THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

# Board Action

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

10/13/2026 Board Meeting

**7-1**

## Subject

Award a $374,450 contract to The Quality Plus Group to replace the fuel dispensing system at the Hinds pumping plant; the General Manager has determined that the proposed action is exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA

## Executive Summary

Metropolitan maintains and operates fuel stations at the Colorado River Aqueduct (CRA) pumping plants to support operations and maintenance activities. These facilities have exceeded their design life, have been experiencing failures due to extreme summer heat, and require replacement to continue providing reliable support for vehicles and other equipment required to maintain and operate the CRA system.

This action awards a construction contract to replace the fuel dispensing system at the Hinds pumping plant. See **Attachment 1** for the Allocation of Funds, **Attachment 2** for the Abstract of Bids, **Attachment 3** for the Subcontractors for the Low Bidder, and **Attachment 4** for the Location Map.

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

**Staff Recommendation: Option #1**

**Option #1**

Award a $374,450 contract to The Quality Plus Group to replace the fuel dispensing system at the Hinds pumping plant.

**Fiscal Impact:** Expenditure of $660,000 in capital funds. All costs will be incurred in the current biennium and have been previously authorized.

**Business Analysis:** This option will enhance the reliability of water delivery infrastructure at Metropolitan's desert facilities by providing reliable fuel services for operations and maintenance activities.

**Option #2**

Do not proceed with the projects at this time.

**Fiscal Impact:** None

**Business Analysis:** This option will forgo the opportunity to enhance water delivery infrastructure in the Desert Region.

## Alternatives Considered

Staff considered providing access to commercial, off-site gas stations. However, the remoteness of the pumping plants makes travel time, emergency response, and long-term costs impractical, rendering this option neither economically nor operationally feasible. The selected option enhances staff's ability to respond to emergencies in the most remote areas of the CRA conveyance system promptly and reduces maintenance costs and travel time for field personnel.

## 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 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.

## California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

**CEQA determination for Option #1:**

The proposed action is exempt from CEQA because it involves the operation, repair, maintenance, and minor alteration of existing public structures involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use and no possibility of significantly impacting the physical environment. The proposed action consists of the replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced. (State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301 and 15302.)

**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. It consists of five pumping plants; 124 miles of tunnels, siphons, and reservoirs; 63 miles of canals; and 55 miles of conduits. The aqueduct was constructed in the late 1930s and was placed into service in 1941.

Metropolitan owns and operates gasoline fueling stations at four of the five CRA pumping plants. These stations provide fuel for maintenance vehicles and equipment that play a critical role in supporting maintenance, capital, and shutdown activities across the desert region. Staff drive hundreds of miles every month across the remote Desert Region, from as far east as Hoover Dam to the Whitewater facility, including all the facilities in between, to perform their work. These fueling stations ensure that staff have continuous access to fuel, minimizing downtime, since no outside fueling services are available near most CRA facilities.

The current gasoline dispensing systems use suction equipment to create a vacuum that draws fuel from an underground storage tank through the piping to the dispenser. These types of systems are vulnerable to vapor lock due to the desert's extremely high temperatures. There is always fuel in the piping between the storage tank and dispenser. Elevated temperatures cause the fuel in the pipe to vaporize, expand and create a vapor bubble that locks the system, preventing the pump from dispensing fuel. This has become a recurring issue during the summer months, causing daily interruptions to the desert fleet's operational capabilities. In addition, the CRA fuel dispenser systems are outdated, and spare parts are no longer available. The combination of frequent breakdowns and the unavailability of spare parts creates significant maintenance challenges. Moreover, the breakdowns hinder the ability to dispense fuel for desert operations reliably.

The existing suction systems at these pumping plants will be replaced with pressurized systems. The upgrade involves replacing the existing suction pumps with submersible pumps to eliminate vapor lock. Additional improvements will be made to comply with regulatory codes and prevent potential spills, including replacing the vapor recovery and leak detection systems. The improvements at the Hinds pumping plant will serve as a pilot project before initiating a larger improvement effort for the remaining dispenser systems at Eagle Mountain, Iron Mountain, and Gene pumping plants. This strategy will allow staff to validate the installation, assess the functionality and performance of the new system in the extreme desert environment, and incorporate lessons learned for the improvements at the remaining three pumping plants.

Final design to improve the Hinds pumping plant fuel dispensing system is complete, and staff recommends proceeding with construction at this time.

