

# Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

## Bally's secures financing for casino

Company unveils proposed hotel redesign with 500-room tower shifted to south end of property

By Robert Channick  
Chicago Tribune

One week after taking possession of the Freedom Center printing plant, Bally's has secured the needed financing to supplant it with a \$1.7 billion Chicago casino complex on the 30-acre site in River West.

Bally's announced a deal Friday with Gaming and Leisure Properties, a Pennsylvania-based real estate investment trust, to provide \$940 million to fund the construction of the permanent casino.

In addition, Bally's has also finalized redesign of its planned 500-room hotel tower, which has been shifted from north of the

casino to the south to avoid damaging city water pipes along the Chicago River, pending approval from the city's planning department.

"We've been working hard in the background to restore the full hotel tower for Bally's Chicago Casino and absolutely intend to meet the September 2026 opening date as planned," George Papanier, president of Bally's Corp., said in a news release Friday. "We are also happy to announce that Gaming &

Leisure Properties Inc. has agreed to finance this entire development in a single phase to ultimately deliver a better project in a more efficient manner."

The financing package and revised site plan should allay concerns expressed by analysts, investors and the city itself that Bally's didn't have the financial wherewithal to build the permanent casino.

In 2022, Rhode Island-based Bally's won a heated competition

to build Chicago's first casino. The glitzy proposal included an exhibition hall, a 500-room hotel, a 3,000-seat theater, 10 restaurants and 4,000 gaming positions overlooking the Chicago River.

Bally's Chicago launched a temporary facility at Medinah Temple in September, with plans to open the permanent casino by September 2026. But the odds against the casino complex being

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A bird flies past McCormick Place Lakeside Center on Tuesday, with newly applied window film to mitigate future collisions. The films are etched with tiny dots that make it easier for birds to distinguish windows from the outdoors. **ANTONIO PEREZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

## McCormick Place adds film to cut bird crashes

\$1.2 million project aims to make windows easier to avoid as fall migration nears

By Karina Atkins  
Chicago Tribune

After nearly 1,000 birds crashed into McCormick Place Lakeside Center last October, the event space along Lake Michigan's shoreline is installing a gridded window film to mitigate future collisions.

The \$1.2 million project began the first week of June and is expected to conclude by early September, just in time for the fall migration.

Located along a major route for birds flying between South America and North America, Chicago — with its glass buildings and lakefront — is one of the deadliest cities for migrating birds. And the Lakeside Center, which has two football fields' worth of windows, "has perhaps been Chicago's most dangerous building since it was built in the '70s," said Annette Prince, director of Chicago Bird Collision Monitors.

Birds struggle to perceive clear

glass. Instead, they see their habitats reflected back to them and fly into windows. Buildings along the city's shoreline are particularly dangerous because they are the first structures birds encounter after stretches of open air, and water creates a striking reflection on glass.

The films being installed at the center are etched with tiny dots that make it easier for birds to distinguish windows from the outdoors.

Chicago Bird Collision Moni-

tors, a nonprofit advocacy group, has been campaigning for these bird protection measures for several years. Prince said the building owner, the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority, ignored them until October's mass casualty event, which made national news and got the attention of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The event has frequently been reported alongside a 2019 study

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### ELECTION 2024

## Biden takes case to key swing state

Trip to Michigan aims to shore up campaign's anxious backers

By Joey Cappelletti,  
Zeke Miller and  
Seung Min Kim  
Associated Press

DETROIT — Four years ago, candidate Joe Biden stood before supporters at a Detroit high school, flanked by Kamala Harris and other rising Democratic stars, and called himself a bridge to the next generation of leaders.

Biden, now a president seeking reelection, returned to that same high school Friday with many in his party now pleading for him to fulfill that very promise and step aside. But Biden remains defiant that he'll remain in the race despite a disastrous debate performance that triggered a wave of calls for him to end his candidacy.

During a news conference Thursday, when asked why he no longer considered himself a "bridge" to the next generation of leaders, Biden responded that "what changed was the gravity of the situation I inherited in terms of the economy, foreign policy and domestic division."

"We've never been here before," Biden continued. "And that's the other reason why I didn't, you say, hand off to another generation. I gotta finish the job."

In the two weeks since his debate debacle, Biden and his team have been on a relentless sprint to convince fretting lawmakers, nervous donors and a skeptical electorate that at the age of 81, he is still capable of being president. But a spate of travel to battleground states, interviews with journalists and a rare solo news conference have done little to tamp down the angst within the party about Biden's candidacy and his prospects against Donald Trump in November.

So far, one Democratic sena-

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### AT&T: Hackers stole call, text data

The data of nearly all customers of the telecommunications giant AT&T was downloaded to a third-party platform in a security breach, the company said, as cyberattacks continue to spread globally. Most of the breach took place in 2022. **Business**

### New piping plover family loses a chick

One of the four piping plover chicks born on Montrose Beach went missing under "unknown circumstances" sometime after 6 p.m. Tuesday, according to Chicago Piping Plovers. **Chicagoland, Page 3**

## Family grieves man killed in fireworks accident



A Chicago police officer works the scene where a man was killed in a fireworks accident in the alleyway of the 3000 block of North Kostner Avenue during the Fourth of July holiday. **VINCENT ALBAN/TRIBUNE**

Father of 3 had 'huge heart'; illegal explosives also blamed for fires

By Sylvan Lebrun  
Chicago Tribune

Earl Lory, a devoted husband and father of three, was a "very deep soul" with an intuitive understanding of other people, his family said. The 34-year-old Belmont Cragin resident loved taekwondo and Halloween, and he was excited about his fourth child being on the way.

But his family is now reeling from tragedy after he was killed on the Fourth of July in a fireworks accident during a neighborhood celebration in Hermosa.

On the evening of the holiday, emergency responders received an injured person call from the 3000 block of North Kostner Avenue and found Lory dead from massive head trauma. A handheld mortar-style fireworks had ignited late, causing a fatal injury, according to the Chicago Fire Department.

Since Lory's passing, his friends, family and co-workers have come together to share memories about his life and his influence on his community, his mother, Angie Lory, said.

"Everyone had something special with him," she said.

"As a mother, you only know one side of your son," Angie Lory said. "I'm learning so much about

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