



OC Commuter

News for a better commute from the OC Rideshare Office



Do You Drive the 405?

The I-405 Improvement Project Is Nearly 40% Complete

Construction on the 405 Freeway between Costa Mesa and the Los Angeles County line is pushing toward the halfway completed mark.

Started in 2018, the **I-405 Improvement Project** aims to ease traffic on a 16-mile segment of one of the most heavily traveled stretches of highway in the nation. Reduced traffic due to the COVID-19 pandemic allowed crews to extend hours, pushing the project ahead of schedule.

Planned improvements include adding one regular lane in each direction between Euclid Street and I-605. A second lane in each direction in the center of the freeway from SR-73 to I-605 will combine with the existing carpool lanes to form the 405 Express Lanes.

In addition, 18 bridges are being built, widened or replaced.

The McFadden Avenue and Bushard Street bridges recently opened to traffic, and the Talbert Avenue bridge is expected to open early next year. The Edwards Street overcrossing was also recently demolished and is under construction.

Construction on the project is anticipated to be completed in 2023.

To sign up for traffic alerts and construction updates, [click here](#).

More Construction News...

Two new carpool lanes recently opened on northbound I-5 between SR-55 and SR-57. The southbound carpool lanes opened to traffic in July.

[\(More\)](#)



Holiday Fares \$10 All Day

On Thanksgiving Day, Christmas and New Year's Day, Metrolink will run on its Sunday schedule and price—so it's only \$10 to travel all day, anywhere you need to go on Metrolink.



Ride the Train, Earn Rewards

Get a free round-trip ticket when you sign up for SoCal Explorer



Now when you ride Metrolink, you can earn points to redeem for free tickets, as well as discounts at area retailers, restaurants and attractions.

Metrolink's new SoCal Explorer loyalty program is free to join. For a limited time, when you sign up, you'll automatically get 750 points—enough for a round-trip ticket on Metrolink.

Each time you ride, log your trip using the app or by scanning and submitting proof of a paper ticket to earn points.

Find out more and sign up at socalexplorer.metrolinktrains.com.



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More Construction News (Continued from page 1)

The new lanes are part of an ongoing project to better manage traffic on the I-5 Freeway. Other improvements included removing concrete barriers between the carpool and regular lanes and restriping the carpool lanes for continuous access to allow drivers to move freely between all lanes.

For more information and construction updates, visit octa.net/i5central.



How COVID-19 Has Impacted Transportation

Working exclusively from home increased from 12% to nearly half (47%) of employees in Orange County due to COVID-19, according to a survey conducted in July by Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA).

The survey's findings will help OCTA to develop transportation options that meet the changing needs of riders during the pandemic.

Other findings include...

- Unemployment increased from 4% to 18% between February and June.
- There has been a large drop in transit, active transportation and rideshare usage due to fewer people commuting and fewer overall trips.
- Working from home increased from 0.8 days per week to 2.6 days per week for the average employee.
- Once the pandemic is over, about half of employees say they prefer to maintain or increase the percentage of days they work remotely.

To see the full survey results, [click here](#).



OC Bike Map Gets an Update

OCTA has updated its **Bikeways Map**. The interactive map shows designated bike paths throughout Orange County—from off-road paved paths to on-road separated bikeways.

The map rates paths by steepness of grade and also offers bike safety tips and links to information on how to bring a bike on board transit.

Get a Charge, Get \$100

Thinking about purchasing or leasing an electric vehicle or a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle? Or have you done so in the past 90 days? You may be eligible for a \$100 incentive through the County's Get a Charge program if you use the vehicle for your commute.

To claim your incentive, fill out the **Get a Charge** form and attach a copy of your lease or purchase agreement.



OC Bus Service Changes

OC Bus instituted **minor service changes** on Oct. 11. It will, however, continue to operate some lines weekdays on a modified Saturday schedule, as it has been during the pandemic.

OCTA also announced that buses are being outfitted with new safety measures—such as plexiglass barriers between the coach operators and passengers—to again allow boarding from the front of the bus.



What's Happening in Transportation

Go511.com is continuing to post information, updated daily on weekdays, on any changes to freeways, express lanes and transit service due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

You can also get information on commute options, Park & Ride lots and more by calling 511.



Thanks for Returning Your Survey!

The annual transportation survey conducted in September lets us know how many employees are ridesharing and provides information so we can see where we need to improve.

If you checked “yes” to receiving a RideGuide on the survey, you’ll soon be receiving a full list of your updated commute options, including potential carpools, bus/rail routing, Park & Ride lots and more.

All employees who turned in a survey by the Oct. 2 deadline were entered into a drawing for \$25 Amazon gift cards. Congratulations to the lucky winners:

- Dominic Mejico, Sheriff/Coroner
- Annette Stephens, Probation
- Doreen Cardenas, SSA
- Sean Harribance, John Wayne Airport
- Erika Melear, HCA
- Jan Mueller, Superior Court
- Kathleen Sakoguchi, Public Defender
- Staci Bui, Auditor/Controller
- Wayne Dachenhausen, OC Information Technology



A Special Thanks to Departments that “Went the Extra Mile”

The transportation survey not only provides useful data to help us develop commuter services at the County, but it is also mandated by the South Coast air quality agency. Thank you to the departments with a 100% survey return rate:

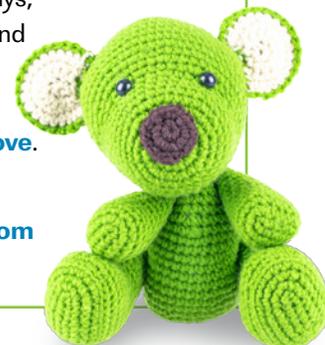
- Campaign Finance & Ethics
- CEO-HRS
- County Executive Office
- Internal Audit
- John Wayne Airport
- OC Public Works
- OCIT
- Office of Independent Review

“Stuff a Bus” With Toys

The annual Spark of Love “stuff a bus” toy drive this year is going virtual since COVID safety protocols prevent firefighters from collecting toys. Starting Friday, Nov. 20, ABC7 will host Stuff a Bus Fridays, urging viewers to donate toys for underserved children and teens in Southern California.

To participate:

- 1) Buy a toy at myregistry.com/giftlist/sparkoflove.
- 2) Text to Give: Text TOY to 310.929.6907.
- 3) Donate online by going to supportlafd.kindful.com to make a donation via credit card.





5 Ways to Save Money on the Commute

1. If you use the 91 Express Lanes and can carpool, did you know that carpools of three or more people **qualify to use the lanes for free or at half price?** (And, yes, kids count as carpools.) You must have a transponder set to three to get the deal.



2. If you ride Metrolink occasionally, the new **Metrolink 5-Day Flex Pass** saves riders 10% over regular round-trip ticket prices.

3. If you ride transit, sign up to **pay for bus or train fares using pre-tax dollars** through the Rideshare Office. Doing so will allow you reduce your overall taxable income by up to \$270 per month



4. If you live close to the office, consider walking or riding your bike. It's a great way to get where you need to go at a bargain price and still practice social distancing.

5. If you live in Riverside or San Bernardino counties and rideshare to work, you may qualify for **commuter incentives from IE Commuter**.

Join to earn up to \$120 in gift cards and get discounts at more than 500,000 retailers.



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