



**July 8, 2024**

**To:** Members of the Board of Directors

**From:** Tam T. Nguyen, Chair of the Board of Directors  
Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

**Subject:** 2024 Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer Initiatives and Action Plan – Mid-Year Report

On February 12, 2024, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Board of Directors (Board) approved the 2024 Board and Chief Executive Officer's (CEO) Initiatives (Attachment A) and Action Plan (Attachment B). The Action Plan consists of three Board initiatives supported by nine CEO initiatives to be monitored through 107 milestones throughout the calendar year. This mid-year report summarizes OCTA's progress in advancing these initiatives between January 1, 2024, and June 30, 2024. By mid-year, 25 milestones were planned for completion. At the conclusion of the second quarter (Q2), 31 milestones total have been completed, including eight that were achieved in Q2 ahead of their originally anticipated schedules. Highlights of these accomplishments are provided below.

**Board Initiative:** Provide Public a Balanced, Sustainable, and Equitable Transportation System

To keep Orange County moving, OCTA is dedicated to offering efficient, reliable, and accessible transportation modes. The agency upholds its commitments to taxpayers by implementing local transportation improvements through Measure M2 (M2) transit, streets, and freeway projects. Additionally, to meet the mobility needs of its riders, OCTA prioritizes fostering and maintaining strong connections with local communities, especially those heavily reliant on public transportation, often located in diverse and disadvantaged areas.

- OC Streetcar: The OC Streetcar project, currently underway, will be a four-mile modern electric streetcar route connecting the cities of Garden Grove and Santa Ana. It will help to improve transit connectivity and accessibility, expand transit options, and offer significant benefits to surrounding communities and the traveling public. In June 2024, this project reached a significant milestone with the completed production of the last remaining streetcar vehicle for a total of eight vehicles.
- Interstate 405 (I-405) Improvement Project: The I-405 Improvement Project covers a 16-mile stretch of the freeway between the City of Costa Mesa and

the Orange County/Los Angeles County Lines. This project entailed the construction, widening, or replacement of 18 bridges, as well as the addition of general purpose and dual express lanes from State Route 73 and Interstate 605. Following the opening of the new 405 Express Lanes in December 2023, some construction activities remained, such as landscaping and additional bridge lighting. In June 2024, working closely with the California Department of Transportation, this project achieved project completion status with the completed construction of all improvements. Overall, the I-405 Improvement Project will provide better travel times and options along this stretch of the highway and its completion marks the greatest highway project in OCTA's history.

- 2024 Orange County Transit Vision Master Plan (Transit Vision Master Plan): The Transit Vision Master Plan is a 30-year plan that focuses on how to integrate, enhance, and expand public transit in Orange County. It also enhances OCTA's positioning for future state and federal funding. Accounting for changes in travel patterns and assessing long-term transit needs throughout the County, potential long-term transit strategies may include transit opportunity corridors (TOC) that are based on travel demand, equity, transit propensity, key destinations, and public input. On May 28, 2024, the Board received an update on the progress of the Transit Vision Master Plan. Consequently, staff was directed to proceed with Phase 2 of the public outreach plan to seek feedback on draft TOCs and countywide transit strategies before its completion (anticipated late 2024).
- M2 Regional Capacity Program (Project O) and M2 Regional Traffic Signal Synchronization Program (Project P): On May 13, 2024, the Board approved programming recommendations to award \$18.7 million to six local jurisdiction roadway improvement (Project O) projects and \$12.9 million to five local jurisdiction signal synchronization (Project P) projects.

**Board Initiative:** Sustain Organizational Excellence, Collaboration, and Diversity

OCTA recognizes that to achieve its goals effectively, it must cultivate and sustain valuable relationships with both internal and external stakeholders. Thus, the agency places a high priority on investing in professional development and diversity, equity, and inclusion programs for its workforce, while putting robust safety and security measures in place to create a safe and inclusive workplace. Furthermore, OCTA collaborates with local and regional partners through open and transparent communication and coordination. This supports OCTA's ability to effectively respond to the evolving needs of the transportation landscape, ultimately leading to a high-performing organization.

- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Employee Training: In June 2024, DEIB training was conducted for all administrative employees.

The importance of diversity and promoting understanding and respect among colleagues was emphasized to ensure that OCTA is continuing to foster a work environment where every employee feels valued and has a sense of belonging.

