

GUIDELINES EXCERPT COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION FUNDING PROGRAMS GUIDELINES

2026 CALL FOR PROJECTS

Orange County Transportation Authority



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Chapter 11 – Environmental Cleanup Program (Project X)

Overview

The ECP, herein referred to as Project X, provides M2 revenues to improve overall water quality in Orange County from transportation-generated pollution. Specifically, OCTA's Ordinance No. 3 (Ordinance), dated July 24, 2006, provides that 2 percent (2%) of gross M2 revenues be dedicated to protecting Orange County beaches and waterways from the conveyance of urban runoff associated with transportation-generated pollution. Project X ensures that funds will be used on a countywide competitive basis to meet federal Clean Water Act standards for controlling transportation-generated pollution by funding nationally recognized Best Management Practices (BMPs).

As required by the Ordinance, an Environmental Cleanup Allocation Committee (ECAC), representing a broad cross-section of the water quality community, was formed in October 2007 to provide guidance on program design and funding. The goal of Project X is to fund projects on a countywide, competitive basis. This will assist the County of Orange and Orange County cities in reducing transportation-related water quality pollution by meeting Clean Water Act standards for local waterways and beaches.

Proposed projects must demonstrate a direct nexus (connection) to a reduction of transportation-related pollution as developed and defined by the ECAC in conformity with the Ordinance. All proposing agencies must demonstrate an understanding of how their proposed projects meet the following transportation pollution nexus definition:

- Transportation-related activities can be a contributor of pollutants and/or impairments to receiving waters via aerial deposition, storm, and non-storm water discharges. Transportation-related activities are associated with the operation, construction, and maintenance of public roads, highways, and other ground transportation systems.
- The conveyance of transportation-related pollutants to surface and groundwater can occur from precipitation, runoff, and leachate entering or discharging from public roads, highways, and other ground transportation systems via drainage systems, such as catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, manmade channels, retention basins, or storm drains. The quality and quantity of these discharges vary considerably and are affected by hydrology, geology, land use, season, and sequence and discharge of hydrologic events.
- Pollutant sources can encompass right-of-way, properties, facilities, and activities related to motor vehicles, highway maintenance, construction site runoff, maintenance facility runoff, illegal dumping, spills, and landscaping care. Pollutant categories include but are not limited to metals (such as copper, lead, and zinc), organic chemicals and compounds (hydrocarbons), pesticides, sediment, nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus), litter, oxygen demanding substances (decaying

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vegetation, animal waste, and other organic matter), groundwater dewatering discharges, and pathogenic material.

Project X funds are designed to supplement, not supplant, existing water quality programs. Proposed projects must improve and not replace existing pollution reduction efforts by an eligible party. Funds will be awarded to the most competitive projects with the highest benefit to water quality.

The intent of Project X is to provide funding for water quality projects that do not replace existing transportation water quality expenditures. In other words, if a project has components which would replace features already in place or which would fulfill project specific mitigation, those components would not be eligible for funding consideration. Some upgrades and expansions may be eligible with appropriate supporting justification.

Proposed projects, which support compliance with the 2015 adopted Trash Provisions, are eligible for Project X funding provided the funds do not replace established and programmed funds and the funds are not applied to any mandated project design features or required mitigation measures.

The eligibility of the project and its components will be determined during the evaluation process. Contact [Mason Doshier](#) at (714) 560-[5427](#), or mdoshier@octa.net with questions.

Tier 1 Grant Program

Overview

The Tier 1 Grant Program is designed to mitigate the more visible forms of pollutants, such as litter and debris, which collect on roadways and in the catch basins (storm drains) prior to being deposited in waterways and the ocean. It consists of grant funding for Orange County local governments to purchase equipment and upgrades for existing catch basins and other related BMPs (i.e., “street-scale” low flow diversion projects). Examples include screens, filters, and inserts for catch basins, as well as other devices designed to remove the above-mentioned pollutants. To date, [15](#) Tier 1 calls for projects have been held. Through this process, many of the opportunities for street-scale BMPs have been fulfilled. Water quality projects, regardless of technology, are eligible for Tier 1 funding provided they have a verifiable benefit to water quality and fall within the maximum per project programming cap. The intent of this funding program is for project applicants to complete the work generally within one year from the letter agreement execution date.

