

Meeting of September 22, 2014

Board Reaffirms Commitment to Deliver I-405 Project as Promised

The board voted to move forward with the \$1.3 billion plan to construct one general-purpose lane in each direction on San Diego Freeway (I-405) as promised to voters through Measure M.

The action comes after Caltrans informed OCTA in July that it intends to select a bigger project—one general purpose lane in each direction, plus a high occupancy toll (HOT) lane in each direction— as the project alternative for the I-405 Improvement Project between State Route 55 and Interstate 605.

Caltrans intends to add the HOT lanes to the freeway when it secures funding for the added cost, estimated at approximately \$400 million. Measure M funds would not be used to build HOT lanes. The HOT lanes project would add an additional carpool lane and combine it with the existing carpool lane to create a two-lane HOT lane facility in each direction.

This stretch of the I-405 carries more than 370,000 cars a day and that number is expected to increase approximately 35 percent by 2040.

The final environmental document is expected to be finished early next year. Based on that schedule and utilizing the design-build method of construction to add one lane in each direction, OCTA's project would get under way in 2016 and be completed in 2021.

No timeline has been set for the addition of the HOT lanes by Caltrans.

\$2.8 Million from Measure M Approved for Environmental Cleanup Projects

The board approved \$2.8 million for environmental cleanup projects to improve overall water quality from transportation-generated pollution.

The Measure M Environmental Cleanup Program will provide funding for 18 projects across the county.

OCTA received 22 applications following a call for projects earlier this year. Applications were reviewed and evaluated by OCTA staff and the Vice Chairman of the Environmental Cleanup Allocation Committee.

The Measure M program is designed to remove the more visible forms of pollutants, such as litter and debris, which collect on the roadways and in the storm drains prior to being deposited in waterways and the ocean. These funds are available for Orange County local governments to purchase equipment and upgrades for existing catch basins and other related projects. Examples include screens, filters, and inserts for catch basins, as well as other devices designed to remove pollutants.

The 18 projects fall into three categories:

- Automatic retractable screen and other debris screens or inserts: Screen or insert units prevent debris from entering the storm drain system (15 projects).

- Continuous deflective separator: CDS units divert runoff away from waterways and screen storm drain flows from trash and debris. CDS units screen, separate and trap debris, sediment, oil and grease from storm water runoff (two projects).
- Bioretention system: Pollutants are captured and immobilized into the bioretention system. Storm water continues to flow into the drain system where the treated water is discharged (one project).

To date, nearly \$9 million of Measure M funds have been granted to cities and the county for projects of this type.

Santa Ana/Garden Grove Fixed-Guideway Project Moving Forward

The Santa Ana/Garden Grove fixed-guideway project has recently hit several project milestones.

The alternatives analysis report has been completed, the environmental assessment and impact report has been approved, and the locally preferred alternative has been chosen.

The alternatives analysis report provided four project alternatives and the city's locally preferred alternative is to build a streetcar system, which would utilize the Pacific Electric Right-of-Way through the western half of its alignment and substantially operate along Santa Ana Boulevard and 4th Street along the eastern half of its alignment

This preferred alternative is expected to have the highest ridership, serve the greatest number of transit- dependent households and cost less to construct and operate than the other streetcar alternative analyzed.

The Santa Ana/Garden Grove fixed-guideway project was initiated through the Measure M Go Local Program, to help broaden the reach of the Metrolink system by providing links between stations and major destinations. OCTA has overseen the project development to ensure consistency with the goals, commitments and objectives of Measure M.

Long-Range Transportation Plan Ready for Submission to Regional Transportation Plan

The final 2014 Long-Range Transportation Plan has been completed and will be submitted to the Southern California Association of Governments as input to the 2016 Regional Transportation Plan.

The LRTP provides the vision for Orange County's regional transportation system over the next 20 years. It analyzes anticipated demographic and travel demand growth, projected revenue limitations and emerging issues and technologies. The plan is updated every four years to adjust for changing conditions.

To prepare the LRTP, a two-phase outreach effort was conducted from June 2013 through June 2014. This included more than 50 meetings, involving more than 1,000 participants including the public, elected officials, local agencies, advocacy groups and industry professionals. As future users of the transportation system, involvement of high school and college age youths was emphasized throughout the outreach effort.

Through 2035, it is projected that average daily trips in Orange County will increase by nearly 1.2 million, roughly going from 8.3 million to 9.5 million. This increase in travel demand is because of anticipated socioeconomic growth. Forecasts estimate an additional 400,000 residents and 300,000 jobs within Orange County by 2035.

OCTA has undertaken a number of planning efforts in recent years that identify priorities, projects, and programs that address many of Orange County's transportation needs. These efforts include major investment studies, the Transit System Study, regional bikeway plans and the M2020 Plan, which will speed up the delivery of Measure M projects.