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CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT, CDA CUT RIBBON FOR THE ORANGE LINE RESTAURANT
AT MIDWAY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

The new eatery is the latest addition of the Concessions Redevelopment Program and a major milestone in the Midway Modernization Program

CHICAGO — Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot joined the Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) for a ribbon cutting today to celebrate the opening of The Orange Line, the latest restaurant concession offering at Midway International Airport.

The opening is part of the \$75M investment to renovate and expand concessions at Midway under the \$400M Midway Modernization Program (MMP), the largest capital improvement project at Midway in more than 20 years.

“The success of the Midway Modernization Program is proof that we can achieve anything when we have a clear vision, solid partnerships with local agencies and organizations, and the ingenuity and creativity of a diverse team of contractors and employees,” Mayor Lightfoot said. “These investments, in and around the airport, significantly enhance the passenger experience and have created more than 1,000 new jobs for Chicago residents.”

“It is our privilege to show the world what Chicago has to offer in terms of local retail and restaurants, and The Orange Line is no exception,” CDA Commissioner Jamie L. Rhee said. “Midway’s new shops and restaurants could stand alone as a destination for shopping and dining, and we hope they will enhance the travel experience for the millions of travelers who pass through the airport each year.”

Named after the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) train line that connects the airport to the Loop, The Orange Line offers tacos, burgers, Buffalo chicken mac and cheese, truffle fries, salads, and more. The restaurant, located in Concourse B near Gate B21, was developed by SSP America’s local joint venture team in partnership with Midway Partnership, the airport’s concession developer. The Orange Line is open from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily and offers breakfast, lunch, dinner, and a full bar.



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The first phase of Midway's Concessions Redevelopment Program, which overhauled the entire concessions area to make room for new and improved options, is now complete. The second phase will add 26,000 square feet of concessions.

"We've been very intentional in our concessions redevelopment to ensure it elevates the passenger experience and creates a sense of place that is truly Chicago," said Sammy Patel, CEO of Midway Partnership. "Through this local joint venture between SSP America and several local Chicago businesses, the Orange Line is a great example of the many ways the partnership with the City of Chicago is maximizing the opportunities for true local participation."

There are currently 61 food, beverage, retail, and vending concessions locations at Midway, including locally-owned favorites like Billy Goat Tavern, Garrett Popcorn, Nuts on Clark, Café Descartes, Shoe Hospital, Farmer's Fridge, and The Orange Line. Nine new food and beverage concessions and eight new retail locations are expected to open in 2023.

Midway's concessionaires achieve an Airport Concessions Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (ACDBE) participation rate of 55%, one of the highest in the United States.

"Orange Line is the latest concept to join the SSP America portfolio and offers passengers a contemporary vibe and celebrates Chi-town menu favorites," said Bob Stanton, Vice President of Business Development for SSP America. "Our team is proud to be a member of the Airport community and continue our efforts to create career and business opportunities for the City's residents. Special thanks to our local joint venture partners who have worked collaboratively with us to bring this concept to life and create a 'taste of place' for travelers."

"The Orange Line restaurant is a success story for a segment of the air travel industry still recovering from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic," said Alderman Matt O'Shea (19th). "The onset of the pandemic severely impacted airport concessionaires across the country, and operators here at Midway were hit particularly hard. I'm proud to see these businesses succeed for the good of our communities."

Since the Midway Modernization Program began in 2017, the CDA has constructed a new 80,000-square-foot security pavilion over Cicero Avenue that provides additional TSA checkpoints for improved throughput. Other improvements have included upgrades to the Terminal Parking Garage, a new inline baggage handling system for carry-on bags, and dozens of infrastructure improvements that allow for better passenger flow. The Concessions Redevelopment Program is the final major component of the MMP.

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