

Meeting of Aug. 24, 2015

\$56 million committed to OC Streetcar

The OCTA board approved the use of \$56 million from Measure M to partially fund the \$289 million OC Streetcar project.

Measure M is Orange County's half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements first approved by voters in 1990 and renewed in 2006. The rest of the project will be funded through other federal, state and local sources.

The OC Streetcar is planned to travel along a route just longer than 4 miles through the cities of Santa Ana and Garden Grove, providing easy connections for people traveling from trains and buses to employment, retail and recreational areas.

OCTA's next steps in developing the streetcar include beginning right-of-way acquisition and vehicle procurement, submitting the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts application and requesting entry into the engineering phase.

The streetcar is expected to move into the design phase later this year with construction planned to begin in 2017. On the current schedule, the streetcar would begin running in 2019.

Hennessey reappointed to board

Michael Hennessey, one of the two public members serving on OCTA's board, was reappointed for another four-year term.

The 15 voting board members that represent the county and cities appoint public members through a majority vote. Public members must be Orange County residents that have not served as elected officials of a city, county, agency or Orange County special district within the last four years.

Hennessey was initially appointed to the board in 2011. He has more than 20 years of experience in the Southern California real estate industry, working in housing and development for redevelopment agencies as well as commercial and residential development companies. He is currently the principal of Hennessey Group, a real estate development and consulting firm.

Study reveals information about declining bus ridership

A bus market study conducted because of declining OCTA bus ridership has provided a number of indicators as to why fewer people are riding the bus.

Of the former riders who participated in the study, 36 percent no longer live in Orange County and 70 percent now have access to their own vehicle.

To increase ridership, OCTA has developed an action plan that includes:

- Launching the Bravo! Route 560 to Long Beach in June 2016
- Introducing faster service by looking to consolidate stops
- Developing a mobile ticketing app
- Launching the new OC Bus brand
- Enhancing and promoting the use of real-time bus information including schedules, detours and alerts through apps, texting, the website, e-mail and social media

Board recognizes employees of the month

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

Resolutions of appreciation were presented to:

- Sheree Harris, coach operator
- Charles Henke from maintenance
- George Olivo, facilities engineering manager