



Regional Transportation Authority

Delivering
our promise
to you

FY 2014 - 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

www.RTAmobility.com

1 E. Broadway Blvd., Suite 401, Tucson, AZ 85701
(520) 792-1093 [tel] (520) 620-6981 [fax]

Roadway



Valencia Rd.

Safety



Magee Rd.

Environment



Walking path along Sahuarita Rd.

Transit



Park and Ride at Broadway Blvd. and Houghton Rd.

2015 RTA Board

RTA Chair

Jonathan Rothschild

City of Tucson Mayor

RTA Vice Chair

Ed Honea

Town of Marana Mayor

RTA Second Vice Chair

Duane Blumberg

Town of Sahuarita Mayor

Ramón Valadez

Pima County Board of Supervisors

Catalina Alvarez

Pascua Yaqui Tribe Vice Chairwoman

Edward Manuel

Tohono O'odham Nation Chairman

Miguel Rojas

City of South Tucson Mayor

Satish Hiremath

Town of Oro Valley Mayor

Mike Hammond

Arizona State Transportation Board Member

Regional Transportation Authority of Pima County

Pima County voters approved the 20-year, \$2.1 billion Regional Transportation Authority plan in May 2006. The plan is funded by a half-cent excise tax. The RTA is the fiscal manager of the plan and member jurisdictions implement the bulk of the plan elements. Plan elements include roadway, safety, transit, and environmental and economic vitality projects and services. The RTA Board is comprised of chief elected officials, or their designees, of local, state and tribal governments.

The RTA Board established a Citizens Accountability for Regional Transportation (CART) Committee to oversee plan implementation. The Technical Management Committee provides technical advice.

The RTA is managed by Pima Association of Governments through a memorandum of understanding. More information is available at www.RTAmobility.com or www.PAGregion.com

Farhad Moghimi, Executive Director

Letter from the Chair

The Regional Transportation Authority completed more than 700 multimodal projects through the end of the 2014-15 fiscal year, the ninth year of the RTA plan.

One of these projects, the Sun Link streetcar, launched on July 25, 2014. In less than one year, the streetcar celebrated its 1 millionth passenger and now averages more than 4,000 passengers per day. Weekend and event ridership also has exceeded expectations, requiring additional service.



Jonathan Rothschild

This particular RTA project has helped transform downtown Tucson into a bustling urban core, spurring development along its 3.9-mile route. Other RTA projects also have led to economic development, such as the new Tucson Premium Outlets in Marana and the Houghton Town Center at the intersection of Houghton and Old Vail roads, where Walmart and a series of other retail outlets opened recently or are set to open in the coming year.

Although development and jobs go along with transportation improvements, our economy has not yet recovered all that it lost during the recession. This means the RTA excise tax collections remain below projections.

In light of the economic situation, the RTA continues to assess its financial outlook. The RTA Board has taken steps to supplement its revenues with other regional funds with the goal of delivering projects promised to voters in the 2006 ballot measure prior to the plan's expiration in FY 2026. The RTA will mark the 10th anniversary of the Pima County voter-approved plan in May 2016.

Soon, we will begin to explore reauthorization of the ½-cent excise tax. Nearly three years of planning and community discussion preceded voter approval of the current plan.

Successful transportation projects require careful planning and considerable resources but they have the potential to yield great economic benefits – as the streetcar and other RTA projects have shown. The ½-cent excise tax has provided a much-needed boost to our transportation network and our economy. We need to renew this investment, with new focus on current needs and priorities, so we can continue to improve our region's mobility, sustainability and livability.

Letter from CART Committee Chair

In February 2015, the Regional Transportation Authority's Citizens Accountability for Regional Transportation (CART) Committee voted in new officers.

I have had the honor of serving as CART Chair in 2015, along with Vice Chair Steve Huffman and Secretary Doug Mance.

I'd like to thank Kelly Maslyn, former CART Chair, and David Longoria, former CART Vice Chair and member, for their many years of service to the citizen's committee since 2006. We also appreciate the years of service of the late Mr. Herb Trossman and Mr. John Sullivan, also former CART members.



Bill Sheldon

During the past fiscal year, the RTA continued to implement many projects as noted in this report. More are in the pipeline. Twenty-seven additional bus pullout projects, for example, were approved during the fiscal year. More than 108 bus pullouts, projects that were favored by the public as the RTA was developed, have been completed to date. In April, CART Committee members had the opportunity to tour projects completed or ongoing in the northwest section of the region. The transportation improvements in the northwest clearly have enhanced regional mobility and transformed the area into a vibrant community corridor for ongoing economic development.

