

Meeting of Feb. 10, 2025

2024 Employees of the Year Recognized

The Orange County Transportation Authority's Board of Directors recognized three employees of the year for 2024.

- Felipe Michel, a coach operator, was honored for his professionalism and unwavering commitment to safety that was showcased through standout performances at both the Southern California Regional Bus Roadeo and the International Bus Roadeo.
- Rafael Luna, a maintenance employee, was recognized for his keen attention to detail that has led to solutions to help ensure the OC Bus fleet continues running safely and efficiently.
- Louis Zhao, an administrative employee, was recognized for his exceptional leadership that helped secure more than \$300 million in grants to safeguard the rail line in south Orange County.

OCTA Board Advances Priority Coastal Rail Projects

The OCTA board took another decisive step in the ongoing effort to protect and stabilize the coastal rail line through San Clemente by advancing four priority projects.

Since 2021, multiple bluff failures and landslides on privately owned land, along with coastal erosion, have significantly impacted rail operations along the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) rail corridor, requiring emergency stabilization efforts.

Subsequently, studies indicated that four other areas through San Clemente are at risk. To address these urgent concerns, OCTA has been collaborating with geotechnical, structural and coastal engineers, alongside key stakeholders to develop projects that will ensure that service continues operating through this area. Those projects, now in the environmental and preliminary engineering phase, include:

- Reinforcement Area 3: A proposed catchment wall at Mariposa Point designed to protect the tracks from landslides.
- Reinforcement Areas 1, 2 and 4: OCTA is evaluating multiple protective measures, including riprap repair, engineering revetments, seawalls and sand nourishment to address coastal erosion risks.

For more information, visit octa.net/CRRS.

Improvements to I-5 in Tustin and Irvine Coming Soon

The OCTA board received an update on the I-5 Improvement Project between I-405 and SR-55, which is currently in the final design phase.

The project will add one regular lane in each direction of the freeway and add new auxiliary lanes between Culver Drive and Jamboree Road in the northbound direction, and between Jeffrey Road and Sand Canyon Avenue in the southbound direction. The project will also restripe carpool lanes so drivers can enter and exit at any point.

Construction is expected to begin in 2026 and wrap up in 2030.

For more information on the project, visit octa.net/15IrvineTustinProject.