

Meeting of Feb. 14, 2022

OCTA Continues Youth Ride Free Pass Beyond Promotional Period

The Orange County Transportation Authority's board of directors has approved the extension of the OC Bus Youth Ride Free program, giving youth riders ages 18 and under free rides to school, work and anywhere that OC Bus travels.

The Youth Ride Free promotional pass was launched in September 2021 to help mitigate the impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and was set to expire this month. The program has been well received by the public with more than 670,000 youth boardings recorded since the program began.

The initial Youth Ride Free promotional period was funded through grants made possible by the Climate Change Investments program, a statewide initiative that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy and improving public health and the environment – particularly in disadvantaged communities.

SR-55 Improvement Project Advances with Consultant Selection

The OCTA board approved the selection of HDR Engineering, Inc. as the firm to prepare plans, specifications and estimates for improvements to SR-55 between I-5 and SR-91.

The SR-55 Improvement Project will add one regular lane in each direction between I-5 and SR-22 and an additional lane to the southbound SR-55 Katella Avenue on- and off-ramps.

It will also relocate the existing southbound SR-55 Lincoln Avenue off-ramp 1,300 feet to the south, next to the existing southbound SR-55 Lincoln Avenue hook on-ramp.

The project is scheduled to move into the design phase using funds from Measure M, Orange County's half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements, also known as OC Go, and federal funds. Construction is anticipated to begin in mid-2026.

OCTA Honors Outstanding Employees of the Year

The OCTA board recognized the top three employees of 2021 – a year in which they helped the agency continue to thrive despite the ongoing challenges of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The 2021 employees of the year are selected from three main divisions, coach operators, maintenance, and administration. They were selected from 36 employees who were chosen as employees of the month throughout 2021.

The 2021 Employees of the Year are:

- Steve Swanson, a resident of Mission Viejo, OCTA's Coach Operator of the Year
- Eduardo Ramos, a resident of Riverside, a Journeyman Mechanic, OCTA's Maintenance Employee of the Year

- Bill Habibe, a resident of Costa Mesa, the Transit Technical Services Manager, OCTA's Administrative Employee of the Year