



## STAFF REPORT FOR ACTION

### Further Update on Public Consultation Program on Request from Porter Airlines for Exemption to Commercial Jet Ban at Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport

#### Supplemental Report

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|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Date:</b>             | September 23, 2013             |
| <b>To:</b>               | Executive Committee            |
| <b>From:</b>             | Deputy City Manager, Cluster B |
| <b>Wards:</b>            | All                            |
| <b>Reference Number:</b> | P:\2013\WF\EX13007             |

#### SUMMARY

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This supplementary report provides an update on the public consultation program conducted as part of the review of the request by Porter Airlines for an exemption to the commercial jet-powered aircraft ban at Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport and related runway expansion options. This request would require amending the 1983 Tripartite Agreement between the City of Toronto, Toronto Port Authority (TPA) and the Government of Canada.

This report summarizes comments received from the public consultation meetings as well as a city-wide telephone survey. These results will be incorporated in the staff evaluation and review, in order to develop recommendations for City Council. It is anticipated that an additional public consultation meeting will be conducted in November in advance of the final report.

Staff are targeting the completion of a final report on this issue for the December 5, 2013 Executive Committee and December 16, 2013 City Council meeting.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

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**The Deputy City Manager, Cluster B recommends that:**

1. Executive Committee receive this report for information.

## **Financial Impact**

In accordance with the City Council decision on May 7-10, 2013, the Toronto Port Authority (TPA) has provided all funding required to conduct this review. To date, the Toronto Port Authority has forwarded \$566,531.25 for costs incurred by the City. In a letter to the City dated September 11, 2013, the TPA indicates that it remains committed to providing financial support for the City's review. The City has retained all consultants directly without involvement of the Toronto Port Authority, Porter Airlines or other airport-related stakeholders with oversight provided by a third-party Fairness Monitor as directed by City Council.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

## **Equity Statement**

This report is consistent with the City's equity framework, and equity goals and objectives. All consultants are required to incorporate equity considerations in their work plans and reviews.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

At its meeting on May 7, 8, and 9, 2013, City Council adopted a report dated May 6, 2013 from the Deputy City Manager, Cluster B, regarding a request from Porter Airlines for an exemption from the commercial jet ban at Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport (BBTCA) and recommendations for proceeding with the next stage of the project. A link to this City Council decision is available here:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.EX31.27>

At its meeting on July 3, 2013, City staff reported to the Executive Committee on the work undertaken by staff, including preliminary findings from the consultants, and information concerning the next steps in the process. The Executive Committee received the staff report for information and requested the Deputy City Manager, Cluster B to expand the study area for the traffic study to incorporate the areas between the Jameson ramps and York Street ramps to the Gardiner, north to Front Street.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.EX33.18>

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the results of the public consultation program as a supplement to the September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013 report on work undertaken to date by staff and the consultant team.

## COMMENTS

Staff has retained DPRA Canada Inc. and Environics Research Group to assist with the public consultation program. The public and stakeholder consultation program consists of a project website, public meetings, surveys, and an information package. The key objective of the public consultation program is to ensure that respondents are adequately informed of the issues and potential impacts, have an opportunity to provide their opinions, and help identify issues that City staff should include in their evaluation.

### Public Consultation Meetings

An information meeting was held on June 17, 2013 at the request of the Ward Councillors where the airport is located for stakeholders representing groups potentially affected by the airport. Public meetings were held on September 4<sup>th</sup> at Fort York, September 9<sup>th</sup> at Metro Hall and September 19<sup>th</sup> at the Direct Energy Centre at Exhibition Place. The September meetings were advertised in the daily newspapers and the advertisements were translated for use in the newspapers reflecting the Toronto's largest language or cultural groups, posted on the city's website and news releases, and sent electronically to all identified stakeholders.

A summary of the results of the meetings held on June 17 and September 4 and 9<sup>th</sup>, 2013 is included in the September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013 report on this issue.

