

—TOWN OF—
MIDDLETON
Wisconsin

February 3, 2025

City of Middleton Mayor, Emily Kuhn; mayor@cityofmiddleton.us

Alder John Schaffer; district1@cityofmiddleton.us

Alder Kim Madden; district2@cityofmiddleton.us

Council President & Alder Katy Nelson; district3@cityofmiddleton.us

Alder Todd Kalisch; district4@cityofmiddleton.us

Alder Jeffrey Jackson; district5@cityofmiddleton.us

Alder Lisa Janairo; district6@cityofmiddleton.us

Alder David Lorman; district7@cityofmiddleton.us

Alder Randall Crow; district8@cityofmiddleton.us

Re Casper Noise Study Recommendations to Remediate Disruptive Morey Airport Aircraft Overflight Impacts in the Town of Middleton

Dear Mayor Kuhn, Common Council President and City Council Alders:

As we have previously communicated to you, the City's recreational airport ("Morey Airport" or "C29") continues to harm residents of the Town of Middleton ("Town") and the City of Middleton ("City") as a result of the excessive noise generated by takeoffs and landings primarily on Runway 28. The existing recommended noise abatement procedures currently in effect are not consistently followed and are not sufficient to bring aircraft noise levels within an acceptable range.

Morey Airport aircraft continue to fly at low altitudes on a daily basis causing significant disruptive noise, and raising safety concerns over thousands of residences and many schools, playgrounds, and parks in the Middleton area.

Noise is the New Secondhand Smoke

According to noise expert Daniel Fink, MD, MBA, "Ambient noise is 'the new secondhand smoke.' Like secondhand smoke, excessive ambient noise is not just a nuisance but is a health and public health problem for millions of Americans. Excessive ambient noise causes hearing loss; disrupts sleep, function, and communication; and causes non-auditory health effects including cardiovascular disease and death." (See *J. Acoust. Soc. Am.* 146, 2835 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1121/1.5136828>).

“Quiet daytime noise levels in rural areas with no significant noise sources might be in the 30 to 40 dBA range”, which is representative of the Town of Middleton’s generally quiet background noise levels absent C29 aircraft overflights. (See https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/Environment/noise/resources/reviewing_noise_analysis/).

New U.S. Aircraft Noise Survey

In a new U.S. aircraft noise survey, descriptors used by 1,452 aviation-impacted community respondents to describe the exposure to aircraft noise included:

- Loud
- Noise that penetrates inside home, office, school, etc.
- Low altitude
- Nighttime noise
- Repetitive noise
- Unpredictable noise intrusion
- Constant or strong rumbling/vibration, and
- Harassment from general aviation pilots in response to complaints.

The survey authors state, “the health of the public is at stake from chronic noise (as well as exhaust pollution) and that the effects extend far beyond simple annoyance”. They conclude that “[C]hronic stress causes serious mental and physical health consequences, including cardiovascular, psychological, and neurological disorders. The results of this pilot study show that aircraft noise is a source of chronic stress and adverse consequences in aviation-impacted communities.” (See Banks, J.L., O’Rourke, B.P. Community impacts of aviation noise: a pilot survey. *J Expo Sci Environ Epidemiol* (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41370-024-00737-z>; See also 12/1/2020 Public Health Seattle & King County Report titled *Community Health and Airport Operations Related Noise and Air Pollution: Report to the Legislature in Response to Washington State HOUSE BILL 1109* available at: https://app.leg.wa.gov/ReportsToTheLegislature/Home/GetPDF?fileName=Community%20Health%20and%20Airport%20Operations%20Related%20Pollution%20Report_c7389ae6-f956-40ef-98a7-f85a4fab1c59.pdf).

Casper Study regarding C29 Aircraft Overflight Noise

In 2024, the Town commissioned a Morey Airport aircraft overflight noise study from an expert consulting firm, Casper, that specializes in recording and analyzing aircraft overflight noise events and traffic patterns. See *Casper Town of Middleton, WI Noise Study May – October 2024* (“Casper Noise Study”), which is attached for your convenience.

During the months of June/July, and August/September 2024, Morey Airport Aircraft overflight noise was measured at two locations west of the Airport in the Town. A total of 1,165 Aircraft Noise Events were captured by Casper with a maximum noise level ranging from 55 to 90. It is important to note that there is no *effective* C29 noise abatement procedure in place for the Town.

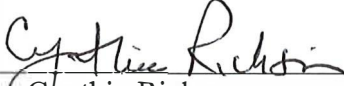
The Casper Noise Study suggested several possible actions that would reduce or eliminate the effect of much of the disruptive noise created by Morey Airport aircraft operations. One of those recommendations, which we have previously requested, is the implementation of a Right-Turn Traffic Pattern when taking off from Runway 28. This, along with increasing the use of Runway 10 whenever the wind permits, would move much of the disruptive and damaging aircraft overflight noise over vacant land to the north of most schools, parks, and residential areas.

According to the Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics (“WI BOA”), Wisconsin has 18 airports with a Right-Turn Pattern. (See WI BOA 5/24 Non-Standard Traffic Patterns Map here: <https://wisconsin.gov/Documents/travel/air/airport-info/non-std-traf.pdf>). Thus, this should not be a difficult adjustment for C29 to make.

We request that the City immediately implement a Right-Turn Traffic-Pattern at C29 when taking off from Runway 28.

Sincerely,

Town Board, Town of Middleton, Wisconsin


By: Cynthia Richson
Town Board, Chair

The Town Board authorized the Town Chair to sign this correspondence on its behalf by a vote of 5-0 on February 3, 2025.

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