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**CITY COUNCIL APPROVES BALLY'S TRIBUNE AS THE CHICAGO CASINO  
LICENSEE**

*Approval allows Bally's to enter Host Community Agreement with the Mayor and City*

**CHICAGO** — Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today announced City Council approval of the first sole casino license for the City of Chicago. The City Council approval of the casino ordinance and resolution allows a casino in the City of Chicago and for Mayor Lightfoot to enter into a Host Community Agreement (HCA) with Bally's Corporation.

"Today, we have marked yet another important milestone in our journey to bring Chicago its first-ever casino and entertainment district," said Mayor Lightfoot. "A City casino signals to the world that our economy is on a strong path toward recovery and helps to ensure our structurally-sound, fiscal future. I thank all of the Aldermen who voted in favor of Bally's proposal, which will undoubtedly lead to the creation of a world-class casino for our world-class city."

The HCA is the official agreement between the City and Bally's that outlines the terms agreed between the applicant and the municipality. The HCA was approved earlier this week by the Special Committee for the City Council led by Chairman Tom Tunney.

"I am grateful that my fellow City Council members are in support of the casino and approved the necessary legislation to move this forward," said Chairman Tom Tunney, 44th Ward. "Not only will we be able to support police and fire pensions, but we will also deliver a world-class entertainment complex that residents and tourist alike will enjoy. Thanks to Mayor Lightfoot as well for ensuring this process was fair and transparent — and that the final selection is the best move for economic prosperity in Chicago."

Last month, Mayor Lightfoot announced that the City selected Bally's Corporation Tribune proposal as it met or exceeded core goals outlined by the casino selection committee, including:



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- **Economic and Financial Benefits to the City:** Bally's offered the strongest overall financial offer to the City. Bally's provided a \$40 million upfront payment at the time of the signing of the Host Community Agreement along with \$2 million annually per year thereafter. Bally's has also provided the highest minimum capital commitment to the project and is the only submitting operator that did not have a competing casino in the Chicagoland region.
- **Job Creation:** Bally's has completed an agreement with organized labor, which the City deems necessary for this process to move forward. Bally's will commit to 60% minority hiring and will create a jobs program specifically targeting neighborhoods with the highest levels of unemployment and lowest income. The jobs program also will include clear career pathways for upward mobility.
- **Equity:** The Chicago casino project is one of the most equitable casino developments in the country. The minority targets on ownership, construction, hiring, and addressable spend are amongst the highest of any large urban casino in the county and are some of the highest targets in any large Chicago redevelopment. Further, Bally's has proposed a unique crowdsourcing option which will allow for equitable opportunity and access to an investment in the project.
- **Design, Planning, Amenities, and Transportation:** The casino is proposed on a site that sits within an important land-use transition zone, with several large-scale existing industrial and commercial uses nearby that will continue to provide critical services to the City.
- **Site:** Bally's will be purchasing the entire Tribune site and is, therefore, flexible in how the other parcels within this planned development can be redeveloped; the company has committed to take input from the community for these pieces.
- **Temporary Casino:** Bally's anticipates operating a temporary casino at the Medinah Temple. This was chosen due to its proximity to major transit and retail/hospitality corridors, as well as its ability to assist in the City's post-Covid revitalization.

In addition to creating thousands of jobs, the casino will generate approximately \$400 million a year in gaming and other revenues for the City and the State of Illinois. The City believes that the casino project will meaningfully support Chicago's tourism industry, finances, job growth, and economic development in addition to enhancing property values in the surrounding area.

"Thank you to Mayor Lightfoot and the members of the City Council for approving the first casino in the city of Chicago that will also be union built and union operated," said Bob Reiter, President and CEO of Chicago Federation of Labor. "This



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represents thousands of construction and permanent jobs in the greatest working class city in the country. The new Bally's complex will be an entertainment and tourism destination that will set Chicago apart not only in this region, but across the country. I'm proud of the work done by our affiliate unions, the city council, and the Mayor to get to a finish line that many others couldn't meet."

