



COMMITTEE TRANSMITTAL

July 22, 2013

To: Members of the Board of Directors
From: ^{WK} Wendy Knowles, Clerk of the Board
Subject: 2014 Long-Range Transportation Plan Context and Key Issues

Regional Planning and Highways Committee Meeting of July 1, 2013

Present: Directors Donchak, Harper, Lalloway, Miller, Murray, and Spitzer
Absent: Directors Bates and Nelson

Committee Vote

This item was passed by the Members present.

Director Spitzer was not present to vote on this item.

Committee Recommendation

Receive and file as an information item.

Note: The Regional Planning and Highways Committee directed staff to modify the list of policy issues to consider intra-county in addition to inter-county travel connections. A revised Attachment H is included with this transmittal.

2014 LRTP -- Key Issues and Questions

Demand is outpacing capacity.

What types of roadway and transit solutions should be explored that could leverage the investments made through Measures M and Measure M2 that also respond to public concerns regarding right-of-way (ROW) impacts?

Carpool lane congestion lowers incentives for use.

Is increasing the throughput and speed on Orange County's carpool lanes a priority? If so, how should ROW and other direct/indirect impacts be addressed?

Further efficiencies could improve existing systems.

What types of roadway and transit improvements or strategies would you recommend to improve efficiencies?

Existing infrastructure requires more investment.

What can be done to ensure that funding is available for timely maintenance of Orange County's transportation infrastructure?

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Should state and federal governments consider using a gas sales tax, congestion pricing, a vehicle miles traveled fee, or some other new revenue-generating concept to help stabilize funding and project delivery?

Active transportation programs are gaining momentum.

To what extent should the Orange County Transportation Authority lead bikeway planning efforts? To what extent should bike and pedestrian projects be a priority for new transportation funding (such as cap-and-trade)?

Rules and regulations continue to grow.

What specific changes should be considered that would expedite state and federal approvals?

Demographics and technologies may change driving habits.

What should be done differently in our transportation planning efforts to accommodate the potential changing travel needs of Orange County's future population?

Inter- and intra-county connections need attention and focus.

Which specific inter- and intra-county transportation bottlenecks or issues should be a priority?



ORANGE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

2014 Long-Range Transportation Plan Context and Key Issues

Staff Report



July 1, 2013

To: Regional Planning and Highways Committee

From: Darrell Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: **2014 Long-Range Transportation Plan Context and Key Issues**

Overview

The Long-Range Transportation Plan is the Orange County Transportation Authority's vision for the future transportation system. The plan also provides input into the Southern California Association of Government's Regional Transportation Plan and related efforts. Currently, a 2035 baseline scenario is under development to provide context and to aid the discussion of key policy issues. A discussion of these issues is presented for review.

Recommendation

Receive and file as an information item.

Background

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) is preparing the 2014 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) as input into the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) 2016 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and the anticipated 2015 Orange County Sustainable Communities Strategy. The 2014 LRTP will focus on analyzing 2035 forecasted travel conditions under three scenarios: a 2035 baseline scenario (presented in this report), a financially constrained (constrained) scenario, and a financially unconstrained (unconstrained) scenario. The baseline scenario includes demographic projections through 2035 and projects that are programmed for funding in the six-year Federal Transportation Improvement Program. The constrained and unconstrained scenarios will start development in fall 2013. The 2014 LRTP will be finalized by summer 2014, prior to SCAG requesting input for the 2016 RTP.

Previously established goals and objectives will play a key role in screening the potential solutions; however, there are specific policy issues that will be focal

points within the narrative of the 2014 LRTP, and may also influence the draft and final recommendations.

Discussion

Preliminary analysis of the 2035 baseline scenario indicates that vehicle hours of delay from congestion will increase by over 465,000 hours, or 163 percent over 2010 conditions. This is primarily due to growth in Orange County's population and employment that is projected to take place between 2010 and 2035, as shown in Attachments A through F. Between 2010 and 2035, population is expected to grow by over 400,000 (13 percent), and employment by over 288,000 (19 percent). This population growth is roughly equivalent to adding enough residents to match the City of Costa Mesa four times over.

Furthermore, initial 2035 baseline analysis indicates growth in vehicle hours traveled by 53 percent, and in vehicle miles traveled by 28 percent, over 2010 conditions. These performance measures indicate that travel demand in Orange County is continuing to grow, and that future revenues must be secured to fund improvements throughout the system, such as capacity expansion, efficiency improvements, operations and maintenance, and enhancing alternatives (such as public transportation) to single-occupant car trips.

