



February 28, 2022

Dear Mayor Romero,

I write to recommend that the City of Tucson (COT) move to affirm diversity and inclusion at the Tucson Convention Center (TCC) by inscribing and memorializing two pathbreaking women in Tucson's history: Alva B. Torres and Linda Ronstadt. Doing so would not only highlight Latinx contributions but would also work to feminize the downtown landscape where the overwhelming majority of sites are named after men.

In 2021, I chaired the Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission's Task Force on Inclusivity Regarding the Naming of City and County-Owned Buildings and Properties. This committee recommended that the COT reframe and revisit the meanings associated with "Historical Significance" and how this category often reflects value judgments, racist, sexist and exclusionary understandings of who is deserving of participating in the naming process and of having their name on facilities and sites. With this in mind, the Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission voted unanimously at their October 13, 2021 meeting to "to recommend to Mayor and Council that when the current phase of the rehabilitation of the Tucson Community Center (TCC) historic landscape is completed, it be named the Alva Torres Plaza in honor of Tucson preservationist Alva Torres and [that] there be interpretation of the history of the site."

From 1984 to 1992, one of Tucson, Arizona's major newspapers, the *Tucson Citizen*, featured a weekly column authored by Alva B. Torres. In the journalistic world, she stands out as one of the first Mexican American women whose weekly column appeared in a major newspaper. Before writing her weekly column, Torres had organized the Society for the Preservation of Tucson's Plaza de la Mesilla or La Placita Committee, the most formidable resistance effort to urban renewal that targeted Tucson's oldest barrios in the late 1960s and which resulted in the constructing the many buildings that comprise the TCC.

Naming the TCC Music Hall after singer Linda Ronstadt is the next logical step in activating diversity downtown. She has already been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and her name and accomplishments need to be recognized in her hometown's downtown landscape in a site that hosts musical and cultural events.

Alva B. Torres and Linda Ronstadt are both historically significant. I offer my services in interpreting the history of the TCC landscape and of these two women, and am more than willing to volunteer as needed to move these endeavors forward. I hope that that you too, Mayor Romero feel that now is the time to recognize these two deserving Latinx pathbreaking women.

Sincerely,

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Historian and Author

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