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From this week's In Other News

## Chicago's building owners, retailers prepare for the worst ahead of NATO/G8 summits

By [Ryan Ori](#) and [Brigid Sweeney](#)

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Chicago police officers in full riot gear stand guard outside the headquarters of Boeing Co. as protesters demonstrate against the Trans-Atlantic Business Dialogue summit Nov. 7, 2002.

Photo by: Newscom

21.

"There are properties that are looking at boarding up windows, fencing off areas, putting on security window film," says Mark Anderson, who oversees

security at about 40 large buildings that Jones Lang LaSalle Inc. manages in the Chicago area, including the Aon Center, Union Station and NBC Tower.

Business leaders are hoping diplomacy, spring weather and fine dining will win out over protests, property damage and traffic snarls caused by world leaders' motorcades. Owners and managers of commercial real estate are left to walk a fine line between the rosier and gloomiest scenarios as they plan.

"We're really hoping it won't look like this is some kind of place where people have retreated," says Kevin Purcell, an executive vice president and managing director at MB Real Estate, which manages 24-acre tourist haven Millennium Park and several office buildings. "I'm hoping we're not going to be boarding up windows in advance. We need to plan for the worst and hope for the best."

Planning for the worst is what building managers and retailers are doing. Building managers will increase security staffing, and some will put film over windows. Those who opt to keep their windows clear may keep boards on site and board-up companies on speed dial, several real estate professionals say.

### OVERNIGHT PROVISIONS

Jones Lang LaSalle's buildings will have cots, showers and extra food available in case employees are forced to stay overnight, as with last February's blizzard.

"Our vendors have been asked to have enough provisions on site to last an extra day or two, if people have to hold over," Mr. Anderson says.

Such measures will be costly, including lost productivity if companies decide to close leading up to the mostly weekend events.

Zeller Realty Group, which owns an office building at 401 N. Michigan Ave. and is a tenant there, also owns Pioneer Court in front of it. Robert Six, chief operating officer at Zeller, says security will be beefed up, but the plaza, with its 26-foot-tall Marilyn Monroe statue, will remain open to the public.

"Obviously, because of our plaza being one of the largest private plazas in the city, we're particularly concerned as it relates to protecting our property," Mr. Six says. "The Marilyn Monroe statue is a piece of art that is our gift to the city of Chicago for viewing. We will take whatever actions are necessary to protect our property. We're not going to put a fence up around it. It's meant to be enjoyed by the people."

Though the summits will be held in McCormick Place, three miles from that statue, restaurants are thinking about damage control, including possibly removing outdoor furniture and other moveable items.

"If there is a march or demonstration, we suggest to buildings that they remove things like trash cans that can be displaced and thrown," says Michael Cornicelli, executive vice president of the Building Owners and Managers Association of Chicago.

Mr. Cornicelli says the group's 262 member buildings downtown will be kept informed by two alert systems that already are available.

Sailboats usually moored at Burnham Harbor will be moved to another harbor during the summits because of their proximity to McCormick Place, Frank Bene-detto of the U.S. Secret Service told more than 500 business leaders last Wednesday at a meeting held at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. They also were addressed by representatives of the FBI, Chicago Police Department and Office of Emergency Management and Communication.

While some office workers may stay home, others will remain downtown for the duration. MB Real Estate building managers will stay in hotel rooms so they can remain close to work during the summits, Mr. Purcell says.

## GRADUATIONS, CLASSES MOVED

Universities also are adjusting.

DePaul University is moving its law school commencement from the Civic Opera House in the Loop to the suburban Rosemont Theatre. Northwestern University has bumped its law school commencement up a week, to May 11, and Roosevelt University, based in the South Loop, has delayed its start date for summer classes to May 21 from May 14. Columbia College Chicago will end its spring semester two weeks early; graduation will take place the weekend of May 5.

In a letter to the school community, Columbia President Warrick Carter cited several reasons for his decision, including the fact that the Hilton Chicago, near the college's campus at Michigan Avenue and Balbo Drive, will serve as headquarters for eight heads of state and their security details; attendance at NATO/G8 events are estimated at 30,000 people, and 160 groups already have organized to plan demonstrations in Grant Park.



**Robert Six of Zeller Realty Group, which owns Pioneer Court, above, says security will be enhanced but the plaza and its 26-foot-tall Marilyn Monroe statue will remain open to the public during the NATO/G8 summits in May.** Photo: Erik Unger

High schools located near the Loop, like St. Ignatius College Prep, are waiting to decide whether classes need to be canceled. Meanwhile, the Latin School of Chicago in the Gold Coast has changed its prom venue from a Loop hotel to the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum in Lincoln Park.

*Shia Kapos contributed.*

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Brian F. wrote:

One correction - Burnham Harbor is primarily motorboats - the sailboats are one harbor up - Monroe.

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