One of our region's major roadway corridors received a green light from the Tucson City Council and RTA Board to move into the design phase. Broadway Boulevard, from Euclid Avenue to Country Club Road, will be widened to six lanes with bus pullouts. This project, once completed, will be a renewed gateway to downtown Tucson, along with the final phase of Downtown Links as it connects to Barraza-Aviation Parkway.

We continued to receive project updates and a positive outlook on the projects benefitting from the \$150 million in RTA bonds issued in June 2014. While we recognize that RTA revenues continue to lag, the RTA has developed solutions to deliver projects in the 20-year plan. The RTA continues to provide outstanding results to the benefit of our regional economy and mobility.

Albert Pesqueira
Allen Cook
Amber Smith
Armando Rios Jr.
Charlene Robinson
Chris Albright
David Heineking
Douglas Mance
James Barber
Joseph Oliva III
Kennton Grant
M. Joe Yee
Pamela Traficanti
Richard Roberts
Robert Cook
Roger Cracraft
Sami Hamed
Steve Huffman
William Sheldon

**JURISDICTION
REPRESENTATIVES:**

Kendell Elmer
Pima County

Alena Fast
City of Tucson

Herman Lopez
City of South Tucson

Kelle Maslyn
Town of Marana

Tom Bush
Town of Oro Valley

The late John Sullivan
Town of Sahuarita

Charles Mendonca
Pascua Yaqui Tribe

Gerald Fayuant
Tohono O'odham Nation

2015 Technical Management Committee

JURISDICTION REPRESENTATIVES:

Chuck Huckelberry
John Bernal
Pima County

Joel Gastelum
City of South Tucson

Kelly Udall
Town of Sahuarita

Martha Durkin
Daryl Cole
City of Tucson

Keith Brann
Town of Marana

Marcelino Flores
Pascua Yaqui Tribe

Jose Rodriguez
Town of Oro Valley

Steve Tipton
*Tohono O'odham
Nation*

**PRIVATE SECTOR
REPRESENTATIVES:**

Bob Iannarino
Chet Davis
Frank Thomson
Jim Schoen
Paul Cella
Roger Caldwell
Steve Shepherd
William Carroll



Wildlife crossing at Twin Peaks Rd.



Magee Rd.



Bus pullout on Valencia Rd.



St. Mary's intersection

Projects Completed in FY 2014-15

ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

La Cañada Drive, River Road to Ina Road

Houghton Road, Broadway Blvd. intersection
(Vicksburg St. to Foxmoor Drive)

La Cholla Blvd., Magee Road to Overton Road

SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Speedway Blvd./6th Ave. intersection

Orange Grove Road/Mona Lisa Drive intersection

Rancho Sahuarita Road/La Villita Drive
intersection

La Paloma Academy at Golf Links Road
pedestrian crossing

La Cholla Blvd. at Merlin St. pedestrian crossing

Park Ave. at 33rd St. pedestrian crossing

Stone Ave. at King St. pedestrian crossing

Homer Davis Safe Routes to School project

Centennial Elementary and Flowing Wells Jr. High
- Safe Routes to School project

Bus Pullouts Package No. 4

City of Tucson ADA Bus Stop accessibility
improvements

ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC VITALITY IMPROVEMENTS

Orange Grove Road bike lanes

Pantano Riverpark, Broadway Blvd. to Kenyon
Drive

Cañada del Oro shared-use path

State Route 86 (Ajo Highway)/Santa Rosa wildlife
underpass

State Route 86 (Ajo Highway)/Kitt Peak wildlife
underpass

TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS

Modern Streetcar (Sun Link)

Broadway Blvd./Houghton Road park-and-ride
and transit center

Major Projects under Construction in FY 2014-15

ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

Magee Road, La Cañada Drive to Oracle Road (completed Oct. 2015)

Sahuarita Road, La Villita Drive to Country Club Road (completed Sept. 2015)

22nd St./Kino Parkway intersection (completed Oct. 2015)

Valencia Road, Alvernon Way to Wilmot Road (completed Dec. 2015)

Valencia Road, Wade Road to Mark Road

Silverbell Road, Grant Road to Goret Road

Houghton Road, Broadway Blvd. to 22nd St.

SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Nogales Hwy./Old Nogales Hwy. intersection (completed Dec. 2015)

Rancho Vistoso Blvd./Vistoso Highlands intersection (completed July 2015)

Pedestrian signal at Treat Ave./Broadway Blvd. (completed Nov. 2015)

Pedestrian signal at Euclid Ave. and 5th St. (completed Sept. 2015)

Pedestrian signal at 22nd St. and Avenida Serio (completed Nov. 2015)

ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC VITALITY IMPROVEMENTS

Campbell Ave. transportation enhancements

Rancho Vistoso sidewalk (completed July 2015)

State Route 86 (Ajo Highway) wildlife fencing (completed Oct. 2015)

State Route 77 (Oracle Road) wildlife crossings





Projects going to Construction during Calendar Year 2016

ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

Kolb Road Connection (Sabino Canyon Road extension) Phase 2

Grant Road Phase 2, Stone Ave. to Park Ave.

