



January 12, 2026

To: Members of the Board of Directors 
From: Douglas Chaffee, Chair of the Board of Directors
Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer 
Subject: 2025 Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer Initiatives and Action Plan – End-of-Year Report

On January 27, 2025, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Board of Directors (Board) approved the 2025 Board and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Initiatives (Attachment A) and Action Plan (Attachment B). Following its approval, the 2025 CEO Action Plan was updated to reflect feedback received from the Board and was shared via a memorandum to the Board on March 20, 2025. The revised Action Plan consists of three Board initiatives and nine CEO initiatives that are monitored through 110 milestones for the calendar year. This year-end report summarizes OCTA's progress in advancing those initiatives between January 1, 2025, and December 31, 2025.

At the conclusion of 2025, 95 of the 110 milestones were completed. Attachment B summarizes all 110 milestones, including the 15 milestones that will be carried over for reconsideration in 2026. The schedules for these carryover milestones had to be adjusted primarily due to delays in coordination with external entities, resource constraints, and other unanticipated circumstances impacting project complexity and delivery.

Highlights of OCTA's accomplishments are provided below.

Board Initiative: Deliver the Public a Balanced, Sustainable, and Equitable Transportation System

In 2025, OCTA remained committed to keeping Orange County moving by delivering transportation services that are efficient, dependable, and accessible. The agency continued to fulfill its voter-approved Measure M2 commitments through strategic investments in transit, local streets, and freeway improvements. In support of the region's diverse mobility needs, OCTA also prioritized meaningful engagement and strengthening its relationships with local communities, including those that rely most on transit.

- **OC Streetcar:** On November 12, 2025, the OC Streetcar Project reached a significant milestone with the beginning of vehicle testing. In coordination with Herzog Transit Services, Inc., initial testing involved pulling a car on the Pacific Electric Right-of-Way. This phase will help to confirm system functionality and the electric system's readiness, ensuring safe operations before passenger service begins in 2026.
- **OC ACCESS Eligibility Assessments Software:** On July 28, 2025, the Board approved the selection of Spare Labs Inc. to provide paratransit and microtransit software to better meet the needs of OC ACCESS riders. In December 2025, the new software was successfully launched and deployed, enhancing service delivery for customers.
- **State Route 91 (SR-91) Eastbound Corridor Operations Project (ECOP):** The proposed SR-91 ECOP will add a lane to eastbound SR-91 between State Route 241 and State Route 71 with the goal of improving traffic operations in the area. This project has required close coordination with the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) as it spans both Orange and Riverside counties. In October 2025, OCTA received a draft cooperative agreement from RCTC, highlighting meaningful progress toward establishing a formal interagency agreement to advance the SR-91 ECOP.
- **Same-Day Taxi:** On October 27, 2025, the Board approved a pilot of the Same-Day Taxi Program expanding the service radius from five to seven miles and exercising the option term to support continued service through November 2027. The two-year pilot will test expanded Same-Day Taxi benefits to support a more flexible and cost-effective alternative to OC ACCESS. Results will be monitored and evaluated to guide future program adjustments or permanency.
- **Diverse Community Leaders Group (DCLG):** To ensure OCTA projects and studies reflect the needs of the communities they serve, the agency engages with diverse populations across Orange County. OCTA provides updates and gathers key stakeholders' input on transit improvements and planning efforts through collaboration with the DCLG, a representative group of leaders from local business, community, civic, faith, education, and nonprofit organizations. In 2025, OCTA continued to host quarterly meetings with the DCLG to discuss major projects, including the new Wave card and the 2026 Long-Range Transportation Plan.

- Congestion Management Program (CMP): OCTA is responsible for monitoring and reporting on the Orange County CMP. On November 24, 2025, the Board adopted the 2025 Orange County CMP Report, which was developed in coordination with local agencies, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). The report documented continued improvements for Orange County's transportation system performance and fulfills state requirements to remain eligible for funding. Following Board adoption, it was submitted to SCAG for a determination of consistency with the Regional Transportation Plan, as required by state law.

Board Initiative: Ensure Organizational Resiliency through Fiscal and Environmental Responsibility

As Orange County's transportation commission, OCTA recognizes the importance of safeguarding its fiscal integrity and upholding its commitments to local voters. Through disciplined financial management and the responsible use of public funds, the agency successfully delivered transportation improvements throughout the year. OCTA also advanced key efforts in resiliency, sustainability, and environmental stewardship, helping to build a transit system more capable of withstanding and adapting to changing conditions.

