

City Council

Agenda Cover Memorandum

Meeting Date: March 1, 2010

Item Title: Report from the O'Hare Airport Commission

Action Requested:

- ☐ Approval
- ☒ For discussion
- ☐ Feedback requested
- ☐ For your information

Staff Contact: Steve Cutaia, Building Administrator
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Background:

On November 16, 2009, the O'Hare Airport Commission (OAC) came before the City Council to report on its goals and strategies. The OAC has redefined its focus for achieving its goals in its March 1, 2010 Report to the Park Ridge City Council. The OAC has produced a mock-up of a webpage it recommends be incorporated into the City's website, as well as an outreach presentation which it anticipates using as an educational tool when meeting, individually along with an alderman, with the numerous Park Ridge organizations.

Recommendation:

Discuss and provide direction to OAC regarding its outreach presentation and to staff regarding webpage and budgetary recommendations.

Budget Implications:

Does Action Require an Expenditure of Funds: ☒ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, Total Cost: \$500,000

If Yes, is this a Budgeted Item: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Attachments:

- O'Hare Airport Commission Preliminary Report to the City Council, March 1, 2010
- Park Ridge O'Hare Airport Commission webpage mock-up
- Outreach presentation

CITY OF PARK RIDGE, ILLINOIS

O'Hare Airport Commission

Preliminary Report to the City Council

March 1, 2010

MISSION:

The mission of the Park Ridge O'Hare Airport Commission is to develop and recommend appropriate solutions enabling Park Ridge City Officials to take decisive action to reduce noise and environmental impact from operations at Chicago O'Hare International Airport, protect the health and safety of its residents, educate the community, and positively impact and protect property, sense of community, and quality of life.

GOALS:

Community Awareness:

Educate the community on the negative impact now and in the future expansion of O'Hare International Airport. Garner support and action from residents, businesses, and organizations within Park Ridge.

Political:

Create political pressure to elicit change in airport policies regarding runway usage.

Legal:

Determine which legal remedies are viable for the City of Park Ridge.

Noise Abatement:

Determine which Noise Abatement Procedures will best relieve the noise burden for the community, and develop strategies to enforce them.

Environmental:

Research existing environmental data; determine which environmental studies/tests can be reasonably completed and offer solutions to use the information to minimize the negative health effects from airport operations.

Report & Recommendations to the Park Ridge City Council by the Park Ridge O'Hare Commission

Progress to Date:

The Commission, comprised of 9 residents, convened for their first meeting on September 15th, 2009. Since then, the Commission has met as a group bi weekly and in small groups of two people as needed. The smaller group was designed to allow the Commission to move through the processes quickly and to maintain appropriate numbers in line with the Open Meetings Act.

The Commission agreed to split into groups to research and create strategies and tactics for each of five potential angles that may lead to resolution of the issues surrounding the unacceptable conditions resulting from expansion at Chicago O'Hare International Airport. These five ideas include: Community Awareness, Political, Legal, Environmental and Noise Abatement. While there is great cross over among the five categories, the approach allowed the Commission to identify and organize needs individually. It is the Commission's position that it is only by executing on these carefully crafted strategies, in a combined effort, that relief will be achieved for the City.

During the course of the meetings, the Commission identified short and long term needs and is recommending the following as an overall plan for the City Council to move forward immediately.

Budget Year 2010 Needs

Community Awareness: Share information with the residents of the City to create one go-to point for accurate information, inspiring the community to get involved while driving pressure to political figures.

Projected Expense: \$10,000

1. Request City Council resolution to adopt a unified city statement against O'Hare expansion for use on the city's website and in other marketing venues. Statement follows:
"The City of Park Ridge believes strongly that continued expansion at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport will not enhance the overall quality of life for its citizens. Roughly 6,000 Park Ridge households, which is 42% of all Park Ridge homes, are affected by changes in flight paths resulting from the O'Hare Modernization Plan (OMP). The City of Park Ridge seeks mitigation solutions for noise and pollution resulting from continued expansion at O'Hare, vehemently opposes and seeks course correction on continuing expansion at the airport."
2. Enrich the City's website O'Hare link with useful information such as the noise hotline number, elected official addresses and emails to send comments and suggestions, a community outreach presentation, noise mitigation steps to provide relief, city statement regarding expansion and other information/communication tools.
3. Create an 11x14 color poster with cartoons depicting our current plight. The poster would direct people to useful links, including the Commission website. Place these at retail and public area bulletin boards. Include business card size "take one" to each. The community brochure will mirror the website
4. Create a plan to drive traffic to the website.

