



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

5e

AGENDA REPORT
 Consent | Action

November 3, 2025

TO: Chair Whitburn and Commissioners

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

SUBJECT: **2025-2026 Workplan Status**

SUMMARY

The San Diego County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) will receive a workplan update on the 30 projects scheduled for 2025-2026. One project is complete — establishing an alternative membership organization serving San Diego and partnering LAFCOs. Another 16 projects are underway with high-priority municipal service reviews on wholesale water service providers, healthcare districts, and the Carlsbad region tentatively scheduled for noticed hearings beginning February 2026. Staff recommends the Commission receive and file the update with opportunity for discussion as needed.

BACKGROUND

San Diego LAFCO adopted its current fiscal year workplan at a public hearing in May 2025. The workplan includes 30 special projects divided into two distinct categories – statutory and administrative – with priority assignments established by the Commission.

DISCUSSION

This item provides San Diego LAFCO with an update on the special projects approved as part of the 2025–2026 Workplan. The attached status report lists all 30 projects and indicates

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that eight of the ten high-priority projects are substantively underway. Additional details on the status of all 10 high-priority projects follow.

Priority No. 1a | Municipal Service Review: Wholesale Water Service Providers

This study evaluates the performance and governance of the region’s two principal wholesale water agencies — the San Diego County Water Authority (CWA) and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MET). The review is intended to assess service efficiency, governance, and financial standing relative to regional demands, with a focus on capturing real-time operational adjustments in staff analysis. The project is being led by LAFCO staff with consultant support, and an administrative draft is anticipated for Commission review in Spring 2026.

Priority No. 1b | Municipal Service Review: Healthcare Districts

This service-specific study reviews the four healthcare districts serving San Diego County — Fallbrook, Grossmont, Tri-City, and Palomar. The study serves as a follow-up to the 2015 MSR and evaluates governance, service delivery, and financial performance relative to best practices. The project is being prepared by LAFCO staff with consultant support, with an administrative draft anticipated for Commission review in Spring 2026.

Priority No. 3 | Municipal Service Review: SANDAG

This study evaluates SANDAG’s core regional functions — transportation planning, housing coordination, and climate adaptation — through a hybrid municipal service review and special study framework. The review aims to assess agency performance, transparency, and data-sharing practices in advancing regional goals.¹ LAFCO staff and consultant Bill Fulton are leading the effort, with an administrative draft to be shared with SANDAG staff for technical review by early 2026.

Priority No. 4a | Municipal Service Review: City of Carlsbad + Carlsbad MWD

This region-specific MSR examines governance, service delivery, and fiscal accountability within the City of Carlsbad and the Carlsbad Municipal Water District. The review assesses operational efficiency, governance structure, and long-term financial sustainability. Administrative drafts have been distributed for agency review, with a final draft anticipated for Commission consideration in February 2026.

Priority No. 4b | Municipal Service Review: City of Encinitas + Overlapping Districts

This accompanying MSR evaluates the City of Encinitas and its overlapping districts – Olivenhain Municipal Water District, Leucadia Wastewater District, and San Dieguito Water District. The analysis focuses on agency performance relative to service demand, infrastructure capacity, and regional coordination. Administrative drafts are under technical review, with Commission consideration anticipated in early 2026.

¹ At the September 18, 2025 Cities Advisory Committee meeting, staff presented an update on the SANDAG MSR. The Committee took action to form an ad hoc working group to assist with development of the MSR and emphasized the importance of evaluating SANDAG’s data development and data-sharing practices.

Priority No. 6a | Municipal Service Review: City of San Marcos + Overlapping Districts

This regional study evaluates the City of San Marcos and its overlapping service providers: Vallecitos Water District, San Marcos Fire Protection District, and Vista Irrigation District. The review is intended to assess agency performance, service capacity, and coordination opportunities across jurisdictional boundaries. Study initiation is scheduled to begin in early 2026.

Priority No. 6b | Municipal Service Review: City of Vista + Buena SD

This accompanying MSR evaluates the City of Vista and Buena Sanitation District (SD), with emphasis on wastewater service delivery and Buena SD's role as a subsidiary district under City governance. The review will assess overall agency performance, fiscal accountability, and potential efficiencies or coordination opportunities between the two entities. Study initiation is anticipated to begin in early 2026.

Priority No. 8 | White Paper on Homeless Services

This informational report evaluates the scale, organization, and governance of homeless services throughout San Diego County. Its intent is to assess existing service gaps and explore governance frameworks that could improve coordination within the regional continuum of care system. Staff is working with consultant Technical Assistance Collaborative to map the ecosystem of homeless services and analyze related performance metrics, with a draft report anticipated for Commission presentation in Spring 2026.

Priority No. 9 | White Paper on Public Recreation at City Reservoirs

This informational report assesses public recreation opportunities at City of San Diego-owned reservoirs located within unincorporated areas of the County. The project aims to evaluate alternative governance and partnership models that could enhance public access and inter-jurisdictional coordination. A contract is anticipated to be executed by November 2025, with project work commencing shortly thereafter.

