San Diego County
Local Agency Formation Commission
Regional Service Planning | Subdivision of the State of California

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AGENDA REPORT
Business | Action

October 6, 2025

TO: Chair Whitburn and Commissioners

FROM: Keene Simonds, Executive Officer
Priscilla Mumpower, Assistant Executive Officer

SUBJECT: **Proposed Update to Rolling Five-Year Study Schedule**

SUMMARY

The San Diego County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) will consider updating its five-year study schedule for municipal service reviews. The proposed update would reset the coverage period to run from Fiscal Year 2026 through Fiscal Year 2030 and generally constitutes a full roll-forward of the existing schedule. Two notable adjustments are included: removal of the now-completed Oceanside regional review and addition of several new reviews, all but one of which are placed toward the latter part of the period. Consistent with prior practice, the first two years (FY26–FY27) correspond to the municipal service reviews already authorized and funded in the adopted annual workplan, including the newly added review of the San Diego Unified Port District. The final three years (FY28–FY30) function as an advanced planning tool to signal the Commission's long-term intentions and providing local agencies and the public with notice of upcoming reviews. Staff recommends the Commission approve the proposed update, subject to any desired modifications.

BACKGROUND

Study Directive | Municipal Service Reviews and Sphere of Influence Updates

State law requires San Diego LAFCO to prepare municipal service reviews to independently assess the availability and adequacy of local services relative to community needs with the

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Commission's policies on preparing these reviews codified as L-106 and including direction to maintain a five-year study schedule. These municipal service reviews directly inform the mandated sphere of influence updates that State law directs LAFCO to complete approximately every five years, through which the Commission actively manages local agencies' appropriate current and future boundaries and service areas.

Rolling Study Schedule + Implementation Practices

San Diego LAFCO annually reviews and resets a five-year rolling study schedule to calendar municipal service reviews and corresponding sphere of influence updates consistent with adopted policy. Approvals to reset are guided by two implementation practices as summarized below.

1. The first two years of the five-year study schedule are combined and cover all municipal service reviews separately authorized and funded by the Commission under the annual adopted workplan. The combination of the first two years provides LAFCO flexibility to pace work in line with accommodating the agencies' resources and abilities to participate in the data collection and review process.

2. Years three, four, and five of the five-year study schedule serve as telegraphing tools to the affected agencies and other interested stakeholders with respect to the Commission's expectations of initiating future municipal service reviews. Actual work on any municipal service review will not occur until the Commission formally authorizes the expenditure of LAFCO resources as part of the annual workplan.

DISCUSSION

This item is for San Diego LAFCO to consider an update to its five-year study schedule, and in doing so, reset the coverage period from FY2025–FY2029 to FY2026–FY2030 for the purpose of calendaring municipal service reviews.

- **Years One and Two** of the proposed update are consistent with the adopted workplan, covering all authorized reviews with continued emphasis on wholesale water agencies, healthcare districts, SANDAG, and the north and north-coastal communities. A principal structural adjustment is proposed for the Carlsbad-Encinitas region: Part I will include the City of Carlsbad and its subsidiary Carlsbad Municipal Water District, while Part II will focus on the City of Encinitas and its overlapping special districts (Leucadia WD, Olivenhain MWD, and San Dieguito WD). This structural approach is also applied to the Del Mar-Solana Beach and San Marcos-Vista regions. The Del Mar-Solana Beach MSR is further revised by moving the scheduled review of County Service Area 17 into a newly proposed review in FY 2030, as detailed in the proceeding section. Additionally, a review of the San Diego Unified Port District has been added consistent with the adopted workplan.

- **Years Three through Five** remain largely intact although several adjustments have been made to reset existing scheduled reviews into new groupings where merited and most prominently affect the greater East County region. The proposed update also adds five new reviews and does so based largely on feedback and related insights generated in preparing other reviews to date. The proposed new reviews are all service-specific and include the following:

    - San Diego County Wastewater JPAs
    - Countywide Recycled Water Service Providers
    - County Service Areas
    - Countywide Police Protection Services
    - Geological Hazard Abatement Districts

ANALYSIS

The proposed update to San Diego LAFCO's rolling study schedule continues the Commission's ongoing approach to local agency oversight while providing flexibility in municipal service review planning. This annual update process aligns with the adopted workplan and specific municipal service review authorizations while signaling near-term intentions to local agencies and the public. As addressed above, the proposed update represents a full roll-forward in the first two years with aligning exceptions to remove the now completed Oceanside region review and add a review of the San Diego Unified Port District. These exceptions aside, all changes in the proposed update are reflected in years three, four, and five and are marked by adding five reviews that have been flagged by the Commission and/or stakeholders as meriting attention – most notably regional wastewater authorities, recycled water providers, and police protection services. (The other two additions involve grouping together previously separated reviews of county service areas into one and addressing responsibility over geological hazard abatement districts.) The balance of the proposed update involves mostly subtle restructuring of reviews to economize resources through improvements in either regrouping agencies together as part of one review or extracting an agency for individual review. A prominent example of the latter involves Otay Water District, whose service area spans both south and east county regions.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that San Diego LAFCO approve the proposed update to the five-year study schedule with any changes as specified. This recommendation is consistent with Alternative Action One below.

