



- **Board of Directors**

***Legislation, Regulatory Affairs, and Communications Committee***

1/9/2024 Board Meeting

7-11

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## Subject

Adopt Legislative Priorities and Principles for 2024; the General Manager has determined that the proposed action is exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA

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## Executive Summary

This letter presents the final 2024 legislative priorities and principles recommended by staff with input received for the Board of Directors' consideration and adoption.

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## Proposed Action(s)/Recommendation(s) and Options

### Staff Recommendation: Option #1

#### Option #1

Adopt the Legislative Priorities and Principles for 2024

**Fiscal Impact:** None

**Business Analysis:** Adoption of these legislative priorities and principles supports staff's ability to address matters in a timely fashion related to legislation in 2024.

#### Option #2

Take no action

**Fiscal Impact:** None

**Business Analysis:** Absence of these legislative priorities and principles could hinder staff's ability to respond in a timely manner to legislation in 2024.

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## Alternatives Considered

Not Applicable

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## Applicable Policy

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 11104: Delegation of Responsibilities

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## Related Board Action(s)/Future Action(s)

The draft 2024 priorities and principles were presented to the Legislation, Regulatory Affairs, and Communication Committee as an information item on November 14, 2023.

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## Summary of Outreach Completed

The draft 2024 Legislative Priorities and Principles (LPP) was presented to the Member Agency Legislative Coordinators Annual Planning Meeting on November 2, 2023, and to the Member Agency Managers' Meeting on November 3, 2023. Feedback on the priorities and principles was requested and received and is provided to the Board in the Summary of Comments (December 2023) (**Attachment 1**). All input received was reviewed and

either incorporated or received a response from staff. The redline of changes to the draft 2024 LPP is also provided for reference (**Attachment 2**).

## **California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**

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### **CEQA determination for Option #1:**

The proposed action is not defined as a project under CEQA because it involves legislative proposals that do not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment (Public Resources Code Section 21065 and Section 15378(b)(1) of the State CEQA Guidelines). The proposed action is also not defined as a project under CEQA because it involves continuing administrative activities, such as general policy and procedure making (Section 15378(b)(2) of the State CEQA Guidelines). In addition, where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the proposed action in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the proposed action is not subject to CEQA (Section 15061(b)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines).

### **CEQA determination for Option #2:**

None required

## **Details and Background**

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### **Background**

This board letter presents the 2024 LPP as recommended by staff for the Board's adoption. It lays out an integrated "One Water" collaborative approach on legislatively active issues related to managing Southern California's watersheds, water resources, and water infrastructure to ensure long-term resilience and reliability for communities and ecosystems. Once adopted, staff uses this document to determine Metropolitan's positions and advocate for these priorities and principles at the state and federal level through Metropolitan-sponsored legislation, engaging on bills, or pursuing state and federal funding. Updated legislative priorities and principles are presented annually to the Board of Directors. Final, board-approved annual legislative priorities and principles are publicly available on the Metropolitan website.

For the coming year, which is year two of the two-year state and federal legislative cycles, staff updated the document to reflect developments and new laws on the state and federal arenas, and to be consistent with internal Metropolitan initiatives, including the General Manager's Business Plan, the Metropolitan Climate Action Plan, and the new Board-led planning effort on the Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water. The body of this letter includes the staff-recommended 2024 draft document incorporating (or responding to) input received since November 1, 2023.

Recommended updates to the language presented in November, after feedback from the Board and member agencies, can be seen in the Summary of Comments (December 2023). This board action letter presents a clean version of the legislative priorities and principles for 2024 with staff's recommended revisions, incorporating technical and policy input received. In November 2023, the Board authorized a bill proposal for 2024 regarding an amendment to the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act.

The 2024 Legislative Priorities and Principles below are respectfully submitted for adoption by the Board.

### **2024 Legislative Priorities**

To help adapt to a changing climate, protect water resources, and partner with communities we serve, Metropolitan will work to support administrative/legislative actions and federal and state funding for the following priorities in 2024:

#### **A. Top Legislative Priorities:**

1. Continue support for imported water supply resiliency and reliability, including planning for the Delta Conveyance Project, Sites Reservoir Project, Agreements to Support Healthy Rivers and Landscapes (Voluntary Agreements), and the development of near-term and post-2026 Colorado River operating guidelines.

2. Conserve existing water supplies and prepare for climate change by supporting demand management and water use efficiency, long-term non-functional turf conversion, and a federal tax exemption for water conservation rebates.
3. Advance Pure Water Southern California and other water recycling projects and long-term supply reliability improvements.
4. Support funding for regional conveyance and water storage improvements to ensure the region's water supply reliability is equitable to all member agencies.
5. Protect drinking water quality and access to safe and reliable drinking water, including upholding the polluter pays principle and ensuring the continued cleanup of sites along the Colorado River.
6. Support adaptive management for ecosystem restoration in the Bay-Delta and Colorado River watersheds that takes into consideration evolving climate conditions, risk analyses, and best available science.
7. Improve water affordability throughout the region, especially for disadvantaged communities, without burdening existing ratepayers.

**B. Metropolitan-Sponsored State Bill (Board-approved in November 2023)**

1. Support administrative/legislative actions to amend the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act to eliminate the sunset date to allow Metropolitan to continue operating under its existing master reclamation plan.

**2024 Legislative Policy Principles**

The 2024 Legislative Policy Principles will guide and inform Metropolitan's engagement on state and federal legislative and regulatory activities. They were developed in consultation with subject matter experts at Metropolitan. The principles holistically address six strategic areas of policy that inform Metropolitan's One Water Vision and the Board-led process for developing the Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water (CAMP4W). These policy areas include: (1) drinking water; (2) regional water resource management; (3) imported water supply; (4) sustainability, resiliency, and innovation; (5) infrastructure; and (6) system resiliency.

I. Drinking Water – Metropolitan provides to the Southern California region high-quality, reliable drinking water in an economically responsible way that surpasses all federal and state drinking water regulations.

**A. Water Quality and Treatment**

1. Support administrative/legislative actions that utilize best available science, occurrence and health effects data, and appropriate cost-benefit analyses or economic feasibility to protect public health and improve water quality. Apply these principles when setting maximum contaminant levels, health advisories, or notification/response levels, in addition to assessing laboratory capacity, analytical methods, and other regulatory standards or guidance levels.
2. Support application of the "polluter pays" principle such that parties responsible for introducing contaminants, such as per- and polyfluoralkyl substances, in or near drinking water sources are held liable for cleanup, and not drinking water and wastewater facilities that subsequently store, transport, or treat the water.
3. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for treatment and mitigation measures to comply with any new regulatory standards, develop risk communication tools, as well as provide adequate time for implementation.
4. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to protect source water quality, reduce threats from invasive species, and mitigate harmful algal blooms.

5. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for the constituents of emerging concern (CEC) Action Fund to improve the State Water Resource Control Board's knowledge of CEC in waters of the state and drinking water.
- B. Water Governance, Affordability, and Funding -- Metropolitan supports efforts to provide access to safe, reliable and affordable drinking water to all residents.
1. Support administrative/legislative actions that prioritize providing safe, reliable and affordable drinking water to disadvantaged communities.
  2. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding that improve water affordability throughout the region, especially for disadvantaged communities, without burdening existing ratepayers.
  3. Support funding to help water systems provide low-income ratepayer assistance programs.
  4. Support administrative/legislative actions that improve governance and long-term sustainability of non-compliant water systems and provide assistance for voluntary consolidations that improve their technical, managerial, or financial capacity, while ensuring that all receiving public water systems are consulted on changes of organization, including proposed consolidations or extensions of service area.
  5. Support administrative/legislative actions that provide local agencies flexibility in determining fees for service and assessment amounts.
  6. Support administrative/legislative actions that ensure the limited resources of the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund are allocated to advance projects, operation and maintenance costs, infrastructure improvements, and/or consolidation actions that will achieve long-term sustainability for water systems and the communities that rely on those systems.

II. Regional Water Resource Management – Metropolitan's One Water Vision and the Board-led CAMP4W process promote collaboration with member agencies to plan for future water supply needs and the challenges ahead in a reliable, cost-effective, and environmentally responsible manner. This involves protecting imported water supplies and quality, supporting local resource development, advancing water use efficiency, and supporting ecosystem protection and restoration.

A. Conservation

1. Support tax exemptions and/or credits for water conservation or efficiency incentives, including but not limited to long-term conversion of non-functional turf (NFT), local stormwater capture, and other measures to reduce consumption of water or enhance the absorption and infiltration capacity of the landscape.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions and federal/state funding to encourage equitable water use efficiency and recycled water use among agricultural, industrial, and urban sectors.
3. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to advance conservation as a California Way of Life in a manner that maintains flexibility and local control. Support efforts to ensure new statutes and regulations are based on science; recognize regional distinctions (i.e., climate, land use, population, and hydrology); water affordability; and potential impacts to wastewater operations and recycled water projects.
4. Support administrative/legislative actions and federal/state funding for leak detection and water loss reduction. Support the development and implementation of flexible water loss standards for both retail and wholesale water systems.

5. Support administrative/legislative actions and federal/state funding for the long-term conversion of NFT in residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional landscapes and ban installation of NFT in new construction.

B. Desalination & Groundwater Remediation

1. Support administrative/legislative actions, funding, and partnerships for brackish groundwater and seawater desalination projects, consistent with the Governor's Water Resilience Portfolio and 2022 Water Supply Strategy and Metropolitan's CAMP4W goals.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for salinity control projects, including but not limited to source control, treatment, and concentrate management.
3. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for research, pilot tests, and demonstration studies to encourage the development of environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient desalination technologies.

C. Recycled Water

1. Support actions to advance and secure funding for the Pure Water Southern California Program and related projects.
2. Support efforts to improve flexibility of the State's water recycling grant program.
3. Support implementation of the National Water Reuse Action Plan and California Water Reuse Action Plan while protecting local flexibility and encouraging local, state, and federal coordination, research, and innovation.
4. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding that facilitate the adoption of direct potable reuse regulations by December 31, 2023. These actions include but are not limited to planning, development, and implementation of local and regional potable reuse projects; and initiatives to fill research gaps and advance the science to promote the further development of potable reuse.
5. Support administrative/legislative actions to promote voluntary on-site water treatment systems if they maintain compliance with Title 22 and do not negatively affect municipal water recycling systems.
6. Support administrative/legislative actions that maximize voluntary use of recycled water.

D. Local Supply Development

1. Support administrative/legislative actions that protect and advance local flexibility and responsiveness in developing locally appropriate, climate-resilient, diverse resource portfolios.
2. Continue to support and promote integrated water resources development by advocating for clear, concise, and expedited regulations/policies that are easily understandable by the regulated community and public.
3. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to expedite the development of new local resources (including recycled water, direct potable reuse, groundwater, stormwater, desalination projects, and groundwater remediation) without compromising the operational, financial, water quality, regulatory, environmental, and customer interests of Metropolitan and other water and wastewater agencies.
4. Support administrative/legislative actions that advance stormwater as a beneficial resource and facilitate the funding and permitting of stormwater capture projects to augment local and regional water supplies and promote holistic watershed health.

5. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding that advance Metropolitan's surface and groundwater storage and/or recovery programs with member agencies.

E. Watershed Management

1. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to enhance watershed management in Southern California, the Bay-Delta, and Colorado River watersheds that provide broad public benefits, including water quality and water supply reliability, reduced wildfire risks, greater scientific understanding, and other environmental improvements.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions that help advance implementation of watershed management plans, including watershed research and multi-benefit forestry management projects.
3. Support implementation of the California Water Resiliency Portfolio and the Water Supply Strategy, as consistent with Metropolitan goals and objectives, to ensure improved watershed-scale coordination, watershed management and planning, and programs and funding that provide water resilience and improve watershed functions.

III. Imported Water Supply – Metropolitan provides imported water supplies to its member agencies from two primary sources, the Colorado River via the Colorado Aqueduct and Northern California watersheds via the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and the State Water Project.

A. Bay-Delta Initiatives– Metropolitan is involved in several key regulatory and planning processes in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta related to the operation of the State Water Project (SWP). The goal is to advance water supply reliability and ecosystem restoration concurrently by modernizing the state's water infrastructure with the proposed Delta Conveyance Project and improving the habitat and function of the Delta estuary for the benefit of threatened and endangered species. To advance these goals, Metropolitan supports collaborative scientific efforts to better understand how to restore and manage the Bay-Delta while reducing reliance consistent with the 2009 Delta Reform Act (Delta Reform Act).

1. Support administrative/legislative actions to advance Delta Conveyance and EcoRestore in support of California's coequal goals of water supply reliability and Delta ecosystem restoration and the Governor's California Water Resilience Portfolio.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to improve scientific understanding of listed Delta fish and wildlife species and water project operations in the Delta, including data collection, real-time monitoring, and modeling. Promote the use of best available science to protect and restore aquatic species and habitats, and enhance flexibility for water project operations while maintaining regulatory and statutory protections for species listed under the state and federal Endangered Species Act.
3. Continue support for implementation of state policies adopted as part of the Delta Reform Act and water management package, including clarification of the monitoring, reporting, and enforcement provisions related to in-Delta diversions.
4. Support administrative/legislative actions to consolidate review and oversight of anadromous species protection under the U.S. Department of the Interior.
5. Support administrative/legislative actions that protect water quality for beneficial uses and that are implemented consistent with California water rights priorities.
6. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to advance the Delta Freshwater Pathway, levee improvements (including levee modernization for the existing Delta levee system), levee maintenance programs (including real-time

monitoring for the existing Delta levee system), and secure Delta flood-fighting materials and stockpiles.

