

# Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

## CHICAGO CITY COUNCIL 2025 BUDGET

## Police monitor sounds alarm

Planned cuts to CPD reform office 'would be a step backward'

By Sam Charles  
Chicago Tribune

The independent monitor assessing the city's compliance with a federal consent decree issued a dire warning Tuesday as proposed budget cuts once again loom over the Chicago Police Department's Office of Constitutional Policing and Reform.

"Cutting these positions permanently could be a devastating blow to the future of CPD reforms," Maggie Hickey, head of the independent monitoring team, told U.S. District Judge Rebecca Pallmeyer during a consent decree status hearing Tuesday.

"The proposed budget cuts would be a step backward for the CPD reform process at a pivotal point," Hickey said, "just when progress is starting to be felt."

Pallmeyer, overseeing the consent decree's progress, echoed Hickey, noting the progress made so far but recognizing the work that remains for CPD to reach full compliance.

"Every requirement needs to be implemented, and that means that it's going to cost city funds in order for that to happen, to do the work and achieve the kind of change that we're seeking," Pallmeyer added. "There has been significant progress, and we've seen some, but there's a lot of work that still is left to do. We all recognize that."

Hickey's and Pallmeyer's comments came amid intense pushback from aldermen to Mayor Brandon Johnson's proposed 2025 city budget.

Johnson's \$17.3 billion spending plan for the city includes \$2.1 billion for CPD, a

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Mayor Brandon Johnson holds a news conference at City Hall on Tuesday. **TERRENCE ANTONIO JAMES/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

## Johnson gives up on property tax increase

Mayor abandons proposal amid stiff opposition, claims he floated idea to 'get people's attention'

By Jake Sheridan  
and A.D. Quig  
Chicago Tribune

Mayor Brandon Johnson is all but giving up on his proposed \$300 million property tax hike before aldermen kill it, and pushing them to find other revenue in its place to avert layoffs.

Johnson's administration is combing over alternatives to the tax jump after members of the City Council scheduled a special meeting in the hopes of voting it down. The mayor's team has presented an array of options to shrink his proposed property tax increase,

including using federal COVID-19 funds, raising a monthly garbage collection fee or hiking various smaller taxes. As negotiations continue, the City Council has extended budget hearings, meaning a final vote now is unlikely before mid-December.

Johnson suggested he wasn't fully committed to his \$300 million property tax plan on Tuesday. Instead, he suggested the proposal was a tactic to get aldermen fully engaged, like he did when he was a teacher with his students.

"I'll say it like this. So as a public

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Ald. Anthony Beale, 9th, complains about parliamentary rules during a City Council meeting. **BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

## Bears taking another look at old Reese Hospital site

Long, skinny stretch on South Side mulled for potential stadium

By Robert McCoppin,  
Brian J. Rogal, Jake Sheridan  
and Jeremy Gorner  
Chicago Tribune

The Chicago Bears are reconsidering the former Michael Reese Hospital site as a potential location for a new stadium, a source said, but the team remains focused on the lakefront.

The team is open to any alternative that would work, but officials have said previously that the former hospital site was unworkable because it's next to Metra train tracks that pose a security risk.

The 49-acre site is limited because it's long and skinny, sandwiched between the tracks and



The former Michael Reese Hospital site stretches 49 acres between Metra tracks and DuSable Lake Shore Drive south of McCormick Place Convention Center. **BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE 2023**

DuSable Lake Shore Drive on the east, apartments on the west, 31st Street on the south and the Stevenson Expressway to the north.

The advantage of the site is that it's mostly open land, not far from the Loop and the lake, and next to McCormick Place Convention Center. It would also avoid a legal fight over the Bears' proposal to build a \$3.2 billion roofed stadium on the lake to replace the team's current home in Soldier Field.

Bears President Kevin Warren previously told the Tribune that the team had looked at 10 sites and ruled out the others, settling on the lakefront site.

The team also spent \$197 million to buy the former Arlington International Racecourse and proposed building a stadium there as part of a mixed-use development, before turning instead

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## Speaker: Congress ready to deliver Trump agenda

But control of House chamber still undecided as lawmakers return to a divided Capitol Hill

By Lisa Mascaro  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — House Speaker Mike Johnson said Tuesday that Republicans are "ready to deliver" President-elect Donald Trump's agenda after his election victory, insisting the GOP won't make the mistakes of last time and will be much better prepared for a second-term Trump White House.

Standing on the steps of the U.S. Capitol with the House GOP leadership team, the speaker said there would be no time wasted before work begins on Trump's "America First" agenda of securing the southern border, projecting strength on the world stage and ending "wokeness and radical gender ideology." He said that he expects Republicans will lead a unified government, even though House control is still too early to call.

"We are ready to deliver on America's mandate," said Johnson.

"We will be ready Day 1. We are prepared this time."

With the Capitol behind his group, he said, "We're going to raise an 'America First' banner above this place."

Trump will meet with Johnson at the Capitol on Wednesday while the president-elect is in town for his visit to the White House, and Johnson said he will be spending the weekend with Trump at his Mar-a-Lago residence in Florida as they prepare for the new year.

Congress returned Tuesday to a changed Washington as Trump's hard-right agenda is quickly taking shape, buoyed by eager Republican allies eyeing a full sweep of power on Capitol Hill while Democrats are sorting out what went wrong.

Even as final election results are still being tallied, the House and Senate leadership is pushing ahead toward a second-term Trump White House and

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**Coach shown the door:** The Bears fired offensive coordinator Shane Waldron on Tuesday, just nine games into his tenure directing the offense with rookie quarterback Caleb Williams. Passing game coordinator Thomas Brown will now be tasked with Williams' development. **Chicago Sports**

## A boost for Madigan defense

Defense attorneys for Michael Madigan began their cross-examination of a key witness Tuesday by seizing on a recent high court decision. **Page 3**

## Cup full of cozy for holidays

With its warming spices and the tickle of a tippie, mulled wine ushers in the holiday season at iconic Andersonville bar and elsewhere. **Food & Health**

## TODAY'S WEATHER



High **53** Low **50**

Complete Chicagoland forecast on Page 12

\$4.00 city and suburbs and elsewhere  
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