Tier 1 Project Types

Tier 1 projects funded in the past include the following types. A description of each project type is provided below:

- 1) Automatic Retractable Screen and other debris screens or inserts: screen or insert units prevent debris from entering the storm drain system.
- 2) Irrigation system retrofits with non-spraying heads to reduce runoff: these projects decrease runoff from highway medians by using more efficient irrigation systems and/or replacing existing landscape to reduce the amount of water used in irrigation.
- 3) Continuous Deflection Separator (CDS): CDS units screen, separate, and trap debris, sediment, oil, and grease from storm water runoff.
- 4) Linear Radial Gross Solid Removal Device (GSRD): GSRDs are certified full capture systems which efficiently remove large solids from runoff water flows.
- 5) Marina Trash Skimmer: these devices draw in floating debris, such as plastics, bottles, paper, oil sheen, and driftwood. The installation of marina trash skimmers will reduce the amount of trash and debris reaching the open ocean.
- 6) Bioswales and Bioretention systems: pollutants and sediments are captured and subsequently removed from stormwater runoff.
- 7) Trash Boom: a floating boom placed across a channel captures trash and debris that have reached flood channels from being further conveyed to downstream receiving waters.

Pre-Application Process

In order to ensure the best use of M2 funds and assist eligible jurisdictions with the Tier 1 Grant Program, applicants may engage in a pre-application process with OCTA staff in project planning, cost estimate development, and determination of likely projected competitiveness. Specific meeting times will be established once the call is initiated. After the call for projects deadline and submittal of the grant application, applicants will not be able to change the content of the application or scope of the project.

Eligible Applicants

Project X funds can be used to implement transportation-related water quality improvement projects to assist Orange County cities and the County of Orange to meet federal Clean Water Act standards for urban runoff and State Water Resources Control Board requirements for trash capture. Applicants eligible for Project X funds include the 34 Orange County cities plus the County of Orange. Eligible applicants must meet the transportation requirements discussed in the M2 Ordinance.

Third parties, such as water and wastewater public entities, environmental resource organizations, nonprofit 501(c) environmental institutions, and homeowners' associations cannot act as the lead agency for a proposed project; however, these agencies can coordinate with an eligible Orange County city and/or the County of Orange.

Two or more agencies may participate in a project. If a joint application among agencies and/or third-party entities is submitted, a preliminary agreement with joint or third-party entities must be provided as part of the application. In order to meet Ordinance requirements, an eligible applicant must be the lead agency for the funding application. If a project includes more than one jurisdiction and is being submitted as a joint application, one agency shall act as lead agency and must provide a resolution of support from all joint applicants.

Each eligible jurisdiction must meet the eligibility criteria as set forth in Chapter 1 of these guidelines.

Project Programming

The Tier 1 Grant Program approach is designed to be consistent with Chapter 2 of the CTFP Guidelines regarding the provisions below:

- Program Consolidation
- Funding Projections
- Project Cost Escalation
- Programming Adjustments
- Programming Policies

- Schedule Change Requests
- Timely use of Funds
- Project Advancements
- Semi-Annual Review

Refer to Chapter 2 for explanations of the above provisions.

Funding Estimates

Approximately \$3.5 million is available for the [2026](#) Tier 1 call for projects.

The maximum amount for the Tier 1 Grant Program is \$600,000 per project. The maximum amount that an eligible local agency can receive in this funding period is \$600,000.

Matching Funds

For the Tier 1 Grant Program, a minimum local match of 20 percent (20%) of the eligible project cost is required. The matching funds shall be provided as a cash contribution.

Retroactive expenditures cannot be credited towards the matching fund threshold or project expenditures.

Overmatch

For the Tier 1 Grant Program, administering agencies may “overmatch” Project X projects; that is, additional cash match may be provided for the project. Applicants will receive additional points in the evaluation process for matching with cash above the minimum requirement. Proposals that exceed the 20 percent (20%) minimum funding match will be given an additional one-half point for every five percent (5%) over the minimum cash match (up to five bonus points).

