

# **Interstate Transit Research Symposium 2020**

## **Speaker, Panelist, and Moderator Biographies**

(Updated 12/4/2020)

### **ASHA WEINSTEIN AGRAWAL**

Dr. Asha Weinstein Agrawal works at San José State University, where she directs the Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI) National Transportation Finance Center and also serves as Professor of Urban and Regional Planning. Her research agenda is guided by a commitment to the principles of sustainability and equity: what planning and policy tools can communities adopt to encourage environmentally friendly travel and improve accessibility for people struggling with poverty or other disadvantages? Her research on public transit includes many studies about willingness to pay for public transit, on onboard passenger survey design, and policies to regulate bus lanes.

### **SEAN BARBEAU**

Dr. Sean J. Barbeau ([barbeau@cutr.usf.edu](mailto:barbeau@cutr.usf.edu)) has been a research faculty member at the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) at the University of South Florida (USF) since 2004. Dr. Barbeau has led many research projects designing, implementing, and evaluating intelligent real-time traveler information systems for mobile phones. He has over 50 peer-reviewed papers and conference presentations and 16 patented inventions. His research interests include multimodal mobile apps, open-source software, standardized open data, and cybersecurity for mobile phones and transportation infrastructure. He holds a B.S. and M.S. in Computer Science from USF as well as a Ph.D. in Computer Science and Engineering from USF.

### **EVELYN BLUMENBERG**

Dr. Evelyn Blumenberg is a Professor of Urban Planning and Director of the Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies in the Luskin School of Public Affairs at UCLA. Her research examines transportation and economic outcomes for low-wage workers, and the role of planning and policy in addressing transportation disparities. Dr. Blumenberg's recent projects include analyses of the relationship between housing affordability and commute distance, transit ridership trends, the role of automobile ownership in employment outcomes, and racial disparities in automobile finance and debt. Dr. Blumenberg was honored in 2014 by the Obama Administration as a White House Champion of Change for her research on the links between transportation access, employment, and poverty. Dr. Blumenberg holds a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of California, Berkeley, and a master's degree and Ph.D. in urban planning from the University of California, Los Angeles.

## **SCOTT BOGREN**

Scott Bogren has been with the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) since 1989, serving the Association in a wide variety of roles before being named Executive Director in 2016. He is a passionate transit advocate and (prior to COVID-19) a daily transit user. His work has always focused on building and promoting safe, affordable, accessible, and inclusive mobility for all Americans. A proud graduate of Indiana University's journalism program, Bogren lives in Germantown, Md., with his wife Beth.

## **ABBY COCHRAN**



Dr. Abigail Cochran holds a Master of City Planning and Ph.D. in City and Regional Planning from the University of California, Berkeley. She is broadly interested in travel behavior, transportation policy, disability, aging, and health. She is presently working as a postdoctoral research associate at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, researching barriers to accessing transportation to health care and new models for providing non-emergency medical transportation.

## **LILY (AGELIKI) ELEFTERIADOU**



Dr. Elefteriadou is the Director of the UF Transportation Institute (UFTI), and the Barbara Goldsby Professor of Civil Engineering at the University of Florida. Her research focus is traffic operations, traffic flow theory and simulation. She is the principal investigator of the US DOT-funded Regional University Transportation Center for Region 4 (Southeast Transportation Research Innovation Development and Education, or STRIDE). Dr. Elefteriadou has served as the principal investigator for several other federal and state projects, funded by the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Federal Highway Administration, PennDOT, and FDOT. She has authored or co-authored more than two hundred publications and reports related to traffic operational quality and highway design, as well as a textbook titled "Introduction to Traffic Flow Theory". Dr. Elefteriadou has received several awards for her research, including the 2019 ASCE Harland Bartholomew Award for her work on I-STREET, the 2015 ASCE James Laurie Prize for her contributions to highway capacity analysis, the 2015 ARTBA Ethel S. Birchland Lifetime Achievement Award, and TRB's Fred Burggraff award for excellence in research in 2001.

## **JAMES FISHELSON**

Forthcoming

## **GILLIAN GILLETT**

Gillian Gillett works at the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) as program manager of the California Integrated Mobility Program. Previously she was the Chair of the Caltrain Joint Powers Board of Directors; a transportation coordinator at the San Francisco Department of Public Works, Bureau of Street Use & Mapping; Director of Transportation Policy, Office of the Mayor of San Francisco; and the co-founder of Graffio, Inc., a custom software development company. Ms. Gillett also served as the Chair, Transportation Policy Board.

