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PURSUING 2016 OLYMPICS WILL HAVE LASTING, POSITIVE IMPACT ON CHICAGO, MAYOR DALEY SAYS

*He Rallies Business, Government, Community Leaders, Olympians and
Residents in Washington Park Prior to His Departure for Copenhagen*

As he prepared to leave for Copenhagen, Denmark, and the International Olympic Committee's October 2 selection of the host city for the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Mayor Richard Daley said today that bidding for the Olympics has been good for Chicago.

"We've pursued the bid to position Chicago to reap the economic, revenue and neighborhood benefits of the better economic times to come," the Mayor said in a news conference held in Washington Park.

"Hosting the Games would help ensure that Chicago remains a vibrant, creative and growing place where our children and future generations can have a good life," he said.

"It is clear that many people think hosting the Olympics would be a great thing for Chicago. We see it as a once in a lifetime opportunity that would help redefine our city and create a host of new opportunities. But as we grapple as a city and a nation with the worst economic downturn in recent memory, people are struggling," Daley said.

"They're having to make difficult decisions that make it tough to focus on the long-term benefit the Olympic Games would bring. I understand that and I respect it," he said.

Daley said he shares the confidence of those who have been involved in putting together the finances for the Games that the risk to taxpayers of hosting the Games is small, while the jobs, revenue and other economic benefits from the Games would be great.

“As we prepare to leave for Copenhagen for the final week leading up to the International Olympic Committee’s decision, I want to remind all Chicagoans how just bidding for the Olympic Games will have a deeply positive impact on our City,” he said.

“Remember, not a single Summer Olympics Games in over 35 years has lost money but has returned an average surplus of \$748 million back to host cities for projects that improve the quality of life in those cities,” he said.

He said he was pleased that no taxpayer dollars were spent on this bid process. All the money to support it was raised from private sources.

“Most importantly, the Olympic Games would be a huge boost to our economy, raising it to a new level. They would help us recover sooner from the recession that still grips our nation and enable us to better compete in the new economy,” Daley said.

“Tens of thousands of jobs for hardworking Chicagoans would be created as we lead up to the Games and more jobs for them would be created after the Olympics have ended and our city is more clearly positioned around the world as a great place to visit and do business,” he said.

Daley said millions of dollars in new tax revenues would be generated because of the Games, especially from tourists and others who visit Chicago.

He said new neighborhood investments would be made, leaving a legacy of an improved quality of life. All Chicagoans will benefit for generations to come from some new assets that will be permanent. Those include:

- An aquatics center and amphitheater for sporting and cultural events in Washington Park;
- A multi-sport facility and 50-meter recreational and competition swimming pool in Douglas Park;
- A brand new hockey field in Jackson Park;
- New recreational space at Northerly Island with a youth sailing center, rowing course, kayaking and paddling course and outdoor sports and environment center.
- New tennis courts in Lincoln Park;

“If we are fortunate enough to host the Games, billions of people from around the world would be exposed to Chicago as a destination for tourism and business -- which would create jobs and generate new revenue,” Daley said.

“We expect the Games to generate more than \$20 billion in new economic activity, including more than \$1.5 billion in business taxes across the state. And the Games would serve as a catalyst for funding from the federal government to meet our public transit, infrastructure and security needs,” he said.

The Mayor pointed out that this economic opportunity will be shared by all because Chicago 2016 and its Outreach Advisory Council have signed a memorandum of understanding with community groups that focuses on establishing programs that will ensure broad participation and diversity in contracting and procurement, construction, work force development, affordable housing and community enhancements.

And all Olympic spending, contracts, construction, minority and women contracting, staff diversity and forecasts, among other things, will be reported quarterly to the City Council, which will help assure the public that there is accountability and transparency in the Organizing Committee’s decision making.

“I don’t have a single doubt that all these good things will happen if Chicago is selected to host the 2016 Games,” Daley said. “Regardless of the outcome next week, we can definitively say that bidding for the Games has been a good thing and our City is better off for it.”

He said that Chicago 2016 is committed to several initiatives that will leave a lasting and positive impact on Chicagoans.

For example:

World Sport Chicago will play a large role in engaging Chicago’s youth regardless of the International Olympic Committee’s decision. The recent U.S. Olympic Committee Hall of Fame event raised approximately \$5 million, most of which will be used to continue World Sport Chicago beyond October 2 and funds left over from the bid process will be given to World Sport Chicago.

In the past two years, World Sport Chicago has reached 30,000 Chicago children through WSC events and another 230,000 Chicago young people through educational activities including Olympic Week

And it has brought seven major sporting events to Chicago, including:

- The AIBA (eye-EE-buh) World Boxing Championships
- Two Chicago Cup Wrestling Competitions
- The Pan American Weightlifting Championship
- The Tyson American Gymnastics Cup
- And two International Youth Soccer Tournaments

“Events such as these raise Chicago’s profile, position us as a center of international sports and set us up to host more competitions in the future,” Daley said. “And these events bring visitors and generate revenue for our local economy.”

WSC has also created a program to help Chicago young people prepare for college, created international youth exchange programs and involved local Olympians and Paralympians in mentoring young people in schools and local sports programs.

All these initiatives will continue and others will be established.

He outlined additional reasons why participating in the bid process has been valuable:

- More people all around the world know about Chicago because of the bid process. The City has held world-class sporting events here and its representatives have traveled throughout the world promoting Chicago’s culture, amenities and hospitality.
- The City has acquired the Michael Reese Hospital property as a site for the Olympic Village, a step – whether it gets the Games or not – that will lead to the creation of vibrant new neighborhood and will serve as a catalyst for continued revitalization of the Near South Side.

The City will be able to guide the redevelopment of these 37 acres, which is the last big parcel available on the Near South Side. It will become a neighborhood of affordable housing, new jobs and a retail community for Chicago residents that will also increase access to the lakefront.

- In the spirit of partnership, the bid has strengthened efforts to bring together groups throughout the city to talk about a common civic purpose and engage them in the planning process.

Officials of Chicago 2016 held hearings in every ward in the city to take questions from the people of Chicago and explain their plan. Thousands of Chicagoans participated and Daley thanked them for getting involved.

The Mayor said that perhaps the greatest and most permanent benefit of trying to bring the Olympics to Chicago is that in doing it, City leaders were able to take a fresh look at how to strengthen Chicago’s economy, define the City’s needs and capabilities and plan for a better economic future.

“As I have said before: Those who plan for the future, who actively look ahead for bigger opportunities will not only survive but also thrive,” Daley said.

“There are a small number of defining moments in the history and development of our city – moments that were followed by massive and positive change that improved the quality of life for Chicagoans. The Great Fire was one. So was the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893. The 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games would be such a moment for Chicago,” he said.

Daley concluded:

“This undertaking of this bid has been worth it to the City of Chicago, for all these reasons and one more: We love our city.

“We’re proud of it and we’re proud of the hard work of thousands of people - many of them volunteers – who have brought us right up to the doorstep of another defining moment.

“So, today I am taking with me to Denmark the spirit of Jean Baptiste du Sable and the spirit of Daniel Burnham and the spirit of Jane Addams and the spirit of Walter Payton.

“I’m taking with me the spirit of every immigrant who ever came here – and those who have yet to come -- to make a better life in this great city of opportunity.

“I’m taking the spirit of the countless people who support this endeavor and the passion of those who may not.

“Together, we will show Chicago to the IOC and to the world and then stand back and listen as they say: “Wow. What an incredible place.”

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