

Meeting of Nov. 11, 2018

Hasan Ikhata Recognized for Contributions to Orange County

The Orange County Transportation Authority Board of Directors presented a resolution of appreciation to Hasan Ikhata for his contributions to improving transportation in Orange County and the region as a whole.

Ikhata has played an important role in many of OCTA's successes and is considered one of the preeminent transportation planning experts in the nation. Since 2008, he has served as executive director of the Southern California Association of Governments and has recently accepted a job as the executive director of the San Diego Association of Governments.

Ikhata has supported Orange County's interests regionally through many planning efforts including his leadership on the 2012 and 2016 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy. He has championed regional equity in state and federal funding programs, striving to provide fair and appropriate allocations for Orange County.

Long-Range Transportation Plan Sets Vision for Future of Transportation

The Long-Range Transportation Plan, which provides the vision for Orange County's regional transportation system over the next 20 years and beyond, has been completed and approved by the board.

OCTA develops the plan every four years to examine the county's expected transportation needs, accounting for changes in demographics, the economy and available funding.

OCTA's 2018 plan analyzes travel conditions based on projections for 2040, which assume a 10 percent growth in population, 11 percent growth in housing, 17 percent growth in employment. If no improvements were made, Orange County would experience an estimated 66 percent congestion increase by 2040.

The plan outlines priorities and details projects and services aimed at accommodating the increasing transportation demand. It also explores how emerging innovations and policies may impact transportation and incorporates input received through a comprehensive public outreach effort.

The final plan, called Designing Tomorrow, will be submitted to the Southern California Association of Governments as input for the 2020 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy.

OC Streetcar Rolls Ahead with Approved Vehicle Design

The OC Streetcar project took a big step forward with the OCTA board's approval of the streetcar vehicle design.

The board reviewed three designs and ultimately selected one that is cohesive with OCTA's bus designs and other branding, featuring blue, orange and white, along with the recognizable OCTA logo and the words "OC Streetcar."

To help make the decision, public input was sought through an online and printed questionnaire. More than 4,300 members of the public and experts within the transportation industry provided their feedback.

The OC Streetcar will operate from the busy Santa Ana Regional Transportation Center, along Santa Ana Boulevard and Fourth Street and along the Pacific Electric right-of-way to Harbor Boulevard.

The route will serve Santa Ana's thriving downtown and dense employment areas that include county and local government offices and courthouses in the Civic Center. The OC Streetcar route will also connect with many of OCTA's busiest bus routes and Metrolink and Amtrak's Pacific Surfliner. It is expected to carry more than 7,300 passengers per day within its first year of operation. OC Streetcar construction is expected to kick off this year, with testing and operations scheduled to begin in 2021.