



For Immediate Release

**Contact: Mary Kay Marquisos
(312) 791-6237**

MPEA Announces New McCormick Place Food Service Management Company

CHICAGO (July 20, 2011)—The Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority (MPEA) today announced the selection of a new food-service management company for McCormick Place, the nation's premier convention center. The MPEA approved *Savor*, a food service division of SMG, the private manager of McCormick Place and a recognized leader in convention center management. The new five-year agreement with *Savor* takes effect September 1, 2011.

The MPEA chose *Savor* from four submitted proposals, based on the analysis and recommendations of the evaluation committee and a food service consultant. Five criteria were used to evaluate the proposals including qualifications and experience, strength of management/operations plan, strength of sustainability plan, strength of marketing plan, and M/WBE utilization plan.

"*Savor* presented an exciting approach that will translate into enhanced dining options for our customers," said Jim Reilly, MPEA Trustee. "The MPEA is committed to ensuring that the foodservice experience at McCormick Place is second-to-none. *Savor* will deliver a superior level of service in an environmentally responsible manner at a price that is competitive with our prime, national, and regional competitors in the convention center industry."

In May 2010, the Illinois General Assembly passed sweeping legislation which authorized a dramatic restructuring of the Authority. As such, today the Authority selected a new management firm to provide services at rates which can sustain and continue to improve food service delivery and quality, without providing additional revenue to other McCormick Place operations. *Savor* will be expected to effectively manage operational costs, maintain and improve equipment and infrastructure, and provide a superior level of options and service while maintaining highly competitive pricing.

"The common management of food and beverage and facilities is exactly in line with the Board's approach to attract new convention business and offer the customer the best experience and highest quality possible," noted Wes Westley President & CEO of SMG. "We have had great successes in other major markets where SMG provides a combined management approach and look forward to bringing those experiences to Chicago."

MPEA owns McCormick Place and seeks to promote and operate conventions, fairs and expositions in the Chicago area, in an effort to strengthen the local economy. For more information, visit our website at www.mpea.com.

###