7. Support administrative/legislative actions in the Delta watershed to account for and administer the California water rights system, including protecting stored water releases.
  8. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to advance Sites Reservoir and the Agreements to Support Healthy Rivers and Landscapes (Voluntary Agreements), consistent with the Board's action to advance these efforts.
- B. Colorado River Resources – The Colorado River is a critical resource for the entire Southwest and many diverse ecosystems. Degradation of the Colorado River's water quality can cause significant economic, environmental, and human health impacts across the West. Metropolitan and other interested parties work to ensure we can continue to supply our communities with a safe and reliable water supply.
1. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding of conservation and efficiency projects to enhance the resiliency of the Colorado River System and Metropolitan's Colorado River supplies.
  2. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to ensure that sufficient water is stored and delivered from Lake Mead to meet regional water supply needs while acknowledging the evolving Law of the River.
  3. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for the cleanup of contaminated sites along the Colorado River. This includes, but is not limited to, uranium remediation in Moab, Utah; perchlorate remediation in Henderson, Nevada; hexavalent chromium remediation near Topock, Arizona; and a waste disposal site near Hoover Dam.
  4. Promote continued coordination between states and federal agencies to further the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program (Program) and work to include water conservation as a criterion in the selection of salinity control projects. Support actions to stabilize the financial position of the Program. Maintain the operation of the United States Bureau of Reclamation's Paradox Valley Unit salinity control project at a safe level.
  5. Secure funding and support administrative/legislative actions for the implementation of the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program to promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species in a manner that allows the Lower Basin States to conserve Colorado River water.
  6. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding that advance binational water conservation programs that benefit Colorado River supply augmentation and habitat restoration objectives.
  7. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to update and apply reasonable and beneficial use determinations while acknowledging the evolving Law of the River.
- C. State Water Project – About 30 percent of Southern California's water comes from the SWP in an average year. Metropolitan works with state and federal agencies as well as other SWP contractors to manage threats to the project and address environmental needs and augment water supplies through existing and potential collaborative transfers and groundwater banking agreements.

1. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to address the impacts of subsidence on the SWP and prevent future damage caused by unsustainable groundwater pumping.
2. Support funding for joint state and federal facility repairs, rehabilitation, and improvements, and ensure funding is equitably distributed between partners while maintaining SWP supply reliability.
3. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for the cleanup of contaminated groundwater storage basins used for Metropolitan water banking programs along the California Aqueduct.
4. Support funding for the public share of costs, including recreation, flood protection, mitigation, environmental enhancement, and rehabilitation for multi-purpose SWP facilities.

IV. Sustainability, Resiliency, and Innovation – Metropolitan supports policies and funding that encourage sustainable practices that improve water and power system resilience and adapt to a rapidly changing environmental landscape. Metropolitan strives to fulfill the needs of the current generation without compromising the needs of future generations in an environmentally and economically responsible way.

A. Carbon Neutrality

1. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to implement Metropolitan's Climate Action Plan to reduce Metropolitan's greenhouse gas emissions and reach carbon neutrality by 2045.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to assist the Department of Water Resources in reaching carbon neutrality for the State Water Project by 2045 in a cost-effective and environmentally responsible manner.
3. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to improve, develop, and promote innovative climate adaptation solutions and support science-based strategies and tools that benefit the environment by restoring healthy soils, conserving water, and capturing and/or sequestering carbon.
4. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding that assists public agencies in the transition to zero-emission fleets and equipment.

B. Water/Energy Nexus

1. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for energy efficiency and storage projects, and programs to reduce greenhouse gases and develop renewable resources.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions that remove barriers and encourage energy sector investments in water conservation and energy management programs.
3. Support administrative/legislative or regulatory activities that preserve Metropolitan's ability to pursue a diverse set of supply options and oppose constraints on supply development, such as water resource loading orders based solely on energy intensity.
4. Support efforts to ensure power costs are appropriate and proportional to the benefits received, and that water system operations are not adversely affected by power-related legislation/administrative actions.
5. Support administrative/legislative actions that provide state funding from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund for water/energy nexus projects and maintain Cap-



and-Trade allowances for Metropolitan and Department of Water Resources (i.e., State Water Contractors).

6. Support administrative/legislative actions that maintain Board authority over energy-related matters (e.g., system reserve margin or resource adequacy requirements).

#### C. Renewable Energy

1. Support administrative/legislative actions that define hydropower generation as renewable energy irrespective of a facility's nameplate generating capacity and include the provision of renewable energy credits for hydroelectric generation.
2. Work to ensure that administrative/legislative actions seeking to enhance or expand hydropower at existing dams do not adversely impact those dams, either financially or operationally, or entities with rights to the power from the existing resources that directly or indirectly impact Metropolitan's service area.
3. Support administrative/legislative actions to improve federal hydropower relicensing for existing facilities, including SWP resources.
4. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for the SWP and the Colorado River Aqueduct (CRA) to incorporate renewable energy resources, such as pumped hydroelectric energy, that contribute to the state's climate goals without impacting the projects' primary purpose, provided consideration is given to transmission limitations, cost and portfolio availability, and unrelated impacts are not shifted to SWP or CRA facilities.

#### D. Environmental Stewardship

1. Support administrative/legislative actions for environmental compliance to improve clarity and workability of the requirements and promote consistency and reduce regulatory duplication, while protecting public health and the environment.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to facilitate non-mitigation habitat restoration projects that benefit endangered and threatened species.
3. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for research and partnerships on water science, including snowpack and streamflow monitoring, runoff, drinking water quality, salinity control, source water protection, soil moisture monitoring, healthy soils, and watershed research.

#### E. Workforce Development – Metropolitan is committed to ensuring the resiliency of its workforce and to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion to promote the physical and mental safety and well-being of its workforce and the communities it serves.

1. Support administrative/legislative actions, funding, and partnerships to improve educational opportunities in the water sector, including career technical education and workforce development.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding that improve water system staff training and certification processes.

#### F. Innovation – Supporting and promoting innovation and emerging technologies continues Metropolitan's long tradition of creatively solving difficult challenges.

1. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for the research and development of new and emerging technologies such as satellite- and computer-based technologies to monitor source water quality, ecosystem health, state- and federal-threatened and endangered fish species; measure and predict agricultural water use, urban outdoor water use, and reservoir evaporation; and expand

coordination with technology incubators, research institutions, and other stakeholder groups.

2. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to promote open water data platforms and sharing, including improving access to agency data, streamlining the collection and submission of water agency data, and promoting collaboration among federal, state, and local stakeholders.

V. Infrastructure – Metropolitan has a strategic priority to invest in key capital projects in our region to enable long-term, reliable water deliveries. Key capital projects identified in Metropolitan’s Capital Investment Plan focus on improvements to the CRA, treatment plants, and distribution systems.

