

TORealityCheck

M.P.
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario

Enlarging Toronto Island Airport: Federal Feasibility Study – What is it?

Dear Member of Parliament

We are writing to thank you and your 416 caucus colleagues for your government's July 24 decision on the proposed expansion of Toronto Island Airport. However, subsequent reports suggesting that the decision may be only a pause raise important questions about the government's intentions.

We recognize the momentous national issues facing the government, but the unanswered questions we have raised about a possible airport enlargement must not be pushed aside.

We are Toronto residents who care deeply about our city's future. We wrote to you in June outlining our initial concerns. Attached are more recent letters, delivered August 27, to the Prime Minister (Attachment #1) and to the ministers of Transport and Housing and Infrastructure (Attachment #2). They raise questions about next steps, particularly the federal feasibility study expected later this fall.

The latest letter to the Prime Minister is supported by 48 committed Torontonians, including a former Governor General of Canada, a former Ontario premier, two former Toronto mayors, 22 members of the Order of Canada and/or the Order of Ontario, three former chairs of Waterfront Toronto and a former Waterfront Toronto CEO. Our group continues to grow.

Is there a “shovel-ready” airport enlargement plan?

Ontario's Minister of Transportation has said that the province “is merely supporting a push by the federal Toronto Port Authority, which owns and operates Billy Bishop, to expand the airport.” He reportedly added: “They're the ones leading it. We support that vision for modernization.” The feasibility study is therefore a federal responsibility.

Torontonians have been repeatedly told that there is no plan for the island airport. Is the federal feasibility study camouflage for an existing undisclosed enlargement plan? Why is Premier Ford saying: “There is one airport that has to be private and that is Billy Bishop. It is shovel-ready. There is \$5 to 7 billion of private investment not costing the taxpayers anything, creating thousands of jobs”?

How can an airport privatization project be “shovel-ready” without a detailed plan?

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Is Billy Bishop Airport next on the auction block?

Reports indicate that Billy Bishop Airport is losing money and cannot attract investors without jets. Is the government courting foreign investors for the airport? Is it on the auction block? Is that the real purpose of the federal feasibility study?

To ensure transparency and public confidence, we urge your government to release the study's terms of reference, scope, authorship, methodology and timeline now.

Will this be a genuine, objective and comprehensive study, or a plan to build the largest airport the available land can accommodate? Any credible feasibility assessment should demonstrate the real need for an enlarged airport, determine realistic passenger demand, present sound business and economic cases, infrastructure and land requirements, true costs and benefits, timelines, environmental and quality-of-life effects, and the public uses that would be displaced.

Also attached is Toby Lennox's July 28, 2026 paper to Toronto City Council on the proposed expansion of Billy Bishop Airport (Attachment #3). Mr. Lennox is a former senior executive with the Greater Toronto Airports Authority and former CEO of Toronto Global, the agency responsible for attracting international investment to the city.

Drawing on his aviation and airport-planning experience, Mr. Lennox examines two elements of the Minister of Transport's July 24 statement: the significant questions any plan must address and the major obstacles to achieving its stated goals. His analysis reinforces the need for a comprehensive public assessment of any proposal.

The Minister has said that Toronto voices will shape any future plans for Billy Bishop Airport. We welcome that commitment and expect the government to listen to all interested Torontonians, not a select few.

The goal should be clear: determine openly and on the evidence what is best for Toronto, its residents and future generations. Decisions made now will permanently shape the unique relationship of Torontonians with their waterfront and its islands.

Thank you
Yours very truly
for TORealityCheck

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Powell', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Powell
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Attachments

1. Letter to Prime Minister Mark Carney, dated August 25, 2026
2. Letters to Minister Steven MacKinnon and to Minister Gregor Robertson, dated August 25, 2026
3. Billy Bishop Airport Proposed Expansion, Submission to Toronto City Council, Toby Lennox, July 28, 2026

Who is TORealityCheck?

We are residents of Toronto, volunteers, who care deeply about the future of our city. Our purpose is to ensure active, informed public scrutiny of any suggested changes to Billy Bishop Toronto Island Airport. We will continue asking critical questions, demanding credible, evidence-based answers. Decisions must be grounded in facts, transparency and accountability—not assumptions, political expediency or unsupported promises.

We are a moderate, credible and determined voice—independent while maintaining constructive dialogue with elected officials, governments, public agencies, community stakeholders and the media.