

Proposed October 2019 and February 2020

Bus Service Plan

Public Involvement Program

Final Report

July 11, 2019



# **Table of Contents**

Introduction	1
Executive Summary	2
Public Information and Outreach Program	3
Feedback from Public Meetings	5
Citizen Advisory Committee	6
Special Needs Advisory Committee	7
Diversity Community Leaders Quarterly Meeting	7
Customer Roundtable	7
Online and Print Survey	8
Public Comments – Email and Phone Calls	9
Public Hearing	9
What We Heard	10
Conclusion	14
Web Links to Meeting Minutes and Comment Matrix	14
Online and Print Survey Questionnaire Form	15

# Introduction

In 2015, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Board of Directors (Board) launched OC Bus 360°, a plan that examines and improves bus service in an effort to reverse declining bus ridership and improve productivity. During the initial implementation of this comprehensive plan, OC Bus 360° provided improved service in high-demand areas by reallocating existing resources, enhanced passenger experience through technology, and created new branding and marketing to attract new riders. There are some indications the ridership decline is slowing following the initial implementation of the OC Bus 360° program.

To continue the positive direction of OC Bus 360°, staff has developed the Proposed October 2019 and February 2020 Bus Service Plan to reallocate service to improve productivity and reduce fleet requirements. The proposed service changes consist primarily of the redeployment of resources, including both service reductions and improvements. In addition, the recommendations include restructuring bus service in the Santa Ana Civic Center area during the OC Streetcar construction. The service recommendations are consistent with prior OC Bus 360° efforts and the OC Streetcar Bus Rail Interface Plan.



# **Executive Summary**

The Orange County Transportation Authority is committed to ensuring that key stakeholders and the public remain engaged and informed about OC Bus 360°, a plan that examines and improves bus service in an effort to reverse declining bus ridership and improve productivity.

As part of the Proposed October 2019 and February 2020 Bus Service Plan development, OCTA developed a comprehensive outreach strategy. The goal of the outreach effort was to provide the public with information and to ensure customer and public input is heard and used to inform the final recommended Service Plan being presented to the OCTA Board for consideration.

A variety of tactics were used to inform and gather feedback, including public meetings and roundtables, direct mailings, email updates, bus and newspaper advertisings, press releases and well as 50,000 service change booklets / printed surveys in multiple languages. In addition, OCTA conducted online and social media outreach with feedback gathered through a qualitative online and mailed print survey.

# Key Findings:

The overall feedback from these activities yielded the following key themes:

- Most feedback on the individual proposed changes in the October 2019 and February 2020 Bus Service Plan was positive – with a majority of comments and individual survey responses expressing support for the proposed changes among the individuals that had an opinion.
- The proposed changes to the following routes were strongly supported: 72, 60, 59, 56 and 55. These changes included frequency improvements, new trip additions and route extensions.
- The proposed changes with strong opposition included routes 213/A, 211, 206, 129, 89, 86, 83, 53/53X and 24. These changes included route eliminations, frequency reductions and cutting services from key points of interest such as Golden West / Irvine / Brea Transportation Centers, Anaheim Canyon Metrolink Station, The Village at Orange and Orange Circle.
- There was general support for adjustments to improve system productivity, including reallocating service from low-demand areas to provide additional weekend service.
- Routes with improved service generally received more positive comments.
   However, there were concerns with changes that included service eliminations and route reductions.

# Public Information and Outreach Program

On April 22, 2019, the OCTA Board of Directors received the Proposed October 2019 and February 2020 Bus Service Plan and directed staff to implement a public outreach program to solicit feedback.

# **Tactics**

A variety of tactics were implemented to gain public feedback.

#### **Public Notification**

- Print Advertisements 6 newspaper ads
- OC Register, Excelsior, and Nguoi Viet Community Meeting Notices
- OC Register, Excelsior and Nguoi Viet Public Hearing Notice

#### **Bus Advertisements and Collateral**

- 50,000 Public Notice Multilingual Brochures with comment card in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese
- OCTA website in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese including an online survey
- Interior Bus Cards (550 each language/1,650 total) English, Spanish, and Vietnamese

**Mailings** - Letters with multilingual brochures were mailed out to:

- 105 stakeholders and businesses libraries, schools, senior centers, city halls, etc.
- 56 potentially impacted ACCESS customers

#### **Electronic Media**

- Two emails regarding the plan/community meetings were each sent to 17,000 addresses
- Two "On the Move" e-Newsletters 7,500 distribution per issue
- Public information and ads on Facebook





#### **Local Jurisdiction Communication**

Emails were sent to public information officers at all cities with service change information for re-distribution via cities' communication channels. OCTA staff shared information with city public works staff where proposed changes would reduce or eliminate bus service.