Priority No. 10 | Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation (SALC) 2.0

This multi-year planning grant seeks to build on the findings of SALC 1.0 by quantifying economic challenges facing small-scale farming operations in San Diego County. The project aims to develop countywide policy recommendations that bridge the economic gap between marginal and sustainable farms and strengthen agricultural viability. Development of the Strategic Plan (Task 5 of 6 under the grant agreement) is underway, with final deliverables scheduled for completion in May 2026.

ANALYSIS

None.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended San Diego LAFCO receive and file the progress report. This recommendation is consistent with Alternative Action One in the proceeding section.

ALTERNATIVES FOR ACTION

The following alternatives are available to San Diego LAFCO:

Alternative One (recommended):

Receive and file the progress report on the adopted workplan.

Alternative Two:

Continue the item to the next regular meeting and provide directions to staff as needed.

Alternative Three:

Take no action.

PROCEDURES

This item has been placed on San Diego LAFCO's agenda as part of the consent calendar. A successful motion to approve the consent calendar will include taking affirmative action on the staff recommendation as provided unless otherwise specified by the Commission.

On behalf of the Executive Officer,



Priscilla Mumpower
Assistant Executive Officer

Attachment:

- 1) 2025-2026 Workplan Status

ADOPTED WORKPLAN FOR FY2025-2026

Status as of October 22, 2025

| Priority | Tier | Type | Project | Description |
|----------|------|----------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Ongoing | ... | Statutory | Applicant Proposals and Requests | Prioritize resources to address applicant proposals and related requests |
| Ongoing | ... | Administrative | Targeted LAFCO Presentations | Coordinate timely public outreach; emphasis on informing stakeholders ahead of MSR work |
| Ongoing | ... | Statutory | Workplan and Budget Management | Actively manage the workplan and budget resources with regular updates to the Commission |

| Priority | Tier | Type | Project | Description | Status |
|----------|----------|----------------|---|---|--------|
| 1a | Highest | Statutory | MSR Wholesale Water Service Providers | Service-specific study on principal wholesale water suppliers - CWA (comprehensive) + MET (abbreviated) | |
| 1b | Highest | Statutory | MSR Healthcare Districts | Service-specific study of the four healthcare districts in San Diego County; addendum expected | |
| 3 | Highest | Statutory | MSR SANDAG | Agency-specific study of SANDAG (transportation, housing planning, + climate adaption planning) | |
| 4a | Highest | Statutory | MSR Carlsbad-Encinitas Region I: Carlsbad | Region-specific study on City of Carlsbad + Carlsbad MWD | |
| 4b | Highest | Statutory | MSR Carlsbad-Encinitas Region II: Encinitas | Region-specific study on City of Encinitas + special districts (Olivenhain, Leucadia, San Dieguito) | |
| 6a | High | Statutory | MSR Vista-San Marcos Region I: San Marcos | Regional MSR on City of San Marcos + special districts (Vallecitos, San Marcos FPD, Vista ID) | |
| 6b | High | Statutory | MSR Vista-San Marcos Region II: Vista | Regional MSR on City of Vista + Buena SD | |
| 8 | High | Administrative | White Paper Homeless Services | Evaluate the scope-scale of homeless services in SD County + potential governance options | |
| 9 | High | Administrative | White Paper Public Recreation @ City Reservoirs | Assess public recreation at City of SD's unincorporated reservoirs + potential governance alternatives | |
| 10 | High | Administrative | SALC Planning Grant 2.0 | Complete multi-year grant to inform + enhance small farming operations in SD County | |
| 11a | High-Mid | Statutory | MSR Solana Beach - Del Mar Region I: Cities | Region-specific study on mid coast I-5 municipalities (Solana Beach and Del Mar) | |
| 11b | High-Mid | Statutory | MSR Solana Beach - Del Mar Region II: Districts | Regional MSR on mid coast I-5 districts (Santa Fe ID + CSA 17) | |
| 13 | High-Mid | Administrative | Website Refresh + Content Expansion | Work with outside consultant to design and launch website refresh w/enhanced end-user features | |
| 14 | High-Mid | Statutory | MSR San Diego Unified Port District | Agency-specific study of the Port (harbor, recreation, public safety, + community development) | |
| 15 | High-Mid | Statutory | Special Study Oceanside SCHED | Prepare special study on SCHED detailing revenues/expenses + potential governance alternatives | |
| 16 | Mid | Administrative | Outside Audit RFP + Selection | Prepare and circulate RFP and select new outside auditor beginning with FY2025 statements | |
| 17 | Mid | Administrative | Outside Audit FY2025 | Complete outside audit of financial statements for FY25 with supplemental information | |
| 18 | Mid | Administrative | Pilot Grant Program | Establish pilot program to explore grant opportunities to help fund special projects at LAFCO | |
| 19 | Mid | Administrative | Special Districts Advisory Committee | Provide administrative support to the SDAC and hold no less than three meetings in FY2026 | |
| 20 | Mid | Administrative | Cities Advisory Committee | Provide administrative support to the CAC and hold no less than two meetings in FY2026 | |

