

## WELCOME REMARKS



**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.



**Stephanie N. Wiggins – Video Remarks**

*Chief Executive Officer, LA Metro and Board Member, Mobility 21*

Stephanie Wiggins is the CEO of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), the lead transportation planning, programming, financing, and construction agency for the 10 million residents of LA County and the second busiest transit agency in the United States. As CEO of Metro, Stephanie leads a public agency with 12,000 employees and an annual budget of \$9 billion. Stephanie also leads the nation's largest transportation capital improvement program, with \$26 billion worth of projects in active planning or construction. A lifelong trailblazer and champion of equity and inclusion, Stephanie is the first woman – and first African American woman – to lead Metro.

Over her three-decade career in transportation, Stephanie has led numerous initiatives that have driven innovation in the transportation industry and centered equity in the delivery of transit and transportation services. As CEO of Metro, Stephanie has led massive investments to improve the transit customer experience, including the creation of the nation's largest transit

**Luncheon General Session**  
*Grand Ballroom*

ambassador program, and numerous other improvements related to safety, cleanliness, and reliability. She has also overseen the delivery of several transit megaprojects, including the \$2.3 billion K Line in south LA and the \$1.9 billion Regional Connector in downtown LA. She has also ensured Metro's transportation investments are as equitable as possible through the implementation of Equitable Zero-Based Budgeting. Ahead of the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Stephanie is also leading the delivery of dozens of projects that will leave a legacy of permanent transit improvements for LA County's residents.

Before joining Metro as CEO in June 2021, Stephanie served as the CEO of Metrolink, the nation's third largest passenger rail system with 538 route-miles throughout Southern California where she grew ridership to historic levels pre-pandemic. Prior to Metrolink, Stephanie was Deputy CEO of Metro, where she assisted the CEO in providing leadership, formulating, and achieving strategic public transportation objectives, including the passage of Measure M, a half-cent sales tax approved by 71 percent of voters in LA County. Earlier in her career, Stephanie led the creation of LA County's first high occupancy toll lanes, known as ExpressLanes and greatly expanded Metro's utilization of local, small, and historically underutilized businesses through new inclusive procurement strategies.

Stephanie is a graduate of Whittier College and holds a Master of Business Administration from the University of Southern California Marshall School of Business. She has been the recipient of numerous awards including the 2024 Bond Buyer Freda Johnson Award of Trailblazing Woman in Public Finance. She is the founding president of the Inland Empire Chapter of Women's Transportation Seminar, a Board Member of the Los Angeles Chapter of Friends of the Children, the Wiley Center for Speech and Language Development, the Southern California Leadership Council, and the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce.



**Hon. Fernando Dutra**

*Councilmember, City of Whittier and Chair, LA Metro*

Fernando Dutra was elected in April 2018 and re-elected in 2022 to represent District 4 for four years after being elected citywide in April 2014 to a four-year term. Councilmember Dutra was initially appointed by the City Council in August 2012 to fill the remaining term of the Council seat vacated by Greg Nordbak.

Councilmember Dutra and his wife, Mary, have three children—Sara, Megan, and Eric. The Dutras have lived in Whittier since 1987. Councilmember Dutra is President of Allwest Development Company and holds licenses for general building contractor and general engineering.

Councilmember Dutra served as a Member of the Planning Commission for six years from 2006 to 2012 and has served as Chairman of the Commission. Prior to his term on the Planning Commission, he served for six years on the Design Review Board. He has chaired the Metro Light Rail Extension Project Washington Boulevard Coalition, sits on the Whittier YMCA Board of Directors, and has served on the St. Gregory Parish Board. On March 8, 2021, Councilmember Dutra was appointed to the Los Angeles County Metro Board and is currently Chair, serves on the Metro Executive Management Committee as Vice Chair, and is Chair of the MTA Construction Committee. He has also been appointed to the Los Angeles - San Diego - San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Corridor Agency and is Chair of the Gateway Cities Affordable Housing Trust Board.



**Hon. Karen Bass – Video Remarks**

*Mayor, City of Los Angeles and Board Member, LA Metro*

Mayor Karen Bass has led the nation's second largest city with unprecedented urgency that has delivered results for all Angelenos.

Thousands more unhoused Angelenos have come inside in her first year than the year before, leading to a reported drop in homelessness for the first time in years.

During her first year, LAPD received record numbers of applicants while homicides and violent crime decreased. 100,000 more city services like pothole repair and graffiti removal have been provided. Thousands of businesses opened. Hundreds of millions of dollars secured through locking arms with state and federal partners as Los Angeles continues to urgently lead on climate.

And she's just getting started.

A daughter of our city, Mayor Bass was raised with her three brothers in the Venice/Fairfax neighborhood and is a proud graduate of Hamilton High School. After serving as a front-line healthcare provider as a nurse and as a Physician Assistant, Mayor Bass founded the Community Coalition to organize the predominantly Black and Latino residents of South L.A. against substance abuse, poverty and crime, and to pioneer strategies to address the root causes behind the challenges faced by underserved neighborhoods.