- A. Support administrative/legislative actions to initiate, expedite, and secure funding to defray the costs of planning, financing, constructing, repairing, and rehabilitating water infrastructure projects, including but not limited to general obligation bonds, tax-exempt municipal bonds, grants, low-interest loans, and direct appropriations. Ensure equitable cost-sharing of water infrastructure projects.
- B. Support administrative/legislative efforts to expand funding programs, expedite project approval and reporting processes, and prevent project backlogs in state and federal funding or financing.
- C. Support the “beneficiaries pay” approach as a financing mechanism for statewide projects and programs and oppose public goods charges, or other charges levied on water agencies for funding broader public benefits.
- D. Support funding for the public share of costs, including mitigation, rehabilitation, and recreation, for multi-purpose water infrastructure.
- E. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for new or expanded water infrastructure or programs that complement existing water supplies to ensure reliability for all member agencies.

VI. System Resiliency – Metropolitan diligently maintains and significantly invests to safeguard a region-wide water supply system that is a cornerstone of Southern California’s \$1.6 trillion economy. Changes in the climate and accompanying weather extremes are serious challenges facing Metropolitan. Additionally, Metropolitan needs to be prepared to respond rapidly to natural disasters and security threats. Resiliency ensures the water supply and delivery system is strong, can return to service quickly, and is prepared to address future challenges

#### A. Climate Resiliency

1. Support legislative/administrative actions and funding for local and regional drought resiliency projects to improve system flexibility.
2. Support legislative/administrative actions and funding for planning and research into the potential water resource and quality effects of climate change.
3. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for imported source watershed protection and enhancement of water quality, supply, and demand-side management actions to help offset the effects of climate change.
4. Support administrative/legislative actions and pursue funding opportunities that recognize and help mitigate the significant differences in the capability and needs of communities and regions to withstand the impacts of climate change.
5. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for local drought contingency planning areas in the state that have increased concern about wholesale water system delivery constraints.

6. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding that facilitate the integration of existing and planned local water supply, distribution systems, and regional water facilities.

#### B. Emergency Preparedness

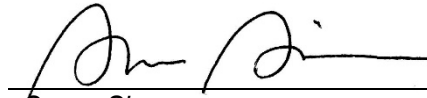
1. Support administrative/legislative actions that assist the water industry in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from extreme weather events and natural disasters, including earthquakes and wildfires, catastrophic accidents, and physical or cyber sabotage. These actions may include, but are not limited to, actions to provide funding for emergency responses and planning and post-emergency restoration of service.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions that assist the water industry to address the effects of wildfires and power outages, including the impacts of public safety power shutoff events.
3. Support additional funding for the Federal Emergency Management Agency programs to assist with emergency repairs and improvements, including but not limited to dam safety, spillway improvements, and erosion control repairs.

#### C. Physical and Cyber Security

1. Support continued U.S. Environmental Protection Agency oversight of water system security in coordination with other federal and state agencies with expertise in security, including the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, and the Chemical Security Analysis Center.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions that would provide funding or reimbursement for enhanced physical security and cybersecurity for water and power infrastructure.
3. Support trade associations and coalition efforts to share information and develop standard guidance and best management practices to protect water and power critical infrastructure from cyber vulnerabilities.
4. Support administrative/legislative actions that ensure Metropolitan's ability to reliably operate and maintain its facilities, infrastructure, and real estate assets, including rights of way, and to protect against encroachment.

**D. Chemical Security**

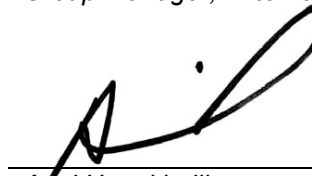
1. Support administrative/legislative actions to improve supply chain reliability, achieve tax-exempt status for water treatment chemicals, and ensure access to water treatment chemicals.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions to ensure the continued use of gaseous chlorine to protect public health.



*Susan Sims*  
*Group Manager, External Affairs*

12/27/2023

*Date*



*Adel Hagekhalil*  
*General Manager*

12/27/2023

*Date*

**Attachment 1 – Summary of Comments (December 2023)**

**Attachment 2 – Redline Final Proposed 2024 Legislative Priorities and Principles**

Ref# ea12698677

Summary of Comments (December 2023)

Commenter	Comment	Response	Suggested Revision
	2024 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES		
San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA)	Legislative Priority 1 Reflect projects are still in the planning phases; Board has not determined participation in the implementation of the projects.	Noted.	Continue support for imported water supply resiliency and reliability, including <u>planning for</u> the Delta Conveyance Project, Sites Reservoir Project, Agreements to Support Healthy Rivers and Landscapes (Voluntary Agreements), and <u>the</u> development of near-term and post-2026 Colorado River operating guidelines.
Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD)	Legislative Priority 4 EMWD supports the least expensive options to ensure equal reliability across the Metropolitan service area, especially for the SWPDA. We struggle with the concept that each member agency needs access to the exact same Met facilities as that approach appears very expensive and does not increase Met’s overall water supply reliability. It seems more prudent and more aligned with Met’s water affordability goals to invest in additional resource development in SWP dependent areas and continue water banking initiatives.	Initial language was taken from the Board’s policy adopted in August 2022. (Resolution 9318, M.I. 52946)  The definition of equitable access below is taken from the November 28, 2023 presentation, Item 3d, to the Subcommittee on PureWater Southern California and Regional Conveyance, as follows:  “Definition of Equitable Access (draft), ‘Member Agencies have adequate access to Metropolitan supply and storage assets and programs to provide uniform water supply reliability to prevent geographic-specific disparity, with fully operating infrastructure.’”	Support funding for regional conveyance <u>and water storage</u> improvements to ensure the region’s water <u>supply reliability storage</u> is equitable <u>ly accessible</u> to all member agencies.
EMWD	Legislative Priority 5 EMWD recognizes that Metropolitan is sensitive to the issue of ensuring equitable access to clean drinking water for all Californians, however, we believe that Metropolitan should limit the scope of their investment to their service area. For the sake of water affordability for member agencies and so as to not violate Prop 26, Metropolitan should limit this	Language had carried forward from 2023 LPP.  Metropolitan should not restrict investments to its service area because it needs to protect its imported water sources.	Protect drinking water quality and <del>ensure</del> access to safe and reliable drinking water <del>for all Californians</del> , including upholding the polluter pays principle and ensuring the continued cleanup of sites along the Colorado River.

