

## Arizona Roundtable Fact Sheet

### **Vision: Arizona Extension**

- This new corridor links the rapidly growing Phoenix and Tucson areas with daily multi-frequency service between downtown Tucson through Phoenix to the western suburb of Buckeye.
- Frequency: 3 daily roundtrips connecting Tucson-Phoenix-Buckeye
- Trip time:
  - Phoenix-Tucson: 2:25
  - Buckeye-Tucson: 3:05
  - 2:30 peak driving time
- Host Railroad: Union Pacific

### **Proposed Stations**

- Tucson
- Marana (NEW)
- Coolidge (NEW)
- Queen Creek (NEW)
- Tempe (NEW)
- Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport (NEW)
- Phoenix Downtown (NEW)
- Goodyear-Avondale (NEW)
- Buckeye (NEW)

### **Opportunities**

- The Phoenix metro area has added nearly 900,000 jobs since 2000 and has grown by [16%](#) since 2010, ranking as the [fastest growing city](#) in the United States in 2019 and the fifth largest city in the United States.
- Attractions such as the Musical Instruments Museum, Taliesin West, Desert Botanical Garden, Heard Museum, and a variety of popular hiking trails such as Camelback Mountain and Papago Park entice visitors looking to shop, dine, or spend time outdoors in Arizona's desert climate. Fortune 500 companies Avnet and PetSmart are headquartered in Phoenix.
- At the south end of the corridor, Tucson has added 90,000 jobs since 2000 and has grown by [4%](#) since 2010, with a population of approximately one million residents. Outdoor sites are plentiful and popular in the region: Saguaro National Park, Tucson Mountain Park, and Mount Lemmon Scenic Byway, along with the El Presidio Historic District, Mission San Xavier del Barc, and the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum.
- The Arizona extension would connect passengers to Amtrak's Sunset Limited.

### **Environment and Transportation Equity**

- Phoenix faces long-term congestion issues with the average commuter losing 62 hours per year due to traffic, costing them more than [\\$1,000](#) annually as of 2019.
- Proposed Amtrak stations allow passengers to connect with the Phoenix area light-rail transit system Valley Metro (Phoenix's public transit agency) providing vital last-mile options to numerous points and suburbs. Valley Metro is currently expanding its light rail system with its ongoing [South Central Light Rail Transit Extension](#) and [Northwest Light Rail Transit Extension Phase II](#) projects. Valley Metro would provide vital last-mile options for Amtrak passengers traveling to Phoenix, increasing connectivity throughout the region.

- The Tucson Streetcar, Sun Link, connects the Amtrak Tucson station to the Mercado neighborhood, downtown Tucson, the University of Arizona along Congress Street, 4th Avenue, University Boulevard, and 2nd Street.
- In 2019, Tucson was reported by TomTom to be the [32nd](#) most congested city in America, with commuters spending [19%](#) more time in traffic than the average driver. This is largely attributed to the city lacking a local highway system, resulting in roadways with slower speeds serving a denser population.
- In 2017, Tucson reported the [worst air-quality](#) since 2012, exceeding federal ground-level ozone standards. Taking cars off the roads and investing in public transit will improve air quality.

### **Community Support**

Eleven mayors of communities along the Tucson – Phoenix corridor, led by Tucson Mayor Regina Romero and Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego, have released a joint letter to Congress expressing support for Amtrak’s vision to bring passenger rail service to the region. The communities that signed onto the letter include:

- Tucson
- Phoenix
- Goodyear
- Mesa
- Glendale
- Oro Valley
- South Tucson
- Marana
- Avondale
- Sahuarita
- Chandler

### **Connections to Higher Education**

- A Phoenix – Tucson Amtrak service would create new connections between major metropolitan cities, medium-sized cities, and colleges and universities. Students, their families, faculty, and staff will be able to take advantage of frequent Amtrak service to avoid traffic between destinations and to enjoy greater productivity or relaxation while they travel. Colleges and universities served by the Los Angeles – Phoenix – Tucson corridor include:
  - University of Arizona (Student Population: 44,000)
  - Arizona State University-Downtown (Student Population: 11,000)
  - Arizona Christian University (Student Population: 900)
  - Phoenix College (Student Population: 9,500)
  - Arizona State University (Student Population: 75,000)

### **Existing Amtrak Service & Ridership**

- Amtrak operates three National Network trains through Arizona:
  - The Southwest Chief (daily Chicago-Kansas City-Raton-Lamy/Santa Fe-Albuquerque-Flagstaff-Los Angeles)
  - The Sunset Limited (tri-weekly New Orleans-Houston-San Antonio-El Paso-Tucson-Maricopa-Los Angeles)
  - The Texas Eagle (daily Chicago-Dallas-San Antonio with through car service tri-weekly via the Sunset Limited to Los Angeles)

