



February 8, 2018

To: Transit Committee

From: Darrell Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: Transit Master Plan – Draft Final Plan and Action Plan

Overview

The Transit Master Plan, also known as the OC Transit Vision, is a 20-year integrated bus, rail, and paratransit plan for enhancing and expanding public transit service in Orange County. This plan identifies future potential transit corridor studies and recommended changes to existing transit service. The draft final plan and action plan have been developed for Board of Directors consideration.

Recommendation

Direct staff to consider OC Transit Vision Action Plan in the upcoming Long-Range Transportation Plan process, and return to the Board of Directors with an update as part of the draft 2018 Long-Range Transportation Plan.

Background

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) initiated the Transit Master Plan (Plan) in summer 2016. This process takes a high-level look at long-term transit needs throughout Orange County, and recommends a series of corridors suitable for additional transit improvement. In addition, the Plan will guide future recommendations for fixed-route bus service and innovative mobility strategies. Projects identified in the Plan will be considered in the OCTA Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and position OCTA for upcoming transit funding opportunities.

Discussion

The draft Transit Master Plan Summary Report (Attachment A) is the culmination of the work completed over the last 18 months. The process included regular updates to, and input from, the OCTA Citizens Advisory Committee,

Transit Committee, and Board of Directors (Board). The general public and stakeholders were also interviewed and surveyed along the way, and their input is reflected in the Plan.

The first step was the “State of OC Transit” report, which provided the existing conditions for the transit system. Next, the “Transit Investment Framework” used the project goals and objectives to develop recommendations for when and where to invest transit capital and operating funds. During the next step, 30 “Transit Opportunity Corridors” were identified and evaluated throughout Orange County to determine where transit capital investments would make the most technical sense. In addition to the corridor recommendations, recommendations for transit service improvements in other areas of Orange County have also been included. The draft summary report provides an overview of the process and recommendations. The full draft Plan report is available on the project website at octransitvision.com.



Staff presented draft plan recommendations to the OCTA Board in November 2017. There were three specific topics the Board discussed, which staff has considered when developing the final recommendations. These included connections between the Anaheim Resort and John Wayne Airport, connections between Orange County and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) rail system, and geographic equity of the Plan recommendations. The areas topics are discussed further in the following paragraphs, including additional recommendations for the action plan.

Connecting John Wayne Airport to the Anaheim Resort

The private sector currently provides the best option for tourists to quickly connect between John Wayne Airport and the Anaheim Resort using a shared-ride service. The “Disneyland Express” provides direct bus service between John Wayne Airport and many of the hotels in the resort area. Though this is a convenient option, the \$35 round-trip fare can leave some budget conscious tourists looking for more affordable options, including public transportation.

The Plan proposes a “Westminster Avenue-Bristol Street” line which would connect the John Wayne Airport to the upcoming OC Streetcar. This could provide a one-transfer connection to the Anaheim Resort via Bravo! or future streetcar extension to the resort. As this is a long-term plan recommendation, staff also considered shorter term ways to connect the airport that would not directly compete with the Disneyland Express service.

The best option may be providing a better connection between the existing OCTA bus line on Main Street and John Wayne Airport's parking lot shuttle. Staff will look into this further and discuss options with airport staff.

Connecting Orange County to Los Angeles Metro Rail

As the Metro rail system continues to expand, the "Eastside Phase 2" and the "West Santa Ana Branch" projects are planned to have stations close to the Orange County border. As part of the Plan, connections to these projects were evaluated during the Transit Opportunity Corridor process. The initial findings were that these connections scored lower overall than the ten corridors included in the final Plan. The evaluation was based on existing demographics and land-use in La Habra and along the Pacific Electric Right-of-Way in Orange County, which were not forecast to have the highest transit ridership.

Both Metro projects are in the environmental phase of development. The planned opening date for the Eastside Phase 2 project is currently 2035 and the West Santa Ana Branch is 2041. The Metro Board is considering accelerating these projects to open by the Summer Olympics in 2028 if feasible. Staff recommends working with Metro on a cross-county, multi-modal study to look at transportation improvements for the Summer Olympics and beyond. This study would include additional analysis of bus and rail connections between Los Angeles and Orange County. The recommendation from this study and any changes to the Metro project delivery schedule would be brought back to the OCTA Board for consideration and potential inclusion in future Plan updates.

