THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Board Action

- **Board of Directors**
  Engineering, Operations, and Technology Committee

8/18/2026 Board Meeting

7-5

Subject

Award a $5,164,432 contract to Bigfoot Homes Inc. to furnish and install up to twenty-one manufactured houses at four Colorado River Aqueduct pumping plants; the General Manager has determined that the proposed action is exempt or not subject to CEQA

Executive Summary

Metropolitan maintains employee housing, kitchens, and short-term lodging facilities at the Colorado River Aqueduct (CRA) pumping plant villages to enable staff to conduct their regular operational duties, participate in scheduled major maintenance/rehabilitation activities, and respond to emergencies in a timely manner. 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 improve housing in the Desert Region**.** While the long-term Desert Housing Project is being designed and constructed, there is an immediate need to support the housing needs for new hires and incoming apprentices in the Desert Region.

This action awards a procurement contract to furnish and install up to twenty-one manufactured homes at four CRA pumping plants. See **Attachment 1** for the Allocation of Funds, **Attachment 2** for the Abstract of Bids, and **Attachment 3** for the Location Map.

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

Staff Recommendation: Option #1

Option #1

Award a $5,164,432 contract to Bigfoot Homes Inc. to furnish and install up to twenty-one manufactured houses at four Colorado River Aqueduct pumping plants.

Fiscal Impact: Expenditure of $9 million in capital funds. Approximately $6 million in capital funds will be incurred in the current biennium and have been previously authorized. The remaining capital expenditures will be funded from the next capital investment plan budget.
Business Analysis: This option will provide adequate housing for staff stationed at Metropolitan's desert facilities, ensuring sufficient staffing for operations and maintenance.

Option #2

Do not proceed with the project at this time.
Fiscal Impact: None
Business Analysis: This option will forgo an opportunity to provide adequate housing and staffing at the Metropolitan's desert facilities.

Alternatives Considered

During the planning process for the manufactured homes, staff considered providing rental housing at the closest towns, such as Parker, Blythe, or Indio, where residential or hotel accommodations are available. However, the

remoteness of the pumping plants makes travel time and long-term costs impractical, rendering this option neither economically nor operationally feasible. The selected alternative ensures that staff can respond to emergencies on time, provides the most cost-effective solution, and supports improved recruitment and retention for these remote facilities.

Applicable Policy

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 8121: General Authority of the General Manager to Enter Contracts

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 11104: Delegation of Responsibilities

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.

By Minute Item 54446, dated April 14, 2026, the Board appropriated a total of $1.025 billion for projects identified in the Capital Investment Plan for Fiscal Years 2026/2027 and 2027/2028.

Board Informational Item 6c, dated July 13, 2026, recommended procurement and installation of manufactured homes at four CRA pumping plants to support the immediate housing needs within the Desert Region.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA determination for Option #1:

The proposed action is exempt from CEQA because the action consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use and no possibility of significantly impacting the physical environment. In addition, the proposed action consists of construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure. Furthermore, the proposed action consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation, which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry or agricultural purposes. Finally, the proposed action is exempt from CEQA because there is no potential for the activity in question to have a significant effect on the environment. (State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15061 (b)(3), 15301, 15303, and 15304.)

CEQA determination for Option #2:

None required

Details and Background

Background

The CRA is a 242-mile-long conveyance system that transports water from the Colorado River to Lake Mathews in Riverside County. The aqueduct system was constructed in the late 1930s and was placed into service in 1941. The CRA includes five pumping plants that are located in remote, isolated areas of the California desert. 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, providing on-site housing ensures that staff can respond to emergencies promptly. 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 their construction. 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 through a staged approach. 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 features that include a multi-purpose building. Lessons learned from these initial facilities at Eagle Mountain Pumping Plant will be applied to the remaining plants, ensuring optimized cost and schedule for the entire project.

While staff implement the long-term plans, there is also an immediate need for additional housing to accommodate new hires and support the apprenticeship and upcoming pump rehabilitation programs. The CRA pumping plants require specialized skills and expertise, particularly in mechanical and electrical disciplines, to support daily operations. With 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, including supporting the upcoming capital work. The Desert region hired three apprentices this year, who were provided housing from the existing housing inventory. However, there are plans to hire an additional cohort of apprentices over the next two years. These additional apprentices would be provided housing at the pumping plants. In addition to the apprentices, and with the adoption of the FY 2026/2027 to FY 2027/2028 biennial budget, approximately 10 additional full-time staff will be hired over the next several years to address long-term staffing needs. The planned onboarding schedule 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 harsh desert climates, staff incorporated provisions into the procurement contract to enhance certain features beyond the manufacturer's standard offerings, such as improved roofing, insulation, and siding, to enhance durability. 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. Fourteen 1,300-square-foot, three-bedroom, two-bath manufactured houses and up to seven 660-square-foot, one-bedroom, one-bath manufactured houses will be provided, for a total of up to twenty-one houses, to meet the 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. These units will be delivered and installed in multiple phases over three years across the Desert Region as needs arise. Up to 21 interim units may eventually be needed, but staff will procure the units in an incremental manner that matches the actual onboarding of the new staff.

