



55 Bloor Street West  
Manulife P O Box 19598  
M4W 3T9  
P 416 873 4527  
e-mail [tsa@torontosocietyofarchitects.ca](mailto:tsa@torontosocietyofarchitects.ca)

To: Members of the Planning & Transportation Committee  
Members of the Economic Development and Parks Committee City of Toronto

From: Toronto Society of Architects  
Joe Lobko, Chair

Re: Proposed Expansion of Toronto Island Airport

On behalf of the Toronto Society of Architects (TSA), I write to express our deep concern over the request before Council to expand the Toronto Island Airport.

Toronto is fortunate to have a rich and extensive edge along Lake Ontario and the inner and outer harbours. Our waterfront is currently the subject of an extensive public debate and investigation that will help define how we live, work and visit along the water's edge for decades to come. At this critical point in our history, we have the unique opportunity to create an inclusive vision for our waterfront which incorporates a strong public realm extending along its entire length, including the lands now occupied by the Toronto Island airport.

We therefore ask that you give consideration to the following:

1. We are convinced that an airport is not the highest and best use of this land and that alternative uses, possibly including a combination of public and private development and park space, should be explored which integrate these lands with the evolving vision of our developing waterfront. A rigorous and independent feasibility study should be undertaken to explore viable alternatives to airport expansion. The privileged location of this large site demands that we make a decision only after we exhaust our understanding of its opportunities, and do so in accordance with the larger vision for Toronto's waterfront.
2. Significant concerns remain over the environmental soundness of an airport expansion, particularly regarding air pollution, noise below the flight paths over the lake and the river valley, and the increased danger of accidents over a heavily used recreational water basin.
3. In its current state the Island airport represents an economic burden on the City and is considered unsustainable by its current operator. The potential economic benefits of an airport expansion, (to a relatively small sector of our local economy), need to be measured against the negative and potentially significant economic impact that an expansion would have on many other sectors of that economy. (e.g. housing development, tourism).

The TSA requests that:

1. Council withhold from approving the expansion of the Toronto Island Airport, placing a hold on increased airport activities until a time when,
2. The City undertakes a rigorous feasibility study examining alternative visions for the lands, leading towards the eventual incorporation of the Island airport site into public use, as part of the urban/green fabric of the Island environment. And that the City do so in a manner inclusive of all interested stakeholders.

The TSA would like to express its absolute support for the development of a long-term and sustainable alternative vision for the site currently occupied by the Toronto Island Airport. It is our firm belief that decisions we make today on the airport will have long-lasting consequences on the quality of life, economic vitality and health along the entire waterfront.

On behalf of the Toronto Society of Architects,

Joe Lobko  
Chair, 2002