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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CITY COUNCIL APPROVES ORDINANCE  
TO ACCOMMODATE VERTIPOINT IN CHICAGO MEDICAL DISTRICT**

*Vertiport will be first public-use helicopter landing site near downtown Chicago since 2003*

City Council today approved an ordinance that will accelerate progress of the Vertiport USA-Chicago project. The Vertiport, a first-class helicopter landing, takeoff, storage and parking facility, will be built on property owned by the Illinois Medical District Commission (IMDC) on Chicago's near west side.

"Chicago has not had downtown helicopter access for a decade," said Mayor Emanuel. "This Vertiport will provide a key transportation link to downtown Chicago from surrounding airports – an essential feature of most world-class cities that will enable faster emergency response and shorten travel times."

The Vertiport will provide a much needed aviation amenity to the city of Chicago that, when completed, will include a dedicated ambulance entry point, a single takeoff and landing zone, a 30,000 square foot hangar, two underground fuel tanks and a 12,000 square foot terminal building with office, medical, conference and waiting area space. The project will also create 10 full-time jobs.

"The Illinois Medical District is the largest urban medical district in the country with more than 2,000 hospital beds and servicing thousands of walk-in patients daily," said Warren Ribley, Executive Director of the IMDC. "The Vertiport will allow our four hospitals and first responders to quickly tend to the needs of patients who require essential life-saving treatment."

Currently, all medical flights for the Illinois Medical District operate in and out of the Stroger Hospital of Cook County Helipad located on W. Harrison Street in Pasteur Park. The 10 acre Vertiport site, bordered by Hastings Street on the North, 15<sup>th</sup> Street on the South, the CTA Pink Line on the East and Wood Street on the West, will offer many advantages and improvements over the current helipad including improved response times for medical patients and organs for transplant,

a safer helicopter approach, a larger landing area and reduced refueling times. The latter is currently unavailable in the Illinois Medical District.

Chicago's Police and Fire Departments will save money thanks to reduced flight time to refuel at the new Vertiport. Cost savings will also be produced for the Cook County Health and Hospital System/Stroger Hospital because the County will be able to decommission the existing helipad once the Vertiport is operational.

The Vertiport will be used for a variety of purposes, with priority given to emergency medical transport and public safety. Groundbreaking is anticipated for the spring of 2014.

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