



# High Desert Corridor JPA FY 25 Work Program

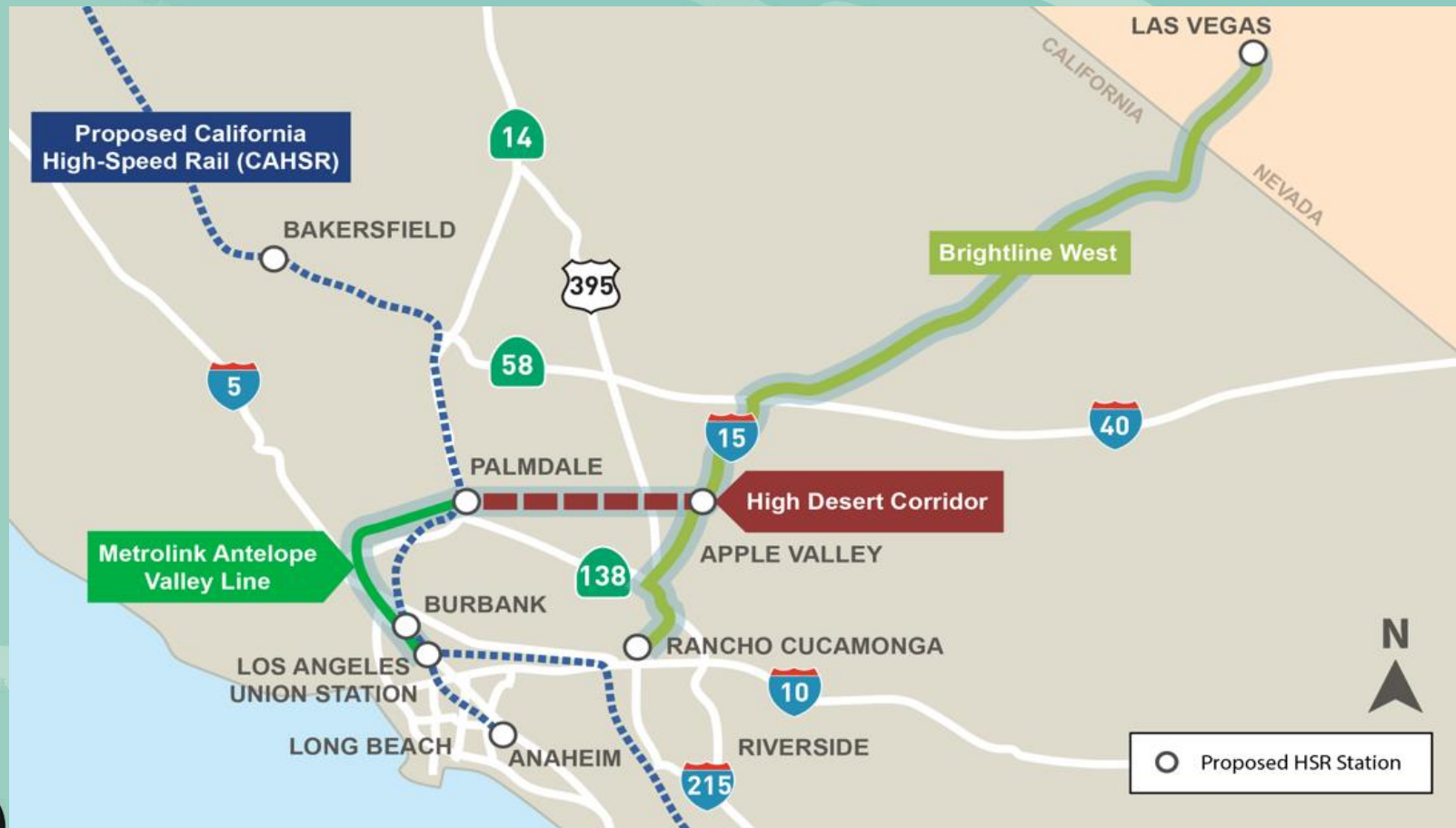
Planning and Programming Committee

May 15, 2024

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# 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.