Sunset Road, Silverbell Road to Interstate 10

Ina Road/I-10 interchange and railroad grade separation

Tangerine Road, La Cañada Drive to Dove Mountain Blvd.

Wilmot Road, end of pavement to Sahuarita Road

Downtown Links, Phases 3 & 4

Houghton Road, Union Pacific Railroad bridge replacement

Valencia Road, Wilmot Road to Kolb Road

SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Stone Ave. and Drachman St. intersection

Ina Road at Thornydale Road intersection right-turn bays

Craycroft Road at Ft. Lowell Park pedestrian crossing

Campbell Ave. at 9th St. pedestrian crossing

Grant Road at Sahuara Ave. pedestrian crossing

Mary Ann Cleveland Way at Kush Canyon Lane pedestrian crossing

State Route 77 (Oracle Road) at Los Lomitas pedestrian crossing

Palo Verde pedestrian crossings (Milton Road and Alvord Road)

Old Vail Safe Routes to School project

Elephant Head Road bridge reconstruction

Golf Links Road bicycle bridge deck replacement

Pima Farms Road bridge replacement

ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC VITALITY IMPROVEMENTS

Summit View walking path

Ina Road sidewalk, Thornydale Road to Meredith Blvd.

El Rio Park to Avra Valley Road shared-use path

Sandario Road sidewalk/path

Hughes Access Road/Alvernon Way bicycle lanes

Arroyo Chico Greenway, Country Club Road to Treat Ave.

Copper St. bike boulevard

Glenn St., Country Club Road to Columbus Blvd., pedestrian path

Liberty Ave. bicycle boulevard

TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS

Laos Transit Center - Sun Shuttle parking improvement

FY 2014-15 RTA PROJECTS COMPLETED

PLAN ELEMENT

ROADWAY

Total Roadway 20

SAFETY

Intersection	150
Elderly & Pedestrian	124
Bus Pullouts	107
Railroad Bridge	8
Signal Technology	71
Total Safety	460

ENVIRONMENTAL & ECONOMIC VITALITY

Greenways, Bikeways, Pathways & Sidewalks	90
Transportation-related Critical Wildlife Linkages	10
Total Environmental & Economic Vitality	100

TRANSIT

Weekday Evening	21*
Weekday Service	23
Bus Frequency & Overcrowding Relief	8**
Park 'n Ride Transit Centers	7***
Neighborhood Circulator	12
High Capacity Streetcar	1
Express Service	7
Special Needs	3
Maintenance Storage Facility	1
Total Transit	83

Grand Total 663

* 21 routes received weekday evening service, fully implementing this service expansion

** 7 routes received overcrowding relief; construction of a bus maintenance facility was completed in October 2009

*** Includes completed temporary lots

FY 2014-15 RTA FINANCIAL STATEMENT

REVENUES (000s)

Sales Tax	\$ 74,263
Program	\$ 1,448
Grants	\$ 6,211
Bond/Investment	\$ 600
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 82,522

EXPENDITURES

ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

Total Roadway \$ 59,312

SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Intersection	\$ 3,013
Transit Corridor Bus Pullouts	\$ 433
Elderly & Pedestrian	\$ 315
At-grade Rail/Bridge Deficiencies	\$ 367
Signal Technology	\$ 230
Total Safety	\$ 4,358

ENVIRONMENTAL & ECONOMIC VITALITY IMPROVEMENTS

Greenways, Bikeways, Pathways & Sidewalks	\$ 2,254
Transportation-related Critical Wildlife Links	\$ 229
Small Business Assistance	\$ 713
Total Environmental & Economic Vitality	\$ 3,196

TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS

Transit Operations	\$ 12,562
Sun Link Streetcar	\$ 4,570
Park & Rides	\$ 533
Total Transit	\$ 17,665

Administration Expenses* \$ 28,794

TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$ 113,325

Other Financing \$ 150,612

Surplus \$ 119,809

Beginning of Year Fund Balance \$ 72,795

Year-end Fund Balance \$ 192,604

* Includes bond principal, interest and administration costs



RTA Revenue Collections

The impacts of the Great Recession of 2008 continue to be felt in Regional Transportation Authority excise tax collections. The original RTA revenue forecast prepared in 2005 presumed that regional growth would occur at an average rate of 2.3 percent growth per year over the 20-year life of the RTA plan, resulting in an estimated \$2.1 billion available for project costs (in 2006 dollars).