- Personnel and Salary Resolution (PSR): Each year, OCTA reviews and updates its PSR for administrative employees. This process ensures that OCTA's compensation and benefits remain equitable and consistent, ultimately helping to attract, develop, and retain top talent. On June 24, 2024, the Board approved the fiscal year (FY) 2024-25 PSR as part of OCTA's FY 2024-25 budget.
- Coach Operator Barriers: On April 22, 2024, the Board approved the purchase of up to 204 driver protection systems for fixed-route buses. Installing these driver barriers is one of the safety measures that OCTA is focused on advancing to help keep coach operators safe.
- Coach Operator Collective Bargaining Agreement: On May 13, 2024, the Board ratified and renewed the collective bargaining agreement with OCTA coach operators. The agreement acknowledges the hard work and dedication of this vital workforce. This ensures that OCTA can continue providing safe, efficient, and reliable bus service that is essential to Orange County residents and commuters.
- Meet the Primes Networking Event: As part of an ongoing effort to support open and fair competition on OCTA projects, in February 2024, OCTA hosted Meet the Primes. This networking event connected prime contractors with small businesses and disadvantaged business enterprises (DBE). With nearly 170 people in attendance, it facilitated meetings between participants from large construction and professional service companies with small businesses and DBE specializing in construction, program management, engineering, design, and other fields. It resulted in meaningful connections and potential partnering opportunities for upcoming OCTA procurements amongst a broader community of consultants. Additional networking opportunities are planned throughout the remainder of the year.
- DBE: On June 24, 2024, the Board approved a DBE goal for OCTA ensure non-discrimination in the contract award and administration of federally funded transportation-related projects, creates a level playing field in which small, disadvantaged businesses can fairly compete and participate, and removes barriers for minority-owned and women-owned businesses.

**Board Initiative:** Safeguard Future through Fiscal Responsibility and Environmental Sustainability

Serving as the County's transportation agency, it is critical for OCTA to uphold its strong financial position and honor its commitments to Orange County voters. This is achieved through prudent financial decision-making and responsibly administering public funds to implement transportation improvements. Moreover, OCTA is focused on planning and adapting its infrastructure and operations while reducing its emissions and advancing environmental stewardship efforts to ensure a more resilient transit system amidst changing conditions.

- OCTA's Operating and Capital Budget: The Board approved the OCTA FY 2024-25 Budget on June 24, 2024. The \$1.7 billion budget reflects a balanced allocation of funds while accounting for financial outlook and addressing the current and future transportation needs of Orange County.
- Reserve Policy: On June 24, 2024, the Board approved an updated reserve policy, which includes revised reserve targets for the 91 Express Lanes, payment commencement dates for the 405 Express Lanes, and incorporation of three existing reserves into the policy. This updated policy demonstrates OCTA's notable history of prudent financial planning to mitigate potential impacts of financial risks to its programs.
- Coastal Rail Resiliency Study: In recent years, emergency measures were implemented to address disruptions to passenger rail service in south Orange County caused by several landslide events. To better understand the impacts of a changing climate on the coastal rail infrastructure in the area, OCTA outlined dual strategies. The first will assess potential short- and medium-term solutions to protect the existing rail line. A separate second-phase study will focus on long-term options, such as potentially relocating a portion of the rail line. Public engagement has been a key component of the planning process. OCTA conducted several listening sessions and focus meetings to seek public input on potential short-term solutions from a wide variety of stakeholders. A draft plan of the first study is anticipated in 2025.
- Transit Chokepoint Study: Identified in OCTA's Directions 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan as a short-term activity, the Transit Chokepoint Study will assess and identify transit service delays that result in reduced speeds and reliability issues. Based on those findings, proposed routing and scheduling enhancements, as well as capital improvements, such as transit signal priority, will ensure more efficient and reliable bus service.

OCTA has 76 remaining milestones for the balance of the year. While several milestones have already been completed, other milestone delivery timeframes have been updated. For a summary of the adjustments, please refer to Attachment B.

Quarterly progress reports on the 2024 Action Plan will continue to be provided to the Board. OCTA remains committed to its mission to keep Orange County moving safely and efficiently by proactively and strategically addressing the immediate needs of the public, its customers, and its employees. Please let me know if you have any questions or contact Darrell E. Johnson, CEO, at (714) 560-5343.

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Attachments