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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

CTA key to cutting city's emissions

Yet pandemic set back ambitious goal of doubling ridership, and luring riders back set to get harder

By Sarah Freishtat
Chicago Tribune

In 2018, regional planners affirmed an aspirational goal for Chicago transit: doubling ridership on buses and trains.

Expanding transit was seen as critical to meeting the region's goals to limit greenhouse gas emis-

sions. And later the city of Chicago reiterated the idea in its own climate plan, calling to increase CTA ridership 20% over 2019 levels by the end of this decade.

But the pandemic decimated ridership, dealing a blow to what advocates describe as one of the quickest ways to reduce emissions. Drawing people back will mean

running frequent, reliable service that matches changing demand for where people want to go and when, they said.

Running frequent and reliable service since the pandemic has been a challenge for the CTA, the largest of the region's transit agencies. Adding to the difficulties facing the transit agencies is a fiscal cliff looming when federal pandemic aid runs out.

The repercussions of these challenges for climate efforts are one

more example of what's at stake for Chicago as the transit agencies work to draw back riders.

"Right now, (transit is) our best bet for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the near term," said Erin Aleman, executive director of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning.

The Regional Transportation Authority doesn't project the region's ridership will come back this decade. In 2022, the agency estimated ridership could hit 74%

of pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2031 if current circumstances persist, though RTA staff said the figures are likely conservative. In May, the CTA carried 69% of the passengers it transported in 2019.

Planners acknowledge the goals to boost ridership were ambitious even when they were set. And they are just one of many strategies to address climate change outlined in separate reports from CMAP and

Turn to CTA, Page 5

Backlash over privacy concerns

License plate-reading cameras solve crimes, but also create angst

By Robert McCoppin
Chicago Tribune

In 2022, a teenager accused of fatally shooting a young mother in the back of the head in Morris was caught driving a stolen car with the help of a license plate camera.

That same year, a man wanted for a slaying in Maywood was arrested in Northbrook after police traced his car there through license plate cameras. The man had previously been released after serving time for a 1994 murder.

Earlier this year, after a woman escaped from being abducted, police were able to track down the vehicle in Waukegan and charged the suspect with kidnapping.

Automated license plate recognition, known as ALPRs, have helped police arrest suspects for a number of heinous crimes in the Chicago area. But they don't just track criminals. They track everyone in their sight, marking each car's location, when it is first detected by a camera and in what direction it's heading — billions of license plates nationwide.

Turn to Cameras, Page 4

Prison plan process drawing complaints

Stakeholders want more info on closing, rebuilding 2 facilities

By Jeremy Gorner
Chicago Tribune

SPRINGFIELD — After two lengthy and occasionally tense public meetings during which employees and others complained about a lack of information from the state on its nearly \$1 billion plan to demolish and rebuild two Illinois prisons, a bipartisan legislative panel that was supposed to make recommendations on the proposal adjourned without taking action.

Only three lawmakers on the 12-member Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability showed up at the panel's meeting Friday, not enough for a quorum to vote on advisory recommendations for the Illinois Department of Corrections' proposal for Stateville and Logan correctional centers.

"To suggest that I've been

Turn to Prisons, Page 2



BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

WET AND WILD

Karter Vaughters, 4, splashes his brother Joshua, 9, while they play at Humboldt Park Beach on Sunday, with temperatures over 90 degrees. Chicago's only inland beach officially reopens Monday after a four-year closure. Temperatures are expected to be in the low- to mid-90s through at least Thursday, and an air quality alert is in effect for Monday when the high could reach 95. Story, Chicagoland Page 3



Men pray as the Islamic Community Center of Illinois holds its annual Eid-al-Adha service Sunday at The Dome at Parkway Bank Sports Complex in Des Plaines. BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Chicago-area Muslims gather for Eid al-Adha services

Area Muslims celebrated Eid al-Adha with a prayer service and renewed attention to the war in Gaza during an event held at The Dome at Parkway Bank Sports Complex in Des Plaines. Chicagoland, Page 3

Bellinger, father share bond of playing in the majors

Cubs outfielder Cody Bellinger has hazy memories of his father playing in the big leagues, but the pair are one of only nine father-son duos who both have won a World Series title. Chicago Sports

Second City show reveals much about state of industry

"The Devil is in the Detours" is a stylish show that exemplifies much about where young improvisers are at these days. The cast even boldly throws shade at the current private equity ownership. Arts & Living

ELECTION 2024

Republicans, anti-abortion bloc seeking shift in states

Groups target citizen initiatives that bolster reproductive rights

By Christine Fernando
Associated Press

CHICAGO — Reeling from a string of defeats, anti-abortion groups and their Republican allies in state governments are using an array of strategies to counter proposed ballot initiatives intended to protect reproductive rights or prevent voters from having a say in the fall elections.

The tactics include attempts to get signatures removed from initiative petitions, legislative pushes for competing ballot measures that could confuse voters and monthslong delays caused by lawsuits over ballot initiative language. Abortion rights advocates say many of the strategies build off ones tested last year in Ohio, where voters eventually passed a constitutional amendment affirming reproductive rights.

The strategies are being used in at least seven states where initiatives aimed at codifying abortion

Turn to Abortion, Page 9