Additionally, administering agencies must commit to cover any future cost overruns if the project is underfunded. Any work not eligible for Project X reimbursement must be funded by other means by the project applicant and cannot count as match. These non-eligible items should not be included in the cost estimate breakdown in the application.

Reimbursements

For the Tier 1 Grant Program, OCTA will release funds through two payments. The initial payment will constitute 75 percent (75%) of the CTFP grant share of the contract award or grant amount at contract award, whichever is less. OCTA will disburse the final payment, approximately 25 percent (25%) of eligible funds, after approval of the final report. Further information on reimbursements can be located within Chapter 9 of the CTFP Guidelines.

Scope Reductions/Modifications and Cost Savings

Any proposed scope modifications, such as a change in BMP device quantities and/or the adjustment of device locations of an approved project must be submitted to OCTA staff for review and approval in advance of the change to ensure consistency with Tier 1 Grant

Program requirements. The proposed modifications must mitigate the same pollutants, affect the same waterways, and meet all other provisions as stipulated in these guidelines.

OCTA staff will review and provide notification to the local agency of either approval or rejection of the scope change or if the modification warrants Board approval. If the proposed scope modification is approved by OCTA, any cost savings will be proportionally shared between OCTA and the grantee; for example, a reduction in Project X funds must be applied proportionally to maintain the approved local match percentage. All cost savings will be returned to the Tier 1 Grant Program for reallocation for subsequent calls for projects.

2026 Tier 1 Call for Projects

The Tier 1 call will be open for approximately 60 days. **2026** Tier 1 Call for Projects applications must be received by OCTA **no later than 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 7, 2026**. OCTA allocates funds on July 1 of each year. **Tier 1 projects are not eligible for delay requests**; please refer to Precept 17 for additional information. Funds will become available upon execution of a letter agreement. Projects that do not award construction contracts by December 31, **2027** will not be considered.

Applications will be reviewed by OCTA for consistency, accuracy and concurrence. Applications determined complete in accordance with the program requirements will be evaluated and scored by an advisory review panel. Project rankings and funding recommendations will be presented to the ECAC and subsequently forwarded to the OCTA Board of Directors for consideration and funding approval.

Local agencies awarded funding will be notified as to which projects have been funded. No additional funds will be allocated for any project once approved by the OCTA Board. Grantees are responsible for any costs exceeding the allocated amount. A tentative call schedule is detailed below:

Board authorization to issue call: March 9, 2026

Application submittal deadline: May 7, 2026

ECAC Review: August 2026

Committee/Board approval: Fall 2026

~~After Tier 1 applications are reviewed by OCTA, an advisory panel will review and rank projects. Following a review by the ECAC, a recommended priority list of projects will be forwarded to the OCTA Board for approval in fall 2026⁴. Funds allocated for projects are final once approved by the OCTA Board. No additional funds will be allocated to the project. Grantees are responsible for any costs exceeding the allocated amount.~~

Tier 1 Selection Criteria

OCTA will evaluate all proposals that meet the mandatory prerequisites based on competitive selection criteria (Exhibit 11-1) with the following categories:

- Project Need, Transportation Nexus, and Water Quality Benefits (15 points)

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- Cost/Benefit (16 points)
- Pollutant Reduction Benefits (12 points)
- Effectiveness Against More Visible Forms of Pollutants (10 points)
- Justification for Project Devices Considered and Proposed (5 points)
- Proposed Device Performance Efficiency and/or Effectiveness (6 points)
- Project Readiness (6 points)
- Secondary attributes* (5 points)
- Methodology for Measuring Pollutant Reduction Before and After Implementation (10 points)
- Operations and Maintenance Plan (15 points)

**Note: Project elements which may qualify for points under the "secondary attributes" category do not need to be eligible expenditures. See Eligible Expenditures and Ineligible Expenditures sections for further information.*

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Each proposal can receive a maximum of 100 points, exclusive of five bonus points for cash overmatch. See Exhibit 11-1 for scoring categories and point distribution.