Noise Abatement: Identify best possible abatement procedures for specific request to FAA/CDA to arrive at resolution.

1. Attend ONCC meetings and push for the implementation and consistent use of the Fly Quiet Program.
2. Advocate for the following:
 - Restricted hours of operation for the north runway (Belle Plaine).
 - Advocate for its use as presented in public forum as a Bad Weather Runway.
 - Limit size/type of aircraft on runways over residential areas.
 - Advocate for stopping the continuation of build-out of the O'Hare Modernization Project.
 - Advocate for stopping the building of the Granville Runway.
 - Ensure the two NW runways are not decommissioned.
 - Ensure Carpenter School is sound insulated.
 - Execute a mandatory Fly Quiet program.
 - Revise procedures to include a more fair distribution of flights across all runways.
3. Ramp up "lobby" to FAA and DOA on key abatement solutions.

Political: Creating politically driven momentum through appropriate citizen demand, information sharing and pressure.

Projected Expense: \$105,000

1. Budget and gain approval for the O'Hare Commission members and Aldermen to make at least one joint presentation each to create a "one voice" mentality for the community. The organizations would include, but are not limited to:

- Park Board
- School Boards 207/64
- Chamber of Commerce
- Library Board
- Church/Ministers Associations
- Uptown/South Park Merchants Associations
- VFW/Rotary/Elks, etc.
- PRCC Board
- Park Ridge Juniors/Park Ridge Community Women

Our Mayor, appointed aldermen, and the PR O'Hare Commission members would do a short (20-30 minute) presentation on the status and impact of the OMP and present future consequences to our community organizations and residents. A question and answer session would follow. Key directives and action items wherein individuals will be encouraged to contact key legislative officials to voice concern will be recommended to all attending. A package of information would be available to each attendee.

2. Identify Members of Congress across the nation whose constituencies are in similar airport situations and, working with each, develop a plan to increase pressure in Congress to repeal ANCA and establish new, 21st century guidelines for airport growth and development projects.
3. Leverage this election as a critical time to gain the support of elected officials and candidates on issues surrounding the airport. Mayors and key officials from the communities that are negatively impacted by O'Hare would work

together as a consortium to encourage candidate participation. Schedule an event to be held where candidates will be invited to state their case on topics important to the residents of the communities, and include 5 key questions regarding O'Hare.

Possible Communities:

- Des Plaines
- Itasca
- Woodale
- Elmhurst
- Harwood Heights
- Norridge
- Edison Park
- Norwood Park
- Sauganash

Legislative Candidates:

Jan Schakowsky
Joel Pollack
Mark Kirk
Peter Roskam
Melissa Bean
Gubernatorial Candidates

This event would be held at a neutral location, perhaps a high school in the area. Maine South, Ridgewood, or Elk Grove High School would be ideal. These schools are all negatively impacted by the O'Hare Expansion Project.

4. Empower the Commission to create 5 key questions to submit to candidate debates throughout the area. The goal is to make these questions a core element of each candidate's platform.
5. Hire a lobbying/PR firm to advocate for the City of Park Ridge in Chicago and Washington against future expansion and advocate for noise abatement. Enable the Mayor and Alderman to lobby on behalf of Park Ridge in Chicago and Washington.
6. Identify and contact politically powerful citizens to advocate for the City of Park Ridge.

Environmental: Issues and conditions at O'Hare that are significantly impacting the environmental condition of our community as they relate to the EPA.

