



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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**CHICAGO ISSUES REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR CITY'S FIRST CASINO-RESORT**

*Holder of Single Owner's License to Select Project Site, Pending City's Approval; City Aims for New Entertainment Destination to Open by 2025*

CHICAGO – The City of Chicago today officially issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the opportunity to apply for the sole casino license in the country's third-largest metropolitan market. The selected partner will be able to propose its optimal site for the project, pending the approval by the City. Chicago aims to welcome the new casino-resort by 2025.

**The RFP is available at [www.chicago.gov/chicagocasino](http://www.chicago.gov/chicagocasino).**

**For a video message from Mayor Lori Lightfoot, click [here](#).**

**For an infographic and additional materials, click [here](#).**

"After years of planning, we are beyond excited to begin the RFP process for Chicago's first casino," said Chicago Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot. "We look forward to collaborating with world-class operators to develop a premier entertainment destination that will catalyze growth in our dynamic economy, create sustainable, good-paying jobs for our workforce and bring new financial opportunities to our businesses."

The Chicago casino project is currently one of the most attractive casino-resort development opportunities in the country. A global gateway city with 9.5 million area residents, Chicago welcomed 60 million domestic and 1.5 million international visitors in 2019. The potential gaming operator will be able to incorporate its property into the City's vibrant cultural scene, robust public transit infrastructure



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and highly diversified economy. Additionally, a significantly lower tax rate was made available to a potential operator due to the passing of Public Act 101-648.

The holder of the Chicago owner's license can operate a temporary casino for up to 24 months (subject to a 12-month extension) and, thereafter, a permanent casino located in the City. In addition to a casino, the gaming enterprise also will have the opportunity to operate slot machines at Chicago Midway International Airport (MDW) and Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD). All applicants selected through the RFP process then must apply to the state for the owner's license and meet the state's licensing requirements.

The City is seeking an entertainment and gaming destination to enhance the urban fabric of the surrounding neighborhood. Required elements include a casino-resort with 500 hotel rooms or less, meeting space, restaurants, bars, entertainment venues and more. The RFP's core project goals include:

- Creating well-paying jobs and new employment opportunities, as well as plentiful apprenticeships and training programs for Chicago's residents;
- Supporting utilization and participation of Chicago-based businesses, including those owned by minorities, women, veterans and those with disabilities;
- Generating gaming tax revenues for the City, which will be dedicated to the City's police and fire pension obligations;
- Integrating seamlessly into Chicago's existing landscape and communities
- Offering a high-quality, architecturally significant design;
- Catalyzing additional economic development in the City;
- Meeting LEED development standards; and
- Providing a first-class standard of service.

The RFP includes several specific requirements that must be met, including a comprehensive plan demonstrating how the applicant intends to meet or exceed these specific goals:

- 26% minority business enterprise (MBE) participation, 6% women business enterprise (WBE) participation and Chicago-based businesses in the design and construction of the project.
- 50% of total work hours by City residents and 7.5% of total work hours by residents of the area surrounding the project in the construction of the project.
- Hiring of employees at the project to assist in building wealth in disadvantaged communities, prioritizing hiring of City residents and achieve a diverse workforce reflecting the overall diversity of the City.



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- Sourcing goods and services during operation of the project to assist in building wealth in disadvantaged communities, prioritizing City-based businesses and maximizing high levels of contracting with MBE and WBE providers and substantial levels of contracting with veteran-owned businesses and businesses owned by persons with a disability.

The tentative timeline for the RFP is:

- **April 22, 2021:** City issues RFP
- **Ongoing:** City posts responses to applicant questions on the City's website
- **July 23, 2021:** Last date for applicants to submit written RFP questions on or before 5 p.m. CT
- **August 23, 2021:** Proposals due by 2 p.m. CT
- **Late Sept. 2021:** Applicants make public presentations of their proposals
- **Q4 2021:**
  - Community meetings with applicants as necessary prior to filing of Planned Development zoning application
  - City announces applicants qualifying for right to negotiate host community agreements
  - City commences negotiations of host community agreements and City commences required City department for agency reviews for Planned Development process
- **Early 2022:**
  - City selects final applicant
  - Ordinance introduced by City Council in support of the response of selected applicant, and applicant submits introduction to City Council of Planned Development application
  - Follow up community meeting(s) to present revisions of selected Applicant's proposal, if necessary, for Planned Development process
  - Chicago Plan Commission hearing for selected applicant
  - City Council Committee on Zoning, Landmarks and Building Standards
  - City Council adopts ordinance in support of the Response of the selected applicant and Planned Development

Applicants may submit written questions concerning the RFP to [ChicagoCasino@taftlaw.com](mailto:ChicagoCasino@taftlaw.com) and the subject line must state, "City of Chicago, RFP Question(s)."

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