Exhibit 11-1 (Tier 1 Scoring Criteria)

Scoring Criteria

Points Possible

1. Describe the need for the selected BMP(s), including nexus to transportation pollutants, and detail the benefits to water quality the BMP(s) will achieve. (up to 15 Points) **15**
2. Cost/Benefit (Up to 16 points): Based on information provided by the applicant, a cost/benefit calculation will be conducted to compare the total project cost to the area of priority land uses treated by the proposed BMP(s). Applicant is required to provide¹: **16**
 - Types(s) of BMP(s) proposed
 - Number of each BMP type
 - Total drainage area(s) contributing to each BMP type
 - Percent of drainage area(s) that is/are considered priority land uses (i.e., high density residential, industrial, commercial, mixed urban, public transportation stations)

The applicant must also provide geospatial information (through ArcGIS and/or Google Earth) that identifies the drainage area(s) and BMP location(s) for the project.
3. Pollutant Reduction Benefits: Based on treatment capacity and BMP type, project benefit will be calculated using the scoring equation: $(A \times 3) + (B \times 3) + (C \times 6) =$ (up to 12 points)¹ **12**

Line	Factor	Points Available
A	Fractional percent of 1 year, 1-hour event flowrate discharging from priority land uses to the BMP(s)	0 to 1
B	Fractional percent of 85th percentile, 24-hr design event that is treated by a low-impact development (LID) or treatment control BMP ²	0 to 1.5
C	BMP Multiplier: ▪ 1/3 point for high capacity systems ▪ 2/3 point for filters/biofilters ▪ 1 point for zero-discharge BMPs	0 to 1

¹Applicants are not expected to calculate the score for question 2 and question 3. OCTA's technical consultant will provide the analysis for these questions based on the application materials provided by the applicant.

²Examples include high-capacity systems (i.e., hydrodynamic separators), filters/biofilters, or zero-discharge BMPs (i.e., retention/infiltration).

4. How effective will the proposed project be in dealing with the more visible forms of pollutants, such as a litter and debris? (up to 10 points) **10**
5. What other BMP types were considered for this project? Why was the proposed BMP chosen? (5 points) **5**
6. Provide information on proposed BMP performance efficiency and/or effectiveness, including pollutant capture, storage capacity, flow capacity, etc. (up to 6 points) **6**
7. Project Readiness: The project schedule will be reviewed by the evaluation committee to determine when the proposed BMP will be operational following OCTA Board of Directors approval. (up to 6 points): **6**

Less than 4 Months	(6 points)	8 - 12 months	(2 points)
4 - 8 months	(4 points)	More than 12 months	(1 point)

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8. Secondary Attributes: Will the proposed project provide any benefits beyond water quality improvement (i.e., water use efficiency, public awareness, flooding control, recreation, habitat, sustainability)? (up to 5 points)	5
9. What is the methodology for measuring pollutant reduction before and after the BMP is implemented? How frequently will monitoring and performance assessment occur? (up to 10 points)	10
10. Provide an O&M plan for the lifespan of the proposed project. Include schedule of inspections, cleaning, removal and disposal of pollutants, repairs, etc. (up to 15 points)	15
	100
11. BONUS: Are local matching funds in excess of the 20% minimum cash being proposed? If yes, at what percentage? (.5 point for each 5% cash overmatch, up to 5 points)	5
	105

Application Process

The following information, which is to be completed within the Tier 1 Grant Application Form, available electronically from OCTA, is required to evaluate and select projects. A checklist is included in the Tier 1 Grant Application Form to assist eligible agencies in assembling project proposals. The following project information will be necessary as part of the application process:

- Project Title
- Lead Agency Information
- Proposed Schedule
- Project Management
- Description and Scope of Proposed Project
- Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) identification (if applicable)
- Project Readiness
- Performance Metrics
- Detailed Project Estimate
- Minimum 20% Local Match (cash match only)
- Joint-Application (if applicable)

In addition to the completed Tier 1 Grant Application, the following documentation is required as part of the application process:

