



Richard M. Daley, Mayor



Rosemarie S. Andolino, Commissioner

# News Release

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## **CITY OF CHICAGO REGAINS TITLE AND POSSESSION OF ST. JOHANNES CEMETERY**

*Illinois Supreme Court Denies Appeal*

In a decision today, the Illinois Supreme Court denied the Petition for Leave to Appeal filed by St. John's United Church of Christ and the intervenors. Today's decision allows the City of Chicago to regain title and possession of St. Johannes Cemetery. Relocation of the cemetery is critical to the completion of the O'Hare Modernization Program (OMP) Runway 10C/28C, our next milestone toward providing delay reduction and capacity enhancement while creating jobs and stimulating the economy.

"We are pleased with the Illinois Supreme Court's ruling, which allows us to move forward with the acquisition and relocation of St. Johannes Cemetery," said Rosemarie S. Andolino, Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA). "We realize this is a very sensitive matter and we remain committed to work closely with the families, as well as the officials from the Church, during the relocation process."

The City of Chicago will continue to work with next of kin to relocate their relatives. To date, 30 deceased have been voluntarily relocated from St. Johannes Cemetery to nearby cemeteries with the assistance of the CDA Cemetery Relocation and Family Assistance Program. The office is working with approximately 150 families who have already received permits to relocate 345 relatives from St. Johannes Cemetery.

The CDA Cemetery Relocation and Family Assistance program was developed to provide the utmost care and respect for the deceased and their surviving relatives, consistent with the City's compelling need to acquire the cemetery. The CDA will pay necessary and reasonable costs associated with the cemetery relocation process.

For more information concerning the relocation process, please contact the CDA Cemetery Relocation and Family Assistance program office at (773) 686-5136 or visit [www.stjohnsfamilyassistance.com](http://www.stjohnsfamilyassistance.com).

Today's decision stems from the Church's and the intervenors' Petitions for Leave to Appeal to the Illinois Supreme Court. The City filed its Answer to the Petition to the Illinois Supreme Court on November 10, 2010.

Based on an order entered by the circuit court in February 2010, the City paid \$630,000 as Preliminary Just Compensation for the cemetery. After payment, the City was able to take title and possession of the cemetery in February 2010. Thereafter, the order vesting title was stayed and the case was heard by the Illinois Appellate Court for the Second District.

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In September 2010, the Appellate Court for the Second District issued its ruling affirming the trial court's ruling that the City may take title and possession of the cemetery. However, the Illinois Supreme Court continued the stay on the order vesting title while it considered the Petitions for Leave to Appeal.

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The Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) is self-supporting, using no local or state tax dollars for operations or capital improvements at O'Hare and Midway International airports. Together, Chicago's airports generate more than \$45 billion in annual economic activity and create 540,000 jobs for the region. Please visit [www.flychicago.com](http://www.flychicago.com) to learn more about the Chicago Department of Aviation.

The CDA continues to incorporate and expand sustainable initiatives for airport planning, operations and maintenance, and concessions and tenants in accordance with the CDA Sustainable Airport Manual (SAM) Version 2.0, released in November 2010. To view case studies, lessons learned and new technologies, and for more information on the SAM, please visit [www.airportgoinggreen.org](http://www.airportgoinggreen.org).

The O'Hare Modernization Program (OMP), introduced by Mayor Richard M. Daley in June 2001, transforms O'Hare's airfield from an outdated system of intersecting runways into a modern parallel runway configuration. The program will reduce overall delays at the Airport by 79 percent, and bad weather delays by 95 percent. It will create 195,000 new jobs and \$18 billion in additional economic activity each year. Please visit [www.oharemodernization.org](http://www.oharemodernization.org) to learn more about the OMP.

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