



June 5, 2017

To: Regional Planning and Highways Committee
From: Darrell Johnson, Chief Executive Officer
Subject: 2018 Long-Range Transportation Plan Goals and Objectives

Overview

The Long-Range Transportation Plan provides Orange County's program of projects for the multi-county Regional Transportation Plan, prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments. The plan also serves a policy framework for future transportation investments in Orange County. Over the planning period for the 2018 Long-Range Transportation Plan (2015-2040), a number of factors may also influence how transportation facilities, services, and needs evolve. Key issues and proposed goals and objectives for the 2018 Long-Range Transportation Plan are presented for review.

Recommendation

Receive and file as an information item.

Background

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) is preparing the 2018 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) as input into the Southern California Association of Governments 2020 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy. The 2018 LRTP will analyze travel conditions based on a 2040 horizon year, which takes into account a ten percent growth in population and 17 percent growth in employment, based on the latest projections from the Center for Demographic Research at California State University, Fullerton. As a result of this growth, it is expected that travel demand will also increase.

OCTA currently has commitments to deliver projects that help manage travel demand and improve system efficiencies. These are being delivered primarily through the Measure M Program and public transit services. However, even with these commitments, the expected growth will likely cause a decline in system performance by 2040.

Discussion

Many factors influence travel demand and system performance beyond demographic changes and OCTA's current commitments. Several of these factors are identified as key issues for discussion in the 2018 LRTP, and they have been considered in developing proposed goals and objectives. The key issues and questions were identified and refined through an elected official workshop, a planning forum with local Planning Directors, and the OCTA Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). These key issues, along with the goals and objectives, are presented for discussion below.

Growing Traffic and Limited Land

Travel demand will continue to increase with the projected growth in population and employment. Beyond the improvements in Measure M, limitations on available right-of-way and funding reduce opportunities to add capacity to meet demand. Therefore, transportation efficiencies will need to be improved through alternatives, such as gap closure and chokepoint fixes, managed lanes, enhanced rideshare programs, and better utilization of available capacity.

New Vision for Transit

Market shifts have resulted in nationwide transit ridership declines, with ridership on OCTA buses falling 37 percent in the last seven years. To reverse this trend, OCTA is developing a new vision for transit that focuses on deploying resources in more productive areas and utilizing the most appropriate types of service to meet the needs of the traveling public. This vision will also be coordinated with local jurisdictions to better leverage existing and planned land uses that support transit ridership.

Disruptive Technologies and Services

Transportation Network Companies, autonomous vehicles, connected infrastructure, and electric vehicles are all emerging as "game changers" that will fundamentally alter the future transportation system. The transportation industry is continuously monitoring these types of disruptors to better understand how they may impact mobility, safety, and emissions. It is important to engage in these efforts so OCTA can respond quickly and efficiently to the coming changes.

Land Use and Transportation

Housing costs in Orange County have many employees commuting in from lower cost-of-living areas, or residents commuting out to higher-wage jobs, resulting in longer commutes. Coordination between OCTA and local jurisdictions on

land use and transportation strategies could help to retain the workforce and reduce automobile dependency.

Transportation Funding Uncertainties

Although funding for transit and local roads will increase with the passage of SB 1 (Chapter 5, Statutes 2017), much of the funding for regional capital projects will be competitive, which leaves a level of uncertainty for planning and delivering improvements. Return-to-source allocation of these funds would allow for more long-term planning of capital improvements. In addition, the future role of federal transportation money is unclear given reliance of the funding on general fund sources rather than user fees.

Challenging Emission Standards

The South Coast Air Basin is faced with a difficult challenge to meet federal air quality standards, along with state goals for greenhouse gas emission reductions. Additional regional planning and investment strategies may be needed to help accelerate use of zero-emission vehicles and alternative travel modes such as ridesharing, biking, and walking.

Proposed Goals and Objectives

Proposed goals and objectives are presented below. The overarching goals are consistent with the previous LRTP, while the objectives for achieving those goals respond to the key issues discussed above. Together, the goals and objectives are intended to help guide policy recommendations and investment priorities within the 2018 LRTP.

- 1) Deliver on Commitments
 - a. Prioritize Measure M investments
 - b. Maintain consistency with the Next 10 Plan
 - c. Maximize external funds to support Measure M and complementary investments
- 2) Improve System Performance
 - a. Deploy transit resources in a cost-effective manner
 - b. Improve efficiency of highways¹ and roadways
 - c. Leverage emerging technologies and services
- 3) Expand System Choices
 - a. Deploy on-demand transit service and rideshare options
 - b. Support improved connectivity for active transportation
 - c. Explore public/private partnerships for new transportation capacity

¹ Freeways and toll facilities.

- 4) Support Sustainability
 - a. Deliver a financially constrained LRTP and identify opportunities to reduce funding uncertainty
 - b. Explore environmental and emission reduction strategies

It is also important to keep in mind that major travel and trade corridors within Orange County are generally shared by adjacent counties. Implications of inter-county projects and studies within these corridors will be acknowledged and considered in development of the 2018 LRTP.

Ongoing Outreach

Outreach activities are underway, which have focused on the key issues discussed above. Additional events are being planned over the summer and into 2018 to further engage elected officials, local Planning Directors, and OCTA's CAC. A public survey is also in development and will be made available over the summer. More opportunities for public input will be provided throughout the development of the LRTP and with the eventual release of a draft 2018 LRTP in 2018.

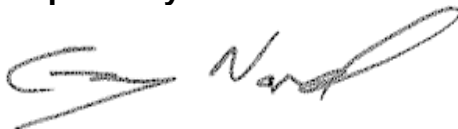
Summary

Travel demand in Orange County is expected to increase with population and employment growth. Measure M, OCTA transit services, and other committed investments help to address this travel demand. However, additional improvements must be explored in order to address issues impacting transportation. To help guide policy recommendations and investment priorities within the 2018 LRTP that address these issues, a series of goals and objectives are being proposed.

Attachment

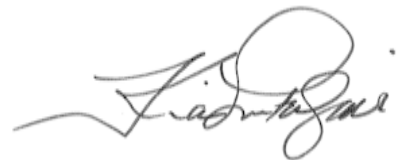
None.

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