

Community Area #76

## O'Hare

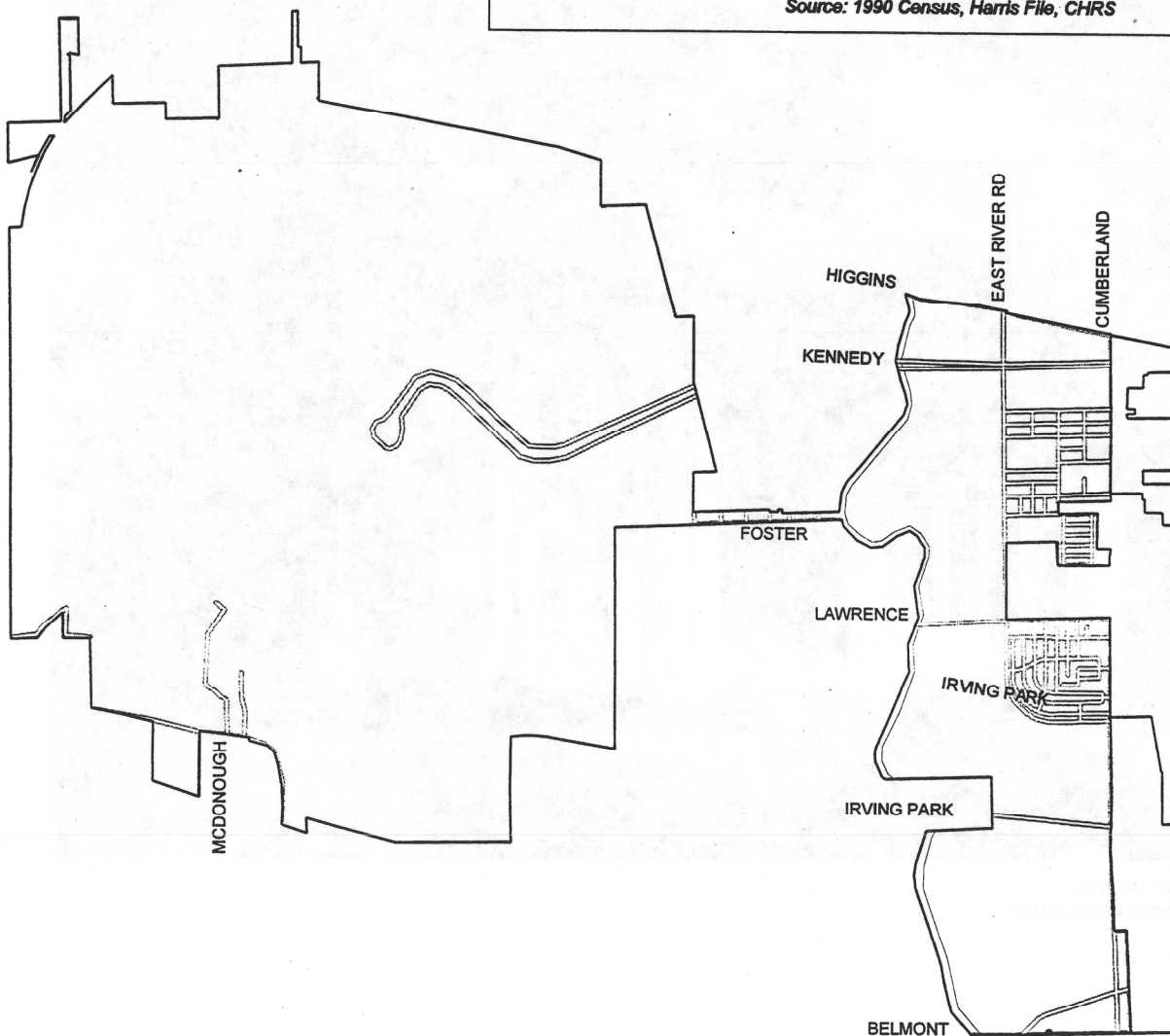
**Population: 11,192**

**Number of Structures: 1,370**

**Avg. Date of Construction: 1971**

***Significant Structures: 1***

*Source: 1990 Census, Harris File, CHRS*



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The O'Hare community area, situated in far northwestern Chicago, has as its central feature O'Hare International Airport, the world's busiest airfield. The community area comprises two separate sections, connected only by a narrow band of land along Foster Avenue and I-190.

