



 **30 YEARS**
KEEPING ORANGE COUNTY MOVING

2021

A PROGRESS REPORT ON OCTA ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ORANGE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY



KEEPING ORANGE COUNTY MOVING

The Orange County Transportation Authority is Orange County's transportation planning agency, responsible for funding, implementing and operating transit and capital projects for a balanced and sustainable transportation system that reflects the diverse travel needs of the county's 34 cities and more than 3.2 million residents.

Originally formed in 1991 through the consolidation of seven different agencies, OCTA commemorated its 30th anniversary in 2021. And even with the pandemic affecting everyday lives, OCTA maintained its long-standing tradition of providing innovative and efficient transportation services.

At the start of the year, the OCTA Board of Directors established three strategic initiatives to guide the agency. This report is framed around those initiatives and highlights several of the projects, programs and accomplishments successfully completed by OCTA throughout the year to deliver on its mission of keeping Orange County moving.



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DELIVER IMPROVEMENTS TO FULFILL MEASURE M PROMISES

- Completed the Talbert Avenue, Magnolia Street, Edwards Street, Edinger Avenue, Bolsa Chica Road and Heil Avenue overcrossings, which are among the 18 bridges being replaced as part of the I-405 Improvement Project.
 - The project is now nearly 70 percent complete, with a total of nine bridges finished and the remainder under construction.
- Advanced beyond the halfway point on OC Streetcar construction with a focus on track work, sidewalks, station construction and ongoing vehicle fabrication.
- Made significant progress on all three segments of the I-5 South County Improvements Project with key structural and roadway improvements.



PROVIDE BALANCED PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS AND SOLUTIONS

- Reintroduced OC Bus service that was reduced in response to the pandemic – adding more than 100 trips on popular routes and increasing the frequency of service on multiple routes.
- Expanded the College Pass Program to include Cypress College and Irvine Valley College, now allowing enrolled students from seven participating community colleges to travel on any OC Bus free of charge.
- Introduced a Welcome Pass to save riders up to 40 percent as they returned to OC Bus, which recorded nearly 750,000 boardings – representing 10% of systemwide ridership during the campaign.
- Initiated the “Making Better Connections” bus restructuring study to address changes in travel patterns and reimagine countywide transit use.



- Started expansion improvements at the Anaheim Canyon Metrolink Station, in partnership with Metrolink and the city of Anaheim, to enhance train service and accommodate future demand.
- Began the public input process on OCTA's 2022 Long-Range Transportation Plan, which is conducted every four years to define a vision for the way people move in Orange County.
- Continued the South Orange County Multimodal Transportation Study to determine long-term transportation needs and develop solutions in south Orange County.
- Moved forward on the Orange County Mobility Hubs Study as a potential strategy for bringing together various mobility services in one place to connect travelers more conveniently.



ENGAGE WITH DIVERSE AND DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

- Launched a trust-building campaign to connect with underserved communities, attending events and engaging with diverse community members and business representatives from communities of color.
- Conducted quarterly meetings with OCTA's Diverse Community Leaders Group, which represents a wide variety of diverse organizations throughout the county.
- Participated in virtual meetings with stakeholders from communities of color that generated hundreds of comments and suggestions.
- Provided translation and Spanish- and Vietnamese-language assistance for marketing and outreach communications materials and events to ensure language is never a barrier to transportation services and programs.

DEMONSTRATE FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY AND EFFECTIVE MEASURE M ADMINISTRATION

- Developed a balanced \$1.3 billion budget that keeps all OCTA's projects and programs on schedule.
- Adopted the fiscal year 2020-21 Comprehensive Business Plan, demonstrating the financial capacity to deliver on voter-approved commitments.
- Reset the interest rate on OCTA's federal loan for the I-405 Improvement Project through the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act, commonly called TIFIA.
 - Became the first agency to close on a partially drawn TIFIA loan, lowering the rate from 2.91% to 1.95% that will result in a \$158 million savings over the life of the loan.
- Issued \$663 million in Bond Anticipation Notes (BANs) at 0.34% vs. the TIFIA loan rate of 1.95% that will result in a \$24 million savings over the next three years.
- Implemented a strategy to eliminate a line of credit required by the Build America Bureau for an estimated savings of approximately \$3.4 million.

