



July 9, 2026

To: Transit Committee

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Darrell E. Johnson", is written over the "To:" line and extends into the "From:" line.

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: Consultant Selection for Feasibility Study for Solar Photovoltaic Systems Installations at Bus Bases

Overview

On March 18, 2026, the Orange County Transportation Authority issued a request for proposals for consultant services to conduct a feasibility study for solar photovoltaic systems installations at its five bus bases. Board of Directors' approval is requested for the selection of the firm to perform the required work.

Recommendations

- A. Approve the selection of Dahl Taylor & Associates, Inc. as the firm to conduct a feasibility study for solar photovoltaic systems installations at Orange County Transportation Authority bus bases.
- B. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and execute Agreement No. C250221 between the Orange County Transportation Authority and Dahl Taylor & Associates, Inc. to conduct a feasibility study for solar photovoltaic systems installations at Orange County Transportation Authority bus bases.

Discussion

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) owns five maintenance and operations bus bases in Orange County, with one located in each of the following cities: Anaheim, Garden Grove, and Santa Ana, and two located in Irvine. In February 2022, OCTA initiated development of the Climate Adaptation and Sustainability Plan (CASP). In November 2024, staff presented an update to the Board of Directors (Board) which set the framework for goals under the CASP, including potential strategies for sustainability to reduce emissions compared to a business-as-usual scenario. OCTA continues to evaluate onsite renewable energy generation options to support sustainable operations, and this

Consultant Selection for Feasibility Study for Solar Photovoltaic Systems Installations at Bus Bases **Page 2**

work effort is for the feasibility study for solar photovoltaic (PV) systems installations at OCTA's five bus bases (Project) which will advance OCTA's sustainability objectives to meet its goals under the CASP. The study will focus on OCTA's power usage at the bus bases, both in terms of amount of power and time of use and related costs, the available space on bus base properties, including parking areas and building roofs to install solar PV systems to generate onsite renewable electricity to the extent feasible, permitting, regulations, and utility provider requirements, along with the economics in terms of costs and benefits of delivery alternatives.

Procurement Approach

This procurement was handled in accordance with OCTA's Board-approved procedures for architectural and engineering (A&E) services that conform to both state and federal laws. Proposals are evaluated and ranked in accordance with the qualifications of the firm, staffing and project organization, and work plan. As this is an A&E procurement, price is not an evaluation criterion pursuant to state and federal laws. Evaluation of the proposals was conducted based on overall qualifications to develop a competitive range of offerors. The highest-ranked firm is requested to submit a cost proposal, and the final agreement is negotiated. Should negotiations fail with the highest-ranked firm, a cost proposal will be solicited from the second-ranked firm in accordance with Board-approved procurement policies.

On March 18, 2026, Request for Proposals (RFP) 250221 was issued electronically on OpenGov, OCTA's online e-procurement system. The solicitation was advertised in a newspaper of general circulation on March 18 and March 23, 2026. A pre-proposal conference was held on March 24, 2026, with four attendees representing three firms. Two addenda were issued to make available the pre-proposal conference registration sheets, as well as to provide responses to questions received.

On April 23, 2026, three proposals were received. An evaluation committee consisting of members from OCTA's Facilities Engineering, Project Controls, Contracts Administration and Materials Management, and General Services departments met to review all submitted proposals. The proposals were evaluated utilizing the following evaluation criteria and weightings:

- Qualifications of the Firm 20 percent
- Staffing and Project Organization 40 percent
- Work Plan 40 percent

Consultant Selection for Feasibility Study for Solar Photovoltaic Systems Installations at Bus Bases *Page 3*

In developing the criteria and weightings, several factors were considered. The firm's qualifications and experience in performing relevant work of similar scope, size, and complexity are important to the success of the Project. The staffing and project organization criterion was assigned a weighting of 40 percent as the qualifications of the project manager and other key task leaders are critical to understanding project requirements and to the timely delivery and successful performance of the work. Similarly, an equal level of importance was assigned to the work plan, as the technical approach to the requirements is critical to the successful performance of the Project.

