

Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

Shelters to be put in one system

City, state plan unified effort for homeless, migrants

By Nell Salzman
Chicago Tribune

The city and state are in the planning stages to combine Chicago's legacy homeless shelter system with its system for migrants, according to government officials, and turn it into a unified shelter structure, an idea advocates for the homeless have long championed.

The "One System Initiative" will shift a "permanent shelter management to the non-profit workforce," Illinois Department of Human Services spokesperson Daisy Contreras said in a statement. Currently, the city contracts with Favorite Healthcare Staffing, whose sizable overtime has contributed to tens of millions of dollars in city payments to the firm staffing the city's migrant shelters.

The state's office to prevent and end homelessness will lead the initiative with more than 25 community-based agencies participating, Contreras said. Planning sessions are set to begin at the end of April and go through the spring.

Beatriz Ponce de Leon, Chicago's deputy mayor of immigrant, migrant and refugee rights, said officials ultimately hope to fully transition to a unified shelter system — and look beyond shelter to affordable housing. The goal, she said, is "to serve people regardless of if they've been here for five days or five years or their whole life." Homeless advocates say combining the shelter systems will take time and coordination, but will be beneficial.

The two shelter systems — catering toward the homeless and migrant populations in Chicago respectively — currently compete for limited affordable housing resources, said Nicole Bahena, vice

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People embrace as Chicago police investigate the scene where Officer Luis Huesca, off-duty but in uniform, was shot and killed just before 3 a.m. Sunday in the 3100 block of West 56th Street in Chicago's Gage Park neighborhood. **BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

Off-duty police officer, 30, killed in Gage Park

6-year veteran of CPD spoke at memorial for fellow officer last year

By Avani Kalra
and Adriana Pérez

When his friend and fellow Chicago police Officer Andrés Vázquez Lasso was fatally shot in the line of duty last year, Luis Huesca called him "one of those guys that actually deserved this star" in a remembrance video. Huesca tapped a badge pinned to his lapel, etched with the slain officer's number 7649: "He was very proud to wear this star."

Just over a year since Vázquez Lasso's killing, the Chicago Police Department is mourning Huesca's death, after he was shot and killed while heading home from his shift early Sunday morning, two days shy of his 31st birthday.

A statement from Mayor Brandon Johnson said Huesca was a member of the Calumet District (5th) priority response team. He was off-duty but in uniform when he was shot in the Gage Park neighborhood just before

3 a.m. Officers had responded to a "gunshot detection alert" in the 5500 block of South Kedzie Avenue and discovered Huesca with gunshot wounds in the 3100 block of West 56th Street.

Superintendent Larry Snelling said in a news conference Sunday morning that Huesca was shot multiple times before he was pronounced dead at the University of Chicago Medical Center. His vehicle was stolen at the scene.

Snelling said Huesca had been with the Police Department for six years. A procession carried Huesca's body to the Cook County medical examiner's office Sunday morning.

"I met with Officer Huesca's mother and uncle this morning and assured them that they have the full support of my administration as they deal with this unspeakable loss," Johnson said.

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WAR IN UKRAINE



A man participates in a rally to raise awareness of the fate of Ukrainian prisoners of war Sunday in Kyiv, Ukraine. The U.S. House approved \$95 billion in foreign aid for Ukraine, Israel and other U.S. allies. **FRANCISCO SECO/AP**

Ukrainians, West laud more US aid

Kremlin warns of 'further ruin,' more deaths in fighting

By Samya Kullab
and Elise Morton
Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Ukrainian and Western leaders on Sunday welcomed a desperately needed aid package passed by the U.S. House, as the Kremlin warned

that passage of the bill would "further ruin" Ukraine and cause more deaths.

Ukrainian commanders and analysts say the long-awaited \$61 billion military aid package — including \$13.8 billion for Ukraine to buy weapons — will help slow Russia's incremental advances in the war's third year — but that more will likely be needed for Kyiv to regain the offensive.

The House swiftly approved \$95 billion in foreign aid for

Ukraine, Israel and other U.S. allies in a rare Saturday session as Democrats and Republicans banded together after months of hard-right resistance over renewed American support for repelling Russia's full-scale invasion.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who had warned that his country would lose the war without U.S. funding, said

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Attorneys grapple over evidence at murder trial's close

Prison not at issue for man abused by police

By Megan Crepeau
Chicago Tribune

For years, Gerald Reed's claims of abuse by Chicago detectives were in the spotlight. All eyes were on his tangled case as the justice system, once again, had to grapple with a decades-old legacy of police torture.

But last week, as Reed was finally brought to a retrial, the focus shifted in a crucial way: Entirely separate from his allegations of torture, is he actually guilty of a gruesome 1990 double murder?

"He is responsible," said special prosecutor Mary Jennings in closing arguments Thursday. "It

doesn't take a rocket scientist to say he is responsible."

Reed's attorney Elliot Zinger, in turn, called the evidence thin and speculative.

"You can't guess people into the penitentiary," he said in his closing.

All week, Reed sat at the defense table with a look of keen attention. He rarely took his eyes off the attorneys as they argued or cross-examined, except to take energetic notes or pull a discreet puff of an inhaler. The stakes for him are high, but not quite the same as those of a typical murder defendant.

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INSIDE

Owner of first Ford Mustang still has it

Gail Wise, of Park Ridge, was a 22-year-old rookie teacher when she bought the car in April 1964. **Chicagoland, Page 3**

Former Lyric Opera leader dies

Sir Andrew Davis was music director and principal conductor of Lyric Opera of Chicago for some 21 years. **Arts & Living**

