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

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AGENDA REPORT
Business | Action

August 3, 2026

TO: Chair Becker and Commissioners

FROM: Priscilla Mumpower, Assistant Executive Officer

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

SUMMARY

The San Diego County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) will consider a proposed update to the Commission's rolling five-year municipal service review (study) schedule. The proposed update follows the Commission's adoption of the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 workplan and advances the existing schedule forward by one year, resetting the planning horizon to Fiscal Years 2027 through 2031 to maintain alignment. The proposed update also incorporates refinements drawn from recently completed studies, prior Commission direction, and evolving service delivery models. Consistent with prior practice, the first two years (FY2027-FY2028) reflect studies authorized and funded in the adopted workplan and budget. The remaining three years (FY2029-FY2031) serve as a long-range planning tool, providing local agencies and the public with advance notice of the Commission's anticipated review schedule. The proposed update was reviewed by the Special Districts Advisory Committee at their July 17, 2026 meeting without any resulting requests or suggestions to revise. Staff recommends the Commission approve the proposed update, subject to any desired modifications.

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BACKGROUND

State and Local Policy Directives | Municipal Service Reviews + 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 present and future community needs. The Commission's policies governing preparation of municipal service reviews are codified in Policy L-106, including direction to maintain a rolling five-year study schedule. These municipal service reviews directly inform the mandated sphere of influence updates 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. The study schedule is accordingly not solely a work-programming tool; it is the mechanism by which the Commission sequences its own compliance with the sphere of influence update cycle.

Rolling Study Schedule + Implementation Practices

San Diego LAFCO annually reviews and updates its rolling five-year study schedule to program future municipal service reviews and corresponding sphere of influence updates consistent with adopted policy. Implementation of the schedule is guided by two practices:

1. **Years One and Two** cover all municipal service reviews separately authorized and funded by the Commission under the annual adopted workplan and budget. 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 through Five** of the study schedule serve to telegraph the Commission's expectations of initiating future municipal service reviews to affected agencies and other interested stakeholders. Actual work on these studies does not begin until the Commission formally authorizes the expenditure of LAFCO resources through a future adopted annual workplan.

DISCUSSION

This item is for San Diego LAFCO to consider an update to its rolling five-year study schedule covering Fiscal Years 2027 through 2031, as detailed in Attachment One. The proposed update generally rolls the existing schedule forward by one fiscal year while incorporating several refinements based on recently completed studies, prior Commission direction, and evolving service delivery models. Key details follow.

Years One and Two (FY2027–FY2028) | Confirmed Studies

Years One and Two of the proposed study schedule align with the recently adopted workplan and encompass all municipal service reviews authorized and funded by the Commission. The proposed schedule generally carries forward previously authorized studies while reflecting recently completed work, incorporating studies advanced from the long-range planning horizon, and refining the scope of several planned reviews.

- **Studies Continuing**
  The proposed schedule reflects the Commission's direction to continue work on previously authorized studies involving Healthcare Services, SANDAG, the San Diego Unified Port District, the North County communities of San Marcos and Vista, the North Coastal communities of Del Mar and Solana Beach, and their overlapping special districts. The schedule also retains Part II of the Carlsbad-Encinitas Subregional municipal service review involving the Encinitas Subregion, which staff anticipates completing by the end of calendar year 2026. Also continued but expanded, the Healthcare Districts municipal service review has been broadened into a two-part Healthcare Services review. Part I will continue evaluating the County's four healthcare districts. Part II expands the study to include major quasi-public healthcare providers, including Sharp HealthCare, UC San Diego Health, and other community providers. This expansion is contextual rather than regulatory; these providers are not subject to the Commission's jurisdiction, but the districts' service roles cannot be meaningfully evaluated in isolation from the providers that deliver the majority of care in their service areas.

- **Studies Completed or Reprogrammed**
  The proposed schedule reflects the completion of Part I of the Carlsbad-Encinitas Subregional Municipal Service Review following its adoption by the Commission in June 2026, leaving only the Encinitas Subregion to carry forward. The proposed schedule separately removes the Wholesale Water Service Providers municipal service review from the FY2027-FY2028 implementation window following the Commission's direction at its May 4, 2026 meeting to suspend work on that study given new and emerging considerations. Consistent with that direction, separate municipal service reviews involving the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and the San Diego County Water Authority are instead programmed in FY2030 and FY2031, respectively.

