Building Strong Coalitions to Build Transit in Five Simple Steps

Tucson’s Modern Streetcar

Presented by Steve Farley | CSG West | Tacoma | August 2017
Step One:
Understand your historical roots
Snapped on the Street
A COMMUNITY ARCHIVE OF PHOTOS AND MEMORIES FROM DOWNTOWN TUCSON 1937-1963
1970s-1990s
All Tucsonans see themselves in mural

By L. Anne Newell
The Arizona Daily Star

Many people see themselves or their family members in the historic street-scenes mural along the Broadway underpass.

Some are right; some are wrong.

Artist Stephen Farley drew images from more than 1,000 observants at a weekend dedication ceremony as he relayed the many inquiries he’s received since the mural went up.

“The flood of calls from people convinced it was them or their families up there,” he said. “None of them were right.”

But, he said, the calls illustrate an important point: People are really seeing themselves on the wall, and it makes me really happy because I was hoping all Tucson would see this as themselves.

For a few Tucsonans, the tilted photos are larger-than-life images.

“There are times in life that for one reason or another you feel like you’re 10 feet tall,” said Bill Cole, who now rests permanently on the second scene on the left.

“Not even I think I’d be 10 feet tall,” he added, to the delight of the crowd Saturday night.

In another mural scene, Morton Tuller and his then-wife Sylvia make for a sporting couple while walking down Congress Street in 1953.

The couple had just decided to turn their jewelry and trophy store into Tuller Trophy Factory and were walking to a drugstore to celebrate their decision.

At the time, the jewelry store had lost a lot of business because of a city decision to eliminate nearby parking. As a result, the Tullers were making more money from engraving mail-order trophies than from selling jewelry. Morton Tuller recalled the dedication ceremony.

The couple moved the store to the corner of North Fourth Avenue and Broadway, where they opened for six years before relocating to 525 N. Sixth Ave. The couple’s son still runs the business from that location.

“This has enabled me to do exactly what I wanted: I’ve become a part of Tucson,” Tuller said.

“I go to people’s houses and see my (trophy) work or the UA and see it there, but to be up there is just unbelievable.”

The couple met in 1947 when Sylvia went to Chicago, Mort’s hometown, for a vacation. After he came to Tucson to marry her, the couple moved to Chicago and then to Hollywood for a time before returning to Tucson in 1953.

Sylvia Tuller died in 1987. Morton Tuller attended the dedication ceremony with his second wife, Veronita.

The mural also has a deep meaning to Tucsonan Blanche Cordova.

She and Joe Rodriguez, in the fifth mural from the right, were on their way to David’s Jewelers to buy their wedding rings in 1949 when a sidewalk photographer snapped their picture.

Cordova, who was 17 at the time and had just gained her mother’s permission to marry, said her mother gasped when she saw the photo later.

“She said, ‘He put his arm around you! And you let him!’” Cordova recalled.


“I don’t even have the words to describe how I feel,” Cordova said before the ceremony. “I just feel so honored that with all the people living here they chose me. I almost fainted when I heard it.”

The murals have reunited long-lost friends and reminded viewers of those who have
Step Two: Find and nurture your grassroots
2000-2014

Citizens For A Sensible Transportation Solution

www.TucsonLightRail.com

I’d Rather Be Riding Light Rail

Arizona Daily Star

Voters greenlight $2.1 billion road plan

yes!!

Transportation measure passes on fifth trip to polls

VOTE FOR 1 and 2 for REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION
“OBSTACLES TO THROUGHPUT”
TUCSON COMMUNITY THROUGH POLITICAL ACTION

A Natural Oasis in the Desert

TUCSON RESIDENTS ARE AMONG the densest city dwellers. One reason why is that Tucson makes it easy for residents to use their muscles to get around. Last year the city was named one of North America’s most bicycle-friendly cities by the nonprofit group bicyclinginfo.org.

Although Tucson roads are bike-friendly, we found that residents do like their cars. Tucson residents drive 20 million miles total every day, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. To help cut air pollution resulting from so much traffic, a group of local activists is lobbying for more public transportation. Currently, the group Tucsonans for Sensible Transportation (TST) is busy collecting signatures from residents who support light rail, an electric train system that has been successful in other large cities and is estimated to reduce the number of cars on the road by 20 percent. The group needs 15,000 signatures to get the proposal on November’s ballot.