Projected Expense: \$50,000

1. Identify strategies to expose environmentally unsound practices at O'Hare.
2. Enlist college students to evaluate the environmental impact of low flying aircraft over the town. This could be part of a thesis.
3. Push for HB-322 Environmental bill to be passed in Illinois.
4. Evaluate and determine if current O'Hare practices violate conditions of the Environmental Impact Statement, looking at soil, air and noise studies. Enlist the support of an environmental consultant.

Legal: Contrary to statements made within the public record, viable legal options for relief exist and further exploration is critical.

Projected Expense: \$335,000

1. Request injunctive relief, via Secretary of Transportation, on all ongoing expansion plans at O'Hare. Request a meeting, in Washington, DC, with the Secretary and appropriate elected officials.
2. Request Executive Session with the City Council to discuss legal options. Continue to explore legal with the CAL Law Firm. Recommend having the CAL Law Firm bring a presentation to the City Council. (No charge to city for lawyers to bring presentation before the City Council.)

Grand Total Projected Expenses: \$500,000

Summary of Expenses:

Community Awareness: \$10,000

Noise Abatement:

Political: \$105,000

Environmental: \$50,000

Legal: \$335,000

Park Ridge O'Hare Airport Commission

Park Ridge City Statement

The City of Park Ridge believes strongly that continued expansion at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport will not enhance the overall quality of life for its citizens. Roughly 6,000 Park Ridge households, which is 42% of all Park Ridge homes, are affected by changes in flight paths resulting from the O'Hare Modernization Plan (OMP). The City of Park Ridge seeks mitigation solutions for noise and pollution resulting from continued expansion at O'Hare, vehemently opposes and seeks course correction on continuing expansion at the airport.

Park Ridge O'Hare Airport Commission Mission Statement

"To develop and recommend appropriate solutions enabling Park Ridge city officials to take decisive action to reduce noise and environmental impacts from operations at Chicago O'Hare International Airport, while protecting the health and safety of area residents, educating the community, positively impacting and protecting property, sense of community, and quality of life."

Goals of the Park Ridge O'Hare Commission

Awareness:

Educate the community on the negative impact now and future expansion of O'Hare International Airport. Garner support and action from residents, businesses and organizations within Park Ridge.

Political:

Create political pressure to elicit change in airport policies regarding runway usage.

Legal:

Determine which legal remedies are viable and enforceable for the City of Park Ridge.

Noise Abatement:

Determine which Noise Abatement Procedures will best relieve the noise burden for the community, and develop strategies to enforce them.

Environmental:

Research existing environmental data; determine what new environmental tests can be feasibly be completed, and offer solutions to use the information to minimize the negative health effects from the airport

Related Links:

To log a noise complaint: <https://servicerequest.cityofchicago.org/>

O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission: www.oharenoise.org

Health effects of airports: www.californiaskywatch.com/health_issues.htm

Park Ridge Air Toxics Study—Mostardi Platt & Environ—2000—[click here](#)

FAQ's and Glossary of Terms ([click here](#))



Landing on Chicago O'Hare Runway 9L-27R—at
Dee Road and Talcott in Park Ridge, IL

Your help is needed. You can make a difference. Be proactive and get involved!

1. Report Noise Disturbances: ONCC [click here to be connected to the O'Hare Noise Compatibility's online complaint registration form](#)
2. Write your elected official: [click here for a list](#)
3. Attend Meetings: OAC meeting info, ONCC info [click here](#)
4. Learn more about the Expansion: outreach presentation—[click here](#)
5. Register to stay informed: [Future registration link](#)
6. Tell us what you think. Take our survey: [Future survey link](#)

Relief Strategies

1. Propose hours of operation for the north runway (Bella Plaine).
2. Advocate for its use as presented in public forum as a Bad Weather Runway.
3. Limit size/type of aircraft on runways over residential areas.
4. Advocate for stopping the continuation of build-out of the O'Hare Modernization Project.
5. Advocate for stopping the building of the Granville Runway.
6. Ensure the two NW runways are not decommissioned.
7. Ensure Carpenter School is sound insulated.
8. Execute a mandatory Fly Quiet program.

[Click here for more](#)



"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."

