

Elgin O'Hare West Bypass

Regional Infrastructure in Northeastern Illinois

Infrastructure's Role in Maintaining Greater Chicago's Competitive Edge

Project Case Studies

- **The West Bypass complements the vision of the O'Hare Modernization Project (OMP) to build a new western terminal.**
- **It provides surrounding communities and industry direct access into O'Hare, improving travel time by 49 percent and increasing transit options.**
- **The bypass targets new "zones of opportunity" within surrounding communities, offering the potential to rezone and incentivize new development appropriately.**

O'Hare and give western suburban residents direct access to the airport. A highway connecting Interstate 90 to Interstate 294 on O'Hare's west side will both alleviate congestion on a major bottleneck and further improve access to the airport. The preferred alternative chosen in the most recent plan calls for transit to play an important part in the project. Light rail, a Chicago "L" extension, bus rapid transit, and local circulators are all under consideration.

The Elgin O'Hare West Bypass is expected to increase the competitive advantage of the area, and studies predict it would lead to an increase of 62,500 jobs by 2030. Moreover,

Background

Labeled a "Project of Regional and National Significance" by the latest federal transportation authorization bill, the Elgin O'Hare West Bypass is a project designed to alleviate congestion around and to O'Hare International Airport. The project will extend the Elgin O'Hare Expressway east to connect with

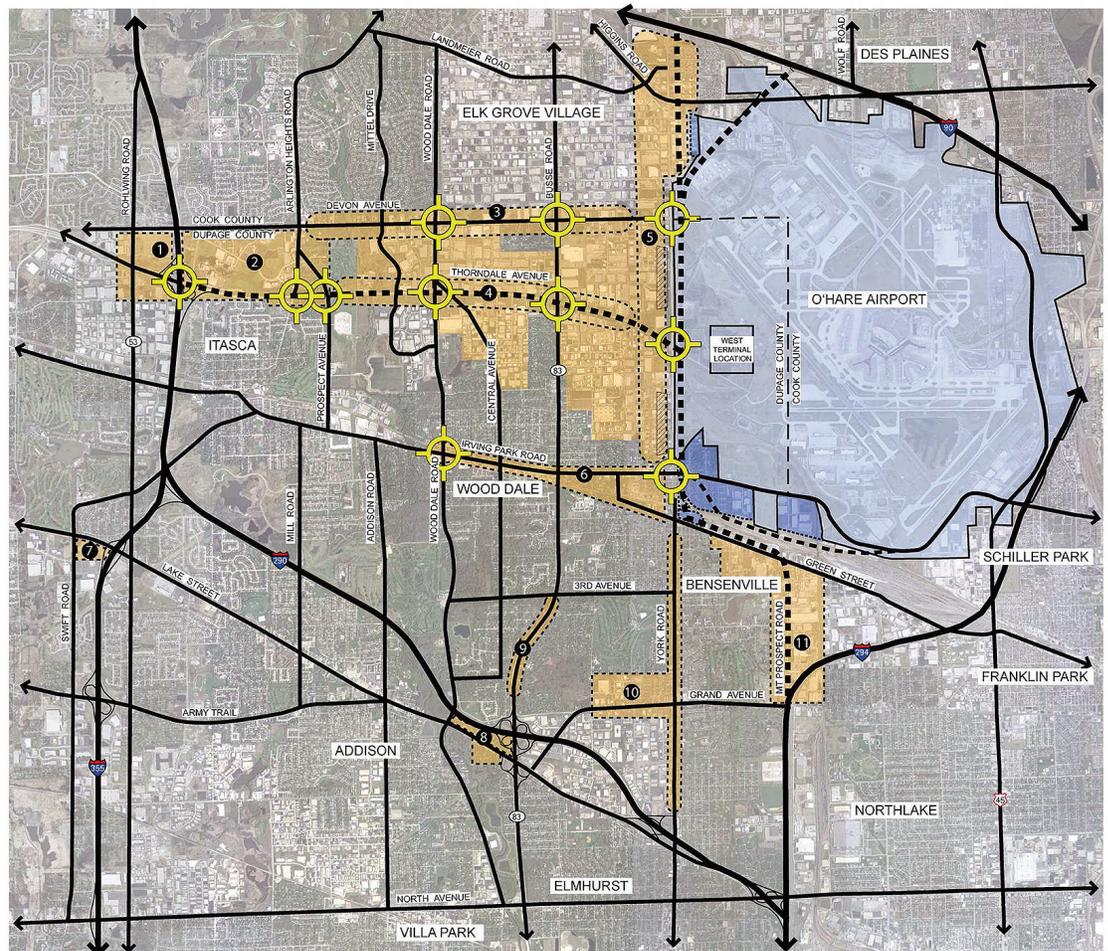
The Elgin O'Hare West Bypass study area. The dashed lines represent potential future roadways, while the shaded areas indicate an opportunity zone. The yellow targets signify major interchanges or intersections.

