

# Ohio could vote on casino resort

A USD 600 million resort and casino in Southwest Ohio that developers hope Ohio residents will vote for this fall would be 185,806 sqm and include a 1,500-room, 20-story hotel. Partners for MyOhioNow.com, the group that hopes to develop the project, revealed an architectural design from their offices here on Wednesday.

The casino would be built on Ohio 73 at Interstate 71 between Harveysburg and Wilmington, but the project first must be approved by Ohio voters.

Casino gambling is not legal in Ohio. Ohio voters have rejected casino-style gambling three times in the last 20 years, most recently in 2006 when they voted against a proposal to place thousands of slot machines at Ohio's horse tracks.

Plans for the project's first phase include a 220,000-square-foot casino, 4,000 to 5,000 slots, a 3,716-5,574 sqm conference center, a 3,000-car parking garage and about 100 gambling tables, plus a poker room. The development also would include up to 9,290 sqm for specialty retail and up to eight restaurants. „This clearly would be the biggest casino in the Midwest,“ said Brad Pressman, a co-founder of MyOhioNow.com.

The casino company has until August to collect the 402,275 signatures necessary to get a proposed constitutional amendment on the November ballot. Rick Lertzman, co-founder of MyOhioNow.com, said the group is in the process of collecting the signatures it needs and hopes to complete that process by June. „Our job now is to go to the voters,“ he said.