**Hinds Pumping Plant Fuel Dispensing System Improvements – Construction**

The scope of the construction contract includes the replacement of the fuel dispenser, fuel pump, leak detector, and vapor recovery systems; electrical conduits and wiring; and integration with the existing fuel dispensing software system. Metropolitan forces will procure and install an electrical panel that provides power to the fuel system.

A total of $660,000 is allocated for this work. Technical support during construction will be provided by Tetra Tech Inc. under an existing agreement. Allocated funds for Metropolitan staff include: $60,000 for force construction as described above; $61,000 for construction management and inspection; $40,000 for submittal review, construction support, responding to requests for information, and preparing record drawings; $75,000 for contract administration, environmental monitoring, and project management; and $49,550 for remaining budget. **Attachment 1** provides the allocation of required funds.

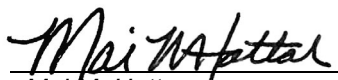
***Award of Construction Contract (The Quality Plus Group)***

Specifications No. 2116A for Julian Hinds Pumping Plant Fuel Dispensing System Improvement was advertised for bids on July 9, 2026. As shown in **Attachment 2**, three bids were received and opened on August 18, 2026. The low bid from The Quality Plus Group in the amount of $374,450 complies with the requirements of the specifications. The other bids ranged from $487,345 to $678,000, while the engineer's estimate was $600,000. For this contract, Metropolitan established a Small Business Enterprise participation level of at least 25 percent of the bid. The Quality Plus Group is a certified SBE firm and thus achieves 100 percent participation. The subcontractors for this contract are listed in **Attachment 3**.

This action awards a $374,450 contract to The Quality Plus Group to upgrade the existing fuel dispenser system at the Hinds pumping plant. As described above, Metropolitan staff will perform construction management and inspection. Engineering Services' performance metric target range for construction management and inspection of projects with construction costs less than $3 million is 9 to 15 percent. For this project, the anticipated cost of inspection is approximately 14 percent of the total construction cost. The total construction cost for this project is $434,450, which includes the amount of the contract ($374,450) and Metropolitan force construction ($60,000).

***Project Milestone***

March 2027 – Completion of construction



9/24/2026
*Mai M. Hattar* *Date*
*Chief Engineer*

9/24/2026
*Shivaji Deshmukh* *Date*
*General Manager*

**Attachment 1 – Allocation of Funds**

**Attachment 2 – Abstract of Bids**

**Attachment 3 – Subcontractors for Low Bidder**

**Attachment 4 – Location Map**

Ref# es12707426

## Allocation of Funds for Hinds Pumping Plant Fuel Dispensing System Improvements

| | Current Board Action (Oct. 2026) |
|---|---|
| Labor | |
| Studies & Investigations | $ - |
| Final Design | - |
| Owner Costs (Program mgmt., envir. monitoring) | 75,000 |
| Submittals Review & Record Drwgs. | 40,000 |
| Construction Inspection & Support | 61,000 |
| Metropolitan Force Construction | 60,000 |
| Materials & Supplies | - |
| Incidental Expenses | - |
| Professional/Technical Services | - |
| Right-of-Way | - |
| Equipment Use | - |
| Contracts | - |
| The Quality Plus Group | 374,450 |
| Remaining Budget | 49,550 |
| **Total** | **$ 660,000** |

The total amount expended to date is approximately $380,000. The total estimated cost to complete the installation of the replacement fueling dispensing systems, including the amount appropriated to date, funds allocated for the work described in this action is $1,040,000.

**The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California**

**Abstract of Bids Received on August 18, 2026, at 2:00 P.M.**

**Specifications No. 2116A**
**Hinds Pumping Plant Fuel Dispenser System Improvements**

The work includes replacing the existing suction fuel dispenser system with a new pressurized system, leak detection system, and vapor recovery system.