The evaluation committee reviewed all three proposals based on the evaluation criteria and found two firms most qualified to perform the required services. The most qualified firms are listed below in alphabetical order:

Firm and Location

Dahl Taylor & Associates, Inc. (Dahl Taylor)
Headquarters: Santa Ana, California
Project Office: Santa Ana, California

NV5 Consultants, Inc. (NV5)
Headquarters: Hollywood, Florida
Project Office: San Rafael, California

On June 3, 2026, the evaluation committee interviewed the two short-listed firms. The interviews consisted of a presentation allowing each team to present its qualifications, highlight its proposal, and respond to evaluation committee questions. Each firm also discussed its staffing plan, work plan, and perceived project challenges. Each firm was asked general questions related to qualifications, relevant feasibility studies experience, project organization, and approach to the work plan. Each firm was asked questions specific to its proposal regarding its team's approach to the requirements of the scope of work, management of the Project, experience with similar projects, and the proposed solutions towards achieving project goals.

Based on the evaluation of written proposals and information obtained during the interviews, the evaluation committee recommends the selection of Dahl Taylor as the top-ranked firm to provide the feasibility study for the Project. Dahl Taylor received the highest ranking due to its experience with projects of similar scope and scale, familiarity with the project requirements, comprehensive understanding of the project objectives and constraints, presentation of relevant technical solutions, and overall approach in performing the required feasibility study. The firm presented a qualified team that met the requirements of the RFP, demonstrated a clear understanding of the project requirements, and presented

Consultant Selection for Feasibility Study for Solar Photovoltaic Systems Installations at Bus Bases *Page 4*

a comprehensive work plan addressing key issues that are critical to the success of the Project.

The following is a summary of the proposal evaluation results.

Qualifications of Firm

The two short-listed firms are well established with recent and relevant experience and are qualified to perform feasibility studies for solar PV systems.

Dahl Taylor's corporate headquarters and project office are in the City of Santa Ana. Dahl Taylor has extensive experience in renewable energy, solar PV systems, conducting feasibility studies, and design-build for public agencies. The firm has provided these services to several agencies in California (CA), including the Port of San Diego, City of San Diego, U.S. Army, San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), and Southern California Edison (SCE). Relevant firm experience includes prime experience conducting solar PV systems feasibility studies for the Port of San Diego, and strategic energy assessment, design, and construction of 21 solar-powered shelters for SANDAG's Escondido Rapid Bus 350 Corridor, and SCE's monolith substation Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) Building. The firm's prior experience with OCTA includes work on multiple projects as part of OCTA's bench agreements of architectural firms for the Facilities Engineering Department. The team has demonstrated experience working together on projects of similar size and scope with the proposed subconsultant. Positive references were received for the firm.

NV5's project office is based in the City of San Rafael. NV5 specializes in transit agency work, with deep local utility knowledge, and provides finance and risk assessment expertise. The firm has provided services to several public and transit agency clients in CA, including Burbank Water and Power, Santa Barbara Unified School District, Long Beach Transit, and Anaheim Transportation Network. Relevant experience includes 11+ Megawatt (MW) Solar Design and BESS Study for the City of Phoenix and Five MW Solar Project Evaluation in the City of Stockton. Additionally, experience with OCTA includes working as a subconsultant on various OCTA projects. The subconsultants have experience working with NV5 on past projects. Positive references were received for the firm.

Staffing and Project Organization

Both firms proposed experienced project managers, key personnel, and subconsultants with relevant feasibility studies for solar PV systems projects.

