



High Desert Corridor JPA FY 24 Work Program

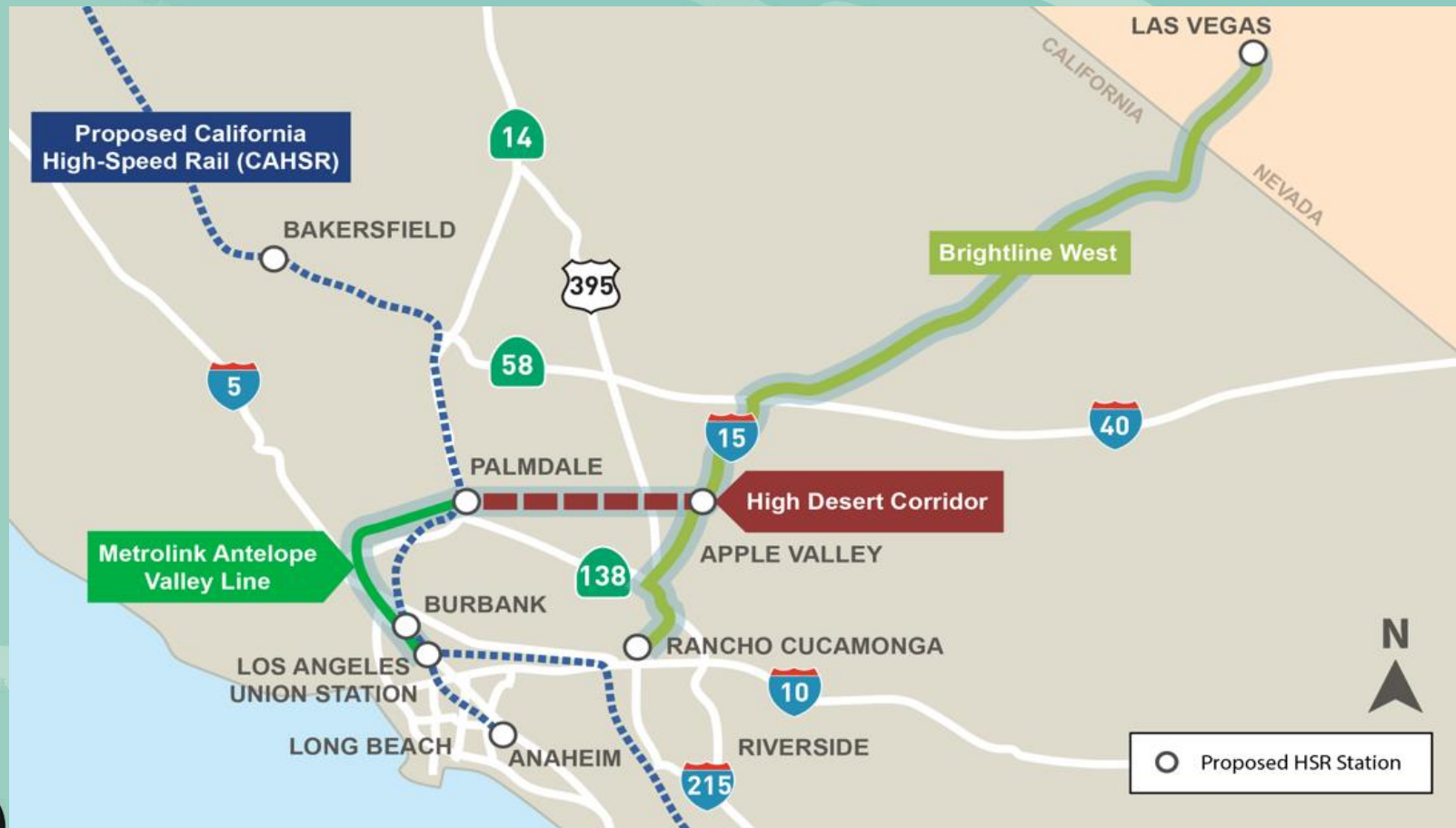
Planning and Programming Committee

May 17, 2023

Legistar File 2023-0099

Recommendation

- APPROVE \$1,947,500 In Measure M High Desert Corridor MSP funds to the HDC JPA for the FY 24 work program



Metro

Background

- 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
- The mission of the HDC JPA is to:
 - Complete the Federal and State environmental review process
 - Pursue grant funding and facilitate the planning, design, construction, financing, operations and maintenance of the High Desert Corridor Rail Project
- 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 previous HDC Joint Powers Authority requested that the FRA act as the lead agency for NEPA compliance, issue a Record Of Decision (ROD), and revalidate the results of the previous 2016 CEQA approval.
- In 2022 the FRA agreed to become NEPA lead agency for HDC Rail Project.

- 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.

Service Development Plan

- Metro programmed \$5,000,000 for Metro to lead a Service Development Plan (SDP) effort.
- Metro has been working 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.
- The SDP is nearing completion, with a draft report sent to the FRA in January 2023.

Next Steps

- Execute funding agreement between Metro and the HDC JPA for the FY 24 work program
- High Speed Rail Project environmental clearance/ROD is expected from the FRA Summer 2024.
- 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.