# Press Releases and Public Service Announcements (714) 636-RIDE Customer Information Center Hotline

# **Public Meetings**

Community Meetings (3)

- Brea Community Center, Brea (May 21, 2019)
- Santa Ana Senior Center, Santa Ana (May 22, 2019)
- Irvine Lakeview Senior Center (May 23, 2019)

# **OCTA Advisory Committees**

- Citizen Advisory Committee (April 16, 2019)
- Special Needs Advisory Committee (April 23, 2019)
- Diversity Community Leaders Quarterly Meeting (May 7, 2019)

#### Customer Roundtable

OCTA Headquarters, Orange (May 16, 2019)

# **Public Hearing**

OCTA Headquarters, Orange (June 10, 2019)





# Feedback from Public Meetings

#### **Community Meetings**

Several meetings took place where customers and the public had the opportunity to discuss the proposed changes and provide input. A total of 24 customers participated in three community meetings and 18 public comments were recorded. A summary of comments from each meeting are listed below.

# Brea Community Center, Brea, May 21, 2019 (Participants: 15)

After receiving information about the proposed bus changes, attending customers at the Brea Community Center offered feedback on a variety of issues.

Nine customers objected to the proposed routing changes on Route 213/A due to concerns about commuting and said that the alternative option, Route 143, would not work for them. Two commented that they would have to quit their jobs if the proposed changes are implemented. They said students who take this route from Fullerton Transportation Center to UCI will also be affected by this change.

Regarding Route 26, two customers said they were glad it would be extended to Yorba Linda Boulevard and Imperial Highway. One would like to see it extended to Anaheim Hills.

Two customers commented on Route 143. While happy about the increased frequency, they said the proposed changes would prohibit them from going to the Target store in Brea.

One customer had concerns on the proposed elimination on Route 129. She stated that if the route is discontinued, she will not be able to use the ACCESS service because she won't be within a quarter mile of a bus stop.

# Santa Ana Senior Center, Santa Ana, May 22, 2019 (Participants: 3)

At the Santa Ana Senior Center meeting, attendees expressed concerns about proposed eliminations on Routes 206 and 211.

Commenting on Route 206, one customer said that workers near Barranca Parkway and Bake Parkway will be significantly impacted. The proposed options to take routes 87 and 177 are not viable since the bus stops are at least two miles away. The person expressed the opinion that ridership is low because service has not been good in the past few months due to no-shows and late arrivals and if service improves, riders will come back.

Another customer asked if the frequency change for Route 53/53X would only be for weekdays, and staff answered yes.

A customer commented on positive interactions with ACCESS drivers and approved of community meetings to discuss upcoming bus service changes.

<u>Irvine Lakeview Senior Center, May 23, 2019</u> (Participants: 6)

Two customers commented on Route 86 at the Irvine Lakeview Senior Center.

One said that Route 86 is his transportation fallback and asked why rerouting was proposed as it will require him to walk more. Staff explained that a location was needed where the bus could both park and connect with other routes, and the Laguna Beach Transportation Center serves both purposes.

Another commenter on proposed changes to Route 86 said her mother will need to walk farther and wait longer for the bus. The bus is her mother's only transportation, and she uses it to travel to Westminster.

According to one person, people in North County don't know they can take the bus on the freeway to South County to work and shop. Staff responded that OCTA would conduct more grassroots education.

# **OCTA Advisory Committees**

## Citizen Advisory Committee

April 16, 2019 – OCTA Headquarters (Participants: 19)

The committee asked about proposed changes to Route 83. Staff said this route is being changed at one end due to the OC Streetcar in Santa Ana and at the other end of the route to service the Garden Walk.

The committee asked about Route 83 and what the advantages / disadvantages are of not servicing Disneyland. Staff said it will still make a connection at Disneyland and showed the planned route, which should serve more employment areas. The committee also asked about Route 53. Staff said the changes would affect Route 53X and some of the trips would go all the way into Irvine. The committee asked about the frequency in the core service area and was told by staff that it will stay the same.

The committee asked about the Bravo Route 560 and will this ever connect to the Blue Line. Staff said the service to the transit center in that area was cut because there was a lot of duplicate service already there. OCTA decided to end the route at the VA and not go any further.

