



October 20, 2008

To: Transportation 2020 Committee
From: Arthur T. Leahy, Chief Executive Officer
Subject: Renewed Measure M Progress Report

Overview

Staff has prepared a Renewed Measure M progress report for July 2008 through September 2008 for review by the Orange County Transportation Authority Board of Directors. The report highlights progress on Renewed Measure M projects and programs and is made available to the public via the Orange County Transportation Authority website.

Recommendation

Receive and file as an information item.

Background

Measure M Ordinance No. 3 requires quarterly status reports regarding the major projects detailed in the Renewed Measure M Transportation Investment Plan be filed with the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Board of Directors (Board). All Renewed Measure M progress reports are posted online for public review.

Discussion

Voter safeguards are a critical factor for public acceptance of Renewed Measure M (M2). The quarterly report is an opportunity to show progress in implementing the M2 Transportation Investment Plan. In order to be cost-effective and improve the accessibility of information to stakeholders and the public, all M2 progress reports will be web-based; however, hard copies will be mailed upon request. Additionally, a new and improved "sitelet" (web portal) is being developed to maximize the availability of easily accessible information to the public. The report reflects progress being made on Board-approved Early Action Plan (EAP) projects and programs. Each item features a brief paragraph that provides an overview of significant progress for

the time period, with a web link to more information including staff reports and project descriptions (Attachment A).

Highlights of the M2 progress in this quarter include:

Highways

- Santa Ana Freeway (Interstate 5)/Ortega Highway (State Route 74) environmental impact report released
- San Diego Freeway (Interstate 405) widening ready to enter environmental phase

Signal Synchronization

- Oso Parkway signal project nears completion and reports 13 to 27 percent in travel time
- Work has begun on signal master plan

Metrolink Expansion

- Design of the grade crossing improvements was completed and a call for bids was released on the Metrolink Service Expansion Plan plus grade crossing safety enhancements
- Five of nine cities have approved safety/quiet zone cooperative agreements with OCTA, which approves the funding and design of the improvements and defines roles and responsibilities during the project

Go Local

- Santa Ana and Anaheim were awarded grants for planning and environmental clearance of fixed-guideway proposals to link to Metrolink
- 25 bus/shuttle proposals are recommended for advancement to begin service planning

Environmental Programs

- Preliminary criteria for evaluating biological mitigation potential of properties for the freeway mitigation program was approved by the Board along with an outreach plan

- Survey completed for Catch Basin Best Management Practices' funding program with 90 percent of cities expressing an interest in applying for funds

Oversight

- New Taxpayers Oversight Committee members were selected

Planning

- South Orange County Major Investment Study is ready for action

Financing

- New revenue projections received from three universities
- Short-term impact on Measure M1 reserves
- M2 projections show lower growth rate and smaller base of revenue for 2011 of \$53 million less than 2005 predictions

To encourage the public review of the quarterly report online, information will be placed in OCTA's existing "Transportation Update" advertisement that appears approximately every three weeks in the *Orange County Business Journal*, *Orange County Register*, *Excelsior*, *The Korean Daily*, *The Chinese Daily News*, and *Nguoi Viet Daily News*. Staff also will notify all Orange County cities and use other existing communication tools such as project newsletters and Board action updates to notify the public about the online availability of the M2 progress report. Because the public may view both the original Measure M and M2 as one program, the original Measure M annual report also includes an update on the progress of M2.

Summary

As required by Measure M Ordinance No. 3, a quarterly report is provided to update progress in implementing the M2 Transportation Investment Plan. To facilitate accessibility and transparency of information available to stakeholders and the public, the M2 progress report is presented on the OCTA website.

Attachment

- A. Renewed Measure M (M2) Quarterly Progress Report for July – September 2008

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**Renewed Measure M (M2) Quarterly Progress Report
*July – September 2008***

The following is a summary of the progress made on the Renewed Measure M (M2) Early Action Plan (EAP) covering the third quarter (July-September) of 2008.

Highway Projects

OCTA is undertaking an accelerated program to begin improvements to the freeway system under the M2 program. Although M2 was approved in November 2006, the sales tax collections do not actually begin until April 2011. In order to expedite some of this work, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) instituted an EAP that advances the development of nine of the freeway corridors before April 2011. This plan uses state infrastructure bonds and other debt financing to start the projects early. The EAP includes the advancement of the conceptual design, environmental clearance, final design, and construction of a number of projects. Work is underway on all nine freeway corridors at this time.