- **Studies Advanced and Calendared**
  The proposed schedule reflects recent Commission direction by advancing two municipal service reviews into the established FY2027-FY2028 implementation window: the City of San Diego (municipal services) and Part II of the South Coast Region (special districts). Both studies were previously identified as tentative FY2028 studies in the adopted schedule. The South Coast Region review will align with the previously authorized Part I review involving the Cities of Chula Vista and

National City and evaluate the overlapping special districts, including South Bay Irrigation District, Sweetwater Authority, Bonita-Sunnyside Fire Protection District (FPD), and Lower Sweetwater FPD, allowing both phases to proceed on a coordinated timeline. To accommodate these changes, the Rancho Santa Fe Region, Wastewater Joint Powers Authorities, Silver Strand Cities, and Public Transit Services reviews have been shifted to FY2029.

Years Three through Five (FY2029 – FY2031)
Telegraphing Tool for Anticipated Studies

Years Three through Five continue to serve as the Commission's long-range planning framework for future municipal service reviews while incorporating several refinements based on recent Commission direction and emerging priorities. Most notably, the proposed schedule adds a new municipal service review involving Mosquito Abatement and Vector Services in FY2031, together with the separate reviews of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (FY2030) and the San Diego County Water Authority (FY2031) described in the preceding section. Additionally, the planned Cemetery Districts study has been broadened into a review of Cemetery Services to catalog both public cemetery districts and private providers in light of recent legislation, and has been advanced one year to FY2029.

Additional Discussion

Consistent with the Commission's practice of soliciting early input from affected agencies, staff presented the proposed update to the Special Districts Advisory Committee at its July 17, 2026 meeting. The Committee reviewed the draft schedule and raised no objections or concerns. Staff prioritized review by the Special Districts Advisory Committee given that the substantial majority of studies programmed over the five-year horizon involve special districts, either as the subject agency or as an overlapping service provider. The Cities Advisory Committee meets semiannually, and its meeting calendar did not align with preparation of this item; staff will present the approved schedule to that Committee at its next scheduled meeting in September 2026 with the opportunity to forward any request for amendments back to the Commission.

ANALYSIS

The proposed update continues San Diego LAFCO's established approach to planning municipal service reviews by balancing statutory responsibilities against available resources while providing affected agencies and the public advance notice of anticipated studies. Three considerations frame staff's recommendation: sphere of influence alignment, resource capacity, and responsiveness to evolving service delivery.

- The proposed update continues to align with the Commission's task to complete sphere of influence updates on the cycle State law contemplates. The proposed schedule holds this alignment for the agencies programmed in Years One and Two, and the FY2029 shifts remain within the range the Commission has previously

accepted. The reprogramming of the wholesale water reviews to FY2030 and FY2031 extends the interval for those two agencies, which staff views as appropriate given the Commission's May 2026 direction and the stable boundary and sphere circumstances of both.

- Staff has evaluated the proposed changes against the adopted workplan and budget and finds them absorbable within existing resources. Advancing the City of San Diego and South Coast Part II reviews into the implementation window is being offset by the completed Carlsbad Subregion review, the suspended Wholesale Water Service Providers review, and the deferral of four long-range studies to FY2029.

- The proposed schedule broadens several planned reviews to better reflect and respond to evolving service delivery models and recent developments. This includes expanding the Healthcare Districts study into a Healthcare Services review, broadening the Cemetery Districts study into a review of Cemetery Services, and adding a new review of Mosquito Abatement and Vector Services to address a previously unprogrammed regional service study.

Consistent with adopted policy, no study programmed in Years Three through Five commences absent separate authorization through a future adopted annual workplan.

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 One below.

ALTERNATIVES FOR ACTION

The following alternatives are available to San Diego LAFCO:

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

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

PROCEDURES

This item has been placed on the Commission's agenda for action as part of the business calendar. The following procedures are recommended in the consideration of this item:

1) Receive verbal presentation from staff unless waived.
2) Invite comments from interested audience members.
3) Discuss and consider the recommendation.

On behalf of the Executive Officer,



Priscilla Mumpower
Assistant Executive Officer

Attachment:

1) Proposed Update to the Five-Year Rolling Study Schedule (FY2027 – FY2031)



Proposed Commission Rolling Study Schedule 5-YEAR PLAN

FY2027 Through FY2031

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 + 2027-2028: SET

COASTAL COUNTY FOCUS

Carlsbad + Encinitas Region

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

San Marcos + Vista Region

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

Del Mar + Solana Beach Region

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

San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)

San Diego Unified Port District

San Diego County Healthcare Services

- **Part I: Healthcare Districts**
  - Palomar HD
  - Tri-City HD
  - Fallbrook HD
  - Grossmont HD
- **Part II: Quasi Public Providers**
  - Sharp San Diego
  - UC San Diego
  - Other Community Providers

City of San Diego

South Coast Region

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

Sweetwater Park,
Chula Vista Bayfront



Photo Credit: Google
(Port of San Diego)



Coronado incorporated in 1890, becoming the sixth of the region's 18 cities to incorporate.

