



OUR TUCSON

A Message from the City Manager



SunLink Streetcar is Tucson's Link to the Future

January 2014

The City of Tucson's link to the future is here. Construction of the City's SunLink Modern Streetcar system, the largest construction project in our City's history, is largely complete.

We appreciate and respect the hard work of City employees, City contractors, area business owners and residents, University of Arizona officials and students, and the many citizens dedicated to the Modern Streetcar's success. We recognize the strength and resolve of the Mayor and Council in their approval of the budget required to see the project through. And we are thankful for the support of our citizens who voted to support this project and for our partners at the Regional Transportation Authority and the Federal Government.

It is difficult to underestimate the significance of this single project to the entire City of Tucson and to the Metro Tucson region. This approximately \$200 million investment is helping address some of the City of Tucson's largest goals:

- increase economic development, private investment, and job growth; revitalize our historic downtown and our central city;
- promote additional opportunities for the UA to expand educational facilities and related high-tech businesses downtown;
- encourage responsible and smart infill development and reduce the demand for urban sprawl;
- enable more citizens to utilize safe, affordable and "green" public transit; and more.

For decades, local elected officials, economic developers, business owners and citizens have embraced these goals for our City. The SunLink Modern Streetcar will help implement them all. There is a lot to celebrate.

The Tucson Downtown Partnership reports that there has been a total of over \$800 million of public and private investment along the SunLink Modern Streetcar line since the project was approved. This is a significant amount of investment already, and the Streetcar hasn't even begun service to the public yet.

You can see the new investment in the new restaurants and stores and hundreds of new housing units. New utilities—water, wastewater, electric, gas, communications—were installed beneath the new streets, providing additional benefits to area business and property owners.

We should be very proud of how much economic development and construction activity has taken place in the heart of our city during the years of economic downturn. This investment helped not just the City of Tucson but also added to the economy of the entire Metro Tucson region.

In addition, the new revenues generated in the central city will help provide basic services—police, fire, street maintenance, parks, and more—throughout the entire City of Tucson. Indeed, we are one City. Economic benefits generated in any area of Tucson benefit all of Tucson: north, south, east, and west.

Naturally, with a project of such significance, size, and scope, there are issues to be resolved and challenges to be faced. While we have largely completed our work locally, we are depending upon the Streetcar manufacturer, Oregon Iron Works, to finish building the streetcars themselves. We will continue to test the system throughout the academic year to further identify issues and fix them before service begins this summer. And we will continue to seek additional funds and cost savings to pay for the full capital cost of the streetcar system and the ongoing operations and maintenance costs once it is in service. While these are important issues, they pale in comparison to the significant benefits the Streetcar has brought—and will bring—to the City of Tucson.

The stage is now set for even more private investment and job growth around the SunLink Modern Streetcar system and throughout the central city and the University of Arizona. There is nothing like it in Southern Arizona. And it further establishes the City of Tucson as the dynamic hub of business, retail, the arts, technology, education, and innovation in our region. It is again as it was: the future of our region will be created in the heart of the City of Tucson.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Miranda". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "R".

Richard Miranda
Tucson City Manager