

BUILD
THE
ERA

2022 Annual Report



“Transportation should always connect and never divide

There’s nothing partisan in the American people’s minds about safe roads, clean water, and reliable broadband.”

- Pete Buttigieg

Within these quotes from [US Department of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg](#) you will find the guiding principles of Build The Era.



BUILD THE ERA

Began with a simple idea: How could we educate, empower, and engage people like us on what the US Department of Transportation does?

As infrastructure was going to become part of America's lexicon with talk of investments not seen since the creation of the Interstate Highway System, we knew there was a need for activating people in our communities.

Build The Era was founded in February 2021 by a group of Pete For America volunteers and staffers to:

- Educate the public as to what USDOT does and doesn't do and why it matters.
- Inform the public about the role that infrastructure plays in America's quality of life.
- Provide training and guidance on how to engage with local and federally elected officials on matters related to USDOT initiatives.
- Provide training and guidance on how to advocate for causes using relational organizing as a primary tool.
- Create measurable effectiveness and change.



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Mission Statement

Build the Era is committed to making the US Department of Transportation's role in the American movement understood by citizens and activating them to engage in smart and equitable investments by USDOT and for better multi-modal planning in their communities.

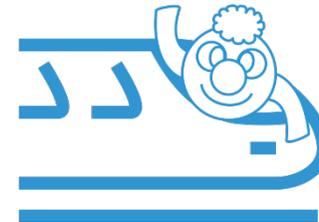
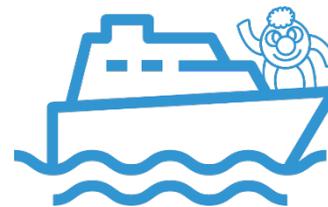
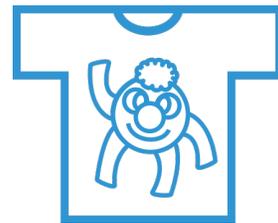


Building our own infrastructure

Working with all volunteers and no budget, we quickly developed branding that encapsulated our desire to educate in an **engaging and whimsical way**.

This branding was immediately deployed as we developed a social media presence with graphics and videos. And our whimsy was front and center as we introduced our own mascot '**Ronda Bout**' (as in roundabout).

Ronda has been seen in videos, PowerPoints, on trains, buses, and at bridges across the country. Ronda is even emblazoned on Build the Era's very own merchandise! We also developed our own website and became part of the Action Network to create rapid response campaigns and registration for our events.



Learning About USDOT

As the song says, the beginning is a very good place to start. As most of us knew little about **USDOT**, our transportation experts **Jeanne Acutanza** and **Jonathan French** developed a multi-segment presentation titled “Learn About DOT”.

Knowing transportation is a multi-faceted topic, they broke this down for attendees with some history, why it matters in your everyday life, the role of USDOT and some of the upcoming transportation challenges facing America.



Move(ing) the Era

In addition to presenting [Learn About DOT webinars](#), Jeanne Acutanza also hosted a [podcast](#) for Build the Era titled “Move the Era”.

This podcast allowed us to take deeper dives into transportation-related topics in an easy-to-understand format. Podcast topics included supply chain transportation and logistics, how roundabouts can lead to a safer and greener America, how Big Data is used to make our infrastructure better, and much more.

[The first season of our podcast had eight episodes, featuring:](#)

- **Steve Gorcester** - founder of Performance Plane, LLC
- **Ted Trepanier** - Senior Director of Public Sector Services at INRIX
- **Dr. Jeralee Anderson** - founder of Greenroads
- **Mike Pillsbury** - COO, Henniker Associates
- **Dr. Anne Goodchild** - leader of University of Washington Supply Chain Logistics program and launched Urban Freight Lab
- **Dr. Laura Schewel** - CEO of Streetlight
- **Vicki Scuri** - founder Vicki Scuri Siteworks
- **Jonathan French, P.E.** - Engineering Data Manager at Maine DOT

Adapting to constantly changing legislation

We learned as much about the legislative process in Congress this past year as we did about transportation. [The American Jobs Plan](#) was introduced by President Biden in April 2021 and Build The Era pivoted to focus on this plan's key benefits.

Our transportation experts led a series of [Happy Hour webinars](#) and wrote [blog posts](#) about what was in the ever-evolving legislation, reacting to Committee hearings, and what to look for as the law took shape in Congress into what is now the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law \(BIL\)](#).

We also asked our members to be involved too, and gave guidance on how to communicate with your elected officials to be sure they supported this legislation. One of those methods was a [letter campaign in support of the BIL](#) and you responded, sending [over 350 letters and emails](#) to your representatives in Congress.



 **350**

LETTERS & E-MAIL SENT
in support of BIL

Spotlighting the issues people care about

Infrastructure touches our lives in ways big and small, no matter how we move around. Besides the BIL, our Happy Hour webinars presented other important topics in meaningful ways, including:



Jonathon Stalls, founder of Pedestrian Dignity, presenting his organization's human-centered, body-based, and holistic approach to identifying what pedestrians face in a time of increasing speed, devastating isolation, and car-centric practices.



Loren McDonald of EVAdoption joined us for a discussion focused on electric vehicles (EV) from the consumer's perspective. He not only broke down the basics for attendees, but also outlined ways DOT could help with the expansion of EV adoption by consumers.

Continuing on the road to success



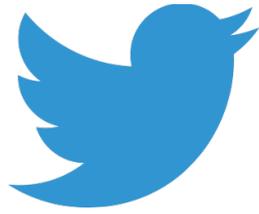
In November 2021 we celebrated the signing of the BIL, and now we are ready to start advocating for projects in our communities that take advantage of the new funding and are in the same spirit as the law. We want to see projects that promote safety, equity, resiliency and that create good jobs.



Build the Era is also following the implementation of the National Roadway Safety Strategy introduced in January 2022 by USDOT. Following that introduction, we presented a Happy Hour webinar about how it will reduce the number of road user deaths in the United States, and discussed additional measures that we think could further improve safety.

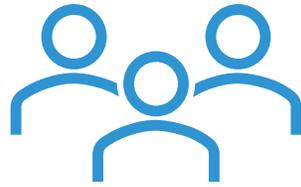
Recap of our work in 2021

- Founded in February 2021 by PFA volunteers and staff + other folks
- Developed a mission statement focused on and around education and advocacy for the work of USDOT
- Held monthly webinars, Happy Hours and other virtual meetings.
- Created a Blog and Podcast
- Created a website from scratch, which includes a Learning Hub to house all content we've created.
- Created a recognizable mascot Ronda.
- Hosted conversations with leaders in planning, safety, infrastructure, EVs, political advocacy, pedestrian safety, and more. We even have merch!
- Pivoted to support and advocate for Bipartisan Infrastructure Law



140,000

Average Monthly
BTE impressions on Twitter



1,862

Social Media
Followers



599

Newsletter
Subscribers



12

Happy Hours
Hosted

Where our members are:



46 States



Canada



Poland



District of Columbia



United Kingdom



Spain

Thank you to our all-volunteer Board of Directors

Jonathan French

Julie Parker

Tracy Seelye

Jan Dohner

Mackenzie Stratton

Christina Cronin

Dr. Laura De Veau

Ali Mischke

Bill Bagnall

“Rarely does the person laying the cornerstone get to do the ribbon cutting.”

- Pete Buttigieg

Our work – like that of USDOT – is looking to the future.

While some actions can be taken immediately to improve people’s lives, many are investments in the future. A future that is cleaner, more equitable, more accessible, and safer for everyone in America. As we look ahead to our second year, watch for us to focus on specific ways USDOT is investing in American infrastructure.