Context: Changes in Orange County Vehicle Travel Demand: 2010-2035

	2010	2035 Baseline	Percent Change
Daily Person Trips	9,822,393	11,393,975	16%
Daily Vehicle Trips	8,198,802	9,499,952	16%
Total Vehicle Hours of Delay	284,958	750,666	163%
Daily Vehicle Hours Traveled	1,640,374	2,515,632	53%
Daily Vehicle Miles Traveled	64,009,879	81,650,022	28%

Source: Orange County Transportation Analysis Model 3.4

Based on this preliminary analysis, as well as involvement in regional planning activities and internal discussions, key issues are presented below. Discussion of these issues will provide guidance on potential strategies for inclusion in the 2014 LRTP.

Demand is Outpacing Capacity

Travel demand is projected to grow as Orange County continues to mature. At the same time, it is becoming more difficult to add capacity on Orange County roadways primarily due to limitations on available right-of-way (ROW). The Measure M2 Program will help to address this growth in travel demand,

but new multimodal solutions will need to be considered to preserve Orange County's quality of life. New faster bus service, improved bus frequencies, new guideways that connect to regional systems, expanded Metrolink and Amtrak trains, and local shuttle services will help provide alternatives for commuters who choose or cannot afford travel by auto.

Carpool Lane Congestion Lowers Incentives for Use

Most of Orange County's carpool lanes are at capacity during peak periods and operate at speeds less than 45 mph in the peak hour. To resolve this problem would require state policy changes, such as improving the utility of the carpool lanes through increasing the passenger requirement to three plus and/or eliminating exceptions for zero- and near zero-emission vehicles. Pricing and/or additional freeway widening (with corresponding ROW and funding impacts) are other examples that could be pursued in order to improve the performance of the carpool lanes. Carpool lane improvements (whether by occupancy change or new capacity) could also be coupled with new express bus service that would offer travel time savings over comparable local fixed-route service that operates on city streets.

Further Efficiencies Could Improve Existing Systems

Beyond capacity improvements and changes to state policies, travel demand can also be addressed through new technologies and innovative strategies that improve the efficiency of the entire transportation system. Additional signal synchronization, new and faster bus service on existing transit corridors, and better traffic management of freeways and tollways are some examples of how efficiency can be improved.

Existing Infrastructure Requires More Investment

Keeping systems such as highways, roads, bridges, fixed facilities, rail, and buses in good working condition is a financial challenge that will become greater as the transportation system continues to expand.

Early investments to maintain a state of good repair, when feasible, are cost efficient. For example, preventive maintenance on street pavement is 14 times more cost-effective than reconstructing the same pavement section once it is failing. While Measure M has proven to be a great aid in this regard for arterials, the California Department of Transportation funds freeway system maintenance using less reliable state funds, which are not currently keeping pace with maintenance needs.

Transportation Funding is Uncertain and Not Predictable

The purchasing power of transportation dollars is declining due to the flat federal tax on fuel (at 18.4 cents per gallon) and increasing inflation (with price levels rising at about three percent per year). Orange County relies on gas tax revenues for major regional projects, and the declining purchasing power may impact future project delivery. Further, OCTA relies on the state budget for a significant source of annual transit operating funds.

Federal funds are especially unpredictable at this time, as the current federal transportation authorization expires September 30, 2014, and federal fuel tax collection authority expires September 30, 2016. Complicating the matter further, new requirements tied to federal funds, such as 'Buy America', are making it more difficult to deliver federally-funded projects on time and on budget.

Active Transportation Programs are Gaining Momentum

There is a growing emphasis on deploying new bicycle and walking facilities to encourage public health. This emerging interest may lead to increased funding for bike and pedestrian projects. Supporting active transportation programs can help to position OCTA and Orange County jurisdictions to compete well for funding opportunities. In addition, investments in active transportation may make walking and bicycling more attractive travel choices, which help to address the anticipated growth in travel demand, reduce congestion as well as emissions, and improve overall public health.

