

## AM 2: Forward Olympics: Regional Readiness through Partnerships

*Magic Kingdom 2*

### MODERATOR



**Maria S. Salinas**

*President & CEO, Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce and Board Member, Mobility 21*

Maria S. Salinas is the President and CEO of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, the largest business association in Los Angeles County representing member companies and serving the interests of more than 235,000 businesses across the Los Angeles region. Maria took the helm of the organization in August of 2018 and became the first woman and Latina to lead the Chamber in its 136-year history. An accomplished businesswoman, entrepreneur, and a determined community leader, Maria's business acumen and financial expertise provide her with the right experience to lead the L.A. Area Chamber.

Maria, a steward of the Chamber's new vision, "A Thriving Region for All," has re-imagined the role of the Chamber. The Chamber looks to the future with a vision to build an inclusive economy and lead in three pillar areas of focus: advocacy work, global engagement, and through community collaboration for economic growth and mobility. The Los Angeles region, which is the 14th largest economy in the world, and the Chamber membership represent a broad spectrum of industries, small businesses, corporations, academic institutions, and nonprofits, which are all examples that the Los Angeles economy is diverse, dynamic and that business is a force for good. Maria was an appointee to Governor Gavin Newsom's Commission on the Future of Work and named to his Business and Jobs Recovery Task Force during the COVID-19 pandemic.

She was appointed to the US Chamber of Commerce's Committee of 100, a distinction reserved for the top 100 Chambers across the country. She represents the Los Angeles business community in state-wide policy initiatives with the Coalition of Regional Economic Association Leaders (R.E.A.L.), she is a member of the Board of Directors of Mobility 21, a regional transportation effort, and an appointee of Mayor Karen Bass to the Small Business Cabinet. She serves on the Board of Directors of The Music Center and Pacific Council for International Policy, among others.

### PANELISTS



**Kome Ajise**

*Executive Director, Southern California Association of Governments and Board Member, Mobility 21*

Kome Ajise is the Executive Director of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the nation's largest metropolitan planning organization. In this role, he leads regional planning to achieve Southern California's unified environmental, transportation and housing goals. Kome has three decades of experience in regional planning and transportation, previously serving as Chief Deputy Director at the California Department of Transportation. He holds degrees in Regional Planning from University of Benin, Nigeria, and California State University, Fresno.

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### **Rose Casey**

*Executive Director, Planning, Orange County Transportation Authority*

Rose Casey was appointed as the Executive Director of Planning for OCTA in July 2024. In this role, she oversees OCTA's Planning Division, a dynamic team of analysts, engineers, geographers, modelers, and planners specializing in multimodal planning, service planning, funding, roadway operations, data analysis, and program management who lead the agency's master planning, corridor studies, project development, transit vision, funding priorities and project implementation work towards comprehensive mobility solutions.

Rose directs the Division's efforts to keep Orange County's transportation plans on pace with future development patterns, changing demographics, evolving technologies, and governing strategies. In addition, Rose formulates Orange County's priorities for using federal, state, and local transportation funds and seeks new funding opportunities. In her role, Rose also monitors the delivery of Measure M – Orange County's multi-billion-dollar transportation sales tax program and the agency's performance management efforts to ensure compliance with commitments to the voters.

Rose's prior role at OCTA for 13 years was as the Director of Highway Programs, where she was responsible for the delivery of major freeway, railroad grade separation, and highway projects. Rose's total capital development program was valued at \$5 billion and included the 16-mile long, \$2.2 billion 405 design-build project which opened for public use in Dec. 2023.

Rose was honored to serve on the City of Irvine Transportation Commission from 2017 to 2019. Prior to joining OCTA in 2007, she served in a variety of executive and management positions at the California Department of Transportation in Districts 7, 8, and 12.

Rose holds a Bachelor of Science degree with a double major in Civil Engineering and Materials Science & Engineering from the University of California, Davis.



### **Darren M. Kettle**

*Chief Executive Officer, Metrolink and Board Member, Mobility 21*

Darren M. Kettle is Chief Executive Officer of Metrolink, Southern California's regional passenger rail system serving six counties and a population of nearly 22 million. Since joining in 2021, he has spearheaded the agency's transformation from a traditional commuter railroad to a modern regional mobility provider through his vision of Metrolink Reimagined, centered on expanded service and enhanced customer experience. Under his leadership, Metrolink has delivered numerous award-winning safety and infrastructure initiatives, including the Union Station Railyard Modernization project, and pioneering safety technologies, positioning the agency as a national model for equity, sustainability, and innovation.

Darren has dedicated his career to strengthening mobility and building connections across Southern California. For 14 years, he served as Executive Director of the Ventura County Transportation Commission, where he oversaw multimodal improvements and forged strategic regional partnerships that laid the foundation for critical investments. He previously held senior roles at the San Bernardino Associated Governments and the Riverside County Transportation

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Commission. On the national level, Darren sits on the Boards of the Commuter Rail Coalition and Mobility 21 and has testified before Congress on the future of passenger rail.



### **Seleta Reynolds**

*Chief of Innovation and Games Mobility Planning, LA Metro*

Seleta Reynolds is Chief Innovation Officer at LA Metro, where she leads a portfolio of projects including the mobility plan for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the largest Mobility Wallet pilot in the US.

Formerly, she was General Manager of the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT), the second largest municipal transportation agency in the United States.

She is the founding Chair of the Board of the Open Mobility Foundation, an organization which develops open source tools to help cities manage emerging transportation technologies; the Secretary of the ITS America Board; and past president of NACTO, the National Association of City Transportation Officials.