

Chairman Ervin, Vice Chairwoman Lee, thank you for the opportunity to be with you today. Before I provide a detailed update on Chicago's airports, I would like to discuss the most fundamental aspect of our work as government officials: public service.

Chicago's airports are more than just gateways to the world — they are symbols of our commitment to service, accessibility, and the betterment of our community, particularly through sustainability efforts that preserve our airports for the next generation. I firmly believe that the success of our airports is inextricably linked to a commitment to public service that is championed by Mayor Johnson. That same commitment is present in the 1,619 CDA employees who commute to O'Hare or Midway daily from all 50 wards. Our dedication to public service runs deep. Our work extends beyond our job descriptions — as the first and last touchpoint for millions of visitors, we are custodians of Chicago's reputation, and key players in delivering on the promise of this world-class city.

Throughout my time as Commissioner, I have sought to inspire a new generation of Chicagoans to consider a career at Chicago's airports. As Mayor Johnson said on day one — we must create a Chicago where business, philanthropy, community, and labor work together to connect every young person to an opportunity to fulfill their potential. We are continually inspired by this work in Chicago's civic community, particularly from Chairman O'Shea, Vice Chairman Curtis, and the entire Committee on Aviation.

To that end, the CDA is working closely with City Colleges to develop a degree program that encourages young Chicagoans to look to the airports for their career. As a precursor to that, this summer, Olive-Harvey College launched a free, online class called Aviation Career Prep.

The course provides students with a foundation to prepare for a career in every facet of the aviation profession. More than 120 Chicagoans have registered for this class since it launched 11 weeks ago, and we know this is just the beginning of a tremendous partnership with Chancellor Salgado and City Colleges.

We also recognize the importance of inspiring children at a young age. Our award-winning youth activity books are great for distracting children on a layover. But we want your help getting them into daycare and kindergarten classrooms across Chicago's neighborhoods.

As you know, the CDA manages two enterprise funds for our airports, which are separate and distinct from all other City funds. Our operating budget does not rely on local or state tax dollars.

Under the leadership of Mayor Johnson, the CDA is focused on **who** is doing the building at our airports, not just **what** we are building. In 2023, the CDA will spend \$177 million with M/WBE certified firms, which accounts for 37% of our total spend.

This total includes spending 10% with Black-owned firms, 13% with Latino-owned firms, 6% with Asian-owned firms, and 8% with women-owned firms. These figures are strong, but we're never satisfied with strong. We want to be exceptional. As this work continues, I'll note the proposed 2024 operating budgets for O'Hare and Midway are \$581.3 million and \$151.3 million, respectively. This level of funding allows us to put safety first — because there is no higher priority than the safety and security of our passengers and employees.

Our budget also positions us to continue to make O'Hare 21 a reality for Chicago residents and visitors. After 16 years of runway construction, the O'Hare Modernization Program is complete, reducing preventable delays by 67%, and allowing the CDA to reposition our focus to the terminal-centric capital program first announced in 2018.

We are five years into this monumental project, with some tremendous successes to showcase. The 350,000-square-foot addition to Terminal 5 we opened last winter includes 10 new gates. That's the equivalent of an entirely new concourse at most airports, and our T5 gates have the highest utilization of all the gates at O'Hare.

The completion of this work at T5 allows us to pivot our attention to the centerpiece of O'Hare 21 — the \$7.1 billion Terminal Area Plan. It's a once-in-a-generation investment in O'Hare's passenger facilities and includes the construction of new Satellite Concourses and the O'Hare Global Terminal to replace Terminal 2. Enabling work began in March, including an extensive boring operation to reconfigure drainage and utility systems, the realignment of taxiways to make way for future concourses, and the construction of temporary gates off Concourse C.

All this work is crucial to Chicago's economy. More than 700,000 jobs are tied to Chicago's airports, contributing \$70 billion to the regional economy. O'Hare 21 will create tens of thousands of new construction jobs over the next ten years, including hundreds of millions of dollars in contracting opportunities for diverse small businesses.

The budget proposal before you today permits us to make these kinds of investments, and continue our industry-leading sustainability initiatives, through which we are targeting net zero carbon emissions by 2050, developing dozens of new EV charging stations and renewable energy sources, reducing food waste by donating to local shelters, and keeping shrubs at bay without the use of fossil fuels thanks to our lawn-mowing goats in the North Airfield.

At the busiest square mile in aviation, we're in the final phase of our Midway Modernization Program, which has completely transformed the passenger experience at our South Side airport. New concessions locations will open in the months ahead, featuring national and local brands with diverse ownership teams, shoring up our first-in-the-nation ACDBE percentage, which sits at 56%. Through July, passenger numbers for the airport are 6 percent higher than 2019, and we are thrilled to offer these visitors a rejuvenated experience at our original hometown airport.

Lastly, I must offer sincere thanks to the incredible partners that make O'Hare and Midway run every day. This includes you, as the elected leaders of the people of Chicago. But it also includes our delegations in Washington and Springfield, our airline and federal partners, our neighboring communities, the O'Hare and Midway noise commissions, the men and women of organized labor, faith leaders, airport contractors, and the numerous City departments and sister agencies, all of whom support the CDA every day. Thank you, all, for your expertise, your dedication, and your professionalism.