



RESOLUTION NO. 26- 10

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE PROPOSED O'HARE FLYER

WHEREAS, the Village of River Forest is an Illinois municipality established in 1880 committed to protecting the health, safety, welfare, and quality of life of its residents, including preserving the esteemed historic character of the community and surrounding natural environment; and

WHEREAS, a proposal known as the "O'Hare Flyer", by The Great Western Railroad, has been presented as a Tier One passenger rail connection between downtown Chicago and O'Hare International Airport that would utilize rail infrastructure through multiple communities, including the Village of River Forest; and

WHEREAS, the proposed O'Hare Flyer, currently in the preliminary planning stages, would operate at speeds exceeding 80 miles per hour, with trains travelling through River Forest every few minutes from approximately 4:00 a.m. through 10:00 p.m.; and

WHEREAS, the proposed route would utilize rail infrastructure through established residential neighborhoods of the Village, raising serious reservations regarding pedestrian and vehicular safety, emergency response times, traffic congestion, and crossing delays; and

WHEREAS, the proposed route would bisect Thatcher Woods, one of the most valuable ecosystems in the Forest Preserves of Cook County system, with unknown impacts on wildlife and biodiversity; and

WHEREAS, the Village also has serious reservations regarding the potential impacts of the Flyer on public health & safety, noise, vibration, infrastructure, neighborhood character, wildlife and environment, and the overall quality of life of River Forest residents; and

WHEREAS, the Village has not been provided with sufficient information or comprehensive analysis regarding the proposed project's impacts on public safety, emergency response times, traffic, at-grade crossings, noise, infrastructure, wildlife and environment, and surrounding neighborhoods and there has been no collaborative planning effort by the O'Hare Flyer group; and

WHEREAS, Village officials have shared resident concerns directly with Union Pacific Railroad and Canadian National Railway and urged the railroads to not allow use of their rail property by the O'Hare Flyer; and

WHEREAS, the Village has filed a Notice of Intent to Participate with the Surface Transportation Board regarding the proposed Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern merger, allowing for formal involvement and communication by the Village in future proceedings; and

WHEREAS, the Village of River Forest hereby expresses its strong opposition to the proposed O'Hare Flyer project, and requests that the project sponsors share full information about the studies, scans, and impact analyses related to the proposed project, including environmental scans, plans for park buildout and residential compatible bridges, sound and vibration mitigation measures; and grade separation details and plans.

WHEREAS, the Village of River Forest urges the project sponsors and applicable governmental and regulatory agencies to explore alternative options, including improvements to Metra and CTA lines that already serve the airport and Chicagoland communities; and

WHEREAS, the Village Board finds that it is in the best interests of the residents of the Village of River Forest to formally express its strong opposition to the O'Hare Flyer; and

WHEREAS, the Village calls on fellow municipalities to oppose the O'Hare Flyer, and specifically requests State Senators Don Harmon and Kimberly Lightford, Representatives Emanuel 'Chris' Welch and Camille Lilly, Commissioner Maggie Trevor, Senator Dick Durbin and Senator Tammy Duckworth to not take any action allowing for the development of the O'Hare Flyer; and

WHEREAS, the Village requests meaningful opportunities for the Village Board, Village staff, and residents to review project information and provide input throughout the planning, review, and approval process.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST, ILLINOIS, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1: Each Whereas paragraph above is incorporated by reference into this Section 1 and made part hereof as material and operative provisions of this Resolution.

SECTION 2: The President and Board of Trustees of the Village of River Forest urge the project sponsors of the O'Hare Flyer to cease advancing their plans and explore alternative route options for the O'Hare Flyer.

SECTION 3: The Village Clerk is directed to send a certified copy of this resolution to the project sponsors of the O'Hare Flyer, Members of the Illinois General Assembly, the Illinois Commerce Commission, Members of the Chicago City Council, Members of the Northern Illinois Transit Authority Board of Directors, Cook County Board of Commissioners, Mayors of municipalities along the proposed route, the West Central Municipal Conference, Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, Illinois Municipal League and the Governor of the State of Illinois and submit this resolution as part of a formal letter of its strong opposition with the Surface Transportation Board and other regulatory agencies as appropriate.

SECTION 4: The President and Board of Trustees directs Village staff to take the initial steps necessary to procure the services of experts in the fields of railroad transportation and regulatory bodies to advocate on behalf of Village interests and continue formally objecting to the proposed O'Hare Flyer plan in River Forest during all review proceedings regarding the proposal, and to bring contracts for such consultants to the Village Board for approval.

SECTION 5: This Resolution shall be effective immediately from and after its passage of approval.

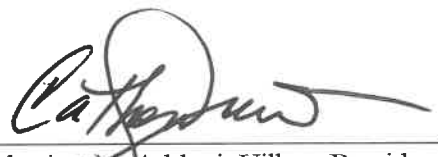
ADOPTED this 14th day of September 2026, pursuant to a roll call vote as follows:

IN WITNESS, THEREOF, I have hereto set my hand officially and caused to be affixed the seal of the Village of River Forest, this 14th day of September 2026.

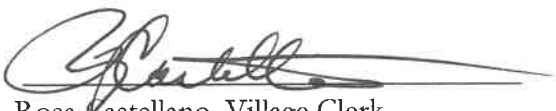
AYES: Trustees Bachner, Gillis, Vazquez, Brennan, Keskitalo, O'Connell

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None


Catherine M. Adduci, Village President

APPROVED by me this 14th day of September 2026.


Rosa Castellano, Village Clerk