



22

COMMUNITY  
MITIGATION  
FUND

xx\_\_\_ check if joint application

**APPENDIX F - 2022 Community Planning Grant Application**

**BD-22-1068-1068C-1068L-68403**

***Please complete entire the Application***

**1. PROJECT INFORMATION**

**a) NAME OF MUNICIPALITY/GOVERNMENT ENTITY/DISTRICT AND VENDOR CODE**

Lead municipality: Springfield

Joint request: West Springfield & Holyoke

**VENDOR CODE:**

**b) PROJECT NAME (LIMIT 10 WORDS)**

*The Fun's On Us – Tourism Hotel Promotion*

**c) BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION (LIMIT 50 WORDS)**

To increase occupancy and mitigate the impact of additional hotel room supply resulting from MGM Springfield in market, we will contract with the Greater Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau to implement a tourism marketing campaign encouraging casino visits and awarding incentives for multiple night stays during 'need' periods.

**d) CONTACT PERSON(S)/TITLE (Persons with responsibility for this grant)**

Ms. Cathy Buono, Director of Administration and Finance, Community Development, City of Springfield, MA

**e) PHONE # AND EMAIL ADDRESS OF CONTACT PERSON(S)**

413-787-6082

[cbuono@springfieldcityhall.com](mailto:cbuono@springfieldcityhall.com)

**f) MAILING ADDRESS OF CONTACT PERSON(S)**

Office of Community Development  
1600 East Columbus Avenue  
Springfield, MA 01103

**2. IMPACT DESCRIPTION/CONNECTION TO GAMING FACILITY**

**a) Please describe in detail the impact that is attributed to the operation of a gaming facility.**

The City of Springfield in partnership with the cities of Holyoke and West Springfield, seeks funding to increase hotel occupancy and mitigate the impact of premature hotel development in anticipation of the MGM Springfield casino opening. As a direct result of the casino license being awarded to MGM Springfield in 2014, hotel developers took greater interest in the Hampden County market and sited new properties in close proximity to the project resulting in 862 hotel rooms being added to the region’s bed base. These developers sought to take advantage of the increased leisure and convention visitors MGM Springfield would bring into the market.

Since MGM Springfield opened, demand for these additional hotel rooms has not materialized to fill the supply of rooms now offered, thereby resulting in a decrease in occupancy in Hampden County. With the exception of the first two months of the casino’s opening (where occupancy reached 72.6% in August 2018 and 74.5% in September 2018), every month since there has been a monthly decrease in occupancy compared to the previous year. In fact, Hampden County occupancy has never returned to pre-MGM Springfield levels. Hotel occupancy also corresponds to Rooms Tax collection and this may have resulted in a decrease in state and local collections from 2017.

Please see the chart below showing the hotels, locations, opening dates and room count for new hotel growth in Hampden County (including the 240 rooms added at the MGM Springfield hotel).

**Hampden County Hotel Room Growth**

| Hotel                                      | City             | Open Date | Room Count |
|--|------------------|-----------|------------|
| MGM Springfield                            | Springfield      | Aug 2018  | 240        |
| Hampton Inn & Suites Springfield Downtown  | Springfield      | Oct 2015  | 87         |
| Holiday Inn Express Springfield Downtown   | Springfield      | Apr 2018  | 97         |
| Courtyard by Marriott                      | West Springfield | Apr 2019  | 120        |
| Residence Inn Springfield Chicopee         | Chicopee         | Sep 2013  | 115        |
| Tru Hotel                                  | Chicopee         | Apr 2018  | 108        |
| Fairfield Inn & Suites Springfield Holyoke | Holyoke          | Aug 2017  | 95         |
| <b>Total Rooms Added</b>                   |                  |           | <b>862</b> |

The addition of MGM Springfield to the local tourism landscape was expected to result in a major increase in overnight visitors for the leisure and convention markets as well as increased tourism funding to the Greater Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau to enhance MGM Springfield’s advertising efforts and tie-in other hospitality businesses throughout the community with the message to ‘stay longer and do more’.

