

Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

CTA to increase its bus service

Some routes set to near pre-pandemic levels, agency says

By Sarah Freishtat
Chicago Tribune

After cuts in transit service during the pandemic, more than two dozen Chicago bus routes will return to “near pre-COVID-19 scheduled service levels,” in the coming days, according to the CTA.

Service will be added on 29 of the agency’s 127 routes beginning Sunday, including some of the busiest, like the 66 Chicago, the 3 King Drive and the 82 Kimball-Homan. Most of the additional service will be added on weekdays, though a few routes will get extra weekend service.

The latest schedule change only affects bus service, but CTA officials said the agency will add back rail service later in the spring. The rail additions will focus on the morning and evening peak periods on the Red, Green, Brown and Purple lines, and the busy O’Hare branch of the Blue Line, the CTA said.

Unreliable bus and train service has been a frequent complaint of riders for years, leaving passengers with long wait times and crowded buses and trains and putting CTA President Dorval Carter in the hot seat. A Tribune analysis in October found the agency slashed schedules on some train lines by as much as 25% to 30% compared with 2019 service levels.

The agency has pegged service cuts on challenges hiring and retaining enough employees to operate buses and trains, and has said adding back service will depend on its ability to add operators.

The added bus service comes after Carter told City Council members in February that bus service would begin to be added back “in just the next few weeks,” and promised rail service would be restored to pre-pandemic levels by the end of the year.

How the new bus schedules will compare with pre-pandemic levels varies by route and time of day, but most of the new schedules will be within 5% of the number of hours buses were scheduled to be in service in 2019, spokeswoman Catherine Hosinski said.

Turn to CTA, Page 2

ELECTION 2024 ILLINOIS PRIMARY

‘Punching back’

Johnson nods to possible defeat for Bring Chicago Home, vows to continue fight for progressive movement, homelessness resources



Mayor Brandon Johnson arrives for a City Council meeting Wednesday at City Hall. BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

All eyes on election authorities as race for state’s attorney remains tight with tens of thousands of mail-in votes still left to be counted

By A.D. Quig and Claire Malon
Chicago Tribune

With mail-in ballots pouring in after Election Day, the Democratic primary race for Cook County state’s attorney remained razor-thin Wednesday as both candidates eschewed declaring victory or conceding defeat and called for restraint as election officials continued to tabulate votes.

Both retired Appellate Judge Eileen O’Neill Burke and Clayton Harris III stayed out of the public eye hours after both greeted supporters at their election night parties to acknowledge the day had ended without a clear resolution. Both are vying to replace outgoing top prosecutor Kim Foxx.

O’Neill Burke began Wednesday with a narrow lead of roughly 9,400 votes over Harris as tens of thousands of mail-in ballots remained to be counted across the city and suburbs and results from roughly



Clayton Harris III, left, trails Eileen O’Neill Burke in the Cook County state’s attorney race. JOHN J. KIM AND TERENCE ANTONIO JAMES/CHICAGO TRIBUNE PHOTOS



Rogers fights off big-money effort

Cook County Board of Review Commissioner Larry Rogers Jr. declared victory in the Democratic primary Tuesday, despite county Assessor Fritz Kaegi pouring \$680,000 into a fund to ensure the incumbent’s defeat. **Page 2**

■ Voters in Will County rejected an \$85 million Lockport school renovation referendum Tuesday. **Page 5**

By Alice Yin and Jake Sheridan
Chicago Tribune

Mayor Brandon Johnson acknowledged Wednesday that hope was waning for the Bring Chicago Home referendum but remained defiant, saying his progressive agenda would go on regardless of whether the tax hike to fund homelessness services prevails.

According to unofficial results from the Chicago Board of Elections, with 98.45% of precincts reporting, 53.7% of votes were against the referendum, to 46.3% in favor.

The Bring Chicago Home initiative was a key pledge from Johnson, who was betting on it becoming the first win from his economic agenda that he said would make wealthy residents and corporate interests pay their fair share. A defeat at the ballot box would signal brewing voter discontent over the mayor’s coalition that has governed the nation’s third-largest city since May but faced nonstop resistance from moderates and business interests, on top of general discontent over the costly

Turn to Mayor, Page 4

Impeachment inquiry at a crossroads

Attempt to implicate Biden all but stalled as panel chair makes plea for testimony

By Lisa Mascaro
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The House impeachment inquiry into President Joe Biden is all but winding down, lacking the political appetite within the Republican ranks to go forward with an actual impeachment, but facing political pressure to deliver after

months of work.

The chairman of the House Oversight and Accountability Committee, Republican Rep. James Comer, made a last-ditch push at Wednesday’s hearing, announcing he will seek testimony from Biden himself, saying the Democratic president was either “complicit or incompetent” in his son Hunter Biden’s business

dealings. It’s highly unlikely Biden would appear before the committee.

“We need to hear from the president himself,” Comer said at the close of the nearly eight-hour hearing.

But having produced no hard evidence of presidential wrongdoing, it’s clear the lengthy GOP impeachment inquiry is all but coming to a close. Seeking testimony from the president would be a possible final act. Comer, of Kentucky, has indicated that rather than drawing

up articles of impeachment against Biden, he is eyeing potential criminal referrals of the family to the Justice Department, a largely symbolic move.

The committee’s top Democrat, Rep. Jamie Raskin of Maryland, said the Republicans have turned the investigation into a “laughingstock” and that the “comedy of errors” of the Biden impeachment inquiry is finally “crashing to an end.”

Turn to Biden, Page 10

Judge tosses suit against Johnson

A federal judge on Wednesday threw out a sexual assault lawsuit against former Chicago police Superintendent Eddie Johnson stemming from a 2019 incident. **Page 4**

Illinois’ hopes rest on Shannon

Illinois men’s basketball star Terrence Shannon Jr. will be front and center as the Illini begin their quest for a Final Four run today, writes Paul Sullivan. **Chicago Sports**

TODAY’S WEATHER



High 39, Low 33
Forecast on Page 16

\$4.00 city and suburbs and elsewhere
176th year No. 81 © Chicago Tribune