- Project design or concept drawings, including preliminary design calculations, of proposed BMPs.
- Precise maps to show tributary drainage area and proposed location(s) for BMP installation including geospatial information (through ArcGIS and/or Google Earth)
- Digital project site photos
- Preliminary agreements with joint and/or third-party entities if part of the funding application (if applicable)
- A city council resolution specific to each proposed project and funding commitment must be approved by the local jurisdiction's governing body prior to the Board approval of grant funds. A sample resolution is included as Exhibit 11-2. **Local agencies, at a minimum, must include items a-l.** The mechanism selected shall serve as a formal request for CTFP funds and states that matching funds will be provided by the agency. A final resolution authorizing a request for funding consideration with a commitment of local match funding must be provided with the project application. **If a *draft copy of the resolution is provided, the local agency must also provide the date the resolution will be finalized by the local agency's governing body.*** For a project to be considered for funding the City Council approved resolution must be provided at least four (4) weeks **PRIOR** to the programming recommendations being presented to OCTA's Board.

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One electronic copy of the complete application form and supporting documentation materials must be submitted to OCTA by the application deadline. Electronic application materials should be submitted via email as an attachment, or via a link to an online storage device site, such as DropBox or OneDrive. Submittal via USB drive is also allowed. CD/DVD files will not be accepted. There is no maximum length for proposals.

Application materials are to be submitted by the call for projects deadline to the following OCTA staff email or via digital media device by mail or in person:

[Mason Doshier](#)

Orange County Transportation Authority

mdoshier@octa.net

By mail:

[Mason Doshier](#)

Orange County Transportation Authority

P.O. Box 14184

Orange, CA 92863-1584

Tel: (714) 560-[5427](#)

In person:

Orange County Transportation Authority

600 South Main Street

Orange, CA 92863-1584

Note: when submitting via email, please note that certain attachments may be subject to file size or file type restrictions, which may prevent emails from being successfully sent to OCTA. OCTA staff will provide a confirmation email that the application was successfully received by the deadline.

Applications are considered final once the electronic application has been submitted. OCTA will document the submittal date and time and download the files for storage and application review. Any applications that do not contain all required information and documentation will be disqualified. Revisions may be allowed if changes are made prior to the application deadline.

Exhibit 11-2 (Tier 1 Sample Resolution)

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL/BOARD OF THE CITY/COUNTY OF _____

AUTHORIZING AN APPLICATION FOR FUNDS FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANUP, TIER 1 GRANT PROGRAM
UNDER ORANGE COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION ORDINANCE NO. 3 FOR
(PROJECT NAME).

- (a) WHEREAS, Orange County Local Transportation Ordinance No. 3, dated July 24, 2006, and is known and cited as the Renewed Measure M Transportation Ordinance and Investment Plan makes funds available through the Environmental Cleanup Program to help protect Orange County beaches and waterways from transportation-generated pollution (urban runoff) and improve overall water quality; and
 - (b) WHEREAS, the Environmental Cleanup, Tier 1 Grant Program consists of funding purchases and installation to catch basins with Best Management Practices, such as screens, filters, inserts, and other "street-scale" low flow diversion projects; and
 - (c) WHEREAS, OCTA has established the procedures and criteria for reviewing proposals; and
 - (d) WHEREAS, (ADMINISTERING AGENCY) possesses authority to nominate water quality improvement projects that have a transportation pollution nexus to finance and construct the proposed project; and
 - (e) WHEREAS, by formal action the (GOVERNING BODY) authorizes the nomination of (PROJECT NAME), including all understanding and assurances contained therein, and authorizes the person identified as the official representative of the (ADMINISTERING AGENCY) to act in connection with the nomination and to provide such additional information as may be required; and
 - (f) WHEREAS, the (ADMINISTERING AGENCY) will maintain and operate the equipment acquired and installed; and
 - (g) WHEREAS, the (ADMINISTERING AGENCY) will give OCTA's representatives access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers or documents related to the funded Tier 1 Grant Project; and
 - (h) WHEREAS, the (ADMINISTERING AGENCY) will cause work on the project to be commenced within a reasonable time after receipt of notification from OCTA and that the project will be carried to completion with reasonable diligence; and
 - (i) WHEREAS, the (ADMINISTERING AGENCY) will comply where applicable with provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, the American with Disabilities Act, and any other federal, state, and/or local laws, rules and/or regulations; and
 - (j) WHEREAS, the (ADMINISTERING AGENCY) must include all projects funded by Net Revenues in the seven-year Capital Improvement Program as part of the Renewed Measure M Ordinance eligibility requirement; and
 - (k) WHEREAS, the (ADMINISTERING AGENCY) authorizes a formal amendment to the seven-year Capital Improvement Program to add projects approved for funding upon approval from the Orange County Transportation Authority Board of Directors; and
 - (l) WHEREAS, the City/County of _____ will provide a minimum of 20% in matching funds for the (PROJECT NAME) as required by the Orange County Comprehensive Transportation Funding Programs Guidelines.
- NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City/County of _____ hereby authorizes (NAME OF AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE) as the official representative of the (ADMINISTERING AGENCY) to accept funds for the Environmental Cleanup, Tier 1 Grant Program for (PROJECT NAME).
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City/County of _____ agrees to fund its share of the project costs and any additional costs over the identified programmed amount.

