

MEMORANDUM

TO: Frank E. Kruesi
Warren Silver
FROM: Jay R. Franke
DATE: August 10, 1990
RE: O'HARE DISCUSSION NOTES

I. O'HARE MASTER PLAN STRATEGY

A. Principles

At and after the July 9 meeting (the outline from which is attached as Exhibit A), it has been resolved that O'Hare development should follow these principles:

1. O'Hare's ability to handle aircraft traffic in bad weather must be improved - IFR delay must be reduced - even if that means new runways.
2. Minimize the period of public controversy and the number of public proceedings.
3. Get into court on the EIS as quickly as possible, in order to get out of court as soon as possible.
4. Proceed with O'Hare development independently of LAC site selection.
5. To the seven axioms listed in the July 6 outline, add the Schneiderman Axiom: No matter what, the City must retain effective control of airport development.

Elements of O'Hare planning are listed in Exhibit A. They include both intuitive airport matters (airside, terminal, landside delay/capacity improvements) and two other categories: air traffic control improvements, and airport "collateral" land development. Both of these are important and complex long term issues, and must be fully developed in any "master plan" scenario.

B. Basic "Master Plan" Process

A variant "master plan" program is contemplated. There will be no traditional, federally-funded and -regulated, lengthy "master plan" process leading up to development of an Airport Layout Plan (ALP) and EIS. The City will simply file a proposed ALP and start the EIS process. This is possible because necessary technical

foundation has been developed by the Delay Task Force and Terminal Support Working Group; this is desirable because it will save time and minimize public exposure. Significant features:

1. Some master plan elements are less likely to become part of the public discussion process (e.g., collateral land development programs). This is a distinct advantage.
2. Competitive bidding and public selection of technical consultants would not be required. This would save at least six months and would increase flexibility. Consultant selection must be given careful thought, and a balanced team must be selected.
3. No federal funds would be used, and no federal strings would be attached. The airlines will fund master planning from current Fees & Charges.

The basic (moderately ambitious) timetable would be:

1. September 1, 1990: Delay Task Force report released. City takes report under advisement. Timing of release may be affected by FAA release of National Capacity Office proposals for O'Hare delay reduction.
2. November 15, 1990: City submits AIP to FAA for airspace review and approval. EIS process initiated and "scoping" meetings (public notice and participation required) held.
3. April, 1991: Preliminary Draft EIS released for review. Public hearing held thereafter.
4. September, 1991: Final Draft EIS released and submitted to FAA. Regional and State EO 12372 review process. EPA publishes availability of Draft EIS.
5. February, 1992: Federal review completed.
6. May, 1992: Complete negotiation with agencies on mitigation measures.
7. July, 1992: Issuance of Final EIS by FAA/EPA. Record of Decision initiated by FAA; issuance of Record of Decision by October, 1992.
8. October, 1992: Litigation starts. Decision or settlement by late 1994.
9. 1995: Construction.

C. Parallel Initiatives.

About the time the Delay Task Force report becomes public,

the City should take certain environmental initiatives. Aside from their considerable independent merits, they will blunt the effects of the report.

1. Stage 2 Phaseout. The City should take a position advocating an early phaseout of Stage 2 aircraft at noise-sensitive airports such as O'Hare and Midway. This matter is outlined in a separate memorandum and materials. The City has an excellent opportunity to have a strong positive effect on national policy.
2. Flood Control. O'Hare already serves as an effective flood control reservoir for its suburban neighbors. There are studies afoot to construct additional retention basins and flood control devices on the airport. After the repeated "100 year" floods of recent years, flood control is a major issue, particularly in Des Plaines. The City should use O'Hare to provide more flood control support, and should claim appropriate public recognition for doing so.
3. Glycol Recycling. Glycol is the de-icing agent used on aircraft and runways, in larger quantities at O'Hare than anywhere else in the world. Its toxicity is uncertain. For reasons both economic and environmental, it is now technically feasible to collect and recycle glycol. This will become a national environmental issue in a few years; Chicago should get out ahead of the issue by announcing a pilot program to test the feasibility of recycling.

