



**September 5, 2019**

**To:** Regional Planning and Highways Committee

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

**Subject:** Interstate 405 Improvement Project Update

### **Overview**

The Orange County Transportation Authority is currently underway with the implementation of the Interstate 405 Improvement Project. This report provides a project update.

### **Recommendation**

Receive and file as an information item.

### **Background**

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), in cooperation with the California Department of Transportation, and the cities of Costa Mesa, Fountain Valley, Huntington Beach, Seal Beach, and Westminster, is implementing the Interstate 405 (I-405) Improvement Project between State Route 73 (SR-73) and Interstate 605 (I-605) (Project). The Project will add one general purpose lane from Euclid Street to I-605, consistent with Measure M2 Project K, and will add an additional lane in each direction that will combine with the existing high-occupancy vehicle lane to provide dual express lanes in each direction of I-405 from SR-73 to I-605, otherwise known as the 405 Express Lanes.

On November 14, 2016, the OCTA Board of Directors (Board) awarded the design-build (DB) contract to OC 405 Partners (OC405), a joint venture. OCTA executed the DB contract with OC405 and issued Notice to Proceed (NTP) No. 1 on January 31, 2017. NTP No. 1 was a limited NTP for mobilization, design, and administrative activities. On July 26, 2017, the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan agreement was executed between OCTA and the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT). On July 27, 2017, OCTA issued NTP No. 2 to OC405. NTP No. 2 was a full NTP for all activities, including construction.

***Discussion***

A number of activities are ongoing as the final design, right-of-way (ROW) acquisition, utility relocations, and construction activities continue to advance. The following provides a more detailed status of Project activities.

**Financing and TIFIA Loan**

On July 26, 2017, OCTA executed a TIFIA loan agreement with the USDOT for up to \$628.93 million. Pursuant to the terms identified in the loan agreement, OCTA staff submits periodic reimbursement requisitions to the USDOT Build America Bureau and Federal Highway Administration. OCTA has received two TIFIA loan disbursements to date and anticipates receiving the third disbursement in September 2020.

**Tolling Contracts**

On February 26, 2018, the Board selected Kapsch TrafficCom USA, Inc., (Kapsch) to provide toll lanes system integration services for design, installation, operation, and maintenance of the electronic toll and traffic management system on both the 405 and 91 Express Lanes. Kapsch is currently under contract and is working closely with the design-builder to deliver fully functional express lanes upon opening in 2023.

Staff has initiated the development of a request for proposals for the back office support and customer service center contract for the 405 Express Lanes, and plans to seek Board approval for its release in early 2020.

**Design**

The final design is approximately 85 percent complete overall and is anticipated to be fully complete in early 2020.

**ROW Acquisition**

Construction of the Project impacts 288 properties, including 179 residential properties, 71 commercial/industrial properties, 37 public properties, and one railroad property. There are 287 properties identified as partial acquisitions and one property identified as a full acquisition at the owner's request. The real property requirements for the partial acquisitions are comprised of a combination of fee acquisitions, permanent easements, temporary construction easements (TCE), permanent and temporary ground lease reductions, and access control rights needed to construct the proposed highway and express

lane improvements for the Project. The full-fee acquisition, partial-fee acquisitions, permanent easements, and TCEs are required for roadway and bridge construction, soundwalls and retaining walls, drainage systems, and for the installation of above-ground and underground facilities, including electrical, telecommunication, water, sewer, gas, and storm drain systems.

The ROW acquisition program is currently on schedule. Of the 288 total parcels impacted, the following summarizes the status of the ROW acquisition:

- 288 offers presented,
- 269 agreements or possession (93 percent of 288 total parcels impacted),
- 60 resolutions of necessity approved.

#### Utility Relocations

There are currently 107 utilities that require relocation to accommodate the Project. OCTA is coordinating with 22 impacted utility companies to identify and resolve conflicts and relocation issues. There are several utility relocation risks, including Frontier Communication, Crimson and Chevron oil lines, and Southern California Edison facilities for which staff continues to develop and implement mitigation plans, as utilities are a shared risk between OCTA and OC405.

#### Construction

OC405 began construction on March 6, 2018. Initial construction activities included restriping portions of the freeway and setting up concrete barriers on the outside of the freeway to protect work areas for activities such as tree removals and grading. These initial construction activities are generally complete. Clearing and grubbing, including tree and ground cover removal, and rough grading activities have also advanced in the last quarter.

Significant roadway construction activities, including installation of drainage systems, retaining walls, and paving operations began earlier this year. Construction at Oceanview Channel, a major drainage facility that crosses under the freeway, has commenced. Additionally, over 20 walls are under construction at this time as well.

Construction of the Slater Avenue overcrossing bridge and approaching local roadways was recently completed. The Slater Avenue bridge was the first new bridge opened to traffic. Construction on the McFadden Avenue overcrossing bridge also continues, and is anticipated to be open to traffic in late summer of 2020. Both Slater Avenue and McFadden Avenue are one-stage bridges, which means the bridges are closed to traffic on both sides of I-405 during demolition and reconstruction.

