



Pickering Airport: What Has This Boondoggle* Cost Us? (update June 2016)

***boondoggle**: a wasteful or pointless project that gives the appearance of having value

We Canadians, through our taxes, have paid for:

- ✓ the many site searches and consultants' studies and reports, from 1968 to 1972, that resulted in the selection of north Pickering in February of 1972 as the site of an international airport
- ✓ the expropriation of 18,600 acres (farmland, natural habitat, and two villages)
- ✓ all the post-decision hearings, inquiries, and studies that were conducted on the taxpayers' dime:
 - environmental studies/assessments
 - the Swackhamer Hearing (1972); the Gibson Inquiry (1973)
 - the wildlife, weather, and water monitoring studies
 - the cultural and heritage studies, including the Draper (Wendat) site excavation, and the massive "Architectural Evaluation of the North Pickering Project and the Toronto Area Airports Project Sites" (1974)
 - the study by the Pickering Airport Lands Revitalization Committee (PARC) (1985-86)
 - undoubtedly other studies that remain unknown to the public
- ✓ the renovation, furnishing, and maintenance of government site offices on the Federal Lands
- ✓ the demolition of hundreds of structures on the site – houses, barns, commercial buildings, and outbuildings – over a period of *41 years*
- ✓ *more than 44 years* of government administration of the Lands, including the salaries and benefits of an unknown number of Transport Canada and Public Works Canada staff and the fees paid to SNC-Lavalin Property Management and other sub-contractors
- ✓ the consequences of Transport Canada's policies of intentional neglect as landlord of the Pickering site (Ottawa has foregone millions in revenue through the department's refusal to re-rent vacated houses; financial records obtained by the *National Post* from Transport Canada show that environmental, green space, regular, and other operating/maintenance costs – no details provided, and overhead excluded – exceeded rental income by close to \$26 million for 1999–2005 alone)
- ✓ *41 years* of inspections of leased properties and of the rehousing or eviction of tenants
- ✓ *41 years* of maintenance (including, 3 decades'-worth grudgingly and shoddily performed by Public Works Canada or their subcontractors) on leased properties on the Lands
- ✓ the federal government's legal costs to fight tenants who took Public Works Canada (Transport Canada's property manager until 2005) to court over shoddy practices and fabricating reasons for eviction, and the resulting costs when the courts sided with the tenants
- ✓ *4 decades* of funding security patrols on the Lands

... and there's more ►

- ✓ Transport Minister David Collenette’s Federal Green Space Preserve initiative for the Lands, including several roundtable meetings with “stakeholders” and a significant consultant’s report (2003)
- ✓ the “technical” study commissioned by Transport Canada in 2001 from the Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA), resulting in the *Pickering Airport Draft Plan Report* and a related *Financial Assessment Analysis* by consultants Landrum & Brown and ArupNAPA (2004)
- ✓ the needs assessment study commissioned by Transport Canada in 2007 from the GTAA, resulting in the *Needs Assessment Study / Pickering Lands, Final Report* (2010)
- ✓ the Independent Advisor’s study of the Land’s economic development potential (2015-16)

And soon we will be paying for

- ✓ Transport Canada’s newly tendered high-powered, multi-year “Pickering Lands Aviation Sector Analysis” to determine (you guessed it) if a Pickering airport is needed

We will likely never know how many millions – or, more likely, billions – of taxpayers’ dollars this mess has cost us, and it’s not over yet. Will these latest studies result in change here, or will they be shelved the way so many others have been shelved before them? The 2010 needs assessment study suggested that since a Pickering airport *could* be needed in 15, 25, or 31 years – or at some unknown time after that – the government should go on administering the Lands. Translation: taxpayers should go on paying the bill for however long it takes.

Compare with:

- the cost to the federal treasury of administering the Federal Lands prior to 1972? **Zero.**
- the cost to the federal treasury if the Pickering site had never been expropriated? **Zero.**

JOIN US IN DEMANDING AN END TO THIS BOONDOGGLE!

For more information, contact

Land Over Landings

905-649-2433

landoverlanding@gmail.com

www.landoverlandings.com