

Encore casino operators urge gamblers to park elsewhere

Written by Administrator
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The fear of traffic jams near the Encore Boston Harbor casino has operators urging gamblers to take the T, a ferry or a shuttle bus when the doors open June 23.

“With so many easy ways to get to Encore, why drive?” casino president Bob DeSalvio told the commission Wednesday.

DeSalvio said visitors will be able to get to the casino by Encore shuttle bus at the Malden Center and Wellington MBTA stations that will operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Coach buses will also be available at the Park and Ride lots in Millbury, Rockland and Londonderry, N.H. Ferries at the World Trade Center and Long Wharf in Boston will run seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 11:40 p.m.

The casino will have almost 3,000 parking spots and will cost \$22 for six hours and \$42 for 24 hours. Travel by Lyft and Uber is also being encouraged.

More than 130 police detail officers have been hired to work on Encore’s grand opening day for traffic — including Everett, Boston and Medford police departments as well as officers from MBTA Transit and state police.

“And they will work with us as long as we need them. So whether it’s a day, a week, a month, three months, they’ve committed that all we have to do with it is ask for the (police) details, and they’ll be able to help us out,” said DeSalvio. “We believe we will keep this opening plan pretty much through the whole first week.”

Parking has already been a sore spot for the \$2.6 billion gambling mecca. As the Herald first reported, the casino has [gobbled up 700 parking spots at a garage in Medford next to the Wellington T station for Encore employees,](#) pushing out commuters.

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Meanwhile, the commission voted 4-0 to allow the casino to begin its three-day “test nights” beginning Monday. Test nights allow Encore to demonstrate to state regulators its slot machines and gaming tables are working properly, and for the casino to fine-tune services before opening to the public.

Commissioner Eileen O’Brien was appointed by the commission to oversee Encore’s test nights and would have authority to issue a conditional operations certificate to allow the casino to open as scheduled on June 23 at 10 a.m.

“One of the reasons why we picked 10 a.m. was to do it on a day that was relatively slow, in terms of normal commuter traffic, hopefully being very, very light,” said DeSalvio of the Sunday opening.

“We were trying to think about heat of the day, we wanted the opening to occur in the morning so that if people were going to line up, it would be more early morning before it gets too hot,” DeSalvio said. “And then so we’re trying to be cognizant of public safety in particular.”

Earlier this week, the commission said its gaming agents have completed inspection of Encore’s 3,158 slot machines, 143 table games and 88 poker tables. Slot machine payouts are determined by software and each machine is required to have a minimum theoretical payout of 80 percent over the cycle of the game.

Read more <https://www.bostonherald.com/2019/06/12/encore-casino-operators-urge-gamblers-to-park-elsewhere/>