

# O'HARE MONITOR

## Mission

The O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission strives to reduce the impact of aircraft noise through home and school sound insulation, and to reduce aircraft noise, whenever possible at its source.

## CDA MONITORS AIRCRAFT NOISE IN 3 SCHOOLS

The Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) is monitoring aircraft noise in three schools near O'Hare International Airport during the summer of 2010 to evaluate the schools' eligibility for sound insulation funding.

Carpenter School in Park Ridge, Ridgewood High School in Norridge and Elk Grove High School in Elk Grove Village appealed to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to reconsider their status for sound insulation funding after the agency determined the schools were no longer eligible. The FAA based its decision on projected noise within the O'Hare Modernization Program build-out noise contour.

ONCC members, Congressional representatives, CDA, FAA and school officials toured the schools in April 2010. Following the tour, the FAA requested the CDA to conduct new noise monitoring at the three schools.

The noise monitoring results will be based on a measured, A-weighted—noise level humans hear—windows-open interior sound level of 45 decibels or greater resulting from aircraft operations during a typical eight-hour school day.

Technicians place monitors at three different sites: inside a classroom with open windows, inside a different classroom with closed windows and on the rooftop. Monitoring will last four full days at each school.

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## CREWS WORK YEAR-ROUND TO RENOVATE HITCH SCHOOL

Construction crews at Hitch Elementary School in Chicago didn't have the luxury of working summers-only as they installed sound insulation and other modifications to the building. Started in November 2009, this 12-month project involved working around students and faculty during ongoing heavy construction.

Craig Cuchra, senior field manager for McKissack & McKissack, construction specialists with offices nationwide, explained that a \$6 million grant to Hitch School from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act included specific time limits that would qualify for federal funding.

Crews constructed temporary walls to protect the students and faculty from harmful asbestos dust and debris when they removed insulation, interior walls and window caulk. Students also rotated classrooms each week during the school year while crews replaced windows and installed air conditioning units.

"All exterior windows at Hitch were replaced just five to eight years ago," explained Marty Fallon, supervisor from



**Hitch School student closes newly installed interior window.**

Reliable & Associates Construction Company of Chicago, who replaced the windows and heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems. "We installed interior casement windows to meet sound insulation requirements without replacing the newer exterior windows. The new windows also had to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements of five pounds of torque to open or close easily."

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## BID FAREWELL TO AVIATION OFFICIAL



*Extending congratulations and bidding farewell to (center) Chris Arman, Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) chief operating officer, are Michael Boland, CDA first deputy commissioner, and ONCC chairperson and Arlington Heights Mayor Arlene J. Mulder. Arman was named project director for the Midfield Terminal Complex at Abu Dhabi Airports Company in May 2010.*

## ONCC Profile

### WOOD DALE ENVISIONS NEW 'MAIN STREET'

Participation in an FAA land-use grant program is one of several benefits the city of Wood Dale credits to ONCC since joining the organization in 2007, according to Mayor Ken Johnson.

The city acquired a \$179,225 FAA grant in September 2009 to develop a Thorndale Corridor master plan as an integral part of the proposed O'Hare western terminal access.



*Mayor Ken Johnson*

"Study results predict Thorndale will become a 'corporate main street' for national and international sales offices," explained Johnson. "We are grateful to ONCC and Chicago for making us aware of the grant."

"We envision a client arriving at O'Hare, taking a ten-minute drive to the airport's western access area and holding a meeting at a nearby sales office. That's efficient business. Of course, there will always be the need for hotels and restaurants in the area," said Johnson who has served as Wood Dale mayor since 1999.

Looking ahead to the OMP completion in 2014, Johnson says he would like to see ONCC advocate for more economic development for the new western corridor. "It would be beneficial if ONCC would officially support and pass a resolution for the Elgin O'Hare-West Bypass project," he continued.

Johnson is confident that when all six parallel runways are commissioned and the FAA re-evaluates the noise contour based on actual data, there will be a need for more residential sound insulation.

"I'm depending on ONCC to advocate for that quality of life cause," he said.

ONCC membership also has opened lines of communication between the airport and city, according to Johnson. "We continue to support the commission as our first line of communication for critical airport information," said Johnson.

