

Toronto Board of Health
Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen Street West

Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

July 13, 2026

Dear Chair Moise and Members of the Toronto Board of Health:

Re: Item HL34.5 - Investigating the Increased Risk of Heart Disease, Lung Cancer, and Tumours from Bringing Jets to Toronto's Waterfront Communities

I write on behalf of the York Quay Neighbourhood Association, representing 20,000 residents of the central waterfront community. We are among the closest residents to the Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport, and we are writing to convey our firm opposition to the proposed expansion of this airport and the introduction of jets on the Toronto Islands, and to request the Board of Health to ask Toronto Public Health to update its 2013 health impact assessment.

Our community includes families with young children, seniors, marginalized communities, and people with health conditions. We have lived beside the Billy Bishop Airport and face the impacts of noise, traffic, and air pollution caused by its current operations every day. When Toronto Public Health concluded their 2013 health impact assessment with the words "Optimal protection and enhancement of the health of Central Waterfront residents and the city as a whole calls for a reduction of current and future airport impacts," they were writing about the impacts on the people in our community, among others. Recent studies in the adjacent Bathurst Quay neighbourhood have confirmed that the Billy Bishop Airport is the primary source of ultrafine particles, pollutants that are recognized as a key health concern.

The expansion of the Billy Bishop Airport that is now being proposed would worsen all of the impacts that our waterfront community faces. The lakefilling and runway extension that the expansion would involve are expected to significantly decrease water circulation in the inner harbour and result in a stagnant pool of water near the city. A vibrant waterfront community cannot live in such conditions. Commercial jets flying overhead and expanded airport operations would greatly worsen the air pollution and traffic impacts. Our city's green spaces and waterfront trails would also be under threat. These are major health concerns.

We know that the Board of Health acted in 2013 and recommended rejection of the previous proposal to expand the airport. The current airport expansion plans are even bigger, and the health impacts would likely be worse than previously expected. It is imperative that we act with urgency to assess what this means for the health of our community and the city as a whole. The residents of our waterfront community and this city deserve nothing less. If we do not act, this will be the end of our vision of a waterfront where families can swim, walk and breathe clean air. We urge the Board of Health to direct Toronto Public Health to update their 2013 health impact assessment and to begin this update immediately.

Thank you for your continued work to protect the health of the residents of Toronto.

Yours sincerely,

Ulla Colgrass

Chair, Planning Committee

York Quay Neighbourhood Association