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TRB SELECTS WILLIAM W. MILLAR AS THE RECIPIENT OF THE 2018 SHARON D. BANKS AWARD

WASHINGTON -- The 2018 recipient of the Transportation Research Board’s (TRB’s) Sharon D. Banks Award for humanitarian leadership in transportation is William W. Millar, former president of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA). The award will be presented on Jan. 10, 2018, at the 97th TRB Annual Meeting, in Washington, D.C.

The Sharon D. Banks Award is a biennial award established in the memory of Sharon D. Banks, who chaired the TRB Executive Committee in 1998. She died in 1999. The award recognizes innovative and successful leadership in people-oriented initiatives in transportation, sustained over an extended period, exemplifying Banks’ ideals of humanity and service. Millar was both a friend and mentor to Banks. Their friendship and collaboration was evident in TRB’s Transit Cooperative Research Program, which Millar helped establish, and where they both served on the Transit Oversight and Project Selection Committee. In their roles, both emphasized the characteristics of humanitarian leadership through collaboration, cooperation, and most importantly, valuing the insights of others.

Millar is recognized for his leadership and mentoring of an entire generation of public transportation leaders. Since the earliest stages of his career, Millar exemplified the ideals of Sharon Banks. As the executive director of the Port Authority of Allegheny County in Pittsburgh, Mr. Millar led the way in improving transportation accessibility by working with persons in the disability community to develop practical, usable transportation services and facilities years before the Americans with Disabilities Act became law in 1990.

As APTA President from 1996-2011, he helped forge partnerships to move public transportation forward whether it was helping to actualize the special acronym behind the Easter Seals Association’s Project ACTION – “Accessible Community Transportation in Our Nation” or pushing for people-oriented initiatives that brought together individuals of diverse backgrounds in the pursuit of excellence by strengthening relationships with transit workers unions, the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials, the Women’s Transportation Seminar and others or pushing public transportation to be better integrated into federal, state, and local transportation policies and plans. Within APTA, he is credited with fostering an environment of camaraderie and empathy, also traits of Sharon Banks, which helped to lay the groundwork for the resurgence of transit in the United States.

Millar, a strong supporter of transportation research, received the Founding Father Award for his leadership in establishing the Transit Cooperative Research Program. His service to TRB began in 1976 when he served as a member of the Standing Technical Committee on Transportation for
the Transportation Disadvantaged. His service to TRB has continued, almost uninterrupted, since that point. He was also a member of the TRB Executive Committee for more than two decades serving as its chair in 1992. In recognition of this contribution, Millar was named a National Associate of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine in 2001.

Millar is the recipient of many awards including APTA’s Jesse Haugh Award as Transit Manager of the Year; TRB's W.N. Carey Jr. Distinguished Service Award and Thomas B. Deen Distinguished Lectureship; Railway Age's Graham Claytor Award; the Texas A&M Transportation Institute's Director's Research Champion Award; and the Eno Foundation’s Award for Transportation Excellence. The William W. Millar Award for the best paper addressing public transportation was instituted by TRB in his honor. Millar has received lifetime achievement awards from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials, and the Council of University Centers. He is a member of the APTA's Hall of Fame and the Intelligent Transportation Society of America Hall of Fame.

Millar has a bachelor’s degree from Northwestern University in geography and a master’s degree from the University of Iowa in urban transportation planning and policy analysis.

The mission of TRB is to provide leadership in transportation innovation and progress through research and information exchange, conducted within a setting that is objective, interdisciplinary, and multimodal. Its annual meeting -- a major focal point of TRB's activities -- provides an opportunity for transportation professionals from all over the world to exchange information of common interest. Approximately 13,000 policymakers, administrators, practitioners, researchers, and representatives of government, industry, and academic institutions are expected to attend the 97th TRB Annual Meeting, taking place Jan. 7-11, 2018. The meeting, held at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C., includes more than 5,000 presentations in more than 800 sessions and workshops covering all aspects of transportation.

TRB is a program unit of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine -- private, nonprofit institutions that provide independent, objective analysis and advice to the nation to solve complex problems and inform public policy decisions related to science, technology, and medicine. The Academies operate under an 1863 congressional charter to the National Academy of Sciences, signed by President Lincoln. For more information, visit http://national-academies.org.

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