




October 2, 2023

To: Regional Transportation Planning Committee
From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer 
Subject: 2024 State Transportation Improvement Program

Overview

Every two years, the Orange County Transportation Authority develops a program of projects for funding through the State Transportation Improvement Program based on Board of Directors' approved policies and state guidelines. Project recommendations for the 2024 program are presented for Board of Directors' consideration and approval.

Recommendations

- A. Approve the 2024 State Transportation Improvement Program submittal of nine projects for \$222.33 million, from fiscal year 2024-25 through fiscal year 2028-29.
- B. Authorize staff to make all necessary amendments to the State Transportation Improvement Program and the Federal Transportation Improvement Program and execute any necessary agreements to facilitate the recommendations above.

Background

The State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is a major source of funding for transportation improvements throughout California. The STIP spans a rolling five-year period. Every two years, state and federal transportation revenues are forecasted and programmed for the new five-year period. The 2024 STIP covers the five-year period from FY 2024-25 to FY 2028-29.

A fund estimate (FE) is developed for each STIP cycle to determine funding shares for each county in California. For the 2024 STIP, Orange County's new capacity is \$71.97 million. On August 7, 2023, the Board of Directors (Board) received the 2024 STIP overview as an information item that provided more detail regarding the updates to the STIP program as well as the funding share for Orange County.

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) is responsible for developing the priorities for the STIP funding for Orange County, which is submitted to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for approval and adoption in early 2024. Consistent with the Board adoption of the Capital Programming Policies (CPP) on December 13, 2021, OCTA dedicates STIP funds for eligible transit capital, freeway, traffic system management, complete streets, commuter rail, fixed-guideway projects, as well as planning/programming and complementary activities, which seek an equitable balance among all modes and are consistent with state goals.

Discussion

The overall strategy for programming the 2024 STIP is to maintain funding for existing projects and develop a multimodal package of projects. For the 2024 STIP, several projects were considered, including freeway, managed lane, and active transportation projects, as well as transit capital improvements. The recommended projects are a high priority for OCTA, fit within the guidelines of the STIP, and serve as a balanced and multimodal approach to meet the transportation needs of Orange County. The 2024 package retains commitments to advance freeway improvements, eliminate highway chokepoints, ease the use of public transit, improve goods movement, expand the network of bicycling and walking trails, and provide for efficient rail transit operations. A map of the 2024 STIP projects is provided as Attachment A.

The OCTA 2024 STIP proposal totals \$222.33 million. This amount slightly exceeds the 2024 STIP funding target of \$210.02 million over the five-year STIP period. Per the STIP FE and guidelines, the CTC may approve and program STIP funding above the targets. OCTA is proposing to request \$12.31 million over the STIP target. If approved, the \$12.31 million will be advanced from the 2026 STIP cycle, reducing new capacity funding that might otherwise be available in the 2026 FE, but allowing Orange County to put the STIP funds toward projects earlier. A significant portion of this funding is already committed through the 2022 STIP to existing projects. The difference between what is committed and what is available is considered the “new capacity”. The 2024 STIP provides OCTA with approximately \$71.97 million in new funding capacity that can be applied to new projects.

OCTA staff is recommending the 2024 STIP as presented in the table and discussed in further detail below:

STIP Projects (\$000)	2022 STIP	2024 STIP
Carry Over and Augmented Projects		
I-5 Improvements from I-405 to Yale Avenue (Segment 1) (CON)	\$95,338	\$95,338
I-5 Improvements from SR-73 to El Toro Road (replacement planting/landscaping)	\$6,000	\$6,000
SR-74 Gap Closure and Multimodal Improvements (CON)	\$24,600	\$24,600
Digital Bus Stop Signs	\$2,500	\$2,500
Planning, Programming, and Monitoring	\$3,116	\$7,255
SR-57 Truck Climbing Lane Phase II – Lambert Road to County Line (ENV) (adding PS&E phase)	\$6,500	\$24,500
Proposed New Projects		
OC Loop - Segment A (La Habra) (CON)	\$0	\$38,233
Santa Ana - Garden Grove Rails to Trails (PS&E)	\$0	\$3,900
OC Maintenance Facility (Phase 1) (CON)	\$0	\$20,000
Total	\$138,054	\$222,326

CON – Construction
 ENV – Environmental
 I-5 – Interstate 5
 I-405 – Interstate 405
 OC – Orange County

PS&E – Plans, Specifications, and Engineering
 SR-57 – State Route 57
 SR-73 – State Route 73
 SR-74 – State Route 74

The I-5 improvements from I-405 to Yale Avenue (Segment 1), is consistent with the Measure M2 (M2) Project B commitment. The I-5 work from SR-73 to El Toro Road (Projects B and C in M2) provide for the replacement planting/landscaping associated with the mainline improvements along this stretch of I-5. These projects continue to be important to OCTA, and staff is proposing that they remain in the STIP. Additional information is included in Attachment B, which provides a brief description of each project and details of the proposed funding changes.

The SR-74 Ortega Highway Multimodal Improvement Project is another prior commitment. This project will alleviate a chokepoint in the arterial system along one of the more critical transportation links in southern Orange County and improve interregional connection. This project will improve SR-74/Ortega Highway by adding travel lanes and bicycle lanes in both directions, plus a new north-side sidewalk and reconstruction of the south-side sidewalk. This is a multimodal gap closure project and one of several key projects that have been identified that will relieve congestion in south Orange County.