Regional Coverage

The Transit Opportunity Lines are recommended for areas which justify the higher level of capital and operating investment required for high-capacity transit. Attachment B shows current annual fixed-route boardings by city and the number of Transit Opportunity Lines proposed in the Plan. In general, the cities with the highest transit ridership would have the most lines, and 20 of 34 cities would have at least one line.

In areas of Orange County not recommended for Transit Opportunity Lines, there are recommendations in the Plan to provide additional public transit service which better meet the needs in these communities. These include:

- Project V community circulator and seasonal services,
- Expansion of OC Vanpool Program,
- Improved frequencies on higher-ridership bus routes, and
- OC Flex micro-transit service.

Another recommendation is to refresh the Plan every four years, which would give an opportunity to revisit the corridor recommendations based on changes to land-use and demographics throughout Orange County.

Public and Stakeholder Feedback

The OC Transit Vision recommendations survey was conducted from November 17 to December 31, 2017 to collect feedback on the draft Transit Opportunity Lines and recommendations. Nearly 1,000 survey responses were received through online and in-person surveying at community events and major transit hubs.

When asked to rank the most important Transit Opportunity Lines, transit riders ranked Interstate 5 (I-5), Main Street, Beach Boulevard, State Route 55 (SR-55), and Westminster Avenue-Bristol Street the highest. Non-riders prioritized the I-5, Beach Boulevard, Harbor Boulevard, SR-55, and La Palma Avenue-Lincoln Avenue the highest. There was limited support for the McFadden Avenue-Bolsa Street and Chapman Avenue corridors.

The survey also asked about priorities for transit improvements outside of the Transit Opportunity Lines. More Metrolink service was most commonly selected as a top priority across all user groups, with 40 percent of respondents choosing this option. Other top priorities for transit riders included more bus service, more express service, special event service, and shared on-demand service. Non-riders also prioritized more bus service, vanpools, special event service, and shared on-demand service. Complete survey results are available on the project website.

Action Plan and Next Steps

The project team has developed an action plan and next steps for the Plan, which are divided into short, medium, and long-term recommendations. Attachment C outlines these recommendations in detail. The staff recommendations are to continue or start implementation of the short-term recommendations listed below:

- Implement OC Flex Microtransit Pilot in Bolsa-Dorado and Aliso-Mission zones (2018),
- Issue Project V call for projects for seasonal, special event, and year-round community transit services (2018),
- Develop and implement strategies for incremental improvements to existing and future Rapid Bus (Bravo!) routes (2018-2019),
- Analyze regional bus-rail connections as part of the upcoming Los Angeles–Orange County Transportation Study (2018-2019),

- Conduct Transit Corridor Study of Bristol Street from initial OC Streetcar alignment to South Coast Metro area (2018-2020),
- Implement Beach Boulevard Rapid Bus (2019),
- Expand OC Flex (2019, pending successful pilot),
- Conduct freeway BRT Network Study (2019-2020),
- Begin operations of initial OC Streetcar service and implement Bus-Rail Interface Plan (2020),
- Improve service on major, local, and community routes to meet Transit Investment Framework Guidelines (ongoing, as resources are available).

These and the medium and long-term recommendations (as well as short-term) are being considered for inclusion in the LRTP. This process will help determine which projects are feasible to be included in the LRTP's financially constrained project list.

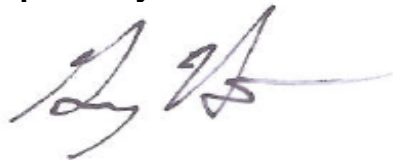
Summary

This report provides an overview of the draft Plan and action plan for Board consideration. Staff is seeking Board direction to implement the short-term recommendations and include the medium and long-term recommendations in the upcoming LRTP.

Attachments

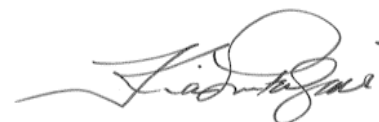
- A. OC Transit Vision, Summary Report
- B. City Transit Ridership and Transit Opportunity Lines
- C. OC Transit Vision, Action Plan and Next Steps

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