The projects underway in the third quarter of 2008 were:

Project A – Caltrans is preparing a project study report to identify ways to relieve freeway congestion along the Santa Ana Freeway (I-5) between the Costa Mesa Freeway (SR-55) and the Orange Freeway (SR-57) in Santa Ana. The study is looking at ways to increase capacity and improve traffic flow through this section of I-5 that connects four major freeways in central Orange County. The study is expected to be completed in early 2009.

Project C – Caltrans is preparing a project study report to identify options to increase capacity of the I-5 corridor between Avenida Pico and Pacific Coast Highway through the communities of San Clemente and Dana Point. This study will evaluate the benefits of extending the existing high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes on I-5 that presently terminate at the Pacific Coast Highway interchange all the way to Avenida Pico in San Clemente. This study is expected to be completed by early 2009. Additionally, a project study report is underway to add new lanes from I-5 from the vicinity of the El Toro interchange in Lake Forest to the vicinity of the San Joaquin Toll Road (SR-73) in Mission Viejo. This study is anticipated to be completed by mid-2010.

Project D – The City of San Juan Capistrano has released a draft of the environmental analysis of proposed improvements to the I-5/Ortega Highway (SR-74) interchange for public review. The City, working with Caltrans, has identified five alternatives to improve traffic flow within the interchange. These five options were reviewed by various public agencies and the general public, and their comments will be considered before a final design alternative is selected. The selection of the preferred alternative and approval of the environmental documents is expected by the end of 2008.

Project F – OCTA is preparing a project study report to analyze options to improve the SR-55 between the San Diego Freeway (I-405) and I-5, passing through the communities of Tustin, Santa Ana, and Irvine. The study is looking at the feasibility of lane additions within this corridor and possible improvements to the freeway interchanges to reduce traffic congestion in the area. This study is expected to be complete by the end of 2008.

Project G – OCTA is preparing the final design for a new northbound lane on SR-57 from Orangethorpe Avenue to Lambert Avenue through the communities of Fullerton and Brea. It is expected that the widening of the freeway in the northbound direction can generally be accommodated within the existing right of way. In addition, OCTA is preparing an environmental analysis to add a new northbound lane on SR-57 between Katella Street and Lincoln Avenue in the Anaheim area. This study will identify any potential environmental impacts of the project and will propose mitigation measures to minimize any unavoidable impacts. Construction is expected to begin on the first segments of the project in 2010.

Project H – OCTA is preparing an environmental document to add a new westbound lane to the Riverside Freeway (SR-91) between the I-5 and SR-57 in Anaheim. This effort is looking at the environmental and design issues related to adding the new lane and will identify the most practical approach that will have the least impact on existing properties along the freeway.

Project I – OCTA is preparing a feasibility study to look into options for improving the SR-91/SR-55 interchange and to add capacity along SR-91 between SR-57 and SR-55. This feasibility study will evaluate previous studies done in the area and select some of the best options to advance into the project study phase.

Project J – Three projects are being advanced along SR-91 to relieve traffic congestion in the corridor connecting Orange County and Riverside County. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is advancing final design of a new westbound lane between the Foothill-South Toll Road (SR-241) and the Corona Expressway (SR-71) in Riverside County. This project will extend the existing westbound auxiliary lane that terminates before Green River Road to the SR-71 interchange. Construction is expected to begin on this project in 2009. Caltrans also is preparing an environmental analysis for adding one new lane each way along SR-91 from SR-55 to SR-241. This project will improve freeway capacity through the cities of Anaheim and Placentia. The third project is being advanced by the Riverside County Transportation Commission to add a new lane each way between SR-241 in Anaheim to the Corona Freeway (SR-15) in Corona. They are currently preparing an environmental analysis for these proposed improvements.

Project K – OCTA has recently completed a project study report to add one or two new lanes each way on I-405 between SR-55 and the San Gabriel Freeway (I-605). These improvements will add mainline capacity and improve the local interchanges along the corridor that serves the communities of Santa Ana, Fountain Valley, Huntington Beach,

Westminster, Seal Beach, and Los Alamitos. A formal environmental analysis of the proposed improvements will begin in the fourth quarter 2008.