**Engineer's estimate**: $600,000

| Bidder and Location | Total | SBE $ | SBE % | Met SBE[1] |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **The Quality Plus Group<br>Corona, CA** | **$374,450** | **$374,450** | **100%** | **Yes** |
| Fleming Environmental Inc.<br>Fullerton, CA | $487,345 | - | - | - |
| Saboo Inc.<br>Brentwood, CA | $678,000 | - | - | - |

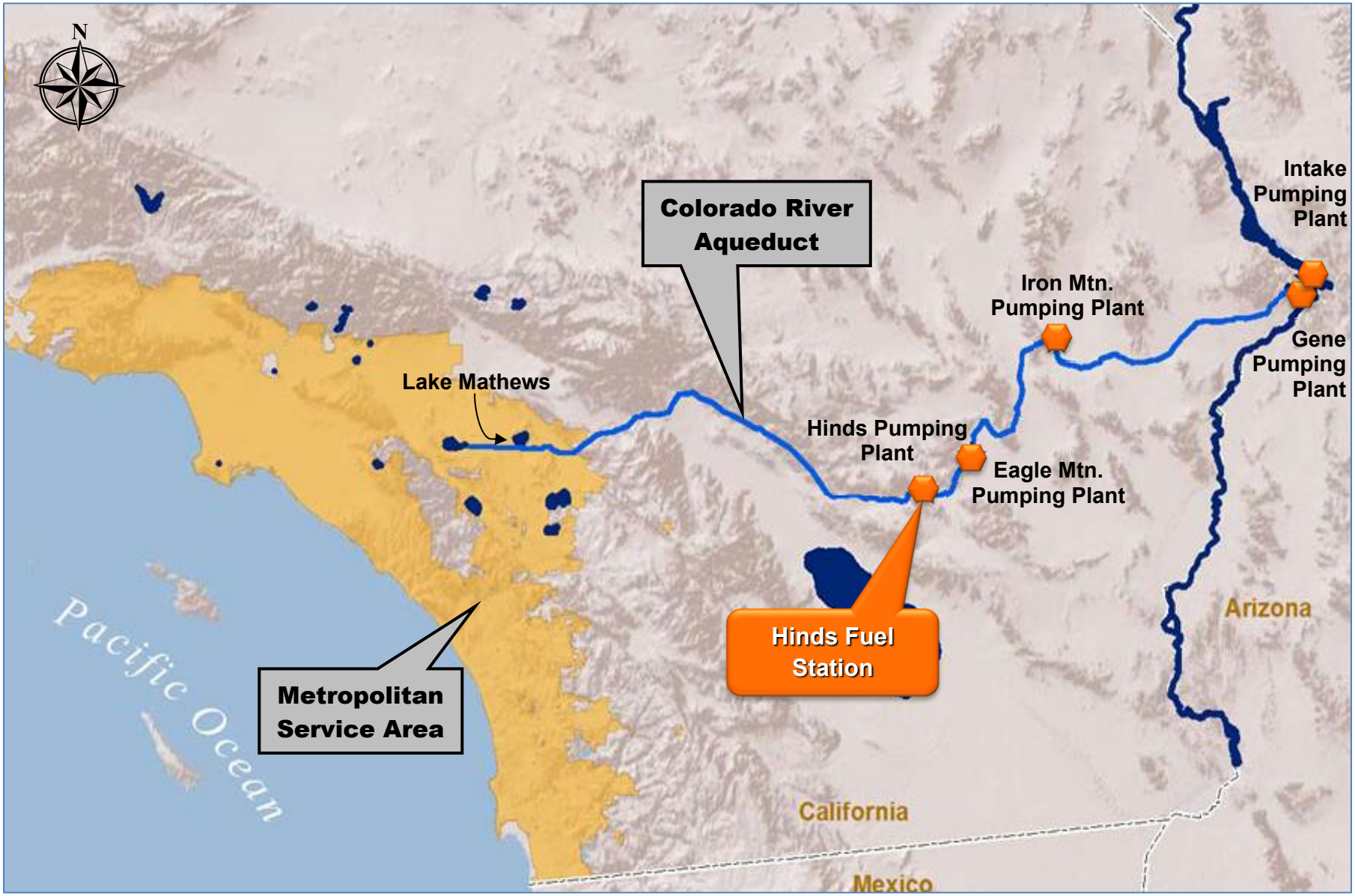
[1] Small Business Enterprise (SBE) participation level established at 25 percent for this contract.

**The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California**

**Subcontractors for Low Bidder**

**Specifications No. 2116A**
**Hinds Pumping Plant Fuel Dispensing System Improvements**

**Low bidder: The Quality Plus Group**

| Subcontractor | Service Category; Specialty |
|---|---|
| Acienda Contractors Inc.<br>Perris, CA | Demolition and Concrete |
| Fuel Nova Company LLC<br>Buena Park, CA | Piping |
| Tait & Associates Inc.<br>Santa Ana, CA | Fuel Dispenser |

# Location Map