II. ALTERNATE STRATEGY

The above strategy may be summarized as: propose new runways at O'Hare and see what "they" do. This is the most direct course and perhaps the best one. There is an alternative that deserves some consideration:

1. The City announces the Delay Task Force study. It confirms the obvious: there must be IFR delay relief at O'Hare in the short run, and capacity relief for O'Hare in the long run. These may be achieved in varying degrees by:
 - (a) New runways;
 - (b) ATC improvements to permit triple converging IFR approaches, providing most of the IFR delay reduction benefit of new runways; and
 - (c) A new airport.
2. New runways are the only responsible solution under current conditions. For the welfare of the region, the City must develop them.

3. However, if certain conditions changed, airport needs might be met without new runways:

- (a) If the FAA would credibly commit to develop triple converging IFR approaches, the current IFR delay crisis would be ameliorated. Technology and procedures to do this are available.
- (b) If LAC could be developed quickly - say, ten years - it could address both delay and capacity issues at O'Hare in a realistic time frame. Only the LAC site can attract sufficient traffic from O'Hare to do this.

4. To develop LAC in ten years, work must begin immediately; the current site selection process must be aborted. To finance LAC within this period, the State of Illinois (and/or Indiana) would probably have to pledge some variation of General Obligation credit. With "GO" credit, LAC could probably be built without direct airline support, a big advantage. The City would continue to pledge PFC revenues.

5. Recognizing the parties' roles, the City would propose a legal Authority to develop and operate LAC, with appropriate representation for the City, Illinois, and Indiana. The Authority would be constituted through a bi-state compact ratified by Congress.

6. If this reasonable alternative is rejected, there is no regionally responsible choice but to pursue immediately new runways at O'Hare.

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This approach is complex but staggeringly beneficial if successful. Even if not successful, it establishes the City as a reluctant developer of new runways.

There are several notable reasons why this approach could be attractive to many parties. Most of these reasons did not exist until recently, and may dissipate in a few months:

- LAC has acquired a sense of inevitability due to the reorganization of the bi-state committee, the public dilemma of Indiana leaders, the success of the PFC in Congress, and the lack of any discernable technical flaw in the LAC Feasibility Study. Most importantly, no other competing site plan has yet emerged as a rallying point.
- The Mayor is the most effective leader in the region, capable of creating events rather than simply coping with them. The zeitgeist is with him; he cannot keep it by waiting a year (or longer) for the untested bi-state committee.

- The Governor of Illinois has been unassertive in this matter; however, he cannot but wish to solve the "third airport" siting issue before leaving office. If the state is going to underwrite economically marginal projects like convention centers, how can it refuse a gilt-edge airport?
- The current U.S. Secretary of Transportation would energetically assist any regional solution, and would commit all possible federal funds to LAC. Any successor (how soon?) would not be as helpful.
- The O'Hare suburbs (and their state legislators) should support this proposal, contingent upon LAC providing sufficient future capacity in an environmentally acceptable way. If they reject the City's positive initiative, they will be ...attaining medals of negativism.
- The airlines will be opposed to foregoing runways. However, the FAA could easily develop triple converging IFR approach procedures in a shorter time than runways could be developed. Getting the FAA to do so is the trick.

Finally, the City should advance this proposal for several reasons:

- The City sets the terms of the inevitable runway trade-off proposal, keeping the Mayor ahead of events rather than caught in them.
- The City offers positive alternatives to new runways, softening opposition to them.
- If this proposal is not successful, these benefits still accrue at no particular cost.
- If successful, the City pre-emptes the airport siting issue while the alternative sites remain inchoate.
- The big picture: the City's overwhelming social needs and tax base issues can only be addressed on a regional level. The LAC Authority could be a positive, City-led example of successful regional cooperation.
- The Midway picture: this proposal would determine the scope of redevelopment at Midway, which will be very problematic under current conditions.