

South Orange County Major Investment Study (MIS) Overview of Outreach Activities

August 2008

To address the transportation needs of South Orange County, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) launched the South Orange County Major Investment Study (SOCMIS). The SOCMIS is charged with identifying the transportation challenges and potential improvements to keep this fast growing region moving over the next 25 years. Through the combined effort of technical analysis and a comprehensive public involvement program, the study is nearing completion and a locally preferred strategy (LPS) has been developed for which there is overall consensus.

From the study's inception, OCTA committed to engaging the public in a transparent and inclusive outreach program that supported the transportation planning process. In order to solicit feedback from a broad range of stakeholders, the public involvement program utilized both traditional and non-traditional outreach methods to communicate proactively and engage stakeholders throughout the study process.

Since our last update to the OCTA Board of Directors (Board) in the fall of 2007, the following highlights some of the key outreach activities conducted by OCTA.

Committees

- Facilitated the Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) to solicit their feedback throughout the study process. Members represent a wide range of interests in south Orange County. Since the fall of 2006, the SWG has met eight times.
- Worked with the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) to provide regular updates on the study's status and receive members' feedback on the study's technical and public outreach activities. The PAC has met 11 times since 2006.

City/Agency Outreach

- Provided city council briefings on the LPS to 12 of the study area cities and presented to the San Diego Association of Governments' (SANDAG) Borders and Transportation committees.
- Continued the newsletter network - partnering with local cities to disseminate study information, website, and survey links to a larger audience utilizing existing newsletters, websites, etc.

General Outreach and Education

- Presented study information to more than 50 interested community organizations through the OCTA speakers bureau program.

- Prepared updates to the study website to provide detailed information on the reduced set of alternatives and the draft LPS.
- Created three additional online surveys seeking input on the initial set of 14 alternatives, the reduced set of six alternatives, and the draft LPS. To date, more than 500 stakeholders have provided their feedback on south County's transportation challenges and possible improvements.
- Communicated via email updates with people interested in the study.
- Conducted three public open house meetings to provide information on the reduced set of alternatives with more than 100 stakeholders participating.
- Facilitated mini-open house sessions for the City of San Clemente's Human Affairs Committee Forum and the OCTA's Citizens Advisory Committee on the reduced set of alternatives.
- Prepared a fact sheet on the key transportation improvements proposed in the reduced set of alternatives.
- Participated in the Ladera Ranch Town Hall to provide study information and respond to stakeholders' interest in the east/west connector concepts.
- Developed and distributed press releases on the public open house meetings to 15 local and regional publications.

As the SOCMIS nears completion, the public outreach program will continue to move forward to provide stakeholders with information on the OCTA Board's recommendation regarding the LPS. Tactics similar to those mentioned above will be implemented.