| Priority | Level | Type | Project | Description | Status |
|----------|---------|----------------|---|---|--------|
| 21 | Mid-Low | Statutory | RCD Ad Hoc Committee: Part II | Complete part II of RCD boundary true ups to inform sphere updates for local RCDs | |
| 22 | Mid-Low | Statutory | MSR South Coast Region I – Cities | Region-specific study on south coast Cities (Chula Vista, Coronado, Imperial Beach and National City) | |
| 23 | Mid-Low | Statutory | MSR Healthcare Districts: Addendum | Address community healthcare needs and related resources + potential governance alternatives | |
| 24 | Mid-Low | Administrative | Alternative Membership Organization | Work with other LAFCOs to receive/provide ongoing education and legislative advocacy services | |
| 25 | Mid-Low | Administrative | Annual Local Agency Directory | Update and publish annual local agency directory subject to LAFCO oversight | |
| 26 | Low | Administrative | Legislative Proposal UC Berkeley Report | Sponsor/facilitate legislation implementing UC report recommendations on LAFCO efficiencies | |
| 27 | Low | Administrative | Commissioner Onboarding | Create a digital toolkit for new Commissioners to help acclimatize to LAFCO | |
| 28 | Low | Administrative | Annual SOI-MSR Registry | Update and publish annual registry showing all recorded SOI and MSR actions | |
| 29 | Low | Statutory | Applicant Procedures | Update and streamline LAFCO application materials + establish related protocols | |
| 30 | Low | Administrative | Featured Work + Tutorial Videos | Produce videos featuring special projects as well as primers on LAFCO duties for online distribution | |

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| Bullpen | Statutory | MSR City of San Diego | Agency-specific study and core municipal service functions (water, wastewater, public safety, etc.) |
| Bullpen | Statutory | White Paper Community Choice | Evaluate the scope and scale of CCAs in SD County and connectivity to LAFCO duties and interests |
| Bullpen | Statutory | Outreach to Sunset/Melrose "Island" | Perform targeted outreach to the island between Oceanside + Vista to assess service needs + possible annexation interests |
| Bullpen | Administrative | Service + Fiscal Indicators | Develop online browser feature to depict service + fiscal indicators among local agencies in SD County |
| Bullpen | Administrative | Liaison with Local Tribes | Establish communication protocols with local tribes with respect to shared interests in regional services + CEQA consultations |
| Bullpen | Statutory | Morro Hills CSD Follow Up | Coordinate and/or otherwise facilitate discussions with County Sheriff to enhance traffic enforcement within the CSD |
| Bullpen | Statutory | Policy Review Health + Safety Fee Reductions | Review options to revise existing fee reductions for proposals/requests involving public health or safety threats |
| Bullpen | Administrative | LAFCO Meeting Room | Explore opportunities to secure a dedicated LAFCO meeting room with scaled dais and A/V enhancements |
| Bullpen | Statutory | White Paper Garbage + Landfill Services | Evaluate the scope and scale of garbage collection and disposal services in SD County |
| Bullpen | Statutory | Legislative Proposal G.C. 56430 | Sponsor and/or facilitate amendments establishing community engagement enhancements in MSR statute |
| Bullpen | Statutory | White Paper School Districts | Evaluate scope and scale of school districts and their baseline capacities for reference in municipal service reviews |
| Bullpen | Statutory | Policy Review Island Annexations | Consider options to define "substantially surrounded" and provide related mapping services |
| Bullpen | Administrative | LAFCO Workshop | Organize a special workshop for the Commission to discuss strategic objectives over the next five-year period |
| Bullpen | Administrative | Public Access Television | Establish public broadcasting LAFCO meetings on local government channels |
| Bullpen | Administrative | Procedural Flow Charts | Create user friendly flow charts for various LAFCO statutory processes for online publication |
| Bullpen | Statutory | Policy Fee Schedule Update | Review and update fee schedule to sync with current costs and related considerations |
| Bullpen | Statutory | Policy CEQA Guidelines | Review and update existing CEQA Implementation guidelines relative to current statute and best practices |
| Bullpen | Statutory | Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities | Update DUC mapping designations (DUC) in San Diego County based on current census information |
| Bullpen | Administrative | County Planning Groups | Monitor regular meetings of the County's 28 Planning and or Sponsor Groups and directly engage as appropriate |
| Bullpen | Administrative | Local Agency Finder Tool | Develop online feature for users to enter address to identify all overlapping local jurisdictions (cities and districts) |
| Bullpen | Statutory | Policy Commission Rule No. 4 | Modernize Rule No. 4 and its provisions to regulate special districts' service functions and classes |
| Bullpen | Statutory | Special Study Escondido + Rincon | Study options to consolidate (functional and political) the City of Escondido and Rincon del Diablo MWD |
| Bullpen | Statutory | White Paper JPAs | Evaluate the status of JPA filings in SD County relative to LAFCO's task in SB 1261 |
| Bullpen | Administrative | Policy Cities Advisory Committee | Coordinate with CAD in updating bylaws and related procedures to sync with current interests/priorities |
| Bullpen | Statutory | Legislative Proposal G.C. 56133 | Sponsor/facilitate amendments to clarify LAFCOs' authority to determine out-of-agency exemptions in (e) |

Complete Near Complete Underway Pending