



August 2, 2021

To: Regional Planning and Highways Committee

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer  For

Subject: Comprehensive Transportation Funding Programs – Project X
Tier 1 Fiscal Year 2021-22 Call for Projects Programming
Recommendations

Overview

The Orange County Transportation Authority's Environmental Cleanup Program provides Measure M2 funding for water quality improvement projects to abate transportation-related pollution. The fiscal year 2021-22 Tier 1 Grant Program call for projects was issued on February 8, 2021. The evaluations are complete, and a list of projects recommended for funding is presented for review and approval.

Recommendation

Approve ten projects in the amount of \$2,697,424 for the 2021 Environmental Cleanup Program Tier 1 call for projects.

Background

In May 2010, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Board of Directors (Board) approved a two-tiered approach to fund the Measure M2 (M2) Project X Environmental Cleanup Program (ECP). The Tier 1 Grant Program is designed to mitigate the more visible forms of pollutants, such as litter and debris, which collect on roadways and in catch basins (i.e., storm drains) prior to being deposited in waterways and the ocean. The Tier 2 Grant Program provides funding for larger (i.e., treating catchment areas of 50 acres or greater) potentially multijurisdictional, capital-intensive structural treatment best management practice (BMP) types of projects.

Tier 1 funds are made available through a competitive call for projects (call) to Orange County local jurisdictions to purchase equipment and provide upgrades to existing catch basins and other related BMPs that supplement current requirements. Examples include screens, filters, and inserts for catch basins, as well as other devices designed to remove the above-mentioned pollutants.

Proposed projects must demonstrate a direct nexus to the reduction of transportation-related pollution, as developed and defined by the OCTA Environmental Cleanup Allocation Committee (ECAC).

To date, the Board has approved funding for 189 Tier 1 projects, totaling approximately \$27.4 million. It is estimated that nearly 33 million gallons of trash have been captured since the inception of the ECP in 2011. On February 8, 2021, the Board approved the issuance of the current fiscal year 2021-22 ECP Tier 1 call, making available up to \$2.8 million to support an 11th call. OCTA publicized the call on numerous occasions with the OCTA Technical Advisory Committee. Staff also presented a guidelines update and call overview to the Orange County Stormwater National Pollution Discharge Elimination System General Permittees committee meeting in March.

Discussion

The 2021 ECP Tier 1 call deadline to submit applications was May 6, 2021. Eleven applications were submitted from ten local jurisdictions. All applications were reviewed and evaluated by an application review committee consisting of OCTA staff, the ECAC Chairman, and an additional member of the ECAC. Project applications were evaluated based on the following Board-approved selection criteria:

- Project need and proposed benefit to water quality;
- Cost/benefit analyses;
- Pollution-reducing benefits;
- Effectiveness of the proposed BMP;
- Evaluation of other BMP types;
- Efficiency/effectiveness of the proposed BMP;
- Project readiness;
- Secondary attributes;
- Proposed methodology for measuring pollution-reduction benefits after installation; and
- Adequacy of proposed operations and maintenance plans.

On July 8, 2021, the ECAC met and endorsed the scoring committee's conclusions and recommended that the ten projects identified in Attachment A be submitted for Board consideration and approval. If this recommendation is approved by the Board, it would result in a total of \$2,697,424 in M2 Project X Tier I funding.

The recommended projects met overall program objectives and scored well in terms of satisfying the evaluation criteria requirements listed above. The one eligible project that is not currently recommended for funding also met these requirements. However, it was the lowest-scoring project and there was not sufficient remaining programming capacity to fully fund this project. Accordingly, this applicant is encouraged to work with OCTA to update its application and reapply in a future call.

Attachment A includes project-specific information, final scores, and recommended award amounts. A brief overview of the project types that are recommended for funding is provided below. Attachment B provides visual samples of recommended project unit types.

- Catch basin debris screen devices: These devices prevent debris from entering the storm drain system through catch basins and primarily consist of connector pipe screen, automatic retractable screen, full trash capture, and grated inlet trash screen types of devices.
- A debris separating baffle box is an advanced stormwater treatment system utilizing a non-clogging screen technology and hydrodynamic separation to capture pollutants. The non-clogging screening system stores trash and debris in a dry state, suspended above sedimentation chambers, thereby allowing for easier maintenance.
- An in-line trash trap unit is a precast concrete structure designed to treat pollutants present in stormwater and urban runoff through the capturing of trash, solids, and floatable debris in disposable mesh nets from incoming flows. The design of the in-line trash trap unit effectively uses the energy of water flow to drive pollutants into nets in order to capture and separate trash, debris, and sediment, including all particles larger than one millimeter. Oil-absorbing material can also be placed inside or outside the nets in order to absorb oil sheen and grease.
- Bioretention basins are landscaped depressions or shallow basins used to slow and treat stormwater runoff. Stormwater is directed to the basin and then percolates through the system where it is treated by several physical, chemical, and biological processes. The cleaned water is then able to infiltrate native soils or can be directed to nearby stormwater drains or receiving waters.

Also, as part of this program, local agencies must agree to contribute a minimum match of 20 percent of total project costs. All the recommended projects met this requirement and are recommended for programming approval.

Next Steps

If these programming recommendations are approved by the Board, each agency that is awarded funding will be required to execute a letter amendment to their Comprehensive Transportation Funding Programs (CTFP) master agreement prior to project implementation. OCTA will then monitor project status and implementation through the CTFP semi-annual review process.

Summary

OCTA, in conjunction with local agencies, implements projects that support water quality improvements related to transportation infrastructure. Staff is seeking Board approval to program \$2,697,424 in ECP funds to ten local agency projects. The improvement includes 1,350 connector pipe screens units, 670 automatic retractable screens devices, seven full trash capture units, one grated inlet trash screen unit, one debris separating baffle box, one in-line trash trap unit, and one bioretention basin.

Attachments

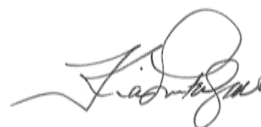
- A. Project X 2021 Tier 1 Call for Projects, Programming Recommendations
- B. Visual Samples of Recommended Best Management Practice Project Types*

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