—Albert Einstein

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Why Park Ridge is A Great Place to Live

Outstanding schools

Parks and Park District programs

Concerts in Hodges Park

Park Ridge sports programs

Tree-City, USA

Welcoming community

Sidewalks and neighbors

Convenient location to transit

Diverse, pleasant architecture

Family friendly

A place to come home to . . .

Topics

What Has Happened

What is About to Happen

What Concerns Us

What Must Happen NOW

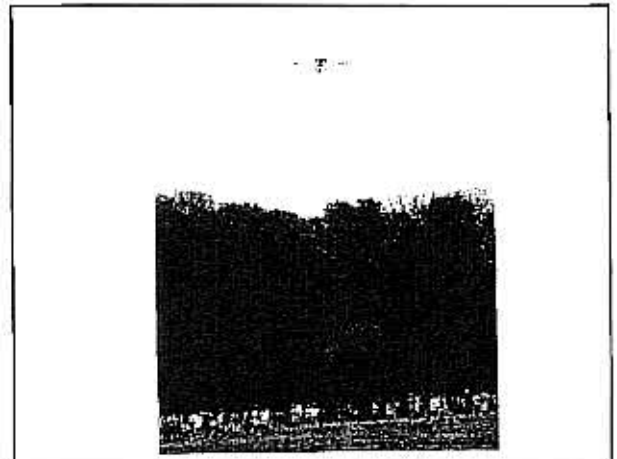
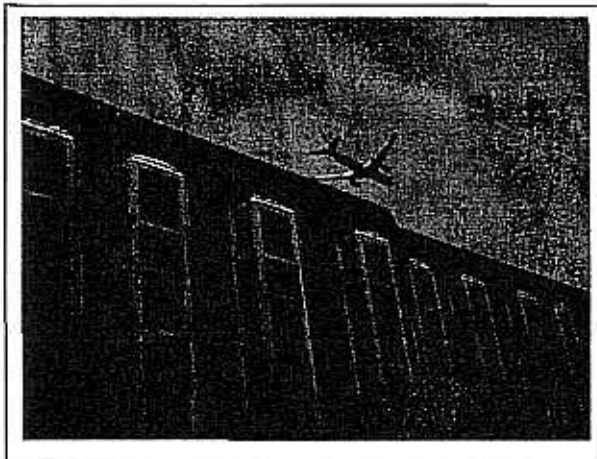
How You Can Help

What Has Happened

The O'Hare Modernization Plan (OMP) is bringing new runways and reconfigured flight paths, increasing noise on new, largely residential flight paths and affecting quality of life throughout Park Ridge and neighboring communities.

NOW – TODAY There are 500 – 900 flights a day over Park Ridge which is affecting roughly 42% or 6,000 households in this community.

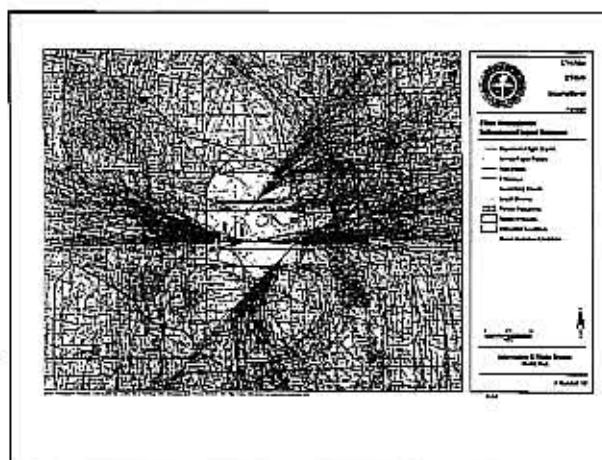
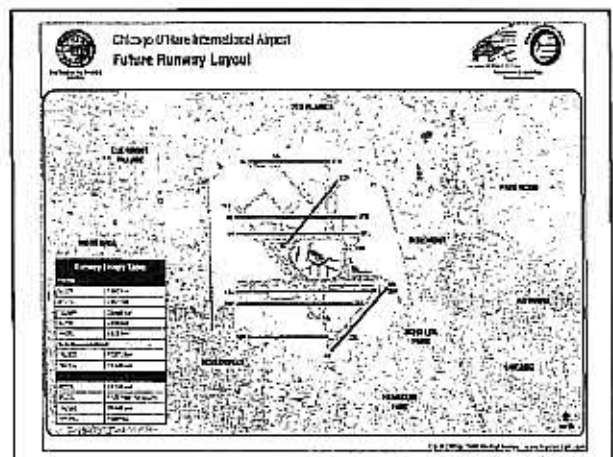
Here's what that looks like:



What is About to Happen

500 flights a day now builds to 2,000 flights a day in 2014

Here's why:



What Concerns Us

Effects of pain

People, property, prosperity

Hearing, health, happiness

Community reaction and cohesiveness

Governmental policy

And here's why:

A rise in the demand for air travel is one of the most serious problems facing the world.

One 747 on arrival/departure generates smog equal to a car driven over 5600 miles.
 Jet aircraft emit carbon dioxide which can last in the atmosphere up to 100 years.
 Jet aircraft emissions are directly deposited into the upper atmosphere, creating a greater global warming effect than those emitted by automobiles.
 Airport ground vehicles run on fossil fuels and are a major source of pollution.

Source: Seattle-Tacoma Regional Airport Commission research reports

"It's like getting jolted with electricity 300 times a day."

Concerned area citizen

Averaging DNL does not accurately reflect the stress of the noise to area residents.
 Airport noise results in a significant use of tranquilizers and sleeping pills.
 Airport communities have higher rates of alcoholism and admission to psychiatric hospitals.
 Infants exposed to high noise levels will suffer lower birth rates and increased rates of birth defects.
 Excessive noise has been associated with development of hypertension, high cholesterol and high blood sugar and puts people at greater risk of heart disease.
 Airport noise causes difficulty in sleeping leading to lethargy, impaired reaction times, fatigue, decreased efficiency and a desire to be left alone.

[Name]

Noise is considered to be a non-specific biologic stressor, eliciting a response that prepares the body for flight or flight.

Through the autonomic nervous system, noise can influence parasympathetic, motor, cognitive, behavioral, glandular, cardiovascular and gastrointestinal function.

People don't adjust to airport noise.

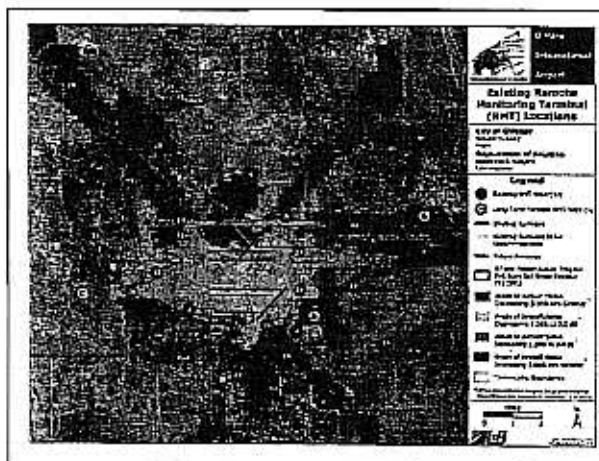
Even 5 years after exposure, physical responses, including higher blood pressure and higher stress levels, continue.

Increased respiratory problems include asthma, decreased lung function, emphysema, sinusitis, rhinitis, sore throat, chest congestion, wheezing and runny or burning eyes.

Source: Seattle-Tacoma Regional Airport Commission Health Studies

The noise contour has not been updated since the EIS Record of Decision for O'Hare Modernization and will not be updated until 2014 or at the end of the OMP completion.

Homes outside the contour, which are experiencing greatly increased levels of noise, will not be offered sound proofing until that time.



A list of issues:

- EIS that is flawed, incomplete and not independently conducted.
- Predictive model used in the EIS; no actual data required or included.
- No actual noise data included in any monitoring or in the EIS.
- Noise data based on day/night averaging does not accurately reflect reality.

