



Board Report

File #: 2024-0084, File Type: Program

Agenda Number: 10.

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE  
MAY 15, 2024

SUBJECT: HIGH DESERT CORRIDOR FY25 WORK PROGRAM

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

CONSIDER:

- A. APPROVING \$4,374,000 in Measure M High Desert Multipurpose Corridor (HDMC) funds identified in the Expenditure Plan for Right-Of-Way acquisition to be repurposed to the High Desert Corridor (HDC) Joint Powers Agency (JPA) for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 work program;
- B. APPROVING \$2,200,000 in Measure M High Desert Multipurpose Corridor (HDMC) funds identified in the Expenditure Plan for Right-Of-Way acquisition to be repurposed to complete the HDMC High Speed Rail (HSR) Service Development Plan (SDP); and
- C. AUTHORIZING the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to negotiate and execute all necessary funding agreements with the HDC JPA.

ISSUE

The HDC JPA has requested that Metro provide funding for the FY 25 HDC JPA work program, which includes mobilization costs leading toward a 30% design of the HDMC (Attachment A).

BACKGROUND

The HDMC, a Measure M Expenditure Plan project, comprises an HSR component , which will implement a new 54-mile east-west rail alignment between the future Palmdale Multimodal HSR Station and the Brightline West Station in Victor Valley in San Bernardino County. The HDMC HSR Project (Project) will link the Metrolink Antelope Valley Line (AVL) with two future HSR lines - California HSR and Brightline West (Attachment B). Brightline West is a new privately funded HSR service that will connect Las Vegas with Victor Valley and Rancho Cucamonga.

The Project also supports the State’s ambitious greenhouse gas reduction efforts and provides economic development and mobility benefits for a region that includes many historically underserved, low-income, and disadvantaged communities.

In 2016, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) completed the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review of the Project. The Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) included the construction of a four-lane freeway and HSR service between Palmdale and Victorville. In December 2020, Caltrans informed FHWA that the “no build” option was selected for the freeway/tollway element of the HDMC.

In April 2021, the HDC JPA requested that the Project move forward with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) as the lead agency for the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) review. In February 2023, the FRA began the final review of the NEPA process. The HDC JPA continues to work with FRA to complete the NEPA environmental clearance, Section 106 analysis and obtain an FRA ROD for the Project in FY25. See Attachment C for recent Metro Board actions in support of the HDC.

**DISCUSSION**

On April 11, 2024, the HDC JPA Board approved the proposed FY25 budget and work program, subject to Metro Board approval. The FY 25 work program consists primarily of completing the NEPA process, managing the HDC JPA, and obtaining project management and financial advisory services as the HDC JPA mobilizes towards 30% design (Attachment D). It should be noted that the HDC JPA proposed work program for FY 25 is \$6,174,000. However, the HDC JPA has \$1,800,000 in carryover cash on hand, which reduces the request for new funding from Metro from \$6,174,000 to \$4,374,000. See the table below.

<b>HDC JPA Work Program</b>	
FY 25 Proposed	\$ 6,174,000
Less \$1,800,000 reserve/cash on hand	(\$ 1,800,000)
Measure M Funds Requested for HDC FY25 Work Program	\$4,374,000

**Service Development Plan (SDP) Update**

The Draft SDP is a planning-level document that provides Metro and project stakeholders with the information needed to assess the utility of establishing HSR service along the HDMC, the costs of implementation, and the next steps to advance the Project. The Draft SDP work began in 2020 and was submitted to FRA in January 2023. Since January 2023, the SDP has been on hold due to new FRA requirements stating that the Project must be included in its Corridor ID Program before their review.

Metro will continue as lead on the SDP to be submitted to FRA for final consideration in FY25. The current January 2023 SDP requires additional operations modeling and analysis, an expanded level of effort to cover the revised FRA framework, design changes for the environmental document development, ridership forecasting, and revenue evaluation analysis. This \$2,200,000 budget amount requested for FY 25 will be partially reimbursed with \$500,000 in HDC JPA FRA Corridor Identification Grant funds awarded in December 2023. It should be noted that \$200,000 of the \$2,200,000 budget is required for Metro labor to lead the completion of the SDP in coordination with the HDC JPA, FRA, and other project partners.

