

Advocating for sustainable public  
and freight transportation



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### **Media Release**

#### **Review of Safety Zones at Expanded BBTCA Indicates Major Impacts to Harbour and Port Lands**

**Toronto** – A proposal to expand the runway to allow jet aircraft at Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport (BBTCA) would have huge impacts stemming from increased safety zones, says the independent transportation advocacy group Transport Action Ontario (TAO). The group released a major report on future safety zones at an expanded BBTCA today.

The TAO report analyzed jet plane safety zone requirements set in Transport Canada and NAV Canada standards and specifications and applied them to an expanded island airport with larger, faster and less maneuverable jet airplanes over the currently used turboprop planes. They indicate that significantly more restricted area would be needed.

“Unless Transport Canada provides exemptions, these safety restrictions would alter almost beyond recognition the access and freedom Torontonians presently enjoy on the water. The proponents have not addressed these restrictions,” said TAO President Peter Miasek.

It is acknowledged by all stakeholders, including the Toronto Port Authority, that the airport would be reclassified to a Code 3 to accommodate jets under Transport Canada standards. Along with this, the Obstacle Limitation Surfaces (OLS) that define restricted air space would move to a lower angle of descent to the runway. Regardless of whether the approving authority mandates a non-precision (visual landings only) or precision (instrument all-weather landings) approach, or uses recommended or maximum slopes of descent, the angles would be dramatically lower than today.

The lower OLS would necessarily expand the marine exclusion zone (MEZ), the zone in the harbour where boating is not permitted, from the current 305 metres to between 830 and 1190 metres from the current end of the island, more than tripling the off limit area. This could severely impede future recreational boating, Toronto Island ferry routes and lake shipping.

An updated report by the City on airport expansion, March 19, 2014, specifically states “no changes to the airport’s Marine Exclusion Zones as currently configured, that would materially encroach on the Western Shipping Channel” are acceptable as a condition to negotiate with the Toronto Port Authority to enlarge the airport.

“Our study clearly demonstrates the airport cannot be expanded to accommodate jets without dramatically increasing the restricted areas in the harbour as well as significantly impede boat traffic through the Western Channel,” said Gordon Woodmansey, lead researcher on the TAO report.

The lower OLS may also severely impede development of the Toronto Port Lands. Depending on the OLS mandated, many potential tall buildings would not be permitted. In the worst case, introduction of jets at BBTCA could curtail development in the Port Lands worth billions of dollars.

Runway approach lighting is another important area not fully considered to date. Virtually all jet airports in the world comparable to BBTCA have approach lighting and buffers extending well beyond the end of the runway. Using Transport Canada guidelines, these facilities at BBTCA would extend 360 – 630 meters into the lake, depending on which lighting system is mandated.

In conclusion, if Transport Canada mandated standards and specifications are followed, there will be huge impacts in Marine Exclusion Zones, approach lighting and Port Lands development. If exemptions are provided, this will significantly increase safety and liability risk at BBTCA.

The complete report and computer illustrations presented at the press conference are available to download and publish at [www.transport-action.ca/ontario](http://www.transport-action.ca/ontario)

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