

## Giant A380 could be too big for most airports

Runways and terminals will need expensive changes

BY ALLISON LINN

It's one thing to build a really, really big airplane. It's quite another to find a place for it to land.

U.S. airports from Seattle to Atlanta say accommodating Airbus SAS's new superjumbo A380 in anything other than an emergency would require major new construction. Runways would need widening, and terminals would need upgrades to load and unload the double-decker plane easily.

Even with those improvements, airports might need to curtail other airport traffic to let the big jet lumber through the airfield. And some officials worry the weight of the A380 would collapse tunnels and buckle overpasses.

What's more, some airport officials say they just aren't seeing the demand for the A380 that would warrant such cost and inconvenience.

"Let's do a cost/benefit analysis: Are you really going to spend millions of dollars [when] you might have two of them a day fly in?" said aviation analyst Mike Boyd.

Stretching about three-quarters of the length of a football field, the A380 isn't much longer than Boeing Co.'s latest version of the 747, the largest commercial airplane in the skies until the A380 enters service next year. But the A380's 261-foot wingspan is 50 feet wider than the 747, broader than many runways and taxiways were built to accommodate. The airplane also weighs in at a maximum of 1.2 million pounds, 30 percent more than the biggest 747.

The Federal Aviation Administration says just four U.S. airports — San Francisco, Los Angeles, Miami and John F. Kennedy in New York — are formally working with regulators on plans to accept the new plane for passengers.

Another two — Anchorage and Memphis — are working with the FAA to take the cargo version.

At Chicago's O'Hare, spokeswoman Annette Martinez said the airport is working on interim changes that will enable it to accommodate the plane by

### GROWING POTENTIAL ON COTTAGE CORRIDOR



Bridges slated for eventual renovation into pedestrian bridges: 35th, 41st, 43rd, 45th and 47th streets

#### RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

Developments of single-family homes, row houses, town houses, duplexes and condos.

- 1 The Arches of Oakwood Shores
- 2 Lake Park Crescent
- 3 Jazz on the Boulevard

#### RETAIL AND CULTURAL SITES

- 4 One-Stop Food and Liquor store, 4301 S. Lake Park Ave.
- 5 Family Dollar store, 4425 S. Cottage Grove
- 6 Sav-A-Lot grocery store, 4701 S. Cottage Grove
- 7 Little Black Pearl arts center, 1060 E. 47th St.
- 8 Walgreens, 1320 E. 47th St., 5036 S. Cottage Grove
- 9 Muntu Dance Theater, 47th and Greenwood

## Cottage Grove area poised for takeoff

Supporters of the Cottage Grove trade area's retail efforts point to several developments that foreshadow growth in the neighborhood:

#### Home ownership soars

Lending to people buying single-family homes in the Cottage Grove trade area soared 400 percent in the 10 years from 1993-2003, according to ShoreBank's MetroEdge research arm. Permits for condo, town-house and single-family-home building and renovation in the area nearly doubled the overall city average in 2003.

Three major housing developments are under way: the 129-unit

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Part of the Cottage Grove corridor (looking south from Oakwood) reveals how neglected it has become, although a study shows there is enough wealth in the area to support retail. —JIM FROST/SUN-TIMES PHOTOS

# COTTAGE INDUSTRY

## South Side corridor ripe for businesses, survey reveals

BY SANDRA GUY  
Business Reporter

A South Side community with big buying power but no major grocery store, apparel retailer or coffee shop is making headway in developing a retail corridor.

The corridor on Cottage Grove Avenue runs from 39th to 51st streets, part of what retail marketers have designated a trade area bounded by 51st Street on the south, 37th Street on the north, Lake Shore Drive on the east and the Dan Ryan Expy. on the west.

"It is a woefully under-served retail market," said Andrew Mooney, senior program director of the Chicago office of Local Initiatives Support Corp., a non-profit group that promotes community development in overlooked areas. "We're seeing a real uptick in median household income, in buying power and in new home construction. It's an emerging opportunity for retailers now."

A new study reveals that, ranked by concentration of buying power, the Cottage Grove trade area shows up a surprisingly strong No. 18 among Chicago's 77 community areas, one notch ahead of the Loop. The trade area's residents have a combined \$191 million in buying power per square mile, 23 percent greater than the city average, according to MetroEdge, a market research



At the Little Black Pearl, 1060 E. 47th, students Cordero Walls (from left), Jabari Brown, Jillian Stewart and Melvin Gordon price pottery. Strategists are seeking new businesses that complement the old.

firm created by Chicago's ShoreBank Corp. to attract investment in overlooked urban markets.

Quad Communities Development Corp., which represents the North Kenwood, Oakland, Douglas and Grand Boulevard neighborhoods, commissioned the MetroEdge study, and is spearheading the retail development efforts.

Cottage Grove residents spend \$2 out of every \$3 of their household income outside their home trade area, for a total of \$450 million a year — among the highest spending outflows in the city.

