

History of O'Hare International Airport



From Orchard Field to O'Hare 1945-1959

- In 1945, a Site Selection Committee appointed by Mayor Edward Kelly chose Orchard Field, the location of a Douglas aircraft assembly plant located on the northwest side of Chicago, as the site for a new Chicago airport. The site had four concrete runways.
- Temporary runway lights were added in 1946.
- In 1949 the Chicago City Council renamed Orchard Field as Chicago-O'Hare International Airport to honor naval aviator Lt. Cmdr. Edward H. "Butch" O'Hare, a Medal of Honor recipient from Chicago who died in World War II.
- O'Hare officially opened to commercial air traffic in 1955 and served 176,902 passengers in its first year.
- The airlines serving O'Hare in 1956 were American, Air France, BOAC, Braniff, Capitol, Delta, Eastern, Flying Tigers, Ozark, Pan American, Trans Canada, TWA and United.
- A fifth runway was added to O'Hare in 1957.
- August 8, 1958, marked the date that O'Hare's first terminal, used specifically for international travel, was dedicated. The occasion was celebrated by the arrival of a TWA non-stop flight from Paris to Chicago. A total of 22,498 international passengers were accommodated by the end of the year.
- On April 1, 1959, Mayor Richard J. Daley presided over ceremonies to inaugurate the expansion of O'Hare to approximately 7,200 acres. The

visited on 9/13/2007

expansion included additional terminal and cargo buildings, airplane hangars, automobile parking, a post office, flight kitchens and rental car facilities.



O'Hare Becomes the "World's Busiest Airport" 1960-1969

- An eight-lane expressway opened in 1960 between O'Hare Airport and downtown Chicago, making the airport more easily accessible to travelers.
- By the end of 1961, flight operations increased to 86,495 departures and arrivals. Also in 1961, the main terminal building and a 5,000-car parking lot were completed.
- All scheduled Midway Airport operations were transferred to O'Hare by 1962. The additional transferred flights made the passenger numbers rise to 10 million by the end of the year, making O'Hare the "World's Busiest Airport".
- On March 23, 1963, O'Hare Airport was dedicated by President John F. Kennedy, who said, "There is no other airport in the world which serves so many people and so many airplanes. This is an extraordinary airport, an extraordinary city, and an extraordinary country, and it could be classed as one of the wonders of the modern world."
- The Seven Continents Restaurant opened in 1963 in the Rotunda building in Terminal 3.
- By 1965, the total number of passengers who passed through O'Hare doubled to 20 million.
- The first taxiway bridge spanning a public roadway opened at O'Hare in 1967 to enhance aircraft maneuvering efficiency. Similar taxiway bridges were subsequently built in Dallas/Ft. Worth, Los Angeles and London's Heathrow Airport.
- A sixth runway was added to O'Hare in 1968.

- O'Hare broke the 30 million passenger mark for the first time in 1968.



Steady Growth and Airline Deregulation 1970-1979

- O'Hare's seventh runway was added in 1971.
- The 10-story O'Hare Hilton Hotel opened in 1973. Located directly opposite from the terminals, passengers could step off an airplane and walk to the hotel lobby.
- O'Hare's 37.6 million passengers in 1973 exceeded that of the second busiest airport in the world by 12 million!
- A six-level parking facility was opened in 1974, bringing O'Hare's parking capacity to 9,300 cars. That same year, a pedestrian tunnel system linking the parking structure, O'Hare Hilton Hotel and the terminal complex was also completed.
- By the end of 1974, O'Hare handled more than 37.8 million passengers on almost 695,000 flights.
- In 1976, Chicago established the nation's first "Airport Delay Task Force", which resulted in the first triple simultaneous runway use at O'Hare.
- O'Hare handled over 40 million passengers for the first time in 1976.
- Deregulation of the domestic airline system was signed into law by President Jimmy Carter in 1978. As a result, O'Hare became the nation's first and now only dual hub airport, with commensurate benefits to consumers—competitive fares and more service to more destinations than any other airport in the world.



