



April 11, 2024

To: Transit Committee
From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer
Subject: OC Streetcar Project Quarterly Update

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Overview

The Orange County Transportation Authority is implementing the OC Streetcar project, and updates are provided to the Board of Directors on a quarterly basis. This report covers OC Streetcar project activities from January 2024 through March 2024.

Recommendation

Receive and file as an information item.

Background

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), in cooperation with the cities of Santa Ana and Garden Grove, is implementing a modern streetcar running between the Santa Ana Regional Transportation Center (SARTC) in the City of Santa Ana (City) and the intersection of Harbor Boulevard and Westminster Avenue in the City of Garden Grove. The OC Streetcar project (Project) will improve transit connectivity and accessibility, increase transit options, relieve congestion, and provide benefits to the community and traveling public. The Project is being implemented as part of Measure M2 Project S – Transit Extensions to Metrolink, approved by Orange County voters in November 2006.

Construction of the 4.15-mile alignment involves complex and specialized work, including the installation of embedded track in existing streets, an overhead contact system (OCS) to supply power to the vehicles, new traffic signals and transit signal priority at intersections, stops with canopies, bridges, and a maintenance and storage facility (MSF).

The Project includes ten streetcar stops in each direction (four shared center platforms and six side platforms in each direction, for a total of 16 platforms).

Each stop includes a canopy, benches, leaning rails, trash cans, lighting, variable message signs, video cameras, a public address system, and ticket vending machines. Platforms will be 14-inches high to enable level boarding to streetcar vehicles.

The MSF can accommodate up to 15 modern streetcar vehicles, as well as all necessary administration, operations, vehicle maintenance, parts storage, and maintenance-of-way needs for the Project. The MSF will also include secured exterior vehicle storage, a wye track for turning vehicles end-for-end, a free-standing vehicle wash, employee parking, and fire department/delivery access.

On March 26, 2018, the OCTA Board of Directors (Board) awarded a contract to Siemens Industries, Inc., (Siemens) for the manufacturing and delivery of eight modern streetcar vehicles, spare parts, and special tools. On September 24, 2018, the Board awarded the construction contract for the Project to Walsh Construction Company II, LLC (Walsh). On November 30, 2018, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) executed the Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA), securing \$149 million in federal New Starts discretionary funding for the Project. In February 2019, the FFGA was funded through the FTA Transit Award Management System, which was the last step necessary to begin the drawdown of federal funding. Through March 2024, \$133,915,385 has been drawn down on the FFGA. On May 22, 2020, the Board awarded a contract to Herzog Transit Services, Inc., (Herzog) to provide operations and maintenance services for an initial start-up and pre-revenue period, and a five-year revenue term.

Discussion

The following is the status of ongoing project activities related to construction, vehicle manufacturing, operations, and public outreach.

Construction

Construction is approximately 86 percent complete through last quarter, ending March 2024. Construction milestones include the completion of the Santa Ana River and Westminster bridges with the placement of handrails, installation of all tracks and OCS poles, placement of approximately 90 percent of the roadway final pavement and striping work, and the reopening of the Santa Ana Boulevard and Santiago Street intersection. In response to community interest in improving the visual appeal of Fourth Street, tree installation was advanced with the placement of 45 trees and the removal of fencing around the tree wells.

In the Pacific Electric Right-of-Way (PEROW) portion of the alignment, two key activities are ongoing. The activities include the overhead wire installation on

OCS poles and train warning and gate systems installation at the Fairview Street, Fifth Street, and Raitt Street at-grade crossings. At the MSF, key activities nearing completion include installation of bi-fold doors, OCS cantilever arms, interior heating, ventilation, and air conditioning, wiring and electrical work, and preparation of asphalt concrete paving for the yard track. Given the significance of the MSF to vehicle testing, staff continues to coordinate weekly with Walsh to ensure significant completion of the MSF for vehicle storage at the earliest possible date.

On the west end of the Project, the Harbor Boulevard parking lot was paved, and on the east end, the SARTC parking lot was also recently paved. Additional work to reconstruct sidewalk, driveways, and curb and gutter is underway along Santa Ana Boulevard between Santiago Street and Mortimer Street, as well as at the intersection of Fourth Street and Mortimer Street, and other locations throughout the Project. Work at Sasser Park continues, with underground electrical elements being installed and preparation for paving and concrete work at the platform.

Upcoming planned work includes continued installation of OCS wire, completion of signals, signage, and the electrical systems for the streetcar, and progressing the MSF and other roadway elements such as paving, sidewalk, driveways, and curb and gutter work.

Vehicles

Five of the eight vehicles that have been completed and approved for storage were moved to a secure offsite Siemens storage area. OCTA will continue to store spare parts and special tools at the Siemens facility until the MSF construction has reached substantial completion and those items can be accommodated within the facility.