A list of issues - continued:

No permanent emissions monitoring at O'Hare.

No actual emissions data included in the EIS.

Carbon dioxide emissions from jet aircraft not included in the EIS.

Carbon dioxide emissions from ground transportation not included in the EIS.

Science and law that are lacking in contemporary applications.

Current noise and health studies contradict EIS.

(Consult Park Ridge Toxics Study 2000, UCSD Health Effects of Noise March 2007)

A list of issues continued:

Low altitude landings - under 400 - 600 feet at Maine South High School.

More flight paths and over flight of area in simultaneous landings.

Airspace capacity limitations.

FAA's Next Gen technology.

Complexities in aviation growth and development.

What Must Happen Now

Obtain relief and course correction on continued expansion at O'Hare including:

Congressional review and changes to ANCA (Airport Noise & Capacity Act of 1990)

Requirement of a new EIS implemented immediately for O'Hare and support for IL GA HB322.

What Must Happen Now

Implementation of reasonable flight caps to stop unlimited use of all runways.

Requirement that the city of Chicago DOA share airport revenues to help mitigate real dangers/damages to airport communities.

Course correction at O'Hare including reevaluation of runway configurations.

What Must Happen Now

Implementation of permanent emissions monitoring and ongoing assessment.

Requirement of new realistic sound assessment standard - (<65 dB DNL (day/night averaging of noise is unacceptable).

Requirement of reporting on SENEL (single event noise exposure levels).

Implementation of MANDATORY Fly Over program for O'Hare.

What Must Happen Now

Requirement of real-time release to public of noise monitor metrics.

Requirement of flight path reconfigurations to allow for equitable distribution of flights.

Coordination on national level with other similarly affected airport communities.

Implementation of CDA (Continuous Descent Approach) on residential flight paths.

Accelerated implementation of RNP/RNAV to mitigate noise and emissions.

How You Can Help

Write your member of Congress.

Write your Senator.

Write Ray LaHood, Transportation Secretary.

Write THE PRESIDENT.

Talk to friends and family.

Call the ONCC hotline number = 1-800-435-9569 with every noise occurrence.

Questions/Answers

Community Concern Expressed to the
Park Ridge O'Hare Airport Commission

*How many homes are
affected by this new
runway?*

In Park Ridge there are over 6000 homes directly affected by the new runway and planned additional runways and reconfigurations. This represents roughly 42% of all Park Ridge households.

*How many schools are
affected by this new
runway?*

There are at least 7 schools directly affected in the path of the newest runway, 9L-27R in Park Ridge. At Malte South High School at the far end of the landing path, jets are typically at 400 - 600 feet or less.

*Isn't this runway supposed
to be used just for smaller
aircraft during bad
weather?*

Many known and respectable news sources reported that the new runway, when it opened in November 2008, would be used for regional aircraft during inclement weather when the winds were blowing from the west. This was also stated on the ONCC (O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission) website as late as January 2009. The FAA refuted those reports, citing past and current reporting as proof. People tell us they feel blindsided by the FAA and the city of Chicago - betrayed in many ways - by inaccurate reporting allowed to go uncorrected. This new runway is really just the first of 3 more to be built which will change the flight paths significantly, redirecting air traffic over largely residential areas while eliminating the main runways utilizing industrial corridors for take-offs and landings.

*So, we're in a new flight
path pattern
with the opening of new
runways. Can these flight
paths be changed?*

Landing paths are something the FAA can change - depending on need and new technologies. Currently, these new flight paths will include Pratt Avenue/BellePlaine, Grambla (Park Ridge) and Higgins Avenue/Kennedy Expressway. Since these streets are all so close to each other, flights will be staggered, one landing every 30 seconds or so - on all 3 paths, once the second of two northern runways is built. But there are new technologies coming that will allow for many flight paths to be merged into one flight path. This will significantly increase the air traffic flow over our heads and over communities who have never before been affected by flight paths.

