Call for Speakers is open from January 27–February 28, 2020
For information and to submit: railvolution.org/callforspeakers
What does it mean to build connected, equitable, livable communities – now and in the future? What experience and real-world solutions can you share?

The Rail~Volution transit and community development conference is seeking proposals for the 26th annual conference in Miami, Florida, September 20-23, 2020. The Call for Speakers is open from January 27 through February 28, 2020. There are two options for submitting proposals: as an individual speaker or for a full session. Make sure your idea is in the mix.

The Rail~Volution National Steering Committee (NSC), made up of 40+ livability professionals from across the United States and Canada, reviews all proposals. They identify qualified presenters and put together sessions, acting as the “coordinators” of sessions right up to the conference.

CRITERIA FOR SPEAKER AND PROPOSAL SELECTION

Every year the NSC sets goals for the conference consistent with Rail~Volution organizational values and with the conference location in mind. They are aiming for high-quality, content-rich and diverse sessions that represent:

- Cross-sector viewpoints: from different industries, geographies, and professional backgrounds, including lived experience.
- Speakers representing different gender and cultural identities as well as people with disabilities.
- Perspectives from historically underrepresented communities, such as communities of color, and those addressing structural racism.
- Innovative partnerships and collaborative solutions.
- Real-world, community-derived, practical applications to solving problems.
- Opportunities and approaches to addressing issues to achieve equitable outcomes

For the 2019 conference, 384 proposals were submitted, including 114 full session proposals and 270 individual speaker proposals. Of those, 82 were turned into sessions in the conference. Thirty-nine percent of all proposals submitted were accepted. Of the 114 full session proposals submitted, only thirteen percent were accepted as submitted and turned into sessions.
ABOUT RAIL~VOLUTION 2020

Rail~Volution focuses on building livable communities (sustainable, equitable, connected) around a core of strong transit, related multimodal networks and robust development. Focused on the connection between transportation, land use and community, the conference equips leaders, practitioners and advocates with policy and implementation approaches to get maximum community benefit from major transit investments.

We bring diverse minds, perspectives, and industries together to explore real-world examples, share implementable ideas and ask tough questions. Participants include community leaders, planners, elected officials, activists, developers, transit agencies, new mobility and technology innovators, transportation engineers, architects, consultants, and housing and transportation advocates from across the US and Canada, as well as internationally. Our name may be Rail~Volution, but our network supports communities as they leverage transportation investments, including buses, rail, bicycles, walking, sharing, and new mobility options, to connect people with employers and neighborhoods.

Miami-Dade County and the South Florida region provide an exciting setting for the 2020 Rail~Volution conference. Rapidly growing and diverse, the region is in the midst of a major expansion of transit options, including Metrorail, bus rapid transit, a redesign of the bus network, and intercity rail to Broward and Palm Beach Counties. Miami-Dade is increasing mobility options by leveraging innovative technology, from on-demand service to transit signal-priority to open payment. Transit-oriented developments are transforming communities across the region. The Underline, a 10-mile linear park and trail that dramatically repurposes public space with multimodal options, opens its first phase in 2020.

One cannot think of Miami-Dade County without thinking of resiliency. Rail~Volution 2020 will be a laboratory for learning how the city and region are preparing for sea-level rise as they address challenges of housing affordability and traffic congestion familiar across North America. Miami-Dade also showcases ways that public and private sectors are working together to expand opportunity.

2020 OVERARCHING SESSION GOALS

Our 2020 sessions will cover our core topics related to transit-oriented development, new technologies, housing, transit and multimodal planning, street and station design, communications and policy innovations, with special attention and consideration to proposals addressing the following:

**Climate Change and Resiliency:** especially efforts by the industry and cities to address resiliency in infrastructure; mitigation strategies; efforts to reduce carbon emissions and carbon taxing/offsetting; making the case for connected communities to reduce travel; transit emergency responses to increased weather events and natural disasters.

**Equity:** especially examples of changing structures of power and privilege to address disparities experienced by historically underrepresented groups; addressing systemic racism and gentrifying practices in transportation planning and development; inclusive community engagement and examples of bringing in new voices; ensuring infrastructure investments work for all; measuring outcomes – what are the right metrics?
TRACK INFORMATION

Proposers should indicate which of the following tracks best fits with their proposal. Read on for more information about the tracks.