Evergreen Plaza Shopping Center, Ford City Mall and State Street in downtown Chicago were the favorite destinations for

clothes shopping, according to a survey last summer.

Jewel and Dominick's were the most popular grocery stores, but the people who shopped Dominick's had to travel to the South Loop for the closest store. A Jewel store operates at 35th Street and King Drive, just outside the trade area.

Sav-A-Lot, a discount grocer that sells one size and one variety of each item, and One-Stop Food and Liquor are the only two food stores in the Cottage Grove trade area.

A food co-op at 47th Street and Lake Park Avenue closed on Jan. 15. Two Walgreens drugstores are

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# Johnson learned secrets of success the hard way

BY SANDRA GUY  
Business Reporter

Earvin "Magic" Johnson has achieved the same eye-popping success in business as he did on the basketball court — and he's reaching profitable heights in the inner city.

"Corporate America wants to do business [in urban areas] the same way it's been doing business in suburban America, but I say, 'Start thinking outside the box,'" Johnson told retailers and marketers at a conference at the Chicago Hilton last week.

Johnson's advice: Do grass-roots marketing first; hire and train neighborhood residents; invest in the community; sell high-quality brands, and tweak your business' food, music, art, customer service and other operations to appeal to customers' ethnic tastes.

The Starbucks restaurants that Johnson runs in African-American communities don't sell scones. What's in: peach cobbler and sweet-potato pie, and they cater to night-time crowds with live poetry readings and jazz.

One of Johnson's six Lowes movie theaters tops all others in the Lowes chain in concession stand revenues per capita because it, too, caters to local tastes. The concession stand sells fried chicken and provides a choice of hot sauce for hot dogs.

Johnson runs his own development corporation that partners with banks and retailers to bring business to urban America. Besides Starbucks and Lowes cinemas, he has partnerships with TGI Fridays, Burger King, Washington Mutual Bank and 24-Hour Fitness Centers.

What does Johnson look for in a partner?

"A company that has a soul," he said. "A company that not only wants to make money, but wants to give back."

Johnson's corporation sponsors toy drives, awards scholarships and opens technology and home-loan centers in urban neighborhoods.



Former basketball star Earvin "Magic" Johnson has brought some mainstream corporations into the inner city by tailoring the businesses to the clientele.

Johnson's partner companies keep their brands and their core messages, but they turn profits by changing the little things that matter, he said.

Johnson developed his love for the business world the hard way. He was turned down for his first loan 10 times, and his first venture running a sports apparel and paraphernalia store lost \$200,000.

He learned that "everything is about the customer."

"My will to win in whatever I do has helped me," he said.

Now, Johnson marvels at his ability to create positive changes in communities and for families.

"There will always be great basketball players," said Johnson, who still shakes his head in disbelief as he recounts precise details of a thrilling basket by Larry Bird or Michael Jordan.

"But these businesses will be there after I'm dead," said Johnson, who announced 13 years ago that he had tested positive for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. "And the 15,000 people who work there can feed their families."

# COTTAGE

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## Retail vision could take 5, 10 years to implement

also in the trade area.

The Quad Communities group has hired Skidmore, Owings & Merrill architects to create a "master plan" for the Cottage Grove corridor, and is working to devise a five-year plan to improve the quality of life in the trade area.

According to MetroEdge, enough buying power resides in the area to absorb 460,000 square feet of new retail, including food, apparel, household appliance, furniture and home-furnishing stores and eating-and-drinking establishments. The poll of residents and business people showed that they most wanted a diversity of fashion retailers, restaurants with healthy menus, grocery stores and entertainment venues. They cited Oak Park, Lincoln Park and Lake View as models.

The goal is to attract mostly small- and medium-size businesses to the Cottage Grove corridor that will complement, rather than compete with, nearby businesses, Cot-



Sav-A-Lot, a discount grocer that sells one size and one variety of each item, is one of only two food stores in the Cottage Grove trade area. Community leaders are seeking more stores. —JIM FROST/SUN-TIMES

tage Grove strategists say.

"We don't have room for a big-box retailer," said 4th Ward Ald. Toni Preckwinkle, referring to giants such as Wal-Mart and Target.

The retail vision could take five to 10 years to develop as new retailers overcome their historical reluctance to invest in predominantly African-American neighborhoods.

The poll showed that respondents also want improvements in safety and beautification.

Now it's up to residents to work

with retailers to achieve the vision.

"What will happen on the Cottage Grove corridor? I don't know," said Helen Dunlap, president of ShoreBank's Advisory Services. "I do know that with this information, residents and community leaders have an opportunity to answer that question differently than if they waited until retailers made the choice as to what happens on the corridor. It's a matter of being out there and being pro-active."

