



● Chair of the Board Adán Ortega Jr.'s Monthly Activity Report – November 2025

Summary

This report highlights my activities as Chair of the Board, as well as Board Member highlights during the month of November 2025 on matters relating to The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's business.

Monthly Activities

Key Activities

- This month, Shivaji Deshmukh joined Metropolitan as General Manager Designate, as part of a transition plan that will end on January 1, 2026, when he will assume full duties as General Manager upon the retirement of Deven Upadhyay. An Ad Hoc Committee of the Board of Directors, in coordination with staff, outlined a transition plan with opportunities for Shivaji to come up to speed with the inner workings of Metropolitan, with opportunities to interact with staff, board members, and key partners in the water industry. His reception by the Metropolitan family has been positive, hopeful, and optimistic.
- Attended the Metropolitan and Yorba Linda Water District's (YLWD) celebration of the dedication of a new helicopter hydrant (Heli-Hydrant) at the Robert B. Diemer Water Treatment Plant, providing firefighters with a new, strategically located water source for aerial fire suppression. The Diemer Heli-Hydrant holds 8,500 gallons of water and can be continuously refilled in less than 10 minutes via a gravity-fed water line from Diemer Plant's treated-water reservoir. In my opening remarks, I highlighted how the Heli-Hydrant project aligns with our Climate Adaptation Master Plan and strengthens wildfire response through strong regional partnerships. I thanked our collaboration with YLWD and emphasized that efforts like this help build a safer, more resilient Southern California. This Heli-Hydrant is a significant milestone in interagency cooperation, bringing together the Metropolitan and Yorba Linda Water District to enhance Southern California's wildfire response capabilities. I also announced my intention to ask the Board's Facilities Naming Committee to name the facility in honor of former MWD Director and YLWD Director Brett Barbre.



- Accompanied General Manager Designate Deshmukh as he started his visits to each of the Metropolitan facilities to introduce himself to the team. So far, Director Erdman, Director Bryant, and I have joined General Manager Designate Deshmukh and introduced him to the staff at the Diemer and Jensen Treatment Plants, as well as the facilities at Eagle Rock and Soto Street. Shivaji also spent three full days with Deven visiting the Southern Nevada Water Authority, the Colorado River Indian Tribes, as well as executive staff.
- Participated in the Water Matters briefing with Long Beach Utilities alongside Assemblymember Josh Lowenthal and Long Beach Utilities Department General Manager Anatole Falagan. Moderated by Director Gloria Cordero, our panel discussed regional water reliability, conservation, and future infrastructure investments. Joining us were Long Beach Mayor Rex Richardson and our engaged community members who participated in the discussions and are committed to building a sustainable water future for Long Beach and the region.



- Initiated a new State Water Project "Follow the Water" Inspection tour with Director Shepherd-Romey to the headwaters of our State Water Project supplies in Plumas and Sierra Counties. Invited guests included representatives from the cities of San Fernando and San Marino, as well as Metropolitan member agencies and representatives from Southern California state water project contractors, including the Mojave Water Agency, Santa Clarita Valley Water, San Geronio Pass Water Agency, San Bernardino Valley Water District, and San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District. The tour started in the upper watershed, where most of the State Water Project water originates along the Feather River. We discussed with the Upper Feather River Region leadership, Blue Forest, Sierra Institute, and Watershed Solutions Network the importance of healthy forests and meadows, connections between leaders in the Feather River and Southern California, and a number of critical initiatives to support a climate-resilient statewide watershed. Other stops during the tour included Yuba City, where we met with the Northern California Water Association (NCWA) to engage in meaningful dialogue about the actions being taken in the Sacramento Valley above the Delta that support rural communities, wildlife, and aquatic ecosystems. The trip concluded after traveling through the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta and

hearing from Sacramento County Supervisor Pat Hume and local farmers in the Delta. Our hosts in Northern California will be returning with a visit to Southern California in January 2026.



- Attended Metropolitan's unveiling of a new helicopter dip tank at the Palos Verdes Reservoir in Rolling Hills Estates, providing firefighters with a quick-filling, strategically located water source for aerial fire suppression. Developed in partnership with the Los Angeles County Fire Department and Peninsula cities, the nearly 4,000-gallon tank can be filled in about five minutes, automatically refills during use, and allows helicopters to hover, fill, and return to the fire line within moments—enhancing protection for nearby homes, businesses, and critical infrastructure in a high-risk wildfire area. In my closing remarks, I noted that we've seen the damage wildfires and climate change can inflict on our communities, which is why Metropolitan is doubling down on preparedness and investing in tools like these dip tanks to safeguard both our water infrastructure and our neighbors. I highlighted that for one-third of one cent per gallon, we help protect properties from fires and supply safe drinking water 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. I was joined by Director Edman, who emceed the event, and Directors Gloria Grey and Raymond Jay, along with General Manager Designate Shivaji Deshmukh, Assistant General Manager Shane Chapman, and Assistant General Manager for External Affairs Dee Zinke.



- Served as a panelist speaker at the Mountain Counties Water Resources Association forum in Auburn, California, speaking during the segment titled: "California Working Together as One – Building a Reliable Water Future." During a panel discussion, I emphasized the importance of Metropolitan's CAMP4Water and its role supporting a strong dialogue on risk management and infrastructure planning, appraising the audience about current discussions on the future of the Colorado River and regional collaboration opportunities. The forum provided an opportunity to encourage greater unity between the Southern California region and those in Northern California, where our water supplies originate.
- As previously reported, in September, Board Vice Chair Michael Camacho cast Metropolitan's votes at the Palo Verde Irrigation District (PVID) for the election of three trustees. Metropolitan casts one vote for each acre of land it owns within PVID's boundaries, as do the other landowners. A court later found that more votes were cast than there are acres within PVID's service area, ordering a new election on February 19, 2026. Metropolitan staff confirmed that Metropolitan voted correctly for the number of acres the District owns. I intend to sign a proxy authorizing Board Vice Chair Camacho to recast our votes.

Regularly Scheduled/Ongoing Meetings

- Continued to meet regularly with the Board leadership, the General Manager, the General Manager Designate, the General Counsel, the Ethics Officer, and the General Auditor to discuss policy and organizational issues.

Activities and Reports by Board Representatives Appointed by the Chair:

PVID Community Enhancement Collaborative Representative Cynthia Kurtz, in coordination with Representatives David de Jesus and Desi Alvarez: At the November 17, 2025, Metropolitan Joint One Water and Adaptation Committee and Subcommittee on Imported Water meeting, Director Cynthia Kurtz reported on the meeting of the Palo Verde Valley Community Enhancement Collaborative (CEC) that was held on October 31, 2025. Director Kurtz began by reminding the committee that the CEC is comprised of three members from the Palo Verde Irrigation District (PVID) Board and three members of the Metropolitan Board. The CEC is looking at how to distribute \$8 million in funds to small businesses, public agencies, and other community organizations for projects that support the greater Palo Verde Valley. She mentioned some of the work that is being done, including applications being accepted, completed bylaws for the Community Advisory Committee (CAC), adopted grant processes, and that new office space has been secured for the CAC in the Blythe Cancer Research Center. Board Chair Ortega commended the CEC for their hard work. General Manager Upadhyay made mentioned that PVID Board Trustee Charles Van Dyke passed two weeks prior to this meeting.