On September 19, 2013 staff held a Town Hall meeting at the Direct Energy Centre, Exhibition Place to provide the public with an opportunity to provide their comments on the issue. This meeting was deferred from September 12<sup>th</sup> in order to provide members of the community with additional time to review the technical reports and the September 10<sup>th</sup> staff update report on this matter. Representatives from Porter Airlines, the Toronto Port Authority and Transport Canada were all invited to attend and address audience questions beyond the scope of City staff. Only Porter Airlines and Transport Canada attended the meeting, while the Toronto Port Authority declined, in writing, to attend. The Town Hall attracted approximately 500 people with a split of residents from the Waterfront and the overall City, requiring the need for an overflow space to accommodate all attendees. During the Town Hall, more attendees spoke in favour of the Porter proposal than has occurred in previous public meetings. However, twice as many speakers continued to raise concerns and/or expressed opposition to the proposal.

Those speaking in opposition highlighted the following:

- Concerns about the local school, community centre and daycare in close proximity to the airport and the negative impacts of traffic, noise and emissions on health and safety

- Need for the Health Impact Assessment to consider other factors such as chemical storage
- The size of the jet engines and danger to birds and planes
- The importance of the bird sanctuary and Atlantic flyway areas in the vicinity of BBTCA to native bird populations and the potential negative impacts jets would have
- How will the City determine if the proposal has an ‘adverse impact’ as referenced in the Official Plan for any opening the Tri-Partite Agreement
- The need to look at all economic impacts including land values and other costs
- The history of previous disputes surrounding interpretation of the Tri-Partite agreement ( i.e. limited commercial aviation, STOL aircraft) which have led to the increase in passenger volumes and planes now being experienced and a lack of trust
- The vision for a busy airport is incompatible with Toronto's vision and significant financial investment in the Waterfront
- The importance of parks and open areas for people – and the ability to enjoy them free of jet noise and fumes
- Traffic in the vicinity of the airport and the existing road congestion which will be exacerbated by reduction of travel lanes on Queens Quay and an increase in passengers
- Concerns that such an important and long-lasting decision was being made in haste and without sufficient information and consultation or that scheduled meetings were in conflict with other events
- Concerns that the revised 200 metre runway extension would move the existing marine exclusion zone and have a negative impact on boaters
- How will the City requirements for noise data and Transport Canada's review of the runway expansion proposal and certification of the CS-100 aircraft align
- Who will pay for necessary improvements required?
- Noise from the aircraft is also an issue for those under the flyover paths beyond the Waterfront
- How will emergency jet aircraft situations be managed so close to a dense city?
- The current way in which noise is currently measured does not reflect human experience or environmental conditions - vibration is also a concern
- Not opposed to the airport and not opposed to Porter Airlines but do not want to see airport expanded and suggest Porter operate jets from Pearson
- The need to ensure that the decision does not negatively impact future developments such as PortLands, Ontario Place and has regard for future generations

Those speaking in favour highlighted the following:

- The convenience offered to travellers
- The direct economic benefits spread among aircraft and airline employees, hospitality industries, taxis, etc...

- The noise of buses and streetcars which run all night as opposed to the airplane curfew at BBTCA between 11PM and 6:45 AM
- The need for a balanced approach on this issue – an expansion of the airport would not cause harm to the environment and provides jobs and convenience to many
- The positive nature of the travel experience at BBTCA as opposed to that at Pearson
- Concerns that the Waterfront was home only to the super-rich treating the Waterfront as their personal playground
- Noise from the airport today is not as much a problem as day-to-day traffic
- Support for Canadian industries (Bombardier) and businesses (Porter) is important for our overall competitiveness
- Importance of gateway experience to travellers and part of being a world-class city
- Need to ensure the decision is data-driven
- The benefits of a longer runway (200 m.) would require a reduced power-setting and be quieter as a result, and the extended breakwater would reduce wave action and sediment build-up in the western gap

In addition to the public consultation meetings, city staff have met with stakeholders to ensure they are informed of the process, issues and potential impacts, and help identify issues that City staff should include in their evaluation. This includes representatives from local Boards and groups such as CommunityAir, NoJetsTO, local ratepayer and resident associations, Toronto District School Board, Toronto Music Garden and Waterfront Toronto as well as Bombardier, Porter Airlines, Air Canada, WestJet Airlines, Toronto Port Authority and Transport Canada.