Since the casino’s opening, a relevant mitigating factor related to decreased hotel occupancy has been the lack of adequate tourism funding provided from the Commonwealth. A nearly \$1 billion visitor attraction was added to this market with only \$68,000 in incremental marketing dollars provided to the GSCVB by the state since the casino opened. Funds that could have been used to amplify the MGM Springfield advertising

message and connect this new attraction to other local attractions, restaurants, shops and hotels resulting in extended stays, higher hotel occupancy and increased Rooms Tax collections.  
 (See chart below for GSCVB state grant allocations)

**GSCVB State Marketing Grant Allocations 2009-2021**



The Springfield Convention Center Situation Analysis report which was commissioned by the City of Springfield and its consultant The Chicago Consultants Studio also illustrates the need for additional tourism funding. In FY17, competitors CVB budgets ranged from \$60,000 in Bangor to more than \$8 million in Syracuse. Hartford, CT does not have a CVB, however the state’s Convention and Sports Bureau allocates a portion of its budget to Hartford.

**Table 14: FY 2017 CVB Budget**

|                      | Budget (MM) | Budget per capita | Budget/ Accommodation Businesses |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Springfield, MA      | \$1.00      | \$1.58            | \$6,944.44                       |
| Hartford, CT (CTCSB) | \$0.45      | \$0.37            | \$1,704.55                       |
| Providence, RI       | \$4.01      | \$2.46            | \$7,761.63                       |
| Albany, NY           | \$1.57      | \$1.77            | \$5,943.15                       |
| Syracuse, NY         | \$1.91      | \$2.93            | \$8,059.07                       |
| Bangor, ME           | \$0.06      | \$0.40            | \$645.16                         |

Source: Various City/Count/State CVBs, The Innovation Group

b) Please provide documentation, specificity or evidence that gives support for the determination that the operation of the gaming facility caused or is causing the impact (i.e. surveys, data, reports).

The chart below details Hampden County hotel occupancy percentages before and after the opening of the MGM Springfield casino in August 2018. Hotels subscribe and report data to STR, a company that provides market data on the hotel industry worldwide, including supply and demand and market share. STR sets the standard for data intelligence and global benchmarking, allowing hotels to compete strategically, plan for the future and understand market conditions. It also allows destination marketing organizations the opportunity to gauge the impact of strategic timely regional marketing campaigns designed to influence overnight stays and drive occupancy. With the exception of the first two months of the casino’s opening (where occupancy reached 72.6% in August 2018 and 74.5% in September 2018), every month since there has been a monthly decrease in occupancy compared to the previous year. MGM Springfield does not report hotel occupancy or any other data to STR however, it is widely understood that the majority of their rooms are comped to players or discounted to MLife members, a practice which takes visitors out of the general lodging market.

Hampden County Occupancy

|      | JAN  | FEB  | MAR  | APR  | MAY  | JUN  | JUL  | AUG  | SEP  | OCT  | NOV  | DEC  |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 2014 | 50.4 | 49.7 | 51.6 | 57.2 | 59.6 | 62.6 | 67.4 | 70.4 | 69.5 | 66.2 | 56.1 | 40.8 |
| 2015 | 44   | 46.7 | 47.2 | 54   | 59   | 63.2 | 65.6 | 61.2 | 66.9 | 63   | 50.9 | 36   |
| 2016 | 39.9 | 47.8 | 46   | 58   | 60.4 | 58.6 | 65.2 | 66.1 | 70.9 | 65.6 | 53.3 | 40   |
| 2017 | 46.5 | 49.5 | 53.6 | 61.5 | 64.9 | 63   | 67.1 | 69.3 | 73.8 | 67.4 | 62.4 | 49.2 |
| 2018 | 56.2 | 59.1 | 62.4 | 67   | 64.8 | 66.6 | 69.5 | 72.6 | 74.5 | 68.5 | 58   | 43.3 |
| 2019 | 45.4 | 50.6 | 54.3 | 57.3 | 64.8 | 64   | 64.2 | 67   | 70.9 | 66.6 | 57   | 43.3 |
| 2020 | 49.2 | 51.7 | 32.6 | 28.9 | 33.3 | 39.9 | 43.9 | 51.1 | 44.8 | 46.2 | 38.5 | 36.1 |
| 2021 | 39.3 | 43.7 | 48.2 | 54.4 | 55   | 63.6 | 68.1 | 69.4 | 65.6 | 65.1 | 55   |      |