Summary of Comments (December 2023)

Commenter	Comment	Response	Suggested Revision
	priority to the geographic scope of this priority to its service area.		
SDCWA	[C]onsider [adding] a priority seeking congressional exemptions for water utilities should PFAS be considered a hazardous substance under Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA).	This is addressed in Section I.A.2 in the Legislative Principles. Metropolitan has been advocating on this issue since 2020.	No change.
	Section I: Drinking Water		
EMWD	Drinking Water – introductory language This overarching principle should reference only Metropolitan’s service area, and not the greater Southern California region.	Noted.	No change.
	Section I.A: Water Quality		
EMWD	Section I.A.2. EMWD would recommend specifying that this principle is also targeting PFAS, and other constituents of emerging concern.	Noted.	Support application of the “polluter pays” principle such that parties responsible for introducing contaminants, <u>such as per- and polyfluoralkyl (PFAS) substances</u> , in or near drinking water sources are held liable for cleanup, and not drinking water and wastewater facilities that subsequently store, transport, or treat the water.
	Section I.B. Water Governance, Affordability & Funding		
EMWD	Section I.B.2. EMWD would like clarification on Metropolitan’s intent to improve water affordability at the water-system level. EMWD maintains the opinion that Metropolitan should not establish an affordability program for the retail customers of member agencies. EMWD continues to support Metropolitan’s pursuit of grant funding to offset the cost burden of infrastructure investments. Eastern	Noted. Also revised Legislative Priority 7 for consistency.	Support administrative/legislative actions and funding that improve water affordability throughout the region <u>at both the individual and the water system level</u> , especially for disadvantaged communities, without burdening existing ratepayers.

## Summary of Comments (December 2023)

Commenter	Comment	Response	Suggested Revision
	requests clarification on what is meant by “individual.”		
EMWD	Section I.B.3. This principle should specify that Metropolitan supports funding to help retail water systems provide low-income ratepayer assistance.	Adding the qualifier “retail” could narrow the advocacy efforts.	No change.
Cucamonga Valley Water District	Section I.B.3. Support in concept, but do not support a mandate or a general tax	Metropolitan includes language in I.B.2. to address this concern, “...without burdening existing ratepayers.”	No change.
	<b>Section II: Regional Water Resource Management</b>		
	Section II.A. Conservation		
EMWD	Section II.A.3. As part of Metropolitan’s efforts to support science-based conservation regulation, they should also encourage the regulations to consider the impacts to water affordability.	Noted.	Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to advance Conservation as a California Way of Life in a manner that maintains flexibility and local control. Support efforts to ensure new statutes and regulations are based on science; recognize regional distinctions (i.e., climate, land use, population, and hydrology); <u>water affordability</u> ; and potential impacts to wastewater operations and recycled water projects.
	Section II.C. Recycled Water		
EMWD	Section II.C.6. EMWD believes that the word “voluntary” is unnecessary in this statement. By only promoting voluntary use, Metropolitan member agencies may be committing valuable potable water resources to uses where recycled water would be more appropriate.	Noted.  Removal of “voluntary” is inconsistent with Metropolitan’s position on SB 332 (Hertzberg, 2019) which would have mandated wastewater recycling.	No change.
	Section II.D. Local Supply Development		
SDCWA	Section II.D.5. Suggest expanding storage to include surface storage to keep the door open for new forms of partnerships	Noted.	Support administrative/legislative actions and funding that advance Metropolitan’s <u>surface and</u> groundwater storage and/or recovery programs with member agencies.

## Summary of Comments (December 2023)

Commenter	Comment	Response	Suggested Revision
	that MWD may consider and funding opportunities for surface storage.		
	<b>Section III: Imported Water Supply</b>		
	<b>Section III.B Colorado River Resources</b>		
SDCWA	Section III.B Suggest adding a principle supporting environmental protections as USBOR adopts and implements steps to address drought and climate change on the Colorado River.	Support is included in bullet III.B.5, “Secure funding and support administrative/legislative actions for the implementation of the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program to promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species in a manner that allows the Lower Basin States to conserve Colorado River water.”	No change.
SDCWA	Section III.B Suggest adding a principle supporting opportunities to store water in Lake Mead, which would benefit the whole Basin.	This is a fundamental principle, and support for increasing storage is incorporated throughout the principles.	No change.
Staff	III.B.1	Correction.	Support administrative/legislative actions and funding of conservation and efficiency projects to enhance the resiliency of the Colorado River System and Metropolitan’s Colorado River <del>supplies</del> <u>Aqueduct</u> .
SDCWA	Section III.B.2 Add language to specify: “while also recognizing and protecting the Law of the River.”	Noted.	Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to ensure that sufficient water is stored and delivered from Lake Mead to meet human health and safety needs <u>while acknowledging the evolving Law of the River</u> .
EMWD	Section III.B.2 EMWD would like for Metropolitan to maximize Lake Mead supply, as it is one of the more affordable imported supplies available. Limiting this storage to only meet health and safety needs may be problematic in the event of low or nonexistent SWP allocations in future years.	Noted.	Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to ensure that sufficient water is stored and delivered from Lake Mead to meet <u>regional water supply needs</u> . <del>human health and safety needs.</del>



Summary of Comments (December 2023)

Commenter	Comment	Response	Suggested Revision
Staff	III.B.4., 5, 6, 7	Revised to eliminate duplication.	4. Promote continued coordination between states and federal agencies to further the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program (Program) <u>and work to include water conservation as a criterion in the selection of salinity control projects</u> . Support actions to stabilize the financial position of the Program, <u>and</u> <del>5. Support efforts to maintain</del> <u>and enhance</u> the operation of the United States Bureau of Reclamation’s Paradox Valley Unit salinity control project at a safe level. <del>while working to develop a viable alternative that provides long-term reductions in salt loads to the Colorado River.</del> <del>6. Support legislative efforts to revise the salinity standard for Colorado River water delivered under the U.S. treaty with Mexico to increase water conservation.</del> <del>7. Support legislative action to include water conservation as a criterion for selecting salinity control projects in the upper Colorado River Basin.</del>
San Diego County Water Authority	Section III.B.10 Add language to specify “consistent with the Law of the River and priority system.”	Noted.	Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to update and apply reasonable and beneficial use determinations <u>while acknowledging the evolving the Law of the River.</u>
	Section VI – System Resiliency		
	Section VI.A. Climate Resiliency		
Eastern Municipal Water District	Section VI.A.1 It should be specified that local and regional drought resiliency projects developed for system flexibility should consider affordability, and limit impacts to member agencies when possible.	Noted.	No change.



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# **2024 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES & PRINCIPLES**

The 2024 Legislative Priorities and Principles lay out an integrated “One Water” collaborative approach to managing Southern California’s watersheds, water resources, and water infrastructure to ensure long-term resilience and reliability for communities and ecosystems.

Staff use this document to advocate for these priorities and principles at the state and federal levels through advancing Metropolitan-sponsored legislation, engaging on bills or pursuing federal and state funding.