Signal Synchronization

In January 2008, OCTA completed the Euclid Street signal synchronization project that implemented optimized signal timing along a 16-mile segment of Euclid Street. Travel times along Euclid Street were improved between 16 and 24 percent with the new timings.

A second OCTA synchronization project along an 8¾ mile segment of Oso Parkway/Pacific Park Drive will be completed in fall 2008. Optimized timing has been implemented in conjunction with strategic signal system upgrades and a monitoring effort. Travel times along Oso Parkway were improved between 13 and 27 percent with the new timings.

In April 2008, the California Transportation Commission awarded OCTA \$4 million as part of the Proposition 1B Traffic Signal Synchronization Program for signal synchronization. Combined with \$4 million from Measure M this will provide \$8 million to fund signal synchronization efforts along ten significant street corridors comprised of 533 signalized intersections over the next three years. OCTA has developed a schedule to fund and implement these projects and will start the first set of these projects in January 2009.

Finally, OCTA began work to develop a master plan for the Regional Traffic Signal Synchronization Program. The \$450 million (plus 20 percent local match) program is funded by M2. The goal of the program is to improve the flow of traffic by developing and implementing regional signal coordination through more than 2,000 intersections. The master plan effort will be complete in fall 2009.

Metrolink

As a result of planned increases in passenger and freight rail traffic on the three rail lines in Orange County, a renewed focus has been placed on at-grade rail-highway crossing (grade crossing) improvements. Improvements to grade crossings can cover a wide spectrum from basic safety improvements (improving crossing surfaces, re-applying of pavement markings, and enhancing signage), to the installation of supplemental safety measures that allow for the reduction of locomotive horn blowing (quiet zones).

On August 27, 2007, the OCTA Board of Directors (Board) approved the implementation strategy for the grade crossing enhancement program and quiet zone improvements at 53 grade crossings in Orange County. Since then, significant efforts have been undertaken to advance the program towards completion by spring 2010.

On August 15, 2008, the design was completed for the Metrolink Service Expansion Plan (MSEP) and rail-highway grade crossing safety enhancement program. The

Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) released the invitation for bids for the combined MSEP and the rail-highway grade crossing safety enhancement program on September 28, 2008. This is a major milestone for the programs. The SCRRA Board of Directors is expected to award a contract in December 2008, with construction beginning in early 2009.

The rail-highway grade crossing safety enhancement program cooperative agreements between the cities and OCTA are expected to be signed by mid-October 2008. To date, five of nine cities have already approved the agreements, clearing the way for these projects to advance into construction.

Go Local

On July 28, 2008, the Board approved the release of requests for proposals for professional services to assist staff in three separate efforts as part of Go Local Step Two project development including: service planning for qualifying Go Local Step One mixed-flow bus/shuttle proposals, project management oversight of the mixed-flow bus/shuttle proposals, and technical and program management support for the fixed-guideway proposals. Staff is in the process of reviewing proposals for these efforts and will bring recommendations on the selected consultants to the Board in late fall 2008.

In September 2008, cooperative agreements were executed between OCTA and the cities of Anaheim and Santa Ana to identify the roles and responsibilities for Step Two. In May 2008, the Board had awarded each city \$5.9 million to perform detailed planning, including an alternatives analysis, and state and environmental clearance on their respective fixed-guideway proposals. The cooperative agreements executed by the Board further identify the level of effort expected as part of Step Two, including the requirement for the two cities to return to the Board at certain Step Two milestones in order for the Board to be kept apprised of project status and to approve progression into the next phase of study.

To date, OCTA has received 29 bus/shuttle proposals requesting consideration to be advanced to Step Two for further refinement of the proposed routes. Based on a screening of the proposals against the Board-approved Go Local evaluation criteria, staff is recommending that 25 of the 29 proposals be advanced to Step Two. The Board is expected to consider staff's recommendations in late October 2008.

Environmental Committees

The Environmental Cleanup Allocation Committee (Allocation Committee) and the Environmental Oversight Committee (EOC) both began meeting on a monthly basis starting in January 2008. The Allocation Committee is designed to make recommendations to the Board on the allocation of funds for water quality improvements, and is currently developing a draft framework for competitive allocation of water quality funding.

