

The County Commuter



Winter 2007

Annual Transportation Survey Results

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Special point of interest:

Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) has teamed up with Google to offer a user-friendly online trip planner to OCTA bus customers. It takes advantage of Google's map technology as well as satellite photos to provide transit itineraries. Find it at www.google.com/transit or www.octa.net.

A big THANK YOU to all employees who completed the annual transportation survey last September! All employees who submitted a survey were automatically entered into a drawing to receive a \$100 gift certificate to the MainPlace Mall in Santa Ana, and the lucky winner was **Carlos R. Meza**, Probation Department.

Once again we exceeded our goal of collecting survey data from 90% of our employees -- the on-line survey has again made it quick and easy for the majority of employees to complete the survey!

The 2006 survey revealed that many employees choose commuting options that help reduce traffic congestion and air pollution by sharing the ride or leaving their vehicles at home altogether. Nearly 12% of employees are carpooling or vanpooling to work, 3% are taking Metrolink or the bus, and 1% walk or ride their bike to work. The average vehicle ridership or the ratio between the number of employee trips and the vehicle

trips made during the survey week is now 1.23 -- Keep up the great work!

This year we also learned more about where you start your commute. This information helps us to identify, highlight and promote the alternate commute options available to those of you that travel from each of these areas.

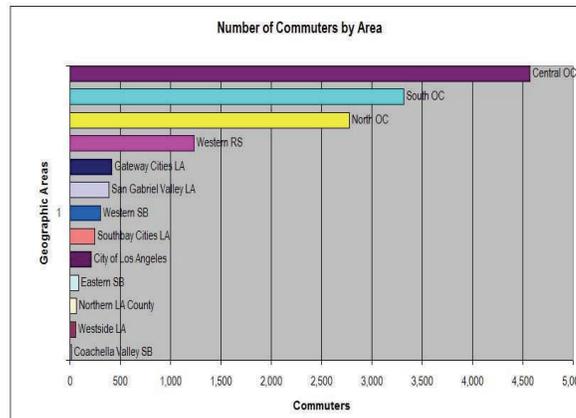
Approximately 77% or 10,664 employees commute from within Orange County -- 43% of those (or 4,572) from Central OC, 31% (or 3,314) from South OC, and 26% (or 2,778) from North OC -- great potential for carpooling with fellow employees or using OCTA bus services or Metrolink for the longer distances.

Nearly 10% or 1,376 of you commute from Los Angeles County -- 30% of those (or 414) from one of the Gateway Cities, 28% (or 390)

from San Gabriel Valley, 18% (or 245) from the South Bay area, 15% (or 209) from within the City of Los Angeles, 4% (or 61) from the Westside and 4% (or 57) from North County -- great potential from vanpooling, carpooling or in some cases, using Metrolink.

Over 12% or 1,633 commute from the Inland Empire -- 75% of those (or 1,231) from Western Riverside County, 1% (or 13) from Riverside's Coachella Valley, 18% (or 302) from West San Bernardino County and 5% (or 87) from East San Bernardino County -- great potential for using Metrolink, vanpooling, and carpooling. There is also a significant number of employees (108) commuting from San Diego County and a few from Ventura County.

2007 is the year to consider alternatives to driving alone to work. Check out our web page and feel free to contact our office for assistance. Be on the lookout for information from our staff regarding ways to cut commuting costs, save time and reduce the stress of driving in traffic.



New Partnership With OCTA Unveiled

Effective February 1, 2007, the County of Orange and the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) have formed a partnership that allows the County's Commuter Club members to enjoy the benefits of OCTA's Destination Deals program.

In 2005, OCTA recruited various merchants and entertainment venues to offer special discounts to OCTA Bus, Metrolink and 91 Express Lane users. In 2006, the County's rideshare program staff approached OCTA and asked if they would extend the Destination Deals program to the members of the County's ridesharing Commuter Club, and they agreed! OCTA has been hard at work recruiting even more merchants and discounts for 2007, and starting in February, the County's Commuter Club members will also benefit from this great discount program. All you have to do to get your discount is

show your new "County of Orange Commuter Club – 2007" card to a participating merchant that displays an OCTA "Destination Partner" decal at the entrance to their establishment.

Visit www.octa.net for more information about OCTA's Destination and Discount Guide which includes a full listing of things to do in Orange County and their partners that provide money saving discounts. You can search by area as well as type of service, including dining, entertainment, historical, shopping, sports and recreation and much more.

Some of the exciting partners include:

Carl's Jr., Domino's Pizza*, Subway*, The Old Spaghetti Factory*, Cold Stone Creamery*, Ruby's Diner*, Red Robin*, Bower's Museum, Orange County Performing

Arts, Brighton Collectibles*, Boomer's Family Fun Center*, Red Rock Chili Company*, and much, much more!

