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McCormick Place Announces Oak View Group as New Private Management and Food Service Partner

OVG360 and OVG Hospitality selected after a competitive RFP process

CHICAGO — McCormick Place, the largest convention center in North America, has awarded Oak View Group two major contracts for private management.

In a unanimous vote, the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority (MPEA) Board awarded the contracts for private management and food services on the McCormick Place campus to OVG360 and OVG Hospitality, respectively.

The contracts, scheduled to begin on October 1, 2023 and run through September 2028, were unanimously awarded following an extensive public procurement process. The change will affect the McCormick Place Convention Center, the 10,00-seat Wintrust Arena, and Arie Crown Theater.

“I am thrilled to welcome OVG360 and OVG Hospitality to our campus,” said **Larita Clark, CEO of MPEA**. “We are always seeking ways to evolve and innovate to provide the best destination in the country for our event planners and their attendees. This new partnership gives us the opportunity to continue to enhance the McCormick Place experience, from the planning phase to the event execution phase, through the completion of each event.”

OVG360 and OVG Hospitality are divisions of global sports and live entertainment company Oak View Group, and currently manage a combination of services in more than 400 venues worldwide, including arenas, stadiums, convention centers, performing arts centers, and more.

“We’re incredibly proud that McCormick Place has entrusted OVG360 and OVG Hospitality as the new keepers of this world-renowned complex. While McCormick Place has set the industry



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standard for decades, we are honored to help shape its future,” **Chris Granger, president of OVG360**, said. “We see an incredible opportunity to elevate the guest experience, support the surrounding community, drive sustainability, and grow and inspire a diverse workforce. We look forward to bringing our depth of experience from around the globe to Chicago and to building upon McCormick Place’s incredible track record.”

OVG Hospitality is among the fastest-growing food and beverage providers worldwide, embracing technology, sustainability, local investment, and diversity, equity, and inclusion to create tailored experiences at every location.

“From onsite hydroponic gardens to high-tech market experiences to diverse local suppliers, OVG Hospitality has all the resources to elevate McCormick Place’s dining experience to the next level,” **Ken Gaber, president of OVG Hospitality**, said. “We are excited to begin serving guests from around the world at McCormick Place.”

Across Illinois, OVG currently oversees a combination of venue management and food services at Navy Pier in Chicago, SeatGeek Stadium in Bridgeview, NOW Arena in Hoffman Estates, and State Farm Arena and Memorial Stadium at University of Illinois in Champaign. OVG also manages more than 60 convention centers across North America, including Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center Dallas, Miami Beach Convention Center, Atlantic City Convention Center, Duke Energy Convention Center in Cincinnati, and I-X Center in Cleveland.

“We’re thrilled to welcome McCormick Place as our newest convention center partner,” **Greg O’Dell, president of OVG360 Venue Management**, said. “With our best-in-class service offerings and relentless pursuit of operational excellence, we look forward to helping McCormick Place maintain its stature as one of the preeminent meeting and conventions venues in the world.”

Planning will begin immediately to ensure a seamless transition for McCormick Place clients, guests, and employees. MPEA is in communication with upcoming events to keep them aware of the latest developments, and OVG360 and OVG Hospitality have committed to honoring existing collective bargaining agreements on campus to maximize employee retention. Additionally, ASM Global and SAVOR...Chicago, the campus’ current private management and food service providers, will work closely with MPEA, OVG360, and OVG Hospitality throughout the transition.

As a municipal corporation governed by Illinois state statutes, MPEA is authorized to employ private venue and private food service management companies for McCormick Place and conduct new competitive procurement processes for these contracts periodically.

“MPEA is grateful to ASM Global and SAVOR...Chicago for setting the standards as McCormick Place’s private management and food service provider for more than a decade, and we thank them for their assistance during this transition,” Clark said.



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About McCormick Place

McCormick Place is the premier convention facility in North America. Located just minutes from downtown Chicago, approximately 3 million visitors each year attend events at McCormick Place. Home to some of the largest and most attended conventions, meetings, and tradeshows in the world, McCormick Place was designed as one of the first purpose-built convention centers in the United States and is the largest and most flexible convention center in North America. The McCormick Place campus is a convention center campus comprised of the North Building, South Building, West Building, Lakeside Center, and the 10,000 seat Wintrust Arena. For more information, please visit: McCormickPlace.com

About Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority (MPEA)

The Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority owns McCormick Place, the largest exhibition and meeting facility in North America, the Wintrust Arena as well as the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place and the Marriot Marquis Chicago Hotels. Together, the North, South, and West Buildings and Lakeside Center offer 2.6 million square feet of exhibition space. Located along Chicago's lakefront, McCormick Place features 173 meeting rooms, the 4,249-seat Arie Crown Theater, and one of the largest ballrooms in the world.

About Oak View Group

Oak View Group (OVG) is a global sports and entertainment company founded by Tim Leiweke and Irving Azoff in 2015. OVG is focused on being a positive disruption to business as usual in the sports, live entertainment, and hospitality industries and currently has eight divisions across five global offices (Los Angeles, New York, London, Philadelphia, and Toronto). OVG oversees the operations of Climate Pledge Arena at Seattle Center; UBS Arena in Belmont Park, NY; Moody Center in Austin, TX; Acrisure Arena in Greater Palm Springs, CA; and CFG Bank Arena in Baltimore, MD; as well as arena development projects for Co-op Live in Manchester, UK; Anhembi Arena in São Paulo, Brazil; FirstOntario Centre Arena in Hamilton, ON; a New Arena and entertainment district in Las Vegas, NV; and a New Arena in Cardiff, Wales. More information at OakViewGroup.com, and follow OVG on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).