



# OC Transit Vision Master Plan

## *Public Engagement and Survey Analysis Report*

### *Phase 1*

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## Table of Contents

<b>I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>1</b>
i. Community Engagement Approach .....	1
ii. Equitable Engagement .....	2
iii. Survey Implementation .....	2
iv. Survey Results Analysis .....	3
v. Stakeholder Interviews.....	6
<b>II. OUTREACH AND SURVEY IMPLEMENTATION.....</b>	<b>8</b>
i. Survey Outreach .....	8
ii. Survey Format.....	9
<b>III. ADDITIONAL SURVEY RESULTS .....</b>	<b>10</b>
i. Geographic Distribution .....	10
ii. Demographics Results .....	10
iii. New Contacts.....	12
<b>IV. CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>12</b>

## Figures

Figure 1: Nightmare on Center St. Pop-up .....	1
Figure 2: Dia de los Muertos Festival Pop-up.....	2
Figure 3: Survey Flyer .....	8
Figure 4: Santa Ana Zoo Pop-Up.....	8
Figure 6: Spanish Survey.....	9
Figure 5: Placentia Heritage Festival .....	9
Figure 7: Home Zip Code Map .....	10
Figure 8: Age Range .....	11
Figure 9: Annual Household Income .....	11
Figure 10: Ethnicity.....	12

## Appendices

<b>Appendix A: Survey Infographic.....</b>	<b>A2</b>
<b>Appendix B: Paper Survey Design (English, Spanish, Vietnamese).....</b>	<b>A5</b>



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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) is developing the 2024 OC Transit Vision Master Plan (Plan), which aims to integrate, enhance, and expand multimodal transportation services in Orange County. This 18-month study will build upon the previous 2018 plan and other recent studies to establish a framework for future transit investments to include high-capacity transit corridors, first/last mile options, and other mobility services for the County. As part of this effort, a stakeholder and outreach engagement program was implemented to inform and seek feedback from Orange County communities about the Plan. This report documents the outreach efforts and survey results for Phase 1 of the study, which was conducted from October through November 2023.

The survey research was qualitative, which means that results cannot be considered representative of the total population of interest. Informal research methods are useful to explore a group's opinions and views, allowing for the collection of verifiable data. This data can reveal information that may warrant further study and is often a cornerstone for generating new ideas.

### i. Community Engagement Approach

An engagement strategy was crafted and executed to increase awareness of the Transit Vision Master Plan (TVMP) among residents, stakeholders, commuters, and visitors of Orange County. The primary goal was to encourage active participation in the community webinar and to prompt stakeholders to complete the TVMP survey. In addition, one-on-one stakeholder interviews were conducted to collect feedback about the future of transit in Orange County.

To achieve community engagement, a robust notification campaign was launched, utilizing both digital and traditional methods of communication. This included social media posts, website updates, email blasts, local multilingual newspaper advertisements, and public announcements.

Additionally, a suite of promotional graphics and text were prepared for community partners to effectively distribute and communicate the webinar and survey details to their respective audiences. This approach ensured a wider reach and deeper penetration into different community segments.

To further enhance engagement, the outreach team participated in a variety of community events throughout the county, servicing each district. These events provided opportunities for face-to-face interactions, allowing the team to directly engage with individuals, answer questions, and

*Figure 1: Nightmare on Center St. Pop-up*



provide insights about the Plan. This approach was particularly effective in reaching those who might not be as responsive to digital or traditional media, ensuring a more inclusive and comprehensive outreach effort.

## ii. Equitable Engagement

The outreach strategy was specifically designed to engage a wide range of community groups, including those often underrepresented. This approach aimed to ensure broad participation from all population segments, irrespective of ethnic background, language preference, or socioeconomic status. To accommodate the diverse linguistic needs of the county, the survey and project materials, including informational fact sheets, surveys, and e-blasts, were made available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. This multilingual approach was vital in making the information accessible to a more significant population segment.

