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OCTA Accelerates Transportation Project Construction

OCTA is working with Caltrans and other partners where possible to speed up construction on essential freeway and rail projects for Orange County.

ORANGE – Even as millions of California residents follow state orders to stay home to help stop the spread of COVID-19, work continues at a rapid pace on transportation improvement projects across Orange County – work the state has deemed as essential.

That includes accelerated construction on several major projects led by the Orange County Transportation Authority, including the \$1.9 billion I-405 Improvement Project on 16 miles between Costa Mesa and the border with Los Angeles County, the 1.4-mile OC Streetcar in Santa Ana and Garden Grove, and improvements along Interstate 5 in south and central Orange County.

Construction crews are working under direction from OCTA and Caltrans to take advantage of decreased freeway traffic volumes when possible to close lanes during the day so more work can be completed. On the I-405 project, estimates are that extended closures will provide more than 4,800 additional work hours from mid-March to mid-May.

Construction is also in full swing on a new passing siding railroad track in Laguna Niguel and San Juan Capistrano. The project, led by OCTA and being built by Reyes Construction, began in spring 2019 and is expected to be complete by early 2021.

Crews used a recent weekend work window with no train traffic through the area to relocate and move new rail into place. (Click [here](#) to see some of the work that was completed during the work window.)

“We want the public to know that even as we all work to manage the effects of the coronavirus, OCTA remains dedicated to fulfilling the promises made to voters through Measure M and doing so in a safe manner,” said OCTA Chairman Steve Jones, also the mayor of Garden Grove.

Measure M is Orange County’s half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements. Also known as OC Go, it was renewed by nearly 70 percent of voters in 2006 and is expected to help Orange County make more than \$13 billion worth of transportation improvements by 2041, including to freeways, streets, bus and rail transit.

With the passing siding rail project, OCTA is working in coordination with Metrolink and the cities of Laguna Niguel and San Juan Capistrano to add 1.8 miles of new railroad track between the Laguna Niguel/Mission Viejo Metrolink Station and Trabuco Creek in San Juan Capistrano. The project runs next to the I-5 freeway.

The passing siding track is being constructed adjacent to the existing track, connecting to it at each end, allowing trains traveling in opposite directions to pass each other without stopping.

The improvements will reduce delays, increase safety and provide more reliable rail service for the region.

The health and safety of the public and its employees is the top priority for OCTA, which continues to take guidance from local, state and federal officials and health experts as it moves forward with all of its projects and programs.

For all project updates, visit OCTA's homepage at www.octa.net. For updates specific to the passing siding rail project, visit www.octa.net/passingsiding.

Photo caption: Work crews construct part of the Laguna Niguel to San Juan Capistrano Passing Siding Improvement Project, expected to be complete in mid-2021. Photo courtesy of the Reyes Construction.

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About OCTA: The Orange County Transportation Authority is the county transportation planning commission, responsible for funding and implementing transit and capital projects for a balanced and sustainable transportation system that reflects the diverse travel needs of the county's 34 cities and 3.2 million residents. With the mission of keeping Orange County moving, this includes freeways and express lanes, bus and rail transit, rideshare, commuter rail and active transportation.