



Representing the Districts of Kenora, Rainy River and Thunder Bay
P.O. Box 10308, Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6T8
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October 7, 2024

Honourable Anita Anand
President of the Treasury Board and Minister of Transport
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A6
Via Email: Anita.Anand@parl.gc.ca

Her Worship Mayor Olivia Chow
Office of the Mayor
City Hall, 2nd Floor
100 Queen St. W.
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Via Email: mayor_chow@toronto.ca

Re: The Future for Billy Bishop Airport Requires Urgent Action and a Modern Governing Agreement

Dear Minister Anand and Mayor Chow,

I am writing to you to express my support for the sustained operation and development of Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport. As the President of the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association, I am extremely concerned to learn that the Tripartite Agreement that governs operations at the Airport expires in 2033 – less than 9 years from now.

Billy Bishop Airport provides a critical service and point of connection for the North. Many of my community members rely on Billy Bishop airport to visit family, connect through to other destinations for work, travel and tourism or to access critical medical services, the convenience and ease of Billy Bishop Airport cannot be matched. It has been reported widely that Northern Ontario communities have experienced drastic reductions in air service coming out of the COVID pandemic. Reliable air connectivity available through Billy Bishop Airport is an important economic and social lifeline for my community.

We were pleased to see the Federal Government's investment in a US Customs and Border Patrol preclearance facility, which is expected to open in 2025. This is welcomed news for communities in Northwestern Ontario as it will enable more and better connections through Billy Bishop Airport and amplify the airport's already strong economic contribution. We viewed this investment in the airport's long term future as recognition of the very important role the airport has come to play for the communities it connects including Northwestern Ontario – very much at odds with an agreement that expires in a matter of years.

To that end, we would implore you, as signatories to the Tripartite Agreement, to commence a process to modernize the Tripartite Agreement and secure the long-term future of Canada's 9th-busiest airport and 3rd-busiest in Ontario. My community members rely on this service, and we

want to see even more connections and expanded services to the North. As elected leaders, we have a responsibility to think past our own front doors, reflect the needs of all of our constituents and those beyond our communities who are impacted by our decisions. Certainty about the airport's long-term future should not be something we as leaders should need to think long about. **The time is now for the parties of the agreement to move forward with urgency to ensure this vital piece of transportation infrastructure and the important connections it facilitates are sustained.**

Sincerely,



Wendy Landry
President, Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association
Mayor, Municipality of Shuniah

Cc:

Hon. Soraya Martinez Ferrada, Minister of Tourism, Government of Canada
Hon. François-Philippe Champagne, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Government of Canada
Hon. Arun Thangaraj, Deputy Minister of Transport Canada, Government of Canada
John D. Elvidge, City of Toronto, Clerk
Paul Johnson, City of Toronto, City Manager
Jag Sharma, City of Toronto, Deputy City Manager
RJ Steenstra, President and CEO, Ports Toronto
Sandra Papatello, Chair, Board of Directors, Ports Toronto
Neil Pakey, President and CEO, Nieuport Aviation
Hon. Prabmeet Sarkaria, Minister of Transportation, Government of Ontario
Hon. Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, Government of Ontario
MP Patty Hajdu (Thunder Bay - Superior North)
MP Marcus Powlowski – Thunder Bay-Rainy River
MP Eric Melillo – Kenora
MPP Greg Rickford, (Kenora – Rainy River)
MPP Kevin Holland, (Thunder Bay - Atikokan)
MPP Lise Vaugeois, (Thunder Bay - Superior North)
All member municipalities - CAOs and Clerks



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Date: October 7, 2024

Resolution 2024-34:

Background:

WHEREAS Billy Bishop Airport serves more than 2 million passengers per year, making it the 9th-busiest airport in Canada, 5th-busiest serving the US market, 3rd busiest airport in Ontario, and making it a critical component of the national and regional air transportation system; and

WHEREAS the airport provides daily connections to the North with service to Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Timmins and Sudbury, and enables access to many other neighbouring communities; and

WHEREAS Billy Bishop Airport is a critical access point for Northern communities for economic opportunities, tourism, social connectivity and critical medical care located in downtown Toronto;

WHEREAS the airport operates under a Tripartite Agreement among the City of Toronto, Transport Canada and PortsToronto, and that agreement is set to expire in 2033; and

WHEREAS the airport is seeking to secure its long-term future through a process to modernize and extend the Tripartite Agreement to drive sustainable growth and enhanced access and connections for passengers and the communities it connects to;

Recommendation:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association is seeking urgent action from the City of Toronto, PortsToronto and Transport Canada to commence a process and conclude it by the end of 2025 to modernize the current Tripartite Agreement and secure the future of Billy Bishop Airport.

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT a copy of this motion be sent to Hon. Anita Anand - President of the Treasury Board and Minister of Transport, Mayor Olivia Chow – Toronto City, Hon. Soraya Martinez Ferrada - Minister of Tourism, Government of Canada, Hon. François-Philippe Champagne - Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry - Government of Canada, Hon. Arun Thangaraj - Deputy Minister of Transport Canada - Government of Canada, John D. Elvidge - City of Toronto – Clerk, Paul Johnson - City of Toronto - City Manager, Jag Sharma - City of Toronto - Deputy City Manager, RJ Steenstra - President and CEO - Ports Toronto, Sandra Papatello – Chair of Board of Directors - Ports Toronto, Neil Pakey - President and CEO - Nieuport Aviation, Hon. Prabmeet Sarkaria - Minister of Transportation - Government of Ontario, Hon. Vic Fedeli - Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade - Government of Ontario, MP Patty Hajdu (Thunder Bay - Superior North), MP Marcus Powlowski – Thunder Bay-Rainy River, MP Eric Melillo – Kenora, MPP Greg Rickford, (Kenora – Rainy River), MPP Kevin Holland, (Thunder Bay - Atikokan), MPP Lise Vaugeois, (Thunder Bay - Superior North), and all NOMA member municipalities - CAOs and Clerks.

Moved By: Lisa Teeple, Councillor of Emo
Seconded By: Jim Vezina, Mayor of O'Connor
CARRIED

Wendy Landry

President, NOMA