



June 7, 2021

To: Regional Planning and Highways Committee

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: Transportation Control Measures - Substitute Program of Projects

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

Overview

The Orange County Transportation Authority, the Transportation Corridor Agencies, and the County of Orange have made project delivery commitments to specific projects that fulfill short-term air quality conformity requirements. Based on air quality regulations, these previously planned projects, known as transportation control measures, must be implemented by December 2022 and December 2023. If not, substitute projects with an equivalent air quality benefit must be delivered in a similar timeframe. Due to project delays, a substitute program of projects is recommended to move forward for implementation. Recommendations are presented to initiate the substitution process with the Southern California Association of Governments, and authorization to negotiate and execute a cooperative agreement with the Transportation Corridor Agencies for toll road improvements within the existing toll facility rights-of-way.

Recommendations

- A. Direct staff to work with the Southern California Association of Governments to replace the previously planned projects in the Federal Transportation Improvement Program with the substitute program of projects included in this report.

- B. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer, or his designee, to negotiate and execute a cooperative agreement with the Transportation Corridor Agencies for improvements on existing toll facilities.

Background

Transportation control measures (TCM) are specific transportation projects and programs committed to help improve air quality. TCMs are required by the federal Clean Air Act (CAA) in areas that do not meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. The South Coast Air Basin, including Orange County, is one

of those areas in the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region. TCMs are considered committed for timely implementation when funds have been programmed for implementation within the first two years of a Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP). When a committed TCM cannot be delivered or will be significantly delayed, the substitution of the TCM follows a process specified in the federal CAA §176(c). In that event, the implementing agencies, the county transportation planning agency, and SCAG work together to overcome the delay or identify a substitute set of projects with similar air quality benefits, serving the same county, and with a demonstrated financial commitment.

The County of Orange, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), and Transportation Corridor Agencies (TCA) have previously committed TCM projects in the current FTIP for which completion is delayed or deferred beyond December 2022 and December 2023. These committed TCM projects are described below.

Hazard Avenue Bikeway

The County of Orange previously committed to complete the Hazard Avenue Bikeway project (FTIP Project ID: ORA170205) by December 2023. This project would have added approximately four miles of Class IV bikeway on Hazard Avenue between Goldenwest Street and Euclid Avenue. As part of this project, the number of lanes on Hazard Avenue would have been modified from four lanes to two lanes with a two-way left-turn lane median. The County of Orange has put this project on hold due to a lack of community support, and the December 2023 implementation date cannot be met.

15 Expansion Paratransit Vans

OCTA previously committed to purchase 15 Expansion Paratransit Vans (FTIP Project ID: ORA130099) by December 2022. These vans would have expanded OCTA's existing paratransit fleet. However, consistent with the OCTA Bus Fleet Plan, these expansion vehicles are no longer needed in the near term. This is particularly true following the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, which has resulted in a reduction in the use of paratransit service.

Placentia Metrolink Station

OCTA previously committed to complete the Placentia Metrolink Station (FTIP Project ID: ORA030612) by December 2022. This project is planned to add a new Metrolink station in the City of Placentia near the intersection of Crowther Avenue and Melrose Street, to be served by Metrolink's 91 Line.

The project will include the construction of a parking facility to serve the station. Completion of this TCM project has been delayed beyond the committed completion date due to protracted negotiations with BNSF Railway, which owns the tracks that will serve the station.

TCA Capital Projects

TCA previously committed to deliver three capital improvement projects along portions of TCA facilities within Orange County by December 2022 that are further described below.

- The San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor (State Route 73) would have added an additional mixed-flow lane in each direction, plus climbing and auxiliary lanes for 15 miles between Interstate 5 (I-5) in San Juan Capistrano and Irvine (FTIP Project ID: 10254).
- The Eastern Transportation Corridor (State Route 261) would have added an additional two mixed-flow lanes in each direction, plus climbing and auxiliary lanes for the length of the facility (26.4 miles) between I-5 via State Route 261 and State Route 133 to State Route 91 (FTIP Project ID: ORA050).
- The Foothill Transportation Corridor (State Route 241) would have added an additional two mixed-flow lanes in each direction, plus climbing and auxiliary lanes for 12.7 miles between Oso Parkway and State Route 261 (FTIP Project ID: ORA051).