*How loud is the noise coming from
these jets?*

Actual decibel level readings show levels at 95 dB or greater much of the time. The problem is that officially, noise is monitored at an AVERAGE decibel level over a 24 hour period, not actual decibel levels. The averaging of noise levels does not accurately reflect the stress inflicted on individuals. This needs to be changed and we are advocating for inclusion of actual noise levels in all studies conducted for airport growth and development.

How is this noise affecting my kids when they are in school?

Studies show that speech and communication are affected along with students' long term abilities to learn. Standardized test scores are also impacted in airport communities. And standardized test scores frequently determine school funding, so increased air traffic can also adversely affect school funding.

How is this noise affecting me?

You tell us! For many of us, it's unnerving to say the least. There are many noise related studies indicating that increased exposure to noise leads to increased usage of tranquilizers and sleeping pills; higher rates of alcoholism; increased rates of birth defects, hypertension, high cholesterol and high blood sugar, difficulty sleeping, lethargy, asthma, rhinitis, sore throat, chest congestion, wheezing, itching burning eyes, etc. People exposed to long term noise from airports don't ever adjust. All of these symptoms continue even after 5 years of exposure.

I am not in the flight path. Why should I care about this?

Regardless of where you live in the 100 plus Chicagoand communities, you are directly affected by jet aircraft emissions. Jet aircraft emissions are not regulated by the EPA and are not required to be part of any environmental study of airports today. While you may not be experiencing significant impact from increased noise, you are affected by emissions – which as of this point in time – are not being reported, studied or regulated.

With all these jets flying directly over my home, how is my property value being affected?

Current studies show that your property value is probably affected if you live anywhere within the communities in the flight path. According to the US for O'Hare, this was projected at an average reduction of 27%, but real estate experts project reductions ranging from approximately 9% to 48% – on top of any recession/economic based dip in value.

Is demand for air traffic decreasing?

Flights are down by 1.1% over the last 4 years at O'Hare, but as there is a rise in the demand for air travel worldwide. This recession of ours will end and that, we can only assume, will increase air travel again in this country. There are studies suggesting that the rise in air travel demand, without changes in aviation technology, will be detrimental to the environment and peoples' health in the long run. One 747, for example, upon landing, generates smog equal to one car driven 5600 miles. And jet aircraft emissions, containing carbon dioxide emissions, can last in the atmosphere up to 100 years.

Are any other communities and airports going through similar changes?

Yes, there are many. In our research, every airport that has faced expansion has also faced significant concerns and opposition from the surrounding communities. On the same day that O'Hare completed its new runway - 9L-27R - Seattle/Tacoma and Washington/Dallas also opened new runways - both with great concerns, similar to ours, expressed by the people in the flight paths. And yet, expansion plans continue, with the full support of elected government officials - despite opposition by their constituents. These same officials cite increased revenue and jobs as their main reason for supporting such expansions, yet fail to realize that better alternatives exist - ones that will create even more jobs and revenue - impacting even greater numbers of people while allowing for better environmental management.

What would you do with the This needs to be all about the future of aviation growth and new information gained from development with environmental and community concerns. A new EIS for O'Hare?

EIS, independently conducted and containing ACTUAL data will allow for that all important discussion to take place on a level playing field. We know that we are all paying a huge health price to continue with O'Hare expansion unchanged. We need to come together as a scientific community and as a legislative community to develop 21st century standards applied to long term aviation growth. Anything less is unacceptable.

What is the difference between the FAA's designation of airspace capacity and flight capacity?

Airspace capacity is a relatively finite number, rarely reached because it depends on flight capacity. O'Hare will ALWAYS be constrained by airspace capacity - since Midway exists in close proximity. And flight capacity, while helped by better ground management and throughput capacity - WILL ALWAYS BE DEPENDENT ON WEATHER CONDITIONS. CHICAGO WILL NEVER HAVE CONSISTENT, PREDICTABLE WEATHER. SO, THE IDEA THAT O'HARE CAN BE EXPANDED AND FLIGHT DELAYS GREATLY REDUCED IS NOT ACHIEVABLE - DUE TO THIS FACT. WEATHER IS THE ONE VARIABLE THAT CANNOT BE CONTROLLED.



"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."

-Albert Einstein