



PRESS RELEASE



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The County of Orange Invites the Public to Celebrate Completion of the New La Pata Avenue Connecting South Orange County Communities

The August 13 event will celebrate the County's largest roadway project in its history before opening to the public on August 14.

To celebrate the largest roadway project in its history, the County of Orange is inviting the public to a historic ribbon cutting event on Saturday, August 13 for the La Pata Gap Connector Project, the new 2.27-mile, four-lane roadway extension that will provide a direct connection between San Clemente and San Juan Capistrano, Ladera Ranch and other neighboring communities.

With a celebration theme of "Connecting Communities from the Canyons to the Coast," the event is open to the public and is expected to attract thousands of attendees from throughout the surrounding communities. In addition to a special ribbon cutting ceremony, the event will feature a classic car show, live music, food trucks, fun family activities, vendor booths and exhibits. The newly connected La Pata Avenue will then open for public use on Sunday, August 14.

"I am very excited to be a part of this milestone project that will help improve mobility within the County and region at large," said Lisa Bartlett, Chairwoman of the Orange County Board of Supervisors and Fifth District Supervisor. "This new corridor will dramatically reduce travel time by directly connecting people with retail centers, medical facilities, schools, recreational opportunities, emergency evacuation routes, the County's Prima Deshecha Landfill and more."

The opening will also provide some timely help as it is expected to greatly cut the commute times for students, parents and staff at nearby San Juan Hills High School, which begins its school year on Monday, August 15. Commuters may experience a 20- to 30-minute reduction in travel time when driving this new route as an alternative to the 5 Freeway.

In addition to Chairwoman Bartlett, the roster of distinguished officials expected to speak at the ribbon cutting ceremony include Pat Bates, Senator, 36th Senate District, Bob Baker, Mayor of San Clemente, Pam Patterson, Mayor of San Juan Capistrano, Lori Donchak, Chair of the Orange County Transportation Authority Board of Directors, Shane Silsby, Director of Orange County Public Works, and Steve Craig, Founder of Craig Realty Group. Congressman Darrell Issa will also be on hand to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

OC Public Works and its contractor, Sukut Construction, began construction of the La Pata Extension Project's first phase, the La Pata Gap Connector, in April of 2014. Completing this phase of the new roadway included excavation and relocation of approximately 800,000 cubic yards of refuse within the County's Prima Deshecha Landfill and moving approximately 13 million cubic yards of soil.

This County project has been years in the making and is the result of the collaboration of many partners, including the OC Public Works, OC Waste & Recycling, the Cities of San Juan Capistrano and San Clemente, Rancho Mission Viejo and OCTA.

The \$126.5 million project is fully funded through a combination of funding sources from Rancho Mission Viejo, Communities Facilities Districts, State Measure M and Proposition 1B Funds, the La Pata Road Fee Program, OC Waste & Recycling, County Road Fund (State gas tax) and utility reimbursements. The Orange County Board of Supervisors unanimously voted on December 10, 2013 to authorize the construction of all three phases for the La Pata Extension Project.

While the newly extended La Pata Avenue will open on August 14, construction will continue on two other phases of the overall project:

- more -

- The widening of the existing La Pata Avenue from three lanes to five lanes from just south of Ortega Highway to just south of Stallion Ridge (formerly Vista Montana), with one of those lanes as a new dedicated turn lane into the San Juan Hills High School area to enhance the flow of traffic, and;
- The extension of Camino Del Rio as a four-lane roadway from its existing terminus in the Forster Ranch community in San Clemente to La Pata Avenue

The partners and sponsors of the ribbon cutting celebration include several organizations from across public, non-profit and private industries, including:

Event Partners



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Event date / time:

Saturday, August 13, 2016, 10 am – 2 pm

Directions from Southbound I-5 Freeway (San Juan Capistrano side)

Exit Ortega Highway and proceed east to La Pata Avenue.

Turn right (south) on La Pata Avenue and continue toward Prima Deshecha Landfill.

Directions from Northbound I-5 Freeway (San Clemente side)

Exit Avenida Pico and proceed northeast to Avenida La Pata.

Turn left (north) on Avenida La Pata and continue toward the intersection of Calle Saluda and Avenida La Pata.

For more information about the La Pata Avenue Gap Connector Project, visit lapata.ocpublicworks.com.

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