June 25, 2013

Leslie Rogers, Regional IX Administrator
Federal Transit Administration, U.S Department of Transportation
201 Mission Street, Suite 1650
San Francisco, CA 94105-1839

Attention: Paul Page

RE: Light Rail Transit Gilbert Road Extension
Main Street, Mesa Drive to Gilbert Road in Mesa, Arizona
Section 106 Consultation
SHPO-2012-0881 (112368)

Leslie Rogers:

Thank you for consulting with the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office [SHPO] pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act as implemented by 36 CFR Part 800 regarding the Federal Transit Administration [FTA] proposed federally-funded Gilbert Road Extension Project in the City of Mesa in Maricopa County, Arizona. Your most recent submittal [dated May 21, 2013] includes documentation, defines the area-of-potential effect [APE], identifies historic properties within the APE and offers eligibility recommendations for them, and also recommends a finding of effect. We have reviewed the submitted materials and offer the following comments.

Our office has had several project-specific discussions with Valley Metro, who is working in coordination with FTA [as stated in one of your earlier letters], and we concur with the APE as it is defined. We additionally concur with the finding of “no adverse effect” as recommended in your letter dated May 21, 2013. We agree, given the nature of the subsurface archaeological deposits within the construction footprint, that a monitoring plan be developed and implemented as well as provide cultural awareness training.

The above-ground historic properties are more problematic. The submitted State of Arizona Historic Property Inventory Forms adequately documented the identified buildings and objects within the APE. The context of commerce out of the downtown Mesa is too broad to identify truly significant buildings, and if they do exist within the APE, the finding of “no adverse effect” is appropriate. Our office’s position on the signage as eligible objects is that the signs would best be considered as features of their associated buildings within the APE;
lacking is a context to identify and determine individually significant signage. Again, if they exist within the APE, the finding of “no adverse effect” is appropriate.

We appreciate your continued cooperation in complying with federal historic preservation requirements. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 602/542-7140 or e-mail me at djacobs@azstateparks.gov.

Sincerely,

David Jacobs
Compliance Specialist/Archaeologist
Arizona State Historic Preservation Office

CC: Robert Forrest, Valley Metro