# **Special Needs Advisory Committee**

April 23, 2019 – OCTA Headquarters (Participants: 9)

At the April 23, 2019 meeting of the Special Needs Advisory Committee, members received a presentation on the Proposed October 2019 and February 2020 Bus Service Plan, including the planned outreach efforts for public comments.

Feedback from the committee included discussion about the proposed changes to Route 86, including concerns that the proposed change would limit connectivity from central Orange County to south Orange County in this area.

Additional feedback involved the new bus routes in the Santa Ana Civic Center / OC Streetcar construction area. A committee member wanted to make sure that the proposed routes would still allow commuters from Santa Ana to reach the Laguna Hills area. Staff welcomed the feedback and said they would review the where people are traveling to / from work in the area.

# **Diversity Community Leaders Quarterly Meeting**

May 7, 2019 – OCTA Headquarters (Participants: 21)

The Proposed October 2018 and February 2019 Bus Service Change was presented at the Diversity Community Leaders Quarterly Meeting on May 7, 2019. While there was no route specific feedback, the participated diversity community leaders agreed to distribute the information in the communities.

#### **Customer Roundtable**

May 21, 2019 – OCTA Headquarters (Participants: 22)

A special customer roundtable was held to gather input on the proposed service changes. Attending customers received information about the proposed changes and then provided feedback on a variety of issues.

There was discussion about the overall strategy of the Bus 360. Generally, customers agreed with the concept of removing or restricting a route if the resources could be reallocated somewhere else that is more beneficial.

There was strong attendee support for proposed changes to routes 24, 26 and 72. Customers commented that the proposed changes were excellent.

Several customers supported proposed route changes to routes 26 and 79, because of the increased service for early morning students to CSUF and UCI. There was also support for proposed changes to Route 21 because of improved service to Golden West Transportation Center.

Customers generally opposed proposed changes to routes 86 and 129, noting that changes to the route would eliminate service to needed areas. Two current riders of Route 206 strongly opposed the proposed elimination of the route. They noted that at least two of the morning / afternoon trips were busy and discussed the lack of alternatives to this route.

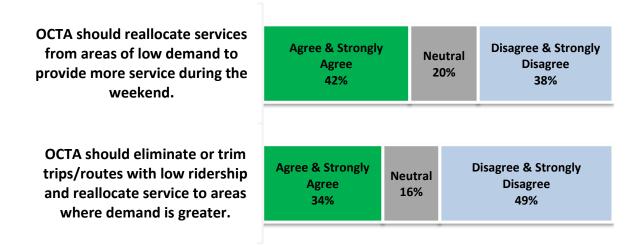
# **Online and Print Survey**

A qualitative online and print survey was conducted for customer and public feedback on proposed service changes. The online survey was available at OCTA.net and was widely publicized in social media postings and other materials. The print version of the survey (with the same questions) was included as a mail-in response attached to each of the 50,000 Service Change Booklets that were distributed onboard OC Bus, at transit centers, libraries and among the community. A total of 129 online and 27 mailed surveys were collected.

The survey results are considered informal and qualitative, rather than statistically valid, as the sample size is small and survey participants were self-selected. Informal research such as this survey is useful to explore a group's opinions and views, allowing for the collection of rich and verifiable data. This data can reveal information that may warrant further study and is often a cornerstone for the generation of new ideas.

The responses regarding individual routes are included along with other public feedback channels in the following "What We Heard" section and Comments by Routes charts.

There was general support for the service improvements included in the Proposed October 2019 and February 2020 Bus Service Plan. Based on survey questions regarding Bus Service Change strategies, most customers agreed with OCTA's approach to reallocate resources from low-ridership routes to provide more service during the weekend. However, 49 percent of respondents disagreed with the approach to eliminate or trim trips/routes with low-ridership and reallocate service to areas where the demand is greater.



# **Public Comments – Email and Phone Calls**

Public comments were collected via phone calls and emails from nine individuals to OCTA customer relations staff.

# **Public Hearing**

June 10, 2019 - OCTA Headquarters

Feedback received at the public hearing included comments opposing proposed changes to routes 86, 211 and 213. Staff from the City of Mission Viejo expressed concerns about the impact to current riders and their lives. Comments on routes 211 and 213/A opposed the proposed eliminations, saying that low ridership is due to service issues and the increased fare. They commented that the loss of the routes will have a serious impact on employees and students in the UCI area.

