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NEWS RELEASE

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Convention-goers to receive a new freebie in Houston George R. Brown CC one of stops in forthcoming free downtown bus service

A new bus service soon will enable conventioners and other visitors to navigate downtown Houston at no cost, with support from Houston First, the newly created local-government corporation that manages the George R. Brown Convention Center and a host of other municipal properties.

Houston First is one of the financial underwriters for Greenlink, a 2.5-mile bus route that will link the GRB to hotels, restaurants, theaters and other downtown landmarks beginning in May 2012. The clean-energy service – the buses will run on compressed natural gas – was announced Monday in a press conference.

Houston First will provide a portion of the funding for the system's \$1.2 million annual operating costs once the buses are up and running next spring. Most of the initial funds come from the Federal Transit Administration.

"With Greenlink, visitors to Houston will move around downtown in ways they never could before," said Ric Campo, chairman of Houston First. "Ease of mobility is critical for convention planners. And what promises to be more convenient for our visitors than Greenlink?"

"We at Houston First await the day when a convention attendee has a quick, easy – and FREE – trip to their hotel or restaurant," Campo added.

When operational, seven buses will operate Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., approximately seven minutes apart during peak hours. In addition to connections to hospitality stops, the route will link the convention center to major office buildings, shopping and restaurants. Other popular downtown destinations on the route include Main Street Square, Discovery Green, Houston Pavilions and City Hall.

Houston First's partners in funding Greenlink operations are the Houston Downtown Management District and the BG Group.

About Houston First

Houston First represents the consolidation of the city of Houston Convention & Entertainment Facilities Department and the Houston Convention Center Hotel Corporation. Houston First is responsible for the day-to-day maintenance and operation of more than 10 City-owned buildings and plazas, and underground and surface parking for nearly 7,000 vehicles. Facilities include the George R. Brown Convention Center, Wortham Theater Center, Jones Hall and the Hilton Americas-Houston hotel.