**Discounts are limited to certain locations—please review the Destination and Discount Guide for specific locations that offer applicable discounts.*

Do you rideshare at least five days per month? If so, be sure to sign up for the Commuter Club to be eligible for this great discount program! To sign up for the Commuter Club, send an e-mail to rideshare@ocgov.com, call the Message Center at 714/647-1931, click [here](#) to be linked to the Commuter Assistance Program website, or visit one of our 30 commuter information display racks. You can click [here](#) for a list of locations, or complete the All-In-One application on the last page of this newsletter.

Quarterly Rideshare Drawing

We're also happy to announce the winners of this quarter's drawing for rideshare participants from the County of Orange Commuter Club members! Each quarter, we draw eight (8) names of current "active" Commuter Club members and they win a \$25 gift certificate! This quarter's winners are:

Dunnington Babb, OC Police Department
Steven Soo, Resource & Development
Management Department
Saul Avila, Registrar of Voters
Mary Manson, Auditor Controllers Office
Sylvia Diaz, Child Support Services
Sonia Munoz, Housing & Community Services
Israel DeLaCruz, Social Services Agency
Pavel Mihai, Superior Court

They've each won a gift certificate redeemable through GiftCertificates.com, where they can select from over 20 merchants!

Do you rideshare at least five days per month? If so, be sure to sign up for the Commuter Club. You'll receive a Claim Form to track your rideshare participation for three months and then receive your annual thank you gift cards, be eligible for these quarterly drawings and reap the benefits of the Commuter Club Discount card in partnership with OCTA.

To sign up for the Commuter Club, send an e-mail to rideshare@ocgov.com, call the Message Center at 714/647-1931, click [here](#) to be linked to the Commuter Assistance Program website, or visit one of our 30 commuter information display racks. You can click [here](#) for a list of locations, or complete the All-In-One application on the last page of this newsletter.



Rideshare Week Winner

Rideshare Week, which was sponsored by OCTA in October 2006, encourages commuters to pledge to rideshare during the first week of October. One lucky County of Orange employee did just that, and won a mountain bike! Congratulations **Melissa Johnson** with the Harbor Justice Center.

OCTA Trip Planning Made Easy



OCTA makes getting there easier than you think! You can get just about anywhere in Orange County on the bus. With more than 600 buses traveling 75,000 miles every day, if there's some place in the County you want to go, you have no excuse not to.

To plan your trip, visit OCTA's website www.octa.net/tripplanner. Enter your starting point and destination, and you'll instantly get complete instructions on how to get there. You can also get a free bus book so you can plan your trip yourself. Bus books are located at all of the County's 30 Commuter Information display racks – click [here](#) for a list of locations, or simply call OCTA at 714/636-RIDE (7433), and they will help you over the phone.

OCTA has recently teamed up with Google to offer a user-friendly online trip planner to their customers. It takes advan-

tage of Google's map technology as well as satellite photos to provide transit itineraries. Find this new service at www.google.com/transit or www.octa.net.

More good news—if you would like to try taking the bus to work, we'll give you a free one-day pass. If you decide to continue riding OCTA and sign up for the County's payroll deduction program, we'll send you an annual e-pass, and you can ride free for the first month.

For more details about the County's "Try the Bus on Us" program or our annual OCTA e-pass program, send an e-mail to rideshare@ocgov.com, call the Message Center at 714/647-1931, click [here](#) to be linked to the Commuter Assistance Program website, or visit one of our 30 commuter information display racks. You can click [here](#) for a list of locations, or complete the All-In-One application on the last page of this newsletter.

Commuter Assistance Program

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www.oc.ca.gov/hr/rideshare

The County Commuter Newsletter is published by the Commuter Assistance Program Office managed by the Human Resources Department. Our mission is to distribute commuter information to all County of Orange employees so that they can make informed decisions about how they travel to work. For more information about the Commuter Assistance Program, please go to the web site.

Did You Know?

- April is Earthquake Preparedness Month, and it's a good time to get ready in case of an emergency. Get more information from the Governor's Office of Emergency Services at www.oes.ca.gov.
- April 22, 2007 is Earth Day. You can get more details from www.earthday.org.
- California became the fourth state in the U.S. to ban drivers from using cell phones. The law will take effect July 1, 2008, and imposes a fine to motorists who use a cell phone while driving – unless they are using a headset, speakerphone, ear bud or other technology that frees both hands while they talk.



Commuter Assistance Program All-In-One Application

First Name		Initial		Last Name	
Home Address		City		Zip Code	
Work Address		City		Zip Code	
Agency/Dept.		Bldg #:		Work Hours	
Work Phone:		Email:			

Commuter Club Application Section - for those that rideshare

Yes, I commit to rideshare at least 5 days per month. I would like the benefits of the Commuter Club including the one-time sign up bonus, annual thank you gift, quarterly drawings, and the merchant discounts while I continue to rideshare.

