



Julie Dzerowicz
Member of Parliament / Députée
Davenport



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Davenport friends and neighbours,

I have been reading the conversation in the group over the last few weeks, every post, and I want to write to you as directly as I can because your questions are important and I want to give you all the information that I have.

Billy Bishop: the bigger picture

I want to start by acknowledging something. It's been pointed out that it feels like piece after piece of this city is being taken away. Ontario Place. The Science Centre. The CNE grounds. Council cut in half. And the sense that nobody federal is paying attention.

I share much of that frustration. I was born and raised in Toronto. The Islands and the waterfront were part of my childhood. And the truth is that our city, the largest in the country and the economic engine of Canada, often cannot deliver on a vision for itself because of how the relationship between cities and provinces was set up in 1867.

That model was designed for a country of about three million people. Today, it is straining badly under a Toronto of three million. **There is a serious conversation to be had about Toronto becoming a charter city** with real authority over its own planning, governance and decisions, the kind of conversation that should be live in this fall's municipal election. This is a topic for another letter. But I feel it is connected to why what is happening at Billy Bishop feels the way it does.

Where I stand on Billy Bishop

On Billy Bishop itself, I do not yet know how I feel about any plans to change the operating environment of the airport, because I do not know what is being proposed.

No business plan has been presented. In today's article published by the Toronto Star both the Mayor of Toronto and the Ontario Premier have clearly stated that they have not seen a new plan for Billy Bishop.

The [Mayor said](#) that she "*still has not seen a clear plan or any plan from the Toronto Port Authority as to what is it that they are trying to do,*" and the [Premier said](#) "*... we'll see the plan when the port authority comes out with it.*"

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Where things stand after Ontario Bill 110 passed

The [Building Billy Bishop Airport Act – Bill C-110](#) became law last Thursday. In simple terms, the Act gives the provincial Minister of Transportation two powers he has not yet used.

1. First, the power to name, by regulation, which specific parcels of city-owned land will be taken over by the Province of Ontario.
2. Second, the power to set the date on which the City of Toronto is removed from the 1983 Tripartite Agreement (that governs Billy Bishop Airport operations).
3. There is also a third step that must follow: once those two things are done, the Province has to sit down with the federal government to renegotiate a new version of the Tripartite Agreement with the Province in the City's place.

None of those three things has happened yet. The legislation built the trigger. The trigger has not been pulled.

What the Ontario legislation did not do and cannot do is change how Billy Bishop operates.

The 1983 Tripartite Agreement still governs the airport. Any decisions regarding bigger planes, runway extensions (beyond the safety work already approved), landmass expansion, hours of operation, noise limits require the consensus of all three signatories. The federal government is one. Ports Toronto is another. The Province, even after it substitutes itself for the City, will be the third. Not the only.

I want to be clear about my own position on the City of Toronto's role. When the City is removed from the Tripartite Agreement, and not if but when, **the voice of the City of Toronto remains essential**. The City must be a key part of any consultation. Any change to the operating environment in the future must involve Torontonians and the City of Toronto substantively. You cannot have a real conversation about Toronto's waterfront without the City of Toronto.

The Province has also said it intends to designate the airport land a "special economic zone" under separate legislation passed last year. In plain terms, a special economic zone is a provincial tool. It can suspend provincial and municipal laws to speed a project up. It cannot suspend federal law.

Billy Bishop is governed by federal aviation law, federal environmental law, federal Indigenous consultation obligations and the Tripartite Agreement, which is a federal contract. A special economic zone does not touch any of that. The Province has built itself a faster lane through Queen's Park and City Hall. It has not built a faster lane through Ottawa.

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On the questions about lobbying, Nieuport and JPMorgan
First, who is Nieuport?

Nieuport Aviation owns and operates the passenger terminal building at Billy Bishop. It does not operate the airport itself. That is Ports Toronto, an arm's-length federal agency. Nieuport bought the terminal from Porter in 2015. Since 2019, Nieuport has been owned by a group of institutional investors that are advised by J.P. Morgan Asset Management.

By Nieuport's own description, those institutional investors include funds that hold the savings of Canadian and Ontario families through pension and infrastructure investments. So when you read "*JPMorgan owns the terminal*," the more accurate version is that institutional investors are the owners and J.P. Morgan Asset Management advises them. That distinction matters when trying to understand what is going on.