Manufactured Employee Housing for Colorado River Aqueduct Pumping Plants – Procurement and Installation

The procurement and installation contract will provide up to twenty-one manufactured houses for four of the CRA pumping plants at Hinds, Eagle Mountain, Iron Mountain, and Gene. Fourteen 1,300-square-foot, three-bedroom, two-bath manufactured houses and up to seven 660-square-foot, one-bedroom, one-bath manufactured houses will be provided. The houses feature composite shingle roofing, exterior cement-panel siding, dual-hung glazed windows, HVAC, dishwasher, electric range, and refrigerator. The houses will be delivered to the pumping plants and installed on-site.

Installation of the manufactured houses will be performed utilizing a hybrid construction approach. The vendor will fabricate the houses at a factory, deliver them to each pumping plant, and install them on the designated vacant lots. Metropolitan forces will perform grading before house delivery and extend utility services for sewer, potable water, and power to each house. Some of the site work will also be handled through minor construction contracts that are planned to be awarded by the General Manager under his Administrative Code authority. This work may include installation of hardscape, such as walkways, stairs, and driveways; surface drainage features; and minimal landscaping. Installation of the manufactured houses will be phased over three years, based on the new staff hiring and the upcoming apprenticeship program in the Desert Region. The procurement contract also includes provisions for unit pricing reductions if Metropolitan determines that some of the houses are not needed.

A total of $9,000,000 is required to perform this work. In addition to the amount of the procurement contract described below, the allocated funds for Metropolitan staff include $570,000 for factory fabrication inspection; $2,500,000 for Metropolitan force construction as described above; $155,000 for submittals review and responding to requests for information; $290,000 for contract administration, environmental monitoring, and project management; and $320,568 for the remaining budget. **Attachment 1** provides the allocation of the required funds.

Award of Procurement Contract (Bigfoot Homes Inc.)

Specifications No. 2190 for furnishing twenty-one manufactured houses was advertised for bids on April 23, 2026. As shown in **Attachment 2**, three bids were received and opened on July 14, 2026. The bid from Bigfoot Homes Inc. in the amount of $5,164,432 complies with the requirements of the specifications. This amount includes delivery and all sales and use taxes imposed by the state of California. The other bids, including taxes, ranged from approximately $5,823,895 to $6,852,225. The budgetary estimate for the procurement contract based on manufacturer estimates is $5,500,000.

This action awards a $5,164,432 procurement contract to Bigfoot Homes Inc to furnish and install up to 21 manufactured homes in the Desert Region. As this is primarily a procurement contract, there are limited subcontracting opportunities, and no Small Business Enterprise participation level was established for this contract.

Project Milestone

June 2029 – Complete delivery of interim housing units

7/29/2026
Mai M. Hattar *Date*
Chief Engineer
Engineering Services

7/29/2026
John V. Bednarski *Date*
Assistant General Manager

Attachment 1 – Allocation of Funds

Attachment 2 – Abstract of Bids

Attachment 3 – Location Map

Ref# es12710207

Allocation of Funds for Manufactured Employee Housing for Colorado River Aqueduct Pumping Plants – Procurement and Installation

	Current Board Action (Aug. 2026)
Labor	
Studies & Investigations	$ -
Final Design	-
Owner Costs (Program mgmt., envir. monitoring)	270,000
Submittals Review & Record Drwgs.	155,000
Construction Inspection & Support	570,000
Metropolitan Force Construction	2,250,000
Materials & Supplies	250,000
Incidental Expenses	20,000
Professional/Technical Services	-
Right-of-Way	-
Equipment Use	-
Contracts	-
Bigfoot Homes Inc.	5,164,432
Remaining Budget	320,568
Total	**$ 9,000,000**

The total amount expended to date is approximately $540,000. The total estimated cost to complete the installation of the manufactured homes, including the amount appropriated to date, and funds allocated for the work described in this action is $9.54 million.

