



MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FURTHER INFORMATION:

Eric Melcher

615-862-4620

eric.melcher@nashville.gov

WeGo facilities renamed for community leaders *Elizabeth Duff, Ernest 'Rip' Patton honored*

NASHVILLE – The Metro Nashville City Council approved an ordinance on Tuesday to officially rename WeGo Central in downtown Nashville as the “Elizabeth Duff Transit Center at WeGo Central.” The council also approved the naming of the future WeGo North Nashville Transit Center as the “Ernest ‘Rip’ Patton North Nashville Transit Center.”

Duff was the first female and first African American female bus operator in Nashville when she was hired by the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (Nashville MTA) in April 1974. Patton was a college student and member of the Nashville Freedom Riders who participated in the downtown Nashville Civil Rights sit-ins and protests in Mississippi.

“To me, [this naming] is an inspiration to just keep going forward and to try to follow in her footsteps and be all I can be like she was,” said Virpi Carter, daughter of Elizabeth Duff.

“It shows that all the things that my uncle did was very special, not just to only me, but to everyone he met and came into contact with, and the things he had done for the community and the process of what happened back then until now, and that there is still work to be done,” said Michelle Holt, niece of Rip Patton

All Metro Council members co-sponsored both bills, an indication of the level of support for the ordinances. The Nashville MTA board recommended the naming changes during a meeting in April. Duff died of COVID complications on February 13, 2021, at the age of 72. Patton died on August 24, 2021, at the age of 81. An official renaming ceremony will be held at the Elizabeth Duff Transit Center at WeGo Central when signage is installed. Groundbreaking for the Ernest ‘Rip’ Patton North Nashville Transit Center is expected this fall. For more information about WeGo Public Transit visit [WeGoTransit.com](https://www.wegotransit.com).



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Duff and Patton family members attended the Metro Council meeting, including Elizabeth Duff's son, Seneca (center), who is a WeGo bus operator. They are joined here by council members: Freddie O'Connell, District 19; Zulfat Suara, CM at large; and Brandon Taylor, District 21.

About WeGo Public Transit

The Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (Nashville MTA) and the Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee (RTA) are operating bodies of WeGo Public Transit, which serves 26 local bus routes, eight regional bus routes, and one train serving Davidson and Wilson Counties. Visit WeGoTransit.com.



Editor's Note: To request this info in an alternative format, call 615-862-5950 for the ADA Coordinator.