Grants Funding Strategy and Transition to 30% Design

The HDC JPA has successfully received grant funds to advance the Project. In April 2023, CalSTA announced the award of \$8,000,000 to the HDC JPA for the Project. This was matched with \$8,000,000 previously committed by the Metro Board as a local match in January 2023. In December 2023 the HDC JPA received a \$500,000 FRA Corridor ID Program grant for SDP development efforts, which was also matched with \$500,000 from the Metro Board in January 2023, bringing the total Project grant funding to \$17,000,000. This funding allows for the HDC JPA to enter step 1 of the FRA Corridor ID Program to develop a scope, schedule, and cost estimate for preparing, completing, or documenting an SDP and do advanced engineering for the Project.

The HDC JPA intends to leverage the \$17,000,000 provided so far to the Project as a match towards future grant requests, such as the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program, to provide additional funding to advance the Project to 30% design.

With the completion of the NEPA process anticipated to occur in 2025, the HDC JPA has been mobilizing to advance the design of the Project. In April 2024, the HDC JPA Board awarded a contract to hire a financial services consultant. In October 2024, the HDC JPA is anticipated to award a contract for Program Management services as it prepares to release bid documents to advance the 30% design. Advancing to 30% design for the 54-mile Project is estimated to cost \$70M.

**DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT**

The Project's advancement will be done per all applicable FRA, CPUC, CHSRA, Brightline, and SCRRRA design and engineering standards, which will maximize Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and safety benefits to the public.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The Measure M Expenditure Plan includes \$170 million for the Project for right-of-way (ROW) acquisition or other project uses. Recommendation A will program and repurpose the funds from ROW acquisition to 30% design. Recommendation B will program and repurpose the funds from the ROW acquisition to completion of the SDP and increase the SDP LOP to \$7.7 million. Currently, there is approximately \$153 million available, which is eligible to be used by the HDC JPA to fund the FY 25 work program, complete the Final SDP, and mobilize towards 30% design.

<b>Measure M Funding Plan for HSR Project ROW Acquisition</b>	<b>\$ 170.0M</b>
- Service Development Plan (Metro Board 8/20)	(\$ 5.0M)
- HDC JPA FY23 Work Program (Metro Board 4/22)	(\$ 1.7M)
- Match to TIRCP/FRA Grant Requests (Metro Board 1/23)	(\$ 8.5M)
- FY24 Work Program Request (Metro Board 5/23)	(\$ 1.9M)
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$ 152.9M</b>
- FY25 Work Program/Recommendation A (Metro Board 5/24)	(\$ 4.4M)
- Complete Final SDP/Recommendation B (Metro Board 5/24)	(\$ 2.2M)
<b>Projected Measure M Balance for HDC</b>	<b>\$ 146.3M</b>

### Impact to Budget

\$6,600,000 has been included in the FY25 Proposed Metro Budget for the HDC JPA FY25 work program and to complete the Final SDP under project number 475499. This is in addition to the \$8,500,000 approved by the Metro Board in January 2023 (#2022-0847) as a match for the TIRCP and FRA Corridor ID Program grant applications. It will be the responsibility of the Chief Planning Officer to program funds for the HDC JPA for this multi-year program in the future. Annual funding agreements between Metro and the HDC JPA will be audited and reconciled each year, subject to Measure M requirements.

### EQUITY PLATFORM

The Project will improve mobility for residents in North Los Angeles County by providing a high quality, environmentally friendly, safe, and efficient transportation option to the communities to access jobs, health care, education, other services, and economic opportunities offered at major urban and employment centers in Los Angeles and Las Vegas. As part of the environmental review process, the HDC JPA has engaged in frequent dialogue with key governmental stakeholders, plus consultation with local native tribal governance councils.

The entire Project area falls within the low-income communities and households as defined by AB 1550. A significant portion also falls within the disadvantaged and low-income communities, as defined by SB 535. The Project also traverses through Metro's Equity Focus Communities in the Antelope Valley, including the cities of Palmdale, Lancaster, and unincorporated Los Angeles County. In addition, residents within the Project area are predominantly from Black, Indigenous, and Other People of Color (BIPOC) populations, between 61% and 77%, with the highest percentage of BIPOC populations in the City of Palmdale. Many of the minority populations include people with limited English proficiency.

### IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Recommendations A and B support the Metro Vision 2028 Strategic Plan goals 1, 4, and 5 as follows:

- Goal 1.2: Invest in a world-class transit system that is reliable, convenient, and attractive to more users for more trips;
- Goal 4.1 Work with partners to build trust and make decisions that support the goals of the Vision 2028 Plan;
- Goal 5.2 Exercise good public policy judgment and sound fiscal stewardship.

### ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

An alternative is that the Board does not approve Recommendations A or B. This is not advised since completion of the Final SDP will enable the Project to participate in the Federal Corridor ID grant program. Additionally, the HDC JPA has received \$17,000,000 in grant and Metro Board-approved funding to advance the Project, indicating strong support from State and Federal partners that the Project has merit and provides value to the Southern California rail network.

### NEXT STEPS

Subject to the Board's approval of the recommendations, Metro will execute a funding agreement with the HDC JPA to implement the FY25 work program. Metro will continue coordination meetings with the FRA and the HDC JPA to complete the Final SDP. The HDC JPA will continue efforts toward environmental clearance, with a ROD expected in 2025. Once the ROD is received, HDC JPA anticipates applying for a grant for 30% design in the next cycle of FRA Federal/State Partnership grant funding.

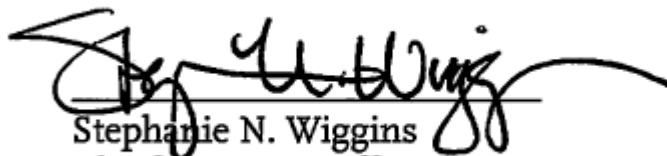
Concurrently, the HDC JPA is in the process of hiring program management, financial advisory services, and additional contract staff in anticipation of the release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for advanced design to draw down the TIRCP grant plus Metro local match (\$8 million + \$8 million = \$16 million), expected to occur in FY25. Staff will return to the Board with periodic updates as needed.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment A - HDC JPA Funding Request
- Attachment B - HDC Corridor Map
- Attachment C - Metro Board Actions in Support of HDC
- Attachment D - HDC JPA FY 25 Work Program

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Stephanie N. Wiggins  
Chief Executive Officer



# Attachment A

March 13, 2024

To: Mr. Ray Sosa, Metro Chief Planning Officer

From: Arthur Sohikian, HDC JPA Executive Director

RE: **HDC JPA requests May 2024 Metro Board consideration and approval of the HDC JPA FY2024-25 Work Program for the High Speed Rail Project identified in the Measure M Expenditure Plan.**

## **2023 HDC JPA Highlights**

- High Speed Rail Project National Environmental Policy Act completion is estimated to be late-2024/early 2025, including Record of Decision.
- Jan 2023, Metro Board allocates \$8.5M Measure M match for HDC JPA grant requests.
- Dec 2023, HDC JPA receives California TIRCP \$8M allocation.
- Dec 2023, HDC JPA receives \$500,000 FRA Corridor Identification Program Grant.
- HDC JPA will consider adopting the Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) Budget at their April 11, 2024 Board of Directors meeting.

## **HDC JPA FY2024-2025 Work Program**

The HDC JPA is pleased to report the coming fiscal year is the year of establishing the organizational structure of the agency by setting up the financial advising, program management, right-of-way planning, and procurement functions that are necessary for conducting the upcoming phases of engineering and design and right-of way acquisition.

Consequently, as the High Speed Rail Project progresses beyond the environmental phase into preliminary engineering/design and right of way planning in FY25, the HDC JPA requires additional staffing and contractors to support the increasing complexity, expertise, and level of effort this project requires. To conduct this work effort, the HDC JPA FY25 Proposed Budget of \$6,174,000 (Attachment A) seeks to establish the organizational management structure for this purpose. As noted in Attachment, after accounting for the \$1,800,000 cash reserves on hand, the amount that the HDC JPA will need from the Measure M Funds is \$4,374,000. A summary of the activities that would be conducted with this funding is highlighted below.

## **Complete NEPA environmental clearance and Obtain Record of Decision**

The HDC JPA continues working with the FRA staff to complete the NEPA environmental clearance, Section 106 analysis as well as obtain a FRA Record of Decision for the High Speed Rail Project in FY25.