TRACK 1
Technology and New Mobility Interfacing with Transit

TRACK 2
Transit-Oriented Development and Communities

TRACK 3
Transportation Policy Innovation, Communication and Leadership

TRACK 4
Transit Modes and Corridors for People

TRACK 5
Housing, Community Engagement, Place Keeping and Social Justice

TRACK 6
Rail~Volution PK Slam, powered by PechaKucha™
Track 1: Technology and New Mobility Interfacing with Transit

Mobility innovations have the potential to help us achieve more livable communities. The challenge is to figure out ways to use rapidly evolving technology and modes to better connect people of all backgrounds to transit and create the walkable, livable neighborhoods people want.

Subtopic Areas for Proposals – proposers will be asked to choose 1

FIRST- AND LAST- MILE EQUITY AND STRATEGIES especially bike share (including dockless) scooters and the angle of economic justice; microtransit, mobility hubs; suburban strategies; private and public-sector connections; emerging options and practices. Addressing the aging population and accessibility. Everyday use versus special events. Reliability and service life/waste.

AUTONOMOUS AND CONNECTED VEHICLES especially the relationship between transit and AVs, land use, policy and equity implications, pricing.

SMART TRANSIT especially mobile apps, transit’s role in “smart cities,” complete trips; alternative fuels; Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs, such as Mobility on Demand and Integrated Mobility Innovation. Future modes and intelligent transportation.

STREET DESIGN, COMPLETE STREETS AND CURB MANAGEMENT especially allocating space, station access for all users and multiple mobility options. Successful curb management programs. Policies related to private and freight transportation.

NEW SKILLS & TOOLS FOR INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY especially control of streets, signal priority, digital divide, access to data and data integration, leveraging data, data standards, new skills in visualization, urban freight; payment modes.

HOT TOPICS FOR 2020 AND MIAMI LOCATION

‣ Curbside management – policy, optimal street design and economics.
‣ Market and community-driven mobility.
‣ Mobility as a Service (MaaS): How are cities, transit agencies and regions adjusting to MaaS? How do we assess needs with a multimodal approach and what does that mean for coordination of modes?
‣ Autonomous Vehicles: What are we learning from pilots and connected vehicle operations?
‣ Mobility Technology 101: Emerging modes of travel and new technologies to improve mobility.
**Track 2: Transit-Oriented Development and Communities**

This track focuses on issues related to the planning, financing, advocacy for and implementation of transit-oriented development (TOD) at all scales, including multimodal and trail-related development, in urban and suburban locations. Development includes workforce and economic development at and beyond station areas.

**Subtopic Areas for Proposals – proposers will be asked to choose 1**

**REAL WORLD TOD** Lessons learned from successes and failures, complex deal stories, moving from concept/vision to construction, measuring TOD success, fundamentals of real estate, challenges of mixing uses.

**JOINT DEVELOPMENT PLAYERS AND PARTNERSHIPS** Understanding stakeholders; how to attract development; innovative partnerships, governmental partnerships; the process from developing an RFP through to the final development agreement; involving community-based organizations; addressing transit operations within a joint development.

**FINANCE** Financing and funding basics, private sector financing (the developer’s view), value capture (agency view), taxes and incentives (city view), innovative sources of funding, innovative methods of financing, community benefits.

**TRANSIT INTEGRATION SMALL AND LARGE** Transit information as a service; air rights; bus stops incorporated into development; shared facilities, shared parking; lessons learned; developing partnerships to identify needs, opportunities and solutions.

**STRATEGIES TO ADVANCE AFFORDABLE AND WORKFORCE HOUSING TODS** Streamlining the approval process; the missing middle housing in transit-served areas; reducing/eliminating parking requirements; form-based codes; public (interagency, state/local government) and private (non- and for-profit developers) partnerships for affordable housing, role of state and local agencies and authorities; unlocking new funding/financing tools; defining transit agency roles and policies.

**REDEVELOPMENT, RETROFIT AND REUSE FOR TOD** Building TOD in the already-built environment, converting brownfields to TOD, creating walkable urbanism in an auto-oriented community, building the TOD before the transit, defining and measuring walkability, improving streets around transit.

**PARKING** Housing people not cars; Park & Ride v. TOD with TDM (transportation demand management). Replacement parking, charging for parking, effects of changing parking requirements; parking as a service, not an asset; equity aspects of parking choices; designing for the future.

**LIVING LIFE ALONG THE LINE** Station areas as collective urbanism, case studies of retail served by transit, job centers on transit, experiences in linking people and jobs; FTA Pilot planning grant results.

**TOD AND CLIMATE CHANGE** Climate impacts of TOD v. alternatives, TOD and mode shift impacts; electrification of vehicles, environmental justice and TOD; how green is your TOD; case studies of changes in development patterns and climate impact.

