



## **New Orleans Regional Transit Authority and Veolia Transportation Receive US DOT Grant of \$45 million for Streetcar Expansion**

**New Orleans – February 28, 2010** – The New Orleans Regional Transit Authority (RTA) announced the receipt of a \$45 million TIGER Award from the US Department of Transportation (DOT). The grant was part of \$1.5 billion in stimulus funding that DOT granted to high priority, innovative transportation projects around the country. It will expand the historic New Orleans streetcars through the city's central business district, along Loyola Avenue, a corridor that is home to significant commercial and business activity, and is near the Louisiana Superdome.

The RTA Board of Commissioners and Veolia Transportation have a new kind of public-private sector relationship. The Board of Commissioners of the RTA has a contract with Veolia Transportation in which Veolia manages all major transit authority responsibilities and operations. This type of delegated management arrangement is common in Europe but is the first of its kind in transportation in the U.S.

Two years ago, the RTA and Veolia Transportation presented a multi-faceted new vision for mobility to the Mayor of the City of New Orleans. In the first phase of the vision, the RTA hired Veolia to make broad-based improvements in the city's transit system. The award of this TIGER Grant is a key second phase in the realization of the RTA's vision for mobility.

The acronym "TIGER" means Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery. This award was earned via a highly competitive process in which cities and states competed for funds from DOT for highway, rail and transit projects. The U.S. Department of Transportation received 1,380 grant applications totaling \$56.6 billion, and New Orleans was one of only fifty projects selected. This grant enabling the Loyola Avenue streetcar expansion is the first half of a comprehensive plan to expand the popular streetcars.

"We are grateful to the Department of Transportation for its support of this project and our vision for enhanced mobility in New Orleans," said Cesar Burgos, Chairman of the New Orleans RTA. "We and Veolia Transportation see mobility as a tremendous catalyst to the city's continuing renewal. Expanding the streetcars in this important corridor will make a major contribution to the vitality of our central business district."

"This project is a consequence of a new kind of partnership between the city of New Orleans and the private sector," said Mark Joseph, CEO of Veolia Transportation. "We and the RTA have implemented a model of partnership proven in Europe. We are delighted by this success and believe it is a prelude to many more great projects and new funding sources that will collectively bring visible, important benefits to New Orleans."

## **About The New Orleans Regional Transit Authority**

The New Orleans RTA operates multiple modes of transit including bus, paratransit, neighborhood circulators and the historic New Orleans Streetcars. The RTA transports over 11.5 million passengers, with 83 buses, 66 streetcars, 10 Lil' Easy circulator vans and 42 paratransit vehicles.

There are three streetcar lines in New Orleans, which have a long and storied history. One line, the famous St. Charles streetcar line, was the oldest continuously operating line in the world for 170 years, from 1835 to 2005 when Hurricane Katrina struck. Following repairs, the line re-opened in mid-2008 to much fanfare.

The St. Charles line was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973, which means that it operates today with cars and infrastructure exactly as it did in the 1920's. It is a major tourist destination in the city.

Today the New Orleans RTA has a vision and a plan for expansion of the streetcars in the downtown area, as well as improvement of the bus fleet and service. The RTA is dedicated to providing service to residents who remained through Katrina, as well as adapting appropriately to the new residential patterns of former residents who are now returning to the City, as well as new residents attracted by the City's renewal and reinvigoration.

## **About Veolia Transportation**

Based in Chicago, Veolia Transportation is the largest private-sector operator of multiple modes of transit in North America, including bus, rail, paratransit, shuttle, sedan and taxi services, through contracts and partnerships with cities, transit authorities, airports and other clients.

The company is part of the ***Veolia Environnement companies in North America***, with 30,000 North American employees, providing sustainable environmental solutions in water management, waste services, energy management, and passenger transportation.

Veolia Transportation is part of Veolia Transport, the global transportation division of Veolia Environnement. Veolia Transport is a leading private operator of multiple modes of public transit, operating contracts for 5,000 city transit authorities in 28 countries, and completing over 2.6 billion passenger trips per year. ***Veolia Environnement*** (NYSE: VE and Paris Euronext: VIE) is the worldwide reference in environmental services. With more than 336,000 employees in 72 countries, Veolia Environnement recorded annual revenues of \$50 billion in 2008. Veolia Environnement is in the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index (DJSI World) and Dow Jones STOXX Sustainability Index (DJSI STOXX). Visit the company's Web sites at [www.veoliatrtransportation.com](http://www.veoliatrtransportation.com) and <http://www.veolia-transport.com/en/>.

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