## **JESUS GOMEZ**

Jesus Gomez is the Transit Director of the City of Gainesville Regional Transit System (RTS). Gomez received his Civil Engineering degree from Venezuela, and his master's degree from the University of South Florida (USF) in Tampa, Florida. He began his transit career as the Chief Transit Planner at RTS, held the position of Operations Manager before being promoted to Transit Director in 2005. Under Gomez's leadership, RTS has built secure funding partnerships with the University of Florida as well as major employment centers in the Gainesville area. Ridership has increased each year since Gomez's career with RTS began – as demonstrated with an annual ridership of less than 1,700,000 in 1998 to a fiscal year record of 9.4 million in 2019. RTS has been honored with numerous American Public Transit Association (APTA), Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA) and other organizational awards under Gomez's watch. The recognition includes FPTA's Outstanding System of the Year in 2008 and 2016.

## **ANN GUERRA**

Ann Guerra is the executive director of Connecting Point, a public agency that provides several community services including travel training and a 211call center. Growing up in San Francisco, riding the bus everywhere was a normal part of city life. Her interest in transportation was sparked in the early 1990's when she received extensive training in the American's with Disabilities Act as part of her work as a disability advocate. Guerra became involved with transportation issues locally and has served on the Transit Services Commission since 1997. Transportation and independence are closely linked, and Guerra finds it gratifying to assist in connecting people to the travel opportunities that exist in our small communities.

## **RON HALL**

Ron Hall is an enrolled member of the Three Affiliated Tribes and the President of Bubar & Hall Consulting, LLC. He is the former Director of the Tribal Technical Assistance Program (TTAP) at Colorado State University. He obtained a BA in Criminal Justice and Sociology from Augustana University and a Juris Doctorate from Mitchell Hamline Law School. He is a current member of the New Mexico State Bar Association and New Mexico Indian Bar Association. Hall works nationally to understand and support the research, training, technical assistance, and strategic planning needs of tribal transportation programs. His legal experience includes general counsel representation of tribal governments, Native American owned businesses, surety, and construction law. Consultant activities include tribal consultation facilitation, mediation, research, strategic planning, and training on a wide range of transportation infrastructure, historic and cultural preservation, economic development, and workforce initiatives. He has worked on a wide range of issues including administrative law, housing, energy, agriculture, construction, federal employment discrimination as well as general practice attorney. Hall played a key role in creating the National Academies of Science Transportation Research Board Standing Committee on Native American Transportation Issues in 2001 and is the current Committee Chair. Hall also served on the Federal Highway Administration Tribal Safety Management System Steering Committee from 2008 - 2013. He organized and hosted the first two National Tribal Transportation Safety Summits in 2009 and 2012. Hall serves as a Native American transportation safety expert for the National Center for Rural Road Safety. He is active with non-profit organizations including the Central North American Trade Corridor Association and Village Earth.

## **ANDREAS HOFFRICHTER**

Dr. Andreas Hoffrichter leads the Sustainable Motive Power and Zero-Emission Technology practice at DB Engineering & Consulting USA Inc. (DB E&C USA). Prior to joining DB E&C USA he was the Burkhardt Professor in Railway Management and the Executive Director of the Center for Railway Research and Education at Michigan State University. His expertise is in low- and zero-emission technologies for railway motive power, including discontinuous electrification, hybrids, battery-power, and hydrogen fuel cell options. He has been involved in many zero-emission motive power rail projects, globally, and is leading several ongoing projects in this field at DB E&C USA. Dr. Hoffrichter holds a bachelor's degree in Transport Management and a master's degree in Railway Systems Engineering and Integration. He holds the first Ph.D., globally, in hydrogen-powered railway vehicles, and his work led to the first practical railway vehicle with such a powertrain in the UK. He won the prize for the best Ph.D. in the School of Electronic, Electrical and Computer Engineering in 2013. He has published several articles in peer-reviewed journals and presented at numerous international conferences.

