



AFFILIATED AGENCIES

*Orange County
Transit District*

*Local Transportation
Authority*

*Service Authority for
Freeway Emergencies*

*Consolidated Transportation
Service Agency*

*Congestion Management
Agency*

May 11, 2026

Honorable Maria E. Hernandez
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
Orange County Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Dear Judge Hernandez:

On behalf of the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), I am submitting OCTA's response to the 2025–2026 Orange County Grand Jury Report entitled "Connecting Orange County to LAX: Evaluating Transportation Options," in accordance with California Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05.

The report reviews existing transportation options between Orange County and LAX and references prior efforts to provide direct service. These past efforts demonstrate the operational and financial challenges associated with developing viable public transit options for airport travel.

To the extent the Grand Jury Report recommends that OCTA study and implement specific travel options, this may exceed the Grand Jury's statutorily defined investigatory authority, as such decisions are policy determinations within the purview of OCTA's Board of Directors. Notwithstanding, OCTA provides the following responses as directed by the Report.

OCTA has addressed each of the findings and recommendations assigned to the agency and will continue to coordinate with regional partners to evaluate opportunities to improve connectivity consistent with regulatory requirements and available resources.

If you have any questions regarding the enclosed document, please feel free to contact me directly at (714) 560-5343.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Darrell E. Johnson", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Darrell E. Johnson
Chief Executive Officer

DEJ:mm
Enclosure

ORANGE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (OCTA)

RESPONSE TO 2025–2026 ORANGE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT

Title: “Connecting Orange County to LAX: Evaluating Transportation Options”

Prepared in accordance with California Penal Code §933 and §933.05

F1

Several Orange County locations meet the criteria for express bus pick-up sites, being approximately twenty-five miles from LAX and near major freeways. These locations are Fullerton Park & Ride, Buena Park Mall, and former Westminster Mall.

OCTA partially agrees with this finding. OCTA acknowledges that the identified locations may present opportunities for improved regional connectivity based on proximity to major transportation corridors and existing or planned transit-oriented developments. However, the feasibility of implementing express bus or FlyAway®-style services at these locations depends on multiple factors, including coordination with Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA), demand levels, operational funding, and compliance with federal regulations governing transit operations.

OCTA conducts a system-wide assessment of transit needs approximately every three to five years to ensure that limited resources are allocated where there is the greatest potential for ridership. The most recent OC Bus restructuring effort, the Making Better Connections Study, was approved by the OCTA Board of Directors in 2022 and focused service improvements in areas with the highest propensity for transit usage. While demand for service to airports such as LAX or John Wayne Airport has historically been limited, OCTA anticipates initiating its next system-wide assessment in 2027, which will evaluate evolving travel patterns and demand across the County.

In addition, major capital improvements at LAX, including the Automated People Mover and related infrastructure projects, are expected to significantly change access patterns. It would be prudent to evaluate future service opportunities after these improvements are fully operational and sufficient post-implementation data is available. OCTA will continue to work with regional partners to assess potential opportunities consistent with these considerations.

F2

The Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center presents a viable option for express bus service to LAX due to its location near Orange County attractions and multimodal connectivity, despite being forty miles from LAX.

OCTA partially agrees with this finding. OCTA recognizes that the Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center (ARTIC) is a major multimodal hub with strong regional connectivity and proximity to key destinations. While ARTIC may present opportunities for

enhanced airport access, the implementation of express service to LAX would require coordination with LAWA, demonstration of sufficient ridership demand, identification of sustainable funding sources, and compliance with applicable federal regulations.

As part of its ongoing planning efforts, OCTA conducts system-wide transit assessments approximately every three to five years to evaluate service needs and prioritize investments based on ridership potential. The most recent restructuring plan, the Making Better Connections Study, focused on improving service in areas with the highest existing demand. Historically, demand for direct airport transit service to LAX has been limited, and future service considerations will be evaluated as part of OCTA's next system-wide assessment anticipated in 2027.

Furthermore, upcoming LAX improvements, including the Automated People Mover and associated landside access projects, are expected to significantly alter travel patterns. A comprehensive evaluation of express service opportunities would be most effective after these improvements are operational and reliable demand data becomes available. OCTA will continue to support regional coordination efforts to identify viable and sustainable transit solutions.

F4

Public transit options to LAX that offer travel times comparable to private automobiles have several limitations. The Orange County Transportation Authority has never operated direct transit service to LAX due to federal regulations prohibiting transit bus service to a single destination such as LAX. Metrolink OC Line lacks direct connections to LAX, as stations such as Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs do not provide a seamless link to the airport. Southern California Association of Governments planning documents that discuss regional airport ground access neglect cross-county mobility challenges.

OCTA partially agrees with this finding. OCTA agrees that existing transit options involve transfers and may present travel time challenges. Federal regulations limit OCTA's ability to operate direct service to a single destination such as LAX. OCTA collaborates with Metrolink, LA Metro, LAWA, and SCAG to improve regional connectivity and will continue to support efforts to enhance integration across transit systems.

R1

By September 30, 2026, the City of Fullerton should direct its Planning Department to collaborate with Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) and Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) on a business case study for FlyAway® or similar services from Fullerton Park & Ride (Orangethorpe Transit Village) to LAX, with a case study submitted to LAWA. This study should include projected ridership, financial sustainability, infrastructure readiness, and community benefits to support funding of the proposed service.

The recommendation has been implemented. OCTA currently collaborates with local jurisdictions and regional partners, including LAWA, in evaluating transportation improvements and transit-supportive developments. OCTA will continue to provide technical support and

coordination as requested. Any future service would require partnership with LAWA, funding identification, and regulatory compliance.

R4

By September 30, 2026, the Anaheim City Council should direct its Planning Department to collaborate with Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) and Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) on a business case study for FlyAway® or similar services from the Anaheim Regional Transit Intermodal Center to LAX, with a case study submitted to LAWA. This study should include projected ridership, financial sustainability, infrastructure readiness, and community benefits to support funding of the proposed service.

The recommendation has been implemented. OCTA has an established practice of coordinating with the City of Anaheim and regional partners on transportation planning initiatives involving ARTIC. OCTA will continue to collaborate with Anaheim and LAWA to evaluate potential opportunities. Any advancement of service would depend on demand, funding, and regulatory requirements.

R8

By June 30, 2026, OCTA and Metrolink should promote the appropriate services that offer convenient connections to LAX, aiming to inform and guide travelers who are ready to choose public transit for their airport commute.

The recommendation has been implemented. OCTA, in coordination with Metrolink and regional partners, actively promotes transit options connecting to LAX through its website, trip planning tools, and outreach efforts. OCTA will continue enhancing public awareness to encourage transit use for airport access.