

Meeting of June 14, 2021

OCTA Approves \$1.3 Billion Balanced Budget for FY 21-22

The Orange County Transportation Authority's board of directors approved a budget of approximately \$1.3 billion for the upcoming fiscal year that begins July 1.

The balanced budget – down more than \$282 million or 18% compared to last year's amended OCTA budget – makes conservative assumptions due to the ongoing financial effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic while keeping important transportation improvements moving forward.

Major initiatives for the budget include advancing capital improvement projects on freeways, including I-405, I-5 in South County, SR-55, SR-57 and SR-91. It will also improve local streets and continue serving Orange County's transit needs, while keeping health and safety as the top priority.

OCTA Releases the Draft 2021 SR-91 Implementation Plan

OCTA, working with the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), has released its annual plan for potential transportation improvements along the SR-91 corridor between SR-57 in Orange County and I-15 in Riverside County.

The plan was prepared in consultation with Caltrans, the Transportation Corridor Agencies (TCA), and the cities of Anaheim, Corona, Orange and Yorba Linda.

Since 2003, more than \$1.9 billion has been invested along the SR-91 corridor with the completion of nine projects, which has helped accommodate population and employment growth in the region.

OCTA, RCTC, TCA and Caltrans will continue working together to coordinate future projects along SR-91 to ensure improvements can be made in a way that minimizes impacts to drivers.

In Orange County, three projects totaling approximately \$524 million are planned to help improve SR-91:

- 91 Freeway improvements between SR-57 and SR-55
- Anaheim Canyon Metrolink Station improvements
- Placentia Metrolink Rail Station

OCTA Purchases Chargers for Plug-In Battery Electric Buses

The OCTA board approved the purchase of 10 battery chargers to support a pilot program testing how plug-in battery-electric buses perform in Orange County.

The action is the latest among OCTA's many efforts to move to 100 percent zero-emission technology by 2040.

The contract with One Source Distributors, for approximately \$863,000, will provide 10 battery chargers for the 40-foot buses that will operate as part of the pilot program beginning later this year. The cost of the chargers, which also includes training for those who will operate and maintain the equipment, is paid for through the state's Low Carbon Transit Operations Program.

To support the charging of these vehicles, OCTA is also partnering with Southern California Edison to provide necessary electrical infrastructure at the Garden Grove bus base.

Board Receives Update on Regional Traffic Signal Synchronization Program

The OCTA board received an update on the Regional Traffic Signal Synchronization Program, which is funded in part by Measure M, Orange County's half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements, also known as OC Go.

Through Measure M, OCTA awards competitive grants annually to projects dedicated to the synchronization of traffic signals. The projects improve travel times, reduce delays and congestion, and increase the number of successive green lights drivers see during their daily commutes.

Since 2008, OCTA, working with cities and the county, has successfully implemented new traffic signal synchronization timing along 89 corridors.

The completed projects:

- Reduced average travel time by 13 percent and the average number of stops by 29 percent
- Increased average speed by 14 percent
- Saved drivers approximately \$178.4 million on fuel costs
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 919 million pounds over a three-year period

OCTA is currently funding an additional 31 signal synchronization projects, totaling \$55.7 million. Once completed, these projects will synchronize an additional 1,200 signals along 316 miles of road.