FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Des Plaines, IL 60018

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FAA RELEASES FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT ON O'HARE MODERNIZATION EFFORT

CHICAGO, IL – The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has completed its Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the proposed modernization of Chicago O'Hare International Airport and has identified the city of Chicago's plan as the agency's preferred alternative.

In its EIS, the FAA used a detailed screening process to analyze the plan proposed by the city of Chicago along with numerous alternative plans. The alternate plans included other modes of transportation, other regional airports, and various runway layouts. The FAA's Final EIS focused on the city's plan, two alternative runway layouts, and a "no-build" option. The modernization plan calls for building new runways and taxiways and modifying others to increase capacity and reduce congestion at O'Hare, the world's second-busiest airport.

By law, the FAA must identify a "preferred alternative" in its Final EIS. After considerable review and analysis, the FAA determined the city's proposed plan (Alternative C in the Final EIS) is the preferred approach. It offers the lowest level of average delays, the greatest savings in delay costs, and has just minimal additional impacts on air quality, water quality, water run-off and noise levels when compared to the other construction alternatives. *(See Attachment A for more details.)* The FAA will continue to consider the other alternatives and the no-build option as possible choices in its Record of Decision on the project.

In addition, the FAA's Final EIS outlines proposed mitigation actions and suggestions in various environmental areas. Some of the key areas include:

Noise Mitigation – The Final EIS discusses the need for soundproofing for all residences and schools that would be newly exposed to noise levels of 65 decibels and higher. To keep noise levels at a minimum in residential areas near the airport, the Final EIS also suggests the continuation of the Fly Quiet program at O'Hare and ongoing efforts by the O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission to oversee mitigation efforts around O'Hare.

Air Quality Mitigation – Since the proposed O'Hare plan does not violate U.S. EPA national air quality standards, formal mitigation actions are not required. However, the city does intend to implement several valuable emission reduction initiatives. They

include using cleaner and more fuel efficient engines on construction equipment, using ultra-low sulfur fuel for off-road diesel equipment, implementing diesel-idling restrictions for delivery vehicles, encouraging the use of alternate fuel for the airport's bus and shuttle vehicles, and continuing the use of best management practices for all decisions affecting air quality.

Land Acquisition – For homes and businesses that may be acquired, the city will fully adhere to the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act to ensure that residents receive just compensation and support. The city also would provide Spanish translators throughout the land acquisition process when it is necessary.

Cemeteries – As a result of detailed analysis, the Final EIS states that if the FAA's Record of Decision approves the city's proposal, the graves in St. Johannes cemetery must be relocated because there are no less restrictive alternatives available. *(See Attachment B for details on the FAA's analysis of minimizing impacts to the cemeteries.)* The FAA is developing an agreement with the city of Chicago that will require the city to produce a professional-level survey map of all identified graves and historic features, and photographic records of all headstones.

The FAA would also develop a second agreement that would outline the requirements and procedures for the removal and relocation of the graves in St. Johannes Cemetery. Details about this potential action will be discussed in the FAA's Record of Decision. The city would bear all costs associated with relocation.

At Rest Haven Cemetery, adjustments could be made on the airfield for construction of new cargo facilities that leave the cemetery undisturbed. In addition, it might be possible for the public to still visit the cemetery, although access could be limited. Further details about these possible actions will be available in the FAA's Record of Decision.

Final EIS Comments – The public can view the FAA's Final EIS during regular business hours at 33 locations in Chicago and the suburbs. *(The specific locations can be found on Attachment C.)*

The FAA also encourages individuals and organizations to submit comments on specific sections of the final environmental study during a 30-day comment period. Comments must be received no later than 5 p.m. central time on Sep. 6. The sections open for comments include: Alternatives, Air Quality, Environmental Justice, Mitigation, and Religious Freedom Restoration Act materials. The FAA will use the public comments it receives as it develops its Record of Decision.