In January 2024, OCTA staff participated in a pre-storage vehicle inspection for two of the three remaining vehicles, Cars 5 and 7, at the Siemens manufacturing facility. The pre-storage vehicle inspection includes a rigorous review of the interior, exterior, and roof of the vehicles. The vehicle inspection also includes final water and software testing. OCTA's operations and maintenance contractor, Herzog, also participated in the inspection at the Siemens facility. Herzog's focus was on operational systems such as cab operator display, doors, trucks, and vehicle coupler. Herzog will be responsible for the vehicles once they are delivered to the MSF. Therefore, Herzog's participation is critical to establish continuity in the vehicle pre-storage inspection, pre-shipment inspection, and delivery. Following the inspection, Cars 5 and 7 were approved for storage.

Car 8 remains in final static and dynamic testing. The final inspection of Car 8 is expected to be conducted next quarter.

OCTA has requested that Siemens provide a long-term storage estimate for the vehicles, vehicle warranty extension, and vehicle maintenance during storage. OCTA and Siemens continue to coordinate regarding the vehicle delivery schedule and long-term vehicle storage at the off-site Siemens facility. Staff anticipates returning to the Board for contract amendments required for Siemens as a result of these discussions in the second quarter 2024.

Operations

In February 2024, the Rail Activation Committee met to report on the activities of the smaller working groups, including the System Integration Testing (SIT) Committee and Operations Working Group. The SIT Committee is meant to validate that the interface between the vehicle, MSF, and mainline are performing as intended. The Operations Working Group is led by Herzog and is responsible for the development of all rail activation plans and deliverables. In February 2024, the Rail Activation Committee and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) conducted a field walk from the MSF to the Fairview Street grade crossing to review the track, signal, and switches that will be used for the initial vehicle testing. The CPUC's engagement in the field walks is critical to the testing and certification of the system.

In March 2024, Herzog provided a second vendor presentation to OCTA and the CPUC of an early warning device system, a requirement for CPUC compliance. This system provides advanced warning of an approaching train to both track workers and train operators. Early warning device systems will be utilized in the field by operations and maintenance personnel as part of their personal protective equipment safety requirements.

OCTA and the City of Garden Grove are finalizing negotiations for the operations and maintenance agreement needed once the Project is in revenue service. Staff anticipates this agreement, along with the agreement with the city, coming to the Board for approval in May 2024.

Public Outreach

During the reporting period, bilingual notifications were developed and distributed for tree planting on Fourth Street between Ross Street and French Street, final paving and striping in Segment 3 at the Ross Street intersection, and in Segment 5 on Santa Ana Boulevard near French Street. In addition, the County of Orange and the Ronald Reagan Federal Courthouse received customized flyers to highlight alternate routes during the paving and striping operations. All these activities were also shared on the project's website, social media outlets, and with the City for their use to inform their staff and residents. Stakeholders adjacent to the PEROW were notified about ongoing activities, including pulling OCS wire on the overhead contact poles.

The outreach team met with representatives of the Santiago Lofts to discuss the sidewalk restoration adjacent to their property. The physical boundaries of the sidewalk restoration were identified to allow the new sidewalk material to blend into the existing conditions. In addition, the locations of the utility markings were noted and will be removed as part of the restoration. Outreach staff continues to provide updates to the representatives and a follow-up field walk will be scheduled April 2024.

The outreach staff participated in two Artwalk events, as well as at the Boco de Ora literary festival in Downtown Santa Ana. Staff from the diversity and construction outreach teams attended the Coffee with the Mayor event and shared information about the Project as well as other OCTA initiatives.

The Eat Shop Play program continued providing content for city electronic billboards and social media advertisements, as well as interior and exterior advertisements on OCTA's fixed-route service. Several focus groups were held in January 2024 to support the Safety Education and Public Awareness Campaign efforts. Additional feedback about safety messaging was solicited from OCTA's Teen Council participants. Input from these groups is an important element of developing and refining the materials that are shared with the community to help educate and create awareness about the Project.

Cost and Schedule

In April 2023, the Board approved a revised project budget of \$579,160,000 that assumed a November 2024 revenue service date. Staff continues to actively manage Walsh to advance construction activities to meet this date. However, given continued construction and legal challenges as previously reported to the Board, including construction quality issues, limited deployment of labor resources, and inaccurate schedule reporting, staff is re-evaluating the project schedule to determine a revised revenue service date based upon progress in the field and anticipated project risk.

As previously reported to the Board, OCTA continues to report to the FTA the risk-adjusted revenue service date of August 2025. This schedule contingency date was developed following the FTA-required risk assessment in April 2023. Staff will update the Board regarding schedule re-evaluation efforts as part of future project updates.

Next Steps

Activities in the next quarter will include installation of the OCS hardware and overhead wires, station platforms infrastructure and canopies, continued paving work, and service connections for the four-traction power substations. Staff will focus efforts and continue to communicate with Walsh to ensure significant

completion of the MSF for vehicle delivery and testing. Next steps for the remaining vehicle include finalizing vehicle equipping and inspection for Car 8. Upcoming outreach activities include ongoing coordination with the construction team and the city regarding traffic control measures that are needed for paving, new traffic signal installation, and system electrification. In addition, Outreach staff will continue to attend community events to provide project education and safety messaging.

Summary

An OC Streetcar project update covering January 2024 through March 2024 is provided for the Orange County Transportation Authority Board of Directors' review.

Attachment

- A. Project Alignment – Status of Track Installation

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