

Open Mic with the CEOs!

MODERATOR



Heather Repenning

Vice President and Client Account Manager, Jacobs

Heather Repenning is a Vice President and Client Account Manager at Jacobs where she brings experts together to support resilient infrastructure in the Southern California area.

Heather's previous work experience includes serving as Executive Officer at LA Metro, Vice Chair of the Board of Directors of Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, and Vice President of the City of Los Angeles Board of Public Works. Prior to that, Heather served as Director of External Affairs for the Los Angeles Mayor's Office. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Swarthmore College and earned a Master's Degree from the University of California, Irvine.

PANELISTS



David Aguirre

Executive Director, Imperial County Transportation Commission and Advisory Board Member, Mobility 21

David Aguirre is the Executive Director of the Imperial County Transportation Commission (ICTC), appointed in December 2021. David has obtained a bachelor's and master's degrees in accounting. ICTC is the Regional Transportation Planning and Transit Agency for Imperial County, in addition to the administering agency for the Imperial County Local Transportation Authority. Most recently, ICTC, through AB 939, was authorized to administer non-transportation programs. Current non-transportation regional programs administered by ICTC are the Imperial Valley Resource Management Agency (IVRMA) and the Service Authority of Freeway Emergencies (SAFE). David leads a staff of 15 with an annual budget of over 50 million.

Prior to his appointment, David was the Transit Program Manager for ICTC for over 5 years. As Transit Program Manager, David was responsible for various critical ICTC programs such as managing the administration and operation of ICTC various public transit systems, budgetary administration of ICTC and oversight of ICTC's newly administered programs SAFE and IVRMA. David was also responsible for project management activities for various studies, design, and construction efforts on behalf of the Agency. David, with interagency support, recently completed the efforts to expand the bridge over the All-American canal at the Calexico East Port of Entry as well as managing the construction efforts for the Calexico Intermodal Transportation Center and the Calexico East Port of Entry Intermodal Transportation Center. ICTC also recently implemented its first Microtransit service in the city of Calexico, which has been well received by the community of Calexico. David, coupled with ICTC staff, oversees highway and transit projects, public transit services, and critical regional studies.



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.



Martin Erickson

Executive Director, Ventura County Transportation Commission and Board Member, Mobility 21

Martin Erickson has been executive director of the Ventura County Transportation Commission since January 2022. He joined VCTC in 2016 as director of public transit. Martin has more than 25 years of public transit and transportation experience, including as manager of government affairs at the Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District and deputy city manager for the City of Oxnard, where his responsibilities included management of the city's transit services program.



Sharon Gookin

Deputy Chief Executive Officer, LA Metro

Sharon Gookin oversees LA Metro's capital project portfolio with responsibility for internal cost control opportunities, project readiness assessments, early intervention team efforts, and advancement of public private partnerships for the agency's ambitious \$30-billion construction program. Additionally, she provides executive leadership for a number of specific departments, including Program Controls, Diversity & Economic Opportunity Department (DEOD), and Management and Audit Services (MAS).

Prior to joining Metro, she led the LAX Integrated Express Solutions (LINXS) Constructors Joint Venture consortium. In this role, she was directly responsible for the successful design and construction of the \$4.9-billion LAX Automated People Mover (APM) project, becoming the first woman to lead a multi-billion-dollar transportation project for Fluor. She was recognized by the Chief Development Officer at Los Angeles World Airports for her gold-standard leadership on the APM project.

With close to 35 years of experience, she has shown herself to be an innovative and collaborative leader in the transportation industry. Sharon has proven expertise driving major infrastructure projects nationwide using alternative delivery methods, including public-private partnership (P3) and design-build (DB) models. She is effective at fostering inclusive environments and advancing career development opportunities for women in the industry. Her experience also included serving as the Chief Engineer for Fluor's Infrastructure Business Line

for several years and has touched all aspects of project development and execution from environmental clearance through construction phases.

Sharon holds a Bachelor of Science in Architectural Engineering from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo; a Master of Engineering, Civil Engineering from University of California, Berkeley; and is a licensed Professional Engineer in California.



