

ARIZONA'S STATEWIDE RAIL CONFERENCE

Presented by
AzTA



EL CONQUISTADOR TUCSON



APRIL 11-12, 2022

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Special Thanks To:

AzTA Rail Committee

AECOM Technical Services, Inc. (Conference Program and Signage Design/Printing)

Thank you to the many conference volunteers – you make a difference!

Amtrak Letter of Support

July 13th, 2021

The Honorable Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senate

The Honorable Tom O'Halleran
United State Congress

The Honorable Raúl M. Grijalva
United States Congress

The Honorable Andy Biggs
United States Congress

The Honorable Ruben Gallego
United States Congress

The Honorable Greg Stanton
United States Congress

The Honorable Mark Kelly
United States Senate

The Honorable Ann Kirkpatrick
United States Congress

The Honorable Paul Gosar
United States Congress

The Honorable David Schweikert
United States Congress

The Honorable Debbie Lesko
United States Congress

Dear Members of the Arizona Congressional Delegation:

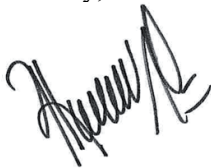
As Mayors of cities and towns located along the potential Tucson-Phoenix-West Valley Amtrak route, we enthusiastically support Amtrak's vision to bring passenger rail service to our communities. Frequent and reliable passenger rail service will expand economic opportunities and provide important regional connections between our cities and towns.

We further support Amtrak's reauthorization proposal to create a Corridor Development Program, which will help advance Amtrak's planning, development and implementation of new corridor routes and improvements to existing routes. By funding this program through Amtrak's National Network grant, Amtrak can make the initial capital investments necessary to get these new routes up and running. The grant will also cover the operating costs for the first several years, offering new services the ability to grow ridership and generate revenue.

Amtrak has made clear its commitment to working in a collaborative manner with state and local partners to grow the national rail network, and we look forward to this partnership. In addition to Amtrak's National Network grant, we also support increased funding for USDOT competitive grants, which can also support more passenger rail.

We ask that you support Amtrak's reauthorization proposal as Congress considers the future of surface transportation programs. Thank you for helping bring Amtrak service to our communities.

Sincerely,



Tucson Mayor Regina Romero



Goodyear Mayor Georgia Lord



Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego

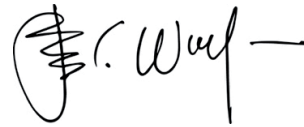


Mesa Mayor John Giles


Amtrak Letter of Support (continued)



Glendale Mayor Jerry Weiers



Oro Valley Mayor Joe Winfield



South Tucson Mayor Bob Teso



Marana Mayor Ed Honea



Avondale Mayor Kenneth N. Weise



Sahuarita Mayor Tom Murphy



Chandler Mayor Kevin Hartke

Historic Rail in Arizona



Mesa Southern Pacific Railroad Depot, 1964



Amtrak Talgo at Tucson, 2000



Coolidge Southern Pacific Railroad Depot, 1965



Amtrak at Tucson, 1977



Phoenix Union Station, 1964



ATSF Special, Phoenix, 1939

Historic photos courtesy of Marc Pearsall, Marty Bernard, Jon Talton, Patty Allison, Otto Schmidt/Dennis Schmidt Collection, and Arizona Rail Museum

Conference Agenda

Monday, April 11

4 pm - 6 pm

Happy Hour & Pecha Kucha Competition (White Dove)

Facilitator: Jennifer Love, Senior Transportation Planner, AECOM Technical Services, Inc.

Join us for a fun social hour and friendly Pecha Kucha competition with topics tied to rail. A Pecha Kucha (Japanese for Chit Chat) presentation is a format that uses 20 slides or images that are displayed for 20 seconds each. The slides will move automatically as the presenter is speaking. This format ensures the speaker is concise, keeps the presentation moving, and gets through all of their content.

(Includes drinks and light refreshments)

PECHA KUCHA

Competition & Happy Hour

Sponsored by



Tuesday, April 12

7:30 am - 8 am

Registration (Coronado I & II)

Breakfast (Coronado I & II)

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8 am - 9:45 am

Welcome from Mayor Regina Romero, City of Tucson (Coronado I & II)



Karen Hedlund

Keynote Speaker: Karen Hedlund, Member, President Biden's Surface Transportation Board (Coronado I & II)

Ms. Hedlund served in the Obama Administration as Chief Counsel of the U.S. Federal Highway Administration (2009-2010), and as Chief Counsel and Deputy Administrator of the U.S. Federal Railroad Administration (2010-2014). Since stepping down from that position, she has advised governmental authorities and private investors on the development of passenger rail and transportation-oriented development projects.