During the public comment period, the FAA will accept comments by fax at (847) 294-7046 and by e-mail at OMPEIS@faa.gov. Written comments may also be mailed to:

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Chicago Airports District Office
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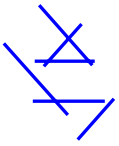
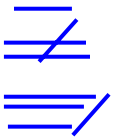
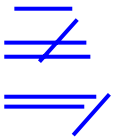
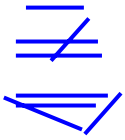
TABLE 1
SUMMARY COMPARISON OF RETAINED ALTERNATIVES

Runway Layout for Each Alternative					
Alternatives		**A**	**C**	**D**	**G**
1. Environmental Impacts					
Wetland impacts	Jurisdictional & non-jurisdictional, including non-wetland Waters of the United States (acres)	23.5	154.2	154.2	154.2
Floodplain impacts	Increase in impervious surfaces area (acres)	0	1,000	823	1,126
DOT Section 4(f)/6(f) Parkland impacts	Parkland properties to be acquired	0	3	3	3
Section 106 impacts	Properties to be acquired and removed	0	4	4	4
Acquisition and relocation impacts	Area of proposed land acquisition (acres)	0	440	413	413
	Population of proposed land acquisition area	0	2,631	2,553	2,553
	Housing Units	0	539	522	522
	Businesses	0	197	164	164
65+ DNL noise impacts (Build Out)	Area (acres)	12,427	11,263	11,187	11,216
	Housing Units	5,199	6,754	7,392	6,572
	Population	14,512	19,577	21,154	19,135
Environmental justice impacts	Minority residents in proposed acquisition area by race	0	1,575	1,479	1,479
	Minority residents in proposed acquisition area by ethnicity	0	1,599	1,524	1,524
Air Quality Impacts	Compliance with NAAQS	Exceedance of CO at 1 location	No exceedances	No exceedances	No exceedances
2. Operational Efficiency Factors					
2018 average annual delay	(minutes per operation)	17.1	5.8	10.5	6.9
2018 annual operations served	(operations)	974,000	1,194,000	1,194,000	1,194,000
3. Economic Impact Factors					
Delay cost	Delay cost to the airlines in 2018 (millions) based on $25 per minute of delay	$416.4	$173.1	$313.4	$206.0
Local tax base	Tax base loss of parcels acquired (millions)	$0	$5.7	$5.3	$5.3
Relative development costs	Relative construction cost	Less than C, D or G	More than A, D, less than G	More than A, less than C, G	More than A, C and D
4. National Policy Factors					
Implementation factors	Regulatory – Does authority exist to implement?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Sponsor – Is there a sponsor able to fund?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Service Provider – Will adequate service be initiated?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Notes: Surface transportation effects are included in **Sections VII-C, Surface Transportation** of this **Executive Summary.**
n/a = not applicable

Source: TPC Analysis, **Chapter 5, Environmental Consequences.**

ATTACHMENT B

FAA ANALYSIS OF O'HARE OPTIONS TO MINIMIZE IMPACTS TO CEMETERIES

As part of its efforts to mitigate environmental impacts associated with implementation of an O'Hare modernization "build" alternative, the FAA analyzed various options that would potentially limit impacts to the two cemeteries adjacent to O'Hare -- St. Johannes and Rest Haven cemeteries.

The following paragraphs outline the options assessed and conclusions drawn concerning each option.

