



UPDATE

JULY 7, 2013

A huge THANK YOU for your commitment to support Land Over Landings and help fight the federal government's decision to put an airport and industrial development on some of the best farmland we have left.

This is our first broadcast e-mail to our members and supporters. Through such newsletters, our website, and our Facebook page, we will keep you informed of developments, advise you of plans and future meetings, and clarify or correct confusing or misleading messages from other sources.

We are not political, except in the sense that we've been forced into the position of having to oppose a bad political decision. There was no public discussion prior to Finance Minister Jim Flaherty's June 11 announcement. There have been no impact studies, no comprehensive transportation reviews. As concerned citizens we want to see that the *public interest* is properly served, not the interests of developers and certain factions within Transport Canada.

This airport is not needed. It wasn't needed in 1972, it isn't needed now, and it won't be needed 14 years from now. Toronto Pearson is operating at approximately half capacity. Greatest urban growth is to the west of Toronto, not the east, yet Hamilton International is begging for passengers. And the *Needs Assessment Study Report* that Mr Flaherty quoted as the basis for his decision *never* said that an airport would be needed in Pickering by 2027. The Report was careful to avoid firm dates. It merely suggested a "most likely" ten-year timeframe. It even warned that the need could occur in the 2040s – or later.¹

And why impose industrial development on unserved food land when thousands of acres of fully serviced industrial lands east of Toronto are

having difficulty attracting industry? Mr Flaherty's ill-conceived plan, with no business case or price tag attached – and this from our federal finance minister! – would saddle us with another Mirabel and a host of vacant buildings, as has happened all over the U.S. in similar circumstances. Build an unneeded airport *and it will fail*. And the industrial areas around it will become a wasteland. This is what Mr Flaherty would impose on us if we don't stop him.

If his plan goes ahead, it will become one more costly, shortsighted political mistake, joining the F-35 debacle and the current plan to build our own Arctic patrol ships that experts say will cost the earth and won't do the job.² The Class 1 farmland that Mr Flaherty would destroy if left to his own devices is a resource he should be *protecting* for the GTA's long-term benefit, not making available for developers' short-term gain. Farms on this Class 1 land should be feeding the GTA, period – and can go on feeding us for generations to come. Only 11% of Canada's land mass can support agriculture. Of that small percentage, only 5% is prime farmland. And only 0.5% is Class 1 land, the best and most reliable land for food production.³ It is a sovereign treasure. It **MUST** be protected. Because all over the world, *food is a growing concern*.

What We've Been Doing

We have not been idle since Jim Flaherty's announcement! In fact, we hit the ground running and can now report the following:

- Executive committee established; work committees formed (Legal, Communications, Research, etc.). All of you who signed up for specific committees will be contacted shortly, if you haven't been already.

¹ *Needs Assessment Study / Pickering Lands, Final Report*, March 2010

² *Titanic Blunder: Arctic/Offshore patrol ships on course for disaster*, Rideau Institute and Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2013

³ *Canada Land Inventory / Ontario Farmland Trust*

- Our “Call to Action” meeting in Brougham on June 18 pulled in a standing-room-only crowd. Perhaps that’s where we met you. We thank all who attended. The meeting was an excellent start to this battle.
- Transport Canada's "public information" meetings on June 24 and 27 delivered no useful information to the public. If you were in attendance, you already know this. We thank you for having taken the time to attend and express your opinions. For our part, the sessions enabled us to sign up many more new members! Big wink to TC for hosting such a great membership drive on our behalf! ;-)
- Our list of supporters is long and growing by the day.
- Executive committee members are meeting or corresponding daily with individuals and organizations eager to support the cause. In our next UPDATE we’ll tell you more. Meetings have also begun with politicians at all levels of government. We’re hearing about a lot of dissatisfaction with Jim Flaherty's announcement. This is very good news!
- Media interviews on high-profile radio programs have been ongoing, and we have received continuous supportive coverage in the press. All our letters to editors are getting published. More coverage, some of it national, is being prepared even as we write.
- Our website has been altered to reflect the current situation and to provide you with regular updates – if necessary, daily or even hourly. Check in often. Go to **Articles > Current Crisis** to read and listen to what’s being said in the media.
- A DONATE page is now on our website. Donations can be made using Visa or MasterCard, via PayPal. Our battle may well be a long one and it won’t be won without the generous support of all those who want to stop government waste and folly, and who care about ensuring food security for the GTA well into the future.
- A new Facebook page is up and running, and our audience is growing FAST! Even if you don't have an FB account, you can view all the activity on the “front page.” Check it out!
- We’re producing a series of "Reality Check" flyers to respond to misinformation. They will all be posted on our website and Facebook page.

- A petition is being developed. This is the formal kind that must be signed in person, the kind that will have the most impact. Our federal government does not recognize online petitions. Stay tuned for more news on this; the petition will be among our fall initiatives.

A Checklist of Ways You Can Help

- Phone, write, or visit your MP. This is of first importance right now. Voice your concern! You’ll find contact information at <http://www.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/Compilations/HouseofCommons/MemberByPostalCode.aspx?Menu=HOC>
- PLEASE provide us with feedback on your conversation(s) with your MP. E-mail us at info@landoverlandings.com
- Be sure to complete the Comments form (available until July 31) on Transport Canada’s website at <http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/ontario/pickering-menu-1362.htm>
- “Like” and “Share” our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/LandOverLandings/>
- Follow us on Twitter... and enjoy!
- Get your “NO PICKERING AIRPORT” lawn sign TODAY. Our website will tell you how.
- Volunteer! We’re going to win this. Be part of it. Contact info@landoverlandings.com
- Watch your Inbox for UPDATES. Keep abreast of what’s been happening and what’s needed. Forward and share these newsletters.
- And please, please, donate if you can.** Help us fund this fight to preserve a sovereign jewel! We’ll be needing legal representation, assessments, expert advice. Every dollar you donate will go directly to the cause. Just click the “Donate” button on our website’s Home page. Thank you so much!



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