

Meeting of February 12, 2024

OCTA Sets 2024 Standards with CEO and Board Initiatives

Orange County Transportation Authority Chair Tam T. Nguyen and CEO Darrell E. Johnson unveiled the 2024 Board and CEO Strategic Initiatives and Action Plan, which focus on continuing to build a transportation network that is equitable, sustainable, and balanced, is fiscally responsible with taxpayer dollars, and protects Orange County's environment.

For 2024, there are three Board Initiatives supported by nine CEO Initiatives:

- **Provide Public a Balanced, Sustainable and Equitable Transportation System**
 - Ensure positive outcomes by engaging all stakeholders, including diverse and disadvantaged communities
 - Deliver programs, services, and projects to continue upholding Measure M promises to voters
 - Improve travel by optimizing reliability and enhancing mobility options
- **Safeguard Future Through Fiscal Responsibility and Environmental Sustainability**
 - Focus on the future by adapting and building resilience to a changing environment
 - Uphold financial responsibilities and Measure M administration to ensure ongoing accountability and transparency
 - Support healthy communities by advancing environmental stewardship, safety and sustainability commitments
- **Sustain Organizational Excellence, Collaboration, and Diversity**
 - Promote employee belonging, growth, and development through a safe and welcoming workplace
 - Reflect community values by sustaining an inclusive and diverse work culture
 - Strengthen regional and business partnerships to advance mutual priorities

The action plan includes 107 milestones that will provide the agency with strategic direction for implementation throughout the year. Progress reports on the milestones will be provided to the OCTA board on a quarterly basis.

\$18.5 Million Available to Improve Orange County Water Quality

OCTA's board has made available \$18.5 million in competitive funding for projects aimed at improving overall water quality in Orange County.

The funding is available through OCTA's Environmental Cleanup Program for projects that reduce the impacts of transportation-related water pollution by removing litter and debris before it reaches the ocean and other waterways. Cities and the county can propose projects through the program, which is funded by Measure M, Orange County's half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements.

Approximately \$3.5 million is available for Tier 1 projects, which focus on addressing the removal of visible trash and debris through the purchase or upgrade of screens, filters and inserts for catch basins. To date, the board has approved funding for 222 of these projects, totaling more than \$36 million.

An additional \$15 million is available for Tier 2 projects, which aim to address non-visible forms of pollution, such as heavy metals, organic chemicals and sediment. To date, the board has approved funding for 22 of these projects totaling \$28 million.

Applications are due April 25 for Tier 1 projects and May 16 for Tier 2 projects.

OCTA in Route to a Zero-Emission Future

The OCTA board received an update on the agency's efforts to transition to a zero-emission bus fleet.

OCTA remains committed to complying with the Innovative Clean Transit Rule passed by the California Air Resources Board in 2018, requiring all transit agencies to transition to a zero-emission bus fleet by 2040.

OCTA launched a hydrogen fuel-cell electric bus pilot program in 2020, which includes 10 buses and a hydrogen fueling station located at the Santa Ana bus base. At the same time, OCTA began piloting plug-in battery electric buses in 2022. Testing both types of zero-emission technology is allowing OCTA to determine which type, or mix of types, will work best on Orange County streets.

OCTA has plans to expand the pilot programs by procuring 40 additional fuel-cell electric buses, 10 additional battery-electric buses, and 10 battery-electric vans for paratransit service. The expansion will also require additional infrastructure, including a second hydrogen fueling station, 10 additional battery-electric bus charging stations, and charging stations for the battery-electric vans.