



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Board Action

- **Board of Directors**
Legislation and Communications Committee

7/14/2026 Board Meeting

8-2

Subject

Adopt resolution supporting the Association of California Water Agencies “Vision for our Water Future” initiative; the General Manager has determined that the proposed action is exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA

Executive Summary

The Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) launched “Vision for Our Water Future” (Vision), a statewide initiative designed to elevate water as a top priority for California. Vision is intended to provide a solutions-focused framework on how to improve water supply reliability and affordability. Metropolitan staff are actively engaged in the three specialized working groups that will guide the development of policy recommendations for the incoming Governor, his Administration, and the Legislature. ACWA members and non-members are encouraged to help elevate Vision in local communities, including adopting a resolution in support of the initiative.

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

Staff Recommendation: Option #1

Option #1

Adopt resolution supporting ACWA’s “Vision for Our Water Future” initiative

Fiscal Impact: None

Business Analysis: Adopting the resolution will communicate Metropolitan’s support for this statewide initiative and the importance of making water a priority for California’s next Governor, his Administration, and the Legislature. Metropolitan’s participation in the initiative would help ensure that the perspectives of Southern California’s communities, businesses, and ratepayers are reflected in the statewide conversation. Vision working groups create an opportunity for Metropolitan to advance the Board-adopted legislative priorities and principles.

Option #2

Do not adopt resolution supporting ACWA’s “Vision for Our Water Future” initiative

Fiscal Impact: None

Business Analysis: Metropolitan staff will continue to participate in Vision’s working groups, but Metropolitan will lose the opportunity to leverage statewide communication strategies and collaboration with other water agencies to communicate its priorities.

Alternatives Considered

Metropolitan develops communication materials and seeks to engage with the Governor, the Administration, and the Legislature through our work in Sacramento, Washington, D.C., and district offices. Staff could continue this approach without the benefit of participating with other ACWA members in building a statewide platform that reflects Southern California priorities.

Supporting Vision would allow Metropolitan to leverage the collaboration and support that has been developed with a statewide organization, water agencies, and partner organizations to raise awareness and elevate water as a priority and advance the Board-adopted legislative priorities and principles during the critical pre- and post-election timeframe.

Applicable Policy

Not applicable

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

By Minute Item 54347, on December 9, 2025, the Board adopted the Legislative Priorities and Principles for 2026.

Summary of Outreach Completed

Staff spoke with several member agencies regarding Metropolitan's support for ACWA's Vision initiative. To date, six member agencies and several retail agencies have submitted their resolutions or statements of support.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA determination for Option #1:

The proposed action is not defined as a project under CEQA because it involves organizational, maintenance, or administrative activities; personnel-related actions; and/or general policy and procedure making that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. (Public Resources Code Section 21065; State CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(2) and (5)).

CEQA determination for Option #2:

None required

Details and Background

Overview

"Vision for Our Water Future" (Vision) is a statewide initiative designed to elevate water as a top priority for California's next Governor, his Administration, and the Legislature. The initiative recognizes that water agencies are on the front lines of the state's most pressing challenges—including droughts, floods, climate resilience, housing, economic development and aging infrastructure—but that meaningful progress requires a strong partnership between the state, regional and local water suppliers. Vision provides a solutions-focused framework on how California can improve water supply reliability and affordability (Vision Framework).

The Vision Framework was developed through an extensive member-driven process involving ACWA's approximately 470 public water agency members across all 10 ACWA regions, including representatives from Metropolitan and its member agencies. Input was gathered through member surveys, regional briefings, committee discussions, review of historic strategic priorities, and a General Manager Working Group with representatives from every region of the state. On March 20, 2026, the ACWA Board of Directors unanimously approved the Vision Framework.

The Vision Framework is intended to provide a high-level roadmap for California's next Governor, his Administration, and the Legislature. To support implementation, ACWA is currently convening working groups to develop more detailed recommendations that will be shared following the 2026 election. Metropolitan is actively participating in the three specialized working groups organized around protecting affordability, delivering critical infrastructure, and modernizing water management.

Four Priority Actions

Vision outlines four priority actions for the next Governor, legislative leadership, and Administration officials:

1) Lead on Water

The framework encourages state leadership to recognize that water is foundational to California's economy, communities, and environment. Vision calls for strong gubernatorial leadership, clear accountability, and improved coordination across state agencies to advance statewide water priorities.

2) Protect Affordability

Vision calls for a stronger state partnership in water infrastructure investment. It is asking for the creation of a reliable, sustainable state funding source for water infrastructure and improving existing funding programs, so investments reach programs faster. The framework also recognizes the importance of integrating water investments with housing, energy, and climate objectives to maximize public benefits and improve project delivery.

