

## **Meeting of Jan. 11, 2016**

### **New OCTA Board Chair and Vice Chair appointed**

The board unanimously selected San Clemente Councilwoman Lori Donchak to serve as chair of the Orange County Transportation Authority Board of Directors for 2016.

Donchak served as the OCTA board's vice chair for the last year. She replaces outgoing Chairman Jeff Lalloway, also an Irvine City Councilman, who remains on the board.

Donchak, a wife and mother of two, has served on the San Clemente City Council since 2006. She has served on the OCTA board since January 2013. Donchak is a retired business executive in the communications industry who also taught in Orange County.

Committed to finding transportation solutions in and around San Clemente, Donchak founded the San Clemente Mobility Task Force and serves on that city's railroad safety/quiet zone task force.

Replacing Donchak as vice chair is Director Michael Hennessey, who is the principal of his own real-estate development and consulting firm and serves on the OCTA board as a public member. He joined the OCTA board in 2011.

### **Year-end Report Summarizes 2015 Accomplishments**

CEO Darrell Johnson presented the board with a video slideshow to review a wide range of accomplishments in the past year based on the 2015 board initiatives.

Those accomplishments included:

- Delivering capital projects. That included helping ease congestion and increase mobility by working with Caltrans to add a new northbound lane on SR-57. The interchange of Ortega Highway and the I-5 freeway also was widened and reconfigured to improve traffic flow. To improve one of the county's most congested freeways, OCTA entered the design-build phase of the I-405 Improvement Project.
- Advancing reliable and modern transportation options. OCTA kicked off OC Bus 360°, an effort to better serve the diverse needs of Orange County residents. The OC Streetcar project received environmental clearance and approval to enter the Federal New Starts funding program. And OCTA became the managing agency for the LOSSAN Rail Corridor Agency, supporting the Pacific Surfliner.
- Collaborating with local, regional and state partners. OCTA worked closely with agencies in Riverside County to enhance transportation along SR-91 and extend the 91 Express Lanes into Riverside County. OCTA also worked closely with law enforcement and social service agencies to raise awareness about the crime of human trafficking through its "Be the One" campaign.
- Expanding public awareness of OCTA programs and projects. Effective outreach campaigns played a big role in the OC Fair Express carrying a record 80,000 people and the Angels Express having its best season ever with more than 54,000 Metrolink riders. In addition, hundreds of

drivers shared their positive stories during the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary campaign for the 91 Express Lanes, describing how the lanes help them spend less time in traffic and more time with family and doing the things that most matter in life.

- Keeping promises made in Measure M. The first 10-year review of voter-approved Measure M was completed, and the results reaffirm that OCTA is delivering on its promises to voters and the public continues to support Measure M, the half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements.
- Pursuing innovative sustainability initiatives. OCTA funded 18 projects that will help keep trash and debris from flowing into Orange County's waterways and, through the Freeway Environmental Mitigation program, purchased its seventh property to be preserved as open space.

### **OCTA to Participate in Hydrogen Fuel Cell Electric Bus Demonstration**

The board approved OCTA's participation in a hydrogen fuel cell electric bus demonstration project. The two-year demonstration period is expected to begin later this year. The project is intended to help OCTA – and other transit agencies – move toward reducing air pollution even further and eventually to a zero-emission bus fleet.

The California Air Resources Board has mandated that transit agencies throughout the state start using a few zero-emissions buses in 2018 on the way to 100 percent zero-emissions bus fleets by 2040.

OCTA has been active with other transit agencies investigating the commercial viability of buses that operate with zero emissions. Originally, the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District along with the Center for Transportation and the Environment had planned to demonstrate the hydrogen fuel cell electric bus. But the transit district was unable to move forward with the project because of a lack of a fueling facility in its service area.

OCTA will operate one hydrogen fuel cell electric bus in place of an existing bus for the demonstration project. It is expected to operate about 16 hours per day, 292 days a year for two years. During that time, it's expected to travel about 48,000 miles. It will be refueled at a hydrogen fuel station at the University of California Irvine.

Operating the bus over the two-year program is expected to cost about \$850,000. Because it replaces an existing bus in the fleet, OCTA's share of the expense is expected to be about \$90,000 per year.