

Porter Airlines Inc.
Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport
Toronto ON M5V 1A1 Canada

porter

October 1, 2024

City Clerk's Office
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

via e-mail: clerk@toronto.ca

Dear Mayor and City Council:

Re: EX17.5 - Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport - Runway End Safety Areas

Please accept this letter as Porter's submission related to the current discussion for implementing Runway End Safety Areas (RESA) at Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport. Among other points, I want to emphasize Porter's commitment to the airport and express my concern with how the city's consultation to date seemingly minimizes the widespread support for the airport's continuing safe operations.

Background

Porter's history at Billy Bishop officially dates to 2006, when the airport was used as the centrepiece of a plan to launch Canada's newest airline. There was incredible support for the modern, inclusive form of flying that we introduced. At the same time, there were competitive and political forces that attempted to undermine Porter's success. We persevered and have since played a crucial role in revitalizing the airport to its current status as the world's best urban airport.

Porter and Billy Bishop

Billy Bishop remains a foundational piece of Porter's business, allowing us to grow through additional means. This includes our more recent presence at Toronto Pearson Airport, from which we operate throughout North America using new Embraer E195-E2 aircraft. This represents the emergence of a legitimate third national airline, which the country desperately needs to counter the existing duopoly.

Some are using Porter's evolution, particularly our presence at Pearson, as a reason to infer that we are less committed to Billy Bishop. This is untrue and not based on any knowledge of our business. While we have elected to expand at Pearson, it is an entirely complementary addition to our network. The destinations that we primarily serve from Pearson cannot be reached from Billy Bishop with the aircraft operating there. To suggest that we can simply transfer all of our business to Pearson lacks understanding of our industry. Pearson cannot

accommodate the volume of flights that Porter operates at Billy Bishop today, particularly at the favourable times currently scheduled. It will be regional markets, such as Northern Ontario, that will suffer should Billy Bishop not be an option for them in the future. This will cause fares to rise and hurt the economies of these markets, as well as Toronto's.

It is common globally for major urban centres to have multiple airports, with airlines often serving one or more of them. The examples in North America alone are plentiful, including Chicago, New York and Washington. Porter is also currently developing a passenger terminal at Montreal Metropolitan Airport to complement our service at Montreal Trudeau. Again, this does not diminish our intention to maintain and grow our presence at Trudeau.

Similarly, the presence of train service connecting Pearson to Union Station does not reduce the value of Billy Bishop. The train has operated for nearly 10 years, yet Billy Bishop remains attractive for millions of passengers who choose to fly there.

These transportation assets must be considered as complementary, not competitive.

Public opinion

The staff report on this matter includes a summary of the associated public consultation. This limited process paints a picture of widespread concerns about the airport.

These concerns are most often the same ones raised by the same people and organizations for the last 20-plus years. Repeating them does not make them true and continuing to include them within official city reports without full context distorts the public record.

What is not prominently featured is the consistent year-over-year favourability rating of greater than 80% that the airport has within waterfront communities and the broader city. The option to submit comments online for the most recent consultation also doesn't appear to have been considered in the final summary to the same extent as the single in-person meeting. I have heard from dozens of people who said they made submissions of support for the airport that are not adequately reflected in the final report.

I also heard from those who attended the public meeting and were dismayed by the lack of civility and ill-informed comments heard from those opposed to the airport. This behaviour is intimidating to the general public and discourages the silent majority from attending such meetings and speaking up. The organized opposition and orchestrated outbursts that prevail at these consultations should not be taken as representative of the wider community's opinions, nor used to justify recommendations.

Waterfront revitalization

The dire predictions for the waterfront accompanying Porter's founding nearly 20 years ago have not come to pass, yet they are being repeated again today. While much development has successfully taken place in the area over the years, many people are stuck in the past when it comes to their thinking about the airport.

The city's growth is complemented by the airport's success, including our mixed use waterfront. You will find that most people agree with this sentiment if you look beyond a narrow subset who make it their business to oppose the airport at any opportunity.

Porter represents Toronto

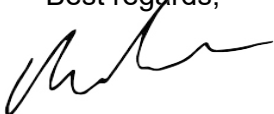
Just this past weekend, Porter participated in two events demonstrating the range of benefits that Billy Bishop provides.

The first was Hope Air's Haul for Hope, where I personally saw the commitment of hundreds of people to raise money for medical patients requiring air transport from their home communities to receive critical care. Thousands of these people have been accommodated over the years on Porter flights and private aircraft using Billy Bishop.

The second was a trade mission in Chicago promoting our city as an attractive destination for tourism, meetings and conferences. The contributions of tourism to Toronto's economy are extremely important and require continual nurturing. Billy Bishop's role in this cannot be understated or removed from the equation without consequences.

The overwhelming sentiment that we hear from people is that they love Porter and Billy Bishop. The fact that this finds no prominent place in the staff report significantly misrepresents public sentiment. I urge Executive Committee members to take this into consideration and recognize that the airport is a city-wide asset.

Best regards,



Michael Deluce
Chief Executive Officer