



***December 3, 2018***

**To:** Regional Planning and Highways Committee

**From:** Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

**Subject:** OC Active: Project Update

### **Overview**

Preparation of a draft countywide active transportation plan is nearing completion. The plan will help ensure bicycle and pedestrian improvement efforts are coordinated between local jurisdictions and reduce the need for local agencies to develop similar plans to compete for state and federal grants. Public outreach and technical analysis have been completed, and recommendations with local jurisdictions are being confirmed before finalizing the OC Active Report. A project status update is presented for Board of Directors review and information.

### **Recommendation**

Receive and file as an information item.

### **Background**

OC Active evaluates needs and recommends active transportation (bicycle and pedestrian) improvements for all 35 local jurisdictions in Orange County. The OC Active Report (Report) provides information and analysis required by state guidelines for active transportation plans. By providing a recommended list of bikeway improvements and pedestrian focus areas, OC Active supports local agency efforts to secure funding to implement infrastructure improvements. This will also help guide countywide funding and program decisions.

### **Discussion**

#### **Project Goals**

The Board of Directors approved the project goals to guide decision making during preparation of the Report. These goals were used to guide public outreach and technical analysis, and include the following:

- Reduce pedestrian and bicyclist collisions,
- Advance strategic walking and biking network,
- Enhance walking and biking access to transit,
- Improve high-need pedestrian areas,
- Strengthen stakeholder partnerships,
- Incorporate diverse community perspectives, and
- Leverage funding opportunities.

#### Public Outreach

Consistent with state requirements and project goals, a robust program of public outreach was developed to solicit community input and promote the project efforts by the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA). Public outreach occurred between February 2017 and October 2018. Feedback was solicited on active transportation needs and priorities to help inform the analysis. The project team reached out to Orange County residents through numerous outreach events and surveys as described below:

- Completed two public surveys related to walking and biking,
- Hosted project website and social media presence,
- Attended 76 community events and festivals for survey input and promotion,
- Developed the Chalk, Walk & Roll Contest where elementary, middle, and high school could win a donated skateboard or bicycle rack through artwork submission,
- Partnered with the Orange County Healthcare Agency to facilitate the Walk to School Day participation by five local elementary schools on October 10, 2018, and
- Partnered with the Anaheim Police Department for the “Cruise with a Cop” community safety event at Maxwell Park in the City of Anaheim on March 24, 2018.

The following themes were heard during public engagement:

- Interest in better connections to parks, downtown areas, schools, jobs and retail centers, and transit,
- Preference for more and improved crosswalks, better nighttime lighting, and more shade/landscaping for people walking,
- Preference for separated bikeways and buffered bike lanes for people bicycling, and
- Desire for educational campaigns addressing motorist, pedestrian, and bicyclist behaviors.

In addition to public outreach efforts, OCTA formed a Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) for agencies and community advocates to provide input on the Report. The SWG consisted of representatives from local jurisdictions and advocacy organizations, the Orange County Council of Governments (OCCOG), and the California Department of Transportation. These meetings provided valuable input using the following guidelines:

1. Provide technical and strategic recommendations during development of OC Active,
2. Identify potential outreach activities to solicit input on the survey tool, and
3. Promote OC Active to community members.

Additionally, the project team made multiple presentations to community members, the OCCOG Technical Advisory Committee, OCTA's Technical Advisory Committee, and the OCTA Citizens Advisory Committee Bike and Pedestrian Subcommittee.

### Pedestrian Mapping

Orange County's pedestrian network is comprised of sidewalks, multi-use trails, pedestrian bridges, and other walking infrastructure designed to help people access key destinations, including schools, employment centers, parks, and transit. The county is home to a diverse network of pedestrian conditions. As such, pedestrian activity and needs vary substantially throughout the county. Currently, few Orange County cities have started or completed a dedicated planning document focused on pedestrian improvements.

Analysis of pedestrian network needs and opportunities identified pedestrian focus areas located throughout the county using a geographic information systems analysis. This analysis used factors such as key destinations, community demographics, socioeconomic and health data, as well as potential barriers to pedestrian travel, such as roadways with high traffic volumes, railroads, waterways, and freeways. A detailed map is provided in Attachment A for each jurisdiction to help local agencies identify and prioritize the implementation of pedestrian infrastructure improvements.

The pedestrian mapping prepared through OC Active is the first ever countywide analysis of pedestrian needs. This comprehensive approach provides the opportunity to leverage the results for future improvements in high-need areas, and better position local agencies for funding and grant pursuits.

### Bikeways Mapping

The Report identifies existing and planned bikeways using the following three key bikeway layers:

- Local bikeways: Each jurisdiction's locally-adopted bikeways are incorporated into the Report,
- Regional bikeways: OCTA has completed four studies identifying 41 regional bikeway corridors linking key regional destinations countywide. OC Active incorporates these regional bikeways into one document, and
- Regional connectors: OC Active proposes the Orange County Regional Connectors. These connectors will leverage the regional bikeways into branded corridors that can advance project implementation.

The layered bikeway network identified in the Report will provide the basis for improvements in the transportation network to serve people biking. Furthermore, prior investments and planning efforts on regional bikeways can be leveraged to utilize the success of the OC Loop. This will support future improvements throughout central and south county, creating better links to employment centers and transit.

### Funding Compliance

OC Active provides information and analysis required by the state guidelines for active transportation plans. By providing a list of both bikeway improvements and pedestrian focus areas, OC Active positions local agencies to secure funding to implement infrastructure improvements. These results will also help guide countywide funding and program decisions.

### Next Steps

OC Active has been a multi-year effort with great collaboration. This included extensive public outreach, as well as strong collaboration across public health and law enforcement sectors to develop a master plan addressing both bicycle and pedestrian issues countywide. The final Report will guide active transportation investments and empower local agencies to secure funding for infrastructure and non-infrastructure improvements countywide. The draft OC Active Executive Summary is provided in Attachment A.

OCTA will continue working with agency staff and community members to advance active transportation measures for a safer community with greater transportation choices available for all Orange County residents.

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**Summary**

Staff is finalizing the Report, which includes bicycle and pedestrian topics. The final Report will assist local jurisdictions with active transportation improvements when pursuing funding for implementation.

**Attachments**

- A. OC Active Orange County's Bike + Ped Plan, Draft Executive Summary

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