Rules and Regulations Continue to Grow

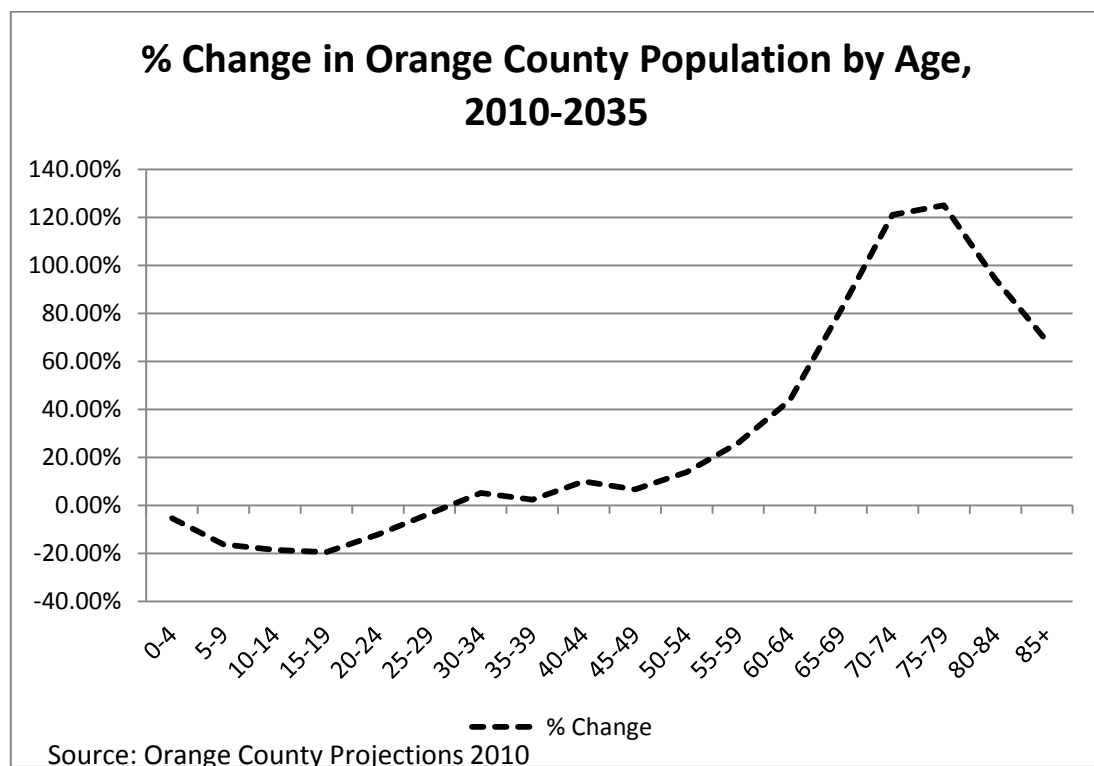
In addition to new regulations tied to funding, the transportation sector may also be saddled with legal requirements for broad "health assessments" that go beyond typical environmental analysis. These types of assessments create new opportunities for involvement by housing, education, and health advocates. While the dialogue may be productive, the project development process will slow, resulting in higher project costs and compounded congestion issues.

Demographics and Technologies May Change Travel Behavior

As Orange County continues to mature, it will likely become more urbanized. Urbanization generally lowers driving demand per capita given that higher-density land-use patterns and parking costs in urban areas tend to support alternative travel modes such as transit and active transportation.

In addition, Orange County's 65+ population is expected to grow by over 300,000 (87 percent) between 2010 and 2035, as depicted in the figure below. An aging population may mean less frequent driving for older Americans; however, this could be offset by new driver-assisted technologies emerging in today's automobiles.

Conversely, teens and young adults appear to be postponing driving due to social networking technology and auto costs. Whether auto ownership continues to climb with population growth is an open issue.



Inter-county Connections Need Attention and Focus

Finally, it is important to keep in mind that major travel and trade corridors within Orange County are generally shared by adjacent counties. Implications of inter-county projects and studies within these corridors will be acknowledged in the LRTP. However, the level to which external projects and studies influence the strategies in the LRTP must be weighed carefully. For example, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority studied options for improving transit access to the Los Angeles International Airport from Orange County (Attachment G). This will be discussed in the 2014 LRTP, and will help influence SCAG's RTP process where regional transportation issues are reviewed and discussed.

Attachment H includes “trigger” questions related to each of the issues discussed above. Members of the Board of Directors may find these questions useful in providing guidance to staff on the issue areas.

Ongoing Outreach

Outreach activities will begin this summer and involve sharing information about the context in which the LRTP is being developed. This includes projections related to population, employment, housing, and future travel conditions. It also involves listening to feedback on key transportation policy issues.

To gather feedback, a letter is being drafted to all local jurisdictions requesting elected official participation at an initial, facilitated roundtable discussion in September, with a follow-up discussion in March 2014. In addition, consultant services are being procured to help develop and implement an outreach strategy to reach County opinion and thought leaders. Other upcoming outreach includes a general public open house and roundtable discussions with key stakeholders including business, labor, environmental community, transportation agencies, transit advocates, and public safety representatives.

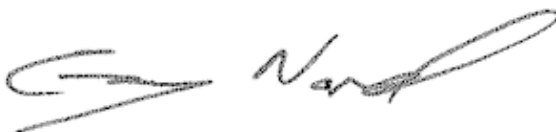
Summary

Travel demand in Orange County is expected to increase with population and employment growth. Based on initial analysis of the 2035 baseline scenario being prepared for the 2014 Long-Range Transportation Plan, improvements must be made to Orange County’s transportation system in order to preserve the current quality of life. In order to identify the appropriate investments that will help to preserve or improve upon the current quality of life, a number of policy related issues have been identified. Staff intends to use feedback from the Board of Directors on these issues in conjunction with the previously identified goals and objectives to develop strategies for guiding future transportation investments within Orange County. It is anticipated that the resulting strategies will be presented to the Board of Directors between fall 2013 and winter 2014.

