OCTA

*July 7, 2025*

***To:*** Regional Transportation Planning Committee

***From:*** Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

***Subject:*** Competitive Grant Programs – Update and Recommendations

## *Overview*

The Orange County Transportation Authority provides competitive grants to local jurisdictions and non-profit agencies beyond those provided through Measure M2 using various federal, state, and local transportation funding programs. The Orange County Transportation Authority also directly applies for federal, state, and local competitive grant programs to support Orange County Transportation Authority-led projects. Staff has prepared an overview and status update for local jurisdiction projects that have received funds, recent grant pursuits and awards for Orange County Transportation Authority projects, and recommendations for changes to grant terms for local jurisdiction projects.

## *Recommendations*

A. Approve one scope modification request from the City of Yorba Linda for the Connect Savi Ranch Project funded through the 2023 Orange County Complete Streets Program.

B. Authorize staff to request that the Southern California Association of Governments make all necessary amendments to the Federal Transportation Improvement Program.

C. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer, or his designee, to negotiate and execute any required agreements or amendments to facilitate the recommendation above.

## *Background*

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) issues periodic calls for projects (call) using non-Measure M2 (M2) federal, state, and local funds to help local jurisdictions and non-profits meet a variety of transportation needs.

The calls include the Orange County Complete Streets Program (OCCSP), Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (EMSD) Program, Pavement Management Relief Funding (PMRF) Program, Bicycle Corridor Improvement Program (BCIP), and Arterial Pavement Management (APM) Program.

OCTA typically issues a Complete Streets call, such as the OCCSP or the BCIP, every two to three years. Similarly, the EMSD is also a regular call which is issued every two to three years. The calls addressing pavement management, PMRF, and APM are issued on an ad hoc basis but have typically occurred using one-time state or federal funding at least every three to four years. Each program has a primary focus or goal, as noted in the table below.

| OCTA Program | Primary Program Goal | Program Fund Source |
|---|---|---|
| OCCSP | Support development of accessible and safe streets that accommodate a variety of transportation modes | STBG and/or CMAQ |
| EMSD | Support services provided to seniors and individuals with disabilities | Non-M2 local transit funds |
| PMRF | Support pavement management needs | Federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act Highway Infrastructure Program funds and State Highway Account funds |
| BCIP | Support the development of Orange County's bicycle network | Federal CMAQ funds |
| APM | Support pavement management needs – replaced by PMRF | Federal STBG funds |

In addition to these directly issued calls, OCTA also supports local jurisdictions pursuing federal and state earmarks or grants from state and federal sources such as the Active Transportation Program regional component through SCAG and the California Transportation Commission (CTC). OCTA may partner with local jurisdictions to seek external funds when combining multiple projects into a single application to increase the chances of being awarded.

OCTA directly competes in federal, state, and local transportation funding opportunities through various discretionary funding programs to support Board of Director's (Board)-approved priority planning, capital, and operating needs. Securing funding through these programs is consistent with the programming

policies and helps preserve M2 and more flexible local funding sources, allowing OCTA to advance a greater number of priority projects. Current priority projects, identified by the Board through approved planning documents, include the Coastal Rail Infrastructure Resiliency, the transition to Zero-Emission Bus (ZEB), Olympic Readiness projects, Metrolink Locomotive Replacement, Track and Structures, Metrolink Operations, OC Connect Garden Grove to Santa Ana Rails-to-Trails, and OC Loop. Identifying priority projects in advance of funding opportunities and securing Board approval positions OCTA to readily pursue new funding opportunities as they are made available. Every discretionary grant award is presented to the Board for formal acceptance.

### *Discussion*

Since 2010, the Board has approved $215.2 million in non-M2 local, state, and federal funds to Orange County local jurisdictions and non-profits through 11 calls. This has supported 260 transportation projects including active transportation, street rehabilitation, mobility options for seniors and individuals with disabilities, and streets and roads enhancement/landscaping activities. As of the drafting of this report, 187 projects which have received $95.4 million in non-M2 funds, are considered fully complete and closed out. The specific status of these completed projects is no longer tracked in the report. The table below reflects the status of active projects and their respective phases of work and phases of work that were completed in this reporting cycle. Currently, $119.7 million in awarded funds are supporting a total of 119 phases of work through the OCCSP, EMSD, PMRF, BCIP, and APM funding programs.

A summary of the current awarded project phases is provided in the table below, and additional details on the status of active projects are provided in Attachment A. The proposed project amendments and recommendations are consistent with all current programming requirements.

| Phase of Work/ Status | PLAN | ENV | DES | ROW | CON | Total Phases |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Planned | 0 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 58[1] | 77 |
| Started | 2 | 9 | 14 | 1 | 16[2] | 42 |
| Subtotal | 2 | 15 | 19 | 9 | 74 | 119 |
| Completed | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 24 | 24[3] |
| Total | 2 | 14 | 17 | 7 | 98 | 143 |
| *Cancelled* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

**Notes and abbreviations:**
1. Includes 14 planned EMSD Capital and 13 planned EMSD Operating projects.
2. Includes 1 Started EMSD Operating project.
3. Reflects only those project phases that were completed during this reporting cycle.

