

Chicago Tribune



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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 2024

BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

New stadium would cost taxpayers

Half of Bears' \$4.6 billion lakefront plan would be public financing, sources say

By Jeremy Gorner, Dan Petrella, Robert McCoppin, and Brian J. Rogal | Chicago Tribune

The Chicago Bears are set to announce a \$4.6 billion plan to build a new enclosed stadium and improved lakefront area with half of the money coming from taxpayers, sources said. But the team will have to overcome serious skepti-

cism from several directions.

The stadium itself would cost \$3.2 billion to build, with another \$1.4 billion in proposed infrastructure improvements, according to sources familiar with the plan who spoke to the Tribune on the condi-

tion of anonymity.

The sources said the Bears plan to pledge \$2.3 billion, which includes some financing through the NFL. But the Bears' plan includes an additional \$2.3 billion in public financing, along with refinancing outstanding debt for prior publicly financed stadium projects for the Bears and White Sox, according to the sources.

Taxpayers would be on the hook for the proposed infrastructure improvements along with about \$1 billion in new borrowing to finance

the new stadium south of Soldier Field, the sources said.

To make the plan a reality, the Bears want the Illinois General Assembly to approve new bonding for the Illinois Sports Facilities Authority, which carries the debt for prior projects at Soldier Field and Guaranteed Rate Field, sources said.

Some of the new borrowing would be used to roll over existing stadium debt, and the plan calls

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INSIDE

Bears get another shot at quarterback

How will Caleb Williams fit into the team culture the Bears are building? "He's all ball, wants to work," GM Ryan Poles says. Plus, options at "premium positions" give Poles confidence at No. 9. Now he just has to nail the pick, writes Brad Biggs. **Stories in Chicago Sports**



Michael Cameron and his son, James, sit on the Chicago Riverwalk between Dearborn and State streets on Monday. EILEEN T. MESLAR/TRIBUNE

Is it really safe to swim in the Chicago River today?

Water quality has improved dramatically, and more than 1,100 ready to give it a try

By Avani Kalra
Chicago Tribune

When organizers announced their plans for an open swim in the Chicago River in September, residents across the city raised their eyebrows.

The days when the river was a dumping ground for the largest slaughterhouse in the world are long past. And, sewage that once flowed directly into the river is now funneled through wastewater treatment plants first.

But when powerful storms hit the city, sewage and stormwater runoff spill into local waterways raising bacteria levels.

Caitlin Jonassen, a lifelong Chicagoan, said she would not even consider swimming in the river. Last year, she said she was getting in a kayak near the end of the swim's planned course when she fell in.

"Not only was it freezing, and I was extremely grossed out by the masses of who knows what floating close by, but I actually

broke out in a horrible rash all over that took a couple of days to clear," Jonassen said. "It was a pretty horrific experience. As a Chicago native, I wish the river could be cleaned up enough where I would trust swimming in it, but for now it's extremely far away from that for me."

Still, swimming in the river, which has improved dramatically over the past few decades, can be done safely, according to many experts.

"A lot of people think about

the Chicago River as being super gross, super polluted," Elsa Anderson, an assistant professor of environmental science at Northwestern University, said. "And at one point in time, that was true. But with the Clean Water Act in the early 1970s, it's not."

Anderson said scientists have been able to measure the river's improvement by looking at the vast increase in fish and plant

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Publisher: Tabloid teamed with Trump

David Pecker testifies paper killed stories, smeared 2016 rivals

By Michael R. Sisak, Jennifer Peltz and Eric Tucker
Associated Press

NEW YORK — A veteran tabloid publisher testified Tuesday that he pledged to be Donald Trump's "eyes and ears" during his 2016 presidential campaign, recounting how he promised the then-candidate that he would help suppress harmful stories and even arranged to purchase the silence of a doorman.

The testimony from David Pecker was designed to bolster the prosecution's premise of a decade-long friendship between Trump and the former publisher of the National Enquirer that culminated in an agreement to give the candidate's lawyer a heads-up on negative tips and stories so they could be quashed.

The effort to suppress unflattering information was designed to illegally influence the election, prosecutors have alleged in striving to elevate the gravity of the first trial of a former U.S. president and the first of four criminal cases against Trump to reach a jury.

Pecker is the first witness against Trump, who faces 34 felony counts of falsifying business records in connection with hush money payments meant to prevent harmful stories from surfacing in the 2016 campaign.

With Trump sitting just feet away in the courtroom, Pecker detailed his intimate, behind-the-scenes involvement in Trump's rise from political novice to the Republican nomination and the White



David Pecker in 2014.

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INSIDE



VINCENT ALBAN/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Finding best deals at the grocery store

As grocery prices climb, the Tribune food team shares its favorite money-saving mark-downs at Chicagoland stores. **Food & Health**

Challenges slow progress at campus

Logistics Campus at the former Allstate headquarters is off to a slow start, with plans for lab-grown meat plant on hold. **Business**

Dom's Kitchen, Foxtrot abruptly close doors

Move comes months after grocers set sights on merger, expansion

By Talia Soglin and Robert Channick
Chicago Tribune

Dom's Kitchen & Market and Foxtrot shuttered Tuesday five months after they announced plans to merge, marking an abrupt end to two Chicago-based startups with high hopes for expansion in the upscale specialty grocery market.

"We explored many avenues to continue the business but found no viable option despite good faith and exhaustive efforts," Dom's said in a statement posted on the company's website.

"We understand that this news may come as a shock, and we apologize for any inconvenience

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People hug outside Dom's Kitchen & Market on Halsted Street at Diversey Parkway in Chicago after the store was abruptly closed and employees were let go on Tuesday. TERRENCE ANTONIO JAMES/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

