

# METRO News Release

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### **METRO hires new CEO, Steve Banta**

**PHOENIX** — An employment contract has been finalized between METRO light rail and its new CEO Steve Banta. Banta is expected to start work on January 20, 2010.

On Wednesday, the METRO Board ratified the negotiated employment contract and submitted it to Banta for his review and, ultimately, his signature.

“We are extremely pleased to move forward with Mr. Banta,” said METRO Board Chairman and Phoenix Vice Mayor Tom Simplot. “The METRO light rail organization will benefit from his years of experience managing an operation that is a model in the transit industry.”

Banta has worked in progressively important management roles for several public transit agencies including in his current role as TriMet’s executive director of operations as well as in San Diego, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, Dallas and Pittsburgh. He has more than 23 years in the transit industry, starting his career in 1986 repairing railcars. “I appreciate the Board’s confidence in me,” said Banta. “I look forward to building a similar level of trust with the metro Phoenix community and add to the excellent work already accomplished.”

Current CEO Rick Simonetta has served as METRO’s first CEO over the last six years; his term ends December 31, 2009. METRO General Counsel Mike Ladino will serve as acting CEO until Banta’s arrival.

Simonetta has more than 38 years in the transit industry, working in all facets. METRO has been his first start-up adventure and, under his leadership, METRO opened on time, within budget and is now experiencing ridership that surpasses all projections. “I’m leaving this organization in very capable hands,” said Simonetta.