

M Resort licensing gets OK from gaming board

The state Gaming Control Board has recommended licensing approval for what would become the southernmost resort in the Las Vegas Valley.

The board unanimously approved licensing for the USD 700 million M Resort at Las Vegas Boulevard South and St. Rose Parkway in Henderson.

The recommendation will be considered Jan. 22 by the Nevada Gaming Commission. M chief executive Anthony Marnell III said the resort would open March 1.

Marnell told regulators that he views the resort as a locals property, but it also will draw small tour and travel groups, particularly from Southern California, and free and independent travelers seeking a high-end resort experience without going to the Strip.

Marnell said the resort would have 351 standard rooms and 39 large suites, a 92,000-square-foot casino with more than 1,800 slot machines and 60 table games, and nine restaurants and several bars.

He also said a convenience store and gasoline station on the property will allow customers to swap loyalty card points for gasoline. An on-resort pharmacy also will distribute medical needs to employees and to customers, also with loyalty card points.

Marnell said the company received 37,000 job applications for 1,800 jobs. He said 400 people have been hired and 1,400 have been extended offers with most employees expected to be on board by Feb. 14.

Construction of a 1-million-square-foot retail center to be attached to the M Resort has been postponed at least 24 months, Marnell said, but construction on a Galaxy Theater complex is scheduled to begin shortly after the resort opens.

In other business, the Control Board recommended approval of the licensing of Australian casino giant Crown Ltd.

Crown is in the process of acquiring Cannery Casino Resorts, which operates three properties in Southern Nevada, and is building a casino in Pennsylvania.

Crown operates resorts in Australia, Great Britain, Canada and Macau and also is an investor in the Fontainebleau project under construction on the Las Vegas Strip.