

## Lori Lightfoot's victory 'nothing but good' for Mayer Brown

The former Big Law partner's election enhances the reputation of a firm already known for government service.

BY CLAIRE BUSHEY

It's all upside for law firm Mayer Brown as former partner Lori Lightfoot takes the top job at City Hall.

Last night's victory for the one-time underdog burnishes the reputation of a law firm with a history of lawyers leaving for government work. It doesn't hurt the firm's chances to win more business from the city and related agencies, either, although city ethics rules and concern for appearances will slow any developments there.

"It's certainly a feather in their cap," said Trisha Rich, a legal ethics partner in the Chicago office of Holland & Knight. "It's going to be nothing but good for the firm."

Mayer Brown is one of the largest law firms in the country, with \$1.39 billion in revenue in 2018, and 1,570 lawyers.

Mayer Brown congratulated Lightfoot this morning on Twitter and Facebook. A statement called her "a shining example of our firm's commitment to public service, and we join the citizens of Chicago in wish-

ing her success as the new leader of a great city."

Another Mayer Brown lawyer with government experience is one of Lightfoot's biggest supporters, former Illinois Attorney General Tyrone Fahner. He may be in the mix for a role in her administration.

Others include Bill Daley, who joined the firm in 1985 at 36 and later became U.S. commerce secretary, chief of staff to President Barack Obama and third-place runner-up in the mayor's race. Both Michael Scodro and Mitchell Holzrichter are back at the firm after government service, Scodro as Illinois solicitor general and Holzrichter as deputy chief of staff to former Gov. Bruce Rauner.

In a 2017 interview with trade publication Law360, Mayer Brown general counsel Andrew Marovitz said having lawyers who had worked in government benefited the litigation practice, showing "our ability to handle pretty high-stakes litigation in a political arena."

Mayer Brown, like dozens of firms, already does work for the city

of Chicago. It has represented public entities in a plan to build a hotel at Navy Pier, widen the Stevenson Expressway and upgrade the Red and Purple el lines.

Anthony Licata, a partner in the Chicago office of Taft Stettinius & Hollister, said Mayer Brown is a distinguished law firm selling quality service, not clout, and Lightfoot's election won't change that.

"I'm sure there will be people who will seek them out for that reason, but I think they will be disappointed," he said. "Lori is a reformer, so I think she'll be especially sensitive to appearances like that."

City ordinance forbids elected officials from influencing decisions about any organization in which they hold a financial interest, for a year before or after the decision, Rich said. Lightfoot resigned from Mayer Brown in May to pursue her mayoral bid, but she could have received earned compensation at a later date.

Still, Lightfoot's victory benefits the firm in the long run, Rich said, even if "they may have to sit out for a minute."