

# SAVE THE TORONTO WATERFRONT

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## **BILLY BISHOP AIRPORT EXPANSION: EXPLAINED**

### ***HOW IS FORD PLANNING TO EXPAND THE AIRPORT?***

On May 28th, 2026 Bill 110: Building Billy Bishop Airport Act was passed by Ford's majority government enabling the province to take over City-owned airport lands and replace Toronto's role in the Tripartite Agreement. The provincial Act sets the stage to expand the airport runway for jets by making Billy Bishop a 'Special Economic Zone,' a designation which allows the province to side-step provincial and municipal planning and environmental regulations.

### ***WHAT IS THE TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT?***

Signed in 1983 by the City, federal government, and Toronto Port Authority, the Tripartite Agreement governs the island airport's operations. All three parties must agree on changes such as runway or landmass expansion, types of aircrafts, noise levels, and operating hours. Now that the province has taken over the City's role in the agreement, we must push the federal government (as a Tripartite Agreement signatory) to not allow a ruthless destruction of our waterfront.

### ***WHAT IS THE TORONTO PORT AUTHORITY?***

The Toronto Port Authority (TPA) is a federal government 'business enterprise' that owns and operates the island airport, the Outer Harbour Marina, the port of Toronto, and various properties along the water's edge. They operate at arms-length from the federal government but board members are appointed by the federal Minister of Transportation (and therefore the TPA should still be accountable to us, the public!). The island airport is the TPA's primary source of income and, as they are federally obligated to ensure the continued commercial viability of their own assets, the airport is the primary reason the TPA continues to exist.

### ***WHO OWNS THE AIRPORT?***

The airport's ownership is divided between the airport's operations, the land it sits on, and the passenger terminal. The airport is owned and operated by the Toronto Port Authority; the land is owned primarily by the Port Authority (78.5%) as well as the province (the portion they just expropriated from the City, 20%), and the federal government (1.5%); and the passenger terminal is owned and managed by Nieuport Aviation, a private infrastructure consortium.

### ***I HEARD BIG AMERICAN BANKS ARE INVOLVED...***

Nieuport Aviation is owned by 'institutional investors' advised by J.P. Morgan Asset Management (yes, a big American bank & the world's largest investment bank). Multiple articles (National Observer, Globe and Mail) point out that J.P. Morgan-controlled companies would stand to benefit from an airport expansion. Plus, Nieuport Aviation bought the airport terminal from Porter Airlines for an inflated price in 2017, then the pandemic hit and passenger numbers still haven't recovered. An airport expansion might be one way for them to recover from a bad investment.

### ***CAN THE PROVINCE JUST TAKE CITY-OWNED LAND?***

Unfortunately, yes. Under Ontario's Expropriations Act, the provincial government has the power to take land for what it considers a 'public purpose,' including land owned by a municipality. This was part of what happened at Ontario Place.

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# Calls to Action...

## WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO WRITE YOUR REPRESENTATIVES AT ALL THREE LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT ABOUT THE PROPOSED AIRPORT EXPANSION:

1. Contact your **Municipal** City Councillor: [tinyurl.com/TO-municipal](http://tinyurl.com/TO-municipal)

**Why?** Mayor Olivia Chow and many city councillors have voiced opposition, calling Ford's expropriate a "land grab." But is their opposition loud enough? Can we make it louder?

2. Contact your Member of **Provincial** Parliament: [tinyurl.com/ON-provincial](http://tinyurl.com/ON-provincial)

**Why?** The Ford government has a majority and pushed Bill 110 through with 58-41 votes. Only a handful of Toronto NDP MPPs (Chris Glover, Kristin Wong-Tam, Alexa Gilmour, Jessica Bell) have been raising concerns. This issue needs to become top of mind for more MPPs especially while they're home on their long (21-week!) summer recess. Encourage your friends and relatives who live in other parts of Ontario to let their MPPs know they care about Toronto Island and the waterfront!

3. Contact your **Federal** Member of Parliament: [tinyurl.com/CA-federal](http://tinyurl.com/CA-federal)

**Why?** The Federal Toronto Liberal Caucus (23 MPs representing Toronto) has tread carefully, with many of them saying they can't take a stance until Ford presents the federal government with an expansion plan. This isn't true! The federal government can assert that the future of Toronto's waterfront does not include jets and that they do not support changes to the Tripartite Agreement.

As of early June, Carney's stance is wobbling. From calling Ford's jet plan a "very interesting vision" in March to saying he hasn't yet "formed an opinion" and is promising public consultations this summer. **Public pressure is working!** Keep writing to your MP and the PM; show up at their offices while they're on summer parliamentary recess.

## FOR A FULL LIST OF ACTIONS TO TAKE & RESOURCES TO SHARE, VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

[SAVEOURWATERFRONT.CA](http://SAVEOURWATERFRONT.CA)

We've compiled useful links, news article, and a comprehensive list of the risks involved with this expansion.

Plus you can download **this flyer** and a **poster** for you to print and share in your own community!