Figure 2: Dia de los Muertos Festival Pop-up



The outreach team also proactively identified and engaged with the community at events, including local gatherings and pop-up events across the county. These events were chosen strategically to maximize Plan awareness and encourage survey participation. Special attention was given to cities with significant populations of residents for whom English is a second language. This targeted approach was aimed at achieving a more equitable representation in the feedback and insights gathered, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the community's needs and preferences.

## iii. Survey Implementation

The survey opened to the public on October 11, 2023, and closed on November 12, 2023. During that time a total of 1,416 surveys were collected which included 1,317 English, 96 Spanish and 3 Vietnamese. The following is a summary of survey implementation:

- The survey was made available in English, Spanish and Vietnamese languages.
- The survey was made available online and in print form.
- Promotional print flyers were distributed to 12 community centers across the five Orange County supervisorial districts.
- Traditional and digital communication tactics were developed to promote survey participation. This includes use of newspaper advertisements, social media posts, emails, outreach toolkits, and promotion at community events.
- As an incentive for participation, respondents were given the opportunity to enter a sweepstakes, with the chance to win one of four gift cards valued at \$50 each.

#### iv. Survey Results Analysis

The subsequent section presents the results for each question in the survey.

**Table 1. Mode of Travel**

Q1: What is your primary method of travel?	
Car (drive alone)	55%
Bus	25%
Carpool/Vanpool	6%
Train	5%
Bicycle	3%
Rideshare (Uber, Lyft)	2%
Walking	2%
E-bike/ E-scooter	2%
Other	0%

**Table 2. Travel Frequency**

Survey Question	Never	4 to 7 days per week	1 to 3 times per week	1 to 3 times per year	1 to 3 times per month
Q2: How often do you ride on an OC Bus?	34%	22%	17%	15%	12%

**Table 2a. Reasons for Not Riding the Bus: Non-users**

For those who chose "Never" in response to Question 2, a subsequent question was presented to understand their reasons for not using the bus. Table 2a displays the three most common explanations for avoiding bus travel.

Q2a: If selecting never, why do you not ride the bus?	
Takes too long	31%
Can't get where I need to go	17%
Need car for work or errands	13%
Other	9%
Not sure	8%



Makes me feel uncomfortable or unsafe	7%
Hard to understand how to get where I need to go	5%
Doesn't run at the right times	4%
It's not reliable	3%
I bike or walk most places	3%

Participants who stated in Question 2 that they use the bus were asked three additional questions to delve deeper into their bus-riding use.

*Table 3. Bus Rider Frequency*

Survey Question	8 or more years	1 to 4 years	Less than 6 months	6 months to 1 year	5 to 7 years
Q3: How long have you been riding the OC Bus?	31%	25%	15%	15%	14%

*Table 4. Bus Use Reason*

Q4: Why do you ride the bus?	
Avoid traffic congestion	23%
Prefer not to drive	22%
Environmental reasons (I.e., air quality)	15%
Can't afford to purchase/maintain a car	14%
No driver's license/ can't drive	11%
High gas prices	8%
Other	7%

*Table 5. Trip Purpose*

Q5: What is your primary purpose for riding the bus?	
Work	43%
Recreation, social, entertainment	21%
Personal errands	14%
School	9%

<b>Health/ medical appointments</b>	6%
<b>Shopping</b>	5%
<b>Other</b>	2%

All participants were then asked two questions (Table 6 and 7) regarding potential transit improvements.

