



TRANSPORTATION AND ARIZONA

Highlights of the 106th
Arizona Town Hall

April 19-22, 2015
Tucson, Arizona



Stephanie Sterns, Andisheh Ranjbari and Jordan Hibbs socializing at Tuesday night's dinner.

People use transportation differently. We must create a system that provides options for people who are unable to drive or cannot afford to drive a car.

- From the 106th Arizona Town Hall Report of Recommendations

For over 50 years, Arizona Town Hall has engaged, educated and empowered Arizonans to create solutions to critical policy issues.

In 2009, the 94th Arizona Town Hall on Transportation recognized that transportation in its most elemental form involves the movement of people and goods from one place to another. The transportation systems of today are interwoven with the fundamental characteristics of our modern society into something far more complex. These systems affect and are affected by our lifestyles, health, families, jobs, education, housing, community, infrastructure, fiscal and financial systems, the economy, and the environment.

Prior to the Town Hall, participants from throughout the state reviewed a comprehensive background report developed by Arizona State University. Meeting in facilitated small groups, the participants addressed a common set of discussion questions. Trained recorders captured points of consensus and the entire group gathered for a plenary session on the fourth day to adopt a report of the findings. Although not every Town Hall participant agrees with every conclusion and recommendation, their report reflects the overall consensus achieved by the 106th Arizona Town Hall.

This publication is a summary of the complete report that includes the background research and the report of recommendations. Complete Town Hall reports are published and made available to Arizona Town Hall members, elected officials including the Arizona Legislature, public libraries, and the general public. Download copies online at www.aztownhall.org or call 602-252-9600 to request a printed copy.

Key Points from the Background Report



TRANSPORTATION TRENDS

- The need to travel has grown exponentially as urban areas have spread.
- The automobile dominates passenger transportation, with around 80% of workers commuting by car every day.
- Freight (the transportation of goods) is transported primarily by trucks.
- Vehicle travel in both the U.S. and Arizona appears to be slowing. Fewer people are getting licensed.
- Investments in roads have not balanced out the substantial population growth.

TYPES OF TRANSPORTATION

- Cars and trucks dominate Arizona's transportation system, but other modes play important roles.
- Buses are the backbone of Arizona's public transit systems. Passenger rail has been successfully reintroduced with Valley Metro's Light Rail and Tucson's SunLink modern streetcar.
- While still a small share of overall travel, bicycling and walking are up dramatically since 2000.
- Tucson International Airport has lost traffic while Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport has expanded.

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION

- Land use planning impacts how we travel. Likewise, transportation plans influence land use, impacting development and the environment.
- Population growth drives land development in Arizona.

- Land development and transportation connections have created the beginnings of a single "megapolitan" area stretching from Nogales to Prescott, though it will be decades before the area unifies.

TRANSPORTATION AND THE ECONOMY

- Transportation accounts for about 10% of jobs nationally and around 17% of household budgets.
- The average driver in Phoenix and Tucson loses 35-38 hours per year in congestion delays.
- Congestion is also a problem in rural areas, on arterial streets, and in off-peak hours.
- Tourism and international trade depend heavily on good transportation systems.

TRANSPORTATION AND SOCIETY

- Mobility is a challenge for many members of society.
- Arizona is not prepared for the coming wave of senior citizens, most of who grew up driving.
- On average, rural households earn lower incomes, drive farther distances, and have fewer transportation choices.
- Tribal areas face concerns about safety, rights of way through and alongside their reservations, and the impacts of those rights of way on air quality and cultural resources.
- Arizona's roadways remain some of the most dangerous in the country; our fatality rate is double that of the safest states, though it has been declining in recent years.

TRANSPORTATION AND ENERGY

- Transportation in the U.S. relies on oil for 93% of its energy.
- The global supply-demand balance drives gasoline prices.
- U.S. oil production has risen dramatically in recent years, but our new sources of oil are costly to produce and demand in the rest of the world keeps growing.
- Vehicles that run on alternative fuels are limited by the lack of refueling stations.

PLANNING AND POLICYMAKING FOR TRANSPORTATION

- Various federal and state laws govern how transportation projects are planned; these rules govern population forecasting, environmental impact evaluation, public involvement, and adherence to civil rights and environmental laws.
- Transportation planning activities occur across the state; from small towns to mega-regions, and from tribal communities and national parks, to statewide plans.
- Planning and evaluation processes can take over a decade for larger projects.
- Engaging the public in project planning is always a challenge.

PAYING FOR TRANSPORTATION

- Transportation funding comes from a maze of overlapping federal, state, regional, and local sources.
- Federal and state gas taxes—the leading source of revenue for transportation—have not been raised in decades and are not indexed to inflation. Also, fuel-efficient vehicles use less gas, which means that fewer taxes are collected per person even though the use of roads and other infrastructure remains the same.
- At the state level, funds intended for roads are being swept into the State General Fund.
- In Arizona, lack of funding for infrastructure needs is reaching crisis proportions. The growing gap puts pressure on officials to make choices between system preservation and expansion of capacity to meet future growth, as well as between rural and urban areas and across the different modes of transportation.



