



July 6, 2026

To: Regional Transportation Planning Committee
From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer
Subject: Competitive Grant Programs Update

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Darrell E. Johnson", is written over the "To:" and "From:" lines of the memo.

Overview

The Orange County Transportation Authority, consistent with Board of Directors-approved programming guidelines, utilizes various federal, state, and local transportation funding programs beyond those provided through Measure M2 to maximize transportation investments throughout Orange County. These funds are pursued and programmed to projects led by local jurisdictions, nonprofit agencies, and the Orange County Transportation Authority that advance Board of Directors-approved transportation priorities. Staff has prepared an overview and status update of local jurisdiction projects that have received funds, recent grant pursuits, and awards for Orange County Transportation Authority projects.

Recommendation

Receive and file as an information item.

Background

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) issues periodic calls for projects (call) using non-Measure M2 (M2) federal, state, and local funds to help local jurisdictions and nonprofit agencies meet a variety of transportation needs. The calls include the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) federal fiscal year (FFY) 2026-27 and 2027-28 Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Programs, Orange County Complete Streets Program (OCCSP), Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (EMSD) Program, Pavement Management Relief Funding (PMRF) Program, Bicycle Corridor Improvement Program (BCIP), and Arterial Pavement Management (APM) Program.

OCTA typically issues a complete streets call, which promotes multimodal facilities designed for all users utilizing OCCSP or the BCIP, every two to three years. The EMSD Program is also programmed through a regular call which is similarly issued every two to three years. The calls addressing pavement management, utilizing PMRF and APM Program funds are issued on an ad hoc basis but have typically

occurred using one-time state or federal funding at least every three to four years. Each program has a primary focus or goal, as noted in the following table.

OCTA Program	Primary Program Goal	Program Fund Source
SCAG FFY 2026-27 and 2027-28 STBG/CMAQ	Supports multimodal street and transportation improvements that enhance safety, accessibility, and air quality	Federal STBG and/or CMAQ programs
OCCSP	Support development of accessible and safe streets that accommodate a variety of transportation modes	Federal STBG and/or CMAQ programs
EMSD	Support services provided to seniors and individuals with disabilities	Non-M2 local transit funds
PMRF	Support pavement maintenance and preservation needs	Federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act Highway Infrastructure Program funds and State Highway Account funds
BCIP	Support the development of Orange County’s bicycle network	Federal CMAQ funds
APM	Support pavement maintenance and preservation needs	Federal STBG funds

In addition to these directly issued calls, OCTA also supports local jurisdictions pursuing federal and state earmarks and grants from state and federal sources such as the Active Transportation Program’s regional component through SCAG and the California Transportation Commission. OCTA may partner with local jurisdictions to seek external funds when combining multiple projects into a single application to increase the chances of being awarded.

OCTA directly competes in federal, state, and local transportation funding opportunities through various discretionary funding programs to support OCTA Board of Directors (Board)-approved priority planning, capital, and operating needs. Securing funding through these programs is consistent with the programming policies and helps preserve M2 and more flexible local funding sources, allowing OCTA to advance a greater number of priority projects. Current priority projects, identified by the Board through approved planning documents, include the Coastal Rail Infrastructure Resiliency Project, Pacific Coast Highway Bridge Replacement, State Route (SR)-91 Eastbound Corridor Operations Project, State Route 57 Truck Climbing Lane, Clean Transportation Initiatives, Los Angeles

2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games Transportation Services, Metrolink Locomotive Replacement, Track and Structures, Metrolink Operations, OC Connect (Garden Grove to Santa Ana Rails-to-Trails), OC Loop, First Street Complete Streets and Transit Signal Priority (TSP), and bus infrastructure investments. Identifying priority projects in advance of funding opportunities and securing Board approval for those projects positions OCTA to readily pursue new funding opportunities as they are made available. Every discretionary grant award is presented to the Board for formal acceptance.

Discussion

Since 2010, the Board has approved \$299.2 million in non-M2 local, state, and federal funds to Orange County local jurisdictions and nonprofit agencies through 12 calls. This has supported 281 transportation projects including active transportation, street rehabilitation, mobility options for seniors and individuals with disabilities, as well as streets and roads enhancement/landscaping activities. As of the drafting of this report, 197 projects which have received \$107.7 million in non-M2 funds are considered fully complete and closed out. The specific status of these completed projects is no longer tracked in the report. The table below reflects the status of active projects, their respective phases of work, and the phases of work completed or cancelled during this reporting cycle. Currently, \$191.5 million in awarded funds support a total of 120 phases through the FFY 2026-27 and 2027-28 STBG/CMAQ, OCCSP, EMSD, PMRF, BCIP, and APM funding programs.

A summary of the current awarded project phases is provided in the table below, and additional details on the status of active projects are provided in Attachment A.