# What We Heard

Following extensive public outreach, a total of 216 individuals provided feedback comments on the proposed changes at community meetings, a customer roundtable and the public hearing, online, and by mail and phone. The table below identifies how those individuals shared their feedback.

# **Who Provided Feedback**

Method Received	No. of Individuals
Online Surveys	129
Mailed Surveys	27
Customer Roundtable*	22
Community Meetings*	18
Phone Calls/Emails	9
Public Hearing*	6
Advisory Committees*	5
Total	216

The number of individuals who provided feedback is shown rather than meeting attendance.

The proposed changes that most customers supported included:

- Improving frequency on routes 56 and 72
- Extending service segments on routes 26, 59, and 60
- Increasing connectivity to Metrolink Stations and Transit Centers on Route 123
- Implementing OC Streetcar routing on Route 55
- Implementing non-stop service from Westminster Avenue and Goldenwest Street to Long Beach on Route 560

While there was general support for the overall changes, a number of routes received opposing comments. These changes include route eliminations, frequency reductions and cutting services from key points of interest such as Goldenwest / Irvine / Fullerton transportation centers, Anaheim Canyon Metrolink Station, The Village at Orange and Orange Circle. The table below lists the routes with strong opposition to the proposed changes.

Proposed Route Changes That Were Strongly Opposed			
Proposed October 2019 Changes			
Route	Change Description	Opposing Comments	
206: Santa Ana – Lake Forest Express	Route elimination	49	
53/53X: Anaheim – Irvine	Frequency reduction (10 -12 min. reduction)	45	
213/A: Brea – Irvine Express	Rerouting removes service to Fullerton Transportation Center and Orange Circle	40	
89: Mission Viejo – Laguna Beach	Frequency reduction (15 min. reduction)	37	
211: Huntington Beach – Irvine Express	Route elimination to Golden West Transportation Center	36	
Proposed February 2020 Changes			
Route	Change Description	Opposing Comments	
86: Costa Mesa – Mission Viejo	Route reduction removes service from Lake Forest's Jeronimo / Los Aliso area	58	
129: La Habra – Anaheim	Route elimination that combines portions with Routes 143 & 153	39	
24: Buena Park – Orange	Route reduction removes service from the Village at Orange/ Anaheim Canyon Metrolink Station	34	

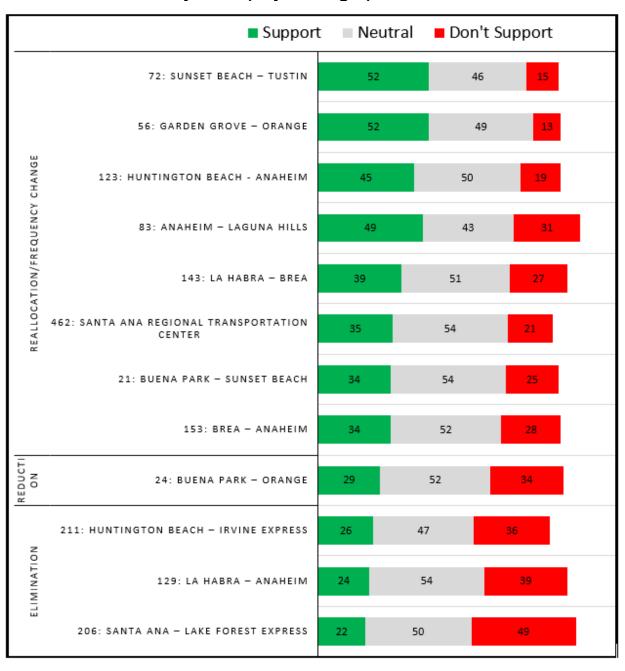
#### Feedback on Individual Routes

A total of 2,797 comments from 216 individuals was received, including public meeting comments and survey responses to individual route changes. Most feedback on the individual proposed changes was positive, with 35 percent of comments expressing support for the proposed changes, 24 percent of comments opposing the changes and 41 percent comments were neutral or stated no opinion for or against the proposed changes.

