

7 STAKEHOLDER THEMES

A robust public engagement process will ensure the OC Transit Vision truly reflects the needs and values of Orange County residents, employees, and visitors. As a first step in that process, focus group and key stakeholder interviews were being conducted as this document was being prepared. Findings from the four focus groups and 18 stakeholder interviews are described in this chapter. (Focus group interviews support both this effort and the update to the OCTA Long-Range Transportation Plan.)

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS



Citizens Advisory Committee meeting.

The project team interviewed representatives from:

- Automobile Club of Southern California
- California Department of Transportation District 12
- Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa
- County of Orange
- Irvine Company
- John Wayne Airport
- Mariners Church
- OCTA Bus Customer Roundtable
- OCTA Diverse Community Leaders
- Orange County Visitors Association
- Rancho Mission Viejo
- Several OCTA committees including: Citizens Advisory Committee, Special Needs Advisory Committee, and Technical Advisory Committee.
- South Coast Metro Alliance
- Spectrumotion, Irvine
- The Disneyland Resort
- And Transportation Advocate and former OCTA Board Member Sarah Catz

Each group was asked for their transit vision and the interviews generally followed a script of about 15 questions (see appendix), although only select questions were asked in each interview based on the category of interviewee (for example, whether they represented a public agency, business group, institution, or other major category). The transit questions were related to identifying barriers, priorities, opportunities and what is working well.

Interviewees shared a wide range of ideas, issues and insights. Recurring themes included the following:

- Demographic change is driving changing travel needs. As baby boomers reach retirement age, there will be a greater need for transportation tailored to seniors. At the same time, millennials are driving changes, including an increase in creative office space and greater demand for evening travel.
- A number of popular non-commute travel markets in Orange County are not adequately being served with transit, including evening, weekend, and special-event service.
- A number of high-capacity transit modes may be appropriate for Orange County, including both rail and higher-quality bus service (bus-only lanes, express buses with park-and-ride lots).
- Improving connectivity will be key to the future success of transit in Orange County, including both first-/last-mile feeder connections as well as connections between longer distance destinations, such as inland and coastal areas and North and South County.
- Transportation network companies such as Uber and Lyft could play an important role in improving first-/last-mile connectivity. They could also supplement transit in higher-demand corridors by providing alternative service to lower-demand areas.
- Similarly, autonomous vehicle technology could benefit transit by reducing transit operating costs.

Additional key findings included the following:

- OCTA performs well in a number of areas, such as meeting the needs of service-industry workers and collaborating with cities.
- Focus transit resources on areas with higher transit demand, where transit can be more productive and cost-effective.
- For transit in Orange County to truly become a viable travel option for most, it will need to be practical and convenient for residents to live a car-free lifestyle.
- Transit options need to be more diverse and customized depending on the various needs of different demographics.
- I-405 is a heavily trafficked corridor where high-capacity transit might be effective.
- Neighborhood-based circulators are an attractive transit option.
- There appear to have been increases lately in walking and cycling in Orange County.

Recent OCTA surveys of existing customers and people who do not use transit today found that both groups want better service frequency and faster transit travel times. Current riders also expressed a need for expanded weekend and evening service, while non-riders shared preferences for additional express routes and service closer to major destinations.

A summary of findings from each interview can be found in Figure 7-1.

Figure 7-1 Stakeholder Interviews Key Findings (Public Outreach from October to December 2016)

