



September 2, 2021

To: Regional Planning and Highways Committee

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: Grant Awards for the Garden Grove-Santa Ana Rails-to-Trails Gap Closure and Bus Stop Safety and Accessibility Study

Overview

The Orange County Transportation Authority was awarded \$3,000,000 for the Garden Grove-Santa Ana Rails-to-Trails Gap Closure through the statewide Active Transportation Program, and \$300,000 for the Bus Stop Safety and Accessibility Study through the regional Sustainable Communities Program. To utilize these grants, Board of Directors' approval is requested to accept the awards and enter into agreements with the granting agencies.

Recommendations

- A. Adopt Orange County Transportation Authority Resolution No. 2021-071 and authorize the Chief Executive Officer, or designee, to accept the Active Transportation Program \$3,000,000 grant award and execute required grant-related agreements with the California Department of Transportation and California Transportation Commission.
- B. Adopt Orange County Transportation Authority Resolution No. 2021-072 and authorize the Chief Executive Officer, or designee, to accept the Sustainable Communities Program \$300,000 grant award and execute grant-related agreements with the Southern California Association of Governments.
- C. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer, or designee, to amend the Federal Transportation Improvement Program and process all necessary amendments to facilitate the recommendations above.

Background

The state Active Transportation Program (ATP) was created to encourage increased use of active modes of transportation, such as walking and bicycling. On March 25, 2020, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) issued a statewide competitive call for projects (call), which made approximately \$450 million available in federal and state funding in fiscal year (FY) 2021-22 through FY 2024-25. In response, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) submitted the Garden Grove-Santa Ana Rails-to-Trails Gap Closure application requesting \$3,000,000. The concept for a multi-use path along the Pacific Electric corridor emerged through the 2019 OC Active plan development process that was conducted in collaboration with all Orange County local jurisdictions and supported through extensive public outreach effort. The development of the multi-use path also complements the use of this corridor for transit purposes.

The regional Sustainable Communities Program (SCP) is intended to increase rates of walking and bicycling, promote traffic safety, and expand opportunities for multimodal transportation options. On September 8, 2020, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) issued a call for the SCP Active Transportation and Safety (AT&S) Program, which made approximately \$5 million available in FY 2020-21. In response, OCTA submitted the Bus Stop Safety and Accessibility Study (Study) application requesting \$300,000.

Discussion

Garden Grove-Santa Ana Rails-to-Trails Study

OCTA submitted the Garden Grove-Santa Ana Rails-to-Trails Gap Closure for consideration of funding through the statewide ATP Cycle 5 call on September 15, 2020. The grant application was developed with the support of the cities of Garden Grove, Santa Ana, and the County of Orange Flood Control District (attachments D, E, and F). The project was awarded \$3,000,000 for the project approval and environmental document phase by the CTC on June 23, 2021.

The project will complete environmental assessment and public outreach, which will support the possible future construction of an approximately four-mile trail along the OCTA-owned Pacific Electric Right-of-Way in the cities of Garden Grove and Santa Ana. The implementation phases of the project are expected to be handled by the cities of Garden Grove and Santa Ana.

The project was identified in OCTA's West/Central Orange County Regional Bikeways Strategy, both cities' master plans, and the City of Santa Ana's 2019 Active Transportation Plan. This multi-use path will result in connecting downtown Garden Grove to downtown Santa Ana, and provide a connection to the Santa Ana River Trail, and is part of the 66-mile countywide OC Loop bicycle trail. This trail will provide a connection to much of Orange County and some of Los Angeles County, with over 20 transit stops conveniently located to allow for farther connections. Currently, surrounding residents and businesses have no immediate access to a bikeway safely located away from vehicles.

Study

The Study was submitted for consideration through the SCAG SCP AT&S on December 11, 2020. On May 6, 2021, the SCAG Regional Council awarded \$300,000 to the Study for the development of recommendations for pedestrian accessibility and safety improvements in the areas surrounding the OCTA bus stops with the highest ridership in Orange County.

The Study will result in recommended improvements for at least 41 stops providing service to 12,500 daily riders in the cities of Anaheim, Costa Mesa, Garden Grove, and Santa Ana. The plan will incorporate earlier plans and will focus on details for project implementation and provide recommendations to address localized access and safety needs. The report, in turn, can help the respective local agencies implement the improvements as appropriate.

Fiscal Impact

The studies were approved by the Board in OCTA's FY 2021-22 Budget under Account No. 1531-7519-A4530-0QC and 1531-7519-A4530-0QA.

Next Steps

Following the execution of the CTC ATP and SCAG SCP AT&S grants, staff will coordinate with the California Department of Transportation and CTC to proceed with project delivery. Staff will also follow OCTA's procurement process to award professional services contracts by winter 2021.

Summary

The Orange County Transportation Authority was awarded \$3,300,000 to support the development of the Garden Grove-Santa Ana Rails-to-Trails Gap Closure (\$3,000,000) and the Bus Stop Safety and Accessibility Study (\$300,000). Board of Directors' authorization is requested to accept the awards from the California Transportation Commission and the Southern California Association of Governments, and to negotiate and execute grant-related agreements and documents with the California Department of Transportation, the California Transportation Commission, and the Southern California Association of Governments, as appropriate.

Attachments

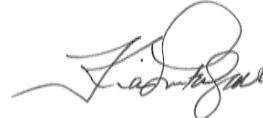
- A. Resolution No. 2020-071 of the Orange County Transportation Authority, 2020-21 Active Transportation Program Grant Authorization
- B. Resolution No. 2020-072 of the Orange County Transportation Authority, 2020-21 Sustainable Communities Grant Program Authorization
- C. Active Transportation Program Term Sheet, Project Baseline Agreement
- D. Letter from Mayor Steven R. Jones, City of Garden Grove, to Mr. Mitchell Weiss, Executive Director, California Transportation Commission, Subject: Garden Grove – Santa Ana Rails-to-Trail Gap Closure Project Active Transportation Program Cycle 5 – Large Infrastructure Application, Dated August 18, 2020
- E. Letter from Mayor Miguel A. Pulido, City of Santa Ana, to Mr. Mitchell Weiss, Executive Director, California Transportation Commission, Subject: Garden Grove – Santa Ana Rails-to-Trails Gap Closure Project Active Transportation Program Cycle 5 – Large Infrastructure Application, Dated August 20, 2020
- F. Letter from Nardy Khan, P.E., Deputy Director, OC Public Works, to Mr. Mitch Weiss, Executive Director, California Transportation Commission, Subject: Garden Grove – Santa Ana Rails-to-Trail Gap Closure Project Active Transportation Program Cycle 5 – Large Infrastructure Application, Dated September 1, 2020

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