Designing for a New Wave of Passengers and Flights to O'Hare 1980-1989

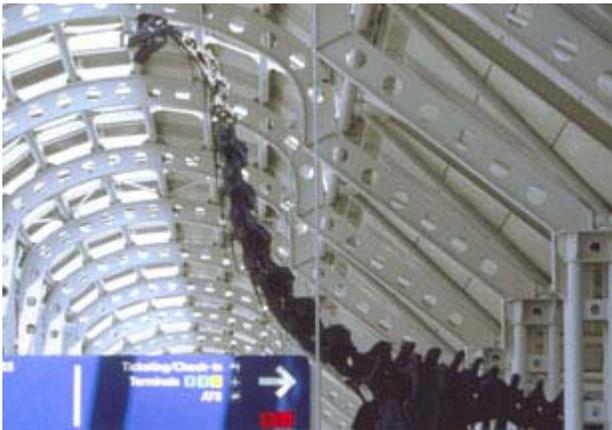
- Chicago responds to crowded terminals with the announcement of a \$2 billion O'Hare Development Program in 1983.
- In 1984, Concourse L was added to Terminal 3 housing Delta Airlines.
- The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) extended the Blue Line rail service to O'Hare in 1984. The new O'Hare CTA station made the commute to the airport fast, easy and inexpensive.
- Interim International Terminal 4 opened in 1985 to make room for the construction of Terminal 1, United Airlines' future "Terminal for Tomorrow".
- Over 50 million passengers passed through O'Hare for the first time in 1986.
- United Airlines' Terminal 1 opened in 1987. The state-of-the-art terminal was built at a cost of \$500 million.
- In 1989, the South Cargo Area was completed at O'Hare, resulting in the nation's largest mid-continent freight origin/destination market.

O'Hare Prepares For the 21st Century 1990-1999

- O'Hare surpassed the 60 million passenger mark for the first time in 1990.
- American Airlines completed renovation of Terminal 3 in 1990.
- In 1990, Mayor Richard M. Daley led the initiative to introduce Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) legislation, providing funds needed to modernize the nation's airports at no cost to local taxpayers.
- The O'Hare Command Center opened in May 1992.
- The Airport Transit System (ATS) opened in 1993 to improve intra-

terminal passenger transit, relieve roadway congestion and reduce air emissions.

- The world class International Terminal 5 opened in 1993, establishing Chicago as the premier mid-continent international gateway and connecting hub. Chicago began to capitalize on deregulation of the international market and liberalization of open skies agreements.
- The O'Hare and Midway Noise Compatibility Commissions were established in 1996 to provide neighboring communities with the funds and decision-making authority to reduce the impact of aircraft noise.
- O'Hare Airport unveils the first "Hush House" at a major U.S. airport in 1997. The "Hush House" features state-of-the-art noise reduction technology to reduce aircraft ground run-up noise.
- O'Hare Airport served more than 70 million passengers in 1997.



O'Hare Airport Today

- O'Hare is the nation's only dual hub airport. The two airlines that have a hub at O'Hare are United and American Airlines.
- Chicago's airports generate approximately 514,000 jobs for the region and nearly \$37 billion a year in economic development.
- More than 76.5 million passengers passed through the airport in 2005 while over 972,000 flight operations took place.
- The FAA has issued its Record of Decision in favor of the O'Hare Modernization Program, which will decrease delay and increase capacity by creating a parallel runway system.
- More than 1.7 million tons of freight and mail are moved through O'Hare each year.
- Chicago remains committed to noise reduction and works closely with 36 communities surrounding O'Hare and Midway Airports, providing millions

of dollars in residential and school soundproofing.

- O'Hare's focus on customer service is enhanced by multi-lingual information representatives stationed throughout the airport.
- O'Hare offers travelers a taste of Chicago through its concessions program. Favorite local establishments and nationally recognized chains make up the airport's wide variety of food, beverage and retail offerings.
- On September 30, 2005, the Federal Aviation Administration issued a Record of Decision in favor of the O'Hare Modernization Program. Mayor Daley and U.S. Senator Richard Durbin joined business leaders for a celebratory groundbreaking ceremony that initiated the first phase of the project.