



ontario greenbelt alliance

Ontario Greenbelt Alliance
C/O 116 Spadina Avenue, Suite 300
Toronto, Ontario M5V 2K6

February 8, 2016

Sent by email for submission to: leanna.joslin@tc.gc.ca

Re: Ontario Greenbelt Alliance North Pickering Lands input & Support for the Land Over Landings Submission .

Dear Dr. Polonsky,

The Ontario Greenbelt Alliance (OGA) is an alliance of 117 member organizations that includes environmental, ratepayer and community organizations that work to support and protect Ontario's Greenbelt (membership list attached). Our membership is committed to a strong Greenbelt that protects significant agricultural lands as well as sensitive environmental features such as the Oak Ridges Moraine, Niagara Escarpment, prime countryside as well as significant water-sources. As such, we are in support of the long term protection of prime farmland in North Pickering, the federally held lands that have in the past been earmarked for a potential airport.

As input to your study of the North Pickering lands, we wish to express the OGA's support for the positions outlined by Land Over Landings. In addition, we would like to bring several other considerations to your attention.

Ontario Greenbelt Alliance Background

The OGA was instrumental in establishing the Greenbelt when the legislation was being considered in the lead up to 2005. We have also led the charge to grow it in the intervening years, making it the largest permanently protected Greenbelt in the world. Its members draw attention to the issues that affect the Greenbelt, support communities and governments in their efforts to protect the Greenbelt for its natural and agricultural values, work together and share information on key regional issues. We work to ensure that the integrity of Ontario's Greenbelt is not undermined by inappropriate development, poorly planned infrastructure, quarries, or other uses, while also advocating for increased protection of natural areas and agricultural lands within the Greenbelt. We are also working to build support for expanding the Greenbelt so that the benefits of its smart planning framework can be extended to

adjacent areas that are under serious and unsustainable development pressure. The Greenbelt is a living, growing system for sustaining a healthy environment and vibrant communities.

Our Vision For The Future Of The North Pickering Lands

The Greenbelt plan links significant natural heritage features, agricultural land and communities together to form a cohesive protected landscape that ensures agriculture continues to thrive and nature is protected for generations to come in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH). The Plan also guides land use in coordination with the Ontario Growth Plan - protecting what is valuable and supporting development in appropriate areas. A portion of the northern lands in question are designated as part of Ontario's Greenbelt and are located on the sensitive Oak Ridges Moraine. These lands should be protected from development regardless of their federal ownership.

Including All North Pickering Lands Within The Rouge National Urban Park

While we are pleased that just over half of the original proposed airport site has been recently protected as part of the new Rouge National Urban Park, the remainder of these prime agricultural lands are still threatened by a redundant airport as well as proposed incompatible commercial and industrial land uses that threaten both the integrity of the Oak Ridges Moraine and provincial Greenbelt. Linking the Lake to the Moraine through the Rouge Watershed is the GTA's last chance to ensure a functional ecological corridor that serves to protect the river as well as wildlife within the Rouge watershed.

It is our view that these important ecological lands be added to the Rouge National Urban Park, along with the entirety of the proposed federal airport lands, to ensure the long term protection of the agricultural and natural heritage land base in North Pickering. This position is consistent with our, and the province's view that major infrastructure and/or urban development should not be placed in the Greenbelt itself.

Supporting And Protecting Ontario's Agricultural Sector

The importance of Ontario's agricultural sector and its employment potential must also be factored into any decision making process. Given that the agricultural sector is one of Ontario's most productive and the largest employer in the province, we believe these lands are best left for agricultural production as well as the protection of natural heritage assets. The province cannot afford the loss of even more productive farmland - an economic engine that also helps to ensure local food security.

Decision Making With A Climate Change Lens

Times have changed since the 1970's when the airport was first proposed. The very real threats posed by climate change now challenge all governments to act in new ways and look at all land use decisions through a climate lens. The recent provincial and federal commitments on climate action point to a

future where significant greenhouse gas emission reductions, adaptation and mitigation are critical to the future of our communities and the planet. These facts mitigate against yet another airport within the GTA and are additional to the avoided costs of construction and long term operations. We believe it is wise to use existing airports in the GGHR and take advantage of economies of scale by either expanding or scaling back operations at these sites as needs arise.

In summary, now is the time to close the books on the proposed airport and add all of the North Pickering lands into the Rouge National Urban Park. This will ensure the long term protection of these lands, the existing agricultural system and the ecological benefits of protected nature in this part of the GGHR.