Eliminate proposed Runway 10C/28C - The FAA examined the proposed OMP without Runway 10C/28C. This runway would be utilized as a full time runway in all primary operating conditions. The FAA proposes to find that operation of the airfield without this runway would achieve a measure of delay reduction only marginally better than Alternative D which is studied in the Draft EIS. In poor weather conditions, departure capacity in an east flow is reduced from approximately 120 aircraft per hour to about 90 per hour, a significant reduction, by restricting departures to two independent runways. Moreover, the absence of this runway would remove the ability to conduct quadruple simultaneous landings in VFR weather, and would eliminate the future potential for quadruple operations in IFR weather. It also appears that the absence of this 10,800 foot runway would require an extension to proposed Runway 10R/28L of at least 1,000 feet to accommodate a majority of the forecast fleet mix. Because of existing Runway 4R/22L, such an extension could only be accomplished on the west side of the airport, requiring additional land acquisition in the Bensenville area. In the absence of such an extension, the airfield becomes "imbalanced" with more traffic using the runways located north of the terminals because of the greater lengths they provide. This imbalance reduces the effectiveness of the proposed layout and means the airport will not achieve the delay reduction expected by the proposed action. Also, the removal of Runway 10C/28C deprives the airport of one of two runways that are both wide enough and long enough for use by New Large Aircraft (NLA). Because of the separation distances required for taxiway clearances and other restrictions, it is not feasible to widen to 200 foot any other proposed runway that is long enough to handle NLA. We propose to find that removing Runway 10C/28C from the ALP is not a viable less restrictive alternative. Accordingly, the FAA also proposes to find that this configuration fails to meet the purpose and need of the proposed action, and does not qualify as a less restrictive alternative.

Shorten proposed Runway 10C/28C so that the threshold of Runway 10C would lie to the east of the cemeteries. The FAA also studied another configuration that would call for Runway 10C/28C to be shortened to 7,500 feet. The FAA proposes to find that this configuration would present safety issues and is therefore unacceptable. This configuration also would impose significant operational constraints on the airfield In its shortened layout, Runway 10C/28C would be an arrival runway in east flow conditions while Runway 10L/28R would continue to serve as a departure runway. Because the threshold of shortened Runway 10C would be relocated some 3,200 feet east of the threshold of Runway 10L, traffic landing on runway 10C would be exposed to the wake

turbulence of aircraft that had begun their takeoff roll much further west on runway 10L. Similarly, heavy jet and B-757 arrivals on 10C could produce wake turbulence issues for 10L departures. In addition, the restrictions required by Precision Object Free Zone and Runway Protection Zone standards would negate planned efficiencies in taxi time and taxi routes for aircraft landing on 10C and departing on 10R. Also, reduction in length to 7,500 removes this runway as appropriate for use by NLA, as described above. Accordingly, the FAA also proposes to find that this configuration fails to meet the purpose and need of the proposed action, and does not qualify as a less restrictive alternative.

Shorten proposed Runway 10C/28C further to 6,900 feet. The FAA studied a configuration in which Runway 10C/28C was shortened to only 6,900 feet. This configuration produces the same impediments to delay reduction that are associated with a 7,500 runway and it exacerbates the safety problem related to wake turbulence beyond that expected from a 7,5000 foot runway. The FAA proposes to find this configuration unacceptable for safety reasons, inadequate for meeting the purpose and need of the proposed action, and not viable as a less restrictive alternative.

Shift proposed Runway 10C/28C to the south to avoid the cemeteries. The FAA also studied a configuration in which Runway 10C/28C is shifted some 350 feet south and shortened by 500 feet from its present proposed length of 10,800 feet. The movement to the south is to avoid St. Johannes Cemetery; the shortening of runway length is to preserve the existing airport geometry, specifically the relationship between Runway 10C/28C and Runway 4R/22L. Even in this modified form, however, wake turbulence issues appear because aircraft departing Runway 22L are farther into takeoff roll when crossing the extended intersection with arrival Runway 28C. The greater distance to the southwest that the Runway 28R flight path crosses Runway 22L, the greater the possibility for wake turbulence issues. Moreover, moving Runway 10C/28C to the south would require reducing the size of the south storm water detention facility that now abuts taxiways serving Runway 10C/28C, as well as modification to cargo areas. Should future technology allow for quadruple approach procedures in IFR weather, the lesser distance between 10C/28C and 10R/28L means the less likely such procedures could be authorized. Even without quadruple approaches, however, the requirement of the FAA's Terminal Instrument Procedures regarding Category II/III Instrument Landing System Approach surfaces could impact proposed minimum landing conditions on Runways 10C and 10R, thereby hampering the operational efficiencies of these runways during poor weather conditions. Accordingly, the FAA proposes to reject this configuration for safety reasons and because it fails to meet the purpose and need of the proposed action.

