



Agenda Report

Fullerton City Council

MEETING DATE: MAY 5, 2026

TO: CITY COUNCIL / SUCCESSOR AGENCY

SUBMITTED BY: SUNAYANA THOMAS, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PREPARED BY: SUNAYANA THOMAS, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: CITY OF FULLERTON RESPONSE TO 2025-2026 ORANGE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT: CONNECTING ORANGE COUNTY TO LAX EVALUATING TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

SUMMARY

The 2025-2026 Orange County Grand Jury issued a report entitled *Connecting Orange County to LAX: Evaluating Transportation Options* which identifies Fullerton Park & Ride as a candidate site for direct express bus service to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). The report directs the City of Fullerton to respond to Finding F1 and Recommendation R1 by May 28, 2026. Staff accepts and recommends initiating collaboration with OCTA and LAWA on a business case study for FlyAway or similar direct-to-LAX service from Fullerton Park & Ride.

PROPOSED MOTION

1. Receive and file the 2025-2026 Orange County Grand Jury Report, *Connecting Orange County to LAX: Evaluating Transportation Options*.
2. Authorize the City Manager, or designee to execute and submit the City's required response to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court; and to collaborate with the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) and Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) to begin a business case study process for FlyAway® or similar direct-to-LAX express bus service from Fullerton Park & Ride, with the study submitted to LAWA by September 30, 2026.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- Receive and file the Grand Jury report and authorize the City Manager, or designee to submit the required response, but decline to direct staff to initiate the business

case study at this time. This would require a specific explanation in the Grand Jury response as to why R1 will not be implemented or requires further analysis, per California Penal Code §933.05(b).

- Other options brought by City Council.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Proposed Motion.

CITY MANAGER REMARKS

None.

PRIORITY POLICY STATEMENT

This item matches the following Priority Policy Statement/s:

- Fiscal and Organizational Stability
- Infrastructure and City Assets.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no direct fiscal impact from receiving and filing the Grand Jury report or submitting the required response. Staff will conduct initial outreach with OCTA and LAWA to explore options for a business case study process. Staff will return to City Council with an update following initial discussions and provide potential options and related costs at a future date.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

The 2025-2026 Orange County Grand Jury published *Connecting Orange County to LAX: Evaluating Transportation Options on February 23, 2026*. The report evaluated ten transportation options between Orange County and LAX. The Grand Jury found that approximately 9.9 million Orange County residents use LAX annually, yet public transit ridership remains extremely low. The most reliable existing option is Metrolink or Amtrak to Union Station, then the FlyAway bus, averaging approximately 1 hour and 48 minutes on weekdays.

Finding F1 states that Fullerton Park and Ride meets the criteria for an express bus pick-up site, being approximately 25 miles from LAX and near major freeways. Recommendation R1 directs the City, by September 30, 2026, to direct the Planning Department to collaborate with OCTA and LAWA on a business case study for FlyAway or similar direct service from Fullerton Park and Ride to LAX, covering projected ridership, financial sustainability, infrastructure readiness, and community benefits.

The Fullerton Park and Ride location is the subject of the Orangethorpe Transit Village Conceptual Study, led by OCTA in partnership with the City, exploring transit-supportive mixed-use development at the currently underutilized 9-acre site. Its proximity to the 91 Freeway and existing transit connections make it a strong candidate for a future express bus service to LAX.

FlyAway previously operated a direct route from the Irvine Transportation Center to LAX from 2009 to 2012, discontinued due to low ridership and significant operating losses. Conditions have changed: LAX's Automated People Mover opens in mid-2026, the Orangethorpe Transit Village planning process is underway, and regional interest in airport ground access is growing. A business case study would assess whether a Fullerton-originating service is now viable.

California Penal Code Section 933 requires the City to submit its formal response to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court no later than May 28, 2026.

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 - Orange County Grand Jury Report
- Attachment 2 - Response Letter

cc: City Manager Eddie Manfro