

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Orange County Public Works Reaches Significant Completion of Avenida La Pata Extension Project to Enhance Mobility in South Orange County**

**Completion of widening phase marks significant completion of the County's largest roadway project in its history.**

**Santa Ana, Calif.** (May 8, 2018) – After four years of construction and enough earthwork to fill Lake Mission Viejo nearly three times, OC Public Works has announced the significant completion of its Avenida La Pata Extension Project, the largest roadway project in the department's history.

Newly completed lanes as part of the project's widening phase were opened for public use on April 26 and marked the completion of major construction efforts, with crews continuing to perform minor cleanup activities over the coming weeks.

"This milestone for one of our most significant transportation projects is a historical and exciting time for the County," said Supervisor Lisa Bartlett, Fifth District. "With the opening of Avenida La Pata's initial phase in late 2016, we have seen improved mobility for those traveling this direct connection between South County communities, and this recent completion of new travel lanes is one more element to improving commutes."

"This project was a major undertaking and I applaud our OC Public Works team who for years managed this monumental effort and overcame many challenging elements, ranging from difficult terrain (including landslides) to discovery of fossils dating back millions of years. Additionally, the team coordinated the construction of a major roadway through an area of the active Prima Deshecha Landfill," said Shane Silsby, Director of OC Public Works. "This is an example of successful infrastructure project planning, design and delivery by OC Public Works that will greatly benefit the region."

OC Public Works and its contractor, Sukut Construction, began construction of the project's first phase, the 2.27-mile "gap connector," in April of 2014, where crews excavated and relocated approximately 900,000 cubic yards of refuse within the County's Prima Deshecha Landfill and moved approximately 14.8 million cubic yards of soil. That connection was completed in August 2016, providing a direct route between San Clemente and San Juan Capistrano, Rancho Mission Viejo, Ladera Ranch and other neighboring communities. The connection has greatly reduced commute times in the area by turning a 20 to 30-minute drive to only minutes when driving this new route as an alternative to the 5 Freeway, providing a direct connection to retail centers, medical facilities, schools, recreational areas, emergency evacuation routes, and the County's Prima Deshecha Landfill.



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The extension of Camino Del Rio in San Clemente connected a four-lane roadway from its existing terminus in the Forster Ranch community to the new Avenida La Pata.

The most recent and final stage of the Avenida La Pata Extension Project involved the widening of the existing roadway from three lanes to five lanes from just south of Ortega Highway to just north of Stallion Ridge, with a new dedicated turn lane into the San Juan Hills High School area to enhance the flow of traffic.

The completed project is the result of collaboration of many partners, including OC Public Works, OC Waste & Recycling, the Cities of San Juan Capistrano and San Clemente, Rancho Mission Viejo and OCTA.

The \$136 million project was 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 allocation) and utility reimbursements. The Orange County Board of Supervisors unanimously voted in December 2013 to authorize the construction of all three phases for the Avenida La Pata Extension Project.

OC Public Works' overview video of the Avenida La Pata Extension project is available for viewing here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bs525R5gzcw>



## By the Numbers: Avenida La Pata Extension Project

Project Element	Amount	Comparison
Earthwork	14.8 million cubic yards	Enough to fill Lake Mission Viejo nearly 3 times
Waste Excavation	866,000 cubic yards	Enough to fill 262 Olympic-size swimming pools
Asphalt	130,000 tons	The weight of nearly two Queen Mary ships
Drainage Facilities	15,624 linear feet of storm drains, 80,000 linear feet of V-ditches and 121,754 linear feet of sub-drains	The length of Orange County's entire coastline

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