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**HOT TOPICS FOR 2020 AND MIAMI LOCATION**

- Form-based zoning code in Miami-Dade County.
- Walkability in and beyond the urban core – complete communities in more kinds of places.
- Policies and practices for capturing land before value increases. Completed joint development projects.
- Developers focused on sustainability and design of affordable housing.
What is the changing face of transit leadership and what is needed in the industry? How are leadership and governing bodies defining the future for transit and resiliency? What forms of transit governance help or hurt? How are agencies of all kinds addressing livability issues around crime, safety, homelessness and job density diffusion across a region? What innovative policies are being implemented in transit agencies, MPOs and DOTs? Where there are overlaps with other tracks, this track focuses specifically on policy.

Subtopic Areas for Proposals – proposers will be asked to choose 1

**THE FUTURE OF TRANSIT:**
**RESPONDING TO LARGE SCALE TRENDS** especially ridership, addressing crime, safety and homelessness, overcrowding; context of rising congestion in cities.

**LEADERSHIP** creating a vision for the future, taking risks; women in leadership; professional development opportunities; transit-related career paths.

**NEW PARTNERSHIPS AND NEW ROLES FOR TRANSIT AGENCIES** especially agencies playing an unexpected lead role in community revitalization, mobility and challenges such as homelessness; working with non-traditional partners, i.e. cultural or community-based organizations.

**CHANGING TRANSIT AGENCY CULTURE** especially next generation of leadership, flexibility to respond to unknowns, customer experience for riders, defining performance in a different way; labor and ADA practices in changing mobility landscape; data sharing & reciprocity with partners.

**SELF-HELP THROUGH INNOVATIVE FUNDING SOLUTIONS** especially responding to federal funding decline; value capture, public-private partnerships; funding maintenance and expansion, funding for climate adaptation.

**GOVERNANCE** especially structures that get in the way of innovations in service; structure and funding measures; transit agency as a mobility provider; policies for integrated mobility.

**CAMPAIGNS** especially making the case for transit and preparing for funding referendums, elements of a successful campaign.

**GENERATIONAL SHIFTS** especially responding to interests of students, young people and Gen Z, as well as elderly & disability communities, aging in place, integrating job skills into project development.

**COMMUNICATION** especially how to communicate “total transformation” of service, fares and modes; place-branding and the value of involving community; educating the public and making the case for transit investments and TOD, messaging and communication for communities vulnerable to gentrification.

**MARKETING** especially best practices in messaging for transit; focused, intentional outreach to increase riders; examples of RFPs and marketing along corridors.

**SAFETY & SECURITY** especially the nexus to customer experience and ridership, role of police in livability or ambassador programs.

**HOT TOPICS FOR 2020 AND MIAMI LOCATION**
- Career development, how do you get to the top?
- Mobility management policies – who owns the curb?
- Success stories about transparent, real-time communication with customers. How is communication team staffed?
- Strategic partnerships to boost ridership and how to sell transit to non-transit users. Messaging and making the case for transit investment and transit ROI.
- Federal funding uncertainty; opportunities to move small, locally funded and innovative projects now while you wait for larger federal funding i.e. naming rights?
- Free transit/reduced fares, agency policies for going “fareless.”
- Resiliency, policy and program development (congestion pricing policy)
- Universal design policies.
Track 4: Transit Modes and Corridors for People

In the evolving mobility landscape, transit is still the backbone for efficient, sustainable movement of people. At the same time, mobility is competitive like never before. One size does not fit all. It’s critical to understand the right mobility improvement for a given corridor and how to serve downtown, urban, and suburban communities. Success also depends on knitting transit investments into the communities they serve. This track also looks at operations, accessibility, and equity points of view. And, how community needs have been shaped by selection, implementation, redesign and retrofit, delivery and performance of transit. This track focuses on modes, tools, and applications.

Subtopic Areas for Proposals – proposers will be asked to choose 1

BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) AND BUS NETWORKS especially implementation within an autonomous future; connecting to the overall transit system and multiple other modes; transition to LRT.

TRANSIT SYSTEM INNOVATION especially in mid-sized cities; system innovations and redesign, bus-only lanes, reducing travel time, electric buses, using waterways for transit; Envision Sustainability Rating use in transit projects. Metrics for ensuring equity goals/outcomes; assessing trade-offs, wayfinding.

CORRIDOR MODE SELECTION especially community participation and decision-making, integration of modes.