COVID-19

May 2021 gathering limits lifted

The Massachusetts Gaming Commission report titled “MGM Springfield First Year of Operation” noted that “nearly half of the patrons surveyed indicated that they spent money off-site during their trip to MGM Springfield. Among those patrons who reported some off-site spending, the most reported expenditures were food or beverages in a restaurant or fast food court, with 22.8 percent of patrons reporting expenditures. Other common types of off-site spending on visitor trips included attending an event, show, or exhibit in Springfield, visiting a local bar, pub, or nightclub, and buying fuel or other goods at a gas station. Very few survey respondents reported staying at a hotel or attending other types of entertainment outside of MGM Springfield.” See detailed chart below:

**Table 11. Off-Site Spending by MGM Springfield Patrons by Non-Gambling Activity, First Year of Operation**

| Non-gambling activities off-site   | Patrons Prompted to Visit by MGM Springfield |                  | Patrons Not Prompted to Visit by MGM Springfield |                  |
|--|--|------------------|--|------------------|
|  | Estimated Patrons                            | Share of Patrons | Estimated Patrons                                | Share of Patrons |
| Attended an event, show, or exhibit in Springfield                             | 98,441                                       | 12.5%            | 95,437   | 13.3%            |
| Went to a live entertainment show outside of Springfield, but in Massachusetts | 73,344                                       | 9.3%             | 52,271   | 7.3%             |
| Bought food or beverage in a restaurant or fast food court                     | 195,484                                      | 24.8%            | 146,461  | 20.4%            |
| Visited a local bar, pub, or nightclub   | 81,884                                       | 10.4%            | 85,504   | 11.9%            |
| Retail Shopping  | 50,622                                       | 6.4%             | 58,531   | 8.1%             |
| Stayed at a hotel outside the casino   | 31,930                                       | 4.1%             | 23,005   | 3.2%             |
| Bought fuel or other goods at a gas station                                    | 79,665                                       | 10.1%            | 62,101   | 8.6%             |
| Spent money on other entertainment (amusement park, golf course, etc.)         | 37,767                                       | 4.8%             | 69,683   | 9.7%             |
| Nothing  | 397,787                                      | 50.5%            | 361,366  | 50.2%            |

Source: SEIGMA MGM Springfield Patron Survey; SEIGMA estimates

**c) How do you anticipate your proposed remedy will address the identified impact.**

*The Fun's On Us*, a strategic marketing campaign to be executed by the Greater Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau, has been specifically designed to encourage overnight stays and boost occupancy. It addresses this issue by creating hotel room demand from drive-to feeder markets including New Haven, Boston and Providence. Springfield as the lead community, partnering with West Springfield and Holyoke, will contract with the Greater Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau, the state designated Regional Tourist Council (RTC) with a primary service area of Hampden County to lead this project based on their decades of experience marketing the region's tourism assets. The multi-media marketing campaign will offer rewards to visitors who book two consecutive nights in the same property during designated 'need periods' including October – December 2022 & 2023 as well as February – April 2023. During these booking windows, visitors who meet the booking criteria will be incentivized with a \$100 Visa Gift Card to spend during their stay in Western Mass. Advertising placements in the specific geographic target markets will lead with creative featuring MGM Springfield and other local attractions, shops and restaurants to encourage longer overnight stays. The offer will also be extended to incoming convention groups to encourage participants to come early or stay after their meeting to visit area attractions. By increasing visitation to the region, extending stays and creating additional hotel room demand, the communities involved are projected to see an increase in hotel occupancy which will also create an increase in hotel rooms tax collected for both the state and the local communities.