2028-2029: 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

Silver Strand Cities

- City of Coronado
- City of Imperial Beach

Public Transit Services

- North County Transit District
- Metropolitan Transit Service

Cemetery Services

- North County CD
- Pomerado CD
- Ramona CD
- Valley Center CD
- Other



2029-2030: 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

South East County Water Districts

- Lakeside WD
- Helix WD
- Padre Dam MWD

East County FPDs

- Lakeside FPD
- San Miguel Consolidated FPDs
- Alpine FPD

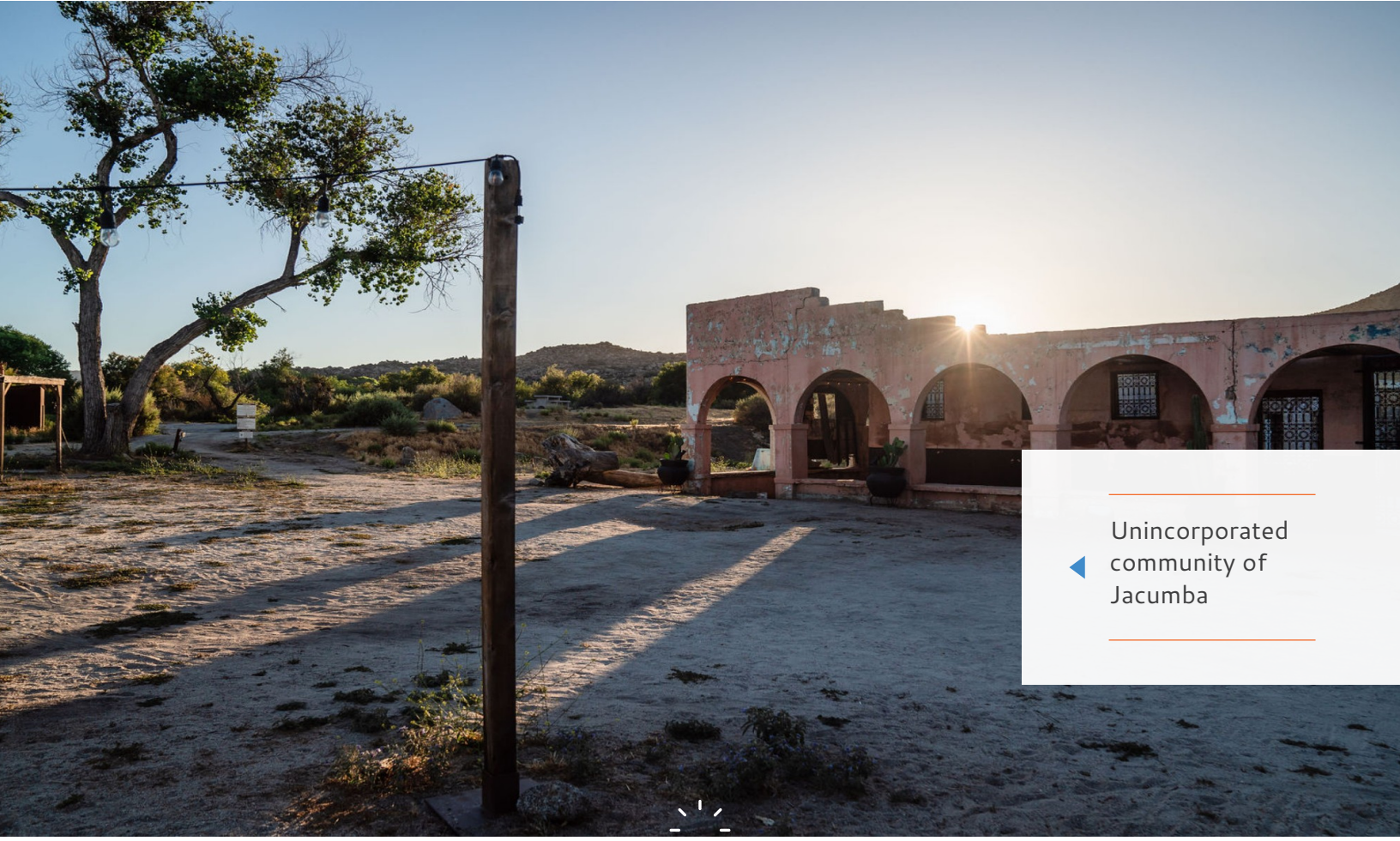
San Diego County Sanitation District

Countywide Recycled Water Services

San Diego County Airports

Metropolitan Water District of Southern CA

Countywide Police Protection Services



Unincorporated community of Jacumba

2030-2031: TENTATIVE

MISCELLANEOUS

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

San Diego County Water Authority

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

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

Mosquito Abatement + Vector Services



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