Attachments

- A. 2010 Orange County Population Density
- B. 2035 Orange County Population Density
- C. 2010 to 2035 Orange County Population Change
- D. 2010 Orange County Employment Density
- E. 2035 Orange County Employment Density
- F. 2010 to 2035 Orange County Employment Change
- G. Orange County to LAX Study – Alternative Overview
- H. 2014 LRTP – Key Issues and Questions

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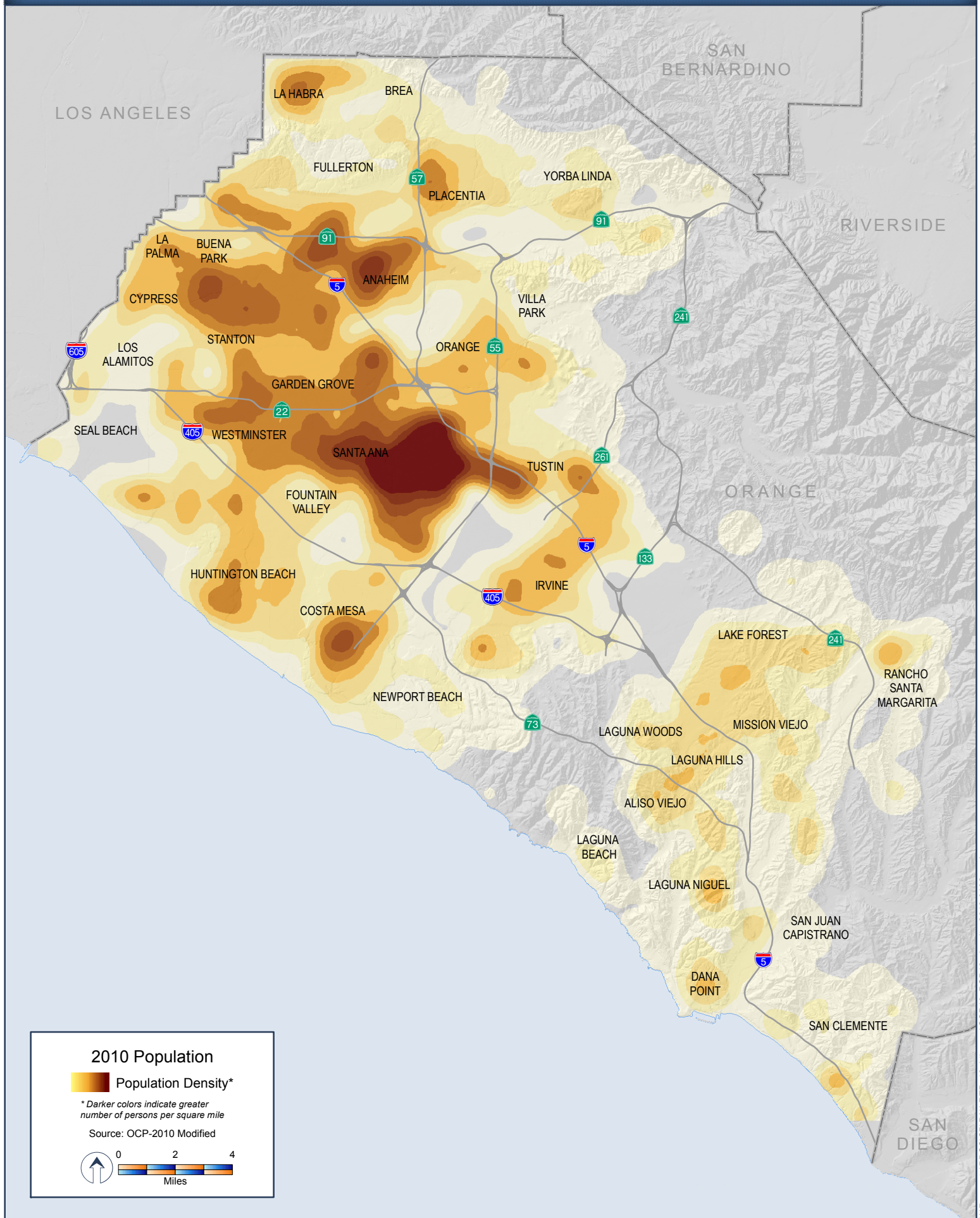
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2014 Long-Range Transportation Plan Context and Key Issues

