

# Federally-owned Pickering Lands

## 1. Government of Canada Announcement

On **June 11, 2013**, the Government of Canada announced a responsible and balanced approach for developing the federally-owned Pickering Lands. This approach sets aside land for a potential future airport and the creation of Rouge National Urban Park.

## 2. Resolution of Pickering Council

On **January 27, 2014**, Council unanimously passed a motion by Councillor David Pickles, seconded by Councillor Doug Dickerson, calling on the federal government to, among other things, show a business case for use of the Federal Lands, conduct an Environmental Assessment prior to construction of an airport, and have regard for Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine policies.

## 3. Rouge Park Announcement

On **July 11, 2015**, the Prime Minister formally announced that 21 square kilometres in Pickering and Uxbridge were being added to the Rouge Park. These lands were part of what was expropriated by the federal government in the early 1970s for an airport.

## 4. Notice in the Gazette - Pickering Airport Site Order and Airport Zoning Regulations

On **July 18, 2015** and again on **July 25, 2015**, Transport Canada published official notice in the *Canada Gazette*, Part I, of proposed regulations affecting the federally-owned Pickering Lands.

The notice in the Gazette indicated that:

“The *Order Declaring the Pickering Lands as an Airport Site* (the existing Order) declares the lands that are required for the use of a future airport, and the *Pickering Airport Site Zoning Regulations* (the existing Regulations) ensure that development on surrounding lands remains compatible with the safe and viable operation of a future airport and aircraft.

Transport Canada has now determined that only a portion of the designated lands would be required for a future airport: consequently, both the original Order and original Regulations need to be updated to reflect a smaller airport site.”

The notice further indicated that a 60-day public consultation period had commenced, where interested persons may submit written comments about the proposed regulations.

[Note: Transport Canada Staff have prepared materials for Treasury Board approval (no date scheduled yet; scheduling is up to the Treasury Board President). Following Treasury Board approval, there will be publication of the approval of the Pickering Site Order and Airport Site Zoning Regulations in the Canada Gazette, Part 2.

The Pickering Airport Site Order is in effect immediately after the Treasury Board approval. However it will take up to 8 months for the Pickering Airport Site Zoning Regulations to be in force as an 'intrusion study/air flights' and final mapping will be required as well as depositing of the regulations in the York and Durham Land Titles Office which can take up to 6 months.

All municipalities will be notified by Transport Canada when the Pickering Airport Site Order and the Pickering Airport Site Zoning Regulations come into force.]

**5. Independent Advisor on the Pickering Airport Lands**

On **July 31, 2015**, Dr. Gary Polonsky was appointed the independent advisor to Transport Canada on the future of the Pickering lands. Dr. Polonsky was mandated to consult with stakeholders—private sector developers, aviation sector operators, community organizations and three levels of government— and gauge the interest in developing a Pickering airport and whether an interim economic development use should be considered.

**6. Council Response to Gazette Notice**

On **September 21, 2015**, City Council responded:

“That Transport Canada be advised that the City of Pickering does not object to the Order that appeared in the Canada Gazette, Part 1, on July 18, 2015, proposing to declare a smaller Pickering Airport Site and the corresponding revised Airport Zoning Regulations”.

**7. Pickering Lands Aviation Sector Analysis**

In **May 2016**, Transport Canada hired KPMG to undertake a Pickering lands aviation sector analysis to: update supply and demand forecasts for aviation traffic in southern Ontario; develop and evaluate options for the type of airport and its potential role in the southern Ontario regional airport system; and provide an assessment of the revenue-generating potential and economic impact of these options. This work is expected to take around two years.

**8. Report of the Independent Advisor**

In **June 2016**, Dr. Polonsky submitted his report on the Pickering Airport Lands to the federal government. His report comprised 64 interviews with 120 people. The report has not been released by the federal government.

**Quote of Justin Trudeau, Liberal Party Leader, in March 2014 in the Town of Ajax.**

“I am not in a position to say whether or not I think the airport should go forward,” Trudeau said. “I’m very much in the position to say the federal government needs to be active in establishing a plan, in creating a framework for the kinds of consultations and business plans and growth strategies that would surround such a significantly important infrastructure investment.”

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