**3. PROPOSED USE OF COMMUNITY PLANNING FUNDS (Please attach additional sheets/supplemental materials if necessary.)**

**a) Please identify the amount of funding requested. In determining the funding request, please round up to the nearest hundred dollars.**

Amount of funding requested: \$315,000  
 \$100,000 each for Springfield, West Springfield & Holyoke  
 \$15,000 Regional Planning Incentive

**b) Please identify below the manner in which the funds are proposed to be used. Please provide a detailed scope, budget and timetable for the use of funds.**

The GSCVB will place ads in key tourism feeder markets of New Haven, CT; Boston and Providence to encourage visitors to come to Western Mass for at least 2 nights and receive a \$100 gift card to assist with in-market spending. Media placements will include digital display ads, OTT (Over the Top media - a media service offered directly to viewers via the Internet. OTT bypasses cable, broadcast, and satellite television platforms, the types of companies that traditionally act as controllers or distributors of such content and social media ads. A corresponding Expedia promotion will further attract visitors who have searched that platform looking for New England getaway destinations. Messaging will detail the steps necessary for the visitor to qualify for the \$100 gift card which will be available at the lodging location upon check-out on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the stay.

This program is modeled after a successful promotion deployed in Santa Maria, California in March 2021. To receive the gift card, visitors needed to provide the Santa Maria Chamber with confirmation of their two-night booking at a local hotel and actually show up for their reservation. The GSCVB anticipates following the same protocols. In California, 500 visitors booked travel according to the promotional guidelines in a 6 week period. The budget below is built with 450 visitors per 3-month flight. The visitor cap will be included in promotional communication to potential visitors.

|   | Oct-22      | Nov-22      | Dec-22      | Apr-23      | May-23      | Jun-23      | Oct-23      | Nov-23      | Dec-23      | Totals              |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------|
| <b>Casino Mitigation Grant \$315K</b>     |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |                     |
| Visitor Incentives for overnight stays    | \$15,000.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$135,000.00        |
| Creative Development                      | \$10,000.00 |             |             | \$2,500.00  |             |             | \$2,500.00  |             |             | \$15,000.00         |
| Media: digital display, OTT, social media | \$15,000.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$135,000.00        |
| Expedia Promotion                         | \$10,000.00 |             |             | \$10,000.00 |             |             | \$10,000.00 |             |             | \$30,000.00         |
| <b>Total</b>                              |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             | <b>\$315,000.00</b> |

**c) Please provide documentation (e.g. - invoices, proposals, estimates, etc.) adequate for the Commission to ensure that the funds will be used for the cost of planning to mitigate the impact.**

The request for a \$315,000 grant is based on projected budget fee for the scope articulated above. The final scope and range of services will be refined throughout the process in response to the success of the promotion and possible need for more incentive funding and less advertising as the 3 promotional periods unfold. All funds received through the 2022 Community Planning Grant will be used solely for the engagement of the Greater Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau to implement *The Fun's On Us* Marketing Promotion in an effort to increase hotel occupancy and visitation to MGM Springfield and other local attractions.

**d) Please describe how the planning request will address the impact indicated. Please attach additional sheets/supplemental materials if necessary.**

*The Fun's On Us* directly addresses the impact of the MGM Springfield casino and subsequent oversaturation of the Western Mass lodging market. There is not enough demand for the available hotel rooms in the market to increase hotel occupancy. This program will incentivize visitors and convention attendees to not only visit Western Mass, but to stay longer with gift cards only being awarded to guests staying 2 consecutive nights. Additionally, the incentive funds are intended to be spent in-market with attractions, restaurants and other tourism-related services.