- Wave Card: In October 2025, OCTA launched its new rider validation and fare system to enhance and simplify the payment process for OC Bus passengers. By streamlining fare payment and eliminating paper passes, the new Wave system reduces waste, improves efficiency, and aligns OCTA with modern transit payment technologies.
- Zero-Emission Paratransit Vehicles: As part of OCTA's zero-emission goals, which are aligned with state mandates for sustainable transit, OCTA is actively transitioning its existing OC ACCESS fleet to battery electric vans. The ongoing Zero-Emission Paratransit Vehicle Pilot Program is replacing ten gasoline-powered paratransit vehicles with ten battery electric vehicles suited for OC ACCESS service delivery. At the end of 2025, OCTA had received delivery of the ten battery electric vans which will reduce air pollution in Orange County, and continue to advance OCTA efforts to meet state mandates.
- Coastal Rail Resiliency Study (CRRS): The CRRS, initiated in fall 2023, assesses potential short- and mid-term solutions to protect the existing rail line and preserve rail operations. An outcome of the study has been the development of alternative concepts that would protect the rail line in place for up to the next 30 years. Throughout the CRRS, collaboration with key stakeholders has led to the identification of alternative protection strategy

concepts. In July 2025, OCTA hosted two public meetings to solicit public feedback on the draft alternative concepts. With the Board's direction, staff will advance the CRRS by continuing coordination with stakeholders and engagement with the public for feedback on the short-listed alternative concepts that will be further refined for future project implementation.

- **Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR):** On November 24, 2025, the Board received the fiscal year 2024-25 ACFR, an annual audit of OCTA's financial records and systems. The report concluded that OCTA presented financial statements and schedules fairly.
- **405 Express Lanes (405 EL) Excess Toll Revenue Expenditure Plan:** The 405 EL opened in December 2023 and are operated by OCTA under state tolling authority and a Caltrans lease. Following the opening of the 405 EL, staff developed guiding principles for the future use of excess toll revenue and worked on supporting policies and framework for the expenditure plan, which the Board approved on November 24, 2025.
- **M2 Environmental Cleanup Program (Project X):** On October 13, 2025, the Board approved grant funding allocations for eight Tier 1 water quality projects totaling approximately \$3.09 million. Funded through OCTA's M2 Environmental Cleanup Program, these projects will help improve overall water quality in Orange County by reducing transportation-related pollution.

Board Initiative: Uphold Continued Excellence, Diversity, and Collaboration

OCTA understands that its success is largely dependent on the relationships it builds with both internal and external stakeholders. Accordingly, the agency invests in professional development and promotes initiatives that strengthen an inclusive and supportive work culture. OCTA also upholds rigorous safety and security practices to ensure a safe work environment. In addition, the agency engages collaboratively with local and regional partners through open communication and coordinated planning. These efforts better position OCTA to meet evolving transportation needs and maintain a high-performing, future-focused organization.

- **Workday:** In December 2025, OCTA launched Workday, an integrated human resources and payroll system. The new system will streamline and modernize key human resources and payroll functions, enhance collaboration, and provide employees with a more efficient and user-friendly platform. This transition was supported cross-departmentally to ensure successful agencywide adoption and implementation. As Workday is further incorporated into daily operations, OCTA will become

better equipped to deliver improved service, strengthen internal operations, and support its workforce.

- **Collective Bargaining Agreement for Maintenance Employees:** On November 24, 2025, the Board approved, in closed session, the renewed collective bargaining agreement with OCTA maintenance employees. The new contract affirms the significant contributions and dedication of this essential workforce, which helps ensure OCTA can continue providing critical bus service riders rely on to reach their work, school, and healthcare destinations.
- **Local Government Forums:** From September through November 2025, OCTA met with local city leaders to exchange information and gain a better understanding of community priorities. This engagement process allows for strengthened collaboration and coordination on transportation priorities that are better aligned with local needs.
- **South County Mobility Improvements:** The Board approved an agreement in October 2021 with the County of Orange and the City of San Clemente to jointly advance several priority transportation projects in south Orange County. Some of these improvements include the non-tolled Los Patrones Parkway extension, widening of a critical segment of Ortega Highway, and an extension of the Interstate 5 high-occupancy vehicle lanes in south Orange County. This past year, work progressed through the project development phase, and an update on these efforts was presented to the Regional Transportation Planning Committee on December 1, 2025.

Upon completion of the 2025 CEO Action Plan, OCTA remains focused on effectively and strategically addressing the immediate needs of both the public and agency employees to keep Orange County moving. Please let me know if you have any questions or contact Darrell Johnson, CEO, at (714) 560-5343.

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Attachments