



February 6, 2023

To: Regional Transportation Planning Committee

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: Measure M2 Environmental Cleanup Program (Project X) - Tier 1
2023 Grant Program Call for Projects

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Darrell E. Johnson", is written over the "From:" line of the memo.

Overview

The Measure M2 Environmental Cleanup Program (Project X) provides competitive grants to local jurisdiction for projects that protect Orange County waterways and beaches from roadway runoff. Updated program guidelines for the 2023 call for projects are presented for review and approval. With approval, staff will issue the call for projects and return with project funding recommendations in summer 2023.

Recommendations

- A. Approve the proposed revisions to the Comprehensive Transportation Funding Programs guidelines for the Tier 1 Environmental Cleanup Program.
- B. Authorize staff to issue the 2023 Environmental Cleanup Program Tier 1 call for projects.

Background

The Environmental Cleanup Program (ECP), also referred to as Project X, provides for the allocation of two percent of annual Measure M2 (M2) revenues to improve overall water quality in Orange County. Funding is allocated on a countywide competitive basis to assist jurisdictions in controlling transportation-related pollution. These funds are intended to supplement, not supplant, existing transportation-related water quality programs. Funds are awarded to priority projects that improve water quality in streams, harbors, and other waterways that have a nexus to transportation-related pollution, consistent with the Orange County Transportation Authority's (OCTA) M2 Ordinance No. 3 (Ordinance). The Ordinance requires the Environmental Cleanup Allocation Committee (ECAC) to advise the OCTA Board of Directors (Board) on priorities and processes for the use of ECP funds.

In May 2010, the Board approved a two-tiered approach to fund the M2 ECP. The Tier 1 Grant Program consists of funding for equipment purchases and upgrades to existing storm drains and related best management practices (Attachment A). To date, the Board has approved funding for 212 Tier 1 projects, totaling just over \$33 million. It is estimated that nearly 60 million gallons of trash have been captured since the inception of the ECP in 2011. The most recent Tier 1 call for projects (call) was finalized by the Board on November 14, 2022, with the approval of \$3,120,217 in ECP Tier 1 funds. The Board awarded funding to support 13 successful project applications (based on the scoring criteria).

The Tier 2 Grant Program consists of funding larger projects (treating catchment areas of 50 acres or greater) for regional, potentially multi-jurisdictional, and capital-intensive projects. Planning efforts are underway related to a future Tier 2 call including revisions of the Tier 2 guidelines and scoring criteria, and the development of a web-based planning tool, which would streamline the application and scoring processes. Based on feedback from prospective Tier 2 project proponents and funding availability, a future Tier 2 call may be brought forward in calendar year 2024, subject to completion of the work underway now and future Board approval.

Discussion

OCTA is preparing for the next Tier 1 call. OCTA considered lessons learned from previous calls and evaluation processes. This year's recommendation for the program guidelines includes minimal changes. The proposed modifications are summarized in Attachment B, and a red-line version of the guidelines is included in Attachment C. A summary of the modifications is provided below.

2023 Call Updates

- Updated ECP call schedule dates and timeline with an application submittal deadline for Thursday, April 27, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.
- With respect to project applications, updated the requirement that all funding applications will need to be submitted in both hardcopy and electronic formats for this call cycle.

Any other revisions that have been incorporated are considered minor and would not result in significant changes to the guidelines.

The funding target for the call is planned to provide approximately \$3 million in M2 Project X funds, which is consistent with the prior year. The proposed changes were reviewed by the ECAC at the January 12, 2023, meeting.

The ECAC voted to endorse the changes to the guidelines and recommended Board approval to issue the 2023 ECP Tier 1 call.

Next Steps

Following Board approval, it is anticipated that the call to will be released on February 13, 2023. Staff will notify local jurisdictions about this funding opportunity and will offer one-on-one meetings to assist local jurisdictions with the application process. Per the recommendation of the ECAC, a workshop for local jurisdictions will be provided on February 23, 2023 as an additional resource. Applications are due to OCTA no later than April 27, 2023, and staff will return to the Board over the summer with programming recommendations. Awards would be effective with Board approval and funding would become available July 1, 2023.

Summary

Revisions to the ECP Tier 1 guidelines and authorization to issue a 2023 ECP Tier 1 call, are recommended for Board approval. The estimated funding target for this call is \$3 million.

Attachments

- A. Visual Samples of Recommended Best Management Practice Project Types
- B. List of Proposed Revisions to the 2023 CTFP Guidelines for Project X (Chapter 11)
- C. Comprehensive Transportation Funding Programs Guidelines Excerpt, Proposed Revisions

Prepared by:



Adrian Salazar
Senior Transportation Funding Analyst
(714) 560-5363

Approved by:



Kia Mortazavi
Executive Director, Planning
(714) 560-5741