



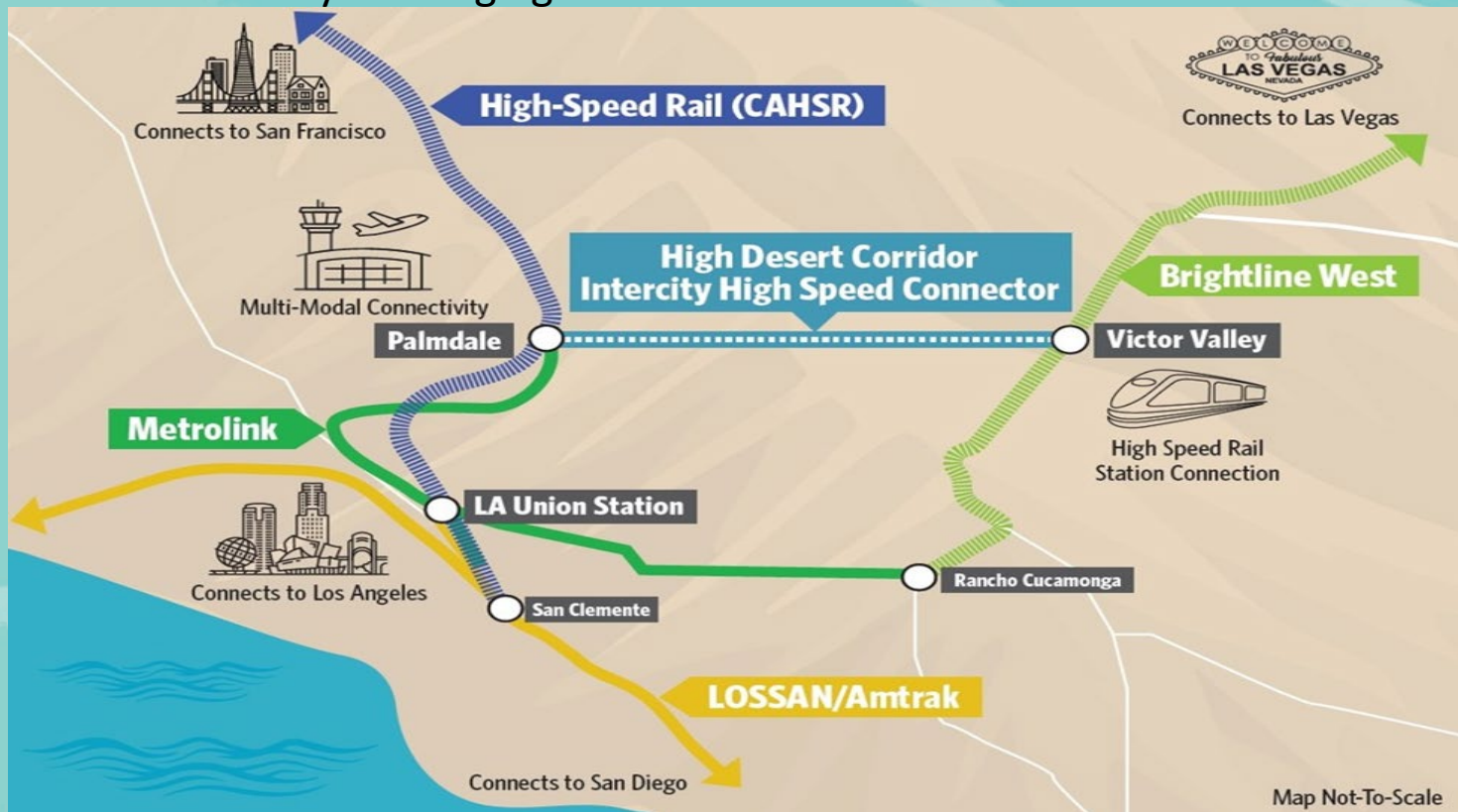
High Desert Corridor Joint Powers Agency Fiscal Year 27 Work Program Planning and Programming Committee

May 20, 2026

Legistar File 2026-0104

Recommendations

- APPROVING \$9,338,470 in Measure M High Desert Multipurpose Corridor (HDMC) funds identified in the Expenditure Plan for Right-Of-Way (ROW) acquisition to be repurposed to the High Desert Corridor (HDC) Joint Powers Agency (JPA) for the Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) work program; and
- AUTHORIZING the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or their designee to negotiate and execute all necessary funding agreements with the HDC JPA.



Metro

Project Background and Benefits

- The High Desert Corridor (HDC) is a 54-mile east/west multimodal corridor that will create a major transit hub in Palmdale with high-speed rail (HSR) connectivity to:
 - Future Brightline West HSR service between Las Vegas & Rancho Cucamonga
 - Future CAHSR service between Los Angeles and Northern California
 - Current Metrolink Antelope Valley Line commuter rail service to Los Angeles
- Project benefits include:
 - Improved passenger rail connectivity throughout Southern California and to Las Vegas
 - Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled and greenhouse gas emissions
 - Equity benefits to underserved, low-income, and disadvantaged communities
- Metro is a member of the 6-member HDC JPA Board of Directors
- Measure R provided \$33M to conduct environmental clearance
- Measure M provides \$2.02B to support HDC implementation
 - \$170M for project development (FY 2018)
 - \$1.85B for construction (FY 2063)
- FY 21 – FY 25 Financial Audit completed by Metro Feb 2026 (clean audit)

High Desert Corridor Key Activities for FY 27

- Complete the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process – HDC JPA will work with CAHSR, the lead agency, to finalize and submit the environmental document to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).
 - Record of Decision expected late 2026 / early 2027.
- Update the Service Development Plan (SDP) – HDC JPA will provide technical analysis and development of the final SDP Gap Analysis to the FRA for final approval in 2027, pending release of Notice of Funding Opportunity.
- Continued grants pursuits – HDC JPA applications pending: Federal-State Partnership (FSP) and BUILD grant programs; will apply for TIRCP.
- Consultant Services – HDC JPA will provide program management, engineering, and financial advisory services as the HDC JPA advances design. Includes HDC JPA management and ROW services (new task).

HDC Service Development Plan (SDP)

- Metro worked closely with key agency stakeholders to complete ridership and revenue forecasting and conduct Palmdale Transportation Center station planning and operations modeling, conceptual engineering, and financial analysis for the HDC.
- In January 2023, HDC submitted a draft SDP to the FRA for comment.
 - FRA delayed full review due to HDC JPA entering newly-constituted FRA Corridor Identification and Development (CID) Grant Program.
- Per FRA direction, the current SDP requires a Gap Analysis and cost updates due to the alignment, structural, and operational changes made to the Project since January 2023.
- CID Stage 1 grant ended Nov 2025; Stage 1 Final Performance Report and close-out report submitted to FRA in Jan 2026
- FRA expected to issue CID Stage 2 NOFO in Spring 2026 with anticipated approval to proceed to CID Stage 2 in late 2026.

Next Steps

- Execute funding agreement between Metro and the HDC JPA for the FY 27 \$9.3M work program, including:
 - NEPA Re-evaluation work and Record Of Decision (ROD)
 - Analysis and completion of the SDP Update under the FRA CID Program Stage 2
 - Engineering Design and Financial Advisory Services
 - HDC JPA Management and Administration
- High-speed Rail Project environmental clearance/ROD is expected late 2026 / early 2027
- The HDC JPA will submit a TIRCP Cycle 8 application, awaits results of FSP and BUILD grant submittals
- Staff will continue to brief the Board as the Project advances