Last quarter, the Allocation Committee identified two proposed categories for water quality funding: a catch basin program and a new capital and operations projects category. The committee is in the process of exploring these two categories and working toward making recommendations to the Board on water quality program guidelines. These guidelines will be used by eligible local agencies to submit project applications and funding requests starting fiscal year 2009-10.

The purpose of the EOC is to make recommendations to the Board on the allocation of environmental freeway mitigation funds and monitor the implementation of a master agreement between OCTA and state and federal resource agencies. The master agreement will provide higher-value environmental benefits such as habitat protection, wildlife corridors, and resource preservation in exchange for streamlined project approvals and greater certainty in the delivery of the freeway program as a whole.

OCTA staff and legal counsel, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the California Department of Fish and Game are currently in discussions on how to structure the master agreement and provide the necessary analysis and documentation to support it. These discussions have focused on balancing four key factors: early action on conservation opportunities, strong assurances regarding processing and permitting of projects, and timeliness and cost.

In September 2008, the Board approved preliminary criteria for evaluating the biological mitigation potential of properties that may be acquired or restored, and directed staff to implement a public outreach plan to build an inventory of potential conservation sites. The public outreach effort will begin in October 2008.

A questionnaire was disseminated in July 2008 to all the cities within Orange County to evaluate a sense of the level of interest and priority a Catch Basin Best Management Practices (BMP) funding program would have for each jurisdiction. Questions were focused on what was currently installed to mitigate storm water pollution specifically related to catch basins and what particular parameters would the cities desire funding if available.

Based on the questionnaire, a key finding of the survey was that less than 10 percent of catch basins in the county have some type of device to screen trash and debris. More than 90 percent of the cities indicated interest in applying for funds, which could increase the number of catch basins to be protected by 40 percent on a countywide basis. It was also indicated that the majority of cities would be interested in pooling purchasing and maintenance of improvements related to a catch basin BMP funding program.

To better define the type and amount of funding that may be potentially available through this program, an additional questionnaire will be disseminated. In addition, OCTA representatives will be meeting with each city manager and their respective staff to ensure that the program is designed to be cost-effective and meets each jurisdiction's needs.

Taxpayers Oversight Committee

Three new members have joined the 11-member Measure M Taxpayers Oversight Committee (TOC) after an extensive recruitment conducted by the Grand Jurors Association of Orange County. The new members were selected by lottery from 15 finalists and replaced outgoing members whose three-year terms expired. The new members are Howard Mirowitz from Newport Beach, Edgar Wylie from Irvine, and C. James Hillquist from Yorba Linda. The TOC meets bi-monthly to review the progress of Measure M programs and projects.

South Orange County Major Investment Study

The South Orange County Major Investment Study is in the process of completing the third and final phase of the study. This final phase will identify a locally preferred strategy (LPS), which includes M2 projects. If approved by the Board in October 2008, the LPS will establish the M2 freeway plan as a priority for improving transportation in south Orange County followed by additional proposed improvements to I-5 and I-405.

Financing

OCTA has received updated sales tax forecasts from the three universities that are contracted to provide this information, namely Chapman University, the University of California Los Angeles (Anderson Forecast), and California State University, Fullerton. Staff has reviewed the forecast data and applied it to actual revenue receipts for fiscal year 2008 to come up with an updated M2 forecast. The forecast results were provided to the OCTA Transportation 2020 and Finance and Administration Board committees.

As compared to the 2005 nominal revenue estimates, the first 12 months of M2 sales tax revenue is projected to be \$53 million less than the 2005 projections and the average annual growth rate over the 30-year period is projected to decrease by approximately 0.5 percent. Overall, the nominal M2 sales tax revenue is projected to decrease from a 2005 estimate of \$24.3 billion to the current estimate of \$18.7 billion for the 30-year period.

Website

The new M2 web portal will be launched at the beginning of 2009. The database-driven site will feature interactive tools and resources that promote government transparency and accountability. Working closely with the technical consultant, OCTA is developing new ways to present project progress online using interactive mapping technologies and e-marketing solutions. The dynamic project profiles will show current status, news, budget, and multimedia-rich content, such as photos or streaming video. Expect these improvements and many more in the first quarter of 2009.