Attachment A

2010 Orange County Population Density

ATTACHMENT A





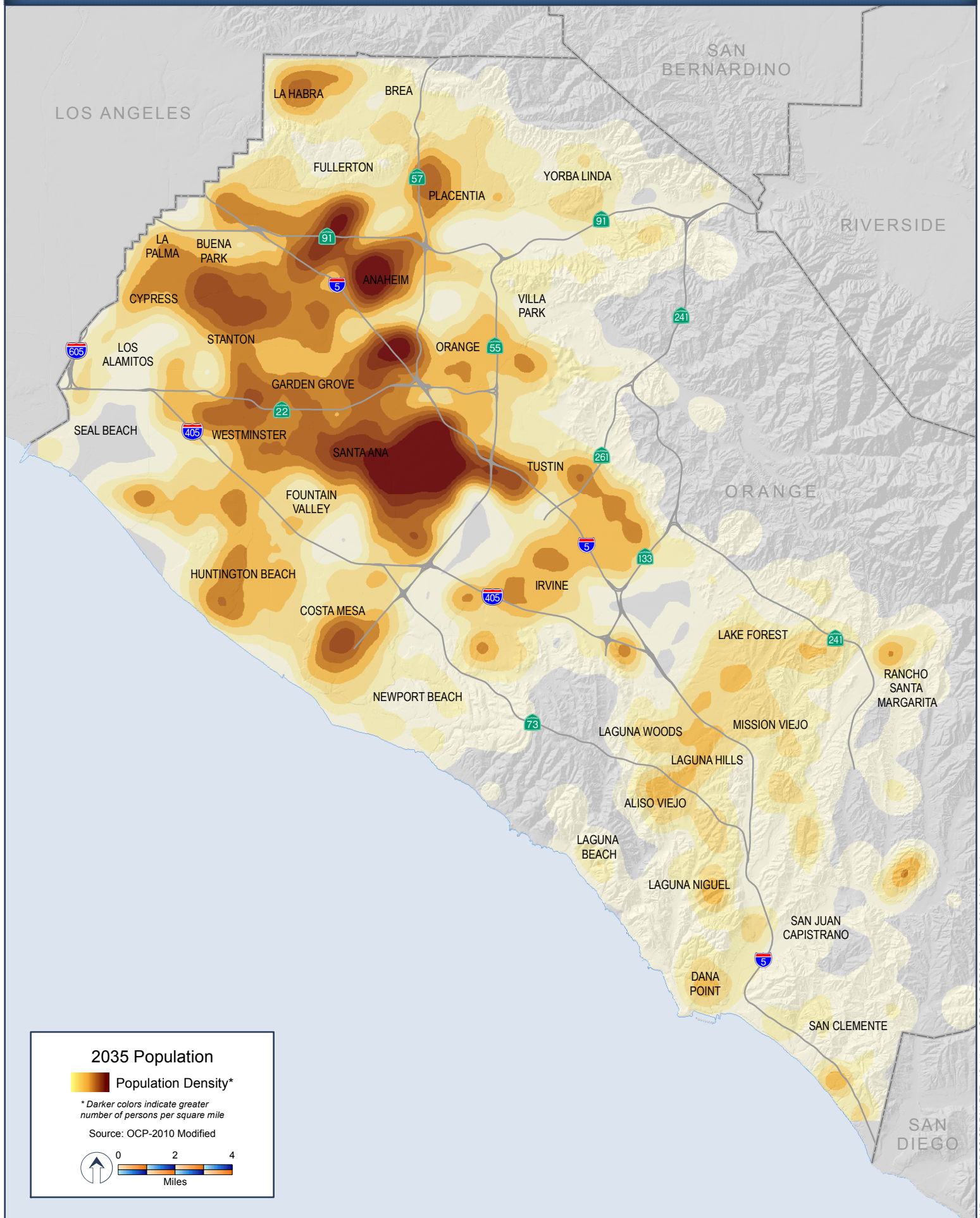
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2014 Long-Range Transportation Plan Context and Key Issues

