

WISCONSIN

Fairfax community. On the other, by showcasing how safe the site was and how qualified the soldiers stationed at W-64 were, it could also be used as a marketing tool for Nike sites across the rest of the country as well. But Fairfax County was likely the exception, not the rule.

“We’ve Won Our Point”

Cities like Chicago on the other hand faced somewhat of a different situation. Unable to place Nike installations offshore in the middle of Lake Michigan, as some of Chicago’s residents had tried to suggest, Chicago’s ring of Nike sites resembled more of a crescent moon, with several sites being placed alongside the Lake Michigan shoreline. Four of these sites fell directly within the densely populated city itself. It seems that little attention was paid to those sites on the outskirts of the city, but for those within, the case was quite the opposite.

Unfortunately for Chicago, the only space along the shoreline where a Nike site could be placed was really its green space, its parkland. Probably the most disputed site in Chicago was C-41, located in Jackson Park, a very popular neighborhood recreational area. All safety concerns aside, the neighborhood’s residents and community council members biggest gripe with the placement of C-41 (at least initially), was over the loss of the “desperately needed” parkland. After realizing that maybe fighting the Nike sites’ establishment was a lost cause, they proceeded to dispute the Army’s lack of reparation for the land it had ceded. Chicagoans disapproval did not stop there though. Once the Nike barracks, radar towers and other infrastructure started going up, they lauded the Army for construction that “...transformed the shore line at 44th St. from an attractive park area to one that resembles a slum”. The radar towers at Promontory Point, which residents thought of as eyesores, were particularly loathed. As early as 1956 there were charges coming out of Chicago that the Nike missile system in its

Right: A photo of frisbee player enjoying Jackson Park in Chicago, where Nike site C-41 was located from 1955 to 1971. The caption is notable as “despite” is the key word here. Clearly there is at least some amount of disdain from the author (presumably Nancy Hays) towards the radar towers being situated at the “Point”. Image courtesy of Michael Epperson, Ph.D., “Nike Missile Site C-41 Promontory Point Jackson Park, Chicago 1955 - 1971” (online).



A frisbee player enjoys the Point despite the radar towers which the U.S. Army maintained there from 1953 to 1971. (Nancy Hays)

▲	Launch site
■	Control site
■	CHICAGO (does not include suburbs)



Scale: 1:375,000
Projection: North American Equidistant Conic
Map produced by Kevin Palmer from data compiled from various sources.