Deployment of Digital Bus Stop Signs is another planned project. The project will acquire and deploy up to 143 digital bus stops to simplify use of public transit service. The project is expected to install real-time bus system information displays along major OC Bus routes 29, 43, 57, 60, 64, 66, 529, 543, and 560. The digital bus stop signs provide real-time bus arrival information, advisory information, as well as other related travel information. The goal is to overcome one of the barriers to riding the bus, by providing better and easily accessible information thus making the bus service more accessible.

The SR-57 Truck Climbing Lane Phase II is a carryover project which is proposed to receive additional STIP funds for the PS&E phase. The project is part of M2 Project G, which is included in the M2 Next 10 Delivery Plan and will complement the SR-57 Lambert Road Interchange Project currently under construction. This project will construct a truck climbing lane on the SR-57 from the Lambert Road interchange to just north of the Orange County/Los Angeles County Line. Staff is seeking approval for \$18 million in STIP for PS&E phase in FY 2028-29. Staff will return to the Board with funding recommendations for further project development phases at a later date.

OC Loop Segment A, the La Habra Rails to Trails OC Loop Gap Closure Project, is a proposed new project for 2024 STIP. The project will close a 3.1-mile gap in the OC Loop, a portion of Orange County's bicycle network, with a Class I bikeway/multi-use path along an underutilized rail line. This project completes Segment A of the OC Loop from the west La Habra city limit to Palm Street. Staff is seeking approval for \$38.23 million in STIP funds for the construction phase in FY 2027-28.

The Santa Ana – Garden Grove Rails to Trails project, otherwise known as OC Connect, is also a proposed new active transportation project for the 2024 STIP. When constructed, the project will close a 3.1-mile gap from Euclid Street in Garden Grove to Raitt Street in the City of Santa Ana and 0.85-miles along Wintersburg Channel. The objective of this funding is to prepare for the addition of a Class I non-motorized transportation facility and provide safety crossing features at approximately 13 intersections, improving safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. Staff is seeking approval for \$3.9 million in STIP funds for the PS&E phase in FY 2026-27.

The Orange County Maintenance Facility (OCMF) is a transit project being proposed for the 2024 STIP. The project is part of the Metrolink Southern California Optimized Rail Expansion program. The goal of this project is to provide for more efficient rail operation. The project allows for layover and light servicing of locomotives and rail cars in Orange County to reduce system operating costs. The OCMF will provide space and equipment to inspect, clean, and maintain locomotives and rail cars. Staff is seeking approval for \$20 million in STIP funds for the construction phase in FY 2027-28.

Attachment C provides a table that depicts the projects proposed for the 2024 STIP and is part of the submittal that will be provided to the CTC. Attachment D provides the updated Capital Funding Plan, which provides summarized funding information for all OCTA's capital projects.

Per STIP guidelines, CTC staff may request changes due to revised funding capacity or timing constraints related to the state and federal funding. As such, adjustments to the recommended program may be necessary, and staff will continue to work with the CTC, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and other appropriate agencies to ensure the projects continue to move toward the 2024 STIP adoption by spring 2024. In alignment with the State's policies, the CTC may question funding for highway and roadway capacity increasing projects even though OCTA is proposing a multimodal program and no new roadway capacity projects are recommended for the new funding capacity. Staff will keep the Board apprised if material changes are necessary.

As part of the STIP process, Caltrans submits a request for funding for the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP). Caltrans primarily submits projects that are significant for interregional transportation with a focus on interregional highways and intercity rail. Caltrans and OCTA staff have met to discuss their submittal for District 12, and their plan is to submit the I-5 Managed Lanes Project from Red Hill Avenue to the Los Angeles County Line Project. OCTA is required to identify the highest priority for our region for the ITIP from the Caltrans list of projects. The I-5 corridor continues to be a critical transportation link in Orange County and is the only project being put forth by Caltrans for ITIP funding at this time, and therefore the high priority ITIP project for Orange County.

Next Steps

With Board approval, staff will finalize and submit the 2024 STIP to the Southern California Association of Governments for quantification of regional benefits, and then to the CTC by December 15, 2023. The CTC will hold public hearings on the proposed 2024 STIP on January 25, 2024, in Northern California and on February 1, 2024, in Southern California. The CTC is expected to adopt the program on March 21-22, 2024. A 2024 STIP development schedule is included as Attachment E.

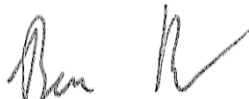
Summary

OCTA is responsible for the development and programming of the STIP for Orange County. Staff is recommending that OCTA submit nine projects for \$222.33 million in STIP funds for FY 2024-25 through FY 2028-29. The use of STIP funds for these projects supplements the local M2 Program and will provide a range of benefits to Orange County.

Attachments

- A. OCTA 2024 State Transportation Improvement Program, Proposed Projects
- B. 2024 State Transportation Improvement Program, Project Descriptions
- C. Funding Plan for 2024 STIP-Proposed Projects
- D. Capital Funding Program Report
- E. 2024 State Transportation Improvement Program Development Schedule

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