



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

May 29, 2008

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Patricia Harris-Morehead, (615) 880-3943

Wendy Smith, (615) 862-6194

MTA wins Federal Transit Administration MegaSTAR Award

NASHVILLE – The Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) received the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Region IV MegaSTAR Award today in Atlanta, Ga.

The Southeast Transit Achievements and Recognition (STAR) awards are given annually to recognize successful initiatives that resulted in significant contributions and excellence in public transportation. The MegaSTAR Award is for the Transit Model of Excellence.

MTA earned this top award for its innovative method of promoting ridership by establishing partnerships with employers, educational institutions and other entities through its Easy Ride commuter benefits program. Easy Ride is designed to help employers of all sizes incorporate commuter benefits into their benefits plan.

“Using transit gives employers and employees a tax savings as well as an affordable alternative to record-high gas prices and commuting,” MTA Chief Executive Officer Paul J. Ballard said. “We are pleased to receive this special recognition from FTA for our successful ridership gains.”

A partial list of employers, educational institutions, and agencies participating in the MTA Easy Ride program include the following: Vanderbilt University and Medical Center, Belmont University, the State of Tennessee, Bass Berry & Sims, LP Building Products, First Tennessee Bank, the U.S. Corps of Engineers, U.S. Bankruptcy Court, U.S. Probation Dept., Greater Nashville Regional Council and several area hotels such as Holiday Inn Select Vanderbilt, Renaissance Hotel, Hilton Hotel and Hampton Inn.

The result of these partnerships has impacted MTA ridership. More than 8 million passenger trips were recorded in 2006, up from almost 7 million the previous year. Nearly 8.5 million passenger trips were recorded in fiscal year 2007, and the MTA is on track to record more than 9.4 million in the current fiscal year that ends on June 30.

FTA-funded public transportation providers in the southeast region include Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

###



Editor's Note: To request this information in an alternative format, please call 862-5950 and ask to speak with MTA's ADA Coordinator.