

Meeting of April 24, 2023

Board Recognizes April Employees of the Month

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

The honors went to:

- Kevin Driftmier, a coach operator at the Garden Grove base who started at OCTA in 2019. He is a model coach operator who has achieved two years of safe driving. Kevin recently assisted a customer in need outside of the bus, clearly demonstrating OCTA's can-do spirit and going above and beyond his duties.
- Maichou Aparicio, a service worker who joined OCTA in 2000. Over the past year, she has performed lead service worker duties servicing an average of 18 buses per night, while simultaneously covering multiple assignments including fueling buses and performing graffiti abatement to ensure morning roll out is made. Maichou exemplifies OCTA's core values and always brings a great attitude to work.
- Eric Torres, a senior civil engineer in the facilities engineering department who started at OCTA in 2022. That same year, he served as project manager on OCTA's Transit Asset Management Plan update which assessed all OCTA transit facilities. Eric is currently managing several facilities projects including the zero-emission bus pilot program and continues to demonstrate high performance and excellent project management skills.

OCTA Selects Outreach Firm for I-5/El Toro Road Interchange Project

OCTA's board approved the selection of Barrios and Associates, LLC to provide public outreach services for the I-5/El Toro Road Interchange Project.

The I-5/El Toro Road interchange is a major intersection in south Orange County connecting drivers to residential communities, businesses and other destinations in the cities of Laguna Hills, Laguna Woods and Lake Forest. The project, currently in the environmental phase, will improve traffic flow and ease congestion, as well as accommodate an expected increase in regional traffic and improve access to and from the I-5 freeway.

Proposed enhancements include improving El Toro Road and other local roads, modifying entrance and exit ramps and modifying or replacing bridges.

The consultant will support OCTA in executing a proactive and comprehensive public outreach and communications plan that will help the public understand the project's benefits and communicate construction updates. The plan will include announcing the relaunch of the environmental process, creating project collateral, developing and distributing messaging to residents, business owners, commuters and other stakeholders, and planning, organizing, and hosting community updates, public scoping meetings, and public hearings.

For more information on the project, visit octa.net/I5ElToro.

Board Approves Updated Funding Plan for I-405 Improvement Project

The OCTA board approved an updated funding plan for the I-405 Improvement Project, which is now more than 90% complete.

The updated plan brings the total project cost to \$2.16 billion, an increase of 3.8% over the project's most recent budget approved by the board in late 2020.

The additional \$80 million will be funded by Measure M, Orange County's half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements, bringing the total Measure M contribution to \$1.4 billion.

Construction on the I-405 Improvement Project has been progressing and several major milestones have been recently accomplished, including:

- All retaining and sound walls are complete.
- 57 of the 58 freeway on-and off-ramps are complete.
- 11 of the 18 bridge replacements are complete and open to traffic.

The 16-mile I-405 Improvement Project is the largest highway project under construction in the state. It is adding a regular lane in each direction of I-405 between Costa Mesa and the Orange County border with Los Angeles County, along with a second lane that will become part of the 405 Express Lanes.

For more information on the project, visit octa.net/405improvementProject.