The RTA conducted formal reviews of its revenue projections in 2010 and again in late 2013, based upon estimates prepared by the University of Arizona Eller College of Management. As a result, the RTA Board supports the use of other regional discretionary funding to augment RTA collections to ensure that the projects within the voter-approved RTA plan are delivered. At the same time, the RTA Board voted to continue periodic reviews of RTA revenues.

The local economy continued to modestly improve during the 2014-2015 fiscal year, with RTA collections increasing 1.69 percent. By comparison, the growth in collections for the Maricopa County transportation excise tax was 5.23 percent. Near-term forecasts for RTA collections are for continued modest growth. Factors that will hold back the recovery of RTA collections in the short-term include job losses in the mining industry, slow housing growth, the

contraction of the local government workforce and increases in Internet sales (which do not contribute to RTA collections). Additionally, the Arizona Department of Revenue has begun charging local governments for the cost of collecting sales taxes. This unanticipated new fee to the RTA is \$511,000 in FY 2016 and, if continued, may amount to \$6 million over the remaining life of the RTA tax collection period.

Other regional sources of revenue which augment RTA project funding have a more positive outlook, with the exception of development impact fees, which will remain weak until housing starts improve. The recent passage of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, or FAST Act, by the U.S. Congress has established federal funding levels for the next five years, giving greater certainty to the funding for projects in the RTA plan that have federal funds programmed as a part of the funding sources, particularly for RTA interchange projects on Interstate 10 (at Ina Road and Camino del Cerro). Highway User Revenue Funds (HURF) also are up as a result of increases in vehicular travel, gasoline sales and new car purchases in the state.

The RTA anticipates performing an update to its revenue forecast in late 2016 to allow for further adjustments to project funding in response to the best economic forecasts available.



Magee Rd. improvements ribbon cutting

RTA Plan – Element Highlights

ROADWAY ELEMENT

The multimodal Roadway Element is the largest element of the Regional Transportation Authority plan, with 20 projects delivered through the end of calendar year 2015, providing congestion relief to travelers along key travel corridors. Major corridor work either completed or underway includes:

Construction of the first phase of **Tangerine Road (RTA #1)** will be initiated in 2016, widening 5 miles of the road between Dove Mountain Boulevard and La Cañada Drive to a 4-lane, divided roadway with all-weather access, multi-use paths and wildlife crossings.

The first phase of **La Cholla Blvd. (RTA #4)** reconstructed La Cholla Blvd., from Magee Road to Overton Road, and at the same time created a needed all-weather bridge crossing over the Cañada del Oro Wash. This alleviated a longer, alternative route to the western Oro Valley neighborhoods and eliminated a hazardous low water crossing that has been a longtime public safety concern. This project was substantially completed in early fiscal year 2014-2015.

Late in fiscal year 2014-2015, the long anticipated first phase of the **Silverbell Road (RTA #5)** project began construction. The Silverbell Road project

consists of reconstructing and widening the sole continuous roadway north of downtown, between the Santa Cruz River and the Tucson Mountains. This multi-phase project will have extensive archaeological investigations as well as major flood control improvements, with the first phase anchoring the southern end of the project, between Grant and Goret roads.

Magee Road (RTA #7 & #12) realigned a poorly performing corridor, eliminating an offset intersection, and constructed flood control improvements on the Nanini Wash and a widened bridge over the Cañada del Oro Wash. The Magee/Cortaro Farms corridor is one of the key east-west corridors of movement in the northwest region. The final phase of this project was completed by the original contractor's bonding company, in October 2015, following a suspension of work in late 2014.

Sunset Road (RTA #8) will be launched with the first phase of construction in early 2016. The first phase will connect the existing Sunset Road interchange on Interstate 10 to Silverbell Road, by way of a new bridge over the Santa Cruz River. This reestablishes a roadway linkage to the Tucson Mountains that was lost with the 1983 floods. It also will provide a multi-use path, sidewalk and bike lane connection to the Santa Cruz Linear Park.

The **La Cañada Drive (RTA #11)** project delivers



Grant Rd. and Stone Ave. intersection

needed arterial road capacity to the established Casas Adobes region and extends to the Town of Oro Valley, providing excellent access to the Oro Valley civic center as well as the Cañada Hills and Copper Creek neighborhoods. The final phase of this project, between River Road and Ina Road, was completed in January 2015.