3) Deliver Critical Infrastructure

Vision supports strengthening California's water backbone, including the State Water Project and Central Valley Project, protecting California's Colorado River supplies, improving operational flexibility, and advancing regional water solutions.

4) Modernize Water Management

Vision supports improving permitting processes, reducing unnecessary regulatory redundancy, increasing certainty and accountability, and advancing flexible and adaptive water management strategies.

The Vision Framework also promotes strengthening water science, data, and technology to support informed decision-making. These priorities are directly connected to Metropolitan's mission and its commitment to maintaining reliable and affordable water service for Southern California. They are intended to help advance water supply, infrastructure, and resilience projects more efficiently while continuing to meet environmental objectives.

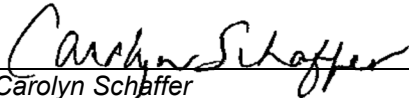
Participation in Vision for Our Water Future

ACWA is encouraging its member agencies and association partners to participate in Vision and its efforts to elevate water as a priority for California's next Governor, his Administration, and the Legislature. Participation does not require agreement on every policy issue or project; rather, it reflects support for Vision's overarching priorities and a commitment to advancing areas of common interest across California's water community. ACWA is also engaging with labor, housing, business, environmental, and environmental justice organizations to identify areas of alignment and opportunities for broader collaboration.

Vision recognizes that California's water challenges are too large and interconnected for any one organization to solve alone. While water agencies may differ on specific projects or policy approaches, there is broad agreement that California needs reliable water supplies, affordable water service, modern infrastructure, regulatory certainty, and strong leadership. Vision provides an opportunity for water agencies throughout California to identify areas of common ground and communicate those priorities collectively. Metropolitan's participation would help ensure that the perspectives of Southern California's communities, businesses, and ratepayers are reflected in that statewide conversation.

Six Metropolitan member agencies have adopted resolutions or submitted statements of support for Vision: Calleguas Municipal Water District, Eastern Municipal Water District, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, San Diego County Water Authority, and Three Valleys Municipal Water District and Upper Water. See **Attachment 1**. The Vision webpage shows there are currently 52 ACWA member agencies and water-focused associations from across the state supporting this effort.

Participation in Vision provides Metropolitan an opportunity to help shape a shared statewide water agenda through a coalition, and to ensure Southern California's priorities are represented in discussions with California's next Governor, the Administration, and the Legislature.



Carolyn Schaffer
Group Manager, External Affairs
6/26/2026
Date



Shivaji Deshmukh
General Manager
6/26/2026
Date

Attachment 1 – Resolution Supporting the Association of California Water Agencies “Vision for Our Water Future” Initiative

Ref# ea12713348

**Resolution supporting the Association of California Water Agencies
“Vision for our Water Future”**

RESOLUTION XXXX

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
SUPPORTING THE ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA WATER AGENCIES
“VISION FOR OUR WATER FUTURE”**

WHEREAS, in April 2026, the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) launched “Vision for Our Water Future”, a member-driven initiative to identify statewide water priorities to inform engagement with California’s next Administration; and

WHEREAS, the “Vision for Our Water Future” priorities are a set of recommendations for the next governor, emphasizing the importance of strong leadership, sustainable investment and coordinated action across all levels of government to secure California’s water future; and

WHEREAS, the first priority is to lead on water and elevate water as foundational to California’s economy, agriculture, communities, environment and climate resilience through sustained leadership and coordinated state action; and

WHEREAS, the second priority is to ensure safe and reliable water remains affordable through sustained and predictable funding partnerships and streamlined investment delivery; and

WHEREAS, the third priority is to strengthen and modernize California’s water infrastructure, including both built and natural systems, to improve reliability and resilience; and

WHEREAS, the fourth priority is to improve regulatory, operational and scientific frameworks to enable efficient project delivery and adaptive water management; and

WHEREAS, regional and local water agencies play a critical role in delivering safe and reliable water supplies and are essential partners in implementing statewide solutions; and

WHEREAS, supporting the “Vision for Our Water Future” recommendations demonstrates a unified commitment to collaborative, science-based and practical policies that advance a secure and resilient water future for California’s communities, farms, economy and environment.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of Metropolitan hereby expresses support for ACWA’s “Vision for Our Water Future” recommendations and affirms its commitment to working collaboratively to advance reliable, affordable and resilient water supplies.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Board of Directors of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, at its meeting held on July 14, 2026.

Secretary of the Board of Directors
of The Metropolitan Water District
of Southern California