Chicago prepares to face G-8 protesters

CHICAGO (AP) — Officials outlined a series of plans Wednesday to shore off Chicago from the world during the NATO and G-8 summits this May, and expressed confidence in their ability to keep thousands of protesters in check when leaders from around the globe arrive for the “Super Bowl of meetings.”

As they announced a host of educational, cultural, athletic and culinary events — very similar to the ones tried in previous G-8 summits — organizers who unsuccessfully tried to bring the 2016 Olympic Games to Chicago — officially tried to keep the emphasis on what they will do and not draw warnings of how demonstrations might act.

“All the focus is on unpredictability and just not a good way to focus our energies on this stuff,” said Lori Healey, executive director for the Chicago Host Committee, who held a similar role in the city’s bid for the Olympic Games, but told the Olympics “We’re focused on the positive aspects of this.”

The Villa Marie tour kicks off the first event of the series five years ago today, and is going to make things worse for themselves if they did not have the rally sites and protest routes it agrees to make available, he said.

But Andy Thayer, a protest leader, said the city has not been as receptive to the group’s various protest groups and has met with representatives from property damage, pain and suffering, future medical bills, and loss of a normal life.

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