**e) For joint grant requests, please state the amount requested for the joint request. Please also state the amount of any Regional Planning Incentive Award requested and provide separate detail on the use of these additional funds.**

Amount of funding requested: \$315,000  
\$100,000 each for Springfield, West Springfield & Holyoke  
\$15,000 Regional Planning Incentive  
All funds will be used for *The Fun's On Us* programming – creative, media and visitor incentives.

#### 4. CONSULTATION WITH REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY (RPA)/NEARBY COMMUNITIES

**a) Please provide details about the Applicant's consultation with the Regional Planning Agency serving the community and nearby communities to determine the potential for cooperative regional efforts regarding planning activities.**

Mary Kay Wydra, GSCVB President met with Lori Tanner, Economic Development Manager for the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission on January 6, 2022. *The Fun's On Us* plan was reviewed and it was determined that efforts to increase tourism in Western Mass align with the Certified Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for Western Mass.

#### 5. MATCHING FUNDS FROM GOVERNMENTAL OR OTHER ENTITY

**a) Please demonstrate that the governmental or other entity will provide significant funding to match or partially match the assistance required from the Community Mitigation Fund.**

No direct matching funds will be provided. In-kind services will be provided.

**b) Please provide detail on what your community will contribute to the planning projects such as in-kind services or planning funds.**

GSCVB in-kind contributions:

Staffing: 10 hours per month of marketing staff salary for coordinate, implement and report on campaign for its duration = \$18,600.

Marketing Campaign Alignment: *The Fun's On Us* will be amplified by the GSCVB's ongoing tourism marketing campaign, *Where Fun Comes To Play*. This totals approximately \$150,000 per fiscal year.

Team Springfield Campaign Alignment: *The Fun's On Us* will also be amplified by the marketing partnership between GSCVB, MGM Springfield and the MassMutual Center totaling \$150,000 per fiscal year.

**6. RELEVANT EXCERPTS FROM HOST OR SURROUNDING COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS AND MASSACHUSETTS ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA") DECISION**

**a) Please describe and include excerpts regarding the impact and potential mitigation from any relevant sections of the community's Host or Surrounding Community Agreement.**

There is a Host Community Agreement between Springfield and MGM Springfield but it does not address the potential for oversaturation in the lodging market due to new lodging properties built in anticipation of increased casino-related tourism. The HCA does address the anticipated increase in visitor volume and potential for increased overnight visitation due to the casino project. As a result, *The Implementation Blueprint* was commissioned to establish a framework for both general and specific urban initiatives within the districts adjoining the casino to help the City, property owners, civic leaders, and private investors leverage this massive investment toward high quality collateral development.

The Host Community Agreement specifically calls out the Implementation Blueprint as follows from paragraph 4.10, page 24: **4.10 Land Use** Developer and the City agree to (i) cooperate with each other to rezone the Project Site to take into account all elements of the Project; and (ii) participate in a district redevelopment strategic plan to provide an implementation blueprint to stimulate and **direct the broader economic development associated with the Project.**

This grant application is exactly what *The Implementation Blueprint* contemplated when it was commissioned – a plan containing specific initiatives to help the city and private property owners to leverage the casino and stimulate the broader economy.



**b) Where applicable, please also briefly summarize and/or provide page references to the most relevant language included in the most relevant MEPA certificate(s) or comment(s) submitted by the community to MEPA.**

There are no relevant sections from the MEPA certificate that relate to the proposed Community Planning Project.

**c) Please explain how this impact was either anticipated or not anticipated in that Agreement or such MEPA decision.**

The impact of new lodging properties opening to take advantage of the expected increase in overnight guests to the region as a result of MGM Springfield was not anticipated in the MEPA decision. At no time did the MEPA decision anticipate that the casino would not significantly drive overnight stays in the market.