Participants Jerry Raburn and Victoria Steel listen intently during one of the Panel Discussions.

Although necessary, increasing existing gas taxes is not a sustainable source of transportation financing because gas use is declining.

- From the 106th Arizona Town Hall Report of Recommendations

Report of Recommendations

The 106th Arizona Town Hall gathered at Casino Del Sol Resort in Tucson on April 19-22, 2015, to develop recommendations for Arizona's future transportation needs. Below is a summary of their recommendations for action.

ACTIONS BY ARIZONA'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

- Stabilize the Highway Trust Fund, public transportation accounts and reauthorize a long-term surface transportation bill.
- Fully fund the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization and enhancements to the Airport Improvement Program (AIP).
- Raise the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) to enable airports to adequately fund needed infrastructure projects.
- Create a long-term, sustainable funding solution for personnel and technology at land ports of entry to facilitate international trade.
- Seek passage of existing legislation to extend the designation of the I-11 Intermountain West Corridor from border to border, through Arizona to Nogales, Mexico.

ACTIONS BY ARIZONA'S GOVERNOR AND LEGISLATURE

- Fund and implement Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT)'s Key Commerce Corridors Plan, and continue the Transportation and Trade Corridor Alliance (TTCA).
- Authorize the State Transportation Board to become a comprehensive transportation body.
- End the diversion of Highway Users Revenue Fund (HURF), State Aviation Fund and other transportation funds to the general fund and pass legislation to prevent this practice in the future.
- Reinstate the HURF exchange for local governments.
- Dedicate a source of funding for the Department of Public Safety outside of HURF or other dedicated transportation funds.

- Increase and index the gasoline tax.
- Develop other funding sources dedicated to transportation such as a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) user fee and a vehicle license taxes (VLT) user fee.
- Restore state funding for public transportation to local governments, including the Local Transportation Assistance Fund (LTAF).
- Authorize county and local governments to use Tax Increment Financing (TIF).
- Market unfunded projects such as a Tucson to Phoenix passenger rail.
- Effectively implement existing traffic safety measures; including new legislation to prohibit texting and other proven acts that cause distracted driving.

ACTIONS BY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS, COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

- Promote planning of transportation systems in urban, rural and tribal areas including consideration for construction, use, operations and maintenance costs.
- Prioritize funding and coordinate applications for federal funding of projects that provide economic development opportunities.
- Disseminate clear facts about transportation projects to educate the public and officials.
- Accelerate projects that demonstrate efficiencies that can be gained using new technologies.
- Encourage local governments to adopt Complete Streets policies.



Pat Norris and Ray Strouss take the opportunity to chat with Monday Dinner speaker Mary Peters.

Arizona's airports are a critical element of transportation infrastructure and a tremendous asset, contributing \$58 billion to the state's economy.

- From the 106th Arizona Town Hall Report of Recommendations

ACTIONS BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR

- Together with agencies, provide facts about transportation projects to educate the public, taxpayers and officials.
- Promote and implement changes necessary to implement the recommendations of this Arizona Town Hall report.
- Explore Public Private Partnerships (P3) that will enhance our transportation systems.
- Adopt strategies such as telecommuting, ridesharing and parking fees.
- Have Chambers of Commerce and other entities educate and advocate on transportation issues, particularly when it comes to supporting key reforms.

ACTIONS BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

- Provide research and educate students and the public about the importance of transportation, including funding, legislation, safety and economic development benefits.
- Support the research and development of important transportation needs, including the establishment of a University Transportation Center in cooperation with ADOT.
- Add curriculum on transportation infrastructure and funding to the Arizona Motor Vehicles Department authorized driving schools and defensive driving schools.
- Consider establishing a student committee to allow a cross-section of students to study and make recommendations regarding transportation in Arizona.
- Provide accessible education to students and the public, including online learning opportunities.

ACTIONS BY INDIVIDUALS

- Engage in public discourse on transportation issues.
- Share this report with communities, groups and organizations as well as our personal connections, the press and our elected officials.
- Use social media to tell elected officials and others about the Town Hall's findings and recommendations.
- Author opinion editorials in newspapers to promote the recommendations.
- Communicate with our state and local representatives about the recommendations.
- Support efforts to identify and secure funding for transportation systems.

Keynote speakers at this Town Hall were **Mary Peters**, Former United States Secretary of Transportation, and **Victor Mendez**, United States Deputy Secretary of Transportation

For specific resources and links, download the full report from the "Past Town Halls" page of our website:

www.aztownhall.org



Participants of the Future Leaders Town Hall held in Tempe

Future Leaders Town Hall on Transportation and Arizona

On March 27, 2015, the Arizona Town Hall, in partnership with Maricopa Community Colleges and other organizations, held a Future Leaders Town Hall that drew high school and college students from around the state. Following are some of the key points developed from the gatherings.

