

## Daley: Stop throwing darts or risk losing Olympics

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<http://www.suntimes.com/sports/olympics/1657038,olympics-daley-economy-chicago-070809.article#>

An impassioned Mayor Daley today portrayed the 2016 Summer Olympic Games as the economic salvation for Chicago, but warned that the city just might lose the Olympic sweepstakes "if people keep throwing darts."

"In the next eight years of any city in America, tell me where the economic development is gonna come from. Is it gonna come from the military? The military builds in the south and southwest. It does not build in the Midwest and East," Daley said.

"You tell me one economic program that anyone has offered — both in the private sector or public sector. Every other city would love to have this—when the federal government will spend billions of dollars on infrastructure and on security. Besides that, the national and global publicity we receive from the build-up all the way to 2016. This is the only economic engine. We're talking about jobs. We're talking about contracts...coming into Chicago."

But, the mayor warned, "If people keep throwing darts at it, maybe they will not get it."

Pressed on whom he believes is "throwing darts," Daley said, "Did you read any headlines?" He added, "You beat us up."

He then caught himself and said, "I'm not gonna blame the media because then, you'll say, 'The mayor is fighting with the media. The mayor is always so arrogant. Then, he's fighting with the aldermen.' No. People can ask questions. But, there was a misconception by the media that I signed" an agreement making Chicago taxpayers the final back-stop against Olympic losses.

Support for Chicago's Olympic bid has been hemorrhaging since last month, when Daley told International Olympic Committee members meeting in Switzerland that he would sign a host-city contract that amounts to an open-ended guarantee from Chicago taxpayers.

Blindsided by the mayor's blank-check promise, besieged by angry constituents and burned by the parking meter fiasco, the City Council demanded that Chicago 2016 open its books to an "objective" third party — possibly the Civic Federation — for an independent analysis of the city's bid.

Ald. Manny Flores (1st) even introduced an ordinance that would cap the taxpayer contribution at the \$500 million already authorized by the City Council.

Aldermen weren't the only ones on the warpath.

Media cheerleaders turned into critics. And Inspector General David Hoffman piled on by branding as the "wrong approach for government" a reluctance to fully disclose Olympic financing plans.

On Tuesday, Chicago 2016 announced plans to hold public hearings in each of the city's 50 wards to stop the bleeding of public support — even though Chairman Pat Ryan has not yet lined up the \$1 billion in private insurance needed to shield taxpayers from unlimited losses.

On Wednesday, Daley said he understands that Chicagoans struggling to make ends meet after layoffs, pay cuts and retirement fund losses have legitimate concerns about the cost of the Olympics.

But, he said, "I would never bankrupt the city of Chicago."

The mayor added, "People can discuss this, but this is the best economic engine we have going. I have nothing [else up my sleeve]."

## 'Throwing darts' the only way to pin down full data on Olympics

Editorial - July 9, 2009

<http://www.suntimes.com/news/commentary/1658449,CST-EDT-edit09a.article>

You call them darts, Mayor Daley. We call them pointed questions.

On Wednesday, Daley warned that Chicago might lose the 2016 Olympic Games "if people keep throwing darts at it."

The mayor has been casting about the last few weeks, trying to save his Olympic dream as the clock runs out. On Oct. 2, the International Olympic Committee will chose one of four cities -- Chicago, Rio de Janeiro, Tokyo or Madrid -- to host the 2016 Games.

But it's the mayor himself who has put the city's bid in jeopardy. At an IOC event in Switzerland last month, Daley said he would sign a host-city contract, putting the city on the hook financially for any Olympic losses. He did it without warning or City Council approval, generating a tidal wave of criticism back at home.

Daley then reversed course, saying he would put the issue before the City Council.

But dozens of questions remain -- and they must be answered. We want the Olympics in Chicago, and we know the IOC won't pick the city without Daley's signature. But if taxpayers are at risk, it's not worth it.

The only way to truly gauge that risk is by asking questions -- tough ones designed to protect tax dollars, not deflate Daley's Olympic dream.

At the top of the list is an explanation of how private insurance policies, still to be purchased by the 2016 bid team, will protect city taxpayers.

Over the next few weeks, Daley's Olympic planners will hold public hearings across the city to take questions. We're also waiting for detailed hearings before the City Council.

On Wednesday, Daley said, "I would never bankrupt the City of Chicago."

There's only one way to find out if that's true.

By asking questions, including pointed ones.