



## IHSAA sectional draws for Bloomington area

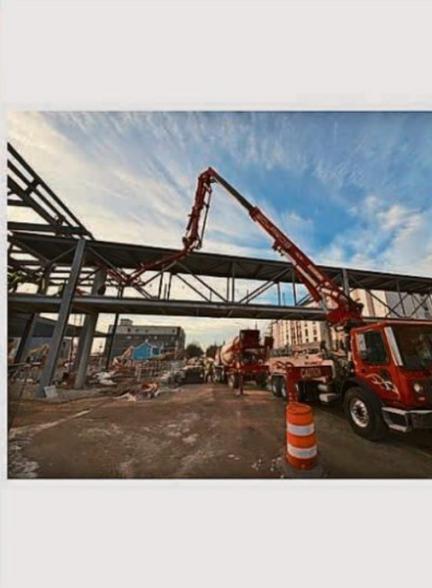
SPORTS, 1B

# The Herald-Times

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BLOOMINGTON, IND. | PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

## Truce reached on convention center



The newly constructed connection across College Avenue between the old and new portions of the Bloomington Convention Center. PROVIDED BY MONROE COUNTY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BOARD

## Faction still pushes north-side property

Some officials seek to keep Bunger & Robertson in play

**Boris Ladwig**  
The Herald-Times  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Though Bloomington Mayor Kerry Thomson has dismissed the idea, a faction of local officials is still fighting to keep the former Bunger & Robertson property in play for the convention center hotel.

The \$71 million convention center is under construction, but tourism officials have said that to maximize the center's success, it requires a host hotel, as the only connection option, the Courtyard by Marriott, has only 117 rooms.

Negotiations with the hotel developer fell apart this month after a disagreement between Thomson and the Monroe County Capital Improvement Board over city-owned land. The developer, Dora Hospitality, initially eyed the former B&R property, the block north of the convention center.

Thomson has ruled out using the site for the host hotel and said negotiations with Dora failed in part because of decisions made by her predecessor, John Hamilton, who declined to comment for this story.

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The old Bunger & Robertson property on June 12, 2025.

RICH JANZARUK/HERALD-TIMES

## Officials consider land donation to jump-start hotel project

**Boris Ladwig**  
The Herald-Times  
USA TODAY NETWORK

After months of disputes over land and financing derailed negotiations with a hotel developer for a long-planned convention center hotel, Bloomington and Monroe County officials are considering donating land.

While one official described the developments as a positive sign, some uncertainties — and animosities — remain: Bloomington Mayor Kerry Thomson said part of the blame for the recent failures lies with Dora Hospitality, the hotel developer with which the Capital Improvement Board had been negotiating.

Work on the \$71 million, taxpayer-funded convention center is progressing. Construction crews recently laid the steel for the skywalk that is connecting the existing center with the expansion across College Avenue.

However, tourism, city and business officials have said that without a big, connected hotel, the county won't be able to attract the kinds of large conventions for which they're expanding the center. The only connected option — the Courtyard by Marriott — has just 117 rooms.



Mayor Kerry Thomson speaks in her office on Feb. 17

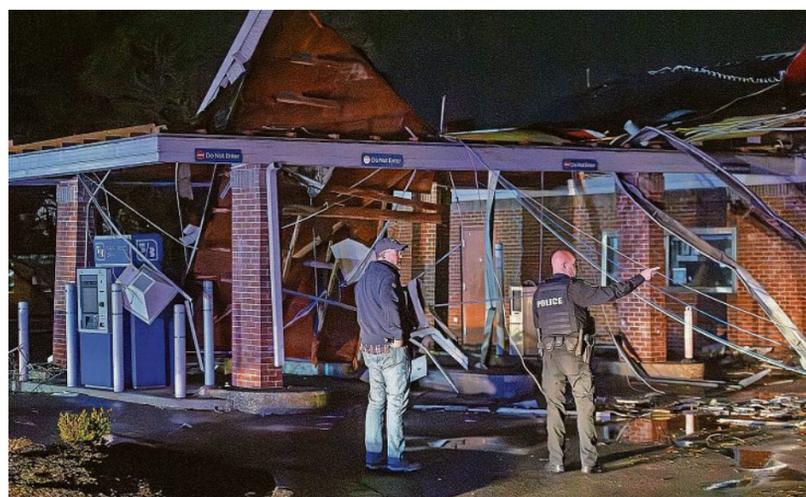
RICH JANZARUK/HERALD-TIMES

### Two sites, two failures

Dora initially planned to build a 200-room hotel on the block north of the existing convention center, bordered by Third and Fourth streets, the B-Line trail to the west and College Avenue to the

east. That project fell apart for financial reasons. The block is owned by the city, and the Thomson administration considered making the property available to Dora for a "nominal amount"

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A police officer directs a person as he looked over damage at Fifth Third Bank on West Third Street after a strong storm came through the area damaging the building and creating a hole in the roof on Feb. 19. RICH JANZARUK/HERALD-TIMES

## NWS report says EF-2 tornado hit Bloomington, EF-0 in Sullivan County

**Carol Kugler**  
The Herald-Times  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Two teams from the National Weather Service (NWS) in Indianapolis traveled to Monroe and Sullivan counties on Friday, after storms with winds of up to at least 70 mph came through the area on Thursday evening.

The Monroe County team's final report confirming that a tornado did touch down on the west side of Bloomington.

The team determined it was a EF-2

tornado that began about 6:56 p.m. in woods west of the Monroe County Airport. The tornado traveled 3.7 miles, moving into a small neighborhood west of the airport, damaging trees and homes as its winds reached an estimated 120 mph.

As the tornado moved east, it caused damage to an airplane hangar at the airport, the NWS report stated. While passing over the airfield, a wind gust of 70 mph was recorded. The tornado con-

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