



BLOOMINGTON CITY COUNCIL STATEMENT ON GAMING IN THE COMMUNITY

The following provides the Bloomington City Council position on initiatives proposed by the Legislature and Governor to locate a casino in the metropolitan area - possibly in Bloomington. The interest and discussion about a casino was generated in the State Capitol, not in Bloomington City Hall. This is not the first time the subject of a new casino has come up in St. Paul, so the Bloomington City Council has established some principles describing how the City will respond to casino legislation, if and when it advances beyond the talking stage.

- In March 2002, the Bloomington City Council discussed the subject of casinos and gaming, and concluded that:

“Bloomington is opposed to a casino unless it’s inevitable, at which time the City would want to negotiate up front to ensure that it is beneficial for the local community.”

- In 2004, during discussion of a legislative proposal by the owners of Caesars Entertainment Inc., the City Council agreed that their discussion and consideration of their positions on casino gaming would occur in public meetings that any Bloomington resident, reporter or other interested party could attend or could monitor the Council’s process by reading meeting minutes. The Council took this direction so that they could develop a sufficient level of knowledge about casinos and gambling to stay abreast of the Legislative process. In the event the Bloomington legislative delegation is unable to defeat casino legislation, Council members want to be prepared to protect the City’s best interests. The Caesars legislation did not advance in the 2004 Legislature.
- In response to a December 2004 request by the Mall of America’s partners, the City Council scheduled a presentation at its January 3 work session. The Mall’s representatives presented their concepts for the next development phase, including their interest in incorporating a casino as part of the Governor’s proposal for generic legislation permitting a casino in the metropolitan area. Following their previously established principles, the City Council described their future direction as follows:

“The partners at the Mall are interested in exploring the option of a casino on their site as part of the Governor’s generic proposal . . . the Council feels that they need to go through a process to get educated on the issue of gaming in their community in order to be in the best position to ultimately make a decision on whether they want to have it here or not.”

Complete minutes of the January 3 meeting are available on the City’s web site at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us.

Future Council discussion of their position on casinos and gaming will occur in open public meetings. No dates are currently determined.

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