Also in 2016, work will begin on the first of two interchange reconstructions serving northern Pima County; the **Ina Road Interchange (RTA #6)** will be reconstructed to provide a grade-separated crossing of the Union Pacific Railroad and improved capacity at the interchange. Coordinated improvements to Ina Road, including a new bridge over the Santa Cruz River and road widening, are also planned. This work will be extensive and require a complete closure of Ina Road at the interchange. Immediately following the re-opening of the Ina interchange, work will begin on the reconstruction of the **Ruthrauff interchange (RTA #9)**, which also will be reconstructed to provide a grade-separated crossing of the Union Pacific Railroad and improved capacity at that interchange. These interchange projects are “game changers” for mobility in the region and will be completed by the end of the decade.

Broadway Boulevard (RTA #17) is moving forward into design with a six-lane roadway configuration. City staff and the project design team are working with adjacent landowners to identify the final alignment, based upon design parameters approved by the Tucson City Council and RTA Board. The design concept report is expected to be completed in early 2016.

The **Grant Road (RTA #18)** project is in demolition and moving to construction for the second project phase, between Stone Avenue and Park Avenue. Design also is well underway on the stretch between Swan Road and Dodge Blvd., which will immediately follow the second phase construction work. The RTA also supported the use of regional funds to repave the roadway in those areas not expected to go to construction in 2016.

Construction ended on the **22nd Street (RTA #19)** and the Kino Parkway intersection in September 2015. The next phase of work, likely to commence in 2017, will reconstruct the roadway east of the intersection to Tucson Blvd. This will include a reconstruction of the viaduct over the Union Pacific Railroad and have a tie in to the Barazza-Aviation corridor (State Route 210).

The final phase of the **Downtown Links (RTA #16)** project is expected to go to construction in 2017. The project will include a new grade separation with the Union Pacific Railroad on Sixth Street, extend the Barazza-Aviation corridor (SR-210) to Interstate 10 and remove substantial areas of the warehouse district and 4th Avenue from the Tucson Arroyo floodplain.

The final phase of work on the **Kolb Road Connection (RTA #25)**, extending Sabino Canyon Road adjacent to Udall Park and across the Vincent Mullins Landfill and Pantano Wash, commenced construction in December 2015. This project is expected to be completed in approximately 12 months.



Shared-use Path on Houghton Rd.

Valencia Road, Ajo Way to Mark Road (RTA #21), is nearing completion for the first phase, from Wade Road to Mark Road. This project includes a crossing of the Black Wash and improves access to the Casino del Sol Resort.

Valencia Road, Alvernon Way to Kolb Road (RTA #24), continues from the intersection work completed at Alvernon Way, eastward through the Wilmot Road intersection. This improvement, completed in November 2015, added travel lanes in each direction, bike lanes, sidewalks and landscaping along this key corridor. Associated improvements improved access to the Desert View High School campus and the newly completed southern access to the Davis-Monthan Air Force Base.

Nearing completion is the design for the continuation of Valencia easterly through the Kolb Road intersection. This work will go to construction in 2016 and will reconfigure the intersection to add indirect left turns for more efficient turning movements.

Houghton Road (RTA #32), the easternmost RTA corridor extending from Tanque Verde on the north and southerly to Interstate 10, has been continuously under construction. The intersections with Broadway Blvd. and Mary Ann Cleveland Way (Old Vail Road) have been completed, as has the section between Irvington Road and Valencia Road. This project is the second largest project in the RTA plan, and has 11 separate work phases. Current construction is underway between Broadway Blvd. and 22nd

Street, with work between Interstate 10 and Valencia Road to commence in late 2016.

The **Sahuarita Road (RTA #34)** project was concluded with completion of the final phase of work between Old Nogales Highway and Country Club Road in September 2015. The Town of Sahuarita reconstructed the original two-lane roadway between I-19 and Country Club Road beginning in 2010. The final roadway included a pedestrian underpass, a relocated railroad crossing and a new 4-lane bridge over the Santa Cruz River.

TRANSIT, SAFETY and ENVIRONMENTAL and ECONOMIC VITALITY ELEMENTS

Safety, Environmental and Economic Vitality Element projects include river park improvements along the Cañada del Oro Wash, pedestrian improvements serving schools, stand-alone intersection improvements, bridge safety improvements, wildlife crossings, traffic signal upgrades to improve safety, reliability and performance, and business assistance services to provide assistance to the businesses most affected by construction.

Transit service has been expanded as a result of the RTA plan passage. Notably, fiscal year 2014-15 marked the commencement of the Sun Link streetcar service, as well as new eastside park-and-rides at the Broadway Blvd./Houghton Road intersection and at Rita Ranch.



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