BCIP projects may have more than one phase of work.

| | |
|---|---|
| Planned – Indicates that the funds for this phase have not been obligated, or a contract has not yet been executed. | |
| Started – Indicates that the funds for this phase have been obligated or a contract has been executed. | |
| Completed – Indicates that the work related to this phase is complete. | |
| CON – Construction (Includes EMSD capital and operating projects) | |
| DES – Design | PLAN – Plan |
| ENV– Environmental | ROW – Right-of-way |

Project Amendments

Staff regularly meets with local jurisdictions to review the status of projects funded through OCTA programs. During the most recent project review, the City of Yorba Linda (Yorba Linda) requested a scope modification for the Connect Savi Ranch Project that is funded through the OCCSP, approved by the Board on November 22, 2021.

The Connect Savi Ranch Project includes a Class I multi-use path and Class IV bikeway improvements along Mirage Street, Old Canal Road, Savi Ranch Parkway, and Yorba Linda Boulevard, connecting to the Santa Ana River Trail for improved regional bicycle access. Yorba Linda has requested OCTA's approval to modify the limits of the project by removing the portion of the trail that crosses over the Santa Ana River on the Yorba Linda Boulevard bridge. This change reduces the current scope of work and defers work on the bridge segment to a future phase. The remaining improvements remain fully functional and independent, and this adjustment is intended to streamline delivery and ensure the project meets its federal construction obligation deadline. The bridge trail segment will be revisited once additional environmental and funding considerations can be addressed.

Following OCTA Board consideration, staff will recommend this project scope change through the Federal Transportation Improvement Program amendment process to SCAG. The final approval will be subject to SCAG concurrence consistent with the project selection process for CMAQ-funded projects. If this requested action is not approved, staff will report back to the Board in the next report cycle. Additional details on the requested amendment are provided in Attachment B.

Discretionary Funding Update

In February 2025, staff presented updates to the Board on OCTA grant pursuits, highlighting the submission of seven grant applications in fiscal year 2024-25 and the award of $305.7 million in awards including the following for the Coastal Rail Infrastructure Resiliency Project (Project):

- $80 million through the SB 1 (Chapter 5, Statutes of 2017) Trade Corridor Enhancement Program – CTC

- $100 million through the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program – Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)
- $125 million through the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program Cycle 7 – California Transportation Agency

Following acceptance of the CRISI Program and state awards last December, OCTA began work on Areas 1 and 2 of the Project to avoid further delays along the corridor. However, this work proceeded prior to receiving formal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) clearance and formal pre-award authority from the FRA. As a result, approximately $3.2 million in incurred costs from Area 1 may be ineligible for reimbursement. Since then, the risk to the broader Project has been reduced, as NEPA clearance has been received for Area 3. Staff is actively working with the FRA to reallocate the $3.2 million from Area 1 to support eligible costs in other areas of the Project. While some potential risk remains, ongoing coordination with the FRA is focused on securing retroactive authorization and preserving full federal funding support to minimize any impact on the delivery of the Project.

Since the February update, 11 grant applications have been submitted for a total request amount of $337.1 million from state and federal sources. These applications reflect a diverse range of priority projects across the county and include planning grants for countywide active transportation, construction funding for highway and arterial improvements, investments in ZEB, operational support for the OC Streetcar, and critical safety and rehabilitation improvements to Metrolink infrastructure. This diversified grant strategy underscores OCTA's commitment to advancing regionally significant transit, sustainability, and mobility priorities through competitive funding opportunities. A summary of these submittals and awards are provided in Attachment C.

A list of near-term OCTA priority projects targeted for funding through ongoing grant efforts is provided as Attachment D. These efforts include OCTA's continued pursuit of competitive grant opportunities to fund and advance priority projects. Staff will bring forward future grant awards for Board acceptance as necessary. The Capital Funding Program Report (Attachment E) summarizes the approved funding for projects, including OCTA-issued federal, state, and locally funded calls.

### *Summary*

Status reports on externally funded OCTA grants awards to local jurisdictions and a list of grant pursuits for OCTA priority projects are provided. Staff is recommending Board approval for a scope modification for Yorba Linda to ensure timely use of funds.

***Attachments***

A. State and Federal Grant Programs Project Status
B. Amendment Requests and Programming Updates
C. Competitive Grants Update
D. Orange County Transportation Authority Priority Project List
E. Capital Funding Program Report

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