**Table 6. Transit Service Considerations**

<b>Q6: If you could increase transit in Orange County, what would be the most important to you? (Select your top 3)</b>	
<b>More frequent service on major routes</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Faster bus services with fewer stops</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Service to more areas, including lower-usage areas</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>More weekend services</b>	11%
<b>More early-morning and late-night service</b>	11%
<b>More service for commuters during rush hour</b>	11%
<b>More special event service (concerts, fairs, festivals, etc.)</b>	9%
<b>More long-distance service outside of Orange County</b>	8%
<b>Direct service to key activity and employment centers</b>	7%

**Table 7. Transit Improvement Considerations**

<b>Q7: What kind of transit improvements would you like to see more of? (Select your top 3)*</b>	
<b>High-capacity rail (train, light rail, streetcars)</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>Bus rapid transit (limited stops, dedicated lanes, more frequent service)</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Increase OC Bus service (improved frequencies and service coverage)</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>More long-distance service (freeway express routes, Metrolink, Amtrak)</b>	13%
<b>Dedicated lanes for transit</b>	11%
<b>Improved pedestrian and bicycle access to transit</b>	10%

Traffic signal priority for transit (keeping lights green a few seconds longer to avoid delays)	8%
On demand microtransit service (OC Flex), community shuttles, taxis, and ridesharing services (Uber/Lyft) in areas with lower transit demand	7%

At the conclusion of the survey, respondents were given the option to answer demographic questions to assess the characteristics of survey respondents. Participation in providing this information was optional and did not affect their raffle eligibility.

*Table 8. Key Demographic Findings*

Survey Question	Response Rate	Findings
Q8: What is your age range?	96%	45% of participants were between the ages of 20-35, 27% were between 36-50, and 15% were between 51-65.
Q9. What is your combined annual household income?	95%	19% of respondents shared their annual household income is between \$50,000-\$79,000. Followed by 16% of respondents who shared their annual household income is between \$100,000-\$149,000. 14% of respondents make less than 30% a year
Q10. What ethnic group do you consider yourself a part of or feel closest to?	96%	41% of respondents identified themselves as Caucasian/White, followed by 31% Latino/Hispanic, and 12% Asian.

A detailed breakdown of the demographic findings is located on page 9.

## v. Stakeholder Interviews

As an effort to collect feedback from stakeholders throughout the county, several target audiences were identified and invited to participate in a one-on-one interview to comment about their goals for the OC Transit Vision. The project team posed open-ended questions to gather insight on what works and what could be improved to encourage more people to use transit in Orange County.

More than 80 stakeholders were invited to participate and represented the following industries and groups: healthcare, building, educational institutions, tourism, major employers; business and chamber groups, and countywide city organization. The following groups participated in the interviews.

- Caltrans
- The Irvine Company
- UCI Health
- Rancho Mission Viejo
- Visit Anaheim
- South Coast Metro Alliance
- South Orange County Economic Coalition Advocacy Committee

Each group was asked to describe its vision for the future of Orange County transit. Interviews generally followed a script of about 15 questions geared to the interviewee's background and expertise. Transit-related questions focused on identifying barriers, priorities, and opportunities, as well as what is already working well. Interviewees shared a wide range of ideas, issues, and insights. Recurring themes included the following:

- Mobility hubs in Orange County will be beneficial in integrating various transportation modes, promoting connectivity, and offering convenient, multi-modal options for commuters.
- Investing in improved biking infrastructure will encourage people to choose bicycles over cars and facilitate crucial first and last-mile connections.
- Integrating technology will be essential for optimizing Orange County's transit system, improving efficiency, and enhancing the overall passenger experience.
- Microtransit can offer flexible, on-demand transportation solutions tailored to individual needs.
- Education will be pivotal for the success of Orange County's transit initiatives, fostering public awareness, understanding, and contributing to a more informed and supportive community.
- As housing increases in Orange County, it's essential to carefully plan transportation infrastructure to accommodate growing population, ensuring efficient access to transit options and minimizing congestion while promoting sustainable development patterns.

## II. OUTREACH AND SURVEY IMPLEMENTATION

A comprehensive outreach strategy was implemented to raise awareness and drive engagement in the greater Orange County community regarding the Plan and survey. This strategy comprised of a mix of email campaigns, where regular blasts were sent to contacts in the TVMP database, and strategic notice distribution at key locations throughout the county. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and X (Twitter) were also leveraged for targeted posts to stimulate interest and participation. Electronic communication toolkits were also developed, providing an easy way for community leaders and organizations to share information. The outreach was further bolstered by local print newspaper advertisements catering to a diverse audience, including those less engaged digitally.