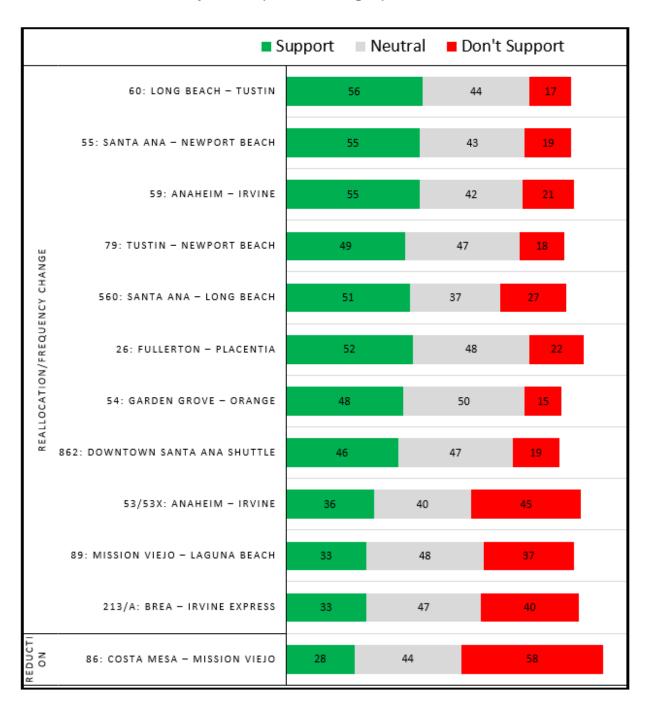
The following two charts show number and type of comments received for each individual route. A link to the actual comments are available at: OCbus.com/Bus2019-20Comments.

The first chart shows comments received for routes with proposed major (greater than 25 percent change in service hours) changes. The second chart shows comments received for routes with minor changes.

# **Number of Comments by Route (Major Changes)**



# **Number of Comments by Route (Minor Changes)**



The overall feedback as well as responses to individual route changes was provided to the OCTA Planning Department to inform the final service change recommendations.

# Conclusion

After a comprehensive outreach effort and public hearings, 216 individuals commented on the proposed changes. Most feedback on the proposed changes in the October 2019 and February 2020 Bus Service Plan was positive, with some opposition to proposed changes on individual routes.

Public feedback from all sources was analyzed to identify major themes and identify common issues.

Routes with improved service generally received more positive comments. However, there were concerns with route changes that included service eliminations and route reductions.

The proposed elimination of routes 206, 211 and 129 and service reduction of routes 53/53X, 213/A, 89, 211, 83, 86, 24 and 153 generated mostly negative comments, although the overall volume of comments in support for all routes changes was higher than those opposing to the changes.

Based on public input, there was general support for adjustments to improve system productivity, including reallocating service from low-demand areas to provide additional weekend service.

The public feedback received on the proposed service changes was shared with OCTA's Planning Division and used to inform and develop the final proposed service change recommendations.

# Web Links to Meeting Minutes and Comment Matrix

The links below are for the following meetings and documents.

Comment Matrix
Minutes from three Community Meetings
Minutes from Customer Roundtable
Minutes from Public Hearing

OCbus.com/Bus2019-20Comments
OCbus.com/Bus2019-20Meetings
OCbus.com/Bus2019-20Roundtable
OCbus.com/Bus2019-20Hearing

# Online and Print Survey Questionnaire Form

Your input is very important. Please provide your comments below. Su contribución es muy importante. Por favor proporcione sus comentarios a continuación. Ý kiến đóng góp của quý vị là rất quan trọng. Hãy ghi ý kiến của quý vị vào phần dưới đây.

Name	e / Nombre / Tên:				
Zip C	ode / Código postal / ma bưu điện: Email	/ Correo electrónico:			
Por fa declar	e indicate if you agree or disagree with the statements below. vor indique si está de acuerdo o está en desacuerdo con las aciones a continuación. ho biết quý vị đồng ý hay không đồng ý với những nhận định tây.	<ul> <li>1 = Strongly Agree / Muy de acuerdo / Rất Đồng ý</li> <li>2 = Agree / De acuerdo / Đồng ý</li> <li>3 = Neutral / Neutral / Trung lập</li> <li>4 = Disagree / Desacuerdo / Không Đồng ý</li> <li>5 = Strongly Disagree / Muy en desacuerdo / Rất Không Đồng ý</li> </ul>			
1	demand is greater.  OCTA debe eliminar o reducir viajes/rutas de baja dem	low ridership and reallocate service to areas where anda y reasignar el servicio a zonas con demanda más alta. ó ít hành khách và phân chia lại dịch vụ đến các khu vực có			
2	<ul> <li>OCTA should reallocate services from areas of low demand to provide more service during the weekend.</li> <li>OCTA debe reasignar los servicios de las zonas con baja demanda para poder brindar más servicio los fines de semana.</li> <li>OCTA nên phân chia lại dịch vụ từ các khu vực có nhu cầu thấp để cung cấp thêm dịch vụ vào cuối tuần.</li> <li>1 2 3 4 5</li> </ul>				
3	Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the proposed changes of your route(s) and why.  Indique si está de acuerdo o no con los cambios propuestos en su(s) ruta(s) y porqué.  Xin cho biết quý vị có đồng ý hoặc không đồng ý về các thay đổi được đề nghị cho (các) tuyến đường của quý vị và cho biết lý do.  Route/Ruta/Tuyến đường Comment/Comentario/ý kiến Route/Ruta/Tuyến đường Route/Ruta/Tuyến Route/Ruta/Tuyến Route/Ruta/				
4	de uso compartido de OCTA, los servicios de búsqued	consideraría otras opciones, como el programa de camionetas a de transporte compartido (ridematching) y ortos más? ó muốn dùng các cách khác như chương trình đi chung xe van			

