

Meeting of Aug. 24, 2020

OC Go to Fund Senior Mobility Program in Laguna Beach

The Orange County Transportation Authority's board of directors approved an agreement with Laguna Beach to provide OC Go funding to support a senior mobility program.

The funding comes from Measure M, Orange County's half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements, also known as OC Go. The goal of the program is to help cities design and operate transit programs that best meet the needs of seniors living within its communities.

Laguna Beach has been providing its own senior transportation services through the city's senior center for more than 40 years. Last year, the senior center provided approximately 7,000 trips to about 300 residents for purposes including medical appointments, grocery shopping, transportation to the senior center and social recreational trips.

The senior population, along with demand for senior transportation, continues to grow in Laguna Beach. The OC Go funding will allow for an expansion of the existing transportation services to more senior residents in need.

Since 2011, OC Go has invested more than \$23 million in senior mobility programs throughout the county, providing approximately 2.5 million trips.

Board Requesting Proposals for Maintenance of Environmental Properties

The OCTA board approved a request for proposals for interim maintenance of the seven open space preserves the agency owns as part of the Measure M Environmental Mitigation Program.

The program is a comprehensive effort to offset the environmental impacts of freeway construction by preserving large swaths of valuable habitat to protect the plants and wildlife that live on the land and provide connectivity to other natural lands. OCTA has purchased from willing sellers, seven open space properties that were eligible for development, totaling 1,300 acres, which will now be preserved in perpetuity.

The selected contractor will be expected to maintain the existing infrastructure on the properties, including access roads, fencing and signage, while maintaining the safety and biological integrity of the preserves. Services will include weed abatement and vegetation control, removal of debris and trash, repairing drainage and trimming trees.

The contract resulting from this procurement will be for a five-year initial term, with two, one-year option terms.

Measure M Forecast Declines due to COVID-19 Impacts

The OCTA board received an updated preliminary forecast for Measure M that shows a decrease in taxable sales compared to last year's forecast due to the impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The preliminary forecast has decreased from \$13.4 billion last year, to \$11.6 billion, a decrease of \$1.8 billion through 2041.

The board is expected to receive another updated forecast in October, after receiving the final fiscal year 2019-20 sales tax receipts.

OCTA is continuing to monitor the evolving financial situation as a result of the pandemic and will report back to the board with updates.