## **Metro Regional Rail Program Staff Assistance**

The HDC JPA values its partnership with Metro in developing and implementing the high-speed rail project. Metro's Regional Rail staff has been critical to the success of project development activities to date. As the project progresses, the HDC JPA will continue to rely on Metro's expertise. Therefore, the HDC JPA is including a budget line item to fund the Metro staff support that will be provided on this project. For FY25, this will consist of assisting with development of the statement of work for the preliminary engineering, proposal evaluations, and other tasks.



**HDC JPA Agency Management**

To effectively set up the agency’s organizational structure and manage the expanded work program for FY25, it is incumbent and justified to have the appropriate staffing to assist executive management with the additional responsibilities that will be required. This is the reason the HDC JPA will be onboarding staff to provide the technical expertise to effectively carry out the expanded duties as it pertains to project management, engineering, design, and right-of-way planning.

**Update High Desert Corridor Service Development Plan (SDP)**

Metro will continue as lead on the HDC Service Development Plan (SDP) to be submitted to FRA for final consideration in FY2025. The current January 2023 SDP requires additional analysis and cost updates due to the alignment, structural, and operational changes made to the Project since Jan 2023. This budgeted amount will be reimbursed to the HDC JPA through the Federal Railroad Administration Corridor Identification Grant funds awarded in December 2023.

**Selection of Financial Advisory Firm**

The HDCJPA Board of Directors will consider authorizing the selection of a financial advisory (FA) firm at their April 11, 2024 Board meeting. Once the FA firm is onboarded, it will support HDC JPA executive management to conduct the ongoing financial planning and analysis, grants management, assess project delivery options, and organizational management analysis to support project development into the preliminary engineering and design phase (30% level of design).

**Program Management Support and Construction Management Support Services (PMC)**

Depending on the pace of environmental approval, the HDC JPA will seek to authorize the selection of the Program Management Support and Construction Management Support Services (PMC) contractor at either the October 10, 2024 or the January 9, 2025 Board of Directors meeting. The PMC firm will support HDC JPA executive management with overseeing the work related to the phases of Engineering and Design, Construction, Transition to Operational Control, and Closeout. This work includes development of statements of work, procurement administration, grant compliance, third party management including utility relocation, right-of-way acquisition/relocation plans and implementation and other related.

For FY25, the PMC contractor is expected to perform work at a level of effort that will be commensurate with transitioning from the environmental phase into the Preliminary Engineering phase of the project. This consists of developing the Preliminary Engineering and Design (PE) statement of work for the Request for Proposal and preparing a right-of-way acquisition and relocation plan. The budgeted amount of \$1.035 million is estimated for a six to seven-month work period during FY 25. The estimate is based on a previous look ahead that will be revised to reflect the updated Service Development Plan assumptions and costs.

The HDC JPA appreciates the continued partnership with Metro to advance the HDC JPA High Speed Rail Project with your guidance and the Metro Board consideration of the HDC JPA FY25 Work Program. Sincerely,

  
Arthur V. Sohikian  
Executive Director

# ATTACHMENT B





## **ATTACHMENT C**

### Metro Board Actions in Support of HDC

In August 2020, the Metro Board approved a Life-of-Project (LOP) budget of \$5 million to develop a SDP for the Project. Metro, in partnership with the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) and Brightline West, developed the SDP in coordination with the HDC JPA and other stakeholders, including the Los Angeles County Public Works Department, San Bernardino County Transportation Authority, San Bernardino County Public Works Department, California HSR Authority, Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA), the cities of Palmdale, Lancaster, Victorville, Adelanto, Apple Valley, and other partners.

In April 2022, the Metro Board approved an increase of \$500,000 in the LOP budget to complete the HDC SDP to develop additional engineering analysis, rail operation analysis, operations and maintenance plans, and coordinate with stakeholders. In addition, the Metro Board approved \$1,236,500 for the FY23 HDC JPA work program.

In August 2022, the Metro Board approved Metro's participation in the new HDC JPA, replacing the previous HDC JPA after the decision from San Bernardino County to withdraw from the HDC JPA.

In January 2023, the Metro Board programmed \$8,500,000 to the HDC JPA as a local match for a State Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) grant and for the FRA Corridor Identification and Development (ID) Program for project development and to advance the Project towards 30% design.