Aaron Hake

Executive Director, Riverside County Transportation Commission and Chair, Mobility 21

Aaron Hake serves as Executive Director of the Riverside County Transportation Commission and the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority where he serves a Commission of 32 elected officials and one Governor's appointee. He leads a professional staff of 80 across nine departments and annual budget of over one billion dollars. Aaron has served RCTC for 19 years. In 2023 RCTC's Executive Committee unanimously selected Aaron to lead RCTC, tasking him with implementing Riverside county's multi-modal transportation and conservation vision.

As a civic leader in Riverside County, Aaron has served as Chair of the Riverside County Planning Commission, the City of Corona Planning Commission, and Treasurer of the City of Corona. He has served as Board Chair of the Inland Southern California United Way and has participated on numerous other local nonprofit boards of directors. His efforts have earned him recognition, including the WTS Inland Empire Chapter Secretary Ray LaHood Award, the Pick Group of Young Professionals IMPACT Award for Civic Leadership, and the 30 Under 30 by the Corona Chamber of Commerce.

Over the years, Aaron's leadership at RCTC has placed him at the forefront of transportation policy and funding in Riverside County, throughout southern California, in Sacramento, and in Washington. With the support of the best Commission and best staff in California, Aaron's career efforts have resulted in funding and legislation impacting nearly every highway and public transit corridor in Riverside County. This year, Aaron serves as Board Chair of Mobility 21, Southern California's public-private transportation advocacy coalition.

Aaron earned a bachelor's degree in political science and philosophy from American University, a master's of public administration from USC, and is a graduate of the Harvard Kennedy School of Government Senior Executives in Local and State Government program.



Darrell E. Johnson

Chief Executive Officer, Orange County Transportation Authority and Treasurer, Mobility 21

Darrell E. Johnson is the Chief Executive Officer of the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), a dynamic agency of 1,400 dedicated professionals. With a focus on enhancing mobility and sustainability for more than 3 million county residents, Darrell leads a comprehensive portfolio of multimodal projects, initiatives and services.

Closing General Session Grand Ballroom

Guided by OCTA's 17-member Board of Directors, Darrell oversees an annual budget exceeding \$1.7 billion. His role encompasses strategic oversight of the planning, financing, and implementation of Orange County's freeway, street, and rail development, in addition to managing countywide transit and commuter-rail services, paratransit service, express lanes, active transportation, and environmental programs.

Since his appointment as CEO in 2013, Darrell has championed innovative financing methods to optimize the impact of Measure M, a voter-approved half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements. He has led a drive toward a more sustainable and equitable transportation network, marked by pioneering environmental mitigation and water-quality initiatives, and a trailblazing shift toward a zero-emission bus fleet.

OCTA is currently managing approximately \$1.8 billion in infrastructure improvements, including the OC Streetcar, a state-of-the-art electric streetcar, with an additional \$1.4 billion in projects anticipated to start within the next two years.

Darrell continues to reshape Orange County's transit system. With a focus on efficiency, passenger experience, and alignment with market demands, he has ushered in reforms including a redesigned bus system, free fares for youth and community college students, and the advancement of community-based and special-event transit services. Embracing innovation and improved connectivity, OCTA explores dynamic technology solutions and strategic private-sector alliances.

On a broader scale, Darrell represents OCTA on matters of local, state, and national policy pertaining to successful transportation program planning, financing, and delivery. He sits on the boards of the Self-Help Counties Coalition, Mobility 21, and Orange County Business Council.

Darrell lives in Rancho Santa Margarita and is married with two children.



Carrie Schindler

Executive Director, San Bernardino County Transportation Authority and Board Member, Mobility 21

Recently appointed as Executive Director of the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority and San Bernardino Council of Governments, Carrie brings a thoughtful, diplomatic approach to collaboration - guided by a shared vision of elevating the region together through innovative transportation strategies and strong partnerships across the Council of Governments.

With roots in engineering and public service, she led the expansion of Metrolink in the East Valley and championed the nation's first FRA-approved hydrogen-powered passenger rail. Her tenure at SBCTA includes key roles in transit, funding strategy, and infrastructure delivery - all grounded in deep planning and construction expertise from her time with San Bernardino County, and as a designer in the private sector.

A licensed Professional Engineer and San Diego State alum, Carrie balances high-impact leadership with family fun and a passion for discovery.