### IIT SCIENTIST CITES RESEARCH TO REDUCE AIRCRAFT NOISE

Ongoing experiments to mitigate aircraft noise annoyance were outlined by Ganesh Raman, Ph.D., associate professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering at the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT), at the May meeting of the ONCC Technical Committee.



*Ganesh Raman, Ph.D.*

He reported that IIT is experimenting with miniature delta fins in the nozzles of aircraft engines to reduce noise. Scientists are also looking at how to increase the sound of engines to 720kHz that would shift noise from low to high frequency and thus eliminate sound vibrations heard by humans. This method would require air compressors on engines and is no easy task, but researchers have had success in the laboratory, Raman reported.

Raman received the 2008 Lindbergh-Lycoming Grant that specifically funds aviation and aerospace innovation projects that focus on a balance between advancement in technology and preservation of the human and natural environment.

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### FAA APPROVES \$247 MILLION FOR SOUND INSULATION IN HOMES

The FAA has authorized the city of Chicago to collect \$247 million in Passenger Facility Charges to sound insulate remaining eligible dwellings prior to the completion of the OMP in 2014. These dwellings are located in Bensenville, Chicago, Park Ridge, Schiller Park and Wood Dale.

Currently, construction is continuing on 500 homes in the 2008 program year and is expected to be finished by mid-August 2010. The remaining 500 homes will be completed in the first quarter of 2011. Homes are located in Chicago, Park Ridge, Schiller Park and Bensenville.

Seven hundred homeowners eligible for the 2009 program year have already confirmed their participation. Dwellings are located in Chicago and Park Ridge. The CDA is contacting 300 Schiller Park homeowners on the alternate list to attend a briefing session. These homes will enter the design stage and be scheduled for bidding this winter.

An ONCC resolution passed in June 2010 established the eligibility list for the 2010 program year that includes 1,185 eligible properties located in Chicago, Rosemont and Bensenville. There is no application process. The CDA contacts eligible property owners directly.

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### ONCC SEEKS ENDORSEMENTS

ONCC members approved a resolution supporting renewal of an intergovernmental agreement in June 2010 that is endorsed by the CDA and will be presented to the Chicago City Council for its approval. Following the council's endorsement, individual ONCC members will seek approval by each of their municipalities, counties and school districts. The first agreement was approved in 1999. The new agreement would be in effect from January 1, 2011 until December 31, 2015.

## Hitch School (cont. from page 1)

When the school is finished there will be two “cooling” systems. The main HVAC system uses high-efficiency condensing boilers based on a closed hot water system that flows through coils and then distributes heat or cool air through large air tunnels.

The second system provides individual cooling units in all classrooms, the library and the cafeteria. Each room has individual fan-coiled air conditioning units to prevent condensation and mold issues.

By the end of the summer, 95 percent of the renovations will be complete. The exterior doors, a new roof and the HVAC system also will be finished. Workers are also installing an elevator and new bathrooms to meet ADA requirements. The project is scheduled to be completed by October 2010.

## CDA Monitors (cont. from page 1)

Results from the loudest monitored eight-hour day will be used as the representative noise level for that particular school.

Pending results, schools may be eligible for FAA sound insulation funds.

## O'HARE | MONITOR

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## MCLAUGHLIN: 'IT'S ALL ABOUT NOISE'

Aircraft noise is nothing new for Brendan McLaughlin, appointed executive director for the O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission in March 2010.

As a youngster living in Chicago's suburbs, McLaughlin spent many Friday nights with his buddies listening to radio communication between O'Hare Airport's control tower and pilots landing aircraft on Runway 14R. Using old flight manuals given to them by a neighbor and pilot, the boys eagerly tracked airliners making their final descent, recalls McLaughlin.



Brendan McLaughlin

Now McLaughlin's boyhood hobby has turned into an opportunity to focus on the growth of O'Hare International Airport and its diverse interactions with populations living nearby.

"It's all about aircraft noise. We need to maintain safety while doing what we can to reduce aircraft noise," he said. "It takes a cooperative spirit. ONCC cannot achieve noise reductions without the assistance of the FAA, CDA, the airlines and their pilots. Cooperation, in my experience, greatly increases the likelihood that you will achieve positive change.

