

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Mayor Scott Smith is in his first term as Mayor of Mesa, Arizona. Mayor Smith is widely regarded as a “refreshing new breed of leadership” with a unique approach to regional decision making. “Lines on a map shouldn’t decide policy or project boundaries,” Smith said. “Decisions must be made on what is best for the region because what is best for the region is ultimately best for each city and its residents.” Prior to being elected Mayor, Smith was a successful businessman. He and his wife Kim have been married for over 30 years, raising their three children in Mesa. He also enjoys being a doting grandfather to three grandchildren.

Panel 1: Moving Forward

Rick Pilgrim has over 30 years of experience in the development and transportation planning field. He is a national expert in the conduct of intermodal corridor projects. Pilgrim is now serving as the consultant team Project Manager for MAG to prepare the Commuter Rail Corridor Development Plans along Grand Avenue along the BNSF Railroad and for Yuma West along the Union Pacific Railroad. He is also directing the planning and design work on the Phoenix West LRT Extension along I-10 for Valley Metro Rail in Phoenix. Pilgrim has worked on commuter rail and light rail planning and design projects across the country, including projects in Dallas, Denver, Salt Lake City, San Diego and Los Angeles.

Jane Morris has been with the City of Phoenix since 1984 and is currently an Assistant Director for the City of Phoenix Aviation Department. Since starting with the Aviation Department in 2003, Morris has led the PHX Sky Train project team that successfully redesigned the project to reduce costs, increase ridership potential and improved flexibility for expansion. PHX Sky Train is currently under construction and will be the backbone of a sustainable transportation system for Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. Morris’s background prior to joining Aviation included Acting Assistant Director of the Community and Economic Development Department and Project Administrator of the Phoenix City Hall Development Team.

Marc Pearsall is a rail transit planner for Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) and is currently project manager for a variety of commuter rail and transit studies. He has worked in the areas of bus transit, transit facilities, light rail, passenger rail and freight rail since 1990. Prior to his employment at MAG, Pearsall worked at the City of Tempe, ADOT, METRO and Valley Metro-RPTA. He is also a former railroad porter and brakeman-conductor. Pearsall is a graduate of Northern Arizona University and a native of Prescott, Arizona.

Shannon Scutari is the Director for State Rail and Sustainability Services in the Arizona Department of Transportation’s (ADOT) Multimodal Planning Division. Scutari directs ADOT’s activities on freight and passenger rail, transportation and land use connectivity, smart growth and sustainable community development. Prior to joining ADOT in this capacity, Scutari served as Governor Brewer and Governor Napolitano’s Policy Advisor for Growth and Infrastructure and advised both Governors on issues related to transportation as well as growth and infrastructure. She earned her joint JD/ MBA and Bachelor’s Degree from Arizona State University and is a member of the State Bar of Arizona.

Panel 2: Moving Beyond the Tracks

Stephen Banta is the Chief Executive Officer of Valley Metro Rail, Inc. (METRO). Banta has served in the public transit industry for more than 23 years. Most recently, as the Executive Director of Operations for TriMet in Portland, Oregon, Banta oversaw a system responsible for more than 350,000 trips each weekday and consisting of 52 miles of light rail, 14.7 miles of commuter rail, 81 bus lines and an extensive paratransit system. His extensive project startup experience, combined with a deep working knowledge of bus and rail operations will help METRO maintain a customer focus while expanding into new services.

Rick Welts is President and Chief Executive Officer for the Phoenix Suns. Welts supervises all business operations of the Phoenix Suns and oversees the club’s interests in the management of the US Airways Center and the Phoenix Mercury (WNBA). He enters his eighth season with the organization.

Kimber Lanning serves as Founder and Executive Director for Local First Arizona, a grassroots, non-profit organization with over 1,700 members dedicated to raising public awareness of the economic and cultural benefits provided by locally owned businesses. Lanning is an entrepreneur, arts advocate and community activist who works to cultivate strong, vibrant communities and inspire a higher quality of life in the greater Phoenix metropolitan area.

David Appleby is an Executive Board Member of Artlink Inc., the umbrella organization that produces the “First Friday” artwalk in the downtown Phoenix area. Appleby works closely with non-profit and for-profit businesses as well as city government to facilitate arts and culture awareness and stimulate economic growth in the downtown area. In addition, Appleby has co-hosted tours with the City of Phoenix to showcase local businesses and serves as a committee member for the Phoenix Art Museum.

Sean Holstege is a senior reporter at the Arizona Republic covering transportation. He was born and grew up in London, England, where he rode the Tube every day. He arrived in Phoenix in 2006 to cover the opening of the light rail system. Prior to that he was regional transportation reporter at the Oakland Tribune, where he covered 28 public transit agencies in the San Francisco Bay Area, including some of the nation’s largest. Sean blogs routinely about Metro’s operations and its community role on the Arizona Republic’s light rail page, found at: <http://www.azcentral.com/news/traffic/lightrail/lightrailindex.html>

Friend of Transit Award



We are proud to present the 8th Annual *Friend of Transit Award* to Rick Simonetta. Rick recently ended a six-year stint as Chief Executive Officer of METRO, where he oversaw the construction of the 20-mile light rail starter line as well as the first year of operation of the system. Friends of Transit presents this award to Rick in appreciation of his dedication and years of hard work as he led METRO to get light rail up and running “on time and on budget.” Rick’s leadership brought about a truly successful system, and his support of Friends of Transit over his tenure helped to make the organization what it is today.

FRIENDS OF TRANSIT
8TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2010
SHERATON PHOENIX DOWNTOWN • 340 N. 3RD STREET

CONFERENCE PROGRAM



TRANSIT

LET'S KEEP MOVING

MISSION

Friends of Transit's mission is to educate the Greater Phoenix community about the benefits of a well-designed and accessible mass transit system, which represents a major component of a balanced regional transportation plan.



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SPECIAL THANK YOU

We would like to recognize the Friends of Transit Board of Directors. Your support, dedication and tireless enthusiasm are the reasons for our continued success. Thank you for all you do!

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SCHEDULE



7:30am Registration and Continental Breakfast

8:00am Welcome and Opening Remarks
▶ Mayor Phil Gordon, City of Phoenix

Regional Transportation Update
▶ Mayor Scott Smith, City of Mesa

8:45am Panel Discussion – Moving Forward
Now that light rail has been operating for more than a year and is exceeding expectations, it is time to discuss other modes of transportation needed and being planned.
Moderator: Rick Pilgrim, URS Corp.

▶ Jane Morris, City of Phoenix Aviation Department
PHX Sky Train at Sky Harbor International Airport

▶ Marc Pearsall, Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG)
MAG Commuter Rail Studies

▶ Shannon Scutari, ADOT
Inter-city Rail and ADOT's Multi-Modal Approach

10:00am Break

10:30am Panel Discussion – Moving Beyond the Tracks
After one year in operation, light rail has become more than a way to "get there" – it has become a "place to be." Panelists will explore the positive effects that light rail has had on the various arts, cultural and large sporting venues, along with small local businesses.
Moderator: Stephen R. Banta, METRO

▶ Rick Welts, Phoenix Suns
Sporting Event Perspective

▶ Kimber Lanning, Local First
Business Perspective

▶ David Appleby, Artlink
Arts and Culture Perspective

▶ Sean Holstege, Arizona Republic
Media Perspective

12:00pm Luncheon and Networking Time
8th Annual *Friend of Transit Award* Presentation – Rick Simonetta

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