Finally, Tucson earned an A+ in our Emotional Health category because its residents, like Alburquequeans, have low depression and stress levels. It must be the Southwest sun.

TUCSON COMMUNITY THROUGH POLITICAL ACTION

NATURALLY HEALTHY CITY

TUCSON, ARIZONA

VITAL STATS

Population: 466,591
Size: 196 square miles
Average Temperatures: 38°F (Jan.), 99°F (July)

REPORT CARD

Natural Offerings: D
* One遗憾: the city has only one USDA-listed farmers market.

Physical Health: B+
* Tucson residents have a lower breast cancer death rate than residents of any other city except Honolulu.

Emotional Health: A+
* Only 10 percent of Tucson residents have high blood pressure.

Environmental Health: A
* The city boasts an impressive 1,345 acres of parks and

Only 22 percent of Tucsonans are obese, compared to 35 percent of Detroit dwellers.
Citizens For A Sensible Transportation Solution

a grassroots political committee for all Tucsonans who want a better future

TucsonLink transit system

1. Light Rail Rapid Transit (starter line)
2. Bus Rapid Transit (future rail extensions)
3. Old Pueblo Trolley extension

Cities to vote on transit system

TUCSON, Arizona (AP) — In a city where choked streets are the norm from early morning through the evening rush hour, many believe a light rail system could be the answer for frustrated commuters.

Voters here will decide November 4 whether to approve two propositions that would put in place a new city transit plan to include a new 13-mile light rail system.

Tucson isn’t alone in asking voters next month to pave the way to a better transit future.

Search for homes in your local MLS

CNN.com/u.s.

A transportation plan for ALL of us

www.SaveTucson.org

drawn by Stephen Farley 2002

TUCSON COMMUNITY THROUGH POLITICAL ACTION
Voters derail another transit proposal

Transit plan: We’re still stuck

Transportation consensus still eludes Tucson

So what now, Tucson? How do you want to get around this rapidly growing community? If anyone out there has a saleable idea, let's hear it.
Step Three:

Embrace your enemies, broaden your appeal
ONE DAY LATER...

Transit plan wins big in central area

Those neighborhoods that would have been most affected are likely to revive the issue.

By GARRY DUFFY
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Voters in central Tucson neighborhoods that would have been most heavily affected by the defeated citizens transportation plan — including a proposed light rail line — gave it strong support at the polls Tuesday.

That may translate into another effort to boost transit services and ridership by the same group that brought the transportation plan to voters earlier this week.

Support from central Tucson wasn’t nearly enough to prevent Propositions 200 and 201 from spiraling down to defeat at the polls. About 63 percent of city voters said “no” to both.

But despite the defeat, backers of transportation improvements that are heavy on transit — expanded Sun Tran and Van Tran service, bus rapid transit and the light rail system that was the lightning rod of the transportation plan — said yesterday that they may be back, and sooner than later.

“The central city voters said they wanted this really, really badly,” said Stephen Farley co-chairman of Citizens for a Sensible Transportation Solution, a group that launched a yearlong petition drive to persuade city officials to put the measures on the ballot. “The people who would have been most affected were the ones who wanted it most.”

The transportation plan and sales tax increases that would have funded it...
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

TUCSON COMMUNITY THROUGH POLITICAL ACTION
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Regional Transportation Authority Plan

Greater cross-region mobility, safer travel, reduced congestion, new choices:

- 250 linear miles of new sidewalks
- 550 linear miles of new bike lanes and paths
- 200 new road lane miles
- 200 new bus pullouts
- 6 new park-and-ride centers
- 4 neighborhood transit circulators
- 7 north-south corridors
- 7 east-west corridors
- New high-capacity streetcar
- $10 million for small business assistance
- 80 new and improved pedestrian crossings
- 10 new and improved railroad crossings
- Expanded services for people with disabilities
- Expanded services for critical wildlife linkages

Question 1: The $2.1 billion Regional Transportation Authority plan for 51 projects in Pima County over the next 20 years including road widenings, intersection improvements, buses, bicycle lanes and sidewalks.

