

# How will area airports fare?

Dueling airports: Lost Nation Airport in Willoughby and Cuyahoga County Airport in Richmond Heights?

Dueling county commissioners: Cuyahoga's **Jimmy Dimora**, **Tim Hagan** and **Peter Lawson Jones**, who boss the Cuyahoga Airport, and Lake's **Bob Aufuldish**, **Ray Sines** and **Dan Troy**, who might boss Lost Nation?

Maybe. It could also be dueling or friendly competition.

The general aviation airports are only 10 miles apart.

Lost Nation is in Lake County. The Cuyahoga Airport is partly in Highland Heights (Cuyahoga) and Willoughby Hills (Lake).

Both airports face high-decibel competition heard and seen more already in daily overhead Lake County skyway flights in Willoughby/Willoughby Hills.

Cuyahoga County commissioners have run their airport for years.

Lake County commissioners might acquire Lost Nation. That is, if it doesn't cost one cent more in, uh, overhead expenses to create, say, a Lake County Airport Authority.

Lost Nation and Cuyahoga Airport currently compete with Cleveland-owned Burke Lakefront Airport (Cuyahoga).

Burke is there on I-90, which becomes a Dead Man's Curve run of overpass and underpass to Cleveland Hopkins International Airport.

But many say that Burke will probably close to make way for a golf course and maybe condos around Lake Erie shoreline, park, and port.

This is even as, coincidentally, the same shoreline competes for ferries out of Canada into Ohio and even Erie, Pa.,



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New York State and Michigan.

The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority wants the ferries. So does Grand River Village, which might become part of a proposed Lake County Port Authority.

Anyway — what happens after any Burke Lakefront closure might be more up to the Federal Aviation Administration in D.C. than county commissioners.

Or maybe up to U.S. Rep. **Steve LaTourette**, R-Concord Township, whose district spans all Lost Nation/Cuyahoga Airport, and U.S. Reps. **Stephanie Tubbs Jones** and **Dennis Kucinich**, both D-Clevelanders serving the Cuyahoga remainder.

Meanwhile, the general aviation airports regionally abut and affect city-owned Cleveland Hopkins International.

Hopkins has increased fares, cramped parking spaces and flight paths. It's mazed into more and longer runways reaching into urban Brook Park.

Since the 1950s around Lost Nation, Cuyahoga Airport and Cleveland Hopkins, homeowners have seen lawns, houses and driveways turn into long runways, hangars and landing strips.

Nowadays nationally, suburban landing spots expand into a year-round aerial whirr and display of jets, four-seaters and a sky filled with a fleet like

the annual Cleveland Air Show.

Such airports either expand, close, remain status quo, duel or merge into one general aviation airport.

Such questions face commissioners in Lake and Cuyahoga counties.

Cuyahoga might ask the FAA for more of Willoughby Hills in Lake County, as one of the latest and many visionary fly-by reports noted last week.

Cuyahoga, for example could take over the Airport Greens Golf Course in Willoughby Hills to get more Lake County space. This could be even as Burke Lakefront gets teed off into a fairway.

Or earthdiggers might build a traffic tunnel under Bishop Road for the Willoughby Hills motorist to pass through. That way, what was the road could become the Bishop Runway.

Or Cuyahoga might also want a safety zone of 10 to 15 houses on Tall Tree Trail in the same Willoughby Hills. That way, the new flight path wouldn't become the Free Fall Trail.

(Hmm. Didn't property values just go up in audited six-year reappraisals for Tall Tree and neighbors? Couldn't any chance of noise and flight cut property value?)

Cuyahoga wouldn't cross the county border into Willoughby Hills until all noise decibels and sonic booms are measured. Also, citizens will first get a chance to sound off.

So maybe don't expect the FAA and Congress to earmark any home-buying money until everybody is heard and any narrow-minded tunnel vision is rechecked.

But if the FAA does approve more Willoughby Hills property being

acquired?

Well, from a Cuyahoga Airport tower in Willoughby Hills, the viewers could wave to nearby counterparts in the Lost Nation tower in Willoughby.

(But the real *control* tower would be shared in D.C. by the FAA, LaTourette, [Stephanie Tubbs] Jones and Kucinich.)

Anyway, Willoughby Hills was spawned out of Willoughby as a same-named sister city sharing the same zip code. Think of airports in the Twin Cities in Minneapolis or Dallas-Fort Worth.

It's also not any continental divide of mountain ridges.

But Lake County tends to hilly slopes like Willoughby Hills and Kirtland Hills. Cuyahoga rises to the occasion of Mayfield Heights, Highland Heights and of course Richmond Heights.

So expect some initial Willoughby Hills co-piloting between Cuyahoga Comish Dimora, Hagan and (Peter Lawson) Jones and Lake Comish Aufuldish, Sines and Troy.

Plus, U.S. Reps. LaTourette, (Stephanie Tubbs) Jones and Kucinich, Willoughby and Willoughby Hills.

Hmm. The Cuyahoga Airport is just off State Route 91, once called the "Boulevard of 500 Flags" as a runway going straight north to Eastlake and Willoughby to Lost Nation.

What if they built a city-to-city highway tunnel under SR 91 for motor vehicle traffic?

And then what was the road could become the W-WHills Runway? Nah. Nobody's talking tunnels over runways anywhere. Are they?

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