## **MARCY JAFFE**

Marcy Jaffe guides and empowers tribal, intercity, small urban and rural transit partners with technical assistance for General Transit Feed Specification - GTFS Builder. GTFS Builder is a no-cost, simple toolkit in Excel to generate digitized and standardized stops and timetables for online trip planning at Google Transit as well as Apple Maps, Bing Maps and digital apps. GTFS Builder outputs your timetable for your website and websites built with National RTAP's Website Builder. In 2016, the balance of Maryland's statewide digitized transit network was built on GTFS Builder. Jaffe has worked at the Washington State Department of Transportation as well as the San Francisco's regional planning agency, Metropolitan Transportation Commission. She has both a Master of Public Administration as well as Master of Business Administration from the University of California, Irvine. Jaffe looks forward to supporting your next tech success.

## **ANDREW KRUM**



Mr. Andrew Krum is a group leader and senior research associate in the Center for Truck and Bus Safety at the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute. Recently, Krum began serving with NIOSH through an Intergovernmental Personnel Agreement to help develop new information and scientific knowledge pertaining to COVID-19 engineering controls for heavy and commercial vehicles under the Occupational Safety and Health Technical Assistance to Re-open Industries Safely Program.

## **SABA LONG**

Saba Long is the founder of Obelisk Strategies, an Atlanta-based public relations agency with a focus on government and civic communications strategy. With more than a decade of experience, she has provided communications expertise to numerous political campaigns and ballot initiatives, counseled tech startups, and served as a liaison for a White House advisory panel on infrastructure and cybersecurity. Long has led public relations and communications for nearly every major transit referenda in metro Atlanta since 2010, bringing transit back to Clayton County and expanding MARTA service in the city of Atlanta. As a MARTA employee, she provided media relations and executive communications for then-CEO Keith T. Parker. Now, in her role as a consultant to the agency, she provides strategic communications, public engagement, and project management expertise for MARTA's capital program. Long is a board member of and helped found the MARTA Army, a citizen-led initiative to improve the transit ridership experience. The Army's most known initiative, Operation TimelyTrip brought route

information to popular MARTA bus stops that lacked relevant signage and was instrumental in helping the agency improve the bus customers' experience. In its 2019-2020 budget, MARTA announced a "Year of the Bus" initiative. Feed-An-Operator, the MARTA Army's latest initiative, is a volunteer-driven program to provide fresh meals to furloughed transit workers and frontline MARTA employees. The MARTA Army is one of the few transit straphanger groups in the country and has gone on to lead numerous projects to encourage transit ridership. Long has also served on the boards of the Atlanta Bicycle Coalition, PEDs, and the Atlanta chapter of Young Professionals in Transportation.

### **ODETTA MACLEISH-WHITE**



Odetta MacLeish-White is the Managing Director of the TransFormation Alliance, a partnership of nonprofits, government agencies, and businesses working to strengthen communities through transit. TFA's work is driven by racial equity and seeks to partner with residents of impacted communities in shaping better health, climate, and economic outcomes through arts & culture-based community engagement, and by improving housing, transit and jobs access. Prior to joining the TransFormation Alliance, MacLeish-White was a Senior Program Director with Enterprise Community Partners in their Southeast market. She supported comprehensive community stabilization efforts around the country with a focus on equitable

Transit Oriented Development initiatives and nonprofit capacity building in the state of Georgia and the Southeast. MacLeish-White has also served as a community development specialist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta and was the staff director for Florida's Affordable Housing Study Commission. She discovered her love for affordable housing while working for a developer in Gainesville, Florida. MacLeish-White earned her juris doctorate and LLM in International Law from Duke University School of Law, and her bachelor's degree in English and American Literature and Language from Harvard-Radcliffe University.

### **NOREEN MACDONALD**

Dr. Noreen McDonald is Chair of the Department of City and Regional Planning at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where she holds the Thomas Willis Lambeth Distinguished Chair in Public Policy. Dr. McDonald's research assesses how transportation infrastructure investments influence travel decisions and the downstream impacts of those decisions on road safety, public health, and city structure. Her work considers how these relationships differ across space and demographic groups and how new technology (Uber/Lyft/autonomous vehicles) may disrupt these relationships. Dr. McDonald received an undergraduate degree from Harvard in engineering and chemistry and a Ph.D. in city planning from UC Berkeley.

## **MEHRI MOHEBBI**

Mehri “Mehrsa” Mohebbi holds a Ph.D. in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Cincinnati, College of Design, Architecture, Arts, and Planning (DAAP). She previously worked as an urban planner and qualitative researcher addressing health and social equity in transportation and community planning in different states across the country.

