

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **NEWLY REFURBISHED TUCSON CONVENTION CENTER DRIVES TUCSON REVITALIZATION STRATEGY WHILE PAYING HOMAGE TO THE PAST**

Tucson, AZ --- On Thursday, February 15th, Mayor Regina Romero, Fletcher McCusker, and other city dignitaries will gather in the heart of the city to honor our past and glimpse the vision of what is yet to come at the TCC. A ribbon cutting ceremony will unveil the latest improvements made by the extensive \$100 million dollar renovation overseen by the Rio Nuevo District, City of Tucson and a private developer that has transpired at the TCC over the past 10 years. *"Conceived by the Mayor's office, this project has been years in the making and is now about to be a time machine recognizing and honoring the history of these lands through the amazing advancements in technology with 3D Augmented Reality, a Culture Walk has been created where visitors can immerse themselves in moments of history — experiencing the land, and the people who came before us."* said Rio Nuevo Chairman, Fletcher McCusker.

TCC and Tucson justifiably pride themselves on a rich and varied history from thousands of years of indigenous culture from our Native American tribes, Spanish missionaries, Mexican Americans, and the Chinese immigrants who settled here. Honoring the past as one of the longest continuously lived-in communities in the US, and the vibrant tapestry of different cultures associated with that history is an important part of TCC's mission: to be a "Tucson Cultural Center" that also hosts conventions and arena events and plays a central role in the economic prosperity for the city itself. The historic content available throughout the TCC campus was compiled and produced by Tucson artist and educator Marc Pinate through extensive research and information contributed by the tribal nations, the Organization of Chinese Americans, the Arizona Historical Society, the Mexican American Museum, and others.

Venue updates throughout the 27-acre campus in downtown Tucson includes 233,000 square feet of new and refurbished meeting and event space, increased venue capacity, new public walkways and gathering places, water features, sculptures

and hardscape, and new eco-friendly landscaping. Embracing state-of-the-art technology, the facility now hosts an impressive array of Digital Touch points with more than 70 additional display screens, way finders, and the amazing, augmented reality installations — the first of their kind deployed in the world. The cutting-edge digital media network installed on campus will guide, inform, and direct visitors while also entertaining and educating them with a wide variety of exclusive content, including photos and video vignettes of local history, sponsor messages, and teasers of upcoming events. Rio Nuevo Executive Officer Tanya Villicana adds, *"These vital improvements will expand TCC's economic impact for Tucson, making it a stronger, more viable option for securing conventions, sporting events, entertainment choices and more from a worldwide audience. And this is just the beginning... plans are underway that embrace community, showcase local businesses, and the rich cultural tapestry that is Tucson."*

The ribbon-cutting ceremony will also see the launch of an all new TCC Mobile App, which will inform TCC visitors and give them access to the integrated AR content throughout the campus. As Rio Nuevo's primary asset, the Rio Nuevo board starting in 2014 and continuing into 2024, chose to heavily invest in the Tucson Convention Center to create a state-of-the-art facility that will become a major economic driver for Downtown Tucson. With the continued revitalization of downtown underway, it was clear that enhancing the entertainment options and bringing in outside convention business would be critical in the long-term success of the Downtown environment. Based on current utilization, the investment has significantly increased the number and quality of events hosted at the TCC, providing the overall economic benefit to Downtown the board intended.

### **TCC Upgrade Timeline**

#### 2014 – Arena Renovations (\$7.8M)

Rio Nuevo's first substantial investment in the Convention center

Primarily patron facing improvements including new seating, concessions, restroom renovations, sound system, score board, and electronics.

#### 2016 – AHL improvements (\$3M)

Back of house improvements to meet American Hockey league requirements for the Arizona Coyotes development team the Tucson Roadrunners

#### 2019 – Doubletree Hotel (Approx \$35M)

Private development of a 170-room hotel on site, physically connected to the Convention Center

#### 2020 – 2024 – Rio Nuevo \$65M comprehensive improvement project

Full renovation of the existing North meeting rooms, Ballroom, and South exhibition hall

Renovation of the Linda Ronstadt Music Hall

Addition of West meeting rooms, directly adjacent to the ballroom and south Exhibition hall to facilitate traditional convention clients

Addition of 400 stall parking garage in Parking lot A

Addition of 500 stall parking garage in Parking Lot C with the capacity to add up to 4 additional stories for parking, hospitality, residential, or office uses.

Full restoration of the Garrett Eckbo designed mid-century landscape and fountain sequence, now on the National Register of Historic Places

Full site upgrades include transition of irrigation to reclaimed water, full implementation of reclaimed water for the fountain sequence and full improvement of remaining site (outside of historic landscape) to true native, drought tolerant species.

Full upgrade of the site for accessibility with Installation of the IT intelligent network backbone throughout the facility to facilitate future technologies.

#### 2023-2024 – Tech Upgrades & Culture Walk (\$3M)

Installation of an interactive IT intelligent network throughout the TCC campus feeding data to Multiple LED displays, IPTVs, interactive kiosks, and a custom-designed mobile application for use by patrons and visitors alike throughout the facility.

Launch of the Culture Walk — Embracing and reclaiming the history of the site, augmented reality views have been placed strategically in the Alva Torres Historical Plaza and other key locations throughout the campus boasting rich, multi-dimensional historical content from the 1800s to the present.

#### 2023-2024 – Acquisition and restoration of the historic Sosa Carrillo House (\$2.2M)

Historic Video Sample: <https://vimeo.com/901990307/1435813c36?share=copy>

Photo

Link <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/ifw2cwymwiugrayy82875/h?rlkey=set8p1rpd6sos090nl6zr5evo&dl=0>

### **About Rio Nuevo**

Rio Nuevo is a Tax Instrument Finance District (TIF) funded by a share of state sales tax dollars and held accountable to the Arizona State Legislature for use of the funds. In 1999 voters approved creation of the District that allows TIF funds to be reinvested into the community to create a dynamic city center.

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