## 2024 Legislative Priorities

To help adapt to a changing climate, protect water resources, and partner with communities we serve, Metropolitan will work to support administrative/legislative actions and federal and state funding for the following priorities in 2024:

### A. Top Legislative Priorities:

1. Continue support for imported water supply resiliency and reliability, including ~~progress planning for on~~ the Delta Conveyance Project, Sites Reservoir Project, Agreements to Support Healthy Rivers and Landscapes (Voluntary Agreements), and ~~the~~ development of near-term and post-2026 Colorado River operating guidelines.
2. Conserve existing water supplies and prepare for climate change by supporting demand management and water use efficiency, long-term non-functional turf conversion, and a federal tax exemption for water conservation rebates.
3. Advance Pure Water Southern California and other water recycling projects and long-term supply reliability improvements.
4. Support funding for regional conveyance ~~and water storage~~ improvements to ensure the region's water ~~storage is equitably accessible~~ supply reliability is equitable to all member agencies.
5. Protect drinking water quality and ~~ensure~~ access to safe and reliable drinking water ~~for all Californians~~, including upholding the polluter pays principle and ensuring the continued cleanup of sites along the Colorado River.
6. Support adaptive management for ecosystem restoration in the Bay-Delta and Colorado River watersheds that takes into consideration evolving climate conditions, risk analyses, and best available science.
7. Improve water affordability throughout the region, especially for disadvantaged communities, at both the individual and water system level, without burdening existing ratepayers.

### B. Metropolitan-Sponsored State Bill (Board authorized in November 2023)

1. Support administrative/legislative actions to amend the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act to eliminate the sunset date to allow Metropolitan to continue operating under its existing master reclamation plan.



## 2024 Legislative Policy Principles

The 2024 Legislative Policy Principles will guide and inform Metropolitan's engagement on state and federal legislative and regulatory activities. They were developed in consultation with subject matter experts at Metropolitan. The principles holistically address six strategic areas of policy that inform Metropolitan's One Water Vision and the Board-led process for developing the Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water (CAMP4W). These policy areas include: (1) drinking water; (2) regional water resource management; (3) imported water supply; (4) sustainability, resiliency, and innovation; (5) infrastructure; and (6) system resiliency.

I. Drinking Water – Metropolitan provides to the Southern California region high-quality, reliable drinking water in an economically responsible way that surpasses all federal and state drinking water regulations.

### A. Water Quality and Treatment

1. Support administrative/legislative actions that utilize best available science, occurrence and health effects data, and appropriate cost-benefit analyses or economic feasibility to protect public health and improve water quality. Apply these principles when setting maximum contaminant levels, health advisories, or notification/response levels, in addition to assessing laboratory capacity, analytical methods, and other regulatory standards or guidance levels.
2. Support application of the "polluter pays" principle such that parties responsible for introducing contaminants, such as per- and polyfluoralkyl substances, in or near drinking water sources are held liable for cleanup, and not drinking water and wastewater facilities that subsequently store, transport, or treat the water.
3. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for treatment and mitigation measures to comply with any new regulatory standards, develop risk communication tools, as well as provide adequate time for implementation.
4. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to protect source water quality, reduce threats from invasive species, and mitigate harmful algal blooms.
5. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for the constituents of emerging concern (CEC) Action Fund to improve the State Water Resource Control Board's knowledge of CEC in waters of the state and drinking water.

B. Water Governance, Affordability, and Funding -- Metropolitan supports efforts to provide access to safe, reliable and affordable drinking water to all residents.

1. Support administrative/legislative actions that prioritize providing safe, reliable and affordable drinking water to disadvantaged communities.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding that improve water affordability throughout the region ~~at both the individual and the water system level~~, especially for disadvantaged communities, without burdening existing



ratepayers.

3. Support funding to help water systems provide low-income ratepayer assistance programs.
4. Support administrative/legislative actions that improve governance and long-term sustainability of non-compliant water systems and provide assistance for voluntary consolidations that improve their technical, managerial, or financial capacity, while ensuring that all receiving public water systems are consulted on changes of organization, including proposed consolidations or extensions of service area.
5. Support administrative/legislative actions that provide local agencies flexibility in determining fees for service and assessment amounts.
6. Support administrative/legislative actions that ensure the limited resources of the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund are allocated to advance projects, operation and maintenance costs, infrastructure improvements, and/or consolidation actions that will achieve long-term sustainability for water systems and the communities that rely on those systems.

II. Regional Water Resource Management – Metropolitan’s One Water Vision and the Board-led CAMP4W process promote collaboration with member agencies to plan for future water supply needs and the challenges ahead in a reliable, cost-effective, and environmentally responsible manner. This involves protecting imported water supplies and quality, supporting local resource development, advancing water use efficiency, and supporting ecosystem protection and restoration.

A. Conservation

1. Support tax exemptions and/or credits for water conservation or efficiency incentives, including but not limited to long-term conversion of non-functional turf (NFT), local stormwater capture, and other measures to reduce consumption of water or enhance the absorption and infiltration capacity of the landscape.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions and federal/state funding to encourage equitable water use efficiency and recycled water use among agricultural, industrial, and urban sectors.
3. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to advance Conservation as a California Way of Life in a manner that maintains flexibility and local control. Support efforts to ensure new statutes and regulations are based on science; recognize regional distinctions (i.e., climate, land use, population, and hydrology); water affordability; and potential impacts to wastewater operations and recycled water projects.
4. Support administrative/legislative actions and federal/state funding for leak detection and water loss reduction. Support the development and



implementation of flexible water loss standards for both retail and wholesale water systems.

5. Support administrative/legislative actions and federal/state funding for the long-term conversion of NFT in residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional landscapes and ban installation of NFT in new construction.

#### B. Desalination & Groundwater Remediation

1. Support administrative/legislative actions, funding, and partnerships for brackish groundwater and seawater desalination projects, consistent with the Governor's Water Resilience Portfolio and 2022 Water Supply Strategy and Metropolitan's CAMP4W goals.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for salinity control projects, including but not limited to source control, treatment, and concentrate management.
3. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for research, pilot tests, and demonstration studies to encourage the development of environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient desalination technologies.

#### C. Recycled Water

1. Support actions to advance and secure funding for the Pure Water Southern California Program and related projects.
2. Support efforts to improve flexibility of the State's water recycling grant program.
3. Support implementation of the National Water Reuse Action Plan and California Water Reuse Action Plan while protecting local flexibility and encouraging local, state, and federal coordination, research, and innovation.
4. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding that facilitate the adoption of direct potable reuse regulations by December 31, 2023. These actions include but are not limited to planning, development, and implementation of local and regional potable reuse projects; and initiatives to fill research gaps and advance the science to promote the further development of potable reuse.
5. Support administrative/legislative actions to promote voluntary on-site water treatment systems if they maintain compliance with Title 22 and do not negatively affect municipal water recycling systems.
6. Support administrative/legislative actions that maximize voluntary use of recycled water.