# TAKEOFF

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## Building bridges in emerging neighborhood

Arches of Oakwood Shores on Cottage Grove, with prices from \$250,000 to the \$500,000s; the 137-unit Jazz on the Boulevard on Drexel Boulevard, from the \$100,000s to the \$500,000s, and the 500-unit Lake Park Crescent, from \$180,000 to \$600,000.

### Cultural corridor emerging

A cultural corridor is emerging along 47th Street. The Little Black Pearl cultural arts center operates at 1060 E. 47th St., and the Muntu Dance Theater is under construction on the northeast corner of 47th and Greenwood. In Bronzeville, the Harold Washington Cultural Center

has opened at 47th and King Drive, and the Second City comedy troupe plans to open a theater on the northwest corner of 47th and King.

### Education improves

The University of Chicago is building its second charter school in the area. Enrollment for pre-school through second-grade classes will start this month for a fall opening in the former George T. Donoghue School at 707 E. 37th St. The school will add grades each year, and eventually will house pre-school through eighth grades.

A third school, King High School, opened as a magnet school two years ago at 4445 S. Drexel.

### Lakefront access grows

The Chicago Department of Transportation is aiming to upgrade the south lakefront's look. The department sponsored an international bridge-design competition that included new pedestrian bridges at 35th, 41st and 43rd streets. Pedestrian bridges now

are on the drawing board, aimed at giving residents access to the lake via 35th, 41st, 43rd, 45th and 47th streets.

### Easy access

The area is easily accessible to expressways via 47th Street, Cottage Grove Avenue and Lake Shore Drive.

### Retail stimulation intensifies

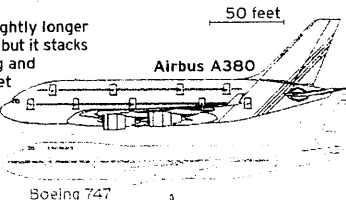
The city is equipping the area with financing tools to stimulate retail and commercial development. The City Council gave the Cottage Grove retail effort a boost last October when it expanded the boundaries and financing flexibility of an overlapping Tax Increment Financing district so it could better attract retail development. The TIF district covers the Cottage Grove corridor from 39th Street on the north to 48th Street on the south, and from the eastern side of Cottage Grove on the east to Vincennes on the west.

Sandra Guy

## SIZING UP THE AIRBUS A380

How Airbus' A380 compares with Boeing's 747:

The A380 is only slightly longer than its predecessor but it stacks two decks of seating and stands nearly 80 feet tall (to the top of its tail), compared to the smaller 747 at just under 64 feet.



**AIRBUS A380**  
Passengers 555  
Wingspan 262 feet  
Cabin width  
Main 22 ft.  
Upper 19 ft.

Cabin widths are comparable but the A380's wingspan far outreaches the 747.

**BOEING 747**  
Passengers 416  
Wingspan 211 ft.  
Cabin width 20 ft.

NOTE: Specifications rounded to nearest foot. 747 figures refer to Boeing model 747-400ER.

SOURCES: AIRBUS SAS; BOEING CO. © 1996

# A380

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## 'For the next decade, this is a niche aircraft'

the end of 2007, while hoping for approval of a big and controversial expansion of O'Hare that would make it practical to take the A380 in the long term.

Airbus says it also has talked with many other U.S. airports and anticipates several more will be able to land the plane on a regular basis by 2011.

Worldwide, the company also says plenty of airports will see the A380 in the next five years, but it's unclear how many of those airports will be ready by 2006.

Outside the United States, those that are making preparations include London's Heathrow — which is spending more than \$800

million on renovations — Charles de Gaulle in Paris, Changi Airport in Singapore and Australia's Sydney Airport.

Dan Cohen-Nir, an Airbus North America program manager, said the company is initially targeting the world's busiest airports, major hubs that are most likely to need a plane designed to carry around 555 passengers on long international routes.

Still, Boyd and other analysts say the scant interest among U.S. airports could be trouble for Toulouse, France-based Airbus, which has 139 firm orders for the A380 so far.

"For the next decade, this is a niche aircraft," said Richard Aboulafia, an analyst with the Teal Group.

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport is in the midst of a \$6 billion airport expansion, but the major upgrade doesn't include plans to accommodate routine A380 flights.

The airport is not willing to

make the necessary changes without seeing more airline interest in the A380, spokeswoman Felicia Browder said.

"In the foreseeable future, we don't think it's worthwhile," she said.

Still, some of the nation's largest airports say the A380 is worth the hassle.

San Francisco International Airport spokesman Mike McCarron said the airport plans to take up to six A380s a day, perhaps beginning in the fall of 2006. The airport already has spent just under \$1 billion to build a new, 23-gate terminal that includes five gates to handle the A380.

"We have a huge Asian market, [and] we see the A380 as a growth area to the Asian market," McCarron said.

Los Angeles International and JFK in New York are spending tens of millions of dollars to upgrade their facilities, as well.