After being elected to represent Los Angeles in the State Assembly, Mayor Bass was elected Speaker, making her the first African American woman to ever lead a state legislative body in the history of the United States. There she and other legislative leaders were awarded the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award for their work making tough decisions to keep the state from bankruptcy while protecting vital services during the largest economic decline since the Great Depression.

While representing Los Angeles and Culver City in Congress, Mayor Bass helped protect small businesses during the pandemic, created policy to drive local jobs from federal infrastructure funding, and led the passage of what the Los Angeles Times called "the most significant child welfare policy reform in decades."

Mayor Bass is the 43rd Mayor of Los Angeles and the first woman and second African American to be elected as the city's chief executive. She earned her bachelor's degree in health sciences from CSU Dominguez Hills before graduating from the USC Keck School of Medicine Physician Assistant Program and earning her masters degree in social work from USC.

Mayor Bass's oldest daughter Emilia planned to follow in her mother's footsteps working for social change. The Mayor continues to be inspired by Emilia and her son-in-law Michael's passion for life. She has three other children, Scythia, Omar and Yvette, and three grandchildren, Michael, Henry and Oliver who live in the Los Angeles area.

## PRESENTATION OF 2024 MOBILITY 21 AWARDS

### Leadership in Equity Award



**LA Metro's Rail to Rail Project Team, Community Relations Team and Planning Team**

Rail to Rail Project Team: Rafie Zamani (project manager), Maryam Dadaboy, Kenyon Price, Mike McKenna, Tim Lindholm

Rail to Rail Community Relations Team: Anthony Crump, Brett Roberts, Heidi Jackson, Olga Arroyo, Yvette Rapose, Jennifer Vides

Rail to Rail Planning Team: Robert Machuca, Jackie Su and Alice Tolar

The Rail to Rail Active Transportation Corridor is a 5.5 mile-long multi-modal path and public green space running along the Slauson Corridor in Inglewood, South L.A., and surrounding communities, which also encompass some of L.A. County's largest Black and Latinx neighborhoods. The walking, cycling, and recreational path connects the Metro K Line Fairview Heights Station, the Metro J Line Slauson Station, and the Metro A Line Slauson Station.

This \$166-million project, funded in large part thanks to voter-approved Measures M and R, broke ground in 2022 and completed construction this year. Since its grand opening in May 2025, it has been an immediate success – census data show that nearly 4,300 pedestrians and 2,500 cyclists use the corridor daily.

The Rail to Rail Active Transportation Corridor is located on the former site of abandoned and blighted railroad tracks. This project reenvisioned the route as an environmentally-friendly example of urban reuse intended to increase mobility in the region – an estimated 18.7% of households in the project area do not have access to a vehicle, making alternatives to cars a necessity for daily commutes to work, school, home, and other locations. Additionally, median household incomes in the area fall below the rest of L.A. County. This project will help residents access affordable transportation options, including Metro buses, rail, and bikeshare.

Largely separated from highly trafficked main roads, the Rail to Rail Active Transportation Corridor provides a safe, easily accessible walking and bike route for residents. Its benefits are numerous: use of the pathway promotes public health, enhances daily quality of life, decreases traffic congestion, and improves access to the neighborhood communities of Hyde Park, Chesterfield Square, Harvard Park, Vermont-Slauson, South Park and Central-Alameda. Pedestrians and cyclists can access a total of 17 Metro bus lines, three DASH bus lines, and five Metro Bike Share stations along the path, and it is located within walking distance of several neighborhood schools, parks, and other community amenities. Rest areas along the path feature new street furniture, lighting, and wayfinding signage.

Safety along the corridor is a top priority. The corridor is equipped with 52 security cameras and nine emergency telephones, all of which are regularly monitored by Metro security. Metro deploys a rotating team of community interventional specialists on the path to help address and diffuse potential issues.

The Rail to Rail Active Transportation Corridor also provides a valuable source of greenery in the area. Nearly 500 new, native trees are planted along the pathway to improve air quality,

reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and offer greater tree canopy coverage. As of 2022, about 13% of South L.A. had tree canopy coverage available, as compared to L.A. City's average of 21%. Metro's plans for the corridor's landscaping were designed to help address this discrepancy.

Future plans for the Rail to Rail Active Transportation Corridor include connecting the Slauson Corridor segment to Vernon and the existing L.A. River Trail. Metro's vision is to create an uninterrupted, accessible pathway for all residents of L.A. County to encounter local green spaces, stay physically active, and safely navigate the region.