We look forward to seeing the results of your work and hope our comments have been helpful. We would be pleased to meet with you or speak with you regarding our position if that is helpful to your study.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erin Shapero". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Erin Shapero,
OGA Coordinator
(On behalf of The Ontario Greenbelt Alliance)

Cc. Mary Delaney, Land Over Landings

Ontario Greenbelt Alliance Members:

- Altona Forest Stewardship Committee
- AWARE Simcoe
- A Rocha Canada
- Best Environment for Streetsville/Sierra Club Peel/NICO
- Blue Mountain Watershed Trust Foundation
- Bond Head/BWG Residents for Responsible Development
- Brampton Environmental Community Advisory Panel
- Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association
- Burlington Green
- Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment
- Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy
- Canadian Network for Respiratory Care
- Canadian Organic Growers
- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS)-Wildlands League
- Canadian Society of Iranian Engineers and Architects
- Castle Glen Ratepayers' Association
- CELA
- Children of the Greenbelt
- Citizens Environment Alliance of Southwestern Ontario
- Clear the Air Coalition
- Coalition of Concerned Citizens of Caledon
- Coalition on the Niagara Escarpment
- Community Preservation Initiative
- Conservation Council of Ontario
- Conservation Development
- Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods (Ontario) Inc.
- Food Forward
- Food & Water First
- Friends of Boyd Park
- Friends of East Lake, Prince Edward County.
- Friends of Fairy Lake
- Friends of Hope Conservation Group Inc.
- Friends of Pittock
- Friends of Rural Communities & the Environment (FORCE)
- Friends of the Farewell
- Friends of the Fraser Wetland Inc.
- Friends of the Rouge Watershed
- Friends of the Twelve (FOTT)
- Global Environmental Action Group
- Grand Erie Energy Quest
- Grand River Environmental Network
- Green Incorporated
- Greening Niagara
- Greenlands Centre Wellington
- Greenpeace Canada
- Halton Environmental Network
- Halton - Peel Woodlands and Wildlife Stewardship Council
- Heritage Speed River Working Group
- Innisfil District Association
- King Environmental Groups
- The Lakewatch Society
- Land Over Landings
- LincolnGreen
- Midhurst Ratepayers' Association
- North East Sutton Ratepayers Association
- Oak Ridges Moraine Land
- Preston Lake Environmental Association (PLEA)
- Protecting Escarpment Rural Land (P.E.R.L.)
- Protect our Water and Environmental Resources (P.O.W.E.R)
- Public Spaces Appreciation Association of Ontario
- Registered Nurses Association of Ontario
- Preservation of Agricultural Lands Society
- Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition
- Richmond Hill Naturalists
- Riversides
- Rural Burlington Greenbelt Coalition
- St.Catharine's CAN (Climate Action Now)
- Save the Maskinonge
- Save the North Gwillimbury Forest Alliance
- Save the Oak Ridges Moraine - STORM Coalition
- Save Our Ravines - Halton Hills
- Sierra Club of Canada (Ontario Chapter)
- South Lake Simcoe Naturalists
- South Peel Naturalists Club
- Stop the Quarry - Save Luther Marsh
- Sunfish Lake Association
- Sustainable Brant
- Sustainable Urban Development Association
- Sustainable Vaughan
- Toronto Environmental Alliance
- The Humane Society of Canada
- The Lakewater Society
- Urban Green Environmental Organization
- Willow Park Ecology Centre

- Alliance of Ontario
- Concerned Citizens of King Township
 - Concerned Residents Association of North Dumfries (CRAND)
 - Credit River Alliance
 - David Suzuki Foundation
 - Earthroots
 - Ecological Farmers of Ontario
 - EcoSpark
 - Environment Hamilton
 - Environmental Defence
 - Evergreen

- Trust
- Oakville Green
 - Ontario Farmland Trust
 - Ontario Headwaters Institute
 - Ontario Nature
 - Ontario Smart Growth Network
 - Peel Environmental Network
 - Pembina Institute/York U
 - Personal Computer Geographic Education System/Software (PCGES)
 - PitSense Niagara Escarpment Group Inc
 - Pomona Mills Park Conservationists Inc.
 - Pesticide Free Ontario

- Valley Voices Residents Association
- Wainfleet Ratepayers Association
- Wellington Water Watchers
- West Whitby Community Against 407 Link Location (WW-CALL)
- West Oro Ratepayers Association Inc.
- York Region Environmental Alliance
- 407 Action Group