



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Great Lakes Region
2300 East Devon Avenue
Des Plaines, IL 60018

MAY 09 2014

Mr. James Chmura
President
Village of Norridge
4000 North Olcott Avenue
Norridge, IL 60706

Dear Mr. Chmura:

Thank you for your letter to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Administrator Michael Huerta and myself, dated March 11, 2014, on behalf of the residents in the Village of Norridge. Your letter identified a number of concerns regarding increased air traffic and increased noise over your community.

The City of Chicago O'Hare Modernization Program (OMP) is a multi-year, multi-phase reconfiguration of the existing airfield to essentially an East/West orientation. This project is a comprehensive redesign of the runways, taxiways, and other associated infrastructure. Throughout the life of the project, the runway usage and air traffic patterns adjust to accommodate operations and construction. When new runways are constructed and available for aircraft, the air traffic patterns adjust accordingly. On October 17, 2013, the OMP commissioned new Runway 10C-28C and transitioned its airspace into a primarily East-West configuration.

The airspace in and around the Chicago metropolitan area is complex, and runway utilization is based on many factors including wind and weather conditions, on-airfield work activities that may affect the availability of runways, and the interrelationship of O'Hare operations with operations at other nearby airports. In the OMP, the City of Chicago proposed a future runway configuration that would increase capacity and efficiency and improve safety. Runway operating configurations were designed to safely accommodate changing weather conditions while maintaining airport efficiency during construction and after completion.

In 2002, the FAA began evaluating all of the proposed development and reconfiguration in the OMP Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The FAA conducted a series of public meetings and responded to public comments, before finalizing and publishing its conclusions in a Record of Decision in September 2005. Noise exposure, runway configuration, airspace configuration, air quality and impacts on surrounding communities were addressed through the extensive public process.

While it is acknowledged that O'Hare operations generate noise impacts on nearby residential areas, which exist on all sides of the airport, those impacts were thoroughly analyzed in the EIS. The EIS identified and mandated specific actions to mitigate noise impacts. The FAA works in cooperation with the airlines, the City of Chicago and the O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission (ONCC) and supports their efforts with funding and technical guidance. Working with the City of Chicago and the ONCC, the FAA has provided approximately \$168 million for

school sound insulation, and more than \$66 million for residential sound insulation to reduce the impacts of aircraft noise to communities adjacent to O'Hare. The FAA continues to participate with other Federal agencies, universities and industry groups in research to reduce noise impacts caused by airports.

The modernization of O'Hare International Airport is needed to meet Chicago's aviation demands of the future in a manner that provides improved safety and efficiency for the airport and public. Through its analysis of the OMP, the FAA took great care to examine health and safety concerns to ensure that all appropriate impact mitigation actions are taken. While we acknowledge that impacts such as noise cannot be completely eliminated, the FAA has taken significant steps to minimize those impacts, and we will continue to do so as technological advancements in the aviation industry provide those opportunities. Thank you for sharing your perspective with the FAA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry D. Cooper". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Barry D. Cooper
Regional Administrator
Great Lakes Region