Attachment B

2035 Orange County Population Density

ATTACHMENT B





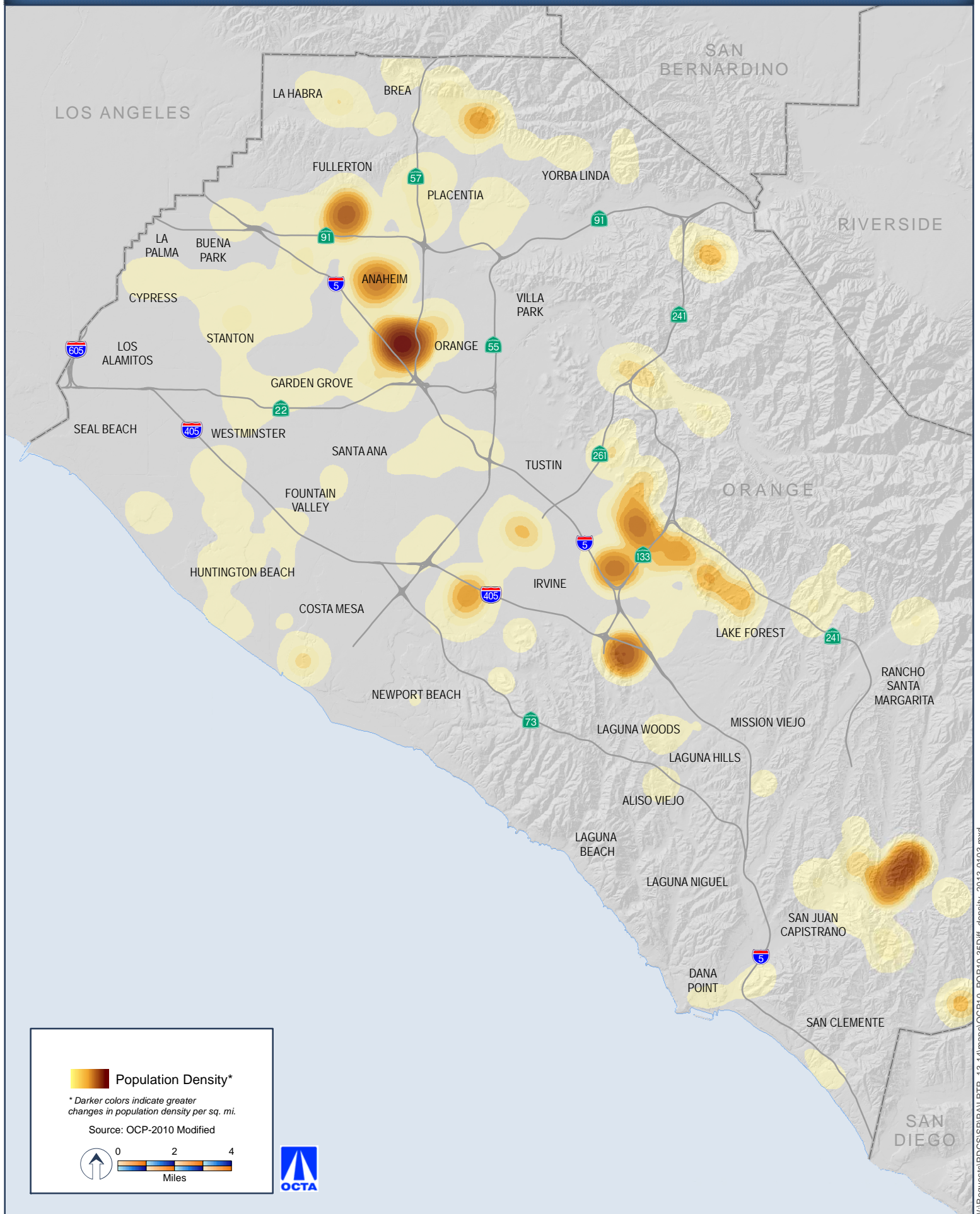
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2014 Long-Range Transportation Plan Context and Key Issues

Attachment C

2010 to 2035 Orange County Population Change