Mayoral Panel Discussion:

THE VISION OF RAIL IN ARIZONA (Coronado I & II)

Facilitator: Melissa Boyles, Vice President of Diversity and Development, Stacy and Witbeck, Inc.

Mayoral Panel:

- Mayor Brigitte Peterson, Town of Gilbert
- Mayor Kate Gallego, City of Phoenix
- Mayor Corey Woods, City of Tempe
- Mayor Regina Romero, City of Tucson

This panel will include a discussion of various types of passenger rail services from the perspective of each city/town. The mayors will elaborate on their support for various rail transit modes and the benefits for each unique community. Quality of life, connectivity, expedient regional travel, environmental sustainability, and economic development impacts are some of the benefits of intercity and commuter rail implementation. With growing populations and dispersed development patterns, cities are embracing new strategies that support regional rail accessibility beyond the automobile.

9:45 am - 10 am

AM Break (Coronado I & II)

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A STACY AND WITBECK JOINT VENTURE

10 am - 11:15 am

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Rail Policy (Agave Ballroom)

Presenters: Markus Coleman, Light Rail Administrator, City of Phoenix; Melissa Boyles, Vice President of Diversity and Development, Stacy and Witbeck, Inc.

Implementing rail programs requires forethought and careful planning to ensure that communities' concerns are heard, their needs are met, and the impacts of construction are mitigated. Policy is the driving force behind ensuring people and places not only survive the implementation process but go on to prosper and thrive as a result of our rail programs. The City of Phoenix culture is oriented around community service and engagement. Hear from **Markus Coleman, Phoenix Light Rail Administrator**, about thought-leadership in developing policies that ensure the needs of communities are considered throughout planning, design, construction, and operation activities.

BRT: Evolutionary Paths to Rail and More (Joshua Tree)

Presenter: Mike James, AICP, Director of Transportation Planning, CivTech

Implementing bus rapid transit (BRT) ahead of future rail projects is a strategy that can establish strong transit ridership. This session considers the subtle strategies and inherit opportunities of BRT that have provided new opportunities to enhance future rail projects; and establish BRT as a high-capacity transit solution of its own.



**Southern Pacific Transcontinental Debut,
Los Angeles to Phoenix and Tucson (Phoenix Station), 1926**

Conference Agenda

Tuesday, April 12 (CONTINUED)

11:15 am - 1:15 pm Lunch & Arizona Intercity and Commuter Rail Panel (Coronado I & II)

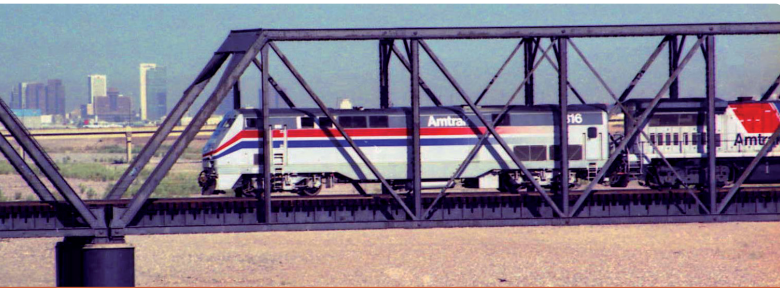
Facilitator: Eric Latto, Transit Services Coordinator – Department of Transportation & Mobility, City of Tucson

City/Town Manager Panel:

- Patrick Banger, Town of Gilbert
- Julie Karins, City of Goodyear
- Andrew Ching, City of Tempe
- Michael Ortega, PE, City of Tucson

This panel will discuss the proposed Tucson to Phoenix, Buckeye, Yuma, and Los Angeles corridor, which would re-establish Amtrak intercity passenger rail service for the first time since 1996. Each manager will talk about their community's efforts in planning and supporting intercity and commuter rail services to highlight the benefits it could provide to each community. Potential next steps include continuing coordination with host railroads and Amtrak (ongoing), establishing governance via a joint powers authority, addressing enabling legislation regarding liability and indemnification, identifying regional, federal, state, and local funding sources, and initiating rail service.

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The Last Amtrak Train, Tempe, 1996

1:15 pm - 2:45 pm BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Finding the Right and Equitable Balance: Tucson's Transit Network and its Influence on Housing, Infill, and the Public Realm (Agave Ballroom)

Moderator: Jennifer Toothaker, Transportation Planning Administrator/Team Manager, City of Tucson

Presenters:

- Ian Sansom, Project Manager, Tucson Norte-Sur Equitable Transit Oriented Development Project, City of Tucson
- Jeremiah Dean, Lead Planner, Housing and Community Development, City of Tucson

The success of the Tucson Sun Link Streetcar is not just about its high ridership. It is also about the dramatic adjacent growth that has occurred since 2010 in anticipation of the line, and continues to this day, 6 years past its grand opening. Now Tucson is seeking to expand its high-capacity transit and enhance its bus service, and one question looms large: How can Tucson strike the "right" balance that encourages future growth and development in these transit-oriented areas while remaining equitable and accessible? Hear from a moderated panel of staff working in areas that play a role in the balance: eTOD, affordable/mixed-income housing, parking, shared mobility, and curb management.