Figure 3: Survey Flyer



### i. Survey Outreach

Recognizing Orange County's diverse linguistic landscape, notifications and materials were made available in multiple languages, ensuring inclusivity and greater reach, especially among diverse and disadvantaged communities. TVMP and the survey were also promoted during virtual meetings, key stakeholder engagements, and local community events, facilitating direct interaction with residents and encouraging on-site participation. This multifaceted approach was crucial in achieving widespread community awareness and involvement, capturing the diverse perspectives of Orange County residents for the TVMP.

The survey outreach notification and engagement highlights are detailed below:

- Gathered 1,416 responses to the survey from October 12 to November 12, 2023.
- Hosted two Community Leaders Roundtables, one community Webinar, seven Stakeholder Interviews.
- Presented at two Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings, one Teen Council meeting, one Diverse Community Leaders meeting, and one Bus Customer Roundtable.
- Engaged with more than 1,400 community members across 12 events in Orange County's five supervisorial districts.

Figure 4: Santa Ana Zoo Pop-up

- Reached over 88,000 readers via Spanish and Vietnamese language newspapers.
- Emailed five multilingual notices to a network of more than 1,500 interested community stakeholders.
- Advertised the survey and community webinar through four Facebook posts, three Instagram stories, and four X (Twitter) posts.
- Created and disseminated toolkits as a convenient communication aid to more than 109 local municipalities, community leaders, and organizations associated with OCTA committees and stakeholders.
- Created and shared materials in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

## ii. Survey Format

The survey was hosted on the Typeform platform and featured several multiple-choice questions for respondents. After the second question, "How often do you ride on an OC Bus?" the survey implemented skip logic. This divided the subsequent questions based on whether the respondent had ever used an OC Bus. Those who indicated they had never ridden were asked a follow-up question about their reasons for not using the bus. Conversely, all other respondents were presented with three additional questions regarding the duration of using the OC Bus, their reasons for riding, and the purpose of their trips. Finally, every participant was asked the last two questions focusing on increasing transit service and potential transit improvements, followed by optional demographic questions.

The survey questions were designed to:

- Understand travel use and trip purposes.
- Determine which transit services are the most important to respondents.
- Obtain feedback on possible transit improvements.
- Acquire demographic information from respondents.
- Gather updated contact details for future communication.

The survey comprised of 13 questions in total, which included four optional demographic questions and an



Figure 6: Placentia Heritage Festival



Figure 5: Spanish Survey

A screenshot of a survey titled "Encuesta sobre el Plan OC Transit Vision 2024". The survey is in Spanish and is hosted on the Typeform platform. The text on the screen reads: "La Autoridad de Transporte del Condado de Orange (OCTA) está desarrollando el Plan Maestro OC Transit Vision 2024 (OC Transit Vision), un plan a 30 años que tiene como objetivo integrar, mejorar y ampliar los servicios de transporte en el condado de Orange, e incluye opciones de autobús, tranvía, microtránsito y otros servicios de movilidad. ¡Complete nuestra encuesta en 3 minutos para tener la oportunidad de ganar una de las cuatro tarjetas de regalo de \$50! SIN OBLIGACIÓN DE COMPRA O PAGO PARA GANAR. Ver reglas." Below the text is a green button labeled "Comenzar" with a small "¡¡¡¡¡" icon next to it.

option for participants to enter their email address for the gift card raffle. A total of 1,416 surveys were collected, which included 1,317 English, 96 Spanish, and 3 Vietnamese.

### III. ADDITIONAL SURVEY RESULTS

The following are additional survey results related to the survey participants’ geographic distribution and demographics.

