



October 7, 2024

To: Regional Transportation Planning Committee

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

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Subject: Comprehensive Transportation Funding Programs – Project X Tier 1 and Tier 2 2024 Calls for Projects Programming Recommendations

Overview

The Orange County Transportation Authority's Environmental Cleanup Program provides Measure M2 funding for water quality improvement projects to address transportation-generated pollution. The 2024 Tier 1 and Tier 2 Grant Program calls for projects were issued on February 12, 2024. Evaluations for grant applications are now complete, and a list of projects is presented for Board of Directors' review and approval.

Recommendations

- A. Approve the award of \$3,712,423 in Tier 1 Environmental Cleanup Program funding for 11 projects.
- B. Approve the award of \$6,967,250 in Tier 2 Environmental Cleanup Program funding for four 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 prior to being deposited in waterways and the ocean. The Tier 2 Grant Program provides funding for larger projects treating catchment areas of 50 acres or greater and allows for multi-jurisdictional, capital-intensive structural treatment best management practice (BMP) types of projects.

Tier 1 funds are available for Orange County local jurisdictions to purchase and install equipment and other projects that implement BMPs and that supplement, not supplant, current water quality programs. Examples include screens, filters, and inserts for catch basins, as well as other devices designed to remove the above-mentioned pollutants. Tier 2 funds are designed to implement more comprehensive capital investments, which mitigate visible litter and debris, but also heavy metals, organic chemicals, sediment, nutrients, and other transportation-related pollutants. Examples of these large-scale BMPs include constructed wetlands, detention/infiltration basins, and vegetated swales. Proposed projects must demonstrate a direct nexus to the reduction of transportation-related pollution, as developed and defined by OCTA's Environmental Cleanup Allocation Committee (ECAC).

To date, the Board has approved funding for 222 Tier 1 projects, totaling over \$36 million. Two previous Tier 2 calls took place in 2012 and 2013, which resulted in funding 22 projects in the amount of \$28 million. On February 12, 2024, the Board approved issuance of the 2024 ECP Tier 1 and Tier 2 calls, with a funding target of \$3.5 million to support a 14th call for the Tier 1 program, and approximately \$15 million to support a third call for the Tier 2 program.

Discussion

Tier 1

The ECP Tier 1 call application deadline was April 25, 2024. As of that date, 13 applications were submitted from 13 local jurisdictions. However, the applications submitted from the cities of Buena Park and Orange cannot move forward due to the cities being found ineligible to receive M2 net revenues by the Board on May 28, 2024. The remaining 11 applications were reviewed and evaluated by an application review committee consisting of OCTA staff and two members of the ECAC. Project applications were evaluated based on Board-approved evaluation criteria, which included the following:

- Effectiveness at removing trash and debris;
- Cost/benefit analyses;
- Pollution-reducing benefits;
- Project readiness;
- Adequacy of proposed operations and maintenance plans; and
- Submission of clear and detailed work plans with specific implementation timing documented.

On September 12, 2024, the ECAC met and endorsed the application review committee's recommendation that the 11 projects totaling \$3,712,423 identified in Attachment A be advanced to the Board for consideration of funding. While the recommended award amount is higher than the Board-authorized target of \$3.5 million, the recommended funding amount is within the Project X funding capacity in the Measure M2 Next 10 Plan and cash flow.

The recommended Tier 1 projects met overall program objectives and scored well in terms of satisfying the evaluation criteria listed above. The proposed improvements primarily consist of various catch basin debris screen devices including connector pipe screens (CPS), automatic retractable screens (ARS), full trash capture (FTC) units, grated inlet trash screens (GITS), as well as debris booms and a hydrodynamic separator (HDS).

More detailed project-specific information and visual samples of recommended project unit types are provided in Attachments B and C, respectively. A brief overview of these project types is also provided below.

- Catch basin debris screen devices: These devices prevent debris from entering the storm drain system through catch basins and primarily consist of CPS, ARS, FTC, and GITS type devices.
- A debris boom is a floating barrier placed across a channel to capture floating trash and debris, which is collected and disposed of regularly and following storm events.
- An HDS utilizes a combination of swirl concentration and indirect screening to separate and capture trash and debris. The filtered water then passes into the separation area where suspended solids can settle, and runoff passes through. Trash and debris are captured and contained within the screen enclosure and vacuumed during maintenance.

As part of the Tier 1 program, local agencies agree to contribute a minimum cash match of 20 percent of total project costs. All recommended projects either meet or exceed this requirement.

Tier 2

The ECP Tier 2 call application deadline was May 16, 2024. Four applications were submitted from four local jurisdictions. Project applications were evaluated based on the Board-approved Tier 2 scoring criteria, which includes both technical and non-technical elements.

Technical scoring was conducted with the OC Stormwater Tools Planning Module which utilized project parameters input by the applicant. Scores were derived based on the proposed projects' nexus to transportation-related pollutants, water quality treatment needs, and the ability of the proposed project to address specific water quality issues. The application review committee reviewed each application and provided non-technical scores considering project readiness, regional benefits, and co-benefits beyond water quality improvement (i.e., recreation, habitat, drainage, etc.).

On September 12, 2024, the ECAC met and concurred with the application review committee's conclusions and recommended that four Tier 2 projects, in the amount of \$6,967,250, be recommended to the Board for funding consideration as shown in Attachment C. All projects demonstrated that they meet the intent of M2 to address transportation-related pollution by providing effective water quality treatment.

More detailed project information and visual samples of the recommended project types are provided in Attachments E and F, respectively. A brief overview of the Tier 2 projects recommended for funding is also provided below:

- Santa Ana Zoo Stormwater Capture and Diversion Project (City of Santa Ana) – construct two underground stormwater filtration systems, install a hydrodynamic separation device and vegetated swales.
- Poche Beach Water Reclamation Project (City of San Clemente) – construct a low flow diversion system to address bacteria water quality.
- State College Boulevard Stormwater Capture and Conveyance Project (City of Anaheim) – repurpose 10,000 linear feet of abandoned sewer pipe to install underground dry wells for stormwater runoff treatment, capture, and infiltration.
- Newport Dunes Water Quality Improvement Project (City of Newport Beach) – construct infiltration galleries to capture dry weather flow.

As part of the Tier 2 grant program, local agencies agree to contribute a minimum cash match of 50 percent of total project costs, with opportunities to reduce the match based on project readiness. All recommended projects meet or exceed the match requirement, and Anaheim was able to reduce its match to 40 percent by applying the match reduction benefit.

Next Steps

Upon Board approval, each funded agency will be required to execute a letter amendment (to their existing M2 Master Funding Agreement) prior to project implementation. Once this process is complete, OCTA will initiate project monitoring and reporting through the Comprehensive Transportation Funding Programs semi-annual review and M2 quarterly reporting processes.

Summary

The OCTA ECP provides grant funding to local jurisdictions for projects that support water quality improvements related to transportation infrastructure. The 2024 Tier 1 and Tier 2 call has concluded. Staff is recommending Board approval to program \$3,712,423 in ECP funds to 11 local jurisdiction Tier 1 projects, and \$6,967,250 in ECP funds to four local jurisdiction Tier 2 projects.

Attachments

- A. 2024 Project X Tier 1 Call for Projects – Programming Recommendations
- B. 2024 Project X Tier 1 Call for Projects – Project Summaries
- C. Visual Samples of Recommended Best Management Practice Project Types – Tier 1
- D. 2024 Project X Tier 2 Call for Projects – Programming Recommendations
- E. 2024 Project X Tier 2 Call for Projects – Project Summaries
- F. Visual Samples of Recommended Best Management Practice Project Types – Tier 2

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