**d) If planning funds are sought for mitigation not required under MEPA, please provide justification why funding should be utilized to plan for such mitigation.**

The unexpected impact of MGM Springfield opening in the market is the oversupply and under demand of hotel rooms and the lack of an increase in overnight visits to fill those new and existing rooms. Additionally, tourism funding has not increased for those regions with casino licensees in their service area. These budget limitations have prevented the Destination Marketing Organization (GSCVB) for Greater Springfield from increasing marketing efforts to attract more overnight stays to the casino and other tourism businesses in Western Mass. The Casino Mitigation Fund should fund this project for these reasons and because no other tourism funding source allows the grantee to incentivize visitors to stay in the market longer.

## **7. INTERNAL CONTROLS/ADMINISTRATION OF FUNDS**

**a) Please provide detail regarding the controls that will be used to ensure that funds will only be used to address the impact.**

The City of Springfield will contract with the Greater Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau. They will oversee all expenditures associated with this promotional campaign and provide a detailed accounting for said funds. No administrative fees will be paid. All funds will be used for marketing purposes. The GSCVB will authorize and approve all expenditures to a specific set of accounts and monitor against the approved scope, process, and milestones. The GSCVB will track expenditures on a monthly basis and can provide written summaries and backup upon request. The GSCVB is well-versed in monitoring grant funds and regularly receives the following grants: Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism 1038 Annual Marketing Grants, Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism's Travel and Tourism Recovery Grant, Massachusetts Convention Center Authority Annual Sales and Marketing Grant, Massachusetts State Budget Earmarks. Funds will be subject to the GSCVB's annual audit review conducted by a third-party CPA firm.

**b) Will any nongovernmental entity receive funds? If so, please describe. If non-governmental entities will receive any funds, please describe what reporting will be required and how the applicant will remedy any misuse of funds.**

The funds will be distributed to the Greater Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau to administer *The Fun's On Us* promotion. The GSCVB is a 501C(6) organization.

The GSCVB will authorize and approve all expenditures to a specific set of accounts and monitor against the approved scope, process, and milestones. The GSCVB will track expenditures on a monthly basis and can provide written summaries and backup upon request. The GSCVB is well-versed in monitoring grant funds and regularly receives the following grants: Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism 1038 Annual Marketing Grants, Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism's Travel and Tourism Recovery Grant, Massachusetts Convention Center Authority Annual Sales and Marketing Grant, Massachusetts State Budget Earmarks. Funds will be subject to the GSCVB's annual audit review conducted by a third-party CPA firm.

**NO COMMUNITY IS ELIGIBLE FOR MORE THAN ONE COMMUNITY PLANNING REGIONAL PLANNING INCENTIVE AWARD.**

**8. CERTIFICATION BY MUNICIPALITY/GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY**

On behalf of the aforementioned municipality/governmental entity I hereby certify that the funds that are requested in this application will be used solely for the purposes articulated in this Application.

By: 

Date: 01/18/2022

Signature of Responsible Municipal  
Official/Governmental Entity

Melanie Achse

(print name)

Budget Director

Title:



## Town of West Springfield

**William C. Reichelt**  
Mayor

26 Central Street, Suite 23  
West Springfield, MA 01089  
(413) 263-3041 | Mayor@tows.org

26 January 2022

Ms. Cathy Judd-Stein, Chair  
Massachusetts Gaming Commission  
101 Federal Street, 12th Floor  
Boston, MA 02110

**Re: Letter in Support of the City of Springfield's Grant Application**

Dear Chairwoman Judd-Stein and Members of the Commission:

On behalf of the Town of West Springfield, I write to lend support to the application filed by the City of Springfield for a gaming mitigation grant award in the amount of \$315,000.00.

