



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Committee Item INFORMATION

Engineering, Operations, and Technology Committee

7/13/2026 Committee Meeting

6c

Subject

Update on District Housing and Property Improvements Program

Executive Summary

Metropolitan maintains employee housing, kitchens, and short-term lodging facilities at the Colorado River Aqueduct (CRA) pumping plant villages. These facilities have exceeded their design life, are showing signs of deterioration, and require replacement. Metropolitan is implementing a long-term Desert Housing Project to address these issues in the Desert Region. While the long-term Desert Housing Project is being designed and constructed, there is an immediate need for housing to support new employees. This presentation will provide an update on the current status of the program including the need to purchase and install manufactured homes at four pumping plants to support immediate staffing needs while the longer-term project is implemented.

Fiscal Impact

Not applicable

Applicable Policy

Not applicable

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

By Minute Item 52179, dated November 10, 2020, the Board authorized preparation of conceptual master plan and to conduct property assessments for District housing.

By Minute Item 52381, dated May 11, 2021, the Board authorized two new agreements for environmental documentation and geotechnical services in support of the District Housing and Property Improvements.

By Minute Item 52448, dated July 13, 2021, the Board authorized an increase to an agreement with Roesling Nakamura Terada Architects for preliminary design and architectural services in support of the District Housing and Property Improvements.

By Minute Item 52980, dated September 13, 2022, the Board authorized an increase to an agreement with Roesling Nakamura Terada Architects for final design and architectural services in support of the District Housing and Property Improvements.

Board Informational Item 9-2, dated July 9, 2024, transmitted the final report from the community planner on the District Housing and Property Improvement Program.

Board Informational Item 6a, dated October 7, 2024, recommended implementing the new CRA housing strategy in four stages.

By Minute Item 53843, dated November 19, 2024, the Board authorized an amendment to an agreement with Roesling Nakamura Terada Architects for design and architectural services in support of the District Housing and Property Improvements.

Board Action planned for August 2026 to award a procurement contract for 21 manufactured homes.

Details and Background

Background

Since the CRA's inception, Metropolitan has provided housing and lodging to employees involved in the construction, operation, and maintenance of the aqueduct system. Due to the remoteness of the pumping plants, the provision of housing ensures that staff can respond to emergency events in a timely manner.

Houses, kitchens, and short-term lodging were initially constructed at the CRA pumping plants in the early 1940s. Expansion of the CRA's capacity in the 1950s led to the construction of additional houses. Metropolitan has performed routine maintenance on each of these facilities since they were built. However, after decades of continuous use and exposure to the harsh desert environment, the facilities have deteriorated and need replacement.

Metropolitan initiated the Desert Housing and Property Improvements Project to address the long-term needs for housing, kitchens, and lodging within the Desert region. A study prepared by a community planning consultant recommended moving to a new housing model based on smaller townhomes instead of the previous single-family housing model. In October 2024, the results and recommendations from the study were presented to the Board. The Board supported moving forward with the staff-provided housing recommendations. In November 2024, staff recommended initiating the first stage of a multi-stage program with Eagle Mountain Pumping Plant as the first facility. Design is underway for the Eagle Mountain Pumping Plant, with construction anticipated to begin by fall 2027. Stage 1 at Eagle Mountain Pumping Plant includes: (1) constructing eight new 750-square-foot townhomes comprised of one-bedroom and one bath; (2) replacing the existing kitchen and lodge facilities; and (3) providing amenity packages that include a multipurpose building. Lessons learned from the first facility will be applied to the remaining plants, ensuring optimized cost and schedule for the entire project.

After Eagle Mountain Pumping Plant, the remaining efforts for Stage 1 at Iron Mountain and Gene pumping plants will be completed. Upon successful completion of Stage 1, staff will evaluate the new townhome model's impact on staff recruitment and retention prior to proceeding with subsequent stages. If desired, three subsequent stages would then be implemented over multiple years to replace all the current single-family residences with townhomes at Eagle Mountain, Iron Mountain, and Gene pumping plants.

As staff proceeds with implementing the long-term plans, there is also an immediate need for additional housing to accommodate new hires and support the apprenticeship program. The CRA pumping plants require specialized skill sets and expertise, especially in the mechanical and electrical disciplines, to support daily operations. With attrition and existing staff shortages, the Desert region has an increased need to bring in apprentices to train and prepare them to ensure continued, reliable operations at these plants. The Desert region hired three apprentices this year, who were provided housing through the use of the existing housing inventory. However, there are plans to hire an additional cohort of seven apprentices over the next two years. These additional apprentices would be provided housing at the pumping plants. In addition to the apprentices, approximately 10 additional full-time staff will be hired over the next few years to backfill vacancies. The onboarding of these new employees will outstrip the availability of existing housing inventory.

Staff recommends that housing for these new desert staff be provided by utilizing cost-effective manufactured housing. While these units are not designed/manufactured to withstand decades of use in the harsh desert climates, they are appropriate for relatively shorter-term applications. The additional manufactured housing units will provide immediate living accommodation for both apprentices and new staff while the long-term improvements are being planned and implemented. Staff initially recommends that up to fourteen 1,300-square-foot three-bedroom, two-bath and up to seven 660-square-foot one-bedroom, one-bath manufactured homes will

be provided, for a total of up to 21 homes, to meet immediate and short-term needs. A combination of three-bedroom and one-bedroom units provides flexibility to accommodate different household types and increases long-term employee retention at these remote facilities during this interim transition period.

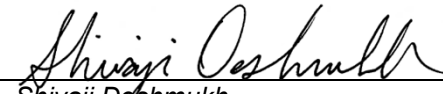
Based on the immediate housing needs at the desert facilities, staff plans to return to the Board to award a procurement contract for up to 21 manufactured homes.



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Engineering Services

6/26/2026

Date



Shivaji D. Deshmukh
General Manager

6/26/2026

Date