- Awarded more than \$28 million in Measure M funding for street improvements to help ease traffic congestion and allocated \$40 million for future congestion-relief projects.
- Updated the Measure M Next 10 Plan, ensuring promises to voters will be kept.
- Administered \$130 million in funding from the Federal Transit Administration's Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to help continue providing safe and reliable public transit service.

CHAMPION ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY

- Invested \$2.7 million in projects to remove street trash and debris before it reaches waterways and the ocean.
- Reinitiated the public docent-led hikes and equestrian rides on OCTA's permanently protected conservation properties after a temporary suspension of the program because of the pandemic.
- Created an environmental website to showcase OCTA's ongoing culture of sustainability.

PLAN AND ADAPT TO A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

- Completed a Rail Infrastructure Study, in partnership with Caltrans District 12, to identify opportunities and challenges to better withstand severe weather conditions.
- Received the initial two plug-in battery-electric buses as part of a pilot program to test the technology and move forward on the Board-approved plan of converting the OC Bus fleet to 100 percent zero-emission by 2040.
- Hosted California State Transportation Agency Secretary David S. Kim on a tour of OCTA's hydrogen fueling station – the largest transit-operated station in the nation.

“ Awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association for OCTA's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. ”

“ Received the 2021 Achievement of Excellence in Procurement Award from the National Procurement Institute – one of only 182 agencies and 36 Special Districts in the US and Canada. ”

ENHANCE WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVE WORK CULTURE

- Created two internal task force groups to address diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging, with one focusing on human resources practices and processes and the other focusing on the agency as a whole.
- Conducted more than 100 Unconscious Bias training sessions to ensure all OCTA employees received the training.
- Launched a diversity, equity and inclusion webpage to further strengthen and highlight OCTA's commitment to providing equitable public transportation and engaging with diverse and disadvantaged communities.



ADAPT TO A CHANGING WORKPLACE AND PROMOTE EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT AND SAFETY

- Continued to take necessary actions in response to the pandemic, implementing health and safety practices to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and increase vaccination access for employees.
- Implemented a return to the workplace plan based on local, state and federal guidelines to safely bring employees back into the workplace while continuing to provide uninterrupted essential services.
- Exceeded the FTA-required Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan performance targets of preventing fatalities, injuries and safety hazards and maintaining system reliability.
- Achieved greater than 99.9% availability for all OCTA's major business applications and telecommunications.
- Completed yearly cybersecurity penetration testing, tabletop exercises, assessments and audits while experiencing zero cybersecurity breaches.
- Deployed phishing and security awareness training and exercises to all administrative staff.

- Completed the co-location of OCTA's data center to an off-site location and decommissioned the on-site data center.
- Delivered OCTA's Management and Intern Development Academies – both virtually and in person – to continue providing professional development to employees throughout the various stages of their careers.

PROVIDE QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE AND COLLABORATE WITH REGIONAL PARTNERS

- Celebrated OCTA's 30-year anniversary with a video, dedicated webpage and social media campaign to mark three decades of delivering balanced and sustainable transit service in Orange County.

“ Awarded a Top Workplaces 2021 honor by the Orange County Register based on an independent, anonymous survey of employees. ”

- Updated the \$1.3 billion SR-91 Implementation Plan – in collaboration with the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) – which will fund improvement projects along the SR-91 corridor in Orange and Riverside counties.
- Approved a cooperative agreement with the County of Orange and city of San Clemente to advance a trio of community-supported south Orange County transportation improvement projects that will meet near-term congestion relief needs while minimizing impacts on the surrounding communities.
- Hosted virtual outreach meetings with more than 4,000 participants to encourage and enhance public engagement in a safe and convenient manner to keep community stakeholders informed and updated on the status of OCTA's projects and programs.
- Successfully supported virtual, in-person and hybrid Board and Committee meetings.





2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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