



June 10, 2021

To: Transit Committee

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: Bus Operations Performance Measurements Report for the Third Quarter of Fiscal Year 2020-21

Overview

The Orange County Transportation Authority operates fixed-route bus and demand-response paratransit service throughout Orange County and into neighboring counties. The established measures of performance for these services assess the safety, courtesy, reliability, and overall quality of the services. This report summarizes the year-to-date performance of these services through the third quarter of fiscal year 2020-21.

Recommendation

Receive and file as an information item.

Background

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) operates a countywide network of 58 routes, including local, community, rail connector, and express bus routes serving over 5,000 bus stops. Fixed-route bus (OC Bus) service operates in a 798 square-mile area, serving more than three million residents in 34 cities and unincorporated areas, with connections to transit services in Los Angeles, Orange, and Riverside counties. OCTA provides these services through both directly operated fixed-route (DOFR) and contracted fixed-route (CFR) service. OCTA also provides OC ACCESS, a federally mandated paratransit service, which is a shared-ride program available for people unable to use the OC Bus service due to functional limitations. Performance measures for both OC Bus and OC ACCESS services are summarized and reported quarterly (Attachment A).

In response to a significant decline in ridership as the result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, OC Bus service was modified to operate on a Sunday-only schedule seven days a week effective March 23, 2020. To support

ridership returning to the system, at the service change in June 2020, a Saturday schedule was implemented six days a week. To provide some connectivity beyond the core service area, eight additional routes that typically only operate on weekdays were also included in the June 2020 service plan, with a total of 50 of the 58 total routes currently being operated. To further address the return of ridership and ensure social distancing is possible while on-board buses, particularly on routes with the heaviest passenger loads, trippers operating on key segments of these routes continue to be deployed, as needed, to provide additional capacity throughout the third quarter of the fiscal year (FY).

Discussion

This report provides an update on the performance of the OC Bus and OC ACCESS services by presenting the current trends and comparisons with OCTA-established performance standards for transit system safety, courtesy, and reliability. OCTA counts preventable vehicle accidents to evaluate system safety, customer complaints to assess courtesy, and uses both on-time performance (OTP) and miles between road calls (MBRC) to measure service reliability.

This report includes performance through the third quarter, including the months of January, February, and March in FY 2020-21. The performance during the third quarter continues to reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in many of the metrics.

- Safety – DOFR OC Bus service performed below the accident frequency standard of one preventable accident per 100,000 service miles. To address this trend, OCTA Operations staff continue to focus on and stress safety in the bus loading/unloading zones and passenger safety inside the vehicle (passenger falls). CFR OC Bus service and OC ACCESS service both performed above standard.
- Customer Service – Customer service is measured by evaluating the number of valid customer complaints received compared to boardings. Through the third quarter, all modes of service performed above their respective standards.
- Reliability – The OTP for OC Bus and OC ACCESS through the third quarter was above standard and continues to perform well, primarily a result of a decrease in local traffic and lower traffic volumes overall due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The OTP for DOFR and CFR was 84.5 percent and 80.7 percent, respectively. The OTP for OC ACCESS was 98.5 percent, 4.5 percent above the standard.

- The MBRC for DOFR OC Bus Service and OC ACCESS exceeded the standard while CFR OC Bus fell below the standard for MBRC.

The report also includes:

- An assessment of the efficiency of OCTA transit operations based on industry standards for ridership, productivity, farebox recovery, and cost per revenue vehicle hour;
- A review of contractor performance for CFR and OC ACCESS services;
- A route-level performance evaluation that includes subsidy per boarding, revenue per boarding, and resource allocation (buses); and
- A status on the initiatives implemented under the OC Bus 360° Program, including OC Flex and the College Pass Program.

Summary

Through the third quarter of FY 2020-21, the performance of OC Bus service exceeded standards in the areas of courtesy and reliability as measured by OTP but fell below the performance standard for safety (DOFR) and reliability with respect to MBRC (CFR). OC ACCESS performed above standard for all measures of safety, courtesy, and reliability. OCTA staff continue to focus on continuous improvement in safety as detailed in the report. In addition to tracking the established key performance indicators, staff will continue to manage the service contracts pursuant to contract requirements and work to identify other strategies to improve overall system performance.

Attachment

- A. Bus Operations Performance Measurements Report, Third Quarter,
Fiscal Year 2020-21

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