

## **Meeting of March 28, 2022**

### **I-5 South County Improvements Project Progresses**

The Orange County Transportation Authority's board of directors received an update on improvements to I-5 in South Orange County between SR-73 and El Toro Road.

The I-5 South County Improvements Project, currently under construction, will add one regular lane in each direction between Avery Parkway and Alicia Parkway and extend the second carpool lane in each direction between Alicia Parkway and El Toro Road.

The project will also reconstruct the Avery Parkway and La Paz Road interchanges and the Los Alisos Boulevard overcrossing, reconstruct and add auxiliary lanes, improve on- and off-ramps, and restripe the carpool lanes for continuous access, allowing drivers to move freely between all lanes.

Updates include:

- Construction between SR-73 and Oso Parkway is 53% complete and scheduled for completion in late 2024
- Construction between Oso Parkway and Alicia Parkway is 65% complete and scheduled for completion in early 2024
- Construction between Alicia Parkway and El Toro Road is 31% complete and scheduled for completion in late 2024
- The Avery Parkway off-ramp on northbound I-5 has been realigned
- Paving on the I-5/La Paz Road ramp is underway
- The Aliso Creek bikeway has been realigned

### **Board Recognizes March Employees of the Month**

The OCTA board recognized three employees of the month for March.

The honors went to:

- Soila Mendez, a coach operator at the Santa Ana base who started at OCTA in 2019. Soila achieved three years of safe driving earlier this month and will be completing OCTA's Certified Maintenance Training Class in June.
- Devon Lambe, a journeyman mechanic at the Garden Grove base. Devon recently repaired a bus that would not start intermittently after other mechanics had attempted to diagnose the issue without success.
- Darren Fields, a Section Supervisor IV of Operations Support who joined OCTA in 2001 as a coach operator. Darren oversees 15 supervisors in OCTA's field supervision group, and he continued to report to work at the Garden Grove Annex throughout the pandemic to support his team and help ensure the delivery of OC Bus service.

## **Environmental Work on I-5 Carpool Extension Continues**

The OCTA Board received an update on improvements to I-5 that would extend the carpool lane in South Orange County between Avenida Pico and the San Diego County line.

The project, currently in the environmental phase, would also add an auxiliary lane in each direction and reconstruct existing auxiliary lanes.

Updates include:

- Preliminary traffic estimates and geometrics are complete
- Environmental technical studies and engineering reports have been initiated
- A public outreach consultant was hired to supplement OCTA's outreach efforts

OCTA will hold a public scoping meeting for the project in August. The draft environmental document is scheduled to be released in spring 2023.