ALTERNATIVES FOR ACTION

The following alternatives are available to San Diego LAFCO:

Alternative One (recommended):
Approve an update to the rolling five-year study schedule.

Alternative Two:
Continue the item to the next regular meeting and provide direction to staff, as needed.

Alternative Three:
Take no action.

PROCEDURES FOR CONSIDERATION

This item has been placed on San Diego LAFCO's agenda for action as part of the business calendar. The following procedures are recommended:

1) Receive verbal presentation from staff unless waived.
2) Invite comments from interested audience members if any.
3) Discuss and provide general feedback as needed.

On behalf of the Executive Officer,



Priscilla Mumpower
Assistant Executive Officer

Attachment:

1) Proposed Update to Five-Year Rolling Study Schedule (FY2026-2030)

Proposed Commission Rolling Study Schedule 5-YEAR PLAN

FY2026 Through FY2030

Regional Service Planning
Subdivision of the State of California



Study Directive

State law directs San Diego LAFCO to review spheres of influence for all cities and special districts and update as needed (affirm, expand, reduce, etc.) every five years and by extension mark the agencies' appropriate current and future boundaries and service areas. Pertinently, local agencies cannot annex and/or extend services outside their spheres with limited exceptions. State law also specifies San Diego LAFCO must inform the sphere updates by preparing comprehensive evaluations – titled municipal service reviews – to determine the availability and adequacy of local governmental services as well as governance responsiveness relative to community needs.

Study Schedule

San Diego LAFCO has established a five-year rolling Study Schedule to guide its statutory task to review and update as appropriate the spheres of influence of cities and special districts under the Commission's oversight. The rolling Study Schedule is premised on the Commission's policy interest to proactively calendar municipal service reviews and use these documents to determine the subsequent scope of any related sphere of influence updates for the affected agencies. The Commission also regularly draws on the municipal service reviews to inform its decision-making on boundary changes.

Rolling Study Schedule Format

The Study Schedule is a living or rolling document that the Commission resets yearly in concert with the annual budget and workplan adoptions. The rolling study schedule spans 5 fiscal years with only the first year being set. The second through fifth years are tentatively calendared, and done so to help guide and telegraph future decision-making. This approach allows the Commission the flexibility to redirect staff resources where needed should calendar studies extend beyond one year while also granting staff the ability to prioritize applicant proposals.

2026-2027: **SET**

NORTH COUNTY FOCUS

Carlsbad + Encinitas Region

- **Part I: Carlsbad**
  - City of Carlsbad
  - Carlsbad MWD
- **Part II: Encinitas**
  - City of Encinitas
  - Leucadia WWD
  - Olivenhain MWD
  - San Dieguito WD

San Marcos + Vista Region

- **Part I: San Marcos**
  - City of San Marcos
  - Vallecitos WD
  - San Marcos FPD
  - Vista ID
- **Part II: Vista**
  - City of Vista
  - Buena SD

San Diego County Healthcare Districts

- **Part I: Macro + Part II: Micro**
  - Palomar HD
  - Tri-City HD
  - Fallbrook HD
  - Grossmont HD
  - County Partners

Council of Governments

- San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)

Wholesale Water Service Providers

- San Diego County Water Authority
- Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

Del Mar + Solana Beach Region

- City of Del Mar
- City of Solana Beach
- Santa Fe ID

San Diego Unified Port District

*Denotes a special district included in more than one study.

Oceanside State Beach ▶





Chula Vista is the second largest city in the San Diego metropolitan area.

2027-2028: **TENTATIVE**

SOUTHWEST COUNTY FOCUS

Rancho Santa Fe Region

- Fairbanks Ranch CSD
- Questhaven MWD
- Rancho Santa Fe CSD
- Rancho Santa Fe FPD
- Whispering Palms CSD

San Diego County Wastewater JPAs

- Encinitas JPA
- San Elijo JPA
- Metro JPA

City of San Diego

Silver Strand Cities

- City of Coronado
- City of Imperial Beach

South Coast Region

- **Part I: Cities**
  - City of Chula Vista
  - City of National City
- **Part II: Special Districts**
  - South Bay Water District
  - Sweetwater Authority
  - Bonita-Sunnyside
  - Sweetwater FPD

Transit Service Providers

- North County TD
- Metropolitan Transit Service

*Denotes a special district included in more than one study.