In the last few years, she has collaborated with national professional associations and served on different committees and task forces (such as American Planning Association (APA) Social Equity Task Force and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee).

Dr. Mohebbi has over 12 years of professional and academic experience focusing on equity issues in urban and regional planning in the United States and overseas. She has authored and co-authored several journal articles, proceedings, and perspective articles for urban planning and sociology media and has given numerous presentations at national and international conferences. As of May 2020, -- she has been serving on the steering committee of a nationwide health equity initiative, the Planning for Health Equity, Advocacy, and Leadership (PHEAL).

Additionally, Dr. Mohebbi has extensive experience in designing and leading equitable planning processes and developing online and in-person community engagement methods.

As a UFTI research faculty, Dr. Mohebbi will lead the Equity in Transportation Initiative.

## **HERB MULLEN**

Born and raised in Elizabeth City, NC. Herb Mullen graduated from Barton College in 1998 with a B.S. in Management and Business Administration and a minor in Economics. In 1999, he went to work with Albemarle Regional Health Services (Parent Agency of ICPTA) and became the Director of Transportation in 2001. Inter-County Public Transportation Authority is a five-county regional transportation authority located in Northeastern NC that operates seamlessly across their 1000 sqm region. ICPTA employs 45 people and operates a fleet of 32 vehicles. Prior to COVID-19, they were providing over 600 demand response trips daily. In his tenure he has received the Governor’s award for pursuing and changing legislation to streamline NC operating funds for regional transportation systems. He and his staff have implemented new technology such as geographic based scheduling, tablets, video surveillance, and propane conversion kits.

## **GREG NEWMARK**

Dr. Greg Newmark is an assistant professor of Regional and Community Planning at Kansas State University. He is particularly interested in the provision and management of public transit services (and used to work at Chicago’s Regional Transportation Authority). Dr. Newmark’s research emphasizes the innovative use of data to understand public transportation as well as the collection of those data. He is the initiator of the Central Archive of Transit Passenger Data (CATPAD) repository – a public database of on-board survey data from transit systems across

the country. The USDOT Federal Transit Administration has recently funded the development of CATPAD as part of the Transportation Secure Data Center (TSDC) at the USDOE National Renewable Energy Lab. Please feel free to reach out to Dr. Newmark about sharing your rider survey data.

## **MATHEW PALMER**

Mathew Palmer serves as the Executive Director for School Planning, Design & Construction for Durham Public Schools. He is concurrently a Doctoral Candidate in City and Regional Planning at UNC-Chapel Hill, and his dissertation is, Planning for Cities and Schools in the American South. He has a Bachelor of Arts from University of Michigan (Ann Arbor) and a Master of Urban and Regional Planning from UCLA. Through his position with DPS, Palmer leads the Plan-Design-Build process for DPS. Planning at DPS includes student enrollment growth projections (demographics), facility design and planning, long-range planning, and real estate portfolio direction. Overall, his team approaches their work in the built environment with emphasis on enhancing equity opportunities and operational efficiency. Palmer's background is in placemaking through a land use and transportation lens, with a focus on the design and function of school and transportation systems. During his career he has focused on the Safe Routes to School Program (students walking and biking to school), neighborhood connectivity to schools, and the development of strategic partnerships between public institutions and private stakeholders. Palmer is married with 2 children, Henry, 7 and a rising second grader, and Roslyn, a 5-year-old and soon-to-be-kindergartner. His wife, Meghan, worked at UNC with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation of women's reproductive health in Sub Saharan Africa. This year Meghan began a tech startup that supports small and medium sized businesses in Durham understand the effectiveness of their marketing investments (ROI, cost per customer, etc.).

## **DEBBIE PEDERSEN**

Debbie Pedersen is the Executive Director of the Modoc County Transportation Commission (MCTC) and the Modoc Transportation Agency (MTA). MCTC assists the City and County with STIP project delivery, regional planning, and she directs and manages plans and programs. MTA directs, manages, and operates Sage Stage, the transit line, through third party contractor. MTA has three intercity routes to Reno, NV; Klamath Falls, OR; and Redding, CA. It also offers a local demand response service. In addition to her work as MCTC/MTA Executive Director, Pedersen has worked in the planning field for almost 30 years. Previously she worked as a staff assistant and created the Joint Powers Authority that runs the service, being instrumental in its creation. She also worked in the Planning Department, working on land use planning, the General Plan, and the housing element. Pedersen also worked at Caltrans in various capacities. In addition, Pedersen is an active artist, working in fused glass, painting, and drawing. She is the chair to the local Art Center and can be reached at [dpedersen@modoctransportation.com](mailto:dpedersen@modoctransportation.com).

