



May 17, 2010

To: Transportation 2020 Committee
From: Will Kempton, Chief Executive Officer
Subject: Go Local Fixed-Guideway Program Update

Overview

The Go Local Fixed-Guideway Program continues to move forward. As part of Step Two of the program, the City of Anaheim and the City of Santa Ana, in partnership with the City of Garden Grove, are underway with project development for the cities' respective fixed-guideway projects. Staff has prepared an overview of progress made to date and the current status of each project for Board of Directors' review.

Recommendations

- A. Direct staff to continue monitoring project development activities for the Anaheim Rapid Connection and Santa Ana/Garden Grove fixed-guideway as both projects progress through the Go Local Step Two Program.
- B. Direct staff to continue to identify and pursue potential funding sources for the next phases of fixed-guideway project development, and ensure work being done on both projects does not preclude eligibility for such funding.

Background

In early 2006, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) initiated the Go Local Program to encourage cities to develop transit extensions to the Metrolink corridor. In 2008, the City of Anaheim and the City of Santa Ana, in partnership with the City of Garden Grove, each submitted a fixed-guideway concept as part of the Go Local Program that proposed a connection between the cities' respective Metrolink stations to nearby destination/activity centers. In May 2008, the OCTA Board of Directors (Board) determined that the concepts met the Go Local evaluation criteria and awarded each city \$5.9 million for additional planning, including an alternatives analysis (AA), conceptual engineering, and state and federal environmental clearance. In January 2009,

the City of Anaheim initiated the AA process, and the cities of Santa Ana and Garden Grove began that process in September 2009.

As part of the Go Local Step Two award, OCTA entered into a cooperative agreement with both cities that outlined key milestones within the detailed planning effort in which the Board would review progress made to date. Prior to the Board's review of the cities' first milestone completion later this year, staff has prepared a status update of the Anaheim fixed-guideway (recently named the Anaheim Rapid Connection) and Santa Ana/Garden Grove fixed-guideway projects.

Discussion

Anaheim Rapid Connection

The City of Anaheim is underway with evaluating a proposed 3.5 mile east-west transit connection between the multi-modal transit hub, Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center (ARTIC), The Platinum Triangle area, and Anaheim Resort. The project is envisioned to operate as a high-capacity system, providing transfers to the Metrolink commuter rail system, Amtrak, local fixed-route bus, future bus rapid transit (BRT), and high-speed train services connecting at ARTIC. This system will provide residents, employees, and visitors a connection between the Metrolink commuter rail system to Anaheim's major employment and activity centers in The Platinum Triangle and Anaheim Resort.

To begin the AA process, the City of Anaheim started with a long list of alternatives, including 12 potential alignments and nine different technologies. Based upon a screening framework developed around the goals of the project and the input of the community, the 12 alternatives were refined to reach a short list of build alternatives which will advance through the state/federal environmental clearance process. The project alternatives being studied include:

- No-Build Alternative – Includes all planned and programmed transportation improvements in the greater project area through the year 2035 and does not include any elements of the Anaheim Rapid Connection project.
- Transportation System Management (TSM) Alternative – Focuses on low-cost improvements to the project area's transportation system, such as enhanced local bus service, skip-stop and express service, improved traffic signal timing, and incentivized carpooling.

- Semi-Exclusive At-Grade BRT Alternative – Calls for BRT service operating at-grade on local city streets in exclusive lanes where sufficient right-of-way exists, as well as in mixed-flow traffic where existing right-of-way does not allow for a dedicated lane.
- Elevated Fixed-Guideway Alternative (with alignment variations and technology options) – Considers a variety of automated fixed-guideway transit technologies, such as an automated people mover, monorail, and low-speed maglev for use along the alignment.

Currently, the City of Anaheim is developing the technical studies and reports required to support the AA and environmental clearance. The AA project activities completed to date include, but are not limited to, purpose and need statement, ridership modeling methodology report, alternatives screening report, and cost methodology report. In addition, the project team is also performing technical studies consistent with both the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements, including, but not limited to, biological resources, geology and soil, hydrology and water quality, paleontological resources, growth inducement analysis, and utility report. In support of the CEQA and NEPA processes, the City of Anaheim hosted two scoping meetings in the summer and fall of 2009 as an opportunity for the public to learn about the project and to provide input on the technologies and alignments to be advanced through the environmental clearance phase.

The City of Anaheim is expected to complete Step Two of the Go Local Program including environmental clearance in May 2011.

Santa Ana and Garden Grove Fixed-Guideway

The cities of Santa Ana and Garden Grove are underway with environmental clearance of an approximately four-mile fixed-guideway transit system that would provide a new east-west transit line between the Santa Ana Regional Transportation Center (SARTC) and Harbor Boulevard. Specifically, the cities are studying the potential for a three-mile minimum operating segment that would run in a loop from SARTC to Bristol Street. This alignment would provide a linkage between SARTC and key areas along the corridor including the Station District, Civic Center, historic neighborhoods, and downtown Santa Ana.

Consistent with the AA process, the City of Santa Ana has completed several key project documents, including the study corridor definition report, mobility problem definition report, goals, objectives and evaluation criteria, purpose and need statement, and definition of alternatives. The alternatives under consideration include:

- No Build Alternative – Consists of existing transit plans and programmed transportation improvements that have already obtained their project environmental approvals within the project study area.
- TSM Alternative – Focuses on relatively inexpensive projects, operational improvements, or policy actions such as increases in existing bus service, improved signal timing, and incentives to carpooling.
- BRT Alternative – Consists of a new BRT route that would provide a travel experience comparable to the fixed-guideway rail alternative. The service would operate in exclusive running lanes where possible without requiring right-of-way takes or causing impacts to existing traffic, as well as in mixed-flow travel lanes where space and traffic constraints do not allow for dedicated running lanes.
- At-Grade Fixed-Guideway Rail Alternative – This alternative consists of a fixed-guideway rail system that operates on tracks embedded in the street pavement. The service would operate on tracks within a dedicated guideway within a mixed-traffic street environment typical of urban streetcar systems.

As of preparation of this report, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is reviewing the project's Notice of Intent, which will invite the public to provide comments on the scope of the environmental studies. Earlier this year, the City of Santa Ana hosted two public listening sessions as an early opportunity for the community to weigh in on project development.

The cities of Santa Ana and Garden Grove anticipate having a completed environmental document in December 2011.

Next Steps

Based on current funding projections for Measure M2 revenues, additional funding sources are likely needed to supplement the next phase of the fixed-guideway projects. The most likely funding source will be the federal New Starts and Small Starts programs. In coordination with OCTA's Government Relations Division, staff will continue with regular coordination meetings with the FTA regarding the viability of pursuing funds under the New Starts and Small Starts federal funding programs. In addition, staff will continue to work with both cities to ensure that project development activities adhere to the federal guidelines for obtaining funds under the New Starts and Small Starts programs. As part of this approach, staff will also assist the project teams in identifying opportunities to accelerate the project schedules within the New Starts and Small Starts programs.

Consistent with the Go Local Step Two cooperative agreement with both cities, staff will return to the Board later this summer with a comprehensive review of the Anaheim Rapid Connection project's alternatives evaluation and in winter with a similar review of the Santa Ana and Garden Grove fixed-guideway alternatives evaluation.

Summary

Project development continues for the Board-approved Anaheim Rapid Connection and Santa Ana/Garden Grove fixed-guideway projects. Staff has provided an update on both projects for Board review as well as for approval to continue to pursue all eligible funding sources for the next phases of project development.

Attachment

None.

Prepared by:A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kelly Long', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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