In addition, the FAA studied relocating Runway 10C/28R some 450 feet south of its proposed location and shortening it to 10,300 to preserve the airfield's proposed geometry. Here, safety issues relating to wake turbulence identified immediately above are increased, since the point where the flight path to 28C crosses Runway 22L is even farther to the southwest by some 550 feet. The south storm water detention facility is compromised to an even greater degree, and the opportunity for quadruple approaches in poor weather conditions is virtually eliminated. For these reasons, the FAA proposes to find that safety and operational impacts render this proposed configuration unacceptable and incapable of satisfying the purpose and need for the project.

Utilize Alternative G instead of the City's plan. This alternative includes a Runway 12/30, which was raised for consideration by the FAA's Air Traffic organization. However, Alternative G, like the City's plan, physically impacts the cemeteries. In fact, this airfield configuration, due to the convergence of two runways in the vicinity of the cemeteries, presents no possibility for avoidance of either cemetery by proposed pavement.

CONCLUSION: The analysis performed by the FAA concluded that there is no viable option for *completely* avoiding cemetery impacts if an O'Hare modernization "build" alternative is employed.

Attachment C

The Final EIS is available for review until September 6, 2005 at the following libraries:

Arlington Heights Memorial Library	500 North Dunton Ave.	Arlington Heights
Bellwood Public Library	600 Bohland Ave.	Bellwood
Bensenville Community Public Library	200 S Church Rd.	Bensenville
Berkeley Public Library	1637 Taft Ave.	Berkeley
Bloomingdale Public Library	101 Fairfield Way	Bloomingdale
College of DuPage Library	425 Fawell Blvd.	Glen Ellyn
Des Plaines Public Library	1501 Ellinwood Ave	Des Plaines
Eisenhower Public Library	4652 N Olcott Ave	Harwood Heights
Elk Grove Village Public Library	1001 Wellington Ave.	Elk Grove
Elmhurst Public Library	211 Prospect Ave.	Elmhurst
Elmwood Park Public Library	4 W Conti Pkwy.	Elmwood Park
Franklin Park Public Library	10311 Grand Ave.	Franklin Park
Glendale Heights Library	25 E Fullerton Ave.	Glendale Heights
Glenview Public Library	1930 Glenview Rd.	Glenview
Harold Washington Library	400 S. State St.	Chicago
Hoffman Estates Library	1550 Hassell Rd.	Hoffman Estates
Itasca Community Library	500 W. Irving Park Rd.	Itasca
Lombard Public Library	110 W Maple St.	Lombard
Maywood Public Library	121 S. 5th Ave.	Maywood
Melrose Park Public Library	801 N. Broadway	Melrose Park
Morton Grove Public Library	6140 Lincoln Ave.	Morton Grove
Mount Prospect Public Library	10 S Emerson St.	Mount Prospect
Niles Public Library	6960 W Oakton St.	Niles
Northlake Public Library	231 N. Wolf Rd.	Northlake
Oak Park Public Library	834 Lake St.	Oak Park
Oakton Community College Library	1616 E. Golf Rd.	Des Plaines
Park Ridge Public Library	20 S Prospect Ave	Park Ridge
River Forest Public Library	735 Lathrop Ave.	River Forest
River Grove Public Library	8638 W. Grand Ave.	River Grove
Schaumburg Township District Library	130 S Roselle Rd.	Schaumburg
Schiller Park Public Library	4200 Old River Rd.	Schiller Park
Villa Park Public Library	305 S Ardmore Ave.	Villa Park
Wood Dale Public Library	520 N Wood Dale Rd.	Wood Dale

The Final EIS is also available on the FAA's website at **www.agl.faa.gov/OMP/FEIS**.