



New Streetcar Expansion Opens in New Orleans *Spurs New Economic Development along Loyola Corridor*

NEW ORLEANS – The new Loyola Avenue/Union Passenger Terminal (UPT) streetcar line began operation on January 28th, the week before the Super Bowl. The Regional Transit Authority and the City celebrated the historic occasion with a grand opening ceremony that was distinctively New Orleans. The ceremony featured marching bands, choirs and an inaugural ride where local businesses and even judges from the Court House came out to the street to offer champagne toasts to city leaders and RTA dignitaries who addressed them from the steps of the streetcar.

The new streetcar line operates approximately 1.6 miles along Loyola Avenue between the Canal Street and the Union Passenger Terminal. The line has already generated \$2.7 billion in development along the streetcar's new corridor, including new apartments and condominiums, a new entertainment/ sports complex, an expanded and renovated Hyatt Regency, a new grocery store. Some 70 projects in all have already converted a formerly bleak area into a vibrant avenue. The expansion improves connectivity between convention, tourism, entertainment, energy, and health care and biosciences facilities and enhances quality of life for residents.

Dignitaries at the opening ceremony included U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood, FTA Administrator Peter Rogoff, U.S. Congressman Cedric Richmond, Mayor Mitchell J. Landrieu, Regional Transit Authority Chairwoman Barbara C. Major and the RTA Board of Commissioners, Veolia Transdev global CEO Jean-Marc Janailac, Veolia Transportation CEO Mark Joseph and other Veolia executives, and a host of other city and state elected officials.

The \$53 million project was funded primarily through a \$45 million TIGER grant from the FTA which the RTA and Veolia's management team secured in February 2010. Additional funds for the project were secured through the Regional Transit Authority Sales Tax Revenue Bond Series 2010. Construction began in June of 2010, and a full 30% of the funding went to local businesses (DBEs).

"It gives me great pride to open a streetcar line to bring better transportation services to the community as well as access to jobs and economic investment in this corridor," said Barbara C. Major, Chairwoman of the RTA Board of Commissioners. "This project is only the beginning for the RTA as we continue to expand our streetcar network around the city."

Said Justin Augustine, VP of Veolia and General Manager of the RTA, "We salute and congratulate the Mayor, the RTA Board of Commissioners, the FTA, our leading engineering and construction partners --AECOM, Parsons Brinckerhoff, Archer Western and RailWorks--, plus the development community, and city departments and utilities, all of whom made valuable contributions."

Veolia Transportation manages and operates the transit system of New Orleans under a "Delegated Management" contract with the RTA Board of Commissioners. CEO of Veolia, Mark

Joseph added, “Veolia Transportation is proud to have played a key role in making this rail expansion a reality for the city of New Orleans. Our team that manages RTA operations has done exceptional work to complete this project and improve operational performance, both of which are contributing to the economic growth of the city as it recreates itself after one of the largest natural and transit disasters in the country.”

This is an example of a highly productive collaboration between federal, state and local government and the private sector. In his remarks, Secretary LaHood referenced the more than \$2 billion in economic development projects in and around the corridor stating, “This is a stimulus project that worked.”

Plans for the next streetcar expansion are in the design phase and will extend the line down North Rampart Street along the edge of the French Quarter. That project is expected to break ground in early 2014.

About RTA and Veolia Transportation

The RTA and Veolia Transportation entered into a delegated management contract in mid-2009. This historic agreement is based on an ambitious, phased plan to improve public transportation and mobility in New Orleans over a ten-year period, as a cornerstone of the city’s continuing renewal following Hurricane Katrina.

Under the contract, Veolia Transportation is responsible for all aspects of the performance of public transportation in New Orleans, including operations, safety, maintenance, customer care, routes and schedules, capital planning and grant administration. The RTA Board of Commissioners exercises policy-making authority for fares, service and operations, as well as approval of each year’s annual transportation development plan. This includes major initiatives, capital purchases and operating budget. The relationship between the two entities has already achieved many important milestones in the plan for improving mobility and economic development.

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