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**Rod Diridon to Chair US HSR Advisory Board, Headline Rail Conference in Los Angeles**  
*MTA Headquarters, Union Station, December 3-5, 2012*

*Washington DC and San Jose CA* – November 15, 2012 -- The [US High Speed Rail Association](#) (USHSR) has appointed Rod Diridon, executive director of the [Mineta Transportation Institute](#) (MTI), as Chairman of the Advisory Board of the US High Speed Rail Association. He will assume this new role at the [High Speed Rail Conference](#) in Los Angeles. The event is set for Monday-Wednesday, December 3-5. The conference comes on the heels of the California legislature voting to move forward with the first \$6 billion phase of the statewide system. *(Journalists are welcome. See note at the end.)*

"We are very proud to have Rod Diridon chair our Advisory Board and headline our conference," said Andy Kunz, USHSR President and CEO. "Rod is a great leader and one of the strongest advocates for high speed rail in America. We welcome his participation."

Mr. Diridon, who will give a keynote address at the conference, said, "The presidential election affirmed the people's desire to renew the nation's transportation infrastructure. High-speed rail is this nation's most seriously deficient mode of sustainable transport. Led by California, the nation is about to catch up with the rest of the world. The US High Speed Rail Association and other progressive transportation leaders are guiding the way so our nation can become a leader again."

The Rail Conference will address numerous issues vital to high-speed rail, including the benefits, opportunities, and challenges of a major new infrastructure project; project updates from California, Texas, Illinois, New York, the Southwest, and more; how US mayors are preparing for 21st century transportation, economic development, major real estate investment, new facilities, and jobs; conditions for investing, an infrastructure bank, public-private partnerships, and developing legislation to encourage private involvement in HSR systems; major real estate developments at rail stations; first-hand experience from other countries; and much more.

Speakers include many leading experts, such as California Governor Jerry Brown (invited); US Congress Member Loretta Sanchez; California State Senator Leland Yee; California Assembly Members Fiona Ma and Norma Torres; Mayor of Irving TX Beth Van Duyne; LA Deputy Mayor for Transportation Borja Leon; USHSR CEO Andy Kunz; and President of GEODATA Italy Piergiorgio Grasso.

Also, Dominic Spaethling of Parsons Brinckerhoff; Dan Krause of Californians for HSR; Tim Smart of CH2M Hill; Patricia Petitto of IRWA; Joe Reed of Balfour Beatty Capital; Dwayne Sampson of MTA New York; Rick Harnish of Midwest HSRA; Katherine Perez of ELP Advisors; and many more.

For information or to register, go to <http://www.ushsr.com/laprogram2012.html>

**ABOUT ROD DIRIDON**

Mr. Diridon has been executive director of the Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI) since 1995, a transportation policy research center created in 1991 by Congress. He is known as the "father of

modern transit service” in Silicon Valley and has chaired more than 100 international, national, state and local programs, most related to transit and the environment. He frequently provides legislative testimony on sustainable transportation issues. Mr. Diridon was appointed in 2001 and 2005 by Governors Davis and Schwarzenegger, respectively, to the California High Speed Rail Authority Board of which he is chair emeritus. He served as president of the national Council of University Transportation Centers.

In 1996 he founded and chaired the Transportation Research Board’s study panel, "Combating Global Warming through Sustainable Transportation Policy." He advised the Federal Transit Administration and in 1995 chaired the National Research Council’s Transportation Research Board’s Transit Oversight and Project Selection Committee. He has provided keynotes, especially for high speed rail and sustainability, in more than 50 US cities and for a dozen international conferences, and he has published numerous related articles.

#### **ABOUT THE US HIGH SPEED RAIL ASSOCIATION**

US High Speed Rail Association is the only non-profit organization in America focusing entirely on advancing a state-of-the-art national high speed rail network. Its vision includes a national HSR Express system consisting of state-of-the-art dedicated track, advanced control systems, elegant multi-modal train stations, and top-of-the-line 220 mph trains. Its goal is to connect cities and states into an integrated system, laid out in phases with an aggressive schedule for full system build out.

#### **ABOUT THE MINETA TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE**

The Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI) conducts research, education, and information and technology transfer, focusing on multimodal surface transportation policy and management issues, especially as they relate to transit. MTI was established by Congress in 1991 as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and was reauthorized under TEA-21 and again under SAFETEA-LU. The Institute has been funded by Congress through the US Department of Transportation’s (DOT) Research and Innovative Technology Administration, by the California Legislature through the Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and by other public and private grants and donations, including grants from the US Department of Homeland Security. DOT selected MTI as a National Center of Excellence following competitions in 2002 and 2006. The internationally respected members of the MTI Board of Trustees represent all major surface transportation modes. MTI’s focus on policy and management resulted from the Board’s assessment of the transportation industry’s unmet needs. That led directly to choosing the San José State University College of Business as the Institute’s home. Visit [transweb.sjsu.edu](http://transweb.sjsu.edu)

#### **Journalists are welcome:**

Journalists are invited to attend High Speed Rail Conference, Los Angeles. For consideration, please contact the Communications office at [press@ushsr.com](mailto:press@ushsr.com) Submit press credentials and proof of employment with your request. Press credentials will also be required on site to enter the conference. USHSR reserves the right to screen all requests.

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