Stakeholders	Observations/General Comments	Vision/Specific Requests
Automobile Club of Southern California <i>Hamid Bahadori,</i> <i>Manager of Transportation Policy and Programs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't necessarily go where you think it is needed, go where people want it Redevelop resources in the higher demand areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer Uber/ Lyft or something similar in place of bus in some areas and late at night
Brandman University <i>Sarah Catz,</i> <i>Director of Center for Urban Infrastructure</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on improving transit in high-use areas, but outside of that focus on emerging technologies Spend less money on big transit and look more at partnerships with Uber and Lyft 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More designated bus lanes in areas where there are a lot of them Look more into how to serve the new developments and communities
Caltrans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tie-in bus service to Park and Ride lots Offer more service to relieve special event traffic during summer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer different types of buses depending on need Would like to see linkage between Old Town Tustin to Downtown Santa Ana
Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would be good to have pick-ups from bus stations to train depots for flexible access Perception that the bus is not safe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service is good along their properties, but wants to ensure that people traveling further out are able to get to them conveniently
County of Orange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OCTA should focus on technology as it relates to new forms of transit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locations from airport to downtown to Disney for fixed-rail Serve Rancho Mission Viejo and new units in Irvine
Disneyland Resort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of affluence is holding county back from improving transit Guests need more convenient and frequent transit options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring back station shuttle from Orange train station Cast members number continues to grow
Irvine Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the role of driverless cars and public private-partnerships for new services OCTA's current services are designed more for the transit dependent, not the choice rider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of transit and land use planning by OCTA and cities Service between residential and nearby business centers, especially within Irvine Support for growth and development

STAKEHOLDER THEMES

Stakeholders	Observations/General Comments	Vision/Specific Requests
John Wayne Airport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Span service is an issue for service workers ▪ Vehicles are not good for travelers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ AVR survey and tenant survey to provide information about patterns. ▪ 800 space parking lot for employees- "T" lot
Mariners Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Connectivity between affluent and lower-income areas should be stronger ▪ Increase parking to make it easier for people to use transit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bonita Canyon is not served well by the Church; bus service is needed
OCTA Bus Customer Roundtable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There should be more variety of bus services across the county ▪ Add diversity to the bus fleet ▪ Expand transit system to travel to all cities so that it is more integrated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BRT on the 5 & 405 ▪ Add light rail ▪ More express bus service ▪ Make it so more bikes can be stored on the buses
OCTA Citizens Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OCTA needs to be more inclusive by getting major hubs connected ▪ Focus on the experience of the riders ▪ There needs to be more of a connection between OCTA and college students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Move more attention to cyclists and pedestrians ▪ Have a rail from Huntington Beach to heart of the county and have rideshare options for millennials ▪ Build on Angel's and OC Fair Express
OCTA Diverse Community Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There needs to be something put in place to get people more educated about transit ▪ The transit system should have more diversity in where it goes ▪ Add amenities such as WiFi to make transit more appealing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus on transportation to and from colleges; all 3 schools have parking issues, look at partnerships ▪ Extend the OC Streetcar
OCTA Special Needs Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Look at origin and destination of seniors and students to determine a mix of transportation options ▪ There should be more community-based opportunities for persons with disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More accessibility to park car near the start and end of express routes

Stakeholders	Observations/General Comments	Vision/Specific Requests
OCTA Technical Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Need better connectivity to other modes ▪ Consider technological advances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Offer better access and convenience for riders
OC Visitors Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take away the allure of cars and make transit more attractive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transit needs to be made easier for visitors to use: integrated, seamless, consistent system
Rancho Mission Viejo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perception of transit is what holds the county back ▪ This is a county of an aging population (55+), so focus on getting that demographic out of cars ▪ More education about transit systems for the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Would like to see more community hubs ▪ Focus on the Antonio Pkwy corridor.
South Coast Metro <i>Diane Pritchett, Executive Director</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OCTA does a good job for those that are transit dependent but not for the occasional rider ▪ Public and private partnerships could be beneficial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider the millennials; there is a large area west of Fairview that is geared towards millennials and creative office space
Spectrumotion, Irvine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transit is limited and inconvenient for a lot of people ▪ Public perception of transportation is what holds us back 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ iShuttle is good but there needs to be better regular service between residential and business/entertainment areas

FOCUS GROUPS

The primary finding from the four focus group interviews is that transit is viewed as an essential element of the future transportation system in Orange County. However, it must be affordable, efficient, accessible, convenient, and reliable.

Additional findings relevant to the OC Transit Vision included the following:

- Improvements to the transit system are the top priority for investment in the transportation system.
- Increasing service in areas of high demand is more important than greater coverage to all areas.
- Improved regional connections, including connections to Los Angeles' Metro Rail system and LAX Airport, are needed.
- The existing transit system in Orange County is good relative to those in other areas, including Los Angeles County.