As you are aware, the Town of West Springfield is immediately adjacent to the MGM Springfield Casino. We are excited to partner with the City of Springfield in their grant application, and believe that this award will be extremely helpful in promoting visitation and extending visitor stays in our community.

West Springfield boasts tremendous tourism assets, including excellent hotels, restaurants, the Eastern States Exposition and more. With this grant, the City of Springfield will partner with the Greater Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau (GSCVB) to implement their "The Fun's on Us!" campaign. This targeted marketing effort will promote these attractions and encourage visitors to extend their stays and take in all of what our city has to offer.

I am confident that this award will increase visitor spending and generate economic activity for our region, particularly in the tourism and hospitality sector which has been so severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

I urge your support for this gaming mitigation grant application, and I am available at any time to answer any questions which you might have.

Sincerely,

**William C. Reichelt**  
Mayor



MAYOR JOSHUA A. GARCIA  
CITY OF HOLYOKE

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January 20, 2022

Ms. Cathy Judd-Stein, Chair  
Massachusetts Gaming Commission  
101 Federal Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02110

Dear Chairwoman Judd-Stein and Members of the Commission:

On behalf of the City of Holyoke, I write to lend support to the application filed by the City of Springfield for a gaming mitigation grant award in the amount of \$315,000.00.

As you are aware, the City of Holyoke falls within close proximity to the MGM Springfield Casino. We are excited to partner with the City of Springfield in their grant application, and believe that this award will be extremely helpful in promoting visitation and extending visitor stays in our community.

Holyoke has numerous marquee tourism assets, including excellent hotels, restaurants, the Holyoke Mall, Volleyball Hall of Fame and more. With this grant, the City of Springfield will partner with the Greater Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau (GSCVB) to implement their "The Fun's on Us!" campaign. This targeted marketing effort will promote these attractions and encourage visitors to extend their stays and take in all of what our city has to offer.

I am confident that this award will generate increased economic activity for our region, particularly in the tourism and hospitality sector which has been so severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

I urge your support for this gaming mitigation grant application, and I am available at any time to answer any questions which you might have.

Best regards,

Joshua A. Garcia, Mayor



MGM SPRINGFIELD  
ONE MGM WAY  
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01103

413.273.5000  
MGMSPRINGFIELD.COM

January 21, 2022

Ms. Cathy Judd-Stein, Chair  
Massachusetts Gaming Commission  
101 Federal Street, 12th Floor  
Boston, MA 02110

Dear Chairwoman Judd-Stein and Members of the Commission:

On behalf of MGM Springfield, I write to lend support to the application filed by the City of Springfield for a gaming mitigation grant award in the amount of \$315,000.00.

MGM Springfield works closely with the City of Springfield on numerous initiatives and my team also has a close working relationship with the Greater Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau (GSCVB). We are engaged in tourism promotion as a marketing partner with the GSCVB, we hold a seat on their Board of Directors and MGM Springfield contributes marketing dollars to the Bureau to promote leisure visitation throughout Western Mass through our Team Springfield initiative. We believe that this award will be extremely helpful in promoting visitation and increasing hotel occupancy by extending visitor stays in our community.

"The Fun's on Us!" campaign is a natural extension of our Team Springfield branding theme, "Where Fun Comes to Play". The brand was developed by MGM Resorts for the GSCVB as they lead the Team Springfield marketing effort on behalf of MGM Springfield and the MassMutual Convention Center. "The Fun's on Us" will promote MGM Springfield and other regional attractions and encourage visitors to extend their stays and take in all of what Western Mass has to offer by rewarding visitors who stay in the region for at least two consecutive nights with \$100 gift cards. We anticipate that this money will also be spent in-market further enhancing the ROI for this promotion.

I am confident that this award will generate increased economic activity for our region, particularly in the tourism and hospitality sector which has been so severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

I urge your support for this gaming mitigation grant application, and I am available at any time to answer any questions which you might have.

Best regards,



Chris Kelley  
President  
MGM Springfield