town”. Windsor’s new Employee Wellness Policy aims to improve employee productivity, morale, access to healthy food and beverage choices, and support healthy lifestyle choices for employees and their families. A bike sharing program for employees, exercise breaks, and healthy food options in the workplace are some of the programs the Town has been encouraged to implement and support to reduce health risks and improving the quality of life for employees.

“Obesity has reached disconcerting proportions in our community. 32.4% of our 5th, 7th, and 9th graders are overweight or obese,” said Councilmember Cheryl Scholar and co-chair of the Windsor Wellness Partnership quoting the study “*Overweigh and Obesity among Children by California Cities – 2010*” published by the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research and the California Center for Public Health Advocacy (June 2012). “At this point, it is obvious that individual effort alone is not sufficient to combat obesity. We have been committed to providing healthy options to our community to support their efforts to make healthier choices. Our new wellness policy is designed to support Town employees’ environment and social context for them and their families to make and maintain healthier and safer personal lifestyle changes.”

“The positive value of the Town Council's decision to provide healthier options of food, beverages, and snacks at all town facilities, and most significantly eliminating vending machines cannot be underestimated. Windsor residents can be rightfully proud that their local government is on the cutting edge of promoting healthy eating,” said Kanat Tibet, Local Policy Specialist of the Healthy Eating Active Living Cities Campaign (HEAL). “The Town of Windsor had already made great investments in healthy and active living through land use and policy decision that encourage physical activity and healthy food choices. The adoption of the employee wellness policy is the confirmation to the community that the council takes the obesity issue at heart and is taking steps organizationally to fight it.”

“Windsor is a pioneer in providing residents and its employees with healthy lifestyle choices,” said Donna Legge, Parks and Recreation Director. “It takes an innovative local government and community partnerships to explore new policy approaches that answer both the challenges associated with reduced funding and skyrocketing obesity-related costs. With support and assistance from Sonoma County Health Action and the Windsor Wellness Partnership, residents and employees will benefit from a healthier community.”

For more information about the HEAL Cities Campaign, visit www.healcitiescampaign.org.