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TRANSIT NEWS

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PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION RIDERSHIP CONTINUES TO CLIMB IN 2007 **Tri-Rail Once Again Among Nation's Leaders**

The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) today announced that Americans took 78 million more trips on public transportation during the first six months of 2007, compared to the first six months of 2006. This means that more than 5 billion trips were taken during this six-month period, representing a 2.3% increase in the second quarter and a 1.1% increase in the first quarter of 2007.

Tri-Rail was once again among the nation's leaders in ridership growth, carrying 15.4% more passengers in the first half of 2007 than they transported during the first half of 2006. Last year, Tri-Rail led the nation in ridership growth in the commuter rail sector. During the first half of 2007, only commuter rail in Harrisburg, PA and Dallas, TX experienced higher ridership increases than Florida's only commuter rail system. Tri-Rail is operated by the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority.

"The fact that our ridership continues to grow is a testament to the need for public transportation in South Florida.," said Joe Giulietti, SFRTA Executive Director. "There is no greater challenge in our region than the movement of people, goods and freight and the establishment of a dedicated funding source that will provide for it."

Noting that the 10.1 billion trips taken in 2006 were the highest in 49 years, APTA President William W. Millar said, "The good news is that public transit ridership is growing on top of last year's record ridership. Whether it is because of high gas prices, increased congestion, or new and expanded transit services, more and more people are choosing public transportation."

"The increased public transit ridership we are seeing this year clearly shows that people want travel choices," said Millar. "Additionally, we are releasing a new report that shows that millions of Americans – from all walks of life – use and depend on public transportation."

In the first six months of 2007, commuter rail had the highest growth rate of all modes at 5.5% and four areas showed commuter rail ridership increases in double digits during this six month period: Harrisburg, PA (47.5%); Dallas, TX (17.0%); Pompano Beach, FL (Tri-Rail) (15.4%); and Oakland, CA (14.9%). Other high

growth rates in commuter rail ridership also occurred in: Stockton, CA (10.0%); San Carlos, CA (8.7%); and Long Island, NY (7.7%).

Light rail (modern light rail, streetcars, trolleys, and heritage trolleys) had the second highest percentage of ridership growth among all modes of transportation, with a 4.1% increase. Some of the areas reporting the highest increases in light rail ridership opened new services over the past year. The Regional Transportation District of Denver, CO showed the largest increase at 78.9%. The light rail systems in the following areas showed double digit increases from January through June 2007: St. Louis, MO (37.8%); New Orleans, LA (34.2%); Kenosha, WI (26.5%); State of New Jersey (19.8%); San Jose, CA (12.2%); Memphis, TN (12.1%), and Baltimore, MD (11.9%).

Heavy rail (subways) ridership grew nationally by 2.8% during the first six months of 2007. The four areas showing the largest increases in ridership were: Atlanta, GA (10.7%); State of New Jersey (7.2%); Staten Island, NY (6.4%); and San Francisco, CA (5.9%).

Bus ridership in small and large communities also showed increases. Nationally, bus ridership increased by 0.6%. The largest bus agencies showing the largest increases for the first six months of 2007 were located in the following cities: Seattle, WA (7.8%); Minneapolis, MN (5.6%); and Denver, CO (5.3%).

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Demand response (paratransit) ridership increased by 3.7%. Trolley bus ridership decreased by 3.7% and all other types of public transportation increased by 0.6% from January through June 2007.

To see the complete report, go to <http://www.apta.com/research/stats/ridership/>.

In addition, to releasing the latest transit ridership statistics, APTA has released a new report that gives the most current profile of public transportation passengers. Titled "A Profile of Public Transportation Passenger Demographics and Travel Characteristics Reported in On-Board Surveys," the data came from 150 on-board vehicle passenger surveys, summarized by transit agencies from responses by more than 496,000 public transportation riders from 2000-2005. These surveys represent transit systems that carry 60 percent of all the transit trips in the United States.

According to the findings of this largest on-board survey study about the public transportation industry, almost 6 in 10 riders surveyed said they use public transportation to get to work (59.2%). The second largest reason for using transit was to go to school (10.7%).

"As the report shows, public transportation is essential for our economy and for an educated workforce, since commuting to work and going to school were two important reasons that people take transit," said Millar.

Other findings of this report, counted by the number of trips taken, include:

- 30% of riders said that this was the first year they had taken public transportation and most transit riders have been riding for more than two years (57.1%).
- Most transit trips are taken by people who regularly use public transportation. Nearly two-thirds of trips are taken by riders who take transit five or more days a week. (65.5%)
- Eight out of ten transit trips are taken by riders who ride three or more days a week (81.2%).
- 25% of transit trips are taken by riders for personal purposes such as: shopping, dining, social events, and medical trips.

- Riders come from all racial backgrounds; the largest groups using public transportation are: Caucasian (41%); African American (33%); and Hispanic (14.3%).
- Women transit riders outnumber men transit riders by a 55%-45% split.
- More than one-third of all transit riders have household incomes of \$50,000 or more (34.3%). Almost 10% of transit riders have household incomes of \$100,000 or more. Almost half of respondents said they have household incomes ranging from \$15,000 to \$49,999 (45.6%)

To read this report go to the APTA web site at: www.apta.com

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APTA is a nonprofit international association of 1,500 member organizations including public transportation systems; planning, design, construction and finance firms; product and service providers; academic institutions; and state associations and departments of transportation. APTA members serve the public interest by providing safe, efficient and economical public transportation services and products. APTA members serve more than 90 percent of persons using public transportation in the United States and Canada.