



Before the O'Hare extension

As we celebrate 40 years of rapid transit service via CTA to O'Hare, the site originally saw air traffic as a base for building aircraft during World War II in 1944—80 years ago! After the war, it became part of a plan by the City of Chicago to replace Midway (formerly Chicago Municipal Airport) and was renamed in 1945 as Orchard Field, and soon later renamed in honor of fallen WWII hero aviator Edward "Butch" O'Hare. (The IATA code for O'Hare as "ORD" stems from the earlier Orchard name!)

Before 'L' service was brought to O'Hare in 1984, movement to bring quality transit to O'Hare began earlier. With the opening of the Kennedy and Dan Ryan lines (related projects notably with stations designed by Chicago-based Skidmore, Owings & Merrill architects, who also designed the Sears Tower and Hancock Building), 'L' service was extended northwest of Logan Square via subway and expressway median as far as Jefferson Park in 1970 with the ultimate goal of reaching O'Hare. At the same time, a non-stop bus route #40 O'Harexpress was introduced to provide fast service between Jefferson Park and ORD.



Celebrating 40 years of 'L' service to O'Hare

