

# Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

## CPS, union eye TIFs

Tax districts sought to plug budget hole

By **Nell Salzman, A.D. Quig** and **Jake Sheridan**  
Chicago Tribune

The sharply divided leaders of Chicago Public Schools and the Chicago Teachers Union seem primed to unite around one broad solution to solve the school district's budget woes: tax increment financing revenue.

Both CPS CEO Pedro Martinez and CTU leadership urged city officials this week to use TIF revenue — property tax dollars collected to spur economic development projects — to help cover the district's major budget stressors, including the cost of non-teacher pension payments and a still-under-negotiation contract with teachers.

CPS and CTU's proposals vary, however. Martinez is lobbying the City Council to give the school district a massive infusion of surplus money from the TIF districts, while teachers union leaders added a call for a sped-up, near-total end to TIF districts that would face daunting political hurdles to give the district an estimated annual payout of \$1 billion.

"Our school communities cannot afford the cost of returning to the cuts and consolidation and closures of the past. The funds are there," CTU research director Pavlyn Jankov said at a news conference Wednesday.

After Wednesday's City Council meeting, Mayor Brandon Johnson said he "has always been very clear" that he would provide the school district with a TIF surplus. "Whatever is there that we can surplus, I've made a commitment," he said. "Those are my values, that's not something anybody had to call me to do."

The teachers union is also facing a new lawsuit filed Wednesday demanding it release an audit disgruntled members say is required and overdue.

The city's 124 TIF districts are an attractive target for the cash-strapped school

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### HURRICANE MILTON

# 'A KNOCKOUT'

Officials issue final pleas for Florida residents to flee the dangerous cyclone's path

As winds, rain begin to lash coast, surge expected as high as 12 feet in Tampa Bay



Chris Williams runs through rain as he packs his car to evacuate before Hurricane Milton's arrival Tuesday in Fort Myers, Florida. **JOE RAEDLE/GETTY**

'I'm not an emotional person, but I cannot stop crying': Chicago-area natives evacuate Florida as powerful storm barrels toward Gulf Coast

By **Peter Breen, Rebecca Johnson** and **Robert McCoppin**  
Chicago Tribune

When Grace Klein made the decision to evacuate from her Tampa home as the powerful Hurricane Milton barreled toward Florida, she only had about an hour to get ready for the airport.

The city was basically in "full panic" by that point Monday, the 25-year-old said. Police cars cruised the streets with their sirens on, warning people through speakers to evacuate. Roads and bridges began shutting down near her apartment, and gas was in short supply at stations.

With the airport set to close in the morning, Klein packed a carry-on and her gray cat, Gigi, and booked a \$800 one-way flight to Chicago. She's now

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The Cantrell family arrives at O'Hare International Airport after evacuating from Florida on Wednesday ahead of Hurricane Milton. They are headed to stay with family in Washington, Illinois. **E. JASON WAMBSGANS/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

### Marathon runners have big decision to make

As the last flights left from major airports in the area, many Florida runners in the Chicago Marathon found themselves facing the decision of whether to bow out of the race for which they spent so much time training. **Page 4**

By **Terry Spencer** and **Kate Payne**  
Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Hurricane Milton hurled rain, tornadoes and tropical storm-force winds at the U.S. coast Wednesday as time began to run out for residents to evacuate from the potentially catastrophic path the storm was carving toward Florida.

The National Hurricane Center stressed that it was not certain where Milton's center would come ashore Wednesday night because the storm's path might "wobble," but the entire Tampa Bay region and points south were at grave risk. Tropical-storm-force winds began lashing the coast Wednesday afternoon.

"This is it, folks," said Cathie Perkins, emergency management director in Pinellas County, which sits on the peninsula that forms Tampa Bay. "Those of you who were punched during Hurricane Helene, this is

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Mayor Brandon Johnson and Ald. Gilbert Villegas, 36th, have a discussion after a City Council meeting ended with Villegas deferring a planned hearing about the Board of Education members on Wednesday at City Hall. **BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

### CHICAGO CITY COUNCIL

## Mayor drops ShotSpotter veto plan as political brawl continues

By **Jake Sheridan**  
Chicago Tribune

Mayor Brandon Johnson is dropping his plan to veto a City Council ordinance aimed at continuing the ShotSpotter gunshot detection system he ended last month, in the face of council opposition that appeared strong enough to overrule him.

Johnson promised to veto the ordinance passed in a 33-to-14 vote, but failed to make the move before a Wednesday morning deadline. A spokesperson told WBEZ the mayor changed

plans because his administration believed the ordinance is already not legally enforceable.

But Johnson was on track to suffer an embarrassing and unprecedented defeat if the veto had gone forward.

South Side Ald. Jeanette Taylor, 20th, was absent for the September vote. She told the Tribune earlier this week she planned to vote against the mayor in a bid to keep acoustic gunshot technology in Chicago. Taylor doing so would likely mean 34 votes in favor of it, the minimum needed to override Johnson's veto.

"We have nothing. How do we have a woman who was there for nine hours and nobody came? There has to be something in place, and they have had plenty of time to do it," Taylor said, referring to a woman fatally shot late last month in the East Side neighborhood whose body wasn't found until the next morning. ShotSpotter supporters say the system would have prompted a much quicker police response.

Johnson has argued the ordinance is illegal because

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