

Meeting of October 23, 2023

Board Honors October Employees of the Month

The OCTA board of directors recognized three employees of the month for October.

The honors went to:

- Terrall Turner, an extra board captain at the Garden Grove base who started at OCTA in 2000 as a coach operator. He is an excellent employee who regularly volunteers to cover open assignments and serves as a mentor to new coach operators. Terrall recently achieved an incredible 19 years of safe driving.
- Rogelio Gutierrez, a journeyman mechanic who joined OCTA in 2000. He joined OCTA as a service worker and in 2002, he became an apprentice mechanic. He is currently on swing shift at the Garden Grove base and is a vital member of his team. Rogelio was recently tasked with troubleshooting a bus with a brake issue and his knowledge and expertise led to a quick diagnosis and repair, allowing the bus to quickly be put back into service.
- Lauren Sato, a transportation analyst supporting the strategic planning division who joined OCTA in 2016 as an intern. Lauren is recognized for her dedicated work on the Board and CEO Initiatives and CEO's Action Plan. Lauren works across divisions to monitor and track the progress of these milestones and invests the time to be knowledgeable on various OCTA topics.

Quicker Commute Coming Dec. 1 With Opening of I-405 Improvements

Travelers on one of the nation's busiest highways are about to see their drive improve as two new regular lanes and the 405 Express Lanes are expected to open to traffic Dec. 1, as part of OCTA's I-405 Improvement Project.

More than 95% complete, the \$2.16 billion project is adding one regular lane in each direction between Euclid Street and I-605, as promised to voters through Measure M, Orange County's half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements. The project has also made improvements to streets and freeway on-and off-ramps, and reconstructed 18 bridges, many of which include new sidewalks and bike lanes.

In addition, the project has created the 405 Express Lanes between SR-73 and I-605, giving options to carpoolers to travel for free and solo drivers the choice to speed up their commute for a toll. Vehicles are required to have a FasTrak transponder and a valid account with any toll agency in California to enter the 405 Express Lanes, which will provide drivers with a safe, reliable commute, while maximizing the number of cars that travel at free-flow speeds.

For more information on the 405 Express Lanes and the overall I-405 Improvement Project, visit 405ExpressLanes.com.

Board Advances Orange County Maintenance Facility

The Orange County Transportation Authority board adopted the environmental planning document for the Orange County Maintenance Facility.

The maintenance facility, planned off of Ridge Valley in Irvine, will allow Metrolink passenger trains to be serviced, cleaned and stored locally, instead of having to travel to facilities in other counties. The site will also include a train washing facility similar to a car wash, as well as office space for crews and maintenance staff, parts storage, and parking.

Work to complete the Mitigated Negative Declaration was finalized in 2022. The declaration states there would be no significant impacts to the surrounding community or environment through the construction and operation of the maintenance facility.

The facility represents a significant step in helping to enhance public transportation in Irvine and throughout Orange County and will support greenhouse gas reduction efforts to ensure healthier communities.

For more information, visit octa.net/OCMF.