#### i. Geographic Distribution

More than 94% of survey respondents shared their home zip code (94.8%; 1,343). Of those that provided zip code information, about 85% of respondents stated they reside within Orange County (85.1%; 1,143). Three cities with the highest percentage of survey responses within Orange County included Santa Ana, (17.3%; 233), Anaheim (14.4%; 194), and Irvine (6.8%; 91). The respondent distribution map identifies the number of surveys collected by city and in total for unincorporated areas in Orange County. It also provides a total respondent count for input received from those residing outside Orange County (23.9%; 273).

#### ii. Demographics Results

The following three figures show the full results from the survey demographic questions.

Figure 7: Home Zip Code Map

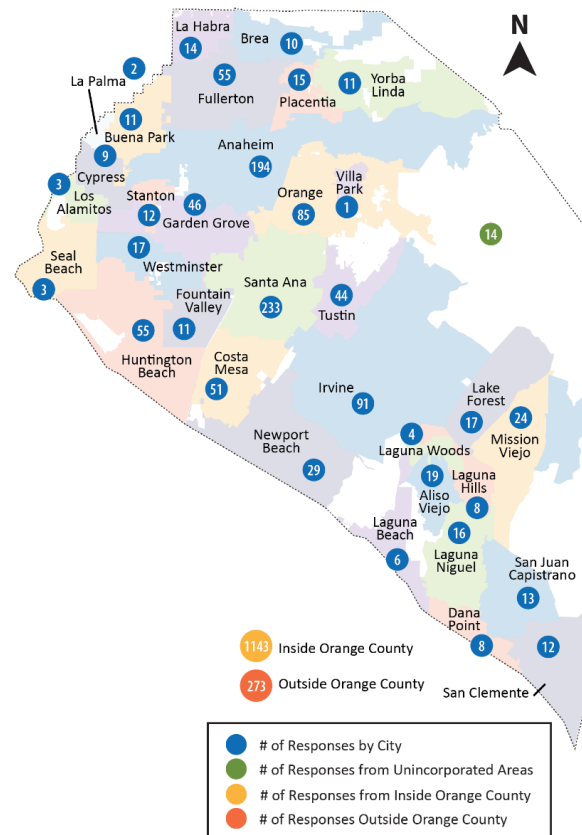


Figure 8: Age Range