## **MICHAEL PIMENTEL**

Michael Pimentel is the Deputy Executive Director of the California Transit Association, a nonprofit trade organization representing California's transit industry, including more than 85 public transit agencies in the state. In this role, Pimentel steers the Association's advocacy and education efforts related to the COVID-19 pandemic and serves as the Association's chief advisor on policies and programs impacting air quality and the climate. Prior to joining the Association, Pimentel held various legislative positions in the Administration of Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. in which he focused on mass transportation issues. He is active in the Young Professionals in Transportation – Sacramento and is an Advisory Board Member for the New Leaders Council – Sacramento. Pimentel received a Master of Public Policy from the University of California, Berkeley's Goldman School of Public Policy, and a Bachelor of Arts in Economics from the University of California, Berkeley.



## **LEANNE REDDEN**

Leanne Redden is Executive Director of the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). The agency manages an annual regional transit operating budget of approximately \$3 billion with assets of approximately \$160 billion and a more than \$8.3 billion five-year capital program. Under Redden's leadership, the RTA created *Invest in Transit*, the regional transit strategic plan covering 2018-2023 that makes the case for the region's capital funding needs. Redden was pivotal in regional advocacy efforts that culminated with the 2019 passage of Rebuild Illinois, the largest capital bill in Illinois history. Before joining the RTA, Redden was Chief of Planning for the Illinois Tollway and Director of Transportation for the Village of Schaumburg. She was a key player in the Illinois' 2008 Transit Funding and Governance Reform Legislation. Redden was named 2015 "Woman of the Year" by the Chicago chapter of Women in Transportation and is a Conference of Minority Transportation Officials 2016 "Woman Who Moves the Nation." Redden can be followed on Twitter @LReddenRTA.

## **SUSAN SHAHEEN**



Dr. Susan Shaheen is a pioneer and thought leader in innovative mobility strategies. She was among the first to research and write about the changing dynamics in shared mobility and likely scenarios automated vehicles might gain prominence. She is a professor in Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of California, Berkeley. She is a Co-Director of the Transportation Sustainability Research Center of the Institute of Transportation Studies (ITS), Berkeley and Director of the UC ITS' Resilient and Innovative Mobility Initiative. She has a Ph.D. from UC Davis and a M.S. from the University of Rochester. She has authored 75 journal articles, over 125 reports and proceedings articles, 18 book chapters, and co-edited two books. She is the Vice Chair of the Transportation Research Board (TRB) Executive Committee and will become the Chair in 2021. She received the 2017 Roy W. Crum award from TRB for her distinguished achievements in transportation research. In May 2016, she was named one of the top 10 academic thought leaders in transportation by the Eno Transportation Foundation.



## **PAUL SKOUTELAS**

Paul P. Skoutelas is president and chief executive officer of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA). His entire career has been in public transportation, serving in both the public and private sectors. Skoutelas is a champion for the power of public transportation to create personal and economic opportunities for all and to connect and build thriving communities. Prior to joining APTA in 2018, Skoutelas served as senior vice president for WSP USA, one of the world's largest architectural and engineering firms and national director of WSP USA's Transit & Rail Technical Excellence Center. He also was chief executive officer at the Port Authority of Allegheny County (PAT), Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and the Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority (LYNX), Orlando, Florida. Skoutelas received bachelor's and master's degrees in civil engineering from The Pennsylvania State University and a master's degree in business administration from the University of Pittsburgh. He is a licensed professional engineer.

## **BRIAN TAYLOR**

Brian D. Taylor, Ph.D., FAICP is a Professor of Urban Planning and Public Policy in the Luskin School of Public Affairs, and Director of the Institute of Transportation Studies at UCLA. He studies and teaches about travel behavior and transportation equity, finance, politics, and history. His recent research examines falling public transit ridership before and during the COVID-19 pandemic; working from home, travel, and life satisfaction; the rise of local sales

taxes for transportation; and the effects of traffic congestion on economic productivity and housing production. Dr. Taylor holds a BA (geography) from UCLA, an MS (civil engineering) and MCP (planning) from UC Berkeley, and a Ph.D. (planning) from UCLA. He was recently named one of the Top 10 Academic Thought Leaders in Transportation by the Council of University Transportation Centers and honored as a National Associate by the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies.

