

# METRO News Release

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### **METRO Board enters negotiations with final CEO candidate**

**PHOENIX** — METRO light rail Board of Directors extends an offer of employment to Stephen R. Banta to serve as METRO's new Chief Executive Officer. Staff will begin work with METRO member cities to negotiate a fair and equitable employment contract with Mr. Banta. The CEO selection will be made official with the Board's approval of the contract.

"This was a very difficult [selection] process," said METRO Board Chairman and Phoenix Vice Mayor Tom Simplot following the Board's executive session where the two final candidates – Mr. Banta and Deborah Wathen Finn – were discussed. "Either candidate could take the reins and lead us with outstanding success; they are each professionals and top of their class."

Mr. Banta presently serves as the Executive Director of Operations for TriMet, the transit authority for the Portland metropolitan region. TriMet is the 7th largest transit system in America providing more than 350,000 trips each weekday on its 52 miles of light rail, 14.7 miles of commuter rail and 81 bus lines. Prior to TriMet, Banta served as the Chief Operations Officer with the Port Authority of Allegheny County in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania for eight years. He has more than 23 years of experience in the transit industry, starting his career in 1986 repairing railcars.

Current CEO Rick Simonetta will stay in this role through December 31, 2009.