1:15 pm - 2:45 pm

Passenger Rail Implementation: Impacts, Challenges, and Opportunities (Joshua Tree)

Moderator: Marc Pearsall, Project Manager-Rail and Transit, Jacobs Engineering

Panel of Industry Experts:

- Alex Khalfin, Senior Manager – Government Affairs Southwest, Amtrak
- Lonnie Blaydes, President, Lonnie Blaydes Rail Consulting
- Steve Hogan, Vice President, WSP

This roundtable discussion session will focus on the impact, challenges, and opportunities for freight railroads on the implementation of proposed statewide passenger rail. Across the nation, intercity, regional, and commuter passenger rail requires trackage access agreements on existing, privately owned freight railroad lines to provide new service. Within Arizona, two Class 1 railroads, Union Pacific Railroad and BNSF Railway, own the existing track network serving metropolitan Phoenix and Tucson. As likely host railroads, both would need to be part of discussions regarding how passenger rail and freight rail can coexist with minimal disruption to either. For passenger rail, a government funding agency, joint powers authority, or a transit operator will need to be identified or established to coordinate with UP and BNSF regarding capital infrastructure, operations-coordination, and liability stipulations for such new systems.

2:45 pm - 3 pm

PM Break

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3 pm - 4:30 pm

Workshop: Building a Coalition to Support a Rail Investment (Coronado I & II)

Facilitator: Chris Bridges, AzTA Board President

Presenter: Lindsey Sousa, Vice President, West Region Transit/Rail Growth and Strategy Lead, AECOM Technical Services, Inc.

Rail investment doesn't occur overnight. The typical planning, design, and construction process for a truly comprehensive system can take decades to complete. The work, however, begins years before the technical planning process even begins. Addressing the concerns and interests of the wide array of stakeholders requires thoughtful planning, consistent messaging, and follow-through. Gaining stakeholder support, and mobilizing an even greater collective voice, can be achieved by building a coalition of those championing the development of rail corridors. In this session, hear from Lindsey Sousa, Vice President, AECOM West Region Transit/Rail Growth and Strategy Lead, regarding the efforts in Colorado to study a new Front Range Passenger Rail and the lessons learned that can be applied to our efforts here in Arizona as a foundation for building our own coalition.

4:30 pm - 6 pm

Arizona's Statewide Rail & 35th Annual Statewide Transit Conference Welcome Reception (Turquoise Ballroom)

(Includes drinks & light refreshments)



Tucson Sun Link Streetcar

Conference Center Map

El Conquistador Tucson



Conference Schedule

MONDAY, APRIL 11		
4 pm – 6 pm	Happy Hour & Pecha Kucha Competition (White Dove)	
TUESDAY, APRIL 12		
	AGAVE BALLROOM	JOSHUA TREE
7:30 am – 8 am	Registration & Breakfast (Coronado I & II)	
8 am – 9:45 am	Welcome from Tucson Mayor Regina Romero, Keynote Address from Karen Hedlund Mayoral Panel Discussion: THE VISION OF RAIL IN ARIZONA (Coronado I & II)	
9:45 am – 10 am	AM Break (Coronado I & II)	
10 am – 11:15 am	Rail Policy	BRT: Evolutionary Paths to Rail and More
11:15 am – 1:15 pm	Lunch & Arizona Intercity and Commuter Rail Panel (Town and City Managers) (Coronado I & II)	
1:15 pm – 2:45 pm	Finding the Right and Equitable Balance: Tucson's Transit Network and its Influence on Housing, Infill, and the Public Realm	Passenger Rail Implementation: Impacts, Challenges, and Opportunities
2:45 pm – 3 pm	PM Break (Coronado I & II)	
3 pm – 4:30 pm	Workshop: Building a Coalition to Support a Rail Investment (Coronado I & II)	
4:30 pm – 6 pm	Arizona's Statewide Rail & 35th Annual Statewide Transit Conference Welcome Reception (Turquoise Ballroom)	

Arizona Transit Association (AzTA)
is a non-profit statewide organization dedicated to improving
public transportation in all Arizona communities. AzTA's mission
is to provide leadership in the funding, advocacy and education for
public transportation services throughout Arizona.

