

## **Meeting of June 13, 2022**

### **OCTA Approves \$1.65 Billion Balanced Budget for FY 2022-23**

The Orange County Transportation Authority's board of directors approved a budget of approximately \$1.65 billion for the upcoming fiscal year – a balanced budget that keeps essential transportation improvements moving forward while responsibly planning for the future.

Overall, the fiscal year 2022-23 budget represents approximately a \$383 million – or 30% – increase over the previous year's budget. The budget, which takes effect on July 1, reflects higher-than-anticipated sales-tax revenue but also accounts for the possibility of additional service demands and the potential for an economic downturn.

Measure M, Orange County's local half-cent sales tax for transportation, will continue to fund improvements to freeways and streets throughout Orange County, along with multiple transit and environmental programs. Included in the budget is \$385 million to help fund freeway improvements and nearly \$59 million for transit, including \$38 million for the ongoing construction of OC Streetcar, the county's first modern electric streetcar in Santa Ana and Garden Grove.

Additionally, approximately \$165 million will go toward improving local streets, including more than \$71 million in formula funding directly to cities, \$49 million to provide more traffic capacity and \$44 million for traffic-signal synchronization.

The budget will also continue to support OCTA's ongoing emphasis on environmental programs and a move toward zero-emission vehicles. That includes \$11.8 million for two programs that offset the environmental impacts of continuing to improve Orange County freeways, and \$3 million for 10 all-electric paratransit buses.

OC Bus service is scheduled to return to pre-pandemic levels with up to 1.6 million service hours, and the budget includes funding to handle an expected increase in OC ACCESS paratransit service. Actual OC Bus service levels will be added back as demand increases.

OCTA will also contribute approximately \$46 million to the Southern California Regional Rail Authority for Metrolink, which plans to restore commuter train service to pre-pandemic levels. More than half of that funding to Metrolink from Orange County, nearly \$27 million, will come from supplemental federal funding.

The 2022-23 budget is a result of OCTA's mission to deliver innovative, long-term sustainable transportation solutions for the residents of Orange County.

### **Measure M Continuing to Improve Orange County Mobility**

OCTA's board received a quarterly report that highlights the progress of Measure M's projects and programs for the first three months of 2022.

Highlights include:

- Work progressed on the I-5 South County Improvements Project, which is scheduled for completion in 2024, and the I-405 Improvement Project, which is expected to fully open to traffic next year.
- A consultant was selected to prepare plans, specifications and estimates for future improvements to SR-55 between I-5 and SR-91.
- Construction continued on the OC Streetcar project, including the placement of the first embedded track-slab concrete on Fourth Street, installation of ballasted track between the Westminster and Santa Ana River bridges and installation of the first steel structures for the maintenance and storage facility.
- A call for projects was released through the environmental cleanup program, which awards money on a competitive basis to cities and the county for projects that reduce the impacts of water pollution related to transportation. Since 2011, the program has allocated

more than \$54 million to projects that have captured an estimated 45.3 million gallons of trash.

- Ridership on Metrolink trains continued to trend positively, with total boardings on the Orange County line increasing on average by more than 100% compared to the same quarter last year. Measure M is the primary funding source for Metrolink service in Orange County.