

Pickering Airport



Pickering Airport is a proposed international airport east of Toronto. The original plans for the airport were developed during the 1970s; the current draft plan from the Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA) calls for construction in a different location on the property to begin in 2010, subject to Canadian federal government approval. The proposed airport would be located in the northwest corner of the City of Pickering. Parts of the airport would spill over into the Town of Markham and Township of Uxbridge.

The GTAA revived plans for the Pickering Airport in 2001 and the federal government has revived the land's designation as an airport site for several reasons such as:

- Toronto Pearson International Airport (CYYZ) will be unable to indefinitely be the sole provider for the bulk of Toronto's air traffic.
- Toronto City Centre Airport (CYTZ) is limited to smaller light jets and propeller planes and is hampered by public opposition to increased jet traffic, as well as the absence of a fixed link to the city core and surrounding transportation architecture.
- Hamilton/John C. Munro International Airport (CYHM) is too far from the city of Toronto core to be practical as a major hub for travelers

The plan would see the Pickering airport open by 2012 for general purposes including recreational and company aircraft, as well as flying schools. By 2032, the new airport will have built a passenger terminal that will accommodate about 10 million passengers a year. That would be about 20 per cent of the 50 million travellers who will then be going through Pearson airport in the northwest part of Toronto. Airport authorities say the new facility would generate \$5-billion a year.

There is opposition to the airport from local residents (especially those living on and around the 75 square kilometres of "airport lands" expropriated in 1972) and some environmentalists, who feel the disruption to the neighbouring Rouge River watershed and Oak Ridges Moraine will be significant. In response to some of the environmental concerns, Transport Canada's Green Space Project was set up to work with the community, environmental groups, and other federal and provincial agencies following Transport Minister Collenette's announcement on March 23, 2001 "that the federal government will take immediate action to further protect the federally owned portion of the Oak Ridges Moraine and areas around the Rouge Park as green space". The Oak Ridges Moraine located on the northern portion of the Pickering Lands will preserve approximately 2,251 hectares (5,562 acres). In addition, the alternate Rouge Park Corridor along the western boundary will preserve another 800 hectares (2,000 acres).

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