"We would like to thank Mayor Lightfoot and the entire city of Chicago for choosing Bally's to develop a \$1.7 billion world-class gaming and entertainment destination," said Soo Kim, Chairman of Bally's. "This destination property will be built, owned, and operated by Chicagoans, with a focus on minority and women investors, contractors, suppliers, consultants, and employees. It will generate tax revenue, create good-paying jobs, and attract international, national, and local visitors for generations to come. We are extremely excited to develop this project with the people, by the people, and for the people of Chicago."

"I want to congratulate Mayor Lightfoot for this milestone achievement for our city," said Former Mayor Richard M. Daley. "As I have said before, the door to gaming in our city was opened years ago, but now our city finances will actually be beneficiaries. A Chicago casino is an important step in shoring up our city's pensions and creating thousands of well-paying jobs for our working families."

A project 30 years in the making, the city is excited to bring a casino to Chicago. The Bally's casino proposal entails a \$1.7 billion casino project and hotel on a portion of the current industrial Tribune Publishing Center. The casino will include world-class amenities such as a 3,000-seat theater; an Immerse Agency exhibition experience; an extension of the Riverwalk; a 500-room hotel tower; an outdoor park; an outdoor music venue; an amenity terrace featuring a large pool spa, fitness center and sun deck; and six restaurants, cafes, and a food hall. The casino will offer space for 3,400 slots and 170 table games. Bally's Corporation projected the development will add more than 3,000 construction jobs annually and 3,000 permanent casino jobs.

"I would like to thank my fellow Council members for their support on the casino," said Alderman Walter Burnett, 27th Ward. "Bringing Bally's to the 27th ward is an exciting opportunity for Chicago. The casino will help bring jobs and economic opportunities to the city."

"The road to bring a casino to Chicago has been a long one," said Alderman Jason Ervin, 28th Ward. "I am thrilled that my colleagues and I were able to work together to create this historic opportunity for the city."



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“The effort that my fellow Council members put into bringing a casino to Chicago has been inspiring,” said Alderman Scott Waguespack, 32<sup>nd</sup> Ward. “I am excited to continue working with them as we move on to the next steps.”

The casino selection process has been an overtly transparent process which started three years ago with a community survey in 2019 and request for information in 2020. Most procurements begin the City Council engagement after the selection recommendation has been made. The City conducted 5 community meetings, 3 subject matter hearings, and a variety of stakeholders meetings all before the selection occurred. Additionally, with this approval, Bally’s will now go through the planned development process which is when the City’s vetting of a project normally begins.

“The support my fellow Council members have given to this project has been integral to bringing Bally’s to Chicago,” said Alderman Emma Mitts, 37<sup>th</sup> Ward. “Although this has been a long time in the making, I am truly excited to say that Chicago finally has a casino.”

“This casino represents an a truly historic moment for Chicago,” said Alderman Michelle Harris, 8<sup>th</sup> Ward. “As we welcome Bally’s to Chicago, I would like to thank all my colleagues for their tireless work to bring this economic opportunity to the city.”

“I would like to congratulate Mayor Lori Lightfoot on this momentous occasion,” said Illinois State Representative Kelly Cassidy. “Bringing Chicago its first-ever casino is a laudable accomplishment and one that will bring business to the City and, by extension, to the entire State of Illinois.”

“I am proud to stand here today, to have helped lead the charge in Springfield for a Chicago casino, and to see our vision finally becoming a reality,” said Illinois State Representative Bob Rita. “We will see tremendous benefits from bringing new economic activity into the city, supporting our local businesses and families, and helping secure the retirement futures of our dedicated police and firefighters.”

The City released a selection recommendation report for the Bally's casino that is available [here](#). Shortly after City Council approval, Bally’s will also submit its application to the Illinois Gaming Board to secure approval for a casino license.

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