



# UPDATE #71

Oct. 5, 2022

## NEW WOULD-BE MAYORS AND COUNCILLORS SAY NO AIRPORT!

Our recent survey has revealed that a new Pickering council of mostly new members would overwhelmingly vote: NO PICKERING AIRPORT. We'd asked the candidates:

**Although all decisions vis-à-vis the Federal Lands of north Pickering are completely within the purview of Transport Canada, should you be elected you will be called upon to vote on Pickering's position. If elected, would you:**

- **Move/support a motion to return Pickering to its historical OPPOSITION TO AN AIRPORT? (Yes/No)**
- **Urge the federal government to PROTECT IN PERPETUITY the prime farmlands of the federal site in north Pickering? (Yes/No)**

Nineteen candidates, including a current councillor, returned unambiguous YES/YES responses. One candidate hedged, seeing other issues as priorities. Eight chose not to reply at all, despite a gentle reminder. Tellingly, three of the non-responders were current councillors. Don't they know that silence speaks volumes? Here's the full councillor response:

Ashe – silence      Brenner – YES/YES  
Butt – silence      Pickles – silence

Mayoral hopeful Kevin Ashe's pro-airport stance remains unchanged despite the many studies that have found no need for an airport. Councillors Butt and Pickles have actively skirted the issue, fooling no one. That these three councillors refused to respond shows shocking disdain for their constituents and suggests they would happily back an unneeded, costly airport, a massive rise in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (starting with the construction itself), and the ensuing destruction of thousands of acres of prime foodland we can't afford to lose.

The world is facing a difficult future – very likely even worse than we imagine. It will demand innovative, progressive, dynamic leadership. Those three silent councillors aren't up to the task. It is up to all of us to show them they aren't wanted on the voyage.

### PICKERING CANDIDATES WHO ANSWERED "YES + YES" TO OUR SURVEY

- |                   |                            |                     |                        |
|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| ✓ JANICE FRAMPTON | MAYOR                      | ✓ JEANINE SOLIGO    | WARD 1 CITY COUNCILLOR |
| ✓ BRADLEY NAZAR   | MAYOR                      | ✓ ANTHONY YACUB     | WARD 1 CITY COUNCILLOR |
| ✓ MAURICE BRENNER | WARD 1 REGIONAL COUNCILLOR | ✓ FRANK MCGILLAN    | WARD 2 CITY COUNCILLOR |
| ✓ LINDA COOK      | WARD 2 REGIONAL COUNCILLOR | ✓ MARA NAGY         | WARD 2 CITY COUNCILLOR |
| ✓ PETER RODRIGUES | WARD 3 REGIONAL COUNCILLOR | ✓ AYESHA SARDAR     | WARD 2 CITY COUNCILLOR |
| ✓ JAMES BLAIR     | WARD 1 CITY COUNCILLOR     | ✓ GEORGE TURNER     | WARD 2 CITY COUNCILLOR |
| ✓ TONY HAROLD     | WARD 1 CITY COUNCILLOR     | ✓ ALI NAQVI         | WARD 3 CITY COUNCILLOR |
| ✓ ZEYNAB KAZI     | WARD 1 CITY COUNCILLOR     | ✓ DARSHAN SRITHARAN | WARD 3 CITY COUNCILLOR |
| ✓ LISA ROBINSON   | WARD 1 CITY COUNCILLOR     | ✓ DAMIAN WILLIAMS   | WARD 3 CITY COUNCILLOR |
| ✓ KAREN SLOAN     | WARD 1 CITY COUNCILLOR     |                     |                        |

### ABOUT THIS ELECTION

We don't endorse candidates but try to inform, especially where a platform or past action has revealed their position on an airport and/or farmland preservation.

Our local council is set for a reboot with the retirement of the pro-airport mayor and with three other seats vacant. Of current council members running for re-election, only Cllr Maurice Brenner has been a consistent and persistent voice *for* farmland, the environment, and wise planning – and always *against* an airport.

With developers apparently pulling the strings in so many areas of our province, and with farmland, communities, and the environment threatened by sprawl and short-sighted planning, the outcome of this election is critical to the future.

**\*Challenge your candidates on these issues.\***

## COMMON GROUND GARDEN GROWS A COMMUNITY!



It's hard to imagine a place more cheerful than this cooperative organic-garden project on the Federal Lands once set aside for an airport. Begun in 2019, CGG has grown from a seed planted by our former exec. member Joanne Brown, who wanted to showcase in a practical, visible way our Class 1 soil and our vision for this land: North Pickering Farms.

Enter People or Planes hero, Michael Robertson, to provide the land at his High Perspective hang-gliding field, and the willing hands of our exec. member Stephen Marshall – and the idea became reality.

For three years, a group of 3 to 6 volunteers worked to increase the garden's size. This year, the garden is a thriving concern, with a core group of 20 devoted gardeners (including 4 children) from Pickering, Stouffville, Markham, and even North York. So far this year, 13 weekly donations of 7 to 15 boxes of fresh, organic vegetables have been delivered to the Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities food bank. Participants' families also benefitted.

A practical demonstration of the productive capacity of these top-grade soils, the project features over 150 garden beds and, with an eye to the future, is edged by berry bushes, young fruit trees, and native perennials. A variety of foods from other cultures (including Sri Lankan onions, okra, bok choy) are grown, as well as local staples: potatoes, carrots, tomatoes, lettuce, kale, peppers, squash, and more.

The garden is indebted to many Whitevale residents (long-time supporters of Land Over Landings) who provided the use of their cultural centre for growing seedlings and also contributed transportation for tools and manure, and gave other help through the season.



There was a joyous celebration at the garden's Harvest Gathering last Sunday, attended (despite the rain) by over 80 people. The raffle of a stunning quilt by Whitevale's Sue Wilson raised funds for next year's projects, including small greenhouses for raising seedlings, and an improved irrigation system. It takes a community to raise a garden; it takes a garden to raise a community.

### AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM MAPPING

Last month we again submitted comments on proposed changes during Durham Region's Official Plan Review.

We cheered plans to protect three important farming areas as Prime Agricultural Areas under the Province's Agricultural Mapping System. We also called for the Region to eliminate several wrongheaded exclusions:

- The "Pickering airport lands." The Province has rightly identified them as a Prime Agricultural Area.
- Rouge National Urban Park's farm areas. National parks aren't excluded by the Province so why should they be excluded by the Region?
- Rural Pickering areas called "Major Open Space" – a designation based on false premises. The sought-after "greater variety of economic uses" already exists as "On-Farm Diversified Uses." No need for Pickering or the Region to create redundant designations.

We backed up our arguments with facts and sources. It's time the Region listened.

**Land Over Landings**  
Because food is a  
**GROWING** concern!

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