Dahl Taylor proposed a qualified project team with relevant experience and understanding of project issues, risks, and challenges. The team, including the subconsultant, is experienced in the various disciplines required for the Project and has relevant experience in feasibility studies. The proposed project manager has 12 years of project management and electrical engineering experience that includes direct prior experience working with OCTA bus bases in the cities of Anaheim, Garden Grove, Irvine, and Santa Ana. The proposed project architect has over 30 years of architectural design, evaluation, and construction management experience. The lead civil engineer has over 30 years of civil engineering and project management experience. Dahl Taylor has mostly in-house services that they will perform but will be using one subconsultant to provide structural engineering services. The information presented during the interview demonstrated the team's knowledge of the scope of work, objectives, and risks associated with the Project. The team provided project-specific responses to all interview questions including any environmental work that might be needed.

NV5 proposed an experienced project team with all key personnel demonstrating relevant solar PV feasibility studies experience. The team is proficient in the various disciplines required for the Project. NV5's proposed senior project manager has 27 years of engineering and management experience in renewable energy, clean transportation, and water sectors. Experience includes planning and design of EV charging infrastructure paired with solar canopies for a portfolio of central valley school districts. The lead architect has over 20 years of experience in architectural design and project management, including over a decade specializing in solar and renewable energy projects. The lead civil engineer is an experienced renewable energy professional who has worked at every stage of solar, BESS, and microgrid projects. The proposed team includes qualified and experienced subconsultants for architecture and structural engineering as well as strong quality assurance and quality control leadership. However, NV5's proposed key personnel have less availability. Additionally, the key personnel did not adequately address all of the evaluation committee's questions during the interview.

Work Plan

Both short-listed firms met the requirements of the RFP, and each firm adequately discussed its approach to the Project.

Dahl Taylor presented a comprehensive and detailed work plan that demonstrated an understanding of the project requirements and identified project challenges, mitigation measures, and innovations. The detailed work plan demonstrated the firm's understanding of the scope of work and its familiarity with OCTA's bus bases. The work plan demonstrated the firm's

understanding of how to work with the utility providers, SCE and Anaheim Power, and demonstrated the firm's experience with similar scopes of work. An innovation identified in the work plan was to provide HelioScope solar modeling reports to quantify the available solar generation capacity at each site. This report would allow OCTA to quantify how much solar generation capacity is available at each bus base.

NV5 provided a detailed work plan that demonstrated an understanding of the project scope of work and approach to completing each task. NV5's overall approach includes strong methodology for energy modeling, financial analysis, and risk assessment. NV5 proposed enhancements to reduce project risks and add value for clients. This would allow OCTA to focus on solar power generation instead of worrying about something going wrong. The work plan is highly detailed and shows a well-structured approach that aligns with the scope of work tasks and includes full project controls. However, the proposed work plan did not show the firm's understanding of OCTA's bus base operations and requirements of transit facilities. Also, the sequence of activities was hard to understand.

Procurement Summary

Based on the evaluation of the written proposals, team qualifications, and information obtained during the interviews, the evaluation committee recommends the selection of Dahl Taylor as the top-ranked firm to conduct a feasibility study for solar PV systems at OCTA's bus bases. Dahl Taylor presented a comprehensive proposal which addressed all requirements of the RFP.

Fiscal Impact

The Project is included in OCTA's Fiscal Year 2026-27 Budget, Capital Programs Division, Account No. 1722-7629-D3120-96N and is grant funded with SB 125 (Chapter 54, Statutes of 2023) Zero Emission Transit Capital Program, Revenue Account No. 0030-6117-D3120-YP0.

Summary

Staff requests Board of Directors' authorization for the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and execute Agreement No. C250221 with Dahl Taylor & Associates, Inc. to provide the feasibility study for solar photovoltaic systems at the Orange County Transportation Authority's five bus bases.

Attachments

- A. Review of Proposals, RFP 250221 - Feasibility Study for Solar Photovoltaic Systems
- B. Proposal Evaluation Criteria Matrix (Short-Listed), RFP 250221 - Feasibility Study for Solar Photovoltaic Systems
- C. Contract History for the Past Two Years, RFP 250221 - Feasibility Study for Solar Photovoltaic Systems

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