9

#### **GET MORE INFORMATION**

For more information on the Proposed Bus Service Plan, please visit OCbus.com/BusPlan or call (714) 636-RIDE. You can provide comments online or mail them to: OCTA, Attn: Marketing, Rm 722, 600 S. Main St., P.O. Box 14184, Orange, CA 92863-1584.

Para más información sobre plan propuesto para el servicio de autobuses, por favor visite OCbus.com/BusPlan o llame al (714) 636-RIDE. Puede proporcionar sus comentarios en línea o por correo a: OCTA, Attn: Marketing, Rm 722, 600 S. Main St., P.O. Box 14184, Orange, CA 92863-1584.

Để biết thêm thông tin về Đề nghị Kế hoạch Dịch vụ Xe Buýt xin mời truy cập vào trang OCbus.com/BusPlan hay gọi điện thoại số (714) 636-RIDE. Quý vị có thể đóng góp ý kiến trực tuyến hoặc gửi thư về địa chỉ: OCTA, Attn: Marketing, Rm 722, 600 S. Main St., P.O. Box 14184, Orange, CA 92863-1584.

#### **Translators and Accessibility**

Spanish and Vietnamese translation services will be available at all community meetings.

Any person with a disability who requires a modification or accommodation in order to participate in these meetings should contact the OCTA Clerk of the Board at (714) 560-5676 no less than two (2) business days prior to this meeting to enable OCTA to make reasonable arrangements to assure accessibility to these meetings.

For more information or to comment online, visit OCbus.com/BusPlan. If you would like to receive this information in 中文, 한국어, ی سراف, or any other languages, please call (714) 636-RIDE.

#### Traductores y accesibilidad

Los servicios de traducción al español y vietnamita estarán disponibles en todas las reuniones de la comunidad.

Cualquier persona con una discapacidad que requiere una modificación o establecimiento, con el fin de participar en estas reuniones, debe comunicarse con el Secretario de la Junta del OCTA al (714) 560-5676 no menos de dos (2) días hábiles antes de esta reunión para permitir a que la OCTA haga arreglos razonables para asegurar la accesibilidad a estas

Para obtener más información o hacer comentarios en línea, visite OCbus.com/BusPlan. Si desea recibir esta información en un idioma que no sea Inglés, español o vietnamita, por favor llame al (714) 636-RIDE.

#### Các phiên dịch viên và Sự Tham gia của người khuyết tật

Các dịch vụ phiên dịch tiếng Tây Ban Nha và tiếng Việt sẽ được cung cấp tại tất cả các cuộc họp cộng đồng.

Bất kỳ người khuyết tật nào cần có những điều chỉnh hay tiện nghi cần thiết để tham dự các cuộc họp cần liên hệ Thư ký OCTA của Hội đồng theo số (714) 560-5676 ít nhất hai (2) ngày làm việc trước khi cuộc họp diễn ra để cho phép OCTA có sự bố trí hợp lý nhằm đảm bảo khả năng tham gia của người khuyết tật vào các cuộc họp này.

Để biết thêm thông tin hay để góp ý kiến trực tuyến, mời quý vị truy cập vào trang OCbus.com/BusPlan. Nếu quý vị muốn nhận thông tin này bằng một ngôn ngữ khác ngoài tiếng Anh, tiếng Tây Ban Nha hay tiếng Việt, xin vui lòng gọi (714) 636-RIDE.

SS

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

REP



NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

ORANGE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY ATTN: MKTG RM 722 PO BOX 14184

**ORANGE CA 92863-9831**