### **Lifetime Achievement Award**



#### **Dr. Raymond W. Wolfe**

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

Dr. Raymond W. Wolfe has represented the businesses and residents of San Bernardino County for decades as a transportation professional focused on doing the right thing in all situations. Since 2012, he has served as the Executive Director of the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) with unwavering dedication, visionary leadership, and an unparalleled commitment to advancing transportation solutions in Southern California. Under his guidance, SBCTA has become a model for sustainable and multimodal transportation, effectively connecting communities, reducing congestion, and enhancing mobility for residents and visitors alike. Dr. Wolfe's strategic vision and innovative approach have left a profound impact on the region's transportation landscape.

Throughout his tenure, Dr. Wolfe has championed a wide range of transformative projects, including the Redlands Passenger Rail Project and the advancement of the first-of-its-kind ZEMU technology - a fully compliant hydrogen/battery hybrid passenger train; the development of the I-10 Express Lanes - San Bernardino County's first introduction into the region's tolling network; the reconstruction of a vital community link in the Mt. Vernon Avenue Bridge; the brokering of a public/private venture that will see a high-speed rail connection to the High Desert; and countless other efforts that have enhanced the state highway system and the multi-jurisdictional transit network.

These initiatives not only modernized infrastructure but also promoted active transportation options and public transit accessibility, fostering a more connected and resilient community. His leadership has secured vital funding for projects through local, state, and federal partnerships, demonstrating his keen ability to navigate complex transportation challenges while advocating for the needs of San Bernardino County residents.

Dr. Wolfe's legacy extends beyond his professional achievements; he is a passionate advocate for collaboration and community engagement. While determined to defend San Bernardino County's deserved opportunities, he has remained steadfast in forming strong relationships with stakeholders, elected officials, and transportation agencies to significantly advance the region's mobility goals. His forward-thinking leadership has set the standard for transportation innovation and left an indelible mark on Southern California's transportation network.

For his lifelong dedication to improving mobility and enhancing the quality of life for countless residents, Dr. Raymond W. Wolfe is a deserving candidate for the Mobility 21 Lifetime

Achievement Award. His remarkable career and lasting contributions exemplify the highest standards of leadership and public service.

**Private Sector Leader of the Year Award**



**Tony Tavares**

*Executive Director, Alameda County Transportation Commission and Former Director, Caltrans*

Tony Tavares serves as the Executive Director of the Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC), bringing more than 30 years of transportation leadership experience across California. Prior to joining Alameda CTC in June 2025, Tavares served as Director of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), where he managed a \$20 billion annual budget and oversaw a workforce of over 22,000 employees responsible for 50,000 lane miles of highway and 20,000 bridges statewide. He previously served as Caltrans District 4 Director for the Bay Area, where he led regional implementation of Senate Bill 1 and oversaw major investments in infrastructure and mobility improvements. Throughout his career, he has led large-scale programs to modernize transportation infrastructure, improve safety and mobility, and deliver multimodal projects across both urban and rural regions throughout California.

Executive Director Tavares is a nationally recognized transportation leader with deep expertise in project delivery, stakeholder engagement, and agency operations. At Alameda CTC, he oversees a nearly \$740 million annual budget and leads the agency's work to deliver major transportation investments and programs, implement long-range planning efforts, and administer transportation funding, such as Measure BB. A licensed Professional Engineer and certified Project Management Professional, Tavares holds a degree in Civil Engineering from the University of California, Davis.

**Public Sector Leader of the Year Award**



**Stephen Polechronis**

*Senior Vice President, Senior Program Director and Senior Advisor, AECOM*

Stephen is a transportation industry executive and project manager with extensive transit project management experience, including development, design, and construction of light rail, heavy rail subway, and commuter rail projects. His project management experience includes complex multidisciplinary assignments at all stages of project development from concept to commissioning. Stephen has broad experience in communicating through public information meetings and both print and broadcast media.

Stephen has held a number of executive positions within AECOM's Transportation business line, including Regional Business Line Leader, West Transportation. He previously led Transportation Business Development for the Western Region, developed and led AECOM's Latin American Transportation Initiative, and was Director of West Program Management, West Coast Unit Manager, Western United States Transit Director, and West Coast Regional Manager of Business Development. Stephen has held positions with both profit and loss responsibility as well as business development.

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**



**Meb Keflezighi**  
*Olympic Marathon Runner*

Emigrating from the East African nation of Eritrea to the United States at 12 years old, Meb overcame significant cultural, economic and social barriers on his road becoming an Olympic Marathoner. Meb has competed in four Olympic Games and become history's first winner of the Boston Marathon, the New York City Marathon and an Olympic Medal. In 2016, Meb became the oldest man to qualify for the US Olympic Marathon Team.

In his journey, Meb developed his philosophy called "Run To Win," which says that winning does not mean getting first place, but getting the best out of yourself. Runners from all over the globe have adopted this philosophy as a reminder to prioritize their own wellness.

Today, Meb is the author of two New York Times bestselling books, a highly regarded keynote speaker and a global ambassador for the sport of running. His "Run To Win" philosophy lives on through 26, a brand Meb co-created to celebrate and enrich the enduring spirit of running culture.