

For Immediate Release  
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### **Daley, DuPage, State Officials Agree on O'Hare Highway Needs**

Mayor Richard M. Daley and State and DuPage County officials have signed intergovernmental agreements to cooperate on highway improvement projects near O'Hare International Airport.

The Mayor made the announcement at a City Hall news conference with Robert Schillerstrom, Chairman of the DuPage County Board; Jack Hartman, Executive Director of the Illinois Tollway; and Diane O'Keefe, Deputy Director of Highways for the Illinois Department of Transportation.

"This is one more example of how we continue to work together, on a regional basis, for the good of all the people in the metropolitan area," Daley said.

"A modernized O'Hare will generate thousands of new jobs and billions of dollars of economic activity. It will enable the Chicago area to become a major player in the global marketplace. But if we're to take full advantage of our 21st century airport, we have to make sure that it's easily accessible by ground transportation from all parts of the metropolitan area."

The group agreed to cooperate on extending the Elgin-O'Hare Expressway to the airport after completion of the new western terminal, which is part of Phase Two of the O'Hare Modernization Plan. The expressway currently runs not from Elgin to O'Hare, but from Hanover Park to Itasca.

The City agreed to protect a 300-foot-wide corridor on airport property to give the State the option of building a bypass road there and avoiding the expense of acquiring additional land on the west side of York Road. The bypass road could eventually connect with I-90 and I-294.

And Daley said the City has committed to helping fund a land-use study by DuPage County that would assess the opportunities for other roadway and transit developments spurred by the O'Hare improvements.

"These agreements are a milestone of regional cooperation and the result of our cooperative working relationship with the City and Mayor Daley," said Schillerstrom. "Today's event underlies our shared commitment to make the O'Hare Modernization Program a true catalyst for economic opportunity for the entire region.

"Western Access is a high priority in the region's transportation plans and one of the premier ways we can reduce traffic congestion as well as create new commercial and industrial corridors," he continued. "Communities in DuPage County, west of O'Hare, will now enjoy the economic development opportunities that communities east of the airport have long enjoyed."

"IDOT has already purchased 116 acres and spent approximately \$37 million for the extension of the Elgin-O'Hare expressway, but there is still a lot of work and even more funding needed," said O'Keefe. "We look forward to working with Chicago, DuPage, the tollway, Speaker Hastert and all the members of our congressional delegation to move forward with this important project for Northeastern Illinois."

Daley said the group will work with Gov. Rod Blagojevich, House Speaker Dennis Hastert and the Illinois Congressional delegation to secure funding for those projects and others that might arise over the course of the O'Hare construction.

"I think it's clear by now that the O'Hare Modernization Program has the support of the vast majority of Illinois residents, including elected officials and business and labor organizations," Daley said. "Working together, we will make the world's busiest airport the world's most efficient airport – and the big winners will be the people of the State of Illinois."

Daley noted that the Chicago City Council approved an ordinance May 11 to construct a state-of-the-art CTA station with express service to O'Hare and Midway as part of the Block 37 project. It will include an airport check-in facility and electronic displays providing flight information and weather reports.

The O'Hare Modernization Program involves the addition and reconfiguration of several runways. Studies predict it will create between 50,000 and 195,000 jobs and generate up to \$18 billion a year in economic activity. It is expected to save the airlines and their passengers an estimated \$750 million a year through reduced delays.