



February 4, 2019

To: Regional Planning and Highways Committee

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: Active Transportation Update

Overview

The Orange County Transportation Authority coordinates regional active transportation efforts in Orange County. An update on recent and upcoming activities is provided for review.

Recommendation

Receive and file as an information item.

Background

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Board of Directors (Board) receives updates on regional active transportation regularly. These efforts support the OCTA role in expanding and promoting active transportation. This report provides an update on regional bicycle and pedestrian planning efforts, educational efforts, collaboration with law enforcement agencies, and success in funding pursuits.

Discussion

Below is a discussion of key topics starting with the status of several planning studies led by OCTA, followed by the status of the OC Loop and Go Human events, highlights on education and enforcement efforts, and a summary of recent grant successes.

OC Active

In fall 2018, OCTA staff presented a status update regarding preparation of the first countywide Active Transportation Plan called OC Active. Funding for OC Active is primarily provided through a state Active Transportation Program (ATP) Cycle 2 grant.

OC Active evaluates needs and recommends active transportation (bicycle and pedestrian) improvements for all 35 local jurisdictions in Orange County. The 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. Staff is finalizing the OC Active report, which will assist local jurisdictions with implementation of active transportation improvements.

OC Loop

The OC Loop envisions a 66-mile regional bikeway network serving the north and central portions of Orange County. It is comprised of the regional bikeway corridors identified in the OCTA-prepared regional bikeways strategies. Over the past few decades, multiple agencies have worked independently to implement portions of the OC Loop, completing about 70 percent. When complete, this will primarily be an off-street system that will utilize the existing off-street trails along Coyote Creek, San Gabriel River, Santa Ana River, The Tracks at Brea, and the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) corridor.

In 2015, the County of Orange (County) completed a feasibility study that provides recommendations and cost estimates on closing gaps along the OC Loop. Based on these recommendations, OCTA prepared the OC Loop 70/30 Plan, which provides an executive level summary fact sheet with estimated improvement costs for each segment of the OC Loop. Additional information can be found on the OC Loop website at www.octa.net/ocloop.

The County staff has continued to pursue funding to advance OC Loop segments, and, recently, Segment F in the City of Yorba Linda area was implemented by the County. The roughly one-mile segment travels through a residential neighborhood, and implementation consisted primarily of wayfinding signage and sidewalk improvements. The status of the OC Loop, which is now over 80 percent complete, is provided in Attachment A.

OCTA is also facilitating negotiations between UPRR and the cities of Brea and La Habra to secure an easement for the OC Loop segments A and B. OCTA is coordinating the plan reviews and approvals with the California Public Utilities Commission and UPRR. Staff will continue to coordinate with the County and local cities to advance projects to complete the OC Loop.

Go Human

Since 2015, OCTA has partnered with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) to develop the marketing campaign and encouragement events for the Go Human Campaign. Go Human is the SCAG-branded campaign to improve safety and encourage more active transportation travel. SCAG has worked with local agencies to host the following demonstration events within Orange County:

- Westminster – Experience Hoover (2016),
- Garden Grove – Re: Imagine Garden Grove (2017),
- Brea – Experience the Tracks at Brea (2017),
- OC Parks, Anaheim and Yorba Linda – Connect the Loop (2017),
- Santa Ana – 18th Annual Cinco de Mayo Festival (2017),
- OC Public Works, Garden Grove, Westminster – Redefine Hazard Avenue (2017), and
- Costa Mesa – Explore Merrimac (2018).

Go Human events have provided temporary demonstrations of separated bikeways, celebrated new trails, or supported open streets events, such as the third annual RE: Imagine event conducted by the City of Garden Grove. Attendance varied as marketing for each Go Human event was in scale with available agency resources. Each event had a set of goals developed by the local agency, such as exhibiting a new design concept or bringing a large number of people to a community festival.

Based on the respective event goals, local agencies have expressed support with the SCAG collaboration and for Go Human events. An additional Go Human demonstration is being coordinated by SCAG and the Beach Boulevard Coalition for the cities along Beach Boulevard. This event is planned to occur on November 17, 2019. The Beach Boulevard event will include a demonstration for each of the seven cities along the corridor.

Education

The Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) Highway Safety Program has provided grant funds in three successive years for OCTA creation of safety videos and campaigns to distribute safety equipment and host bicycle skills classes.

In 2016-17, OCTA utilized OTS funding for preparation of the two “Play it Safe” safety videos. The videos have been highly successful with nearly 400,000 views and were leveraged with an interactive game in early 2018 by the OCTA Marketing Department. The videos and interactive game are posted at the following OCTA website: <https://www.octa.net/Bike/Play-It-Safe/>.

In 2017-18, OCTA utilized OTS funding to host seven bicycle skills classes open to the public and one train-the-trainer course to develop local instructors for future classes. Additionally, the program included distribution of 5,500 reflective keychains to patrons riding on OCTA buses. Lastly, 300 helmets and 700 bicycle lights were distributed to the public during nighttime events. The safety program funded and implemented in summer 2018 is planned to be implemented again in 2019 using a subsequent year 2018-19 grant from OTS. OCTA will continue working directly with OTS to address safety needs within Orange County.

Enforcement

In early 2017, SCAG selected OCTA for competitive grant funding of the Partnerships with Police (PWP) Project. The PWP Project has developed the following three training modules for an audience of local law enforcement officers:

- Actions to reduce bicycle crashes,
- Actions to reduce pedestrian crashes, and
- Understanding new and relevant laws.

The training modules were developed based on review of local collision data and identification of dangerous behaviors leading to crashes affecting people walking and bicycling. The PWP Project has established a forum for open dialogue with law enforcement staff to clarify and address common issues and questions related to active transportation.

The OCTA team will schedule presentations at local law enforcement departments and continue building rapport between transportation professionals and public safety representatives.

OCTA Active Transportation Grant Success

Over the past four years, OCTA staff have pursued and secured \$1.5 million in active transportation grant funding. The topics covered by the grants include planning, evaluation, and education. As shown in Attachment B, OCTA has been able to leverage \$164,000 of local planning funds to secure an additional \$1.3 million in funds from seven grants.

Orange County Active Transportation Implementation Grant Success

In 2018, state and regional funding opportunities were made available to local jurisdictions. Approximately \$11 million is expected to be awarded by the California Transportation Commission to Orange County cities through the state ATP. Another \$13 million will be awarded through the ATP regional funding. Additionally, the OCTA Board authorized \$25 million in the 2019 Bicycle Corridor Improvement Program in fall 2018, and results are expected in spring 2019.

Summary

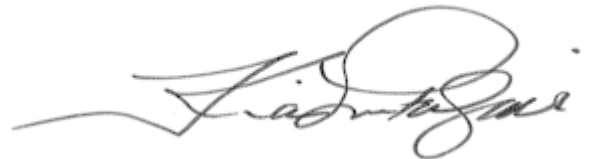
OCTA has advanced planning, education, encouragement, and enforcement efforts to improve active transportation throughout Orange County. Coordination and collaboration will continue between SCAG, the California Department of Transportation, and stakeholders to encourage and support people walking and bicycling within Orange County.

Attachments

- A. OC Loop, Bike. Walk. Connect.
- B. Recent OCTA Active Transportation Grant Success

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