

Meeting of Aug. 8, 2016

Board approves \$19.5 million to improve biking, walking in O.C.

The Orange County Transportation Authority Board of Directors approved more than \$19.5 million to help Orange County cities improve their bikeways and walkways.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program funding was awarded to 13 projects that promote mobility options by increasing safety, provide regional linkages to key destinations, close bikeway corridor gaps and improve air quality across the county. These projects include bicycle paths, parking and safety improvements.

Projects that received funding are in Anaheim, Dana Point, Fullerton, Garden Grove, Santa Ana, Tustin and the county of Orange.

A call for projects was issued by OCTA in March, making available \$20 million for bicycle and pedestrian projects. The project applications were reviewed by an advisory panel and funding was granted based on project readiness, local match contribution, cost-benefit ratio, connectivity to surrounding amenities and compliance with state and federal laws and requirements.

The board has previously awarded \$15.38 million in funding to 31 projects through the Bicycle Corridor Improvement Program.

\$40 million OK'd to help ease traffic through Measure M

The board approved a \$40 million call for projects that will enhance street operations and reduce congestion in Orange County.

A call for projects will go out through the Measure M Regional Capacity Program and the Regional Traffic Signal Synchronization Program to improve traffic flow and provide intersection improvements.

Both competitive programs are funded by Measure M, Orange County's half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements. OCTA approved up to \$32 million for street improvements and up to \$8 million for signal synchronization projects.

The Regional Capacity Program funds intersection improvements and other projects to help reduce congestion. The signal synchronization program provides funding to time traffic lights on streets and roads that run through multiple cities throughout Orange County.

Six annual calls for projects have been issued to date for both programs, and collectively, OCTA has provided more than \$300 million countywide for capacity and synchronization improvement projects.

Project applications are due by Oct. 21. Based on the selection criteria, projects will be prioritized for board consideration in the spring.

Board receives Measure M performance assessment

The board received the third Measure M2 Performance Assessment covering the period of July 2012 through June 2015.

Measure M, Orange County's half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements, includes a requirement for a performance assessment to be conducted at minimum every three years. The assessment evaluates the efficiency, effectiveness, economy and program results of OCTA in delivering Measure M.

While there were no significant findings, recommendations for improvements were made. In general, the assessment found that OCTA has made significant progress in the implementation of the Measure M Program over the last three years.

Recommendations include:

- Continue to partner with Caltrans and explore the possibility of including OCTA Measure M freeway projects in Caltrans' annual Contract for Delivery to ensure awareness and accountability on project schedules and help reduce delays as well as the associated cost increases when delays occur.
- Continue to engage in strategic discussions in the program management office to increase awareness of Measure M, expand partnerships with other self-help counties and increase collaboration with Caltrans.

These findings will be addressed next year as Measure M policies and procedures are updated and implemented.