

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK

BY TONY TRIFILETTI

FEBRUARY 29, 2020

Goals:

- Build support for Amtrak to include a Phoenix-Tucson link as part of its state-supported short-range corridor system.
- Work for daily service on the *Sunset Limited*.
- Build credibility among regional politicians, managers and organizations as the critical organization with expertise in rail.
- Recruit new members and raise funds.

Friends of Transit Annual Conference

There were three speakers who contributed to the meeting.

Kate Gallego, Mayor of Phoenix

- She wants to take the lead on transit issues.
- She expects the MAG package for the Proposition 400 Extension to go to the voters in 2022, not 2024. This means the Policy Committee must have the package together by the end of March. It appears she is going to put her personal prestige on the line for this.

Scott Smith, CEO, Valley Metro

- Valley Metro Rail caused a 50% growth of ridership on buses and light rail in those areas served by the line.
- The next step is increased bus frequencies.
- Work has started on the S. Central Line with utility relocation.
- Approximately one million new people will come to the Phoenix area to live, mostly in the northeast and southwest suburbs which are public transportation deserts; transit needs to extend into these areas.
- Within the loop freeways, Phoenix is approaching Chicago-style density; without more public transportation, gridlock is on the horizon.

Ram Pendyala, Director of the School of Sustainable Engineering, Arizona State University

- There has been a drop in daily traveling due to technology permitting people to do things from the comfort of home.
- Vehicle miles are trending upward, indicating longer trips.
- Commuting to and from work takes up 20% of vehicle miles.
- The two-way daily commute in the Phoenix area runs around 75 minutes.
- Millennials tend to live with parents and delay marriage and other life milestones.

- They have very high Internet usage.
- However, Generation Z appears to prefer physical interaction instead.
- Modes like Uber and Lyft now travel more miles than buses and light rail combined.
- The final mile between destination and public transit is still failing.
- Half of people don't like driverless cars and prefer personal control.
- There is very little public transportation use by non-commute trips.
- Uber and Lyft are not used for the final mile.
- Land use and transit go together.
- Culdesac is a planned community on the way to being built without cars or parking facilities.
- "Don't worry about the future of transit; worry about the future of mobility."

Next Month

- March 12: meeting with Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego.
- March 19: meeting at ASU with Dr. Ram Pendyala.
- Transportation Choices Coalition meeting.

FROM PRESIDENT CHUCK MOTT

- Your Executive Director has personally visited most of the mayors, council members and civic organizations in cities that Amtrak serves, providing information and offering specific proposals how to save these passenger trains.
- He has been on radio, TV and has written up in major newspapers in Arizona. As a result, hundreds of letters, emails and phone call have been made to Arizona's US senators and our Arizona congressmen asking for legislation to preserve, sustain and fund new equipment for interstate passenger trains serving Arizona.
- Tony's efforts as a full time, modestly paid Executive Director have made the difference in moving Arizona forward for more rail passenger service. However, our dues alone cannot fully support him. As a result, we have had to temporarily pull him back from his full-time duties.
- Therefore, we are asking that you consider increasing your annual renewal membership dues to get him back on board full-time.
- We want to thank many of you who have already paid your 2020 memberships dues and particularly those who have already given above the Regular Membership Dues of \$35.00. Here is our expense budget for 2020:

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES AND CORPORATE GIVING GOAL FOR 2020 is: \$32,000

ALL ABOARD DUES PAYING MEMBERS: 200

INDIVIDUAL/CORPORATE GIVING BUCKETS THAT WILL MEET THE BUDGET FOR 2020

- 80 MEMBERS Regular/Spouse/Family: \$ 35.00 \$ 2800
- 50 MEMBERS Copper Spike \$ 50.00 \$ 2500
- 35 MEMBERS Silver Spike \$ 100.00 \$ 3500
- 20 MEMBERS Gold Spike \$ 500.00 \$ 10,000
- 5 MEMBERS Platinum Spike \$ 1000.00 \$ 5,000
- 5 CORPORATE MEMBERS \$ 8,200.00 \$ 8,200

TOTAL BUDGET GIVING: \$ 32,000

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS GIVING TO ALL ABOARD ARIZONA.