- In FY19, Amtrak served the following Arizona locations:
  - Benson – Ridership: 1,947 (FY19)
  - Flagstaff – Ridership: 43,453 (FY19)
  - Kingman – Ridership: 8,691 (FY19)
  - Maricopa – Ridership: 11,194 (FY19)
  - Tucson – Ridership: 25,695 (FY19)
  - Winslow – Ridership: 4,371 (FY19)
  - Yuma – Ridership: 4,285 (FY19)

#### **Existing Host Railroads & On-time performance**

- Amtrak relies heavily on the cooperation of other railroads in order to operate routes using tracks that are not owned or controlled by Amtrak. Host railroads are statutorily required to provide Amtrak trains “preference” over freight transportation. However, on time performance on most host railroads is poor and continues to decline largely due to hosts ignoring their statutory responsibilities. Listed below are the Amtrak services that operate in Arizona with each service’s host railroads and on-time performance (OTP) in FY19:

<u>Service</u>	<u>Host Railroads</u>	<u>FY19 OTP</u>
Southwest Chief	BNSF and New Mexico Department of Transportation	37.5%
Sunset Limited	BNSF and Union Pacific	14.9%
Texas Eagle	BNSF, Canadian National, Union Pacific, and Trinity Railway Express	28.5%

*“On-time performance” represents the percentage of stations at which the train arrives within 15 minutes of the scheduled arrival time.*

#### **Overall Rail Geography**

The UP corridor has two distinct areas with a large difference in freight train traffic

- The eastern end, between Tucson and Picacho (50 miles) is part of UP’s southern transcontinental route between Los Angeles, Texas, and New Orleans. In 2019, it had around 40 trains per day; many trains handling time-sensitive cargo with permitted freight train speeds up to 70 mph as well as Amtrak’s *Sunset Limited/Texas Eagle*.
- The western end, between Picacho, Phoenix, and Buckeye (104 miles), the UP branchline serves many customers with a small number of daily trains, but those trains serve numerous points, requiring frequent and long duration stops.

#### **Estimated Capital Improvements**

*[Beware of providing too much detail publicly which may prejudice negotiations with the host railroad]*

\$923 million Capital Investment, comprised of the following

\$658 million Infrastructure, comprised of the following:

*(\$ in millions)*

- 157 Added capacity on Buckeye-Phoenix-Picacho branch; UP mainline Picacho-Tucson is double track
- 133 Signaling (CTC and PTC on Buckeye-Phoenix-Picacho branch)

- 128 Track speed on Buckeye-Phoenix-Picacho branch (currently Class 3, 60mph passenger)
- 90 Grade crossing improvements on Buckeye-Phoenix-Picacho branch (118 grade crossings)
- 150 Picacho-Tucson main line improvements if needed, TBD

\$205 million Stations, comprised of the following. Note that no specific plans or sites have been chosen:

- Phoenix, Airport, and Tempe: New “Medium” stations, typically intermodal facilities with a building and amenities, platforms, and parking; assume \$60 million each. Note: The current Phoenix station owner has expressed interest in permitting Amtrak use.
- Buckeye, Goodyear, Coolidge, Queen Creek, and Marana: New “Small” stations, typically parking, platform, and minimal shelter; assume \$5m each
- Tucson: Existing station, no improvements planned

\$60 million Equipment, comprised of the following:

- 2 new ICTs
- Supporting facilities

### **Timing**

Five years would be aggressive considering:

- Significant station builds
- Many grade crossing improvements
- New sidings probably requiring analysis of environmental and neighborhood impacts
- Assumes categorical exclusion throughout
- Would require quick project mobilization, design, and host railroad agreement

### **Amtrak Guest Rewards**

- At the end of FY19, there were 62,535 members of the Amtrak Guest Rewards program in Arizona. This is a 13% increase from FY18

### **Sample News**

- ABC 15 Arizona: [Mayors pushing for Amtrak passenger rail service connecting Phoenix and Tucson](#)
- Arizona Daily Star: [Road Runner: Federal funding could restore Amtrak service between Tucson and Phoenix](#)
- Arizona Patch: [Bring Amtrak Between Phoenix-Tucson: Mayors Gallego, Romero](#)
- CBS 5: [Planned Amtrak service would connect Phoenix to California, Las Vegas](#)
- Fox 10 Phoenix: [Mayors show support in new Amtrak line between Tucson and Phoenix](#)
- KJZZ: [Phoenix May Get Passenger Train Service Again By 2035](#)
- KVOA: [Mayor Romero joins other Arizona mayors in push to expand Arizona Amtrak passenger rail service](#)
- Univision: [Alcaldes de Arizona apoyan propuesta de Amtrak para un servicio de trenes de pasajeros entre Phoenix y Tucson](#)