DATA/PERFORMANCE -DRIVEN DECISIONS regarding equity.

INTEGRATION AND IMPLICATIONS OF OLD AND NEW MODES, especially land use, policy, equity implications, interface between modes, coordination across jurisdictions.

HIGH SPEED RAIL especially private financing models.

LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT (LRT) especially financing and political challenges, suburban models, corridor planning and design.

MOBILITY HUBS as community hubs.

PARATRANSIT especially ADA and legacy systems, innovations in service management.

RAIL especially subways, commuter rail. For profit rail (Brightline/Virgin Rail)- what does the company bring and what does community need to bring.

STATION DESIGN especially economics of good design, integrating design disciplines early in the process, accommodation of multiple modes, mega developments at intermodal centers.

STATE OF GOOD REPAIR to ensure systems (legacy and otherwise) better serve the community.

STREETCAR especially addressing the growth in costs, governance models, tactics to improve performance.

SUBURBAN TRANSIT especially walkability and other retrofitting to make service work better; accessibility and workforce; connections to new suburban downtowns; rural, small urban, commuter; innovative Transportation Demand Management, changing rules on freeways.

HOT TOPICS FOR 2020 AND MIAMI LOCATION

› Privately funded transit
› South American BRT, aerial trams, transit case studies.
› Pedestrian and bike safety, infrastructure and implementation.
› Corridor mode selection.
› Redefining the right-of-way, especially for BRT.
How are cities and regions recognizing the existing assets of low-wealth communities? What are new tools and strategies to engage the silent voices in communities when making decisions to improve the quality of life in these neighborhoods? How can we protect historically disadvantaged communities from gentrification and the effects of climate change? Access to affordable housing continues to be a challenge – what approaches are working? We are looking for topics that touch on quality of life challenges linked to transit investment, such as housing, workforce development, wealth building, health and placemaking.

Subtopic Areas for Proposals – proposers will be asked to choose 1

ADDRESSING GENTRIFICATION AND DISPLACEMENT including community-centered stories of success, failure or lessons learned; balancing affordable housing and development, emerging protection and preservation strategies, permanent affordable housing models.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING especially income inequality and upward economic mobility, equitable hiring programs, “missing middle.”

GROWING THE TABLE TO ADDRESS THE HOUSING CRISIS especially the “Yes In My Backyard” (YIMBY) and other pro-density movements, labor support, temporary housing on public land, equity in public referenda, mobility justice.

EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT INNOVATIONS IN HOUSING especially new housing products such as ADUs, micro units, laneway housing, single-room occupancy or co-living; densifying single family neighborhoods and upzoning neighborhoods to avoid displacement; addressing and updating historically racist zoning practices.

HEALTH especially how the built environment impacts the social determinants of health.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & FINANCING TOOLS especially preservation of affordable housing, mission-driven development, Community Reinvestment Act and Fair Housing.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT + TRANSIT: BRINGING IN NEW VOICES especially engaging diverse communities, getting beyond typical public meetings, addressing complicated regional conversations, coalition building and participatory budgeting; educating about transit innovations (e.g., bus only lanes), public engagement.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR EQUITABLE TRANSIT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT especially multi-partner coordination, housing equity in transit and service planning, small business retention and development, transit affordability.

BALANCING PLACEKEEPING AND PLACEMAKING especially examples of short- and long-term strategies contributing to quality of life, preserving and celebrating local culture and art, tactical urbanism, placemaking and urban design near transit-oriented developments; policies, community involvement and implementation, walkable/mixed-use projects for all users.

HOT TOPICS FOR 2020 AND MIAMI LOCATION

- Planning with immigrant communities.
- Policies, programs and metrics to advance equitable outcomes, including community and cultural preservation.
- Growing the table to address the housing crisis.
- Innovative implementation for new and existing residential neighborhoods.
- Community Engagement: bringing in new voices.
- More implemented solutions, less theory and evaluation.
- Environmental and social justice, climate change.
**Track 6: Rail~Volution PK Slam, powered by PechaKucha™**

PechaKucha™ [peh-chá koo-chá] is a rapid-fire presentation format in which each speaker presents 20 slides for 20 seconds each for a total of 6 minutes and 40 seconds for an entire presentation! The slides are automatically timed so presenters need to practice staying within the time and slide speed.

We are looking for creative, light-hearted commentaries on real life issues. Be edgy, put yourself out there, take a risk and tell it how it is! The PK Slam takes place in the evening as a social event and draws a crowd of 400+. For more information and examples follow this link to the Rail~Volution PK Slam playlist.