



October 11, 2018

To: Transit Committee
From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer
Subject: 2019 Project W Safe Stops Call for Projects

Overview

Measure M2 Project W provides funding for passenger amenities at the 100 busiest bus stops in Orange County. Board of Directors approval is requested to update the Comprehensive Transportation Funding Guidelines and to authorize a second Project W allocation. This effort will include working with eligible local agencies to develop and refine a list of projects that could potentially be funded by a second Project W allocation.

Recommendations

- A. Approve proposed revisions to Chapter 3 (Project W section) of the Comprehensive Transportation Funding Programs Guidelines.
- B. Approve making \$3 million in Measure M2 Project W funds available for a second funding allocation.
- C. Direct staff to work with eligible local agencies and to return with Project W funding recommendations in early 2019.

Background

Measure M2 (M2) Project W provides funding for passenger amenities at the 100 busiest bus stops in Orange County. In 2014, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Board of Directors (Board) authorized Project W's first allocation of \$1.5 million dollars. Funds were apportioned to locally-initiated bus stop improvement projects and to support regional technology improvements in order to enhance the overall transit experience (Attachment A).

To date, 43 of these improvements have either been completed or are nearing completion. In anticipation of Board authorization of a second Project W allocation, updates to the Comprehensive Transportation Funding Guidelines (Guidelines) have been developed (Attachment B). A discussion of pertinent Guidelines updates and next steps is provided (Attachment C).

Discussion

During summer 2018, OCTA initiated a review of Project W Guidelines to determine areas that needed to be adjusted and/or updated. The review focused upon issues and lessons learned from the 2014 allocation process. It also included input from local agencies and OCTA departments. Proposed changes were relatively minor. Key applicable components of the Guidelines include the following:

- Eligible projects include passenger waiting amenities at the 100 busiest bus stops in Orange County (Attachment D). Examples include shelters/shade structures, seating leaning/fixtures, waste receptacles, ad displays, lighting, solar panels, and other amenities. Ineligible elements include right-of-way acquisition, planning, maintenance, electricity (on-going charges or connections for non-passenger amenities and non-OCTA uses), and construction support.
- Eligible jurisdictions: 15 agencies
 - The listing of the 100 busiest bus stops excludes bus stops that were improved by the previous 2014 allocation. It should also be noted that bus stops where local agencies and OCTA have concurred that no improvement is needed will be removed from the list when final programming recommendations are approved by the Board.
- Funding: \$3 million in M2 Project W funds are available and proposed for a Board-approved 2019 allocation.
 - Up to \$1,000 in design funds are available per stop, subject to a dollar-for-dollar match. Other eligible activities would not require matching funds.
- Funding caps: \$35,000 for high-load bus stops and \$20,000 for normal-load bus stops.
 - High-load bus stops are defined as bus stops where eight or more passengers are waiting to board for an average of five minutes or more.

Next Steps

Upon Board approval of proposed updates to the Guidelines and authorization to initiate a second Project W allocation, in an amount not to exceed \$3 million, staff will work with local agencies to develop potential funding recommendations.

These efforts will include working with local agencies and the OCTA Operations Division to complete, as necessary, a needs assessment for the 100 busiest bus stops¹. The assessment will focus on several key consideration factors, generally including the following components (Attachment E):

- Current age of bus stop amenities;
- Current bus stop conditions;
- Types of improvements needed at bus stops;
- Ridership demand; and
- Other priority factors that enhance the overall transit experience by providing improved safety and convenience.

These factors, in addition to funding and eligibility requirements specified in the Guidelines, will then be used to screen and prioritize proposed funding recommendations. Once consensus (with eligible local agencies) on a final list of recommended improvements has been achieved, staff will return to the Board (in early 2019) to seek approval of final programming recommendations.

Summary

In anticipation of a second Project W allocation, staff has reviewed, and is recommending, proposed changes to the Guidelines. If these changes are approved and a second Project W allocation is authorized, staff will begin working with local agencies to identify needs at the 100 busiest bus stops in Orange County, as appropriate. This assessment will serve as the basis for future recommendations for a prioritized list of programming recommendations.

¹ Several OCTA-owned facilities are included in Attachment C, which makes them eligible for potential M2 Project W allocations. There is no funding “carve-out” for OCTA facilities. As such, OCTA would be required to complete the same application and evaluation processes as local agencies.

Attachments

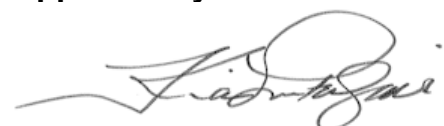
- A. Top Ridership Stops Improved with 2014 Project W Allocation
- B. Updated Comprehensive Transportation Funding Programs Guidelines Excerpt – Chapter 3
- C. 2019 Measure M Project W Allocation Process Summary and Comparison
- D. Draft Top 100 Ridership Stops (Not Already Improved Under Project W)
- E. Orange County Transportation Authority M2 Project W – Safe Transit Stops, Draft Needs Assessment Survey

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