Eligible Expenditures

- Tier 1 projects must meet the transportation nexus as outlined previously in this chapter.
- Project X funds must be for capital improvements.
- For Tier 1, construction support cannot exceed 20 percent (20%) of the M2 grant, subject to match requirements.
- Project X funds can only be used for facilities that are in public ownership for public use; however, water quality improvements on private property, which are connected to municipal separate storm sewer systems, are eligible if part of a right of way agreement (For example, a homeowner association can coordinate through an eligible agency for funding if the proposed project is connected to a public facility). Administering agencies shall provide supporting documentation to justify improvements on private property.
- Reducing volume of surface flows is an integral factor of improving water quality, therefore, projects that have water-saving features (i.e., drip systems) are eligible for funding consideration.

Ineligible Expenditures

- O&M costs are not eligible expenditures. O&M costs cannot be utilized as a source of matching funds.
- Project X funds are not to be used for planning but can be used for final design, subject to the restrictions above.
- Expenditures prior to the grantee executed letter agreement date cannot be considered eligible for funding or match.
- Landscaping and vegetation not directly related to improving water quality (i.e., ornamental shrubs, trees). ~~Landscaping installation and replacement are not eligible for funding consideration.~~
- Replacement of equipment funded with Project X funds that is still within its anticipated useful life (based on manufacturer's specifications).
- Capital equipment purchases related to regular on-going street maintenance efforts, including, but not limited to: trash receptacles, vacuum trucks and/or equipment, street sweepers, signage, etc.
- Street improvement and maintenance activities (e.g., curb and gutter channelization, pavement rehabilitation/restoration, sidewalk reconstruction, or full catch-basin replacement/construction) are not eligible, unless surface repairs are required to restore a funded BMP installation area to pre-construction conditions and generally do not expand beyond the BMP disturbance area.

Reporting and Reimbursement

A final report must be filed within 180 days of the project being completed with information as shown in Form 10-16. See Chapter 9 for the process and requirements

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regarding reimbursements and reporting for the Tier 1 Grant Program.

Additionally, an exception to Precept #40: Agencies may appeal to the ECAC and the OCTA Board on any issues that the agency and OCTA cannot resolve, as such are the reviewing and approving bodies, respectively, for this program.

Technical and/or Field Review

Once an agency submits a final report for a project, OCTA shall review the report for compliance with the CTFP guidelines and may conduct a field review. OCTA will use the project cost estimate forms submitted with the application and revised where appropriate, project accounting records and the final report as the primary items to conduct the review. Agencies must maintain separate records for projects (i.e., expenditures, interest) to ensure compliance. Only CTFP eligible items listed on a project's cost estimate form will be reimbursed. See Chapter 10 for independent audit requirements beyond the technical and/or field review.

Additional Information

Questions regarding these procedures and criteria should be directed to:

By mail:

[Mason Doshier](#)

Orange County Transportation Authority

P.O. Box 14184

Orange, CA 92863-1584

Tel: (714) 560-[5427](#)

In person:

Orange County Transportation Authority

600 South Main Street

Orange, CA 92863-1584

Via email:

mdoshier@octa.net