Some direct questions were raised by Dufferin Grove residents. Here are my responses. Have I personally met with Nieuport Aviation, JPMorgan, or any other registered lobbyist on Billy Bishop? No. I have not. The federal lobbying registry is public and anyone can search it for any MP, including me. You can search it at lobbycanada.gc.ca.

Was the Toronto Caucus aware of the polls regarding Billy Bishop Airport referenced in the Star? I can speak for myself. I first saw both polls, the Campaign Research poll in March and the Liaison Strategies poll the Star itself commissioned in April, in the newspaper. I do not speak for every MP's individual awareness, but to my knowledge the Toronto Caucus did not have advance access to either poll.

On the broader story reported in the Star about the structure of Nieuport's ownership and what its federal lobbying disclosures do and do not say. The questions raised are serious. I believe that the federal Commissioner of Lobbying may be the proper place for these concerns to be examined. I am not able to confirm allegations about disclosure as fact.

Could 23 Liberal MPs shut this down today?
The answer is no, not in the way that is being suggested.

Federal consent to a renegotiated Tripartite Agreement is not held by 23 MPs. It is held by the federal government on the advice of the Minister of Transport, after the consultation process the Minister's office has publicly committed to with stakeholders, affected communities and Indigenous peoples. As indicated above, no plan has been presented to us.

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There is some concern that the federal government has already decided on Billy Bishop. Prime Minister Carney today [said very clearly](#): “I personally have not formed an opinion, just to be absolutely clear on the airport ...” and that *adequate consultation with affected residents and the broader city of Toronto* needs to take place.

The Federal Minister of Transport has also been clear that no changes to the operating environment of Billy Bishop will happen without the unanimous approval of all three parties to the Tripartite Agreement. That is the federal position. It has not changed.

The five standards I will judge any proposal against

I will not take a position on a proposal that does not yet exist. What I will do is make clear, in advance, the standards by which any future proposal will be judged.

These are the five things that must be in place for me to support any change to Billy Bishop’s operating environment:

- A clear, **evidence-based business case** showing real benefits for Toronto and its residents, not just for the airport’s operator, with reasonable passenger volumes and operating hours and full compliance with Canadian aviation safety standards.
- Continued **progress on the planned housing** at the waterfront and the Port Lands, where up to 25,000 new homes are projected.
- **Protection of community assets and the public realm**, including the Toronto Islands, Hanlan’s Point, the ferry path, the Island School, Bathurst Quay, Little Norway Park, and a real local transit plan including the Waterfront East LRT.
- **Real action on noise, air and water quality**, including a cleaner and quieter fleet, measurable emissions targets aligned with federal climate commitments, protection of the Lake Ontario ecosystem, and noise that is actively monitored and transparently reported.
- **Meaningful consultation** with affected communities, local businesses, the City of Toronto and Indigenous peoples, completed before, not after, decisions are taken.

On jets specifically

Several of you have asked me directly whether I approve of jets at Billy Bishop. I cannot tell you whether I approve or disapprove, because no plan has been put in front of me to evaluate.

What I can tell you is that I will not support any change that fails the five tests above, and I will support a change only if it meets all five.

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If a real proposal comes forward, you will know where I stand on the specifics of it before any final decision is made.

I understand the impulse to want a yes or no, and I understand the instinct to be suspicious of any politician who refuses to give one. But is the most honest answer I can give right now.

On the perception that the 23 Toronto Liberal MPs have been silent.

That is not accurate, and the public record shows it. [Here is a full list of my public statements](#) and interviews [on my website](#); I have not turned down any interviews on this topic.

In addition, I have written to Dufferin Grove twice before and give regular updates in my weekly email updates. And I will not stop for as long as you have questions or concerns.

In [today's Star piece](#), seven Toronto Liberal MPs are named as having not responded. I responded, on the record, with what I just told you.

Keep in touch; keep engaging.

In this age of disinformation and misinformation, if you have heard something about my position that does not match what is in this letter, please write to me directly rather than rely on a second-hand account. I would rather you check than wonder.

Please keep writing. Please keep engaging. This matters. Toronto's waterfront is one of the best things about our city, and getting the next chapter right is going to take all of us.

My very best regards,

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