## **Surveys**

The City retained Environics Research Group to complete telephone polling on the proposed expansion. The polling program was conducted in late August and consisted of 1,002 telephone interviews related to the airport's impact and possible issues associated with expansion. The margin of error for a sample of this size is plus or minus 3.1 percentage points (at the 95% confidence level). The sample consisted of 100 interviews each in York and East York, and 175 interviews each in Scarborough, Etobicoke, North York and the former City of Toronto. To ensure the views of residents closest to the airport are represented, an additional 100 interviews were conducted with those living in the immediate area, including residents of the Toronto Islands. The data are statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional, age and gender composition reflects that of the actual Toronto population according to the 2011 Census.

Most Torontonians (78%) are aware that the City is considering whether or not to allow jet aircraft at Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport (BBTCA). Residents of the former City of Toronto (89%), those with a post-graduate education (87%), and those aged 60 and older (90%) are the most likely to be aware of the debate.

Residents are divided between support (47%) and opposition (45%) for the expansion of the airport and use of jet aircraft. Those who oppose the use of jets are more likely to feel strongly (29%), while support is more tentative (27% somewhat support). Eight percent have mixed feelings or are unsure of their position. Residents of the former City of Toronto (55%) and those who live closer to the airport (59%) are most likely to oppose expansion and the use of jet aircraft.

Convenience is the number one reason for support, while opposition is driven by concerns about noise and the environment

Toronto residents are most concerned about the environmental impact on the lake and increased traffic in the area. Among those city residents who are concerned about increased traffic in the airport area, 60% say that dedicated public transit from the downtown core to the airport would alleviate their concerns somewhat or a great deal. Residents who live in the vicinity of the airport and are concerned about increased traffic, a majority (55%) say that dedicated transit does not alleviate their concerns.

When asked if major cities need an airport close to the downtown core, half of residents (51%) say that they do. Users of the BBTCA (69%) are the most likely to say that an airport is needed close to the downtown core. In the former City of Toronto and the Island airport vicinity, residents are more likely to say that an airport is not needed close to downtown (52% each). Seven in ten (72%) Toronto residents have used an area airport in the past five years, with most using only Pearson International (55% of airport users), or both Pearson and BBTCA (38%). Only five percent of residents have used Billy Bishop airport exclusively. Those who use only the BBTCA or both airports are more likely to reside in the former City of Toronto, have higher levels of education, be between the ages of 30 and 44, and have an annual income of \$100,000 or greater. Convenience and location are the main reasons residents choose BBTCA; airport-specific destinations or airlines drive travelers to Pearson.

Half of Torontonians say that an expanded airport with jets does not fit with the revitalized waterfront, and Toronto residents living in the waterfront area are most likely to say that the airport does not fit. Residents believe that the environmental impact, followed by the economic impact is the most important thing for City councillors to consider when deciding whether or not to support the expansion and use of jets at the airport.

## **NEXT STEPS**

An online survey is currently posted on the City's website and is scheduled to close on October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013. It is accompanied by an information booklet outlining the major issues, and these survey results will be included in the staff evaluation and final report.

An additional public consultation meeting will be held in November to review the results of the staff-led evaluation - the results of which will be included in the final report.

## **CONTACT**

Fiona Chapman, Waterfront Project Director/A, Tel: (416) 392-8113, Fax: (416) 392-8805, Email: fchapma@toronto.ca

Christopher Dunn, Project Manager/A, Waterfront Secretariat, Tel: (416) 395-1211, Fax: (416) 392-8805, Email: cdunn@toronto.ca

## **SIGNATURE**

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John W. Livey F.C.I.P  
Deputy City Manager, Cluster B