In May 2023, the Metro Board programmed \$1,947,500 for the FY 24 work program, which included funding for the HDC JPA to work towards NEPA environmental clearance, and the ROD, HDC JPA management, the procurement process to onboard both a financial advisory firm and program management support services, technical planning and grant application support, and other administrative expenses. The FY25 work program builds upon the FY24 work program.

## High Desert Corridor Joint Powers Agency Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2025

Item	HDC JPA FY25 Budget Description	Amount
1	<p><b>Re-evaluate National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) &amp; Record of Decision (ROD):</b> Complete the remaining tasks for NEPA Re-evaluation/RE-validation and Record of Decision (ROD) with Final Review by Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). Due to Federal review of submittals this task is scheduled to be completed by FRA in in FY25. Tasks for FY25 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Addressing FRA comments, provide revised version for FRA final review, Prepare final version for NEPA Re-evaluation and prepare a ROD for FRA final approval.</li> <li>-Draft a Letter of Concurrence and re-initiate ROD Section 7 consult. Complete Section 106 process, Tribe Consultation. Prepare CEQA addendum for state funding. Conclude Surface Transportation Board (STB) Petition Approval process.</li> </ul> <p>Contractors: Transportation Solutions: \$110,000  Epic Land Solutions, Inc.: \$132,350  Circlepoint: \$390,000  Venable LLP: \$135,000  HDR: \$135,000  AECOM: \$75,000</p>	\$977,350
2	<p><b>HDC JPA Management:</b> Oversee agency management including technical analysis, grant applications, budgetary activities, equity focused planning, administration, engineering, right-of-way planning, stakeholder engagement and communications. For FY25, HDC JPA management functions will be augmented to meet the increased project needs requiring the services of a senior level project management/planning, engineering and right-of-way planning support, communications staff, and administrative support staff. As the project progresses beyond the environmental phase into preliminary engineering and final design, the HDC JPA requires additional staffing to support the increasing complexity, expertise, and level of effort.</p> <p>Contractors:  AVS Consulting, Inc.: \$296,400  Cal Strategic Management: \$227,400  Other Support Staff Services: \$665,000</p>	\$1,188,800
3	<p><b>Program Management Support and Construction Management Support Services (PMC):</b> Procure the professional services of a program management support and construction management support services (PMC) firm to support HDC JPA with overseeing the work related to the phases of Engineering and Design, Construction, Transition to Operational Control, and Closeout. This work includes development of statements of work, contract development, contract administration support, local, regional, state, federal, and interjurisdictional grant agreement compliance, procurement support services, set and monitor program controls, project management, third party management including utility relocation, right-of-way acquisition &amp; relocation plans and implementation, cost scheduling &amp; control functions, cost estimating, environmental compliance, configuration management, transition to operational management, and other related support services. For FY25, the PMC contractor will be performing work at a level of effort that will be commensurate with transitioning from the environmental phase into the Preliminary Engineering phase of the project consisting of developing the Preliminary Engineering and Design (PE) statement of work and contract development, and developing a right-of-way acquisition and relocation plan. This budgeted amount is estimated for a 6 month work period during FY 25. Estimate is based on a previous three-year look ahead that will be revised to reflect the updated Service Development Plan assumptions and costs.</p>	\$1,035,000