Map courtesy of DuPage County, Illinois, Department of Economic Development and Planning.

West O'Hare Economic Development Study Opportunity Zones

Legend

- County Boundary
- Interstate Highway
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- Major Roadway
- Proposed Expressway Extension/Bypass
- Proposed Irving Park Re-Route
- Key Intersections/Interchanges
- Existing O'Hare Property
- Future O'Hare Property
- Opportunity Zone
- Future Aviation Easement
- ① Route 53 West Interchange
- ② Route 53 East Interchange
- ③ Devon Avenue Corridor
- ④ Thorndale Avenue Corridor
- ⑤ York Road North Corridor
- ⑥ Irving Park Road Corridor
- ⑦ Lake Street West Interchange
- ⑧ Lake Street East Interchange
- ⑨ Route 83 Corridor
- ⑩ York Road South Corridor
- ⑪ Mount Prospect Road Corridor



Evaluation

Economic competitiveness

- The bypass project is forecast to add 62,500 long-term jobs to the region by 2030.
- It is estimated to improve travel time from the western study area to O'Hare by 49 percent, which is crucial to businesses and residents alike.
- Construction will add \$5 billion to the regional economy.

Opportunity

- Sixteen new transit corridors will improve mobility and connectivity of the area.
- Improved accessibility and transit make the 11 surrounding zones of opportunity ripe for mixed-use development.
- Current and future industrial properties will benefit from shorter trip times to and around O'Hare.

Environmental sustainability

- The bypass is expected to improve area roadway efficiency by 10 percent.
- The preferred alternative will increase transit trips by 37 percent.
- Although the area is already highly urbanized, this project will affect approximately 40 acres of wetland.

Support

- Strong support exists among suburban mayors and elected officials.
- Surrounding local governments have passed 19 formal resolutions in favor of the project.
- In October 2010, the Illinois governor created an advisory council to aid in the planning and construction of the project.
- The federal government included a \$140 million grant in the last transportation bill and labeled the project a "Project of Regional and National Significance."
- The project is listed in the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's GO TO 2040 fiscally constrained capital projects.

Funding and financial feasibility

- Capital costs are \$3.6 billion.
- The yearly maintenance cost for roadways (not including transit) is \$625,000.
- Tier 2 analysis will outline funding sources further; partnering with the Illinois Tollway or forming a private/public partnership is being considered.

the project is expected to increase transit trips by 37 percent and to increase efficiency on area roadways by 10 percent.

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has completed a tier 1 environmental impact analysis of the project and received a record of decision in 2010, which stated the preferred alternative should be carried forward for further evaluation. Currently, the tier 2 environmental review process is underway.

Land Use

The Elgin O'Hare West Bypass project has the potential to substantially affect the land use of the area. Although the project itself is primarily a transportation project, changes in land use have been an integral part of the planning process. A 2006 economic development study outlined 11 zones of opportunity that will arise with implementation of the project, as shown in the map.

Currently, the land use in this study area is largely industrial. Although industry will remain an important part of the region, especially with the improved access to O'Hare, this project has the potential to open the opportunity zones to mixed-use development. Retail, hotel, office, commercial, residential, and open spaces are envisioned as thoroughly incorporated into the land use mix. For example, one zone of opportunity, the Thorndale Avenue Corridor, envisions 2,420 hotel rooms, 415 residential units, and new office and retail buildings along a pedestrian-friendly "Main Street" near a proposed transit station.

An important element of this project's success is the OMP. The OMP calls for the construction of a new western terminal. This terminal will not only be the access point for the roadway extensions, but it will also become central to the plan's 16 proposed transit corridors.

Status and Recommendations

The Elgin O'Hare West Bypass is currently undergoing its tier 2 analysis, conducted by IDOT. The tier 2 analysis will outline details of construction more thoroughly, including financing strategies, transit alignments, and stormwater management. IDOT expects this analysis to be completed in the summer of 2011. In addition, other implementation steps should be considered, including the following

- Continue collaboration with regional transit agencies to finalize transit alignments.
- Update land use analyses to ensure plans are consistent with region's needs, market demands, and sustainability goals.
- Conduct an outreach phase to attract project support.

This description represents the best available information as of November 2010.