



AFFILIATED AGENCIES

*Orange County
Transit District*

*Local Transportation
Authority*

*Service Authority for
Freeway Emergencies*

*Consolidated Transportation
Service Agency*

*Congestion Management
Agency*

January 31, 2020

Mr. Ryan Chamberlain
District Director
California Department of Transportation, District 12
1750 East Fourth Street, Suite 100
Santa Ana, CA 92705

Subject: Proposed High-Occupancy Toll Lanes in North Orange County

Dear Mr. Chamberlain:

At the December 9, 2019, Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Board of Directors (Board) meeting, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) provided a presentation on proposed high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes in north Orange County. Following the presentation, the Board requested Caltrans include a non-tolled high occupancy vehicle (HOV) 3+ alternative in future studies for Interstate 5 (I-5) managed lanes between State Route 55 (SR-55) and the Los Angeles County line. In addition, prior staff comments requested Caltrans explore alternatives north of State Route 57 (SR-57) to the Los Angeles County line to avoid conflicts with the Measure M HOV lanes currently under construction between SR-55 and SR-57. This project, known as Project A in the voter pamphlet, is adding a second carpool lane in each direction in this I-5 section and was environmentally cleared as an HOV project in 2015.

OCTA is very concerned that various Caltrans HOT lane proposals directly conflict with the Measure M freeway program and would result in a breach of trust and broken promises between OCTA and the Orange County voters. Therefore, we urge Caltrans to reconsider the timing of future HOT lane studies until such time the OCTA Board provides specific direction on a tolled express lane network in Orange County. OCTA staff expects to bring forward potential express lane phasing options and related policies for Board consideration by June 2020.

OCTA appreciates the time and effort you and your staff invested in the December 9, 2019 presentation. However, we believe a policy discussion and Board decision must precede HOT lane project development efforts. OCTA welcomes Caltrans participation in these discussions over the next few months.

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Please direct any follow-up to Kia Mortazavi, Executive Director, Planning, at (714) 560-5741 or kmortazavi@octa.net.

Sincerely,



Darrell E. Johnson
Chief Executive Officer

DEJ:sc

c: Lan Zhou, Caltrans
OCTA Board of Directors
Kia Mortazavi, OCTA