## High Desert Corridor Joint Powers Agency Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2025

4	<p><b>Financial Advisor Services:</b> Conduct ongoing financial planning &amp; analysis, modeling, and structural management analysis to support project development into the preliminary engineering phase that includes identifying, developing, and refining the project funding plan, analyze options for local, state, and federal funding contributions toward the project, assess alternative project delivery options and the viability of public-private partnerships through a Value for Money analysis, provide updated ridership forecasting as needed, provide organizational structuring options to adapt to the future growth of the HDC JPA. perform additional financial modeling and diligence on financing options, identify credit enhancement strategies, provide right-of-way coordination to the Program Management Firm as needed, and support discussions with potential market participants.</p>	\$1,165,000
5	<p><b>Service Development Plan (SDP) Update:</b> Metro will continue as lead on the HDC Service Development Plan (SDP) to be submitted to FRA for final consideration in FY25. The current January 2023 SDP requires additional analysis and cost updates due to the alignment, structural, and operational changes made to the Project since Jan 2023. This budgeted amount will be reimbursed to the HDC JPA through the Federal Railroad Administration Corridor Identification Grant funds awarded in Dec 2023.</p>	\$500,000
6	<p><b>LA Metro Regional Rail Program Management Staff Support:</b> Provide program management staff support and assistance on an as-needed basis to support implementing HDC JPA program management functions and related activities.</p>	\$350,000
7	<p><b>County of Los Angeles Treasury, Auditor-Controller, Legal Counsel, Public Works Staff Support:</b> Monthly Support for Accounts Payable/Accounts Receivable functions, Legal Counsel Support, Budget Oversight, Board Meetings staffing, Agency Oversight &amp; Compliance Items, Procurement /Contract Services plus Request for Proposals preparation and Oversight, and contract execution.</p>	\$665,000
8	<p><b>Stakeholder and Public Engagement and Planning Assistance:</b> Provide communications, community engagement, and other related planning assistance to support the Agency communications and planning functions.</p>	\$185,000
9	<p><b>Audit Services: County of Los Angeles Audit Services</b></p>	\$30,000
10	<p><b>LA Metro Funding Agreement Audit Services</b></p>	\$25,350
11	<p><b>Multi-Media Promotion, Materials &amp; Advertising</b></p>	\$30,000
12	<p><b>IT Support, GIS, Software &amp; Website Mgmt.</b></p>	\$22,500
13	<p><b>Total Proposed FY25 Budget</b></p>	\$6,174,000
14	<p><b>Less: Reserve Fund-Cash on Hand as of March 31, 2024</b></p>	\$1,800,000
15	<p><b>Measure M Funds Requested for FY25 Budget</b></p>	\$4,374,000