O'Hare itself occupies the western section, surrounded almost completely by suburbs. The eastern portion, bounded on the west by the Des Plaines River, contains residential and commercial neighborhoods, plus Cook County forest preserves. In addition, several railroads border the community area, including the Chicago and North Western, the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul, and Pacific, and the Soo Line.

The history of O'Hare dates back to 1942, when the federal government purchased 1,000 acres of land at tiny Orchard Place Airport to build a manufacturing plant, run by the Douglas Aircraft Company, to produce C-54 transport planes for World War II. At the time, it was the largest aircraft manufacturer in the nation.

As World War II ended, Chicago faced the need for a larger airport than Midway, located on the city's southwest side. In 1947, the city acquired Orchard Field, plus 5,000 surrounding acres, as surplus war property from the federal government, and planning for a new airport began soon after. In 1949, Orchard Place was renamed O'Hare Field in honor of Edward H. ("Butch") O'Hare, a Chicago pilot who died during World War II. In 1955, commercial airlines began flying from O'Hare.

In 1959, the City of Chicago began to expand O'Hare in order to accommodate commercial jet aircraft. One of the largest public works projects in Chicago history, the O'Hare expansion included the

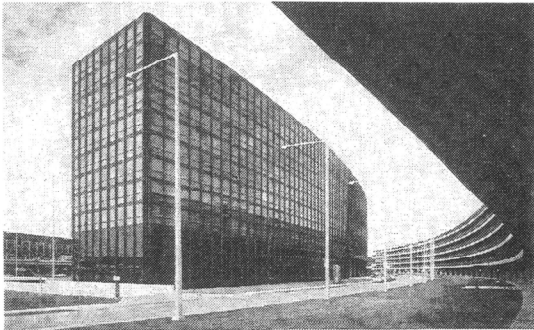


Chicago Park District Garage  
8800 W. Belmont Av.

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acquisition of an additional 2,800 acres for the airport, some of which were in adjacent DuPage County, and the construction of expansive new terminal facilities. As a result of this project, O'Hare International Airport replaced Midway Airport as the city's main air transportation hub by 1963.

The new airport facilities, designed by the Chicago architectural firm, C.F. Murphy Associates, were an impressive display of planning and architecture, from its double-deck roadways to its International Style terminals reflecting the influence of architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's steel-and-glass designs. Particularly distinctive is the airport's power plant, which exposes the mechanical equipment to public view behind generous expanses of glass.



O'Hare Hilton

At the same time that Chicago improved O'Hare, the city strengthened its legal hold on the airport by annexing additional land to provide a more substantial physical connection between the airport and the rest of the city.

In 1960, the O'Hare community area consisted of the airport, plus a few homes surrounded by forest preserves. Total population as reported in that year's census was 763. The completion of the Kennedy Expressway in 1960, combined with the economic stimulus of the expanding O'Hare, encouraged residential and commercial development. Developers built hundreds of middle-income houses, and by the end of the decade, more than 6,000 people lived in the community area.

