



Orange County Transportation Authority . 550 South Main Street . P.O. Box 14184 . Orange, California 92863-1584 . 714-560-OCTA (6282)

Meeting of May 14, 2012

M2 Funding Headed To Environmental Restoration Projects

The Board approved six restoration projects today totaling approximately \$5 million as part of the Measure M2 Environmental Mitigation Program.

Project / City	Amount Funded	Acres
Aliso Creek / Laguna Niguel	\$1.1 million	55
Chino Hills State Park / Brea	\$193,000	21
Harriett Weider Regional Park / Huntington Beach	\$475,000	10
Lower Silverado Canyon / Irvine	\$1.4 million	44
North Coal Canyon / Yorba Linda	\$247,500	5.5
West Loma / Irvine	\$1.3 million	80

The restoration projects chosen are those determined to have the highest potential to support native plants, restore habitat for sensitive species and provide the highest potential to successfully replace resources lost to freeway construction.

The call for projects was issued June 2011 and OCTA received 40 proposals from throughout the county. The next step is to

issue another call for projects with the remaining program funding of \$400,000. The focus of the next round of projects will be on restoring watersheds affected by M2 freeway projects, specifically the Bolsa Chica Channel-Frontal Huntington Harbor, lower Santa Ana River, San Diego Creek and San Juan Creek.

The M2 Environmental Freeway Mitigation Program is a comprehensive plan to preserve and restore open space throughout the county. It will provide approximately \$300 million during the next 30 years to preserve and restore land throughout Orange County.

For more information regarding OCTA's environmental program, visit www.octa.net/environmental.

Board Suspends Decision On Removing 19th Street Bridge from MPAH

The board voted to suspend its previous decision to remove the 19th Street bridge from the Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH). The board asked that OCTA staff work with Newport Beach, Costa Mesa and Huntington Beach to identify potential impacts of removing the bridge from the master plan, find alternative options and generate an agreement that identifies those improvements with affected agencies. The board will revisit the issue no later than November 26.

The board has also decided to deny an appeal from a third party to have the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) determine if the 19th Street bridge

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removal is an environmentally viable option. The board maintains the bridge is exempt from CEQA because the MPAH is solely a planning and feasibility study, requiring only consideration of environmental factors.

In a one-time exception because of unique circumstances, the board voted to remove the 19th Street bridge from the Master Plan of Arterial Highways on March 12. The bridge was in the plan as a four-lane primary arterial.

The cities of Costa Mesa and Huntington Beach requested the removal of the bridge, which faced a number of challenges to being constructed including environmental impacts, community opposition, right-of-way impacts, challenging permitting processes and substantial costs.

The board supported the removal of the 19th Street bridge because of the unlikely possibility it would ever be constructed. The board has begun working with affected agencies to develop alternatives and generate an agreement to the bridge's outcome.

Army Advisory Council Recognizes OCTA as Veteran Friendly Employer

The Southern California Army Advisory Council recognized the Orange County Transportation Authority on Monday as a military-friendly employer for its active involvement in military recruitment.

OCTA employs 124 veterans and honors those employees at an annual Veterans Day event. In addition, the agency reaches out to the military through:

- Participating in veteran recruitment events at least once a year at Camp Pendleton in San Diego
- Speaking at the Camp Pendleton Transition Assistance Program and providing career transition advice to members of the Army, Navy and Marine Corps
- Remaining engaged with local junior colleges and universities to assist veterans making the transition from the military into the academic environment
- Coordinating efforts with the U.S. Army Southern California Recruiting Battalion to assist Guard, Reserve and active duty soldiers as they make a transition from the military service to career fields in the transportation industry