Question 2: The half-cent sales tax to pay for the RTA plan. If voters OK both the plan and the tax, the tax kicks in July 1 on all items except groceries, rent and prescriptions.

Question 3: Bonds to build an $18 million psychiatric urgent-care center at the Kino Hospital campus.

Question 4: Bonds to go toward building an 80- to 100-bed behavioral health facility at the Kino Hospital campus.
Step Four:

Choose the right route for the right reasons
DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT
COMMUNITY THROUGH ART, FOOD & TRANSIT
Step Five:
Challenge the naysayers and don’t give up
FARLEY = TROLLEY TO NOWHERE
Politics play out, producing $200M streetcar undesirable

Money for a streetcar (shown in an artist’s depiction running down East Sixth Street near Arizona Stadium) would be better spent on buses.

Politics play out, producing $200M streetcar undesirable

A pologies to playwright Tennessee Williams, but we should name this streetcar undesirable.

It is the singular undesirable aspect of the Regional Transportation Authority plan, simply because it’s too costly.

Adding to support for the RTA made inclusion of the streetcar line a necessary evil.

That’s an obtuse way of saying it was politics.

Steve Farley brought his support and his fellow light rail supporters into the RTA tent, because the plan included this smidgen of the light rail system he advocated for two years ago.

Led by Farley, light rail proponents’ support of the RTA plan helped get it approved Tuesday.

Nevertheless, the streetcar line’s projected cost – $200 million – for such a limited scope makes it more impractical than most mass transit and thus undesirable.

The money would be better spent on more buses.

Advocates point out that only $80 million will come from the half-cent transportation sales tax. The rest is federal money.

When they raise that point, ask where they think the federal government gets money.

The eyes of the media and the citizenry must stay focused on this aspect of the RTA in particular to make certain it doesn’t become a worse money pit than it already appears to be.

Michael A. Chihak can be reached at mchihak@tucsoncitizen.com or 573-4646.
PERSONAL ATTACKS

Farley seeks promotion to State Senate after streetcar disaster

Steve Farley is the godfather behind Tucson’s Streetcar Fiasco
ECONOMY

Arts District Downtown
What's supposed to be the city's cultural hub is a nest of bars, tattoo parlors and empty storefronts—just like any other downtown.

Place-based development and streetcar transforming downtown Tucson

Since the "modern streetcar" was announced in 2006, more than $1.5 billion in investment has occurred along its route, including housing, restaurants, offices, and retail, according to the US Department of Transportation.

Streetcar delivering customers, businesses say
"I think it's a waste of taxpayer dollars," said Margo Susco, who owns a clothing shop in Tucson right on the line.
Downtown Tucson rocks new businesses — and welcomes the boom

More than two years later, if Susco were to put up new signs, they would be 180 degrees different. The new signs, alongside the retrofitted mannequins that have replaced the sex and leather dolls that gave people pause, would be warm and welcoming.
$200 Million dollars for this?


And that about wraps up the streetcar.

Sure if it went from a huge park and ride lot to UA then to downtown it would have a purpose. You could park at the (hopefully cheap and large) lot and then take the streetcar to school or work. But this doesn't do that. It does practically nothing.

I estimate that it will be really useful for about 200 people. A million bucks a pop if my math checks out.

Will the Tucson modern streetcar be a money pit?

I don't know what the streetcar fare will be, but let’s assume it will be the same as a bus day pass: $3.50. Under that condition it will take 1.25 million riders annually (or 3,424 riders per day over the 3.9 mile route) just to break even on the operating costs. How likely is that?

This project should really be called “The Streetcar Named Fiasco.”
TUCSON, AZ (AP) - The new Tucson streetcars have attracted more than 60,000 riders during their first weekend in operation.

Average daily PAID ridership after first month:
More than 5,500
(2,000 more than projected for the end of the first year)
Even conservative talk radio changes tune...
TUCSON
COMMUNITY THROUGH TRANSFORMATION

JULY 25, 2014
COMMUNITY THROUGH GRASSROOTS ACTIVISM
June 1, 1906

TUCSON

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