For the **one-time sign up bonus (new members only)**, enter a month above each calendar and track the rideshare mode used to commute to work each day for three consecutive months. (c=carpool, v=vanpool, b=bus, t=train, bk=bike, w=walk)

	MONTH:						
	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Week 1							
Week 2							
Week 3							
Week 4							
Week 5							

Carpool/Vanpool Classifieds Section - for those that want help finding a carpool match

Yes, list my home city, work hours, work phone number and/or e-mail address in the Carpool/Vanpool Classifieds section of the Commuter Assistance Program web site so other County employees can contact me.

I would like to join a carpool* I would like to join a vanpool only* I would like to drive/lease the van*

"Try The Train On Us" Application Section - for those that want to try riding Metrolink to work

Please send me a complimentary 4-trip ticket and the Metrolink Ride Guide. I certify that I have not taken the train to work within the past 90 days. I understand that if I like riding the train and decide to purchase the tickets through payroll deductions, I will not be charged for my first monthly pass/ticket (Note 1). The Metrolink station nearest my home is _____ and the station nearest my work is _____.

"Try The Bus On Us" Application Section - for those that want to try riding the OCTA bus to work

Please send me a complimentary 1-day bus pass. I certify that I have not taken the bus to work within the past 90 days. I understand that if I like riding the bus and decide to purchase the annual bus pass through payroll deductions, I will not be charged for my first month of riding the bus (Note 1). The nearest cross streets to my home: _____ The nearest cross streets to my worksite: _____.

* Note 1: The **Commuter Choice Program** allows employees to purchase bus, rail, or vanpool "tickets" through the payroll deduction process so that their taxable income is reduced by that amount up to \$110 per month. You will receive the required Commuter Choice Voluntary Payroll Deduction Authorization form with your complimentary tickets.

Authorization Section - MUST BE SIGNED AND DATED

I have read the Commuter Assistance Program Guidelines and I understand that above information may be used by the Commuter Assistance Program office to organize carpools, vanpools or distribute requested information. I understand the home address information will only be used to send me information or subsidies that I have requested. I agree to complete the annual transportation survey distributed to all employees each September.

Signature	Date
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Please submit by FAX to 714-653-1148 or by Pony Mail to Rideshare, Bldg 10, Civic Center Plaza



Commuter Assistance Program Guidelines

Commuter Choice Program

County of Orange employees can now purchase Metrolink, OCTA bus, and vanpool "tickets" through the convenience of a monthly payroll deduction. By doing so, your taxable income is reduced by that amount up to \$110 per month. This income tax saving is like money in your pocket each month. To register, you must submit a Voluntary Payroll Deduction Authorization Form. Further instructions as well as the form are available on the CAP Website.

Guaranteed Ride Home Program

Sometimes rideshare participants experience unique or unexpected commuter problems such as working late and missing a carpool, or needing to get home for a personal emergency. All employees can now get home via a rental car or the pre-selected taxi service if an emergency arises on a day that they rideshare. Commuter Club members automatically receive a special Authorization Form and instructions or you may contact your HR managers/supervisor for assistance.

Commuter Club Incentive Program

County employees that rideshare at least five times per month for three months can become members of the Commuter Club. Members receive a \$15 Starbuck Card as a sign up bonus, a Commuter Club membership card good for discounts from participating merchants, chances to win quarterly drawings and an annual appreciation gift for those that continue to rideshare. Members also receive a Guaranteed Ride Home Authorization form to use during valid emergency situations.

Carpool Classifieds

If you are interested in carpooling to work, you can view a list of fellow employees who live and work near you who may want to share the ride. Visit the CAP web site to register your commute information or find a carpool partner. The Carpool Classifieds section of web site lists over 500 County employees and is updated regularly. You can also register with the regional rideshare data base at www.ridematch.info to find rideshare matches with non-County employees.

"Try The Bus On Us" Program

This program is available to County of Orange employees that want to try using the OCTA bus service to commute to work for the **first time**. You will receive a complimentary one-day ticket and instructions on how to get a free OCTA personalized transit itinerary. If you like riding the bus and sign up to purchase the annual bus pass through payroll deductions (Commuter Choice), you will receive the first month free. Bus schedules are available at www.octa.net, on our web site and at the Commuter Information Display Racks.

"Try The Train On Us"

This program is available to County of Orange employees that want to try using Metrolink to commute to work for the **first time**. You will receive a complimentary 4-trip ticket and a Metrolink Ride Guide. If you like riding the train and decide to purchase your tickets through payroll deductions (Commuter Choice Program), you will not be charged for your first monthly pass. Metrolink schedules are available on-line at www.metrolinktrains.com and the CAP Web site or at a Commuter Information Display Rack.

Resources:

CAP Website: www.oc.ca.gov/hr/rideshare

CAP e-mail: rideshare@ocgov.com

CAP Voice Mail: 714.647.1931

Commuter Information Display Racks: see list of locations on the CAP Website