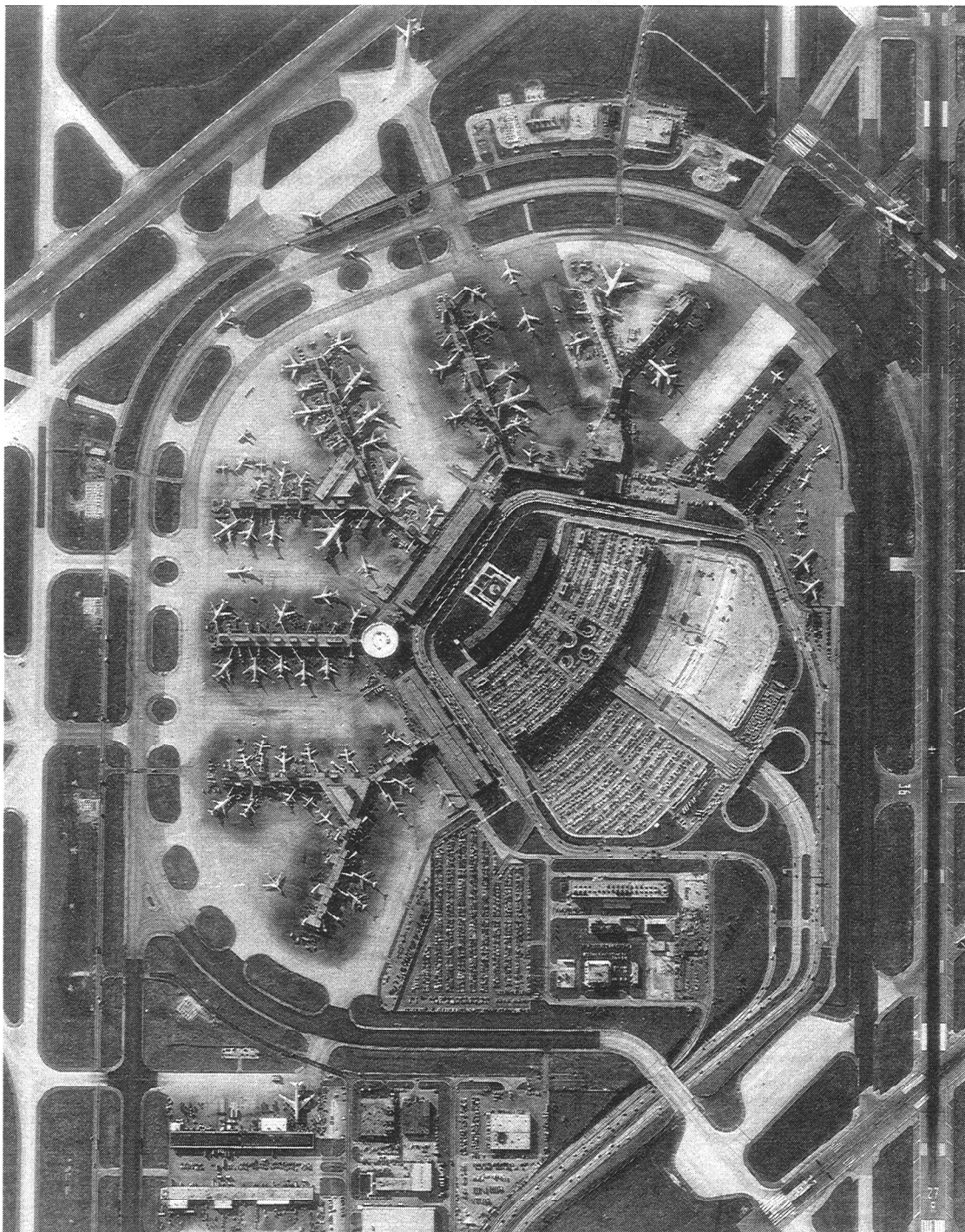
During the 1970s and 1980s, high-rise office buildings were built near the Kennedy Expressway, clustering around the Cumberland interchange. The residential community grew as well, becoming a mix of single-family homes, condominiums, and apartment buildings.

*The focus of the Chicago Historic Resources Survey was on buildings erected prior to 1940. Buildings and developments erected after that date generally are not included in the inventory.*

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Address	Date	Architect	Building Style	Survey LM IS	Building Code Type	PIN	Form #
8800 W BELMONT AV	1930s			N N	OR GARAGE	1223300002	763622001



Aerial view of O'Hare International Airport, 1976

Survey information for this community area was accurate at the time it was first surveyed in April 1985.  
For an explanation of column headings, see page III-1.