## **ROBERT VILLAR**

Robert Villar is the Assistant Director of Financial Services for Miami-Dade County's Transportation and Public Works Department (DTPW). DTPW enhances, coordinates, and operates the County's transportation networks with a goal of improving mobility to create a resilient and sustainable community for our residents, businesses and visitors. DTPW operates the 18th largest public transit system in the country (based on annual vehicle revenue miles) and the largest transit agency in the state of Florida. Villar holds a Bachelor of Accounting and a Master of Science in Taxation from Florida International University. With over 20 years of Accounting, Budget, Finance and Management Experience, he oversees the DTPW Budget & Performance Reporting, Financial Service, Treasury Services and Grant Administration Divisions with an annual operating budget of over \$630 million and a 5-year capital budget over \$3.7 billion. Part of Villar's duties include the issuance of The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for The Transit Enterprise Fund an Enterprise Fund of Miami-Dade County, Florida. He is also an adjunct professor at Miami Dade College where he teaches Accounting and Tax.



## **MARTIN WACHS**

Martin Wachs is Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Civil & Environmental Engineering and of City & Regional Planning at the University of California, Berkeley, where he directed the Institute of Transportation Studies and the University of California Transportation Center. He earlier spent 25 years at UCLA, where he was Chairman of the Department of Urban Planning for eleven years. After retiring from the University, Dr. Wachs became the Director of Transportation, Space, and Technology Program at the RAND Corporation. He now conducts research at UCLA in transportation policy.

## **JEANIE WARD-WALLER**

Jeanie Ward-Waller is the Deputy Director, Planning and Modal Programs. Ward-Waller has served as Acting District 2 Director and provided leadership as Caltrans' Sustainability Program Manager in the Director's Office where she led the growth of the Sustainability Program in implementing new initiatives across Caltrans. Before joining Caltrans, she worked for over a decade in the private sector as a structural engineer and in the non-profit sector as policy director

for two transportation organizations—the California Bicycle Coalition and the Safe Routes Partnership. As a structural engineer, she managed design and construction oversight on large-scale building projects, including a 40-story tower in downtown Boston. In each of her roles, Ward-Waller has built trusted partnerships with diverse stakeholders across government, non-profit, academic, and private sectors to develop creative solutions, advance policy change, and effectively implement new programs. Ward-Waller has a master’s degree in Engineering for Sustainable Development from the University of Cambridge and a master’s degree in Civil Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She earned her bachelor’s degree in Civil Engineering at Brown University. She is a licensed Civil Engineer in California and Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) accredited professional.

## **KARI WATKINS**

Dr. Kari Edison Watkins is the Frederick Law Olmsted Associate Professor in Civil and Environmental Engineering at Georgia Tech in Atlanta, Ga. Her teaching and research interests center in multi-modal transportation planning and the use of technology in transportation, especially as related to transit planning and operations. After a decade long career in transportation consulting, Dr. Watkins obtained a Ph.D. at the University of Washington, where she co-created the award-winning OneBusAway program to provide transit rider information tools and assess their impacts on riders. Her current focus is on understanding and reacting to transit ridership changes and she is leading TRB’s Transit Cooperative Research Program A-43, Recent Decline in Public Transportation Ridership: Analysis, Causes, Responses. Dr. Watkins also serves as the Director of T-SCORE, a new USDOT University Transportation Center on the subject of Strategic Implications of Changing Public Transportation Travel Trends.

## **XILEI ZHAO**

Dr. Xilei Zhao is the Director of Smart, Equitable, Resilient Mobility Systems (SERMOS) Lab and Assistant Professor in Civil and Coastal Engineering at the University of Florida. She applies and invents data and computational science methods to create smart, equitable, resilient mobility systems for future cities. Dr. Zhao specializes in transportation data analytics and travel behavior modeling for emerging travel modes (e.g., micromobility and ridehailing), and modeling and planning large-scale evacuation for wildfires and hurricanes. Her team’s research is funded by federal agencies (e.g., USDOT and NIST), state agencies (e.g., Florida Sea Grant), and major research centers in the country (e.g., Natural Hazards Center).