



Statement to Community Meeting on Proposed Bally's Tribune Casino Development

May 12, 2022 - UIC Pavilion

[90 seconds]

I'm Brian Israel, President of the River North Residents Association

We were surprised and disappointed by Mayor Lightfoot's May 5th announcement, endorsing the Bally's Tribune proposal after only **one meeting** of the Special City Council Committee on Casinos. Since our public survey launched on April 6, **over 2,750** people have participated with **87% expressing opposition** to the project.

Like most Chicagoans, we'd been under the impression that there would be more opportunity for public input and analysis of the proposals, *prior to a recommendation in early summer*. This is an unfortunate example of how the legislative branch of city government, which should play a central role in an issue as consequential as a Chicago casino, has instead been disrespected and marginalized in this process.

In addition to the abrupt selection of Bally's as the "winning bidder", a number of other key issues have apparently been addressed with little or no Aldermanic involvement. The City Council is a coequal branch of government and should not be reduced to the status of "rubber stamp".

At the April 6 community meeting, Bally's officials graciously extended an invitation to RNRA for a meeting to discuss the proposed development. We have accepted this invitation and prepared a list of questions which were sent to Bally's this morning, as well as posted on our website. We don't want to take time from others by asking for answers tonight, but RNRA will publish and share Bally's responses to these questions upon receipt and we look forward to the opportunity for further discussion.

Please visit **RNRACHicago.org** for more information and to participate in our public survey.

Thank you.