Phase of Work/ Status	PLAN	ENV	DES	ROW	CON¹	Total Phases
Planned	0	1	9	3	31	44
Started	3	8	14	3	48	76
Subtotal	3	9	23	6	79	120
Completed ²	0	5	3	2	5	15
Total	3	14	26	8	84	135
Cancelled ²	0	0	1	0	1	2

Notes and abbreviations:
 1. Includes EMSD capital and operating projects.
 2. Reflects only those project phases that were completed or canceled during this reporting cycle.

Planned – Indicates the funds for this phase have not been obligated or a contract has not yet been executed.
 Started – Indicates the funds for this phase have been obligated or a contract has been executed.
 Completed – Indicates the work related to this phase is complete.

CON – Construction ENV– Environmental
 DES – Design ROW – Right-of-way

Discretionary Funding Update

In December 2025, staff presented updates to the Board on OCTA grant pursuits, highlighting the submission of six grant applications in the first half of fiscal year (FY) 2025-26. The update also included eight federal earmark requests advanced in coordination with the Government Relations Division during the federal appropriations cycle for the previous reporting period.

Since the December update, seven grant applications have been submitted for a total request amount of \$102.1 million from state and federal sources. These applications reflect a broad range of countywide transportation priorities, including active transportation safety planning, multimodal corridor improvements, clean transportation and bus infrastructure investments, cybersecurity initiatives, and alternative fuel transit vehicle procurements, all aimed at improving regional mobility, system resiliency, operational reliability, and transportation safety across Orange County.

Additionally, working in coordination with the Government Relations Division, four federal earmark requests totaling \$10.7 million were submitted during the second half of FY 2025-26 to support major transportation infrastructure investments across Orange County. These requests support regional transportation infrastructure improvements, including maintenance and rehabilitation activities, rail station modernization efforts, and multimodal corridor enhancements to improve system reliability, safety, and regional connectivity, further advancing OCTA's mobility and infrastructure priorities through competitive and discretionary funding opportunities. A summary of these grant and earmark submittals is provided in Attachment B.

Over the last six months, OCTA has been awarded \$144.6 million in grant funding supporting 16 projects (several applications were submitted in prior periods).

The following projects have received various competitive grant funding totaling \$5.6 million:

- Security Cameras and Access Controls at OCTA Transportation Centers – \$960,000 through the Federal Transit Administration Buses and Bus Facilities Program
- OC Connections for Los Angeles 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games – \$4 million through the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee Transportation Demand Management Program
- Connected Paths: Building a Regional Inventory for Active Transportation (lead agency: SCAG; sub-applicants: OCTA, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and Ventura County Transportation Commission) – \$700,000 through the California Department of Transportation's Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program

The following projects received awards totaling \$130.1 million through the SCAG FFY 2026-27 and 2027-28 STBG/CMAQ programs:

- Alternative Fuel Replacement Buses: 18 60-Foot Buses – \$30 million
- First Street Complete Streets and TSP Project – \$2 million
- OC Connect – \$14.4 million
- Pacific Coast Highway Railroad Bridge Replacement – \$5.5 million
- Interstate 5 (I-5) Improvement Project from San Diego County Line to Avenida Pico – \$40 million
- OC Streetcar Operations – \$14.7 million
- State Route 74 Ortega Highway Gap Closure and Multimodal Improvements – \$1.5 million
- Southern California Regional Rail Authority/Metrolink Rehabilitation and Renovation – \$22 million

The following projects received congressional earmark awards totaling \$8.8 million through Community Project Funding (CPF) or Federal Highway Infrastructure Programs:

CPF:

- OC Loop – Segment A (City of La Habra) La Habra Union Pacific Rail Line Bikeway – \$3 million

Federal Highway Infrastructure Programs:

- I-5 Improvement Project Segment 2 – \$1.7 million
- State Route 55 (I-5 to SR-91) Improvement Project – \$3 million
- I-5 Improvement Project from San Diego County Line to Avenida Pico – \$850,000
- Technology and Signal Upgrades – \$250,000

Staff will present future items to the Board as necessary to formally accept these grant awards and to incorporate the funds into the relevant project budgets. Details of these awards are also provided in Attachment B.

A list of near-term OCTA priority projects targeted for funding through ongoing grant efforts is provided as Attachment C. These efforts include OCTA's continued pursuit of competitive grant opportunities to fund and advance priority projects. The Capital Funding Program Report included as Attachment D summarizes the approved funding for projects, including OCTA-issued federal, state, and locally funded calls.

Summary

Status reports on externally funded OCTA grants awarded to local jurisdictions and a list of grant pursuits for OCTA priority projects are provided. Recent grant awards and funding activities are also summarized.

Attachments

- A. State and Federal Grant Programs Project Status
- B. Competitive Grants Update
- C. Orange County Transportation Authority Priority Project List
- D. Capital Funding Program Report

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