

AM 3: Reversing the Trends of Declining Transit Ridership

Magic Kingdom Ballroom 3

MODERATOR



Dr. Brian D. Taylor

Professor of Urban Planning; Director, Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies; Director, Institute of Transportation Studies, UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs

Brian D. Taylor, PhD, FAICP is Professor of Urban Planning, Director of the Institute of Transportation Studies, and Director of the Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies in the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs. His research centers on transportation policy and planning – most of it conducted in close collaboration with his many exceptional students. Professor Taylor’s research examines travel behavior, traffic congestion, transportation economics & finance, public transit, transportation equity & politics. Professor Taylor has published over 140 articles, monographs, and reports on transportation topics, over 60 of which are peer-reviewed scholarly publications; these works have been cited over 2,700 times to date, according to Google Scholar.

Prior to UCLA, Professor Taylor was on the planning faculty at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and before that he was a planner with Metropolitan Transportation Commission in the San Francisco Bay Area. Professor Taylor has won numerous honors for his work. He was recently named one of the Top Ten Academic Thought Leaders in Transportation by the Council of University Transportation Centers and the Eno Center for Transportation, and was recently honored as a National Associate by the National Academies for his work with the Transportation Research Board.

PANELISTS



Arthur T. Leahy

CEO, Metrolink and Immediate Past Chair, Mobility 21

Art was appointed as Metrolink’s CEO and began in April 2015. He brings more than 40 years of public transportation leadership and experience to Metrolink.

One of the nation’s leading transit officials, Art served as CEO of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) for six years. During that time, he guided implementation of one of the largest public works programs in United States history, securing billions in federal and state dollars to help finance construction of dozens of transit and highway projects.

He led the completion of numerous projects funded by Los Angeles County’s Measure R. Metro has transit and highway projects valued at more than \$14 billion, eclipsing that of any other transportation agency in the nation.

This includes an unprecedented five new rail projects under construction, including phase 2 of the Expo Line extension to Santa Monica and the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension to Azusa, as well as the Crenshaw/LAX Transit Project, the Regional Connector in downtown Los Angeles, and the first phase of the Westside Purple Line subway extension to Wilshire and La Cienega.

AM 3: Reversing the Trends of Declining Transit Ridership

Magic Kingdom Ballroom 3

Art also launched a \$1.2-billion overhaul of the Metro Blue Line and guided the purchase of a new fleet of rail cars. And he helped transform the iconic Union Station into the hub of the region's expanding bus and rail transit network and led the agency's acquisition of the 75-year-old iconic facility.

Though Metrolink is a separate transportation agency from Metro, the two agencies work collaboratively on multiple fronts to provide effective and efficient public transportation options for people throughout the region. For example, Metrolink and Metro worked together closely to ensure that Metrolink riders would continue to transfer seamlessly to all Metro subway, light rail and bus lines following implementation of the Metro TAP initiative.

Metrolink offers connections to nearly 30 other public transportation providers throughout Southern California at no additional cost. Other Metrolink transportation connections include the OCTA bus system, Riverside Transit Agency (RTA), Omnitrans in San Bernardino County and Ventura Intercity Service Transit Authority (VISTA). In addition, the Rail 2 Rail® program allows Metrolink Monthly Pass holders along the Orange and Ventura County corridors to travel on Amtrak Pacific Surfliner trains within the station pairs of their pass at no additional charge.

Prior to his tenure as Metro CEO, Art led OCTA (2001-2009) and served as the general manager of Metro Transit (1997-2001) in Minneapolis-St. Paul.

While at OCTA, Art led efforts to secure reauthorization of the \$12 billion Measure M sales tax proposal, which gained 70 percent approval from Orange County voters in November 2006. Measure M led to the expansion of the county's rail and bus systems, along with numerous enhancements of streets, highways and traffic management systems.

Growing up in Highland Park community in Los Angeles, both of Art's parents worked in transit and he followed in their footsteps. He started as a bus operator for the Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD) in Los Angeles in 1971 and rose through the ranks to become chief operations officer before taking the position in Minneapolis.