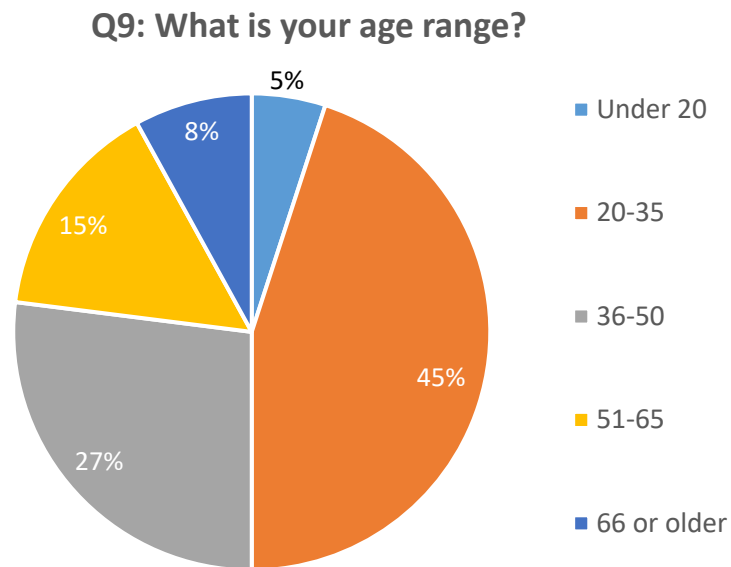


Figure 9: Annual Household Income

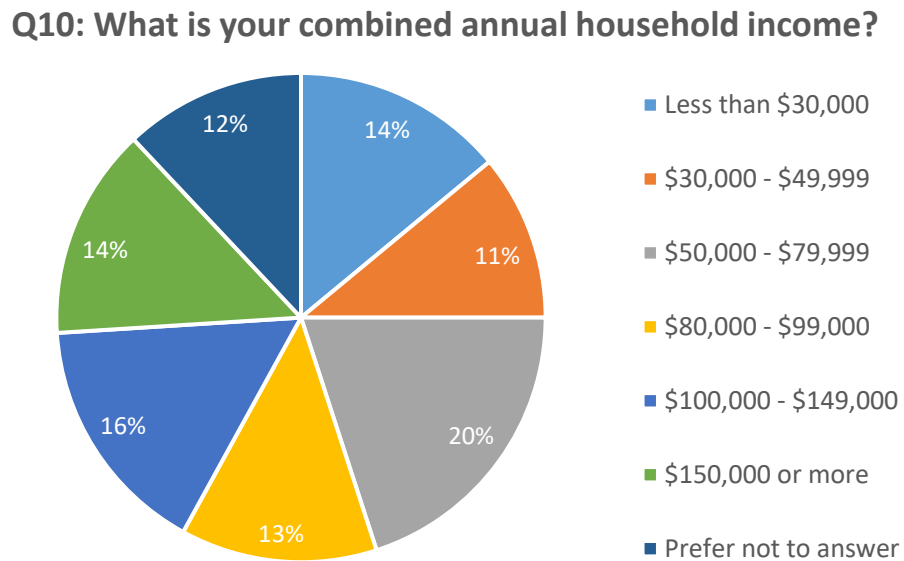
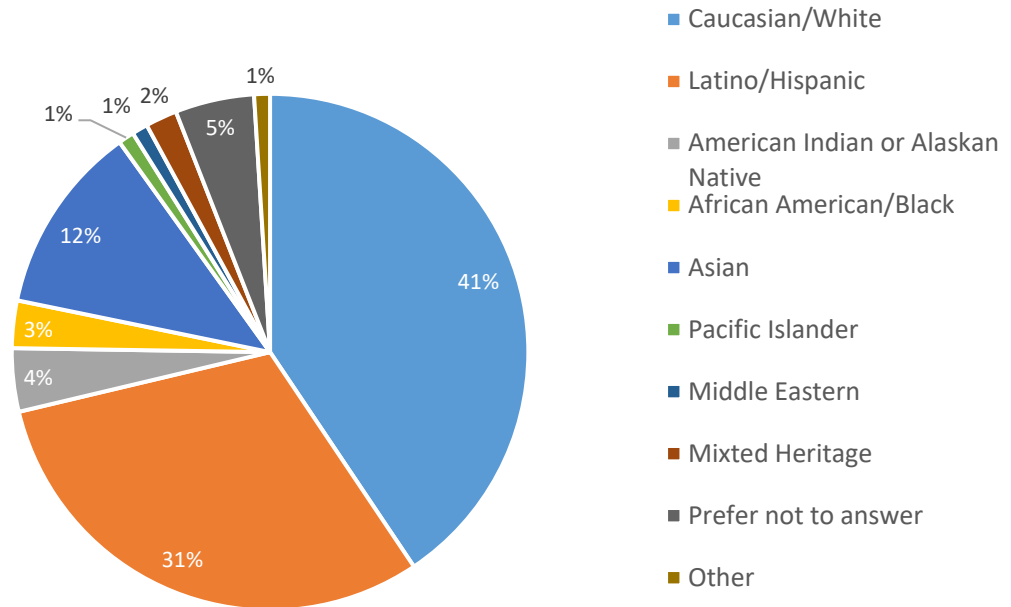




Figure 10: Ethnicity

**Q11: What ethnic group do you consider yourself a part of or feel closest to?**



**iii. New Contacts**

Enhancing public engagement is a key priority for OCTA, and a significant part of this involved expanding the study’s contact list. During this survey effort, a total of 845 new email addresses were gathered from survey respondents. Emails will be used for future TVMP announcements and notifications.

**IV. CONCLUSION**

The technical team will analyze the survey results and public feedback to formulate project recommendations for the TVMP. A final phase of outreach will take place in spring/summer 2024 and will involve seeking public and stakeholder feedback on the Draft Project Recommendations.