Future Leaders Town Hall locations throughout the state:

- Casa Grande
Central Arizona College
- Tempe
Rio Salado Conference Center
- Flagstaff
Northern Arizona University
- Parker
Prker High School
- Prescott
Yavapai College, Prescott Campus
- San Luis
Arizona Western College
- Sierra Vista
Cochise College
- South Maricopa
South Mountain Community College
- Tucson
Pima Community College
- Verde Valley
Yavapai College, Verde Valley Campus
- West Maricopa
Peoria City Hall Complex
- Yuma
Arizona Western College

IMPACT OF TRANSPORTATION ON OUR COMMUNITY

- Transportation impacts the choice of where to live.
- Infrastructure drives our community's ability to grow economically.
- Lack of access to transportation effects the socioeconomic status of individuals.
- Many of our communities do not lend themselves to safe pedestrian traffic.
- Traffic and commuting times can have a negative influence on the quality of life.

ARIZONA'S STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES RE: TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

- Public transportation systems are available in some metropolitan areas.
- Many people are supportive of multi-modal transportation such as biking and walking.
- Our grid-based street systems make it easier to get around.
- There is insufficient funding for transportation infrastructure development and maintenance.
- Arizonans gravitate toward individual cars rather than public transportation.

BEST WAYS TO SUPPORT A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

- Engage businesses and employers in providing incentives for public transportation.
- Educate the public about the cost of public transportation.

- Consider the implementation of transportation usage fees.
- Expand the concept of inland ports using rail rather than roads.
- Transportation infrastructure growth must be sensitive to the environment.

MESSAGES TO ARIZONA'S ELECTED LEADERS

- Use the public transportation system in your area so you can better relate to those who do.
- Keep government vehicles off the road during peak travel periods.
- Facilitate high frequency travel modes such as bus lanes.
- Repurpose tax revenue to support transportation infrastructure.
- Engage in better planning for current and future transportation needs.

COMMITMENTS TO ACTION

Participants committed to:

- Improve our knowledge of our area and the transportation options available.
- Learn more about transportation issues and increase awareness in our community.
- Increase our personal use of public and multi-modal transportation.
- Participate in meetings with community leaders on transportation planning.
- Be proactive in public safety as it pertains to transportation.



After amendments were presented at Wednesday's plenary session, participants give the "thumbs up" for amendments to be included in the final report.

Support for transportation funding also depends on taxpayers, voters, and public officials understanding that the investment of their tax dollars will yield substantial benefits, including those associated with economic development.

- From the 106th Arizona Town Hall Report of Recommendations

Transportation Quick Links

www.azdot.gov

www.azta.org

www.valleyforward.org

www.lisc.org

www.friendsoftransit.org

www.valleymetro.org

www.arizonaforward.org

www.southwestrail.org

www.azagc.org

www.ipcc.ch

www.apta.com

www.fueleconomy.gov

www.t4america.org

www.reconnectingamerica.org

www.cfte.org

www.afdc.energy.gov

www.transitorienteddevelopment.org

Arizona Department of Transportation

Arizona Transit Association

Valley Forward

Local Initiative Support Corporation

Friends of Transit, Inc.

Valley Metro

Arizona Forward

Southwest Rail Corridor Coalition

Arizona Chapter of the Associated General Contractors of America

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

American Public Transportation Association

United States Department of Energy, Fuel Economy Information

Transportation for America

Reconnecting America

The Center for Transportation Excellence

Alternative Fuels Data Center

Transit Oriented Development Institute

How You Can Have An Impact

- Share your knowledge and the work of Town Hall participants with family, friends and coworkers.
- Use available resources, such as those referenced in the background report for the 106th Arizona Town Hall, to partner with existing organizations and create ideas that will ensure the development and support of Arizona's transportation systems. Download the background report at <http://www.aztownhall.org>.
- Keep up to date on relevant programs in your community and action you can take through the Arizona Town Hall (<http://www.aztownhall.org>).
- Arrange a program in your community. Arizona Town Hall can provide resources, speakers, and printed materials. Use social media and personal networks to share information.
- To join existing efforts to pursue recommendations from the 106th Arizona Town Hall, contact the Arizona Town Hall office.
- Vote in upcoming elections and educate yourself on the issues.
- **Be the change.** Model the behavior you expect from others.



We welcome your involvement,
questions, and perspectives.

602-252-9600
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Since 1962, Arizona Town Hall has been educating, engaging and empowering Arizonans. Town Hall recommendations are a valuable resource for policymakers because they do not represent the agenda of a particular group or political perspective. Instead, Arizona Town Hall reports contain the informed consensus of Arizonans from different political parties, professions, and geographic areas of the state. A private, non-profit civic organization, Arizona Town Hall has served as a catalyst for conversations and recommendations that have influenced significant changes in Arizona's public policy. Countless local, state, and national leaders have cited Arizona Town Hall as an important factor in educating people about complex issues, and fostering the development of civic and community leaders.

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