

October 8, 2024

City Council  
City of Toronto  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

**RE:** Modernizing the Tripartite Agreement for Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport

Dear Mayor Chow and Esteemed City Councillors,

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) is the indispensable partner of business and Canada's largest, most influential provincial chamber. It is an independent, non-profit advocacy and member services organization representing a diverse network of 60,000 members. The OCC's mission is to convene, align and advance the interests of its members through principled policy work, value-added business services and broad engagement to drive competitiveness and inclusive, sustainable economic growth.

I am writing regarding the critical need to modernize the tripartite agreement governing Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport. As we approach the 2033 renewal of the tripartite agreement, we face both an immediate challenge and a significant opportunity. While implementing Runway End Safety Areas (RESAs) is a pressing Transport Canada requirement, we can leverage this moment to secure the airport's long-term future and maximize its benefits for Toronto and Ontario.

Billy Bishop Airport stands as a unique asset for Toronto. Situated just 3 kilometres from downtown, it is a vital economic and trade gateway linking our city to more than 20 destinations across Atlantic Canada, Quebec, Ontario, and the northeastern United States. The airport's strategic importance to our national connectivity was demonstrated at the 2023 Canadian Chamber of Commerce's Annual General Meeting, where 80 percent of provincial and territorial chambers of commerce voiced their support for renewing the tripartite agreement.

The airport's economic impact is substantial and growing. Currently, it generates:

- \$2.1 billion in annual economic output
- 4,450 jobs, including 2,080 on-site positions
- \$150 million in annual tax revenue

With U.S. preclearance services expected to launch in late 2025, the airport's economic output could surge to \$5.3 billion while supporting over 32,000 jobs. However, modernizing the agreement transcends mere economic metrics. It's about future-proofing this vital asset through:

1. Enabling innovation in environmental sustainability
2. Allowing for necessary infrastructure investments

3. Adapting to rapid changes in aviation technology
4. Balancing community needs with economic growth

We stand at a critical juncture. As the City addresses the RESA requirements, we encourage you to undertake a comprehensive review of the tripartite agreement in partnership with the Government of Canada and Ports Toronto. This review should develop a new framework that enables long-term planning and investment while fostering future innovation.

Billy Bishop Airport demonstrates daily that a vibrant airport can successfully coexist with a clean, green waterfront. It serves as a crucial connector for our province and the entire country, particularly in providing essential north-south infrastructure connections.

I urge you to seize this opportunity to secure the future of this vital asset for our city and province.

Sincerely,



Daniel Tisch, APR, FCPRS, ICD.D

*President and CEO*

*Ontario Chamber of Commerce*