

Meeting of May 24, 2019

May Employees of the Month Recognized

The Orange County Transportation Authority's board of directors recognized three employees of the month for May.

The honors went to:

- Steve Swanson, coach operator
- Anders Holst, maintenance
- Johnny Dunning, administration

Leonires Arteaga from maintenance was also recognized as an employee of the month for April because he was unable to attend last month's meeting.

OC Flex Celebrates Six Months of Service

The OCTA board received a six-month update of the OC Flex microtransit pilot program, which has been transporting passengers on-demand within two areas of the county since October.

The one-year pilot program allows passengers to request a ride on-demand through a mobile app. The shuttles, each capable of holding up to eight passengers, take riders straight from their pickup location to their destination within two designated zones – one in portions of Huntington Beach and Westminster, and the other in portions of Mission Viejo, Aliso Viejo and Laguna Niguel.

Riders pay \$4.50 when using the OC Flex mobile app or \$5 cash, with no surge pricing. The fare includes unlimited daily rides in either zone and free connections to OC Bus.

OC Flex ridership has been steadily increasing month over month, with more than 12,000 total boardings in its first six months of operation. More than 23 percent of the rides are shared, and nearly 30 percent of riders are transferring to or from an OC Bus or Metrolink train.

The board will receive another OC Flex update after the conclusion of the pilot period in late October. Based on OC Flex's performance, the board may consider continuing, modifying, expanding or eliminating the service.

I-5 South County Improvements to Break Ground

The OCTA board received an update on the I-5 South County Improvements, which will widen the freeway between SR-73 and El Toro Road.

The \$570 million project will speed up commutes through Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel and Lake Forest by adding a regular lane in both directions between Avery Parkway and Alicia Parkway and extending the second carpool lane in both directions between Alicia Parkway and El Toro Road. The project will also reconstruct the Avery Parkway and La Paz Road interchanges, along with the Los Alisos Boulevard overcrossing and nearby auxiliary lanes and on- and off-ramps.

At Friday's meeting, the board also approved TRC Solutions to provide public communications and community outreach services for the project. TRC Solutions has previously worked with OCTA on the West County Connectors Project and the I-5 South County Improvement Project.

The project, which spans 6.5 miles in each direction, will be constructed in three distinct segments. Construction on the first segment between Oso Parkway and Alicia Parkway is expected to kick off this month and the entire project is scheduled for completion in early 2025.