#### D. Local Supply Development



1. Support administrative/legislative actions that protect and advance local flexibility and responsiveness in developing locally appropriate, climate-resilient diverse resource portfolios.
2. Continue to support and promote integrated water resources development by advocating for clear, concise, and expedited regulations/policies that are easily understandable by the regulated community and public.
3. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to expedite the development of new local resources (including recycled water, direct potable reuse, groundwater, stormwater, desalination projects, and groundwater remediation) without compromising the operational, financial, water quality, regulatory, environmental, and customer interests of Metropolitan and other water and wastewater agencies.
4. Support administrative/legislative actions that advance stormwater as a beneficial resource and facilitate the funding and permitting of stormwater capture projects to augment local and regional water supplies and promote holistic watershed health.
5. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding that advance Metropolitan's surface and groundwater storage and/or recovery programs with member agencies.

#### E. Watershed Management

1. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to enhance watershed management in Southern California, the Bay-Delta, and Colorado River watersheds that provide broad public benefits, including water quality and water supply reliability, reduced wildfire risks, greater scientific understanding, and other environmental improvements.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions that help advance implementation of watershed management plans, including watershed research and multi-benefit forestry management projects.
3. Support implementation of the California Water Resiliency Portfolio and the Water Supply Strategy, as consistent with Metropolitan goals and objectives, to ensure improved watershed-scale coordination, watershed management and planning, and programs and funding that provide water resilience and improve watershed functions.

III. Imported Water Supply – Metropolitan provides imported water supplies to its member agencies from two primary sources, the Colorado River via the Colorado Aqueduct and Northern California watersheds via the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and the State Water Project.

A. Bay-Delta Initiatives– Metropolitan is involved in several key regulatory and planning



processes in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta related to the operation of the State Water Project (SWP). The goal is to advance water supply reliability and ecosystem restoration concurrently by modernizing the state's water infrastructure with the proposed Delta Conveyance Project and improving the habitat and function of the Delta estuary for the benefit of threatened and endangered species. To advance these goals, Metropolitan supports collaborative scientific efforts to better understand how to restore and manage the Bay-Delta while reducing reliance consistent with the 2009 Delta Reform Act (Delta Reform Act).

1. Support administrative/legislative actions to advance Delta Conveyance and EcoRestore in support of California's coequal goals of water supply reliability and Delta ecosystem restoration and the Governor's California Water Resilience Portfolio.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to improve scientific understanding of listed Delta fish and wildlife species and water project operations in the Delta, including data collection, real-time monitoring, and modeling. Promote the use of best available science to protect and restore aquatic species and habitats, and enhance flexibility for water project operations while maintaining regulatory and statutory protections for species listed under the state and federal Endangered Species Act.
3. Continue support for implementation of state policies adopted as part of the Delta Reform Act and water management package, including clarification of the monitoring, reporting, and enforcement provisions related to in-Delta diversions.
4. Support administrative/legislative actions to consolidate review and oversight of anadromous species protection under the U.S. Department of the Interior.
5. Support administrative/legislative actions that protect water quality for beneficial uses and that are implemented consistent with California water rights priorities.
6. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to advance the Delta Freshwater Pathway, levee improvements (including levee modernization for the existing Delta levee system), levee maintenance programs (including real-time monitoring for the existing Delta levee system), and secure Delta flood-fighting materials and stockpiles.
7. Support administrative/legislative actions in the Delta watershed to account for and administer the California water rights system, including protecting stored water releases.
8. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to advance Sites Reservoir and the Agreements to Support Healthy Rivers and Landscapes





(Voluntary Agreements), consistent with the Board's action to advance these efforts.

B. Colorado River Resources – The Colorado River is a critical resource for the entire Southwest and many diverse ecosystems. Degradation of the Colorado River's water quality can cause significant economic, environmental, and human health impacts across the West. Metropolitan and other interested parties work to ensure we can continue to supply our communities with a safe and reliable water supply.

1. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding of conservation and efficiency projects to enhance the resiliency of the Colorado River System and Metropolitan's Colorado River ~~Aqueduct~~ supplies.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to ensure that sufficient water is stored and delivered from Lake Mead to meet ~~human health and safety needs~~ regional water supply needs while acknowledging the evolving Law of the River.
3. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for the cleanup of contaminated sites along the Colorado River. This includes, but is not limited to, uranium remediation in Moab, Utah; perchlorate remediation in Henderson, Nevada; hexavalent chromium remediation near Topock, Arizona; and a waste disposal site near Hoover Dam.
- ~~4.~~ Promote continued coordination between states and federal agencies to further the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program (Program) and work to include water conservation as a criterion in the selection of salinity control projects. Support actions to stabilize the financial position of the Program.
- ~~5.~~ ~~Support efforts to maintain and enhance~~ the operation of the United States Bureau of Reclamation's Paradox Valley Unit salinity control project at a safe level. while working to develop a viable alternative that provides long term reductions in salt loads to the Colorado River.
- ~~6.~~ ~~Support legislative efforts to revise the salinity standard for Colorado River water delivered under the U.S. treaty with Mexico to increase water conservation.~~
- ~~7.4.~~ ~~Support legislative action to include water conservation as a criterion for selecting salinity control projects in the upper Colorado River Basin.~~
- ~~8.5.~~ Secure funding and support administrative/legislative actions for the implementation of the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program to promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species in a manner that allows the Lower Basin States to conserve Colorado River water.



9.6. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding that advance binational water conservation programs that benefit Colorado River supply augmentation and habitat restoration objectives.

7. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to update and apply reasonable and beneficial use determinations while acknowledging the evolving Law of the River.

C. State Water Project – About 30 percent of Southern California’s water comes from the SWP in an average year. Metropolitan works with state and federal agencies as well as other SWP contractors to manage threats to the project and address environmental needs and augment water supplies through existing and potential collaborative transfers and groundwater banking agreements.

1. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to address the impacts of subsidence on the SWP and prevent future damage caused by unsustainable groundwater pumping.
2. Support funding for joint state and federal facility repairs, rehabilitation, and improvements, and ensure funding is equitably distributed between partners while maintaining SWP supply reliability.
3. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for the cleanup of contaminated groundwater storage basins used for Metropolitan water banking programs along the California Aqueduct.
4. Support funding for the public share of costs, including recreation, flood protection, mitigation, environmental enhancement, and rehabilitation for multi-purpose SWP facilities.

IV. Sustainability, Resiliency, and Innovation – Metropolitan supports policies and funding that encourage sustainable practices that improve water and power system resilience and adapt to a rapidly changing environmental landscape. Metropolitan strives to fulfill the needs of the current generation without compromising the needs of future generations in an environmentally and economically responsible way.

#### A. Carbon Neutrality

1. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to implement Metropolitan’s Climate Action Plan to reduce Metropolitan’s greenhouse gas emissions and reach carbon neutrality by 2045.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to assist the Department of Water Resources in reaching carbon neutrality for the State Water Project by 2045 in a cost-effective and environmentally responsible manner.
3. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to improve, develop,



and promote innovative climate adaptation solutions and support science-based strategies and tools that benefit the environment by restoring healthy soils, conserving water, and capturing and/or sequestering carbon.

4. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding that assists public agencies in the transition to zero-emission fleets and equipment.

#### B. Water/Energy Nexus

1. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for energy efficiency and storage projects, and programs to reduce greenhouse gases and develop renewable resources.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions that remove barriers and encourage energy sector investments in water conservation and energy management programs.
3. Support administrative/legislative or regulatory activities that preserve Metropolitan's ability to pursue a diverse set of supply options and oppose constraints on supply development, such as water resource loading orders based solely on energy intensity.
4. Support efforts to ensure power costs are appropriate and proportional to the benefits received and that water system operations are not adversely affected by power-related legislation/administrative actions.
5. Support administrative/legislative actions that provide state funding from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund for water/energy nexus projects and maintain Cap-and-Trade allowances for Metropolitan and Department of Water Resources (i.e., State Water Contractors).
6. Support administrative/legislative actions that maintain Board authority over energy-related matters (e.g., system reserve margin or resource adequacy requirements).

#### C. Renewable Energy

1. Support administrative/legislative actions that define hydropower generation as renewable energy irrespective of a facility's nameplate generating capacity and include the provision of renewable energy credits for hydroelectric generation.
2. Work to ensure that administrative/legislative actions seeking to enhance or expand hydropower at existing dams do not adversely impact those dams, either financially or operationally, or entities with rights to the power from the existing resources that directly or indirectly impact Metropolitan's service area.



3. Support administrative/legislative actions to improve federal hydropower relicensing for existing facilities, including SWP resources.
4. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for the SWP and the Colorado River Aqueduct (CRA) to incorporate renewable energy resources, such as pumped hydroelectric energy, that contribute to the state's climate goals without impacting the projects' primary purpose, provided consideration is given to transmission limitations, cost and portfolio availability, and unrelated impacts are not shifted to SWP or CRA facilities.

D. Environmental Stewardship

1. Support administrative/legislative actions for environmental compliance to improve clarity and workability of the requirements and promote consistency and reduce regulatory duplication, while protecting public health and the environment.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to facilitate non-mitigation habitat restoration projects that benefit endangered and threatened species.
3. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for research and partnerships on water science, including snowpack and streamflow monitoring, runoff, drinking water quality, salinity control, source water protection, soil moisture monitoring, healthy soils, and watershed research.

E. Workforce Development – Metropolitan is committed to ensuring the resiliency of its workforce and to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion to promote the physical and mental safety and well-being of its workforce and the communities it serves.

1. Support administrative/legislative actions, funding, and partnerships to improve educational opportunities in the water sector, including career technical education and workforce development.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding that improve water system staff training and certification processes.

F. Innovation – Supporting and promoting innovation and emerging technologies continues Metropolitan's long tradition of creatively solving difficult challenges.

1. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for the research and development of new and emerging technologies such as satellite- and computer-based technologies to monitor source water quality, ecosystem health, state- and federal-threatened and endangered fish species; measure and predict agricultural water use, urban outdoor water use, and reservoir evaporation; and expand coordination with technology incubators, research institutions, and other stakeholder groups.



2. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to promote open water data platforms and sharing, including improving access to agency data, streamlining the collection and submission of water agency data, and promoting collaboration among federal, state, and local stakeholders.

V. Infrastructure – Metropolitan has a strategic priority to invest in key capital projects in our region to enable long-term, reliable water deliveries. Key capital projects identified in Metropolitan’s Capital Investment Plan focus on improvements to the CRA, treatment plants, and distribution systems.

- A. Support administrative/legislative actions to initiate, expedite, and secure funding to defray the costs of planning, financing, constructing, repairing, and rehabilitating water infrastructure projects, including but not limited to general obligation bonds, tax-exempt municipal bonds, grants, low-interest loans, and direct appropriations. Ensure equitable cost-sharing of water infrastructure projects.
- B. Support administrative/legislative efforts to expand funding programs, expedite project approval and reporting processes, and prevent project backlogs in state and federal funding or financing.
- C. Support the “beneficiaries pay” approach as a financing mechanism for statewide projects and programs and oppose public goods charges, or other charges levied on water agencies for funding broader public benefits.
- D. Support funding for the public share of costs, including mitigation, rehabilitation, and recreation, for multi-purpose water infrastructure.
- E. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for new or expanded water infrastructure or programs that complement existing water supplies to ensure reliability for all member agencies.

VI. System Resiliency – Metropolitan diligently maintains and significantly invests to safeguard a region-wide water supply system that is a cornerstone of Southern California’s \$1.6 trillion economy. Changes in the climate and accompanying weather extremes are serious challenges facing Metropolitan. Additionally, Metropolitan needs to be prepared to respond rapidly to natural disasters and security threats. Resiliency ensures the water supply and delivery system is strong, can return to service quickly, and is prepared to address future challenges

A. Climate Resiliency

1. Support legislative/administrative actions and funding for local and regional drought resiliency projects to improve system flexibility.
2. Support legislative/administrative actions and funding for planning and research into the potential water resource and quality effects of climate change.



3. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for imported source watershed protection and enhancement of water quality, supply, and demand-side management actions to help offset the effects of climate change.
4. Support administrative/legislative actions and pursue funding opportunities that recognize and help mitigate the significant differences in the capability and needs of communities and regions to withstand the impacts of climate change.
5. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding for local drought contingency planning areas in the state that have increased concern about wholesale water system delivery constraints.
6. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding that facilitate the integration of existing and planned local water supply, distribution systems, and regional water facilities.

#### B. Emergency Preparedness

1. Support administrative/legislative actions that assist the water industry in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from extreme weather events and natural disasters, including earthquakes and wildfires, catastrophic accidents, and physical or cyber sabotage. These actions may include, but are not limited to, actions to provide funding for emergency responses and planning and post-emergency restoration of service.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions that assist the water industry to address the effects of wildfires and power outages, including the impacts of public safety power shutoff events.
3. Support additional funding for the Federal Emergency Management Agency programs to assist with emergency repairs and improvements, including but not limited to dam safety, spillway improvements, and erosion control repairs.

#### C. Physical and Cyber Security

1. Support continued U.S. Environmental Protection Agency oversight of water system security in coordination with other federal and state agencies with expertise in security, including the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, and the Chemical Security Analysis Center.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions that would provide funding or reimbursement for enhanced physical security and cybersecurity for water and power infrastructure.



3. Support trade associations and coalition efforts to share information and develop standard guidance and best management practices to protect water and power critical infrastructure from cyber vulnerabilities.
4. Support administrative/legislative actions that ensure Metropolitan's ability to reliably operate and maintain its facilities, infrastructure, and real estate assets, including rights of way, and to protect against encroachment.

#### D. Chemical Security

1. Support administrative/legislative actions to improve supply chain reliability, achieve tax-exempt status for water treatment chemicals, and ensure access to water treatment chemicals.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions to ensure the continued use of gaseous chlorine to protect public health.