ATTACHMENT C





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2014 Long-Range Transportation Plan Context and Key Issues

Attachment D





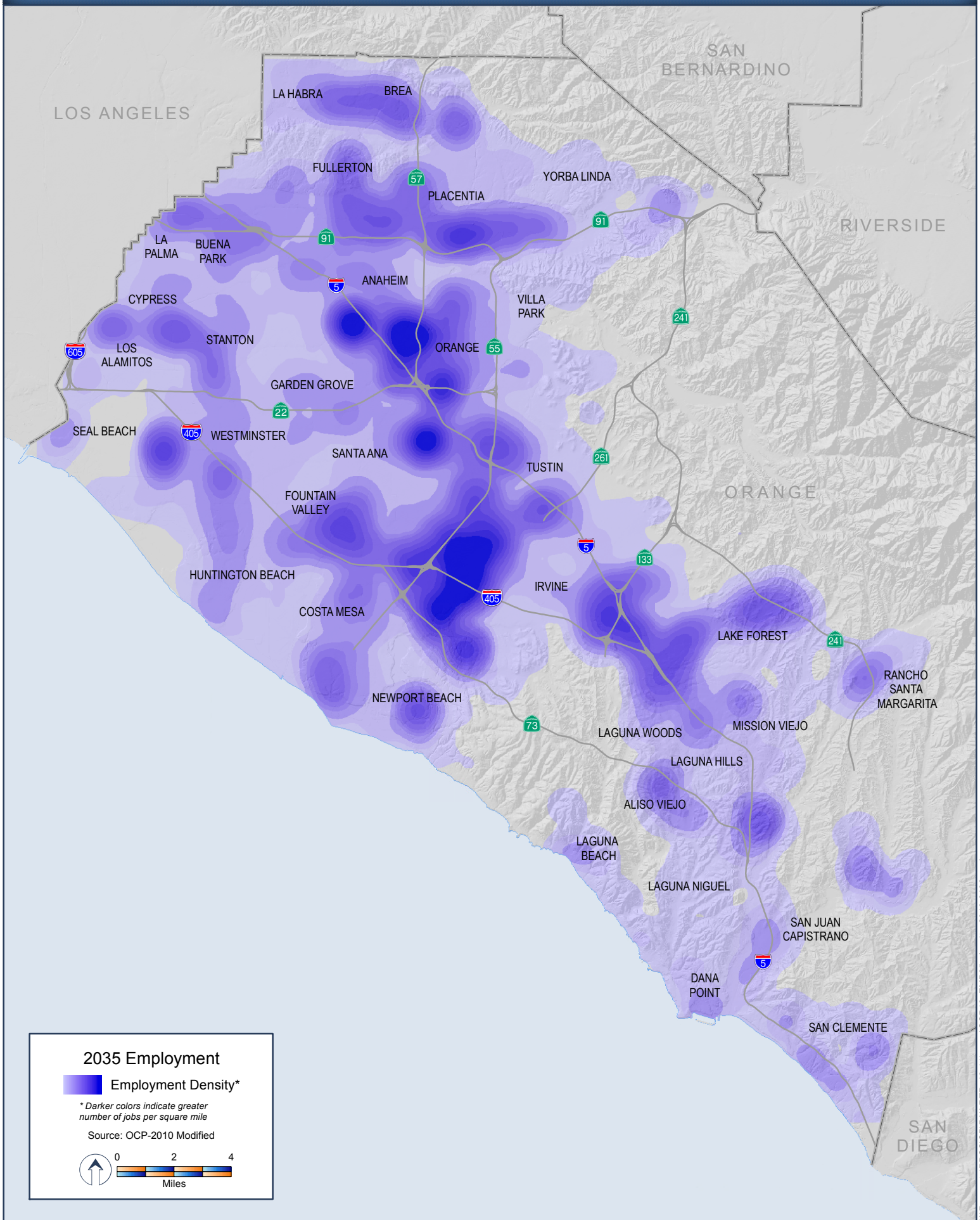
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2014 Long-Range Transportation Plan Context and Key Issues