East County Hiking Trails

2028-2029: **TENTATIVE**

EAST COUNTY FOCUS

Otay WD

La Mesa - Lemon Grove Region

- City of La Mesa
- City of Lemon Grove
- Lemon Grove SD

El Cajon - Santee Region

- City of El Cajon
- City of Santee

East County Water Districts

- Lakeside WD
- Helix WD
- Padre Dam MWD

East County FPDs

- Lakeside FPD
- San Miguel Consolidated FPDs
- Alpine FPD

San Diego County Sanitation District

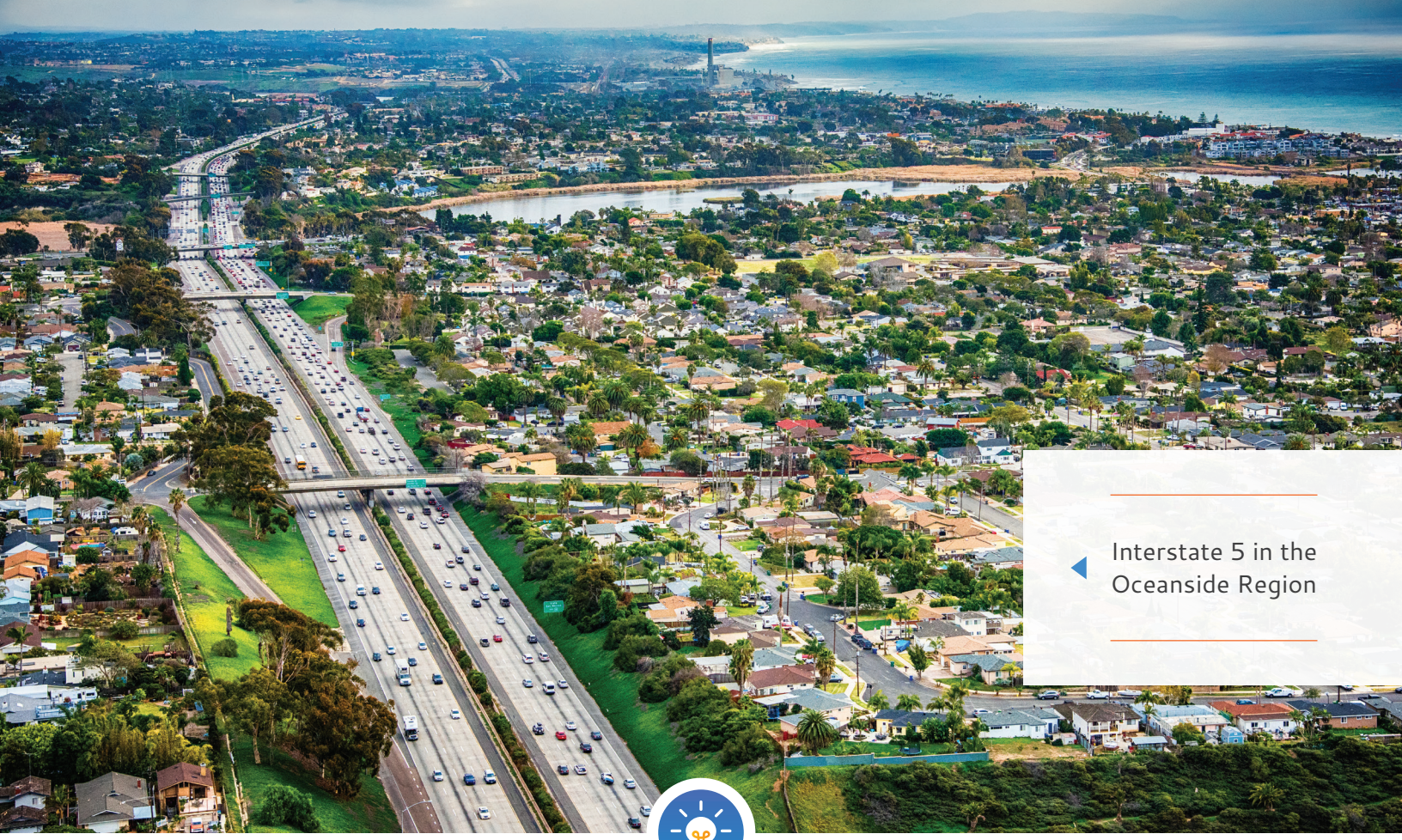
Countywide Recycled Water Services

Cemetery Districts

- North County
- Pomerado
- Ramona
- Valley Center

San Diego County Airports

*Denotes a special district included in more than one study.



Interstate 5 in the Oceanside Region

2029-2030: **TENTATIVE**

MISCELLANEOUS

Countywide Fire Protection Services (Fire, Rescue, and EMS)

County Service Areas

- CSA 17 - Ambulance, San Dieguito
- CSA 26 - Parks and Recreation, Rancho San Diego
- CSA 81 - Parks and Recreation, Fallbrook
- CSA 83 - Parks and Recreation, San Dieguito
- CSA 122 - Infrastructure Planning, Otay East
- CSA 128 - Parks and Recreation, Spring Valley
- CSA 135 - Regional Communications, Countywide
- CSA 136 - Flood Control and Drainage, Lakeside
- CSA 137 - Retail Water Services, Live Oak Springs
- CSA 138 - Parks and Recreation, Valley Center

Countywide Police Protection Services

San Diego County Flood Control District

Pauma Valley Region

- Mootami MWD
- Rincon Ranch CSD
- Pauma CSD
- San Luis Rey MWD
- Yuima MWD

Borrego Region

- Borrego WD
- Coachella Valley WD

East Laguna Summit Region

- Canebrake WD
- Descanso WD
- Jacumba CSD

Geological Hazard Abatement Districts

- Casa de Playa Geologic Hazard Abatement District
- Oceanus Geologic Hazard Abatement District



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