Significant bridge construction also continued at Fairview Road, Magnolia Street, Goldenwest Street, and Bolsa Chica Road overcrossings. These are two-stage bridges, which means traffic will be maintained on the remaining portion of the bridge while the first half of the new bridge is constructed.

Construction began in the last several months at the Bolsa Avenue and Westminster Boulevard overcrossing bridges, both of which are two-stage bridges. Construction also began recently on the Santa Ana River bridge and the Harbor Boulevard overcrossing bridge. Construction at Santa Ana River and Harbor Boulevard consists of widening the existing freeway bridge over both of those facilities.

Looking ahead, the remainder of 2019 will remain busy related to bridge and wall construction. Now that the new Slater Avenue bridge is open to traffic, construction is anticipated to begin on the Talbert Avenue and Bushard Street overcrossing bridges. Both Talbert Avenue and Bushard Street are one-stage bridges, which means the bridges will be closed to traffic on both sides of I-405 during demolition and reconstruction. Additionally, the widening of three existing freeway bridges over Beach Boulevard, Bolsa overhead railroad crossing, and an old Navy railroad crossing is anticipated to begin in the next few months.

### Project Challenges

As would be expected on a project of this magnitude, certain challenges have been encountered, including the following:

- Oversight and approvals from many different agencies and third parties
- Cost and availability of construction resources in this active construction market
- Change management
- Minimizing impacts and disruptions to the public
- Schedule impacts and mitigations

OCTA has worked closely with its partners and OC405 to mitigate schedule impacts when identified. Schedule mitigations implemented to date include building the Slater Avenue and Edwards Street overcrossing bridges in one stage instead of two stages, improvements to the construction staging at Oceanview Channel, and the long-term closure of one of the two off-ramps from northbound I-405 to Westminster Boulevard. Other future schedule mitigations include the potential for longer ramp closure durations and extended nightly lane closure durations in order to increase the productivity of the contractor. These types of schedule mitigations are intended to maintain the original Project completion date and will be balanced with minimizing traffic impacts. OCTA staff is also focused on the other Project challenges as well.

### Project Cost/Contingency

The overall Project cost remains \$1.9 billion, and the Project contingencies have been approximately 30 percent expended to date. This is in line with the percent complete for the Project from both a time and earned value standpoint.

### Public Outreach

Over the last several months, in addition to communicating with the public about major construction activities such as bridge demolition and pile driving, the Outreach team has turned its focus to residents living along the freeway with backyard walls being rebuilt as part of the Project. These sensitive activities have required a substantial effort to ensure the impact to residents is minimized wherever possible. The Outreach team took a comprehensive and methodical approach to communicating with residents in multiple languages about temporary fence installation to ensure the safety of residents and pets. In addition, the team has facilitated nearly 100 preconstruction surveys where properties might be affected by wall construction, with dozens more scheduled.

Since April 2019, the Outreach team also has hosted three additional neighborhood meetings to apprise residents of construction at the Santa Ana River bridge, the Talbert Avenue and Bushard Street overcrossing bridges, and at soundwall locations. The team continues to find cost-effective ways to communicate about activities such as bridge and wall demolition, pile driving, and freeway closures. The team canvassed flyers in English, Vietnamese, and Spanish to nearly 110,000 addresses, reached more than a half-million people on social media through promoted posts, and emailed more than 10,000 recipients weekly with a construction update. In addition, there continues to be strong growth in the use of the Project's interactive map of closures and detours that is integrated with Waze, with an increase in monthly unique users of 156 percent (1,345 to 3,448) from April to June 2019. Nearly 600 users have downloaded the Project mobile app, up from 89 in March 2019. Meanwhile, the team continues to average about 110 inquiries a month from residents and business owners regarding the Project.

The Outreach team participated in a half-dozen community events, from festivals in Westminster and Rossmore to Fountain Valley's Summerfest and the Taste of Huntington Beach. Project updates were provided to key stakeholders such as the OC Fair & Events Center and Westminster Mall, presentations were made to the Irvine Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee, OCTA's Diverse Community Leaders Committee, several service organizations, and site visits to the Slater Avenue bridge were facilitated for members of the Fountain Valley City Council. Last month, completion of the Slater Avenue bridge was highlighted with a community event, which was well attended.

In the coming months, the Outreach team will focus on an enhanced safety awareness campaign and expanded outreach in diverse communities, including face-to-face meetings with faith-based groups, coordination with social media influencers in the community to share Project information, “insider” tours led by Project team members that reflect the ethnic communities along the Project corridor, and participation in cultural youth group events.

**Next Steps**

Staff will continue to work closely with the design-builder as design and construction continue. This involves completing portions of the final design, obtaining permits, utility relocation coordination, and construction activities. Additionally, the ROW acquisition program will continue as planned.

**Summary**

Final design and construction continue to advance. Currently, final design, ROW acquisition, public outreach, and other activities are in process to continue the construction phase of the Project.

**Attachment**

None.

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