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

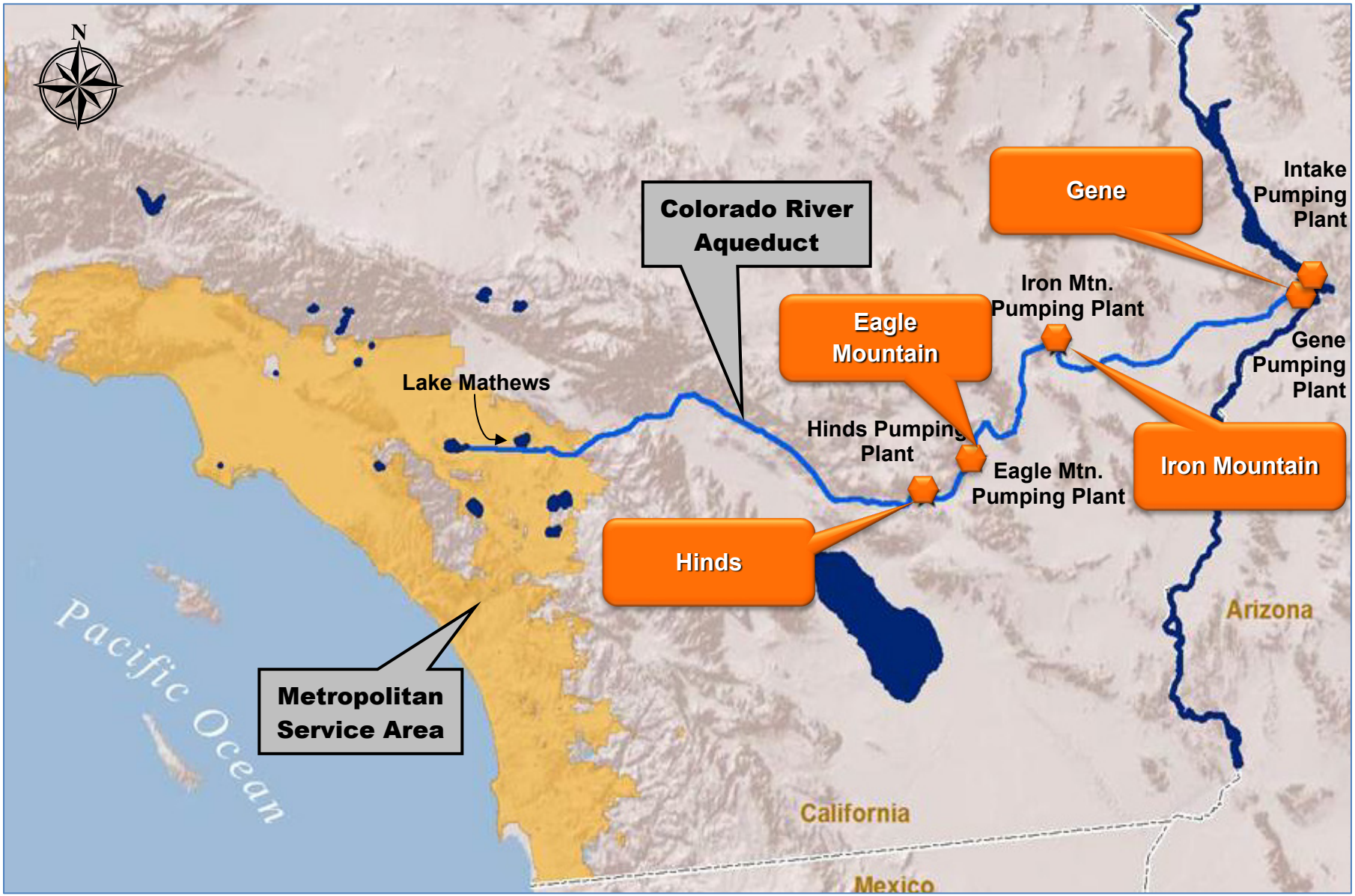
Abstract of Bids Received on July 14, 2026, at 2:00 P.M.

Specifications No. 2190
Furnishing Manufactured Employee Housing for Colorado River Aqueduct Pumping Plants

The work includes procurement and installation of up to 21 manufactured homes, along with all appliances as specified and shown in the specifications.

Budgetary Estimate: $5.5 million

Bidder and Location	Total[1]
Bigfoot Homes Inc.[2] El Segundo, CA	**$5,164,432**
Horizon Manufactured Homes Inc. Hemet, CA	$5,823,895
TKM Home Sales Inc. Riverside, CA	$6,852,225

[1] Includes State of California sales and use taxes of 9.75 percent.
[2] Small Business Enterprise (SBE) participation level is not applicable for this contract.

Location Map