



August 28, 2025

To: Executive Committee

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: Proposed Response to 2024–2025 Orange County Grand Jury Report "OCTA: It Takes a Lot to Keep Us Moving"

Overview

Staff has prepared a response to the June 18, 2025, report issued by the Orange County Grand Jury entitled, "OCTA: It Takes a Lot to Keep Us Moving," for the Orange County Transportation Authority Board of Directors' consideration. The response addresses each of the findings and recommendations made by the Grand Jury and highlights areas of agreement, clarification, or actions already taken.

Recommendation

Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to submit the proposed response to the Orange County Grand Jury report's findings and recommendations as required by California Penal Code Section 933(c).

Background

California Penal Code Section 933(c) states that the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Board of Directors (Board) shall comment on the findings and recommendations of the Orange County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) that pertain to public agency matters under the control of the Board within 90 days of the release of the Grand Jury's final report. The Grand Jury report entitled "OCTA: It Takes a Lot to Keep Us Moving" was released on June 18, 2025 (Attachment A). The 90-day deadline for submission is September 16, 2025. If approved, the proposed response (Attachment B) will be submitted to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court, with copies placed on file with the OCTA Clerk of the Board and the Orange County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.

The Grand Jury's report focused on OCTA's administration of major transportation infrastructure projects, including the OC Streetcar Project, rail

stabilization efforts in the City of San Clemente, the agency's approach to liability risk management, and the transition to a zero-emission bus fleet. It also reviewed the use of Measure M2 funds and OCTA's environmental mitigation and public outreach practices. The report provided both commendations and recommendations related to project delivery, community impacts, and interagency coordination.

Discussion

The 2024–2025 Orange County Grand Jury Report titled "*OCTA: It Takes a Lot to Keep Us Moving*" presented 14 findings and six recommendations related to OCTA's ongoing transportation infrastructure projects, community outreach, environmental permitting, funding practices, and risk management. The recommended response addresses each finding and recommendation, acknowledging areas of agreement, clarifying regulatory limitations, and detailing recent Board actions or ongoing initiatives.

Agreement was made with many of the Grand Jury's observations, including its recognition of OCTA's strong performance in delivering Measure M2 projects, compliance with state zero-emission bus mandates, and its commitment to long-term environmental mitigation. The responses also highlighted OCTA's extensive public engagement efforts, and the regulatory complexities involved in planning and delivering large-scale transit projects.

In certain instances, clarification is provided on why recommendations could not be implemented, citing legal restrictions on direct financial assistance to businesses and reaffirming its decision to remain self-insured while creating a \$32 million catastrophic reserve fund. The response underscores OCTA's transparency, fiscal responsibility, and continued commitment to working collaboratively with regional partners and stakeholders to deliver critical infrastructure projects that serve Orange County residents, businesses, and visitors.

Summary

The proposed response to the 2024–2025 Orange County Grand Jury Report addresses all findings and recommendations. The response highlights areas of agreement, clarifies regulatory limitations, and outlines actions already taken. It reflects OCTA's ongoing commitment to transparency, fiscal responsibility, and delivering transportation solutions that serve Orange County.

Attachments

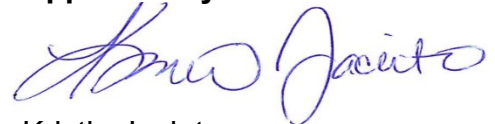
- A. 2024-2025 Orange County Grand Jury Report, "OCTA: It Takes a Lot to Keep Us Moving"
- B. Proposed Response to 2024-2025 Orange County Grand Jury Report, "OCTA: It Takes a Lot to Keep Us Moving"

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