"With aircraft, comes noise. We have to decide where to focus our efforts. We can look to ONCC's successes—the last three schools are being considered for sound insulation eligibility and installation of sound insulation for all identified residences is keeping pace with runway construction as the OMP continues toward its 2014 completion date," he continued.

McLaughlin also cites ONCC's role in the FAA's Noise Research Roadmap workshops regarding the 65 DNL as an acceptable threshold for aircraft noise. "Their efforts to reach a data-supported conclusion concerning the continued use of the 65 DNL standard will take some time," McLaughlin noted.

"ONCC can make a difference, find alternatives, take little steps to ease aircraft noise issues," he said.

For example, an immediate goal is to focus on overnight noise. "We need 'actionable data' to identify the problem. By tracking the handful of overnight departures, perhaps we can pinpoint which flights are making the objectionable noise. We hope to work with our aviation partners to identify ways to reduce such noise.

"Ninety percent of statistical reports on noise and flight patterns are averages. It's hard to fix a broken average. We need to identify specific flights, specific incidents and then study better ways to address wayward flights and noise," he said.

ONCC also is making headway in encouraging airlines' better adherence to preferred flight paths. The commission has lobbied the CDA to undertake a project to integrate the preferred departure flight paths into the FAA's aeronautical plates that are used as the basis for flight manuals.

"We anticipate that including the preferred departure flight paths in flight manuals will result in more aircraft flying along the desired flight paths. This should result in fewer homes experiencing aircraft noise," explained McLaughlin.

ONCC also will work with municipalities that seek FAA land-use grants as progress continues toward development of a western access at O'Hare Airport.

McLaughlin brings a diverse career in public administration, transportation and land-use development to his new ONCC leadership role. His experience includes a 10-year administrative career with the city of Naperville, Ill., and general management of residential and mixed-use master planned communities in California. Most recently, he was city administrator for the United City of Yorkville, Ill.

McLaughlin lives in Naperville with his wife and son.

# BENSENVILLE INITIATES COMPREHENSIVE LAND-USE PLANS

The village of Bensenville is moving ahead in efforts to reposition itself as a vibrant residential, commercial and industrial center with a \$1 million FAA Vision 100-Century of Aviation grant acquired in November 2009 to underwrite extensive land-use planning.

The FAA grant will support a comprehensive land-use plan, study economic and market trends, create economic development goals, review infrastructure needs and suggest transportation and transit options. Bensenville provided a required match of 20 percent or \$200,000 for the FAA's \$800,000 land-use grant.

“With the final stages of the OMP underway, we wanted to take advantage of our prime location next to one of the world’s busiest airports,” said Bensenville Mayor Frank Soto.

Bensenville selected a consulting team comprised of land-use engineers, planning and economic development consultants, and transportation planning engineers to develop commercial corridor concepts and transportation scenarios based on information gathered from web-based surveys, community workshops and one-on-one stakeholder interviews.

“In addition, our ONCC membership provides vital information about O’Hare operations,” he said.

“One of the goals we hope to accomplish is for Bensenville to become more attractive to relocating and expanding businesses,” said Soto. “The village board unanimously adopted a 15-year strategic plan that articulates the village’s vision and includes a mission statement, core principles, goals and objectives.”



*Bensenville’s revitalization includes land-use planning for York Road, Irving Park Road and Green Street (note red lines).*

By 2011, Bensenville will have completed plans to update zoning ordinances, review subdivision regulations, amend some building codes, complete an official village map and finalize its capital improvement plan.

## FAA STUDIES AIRCRAFT NOISE

FAA Noise Research Roadmap workshops, created in 2009 to re-evaluate the current 65 DNL noise contour standard, have confirmed that aircraft noise affects numerous daily living activities and may influence learning ability.

A forthcoming project will identify and investigate community reaction to the introduction of new airport runways and generate positive outcomes, according to ONCC Chairperson and Arlington Heights Mayor Arlene J. Mulder who participates in ongoing telephone updates and on-site workshops sponsored by the Federal Interagency Committee on Aviation Noise (FICAN).

For more information and specific observations regarding exposure to aircraft noise, visit [www.oharenoise.org](http://www.oharenoise.org) or the FICAN site at: [www.fican.org/faaworkshop.html](http://www.fican.org/faaworkshop.html).



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