These designated TCM projects have been deferred by TCA, and TCA has indicated that the agency is committed to delivering these projects post-2035. Further, the agency has committed to pursue key, strategic widening projects that will address congestion on TCA facilities prior to 2035 (Attachment A). To memorialize these commitments, an OCTA/TCA cooperative agreement is recommended that would require TCA to:

- Implement key strategic widening projects by 2035 that achieve the same air quality benefit as the prior projects; and
- Continue to provide updates of its annual Capital Improvement Program and promptly notify OCTA of any delays to the strategic widening projects; and
- Provide full funding to OCTA to implement an alternative program of projects (that provide an equivalent air quality benefit as the prior projects) should TCA not implement the strategic widening projects by 2035.

With Board of Directors' (Board) authorization, staff will work with TCA to negotiate and execute a cooperative agreement consistent with these terms.

Discussion

For air quality conformity purposes, OCTA is proposing a substitute program of projects as a replacement to these previously planned TCMs. The recommended substitute program of projects consists of three signal synchronization projects spanning approximately 33 miles of roadway. The substitute program of projects will be implemented by December 2022, and have equivalent air quality benefits to the region as the previously planned TCMs described above. Current funding, as part of Measure M2, will be used for these three signal synchronization projects. Project descriptions and air quality modeling results are discussed below.

Portola Parkway Signal Synchronization Project (SSP)

The Portola Parkway SSP implements optimized signal timing between Paloma Parkway to Plano Trabuco Road. The project includes select upgrades to key equipment including Advanced Traffic Controllers (ATC), communications, and detection. The project is being implemented by OCTA and is anticipated to cost approximately \$2,200,000, is 7.1 miles long, and will be completed by December 2022.

1st Street/Bolsa Chica Street SSP

The 1st Street/Bolsa Chica Street SSP implements optimized signal timing between Bolsa Chica Street to Newport Avenue. The project includes select upgrades to key equipment including ATC, communications, and detection. The project is being implemented by OCTA and is anticipated to cost approximately \$3,800,000, is 13.1 miles long, and will be completed by December 2022.

Alton Parkway SSP

The Alton Parkway SSP implements optimized signal timing between Red Hill Street to Portola Parkway. The project includes select upgrades to key equipment including ATC, communications, and detection. The project is 12.8 miles. The project is being implemented by OCTA and is anticipated to cost approximately \$3,900,000, is 12.8 miles long, and will be completed by December 2022.

Air Quality Analysis Findings

The air quality forecasts with the previously planned TCM projects were compared with those of the substitute program of projects using a stepwise method built on SCAG's emissions methodology, the Orange County Transportation Analysis Model, and the California Air Resources Board Emission Factors (EMFAC) model. The EMFAC is used throughout California to calculate emission rates from motor vehicles, such as passenger cars and heavy-duty trucks operating on freeways and local roads. Outputs are measured in daily tons of emissions for three forecast years (2022, 2037, and 2045). OCTA compared the results of all the projects in the approved FTIP both with the previously planned projects and with the substitute program of projects. The results are included in Attachment B and indicate that the substitute program of projects will have generally equivalent air quality benefits in Orange County and the region.

Next Steps

With Board approval, staff will initiate the TCM replacement process with SCAG and negotiate and execute a cooperative agreement with TCA, consistent with the terms outlined in this report. This process includes obtaining formal approval of SCAG's Transportation Conformity Working Group and related committees. This process also includes concurrence with the federal Environmental Protection Agency to replace the previously planned projects with the substitute program of projects to provide equivalent air quality benefits. Finally, the three SSPs will be programmed into the FTIP and will replace the previously planned projects, which will be removed from the FTIP.

Summary

A substitute program of TCM projects is recommended for Board approval to meet federal air quality regulations. The substitute program of projects offers equivalent emissions reduction, serves a similar geographic area, and meets other criteria required by the SCAG.

Attachments

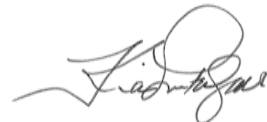
- A. Letter from Valarie McFall, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Transportation Corridor Agencies, to Kurt Brotcke, Orange County Transportation Authority, Subject: Request to Substitute Transportation Control Measures, dated May 18, 2021
- B. Air Quality Analysis

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