# High Desert Corridor JPA FY 25 Work Program

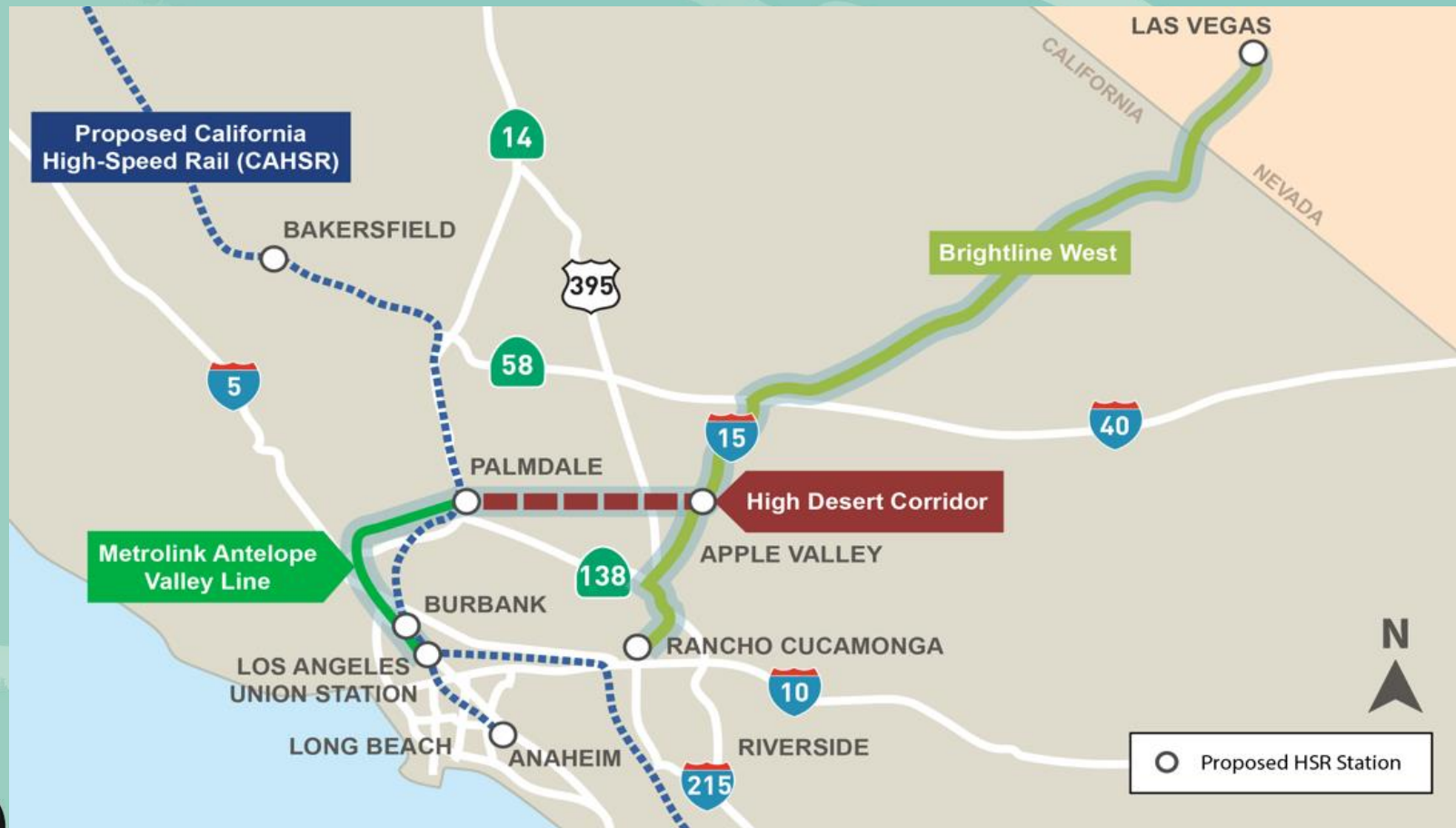
Planning and Programming Committee

May 15, 2024

Legistar File 2024-0084

# Recommendation

- APPROVE \$4,374,000 In Measure M High Desert Corridor MSP funds to the HDC JPA for the FY 25 work program



Metro

# Background and Project Benefits

- The High Desert Corridor is a 54 mile east/west corridor which will create a major transit hub and high-speed rail connectivity from Palmdale to:
  - Future Brightline West high speed rail service to Las Vegas and Rancho Cucamonga
  - Future CAHSRA high speed rail service to Los Angeles and northern California
  - Current Metrolink commuter rail Antelope Valley Line
- Project benefits include:
  - Improved rail connectivity
  - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
  - Equity benefits to underserved, low-income and disadvantaged communities
- Measures R provided \$33M to conduct environmental clearance.
- Measure M provided \$2.15B to further advance the High Desert Corridor.

# Environmental Update and Previous Metro Board Actions

- In 2016 the High Desert Multi-Purpose Corridor (HDMC) received CEQA clearance for a corridor to include a freeway, rail, bicycle lanes, etc.
- In 2020 the freeway portion of the HDMC was eliminated.
- In 2021 the HDC JPA requested that FRA be the lead agency for NEPA compliance, issue a Record Of Decision (ROD), and revalidate the previous 2016 CEQA approval.
- ROD expected late 2024/early 2025

- In August 2020 Metro programmed \$5,000,000 to develop a Service Development Plan for the HDC.
- In April 2021 Metro programmed \$1,236,500 to HDC JPA for additional NEPA work, changes to the rail alignment and the FY 23 work program.
- In August 2022 Metro joined the Board of the new reformed HDC JPA.
- In January 2023, Metro programmed \$8,500,000 as local match to the HDC JPA for two grants.
- In May 2023, Metro programmed \$1,947,500 for the FY24 work program.

# Service Development Plan

- Metro worked closely with key stakeholders and a consultant team to complete detailed ridership and revenue forecasting, conduct operations modeling, Palmdale Transportation Center station planning, conceptual engineering and financial analysis for the High Desert Corridor.
- In January 2023, the draft SDP was submitted to the FRA for comment. FRA has delayed full review as the HDC JPA entered the new Corridor Identification and Development Grant Program.



# Next Steps

- Execute funding agreement between Metro and the HDC JPA for the FY 25 work program
- High Speed Rail Project environmental clearance/ROD is expected from the FRA late 2024/early 2025.
- The High Desert Corridor JPA will seek additional grant funding opportunities.
- As the Project advances, the HDC JPA will contract additional staff to prepare the 30% design documents.
- Staff will continue to brief the Board as the project advances.