Prior to earning a Masters of Public Administration degree from the University of Southern California in 1982, Leahy completed a Bachelor of Arts degree from California State University, Los Angeles in political science (1974) and certificate in transportation management (1973) from UCLA.



Kurt Luhrsen

Vice President of Service Planning, Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Texas

Kurt Luhrsen has been with the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County for eight years and is currently the Vice President of Service Planning. In this role, he is responsible for the oversight of short and long range service planning, ridership analysis and reporting, emergency evacuation planning and coordination, and fixed route scheduling. Kurt has twenty years of transportation planning experience in both the public and private sector with special emphasis in transit service design and evaluation, scheduling, bus rapid transit development, transit facility design and fare policy.

AM 3: Reversing the Trends of Declining Transit Ridership

Magic Kingdom Ballroom 3

Kurt holds a Bachelor of Arts in Urban Studies & Planning from the University of California at San Diego and a Master of Arts in Urban Planning from UCLA. He is also an active member of the American Planning Association and a current member of the Advisory Board for the UCLA Institute of Transportation Studies. Most recently, he served as METRO's Project Manager for the System Reimagining project, which completely redesigned the fixed-route bus network to make it useful for more people and aims to increase ridership by 20% over its first two years.



Ken Phipps

Deputy CEO, Orange County Transportation Authority

Ken is currently Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA).

Prior to serving as OCTA's Deputy CEO, Ken was the Executive Director of Finance and Administration where he directed OCTA's financial planning, budgeting, accounting, financial reporting, information technology, contracts administration and materials management, treasury and general administration functions.

Ken first joined OCTA in 1992 with a broad background of experiences in the private sector, ranging from manufacturing to service to defense contracting. He worked as a financial analyst building OCTA's annual budget and long-term financial plans. In 1998, Ken left OCTA to join the Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority, a \$2.4 billion freight rail project linking the San Pedro Ports with downtown Los Angeles, where for two years he served as Budget Manager and Controller. Ken returned to OCTA as the Budget Manager, then Manager of Financial Planning and Analysis, Director of Finance and Administration, before advancing to Executive Director of Finance and Administration.

Ken earned a Bachelor of Arts in Applied Mathematics from the California State University, Fullerton. He also attended Cornell University, School of Engineering and completed the Management Development Program at the University of Southern California.



Leslie Rogers

Regional Administrator-Region IX, Federal Transit Administration

Leslie is the Regional Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Region IX Office and has served in this position since May 1996. Headquartered in San Francisco, Region IX is comprised of the states of California, Arizona, Nevada and Hawaii, and the territories of Guam, American Samoa, and the Northern Marianas. As Regional Administrator, Leslie leads a professional and paraprofessional staff, including a satellite office in

Los Angeles, which provides the planning, grant making and project management for the delivery of the FTA program in Region IX that annually exceeds \$2.4 billion. The transportation program portfolio that he manages is in excess of \$15 billion. Prior to his appointment as Regional Administrator, he had held the position of Deputy Region IX Administrator from 1993. In 2000, he became a member of the Federal Senior Executive Service.

AM 3: Reversing the Trends of Declining Transit Ridership

Magic Kingdom Ballroom 3

His 37 year tenure with the FTA also has included service in the Office of the Chief Counsel in Washington, D.C. and as Regional Counsel in the Denver and New York City Regional Offices. During his years with FTA, Leslie has dealt with national and regional issues covering various policy, budget and legal matters. His range of experience includes responding to the needs and concerns of tribal governments, rural and small bus operators and to those of two of the country's largest transit systems in New York City and Los Angeles.

Leslie is a graduate of Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois and the Howard University School of Law in Washington, D.C.



Stephanie Wiggins

Deputy CEO, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Stephanie is the Deputy Chief Executive Officer for Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro). She most recently served as Executive Director of Vendor/Contract Management. She has over 20 years of experience working for transportation agencies. Prior to Metro, she served as Regional Programs Director for the Riverside County Transportation Commission and oversaw transit, commuter rail, rideshare, goods movement and rail capital projects. She is a member of the WTS-LA Board Chapter, Transportation Research Board (TRB) Congestion Pricing Committee and TRB Research and Technology Coordinating Committee. She earned a BA from Whittier College and an MBA from University of Southern California.