Attachment E

2035 Orange County Employment Density

ATTACHMENT E



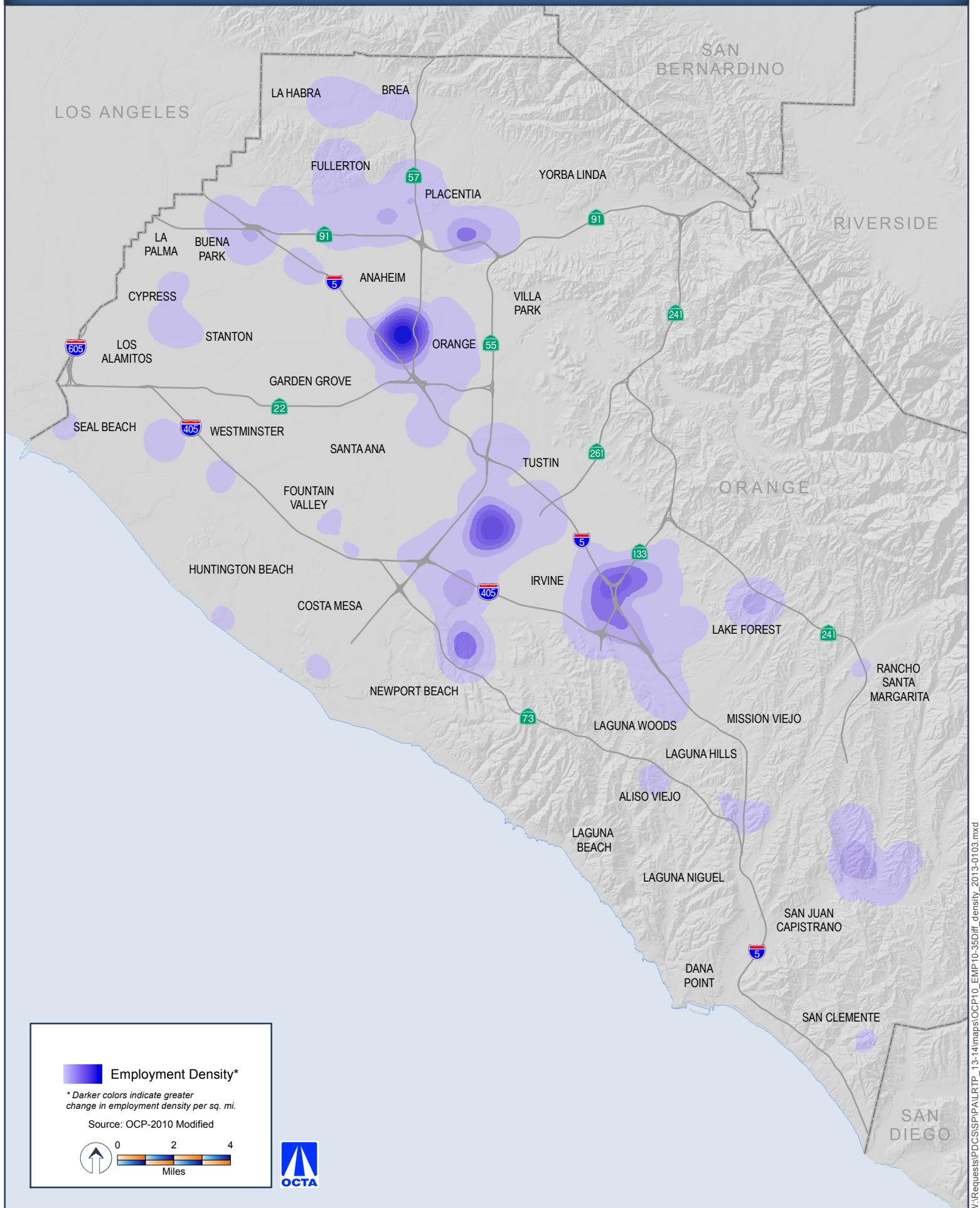


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2014 Long-Range Transportation Plan Context and Key Issues

Attachment F

2010 to 2035 Orange County Employment Change **ATTACHMENT F**





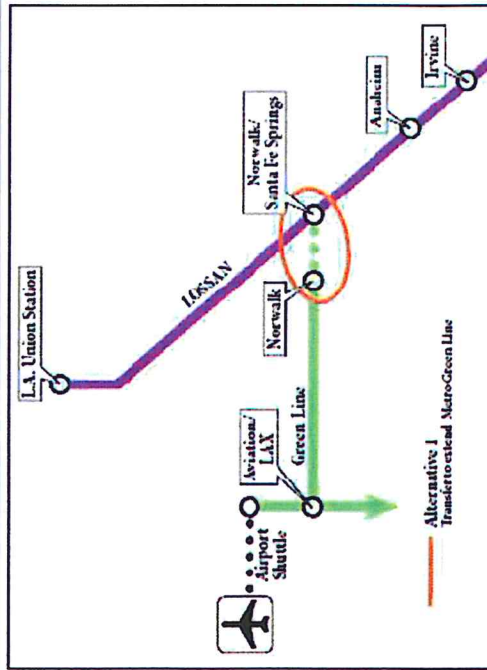
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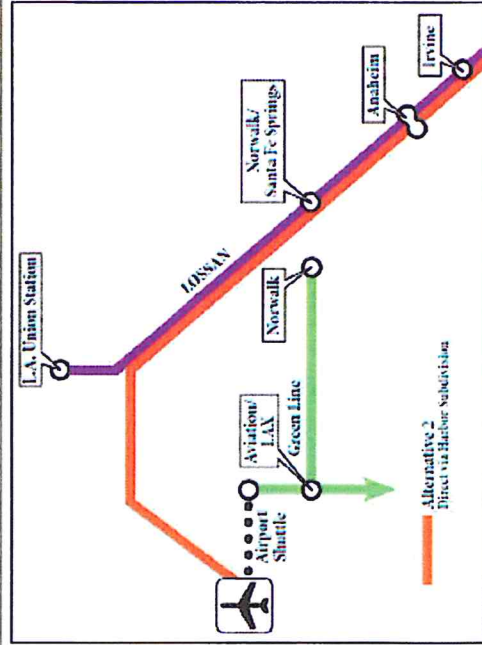
Attachment G

Orange County to LAX Study

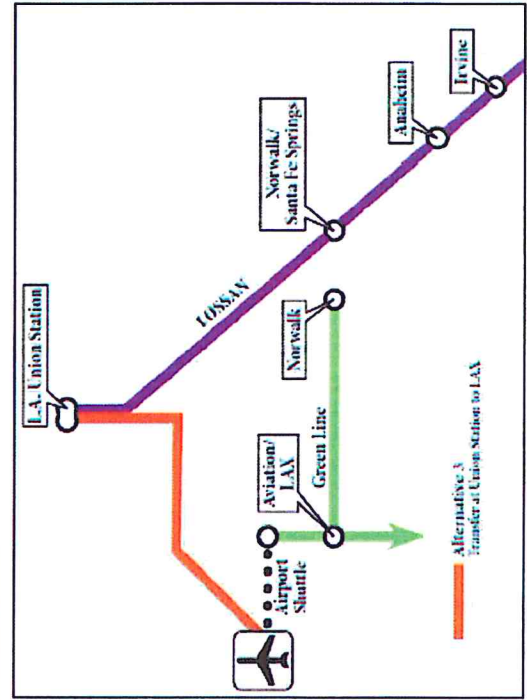
Alternative Overview



Alternative 1



Alternative 2



Alternative 3





ORANGE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

2014 Long-Range Transportation Plan Context and Key Issues

Attachment H

2014 LRTP -- Key Issues and Questions

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ORANGE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

2014 Long-Range Transportation Plan Context and Key Issues

Attachment H - Revised

2014 LRTP -- Key Issues and Questions

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