

pickering bulletin

Economic potential being examined

The economic viability of an area is crucial if it is to prosper.

Keeping this in mind, the Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA), in conjunction with local, regional and provincial government officials, is currently studying the potential future economic development opportunities of an airport on the Pickering lands.

This study will identify economic strategies that the GTAA and local governments could adopt in order to take advantage of the economic development and job growth potential of an airport in Pickering.

The study examined 10 airport systems, four in Canada, five in the United States and one in Europe, to identify the best practices, policies and strategies that have worked, and in some cases, what strategies have failed. For each airport system, the study examined the ownership and management of the airports, the role and missions, land use issues, business development strategies employed and economic impact.

To help understand the current economic environment of the Durham and York Regions, the study identified the existing industry clusters - groups of similar businesses that are significant to the regional economy - which are located in the Regions of York and Durham, to assess the growth potential of these clusters and determine how a future airport would affect them.

Preliminary findings of the study have indicated the following cluster industries currently exist in York and Durham. They have been grouped according to their potential growth for the area **relative** to the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) as a whole. They are:



A study is currently underway to assess the economic impact a possible airport would have on Pickering and the surrounding municipalities.

Star clusters - industries such as IT, auto and auto parts, materials, and furniture in the Regions of Durham and York that are expected to experience well above average growth in the next five years and beyond.

Opportunity clusters - those that have above average national growth but have not yet achieved a significant presence in the Regions. Examples include pharmaceutical and biotechnology.

Mature clusters - the Region's historical strength industries, such as manufacturing, distribution, and power generation.

Seed clusters - industries such as finance, insurance, and real estate, agri-food and media that have some strength in Durham and York, but the employment concentration in this sector is lower than the GTA average.

The City of Pickering is moving ahead with its Growth Management Study, and it has identified a preferred option that would see future employment areas along the 407 corridor. The Town of Markham, having also recently completed its Eastern Markham Strategic Review, has indicated a desire to have lands designated as future employment lands in eastern Markham. These proposed land uses adjacent to the airport lands would be compatible with the operation of an airport in Pickering.

"Job growth is vital to a region's success," says Steve Shaw, Vice-President of Corporate Affairs and Communications. "The challenge is to properly coordinate this growth to ensure good planning principles are at the forefront. Given the limited development on the lands adjacent to the Pickering airport site, there exists a unique opportunity to coordinate future development."

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DID YOU KNOW

In keeping with its commitment to public awareness, the GTAA travelled to both the Buttonville Municipal Airport's Annual Open House and the Greenwood Community Festival in September. Chris Gray, Program and Office Coordinator for the Pickering Project, was on hand to answer questions as well as distribute various publications, maps and information.

GETTING TO KNOW THE PICKERING TEAM

This is the first of a three part series introducing Bulletin readers to the dedicated Pickering team who work to ensure the GTAA's commitment of communications is not only met, but surpassed. This month, we had a conversation with **Lorrie McKee, Senior Manager, Government and Corporate Strategy**



1. What is your current title?

McKee - "I am the Senior Manager, Government and Corporate Strategy."

2. What role do you play in the Pickering initiative?

McKee - "I coordinate public and government relation strategies, manage the Pickering Site Office, oversee the many committees and look after public relations."

3. What are your other experiences in government relations?

McKee - "I was the Director of Government Relations for the Ontario Credit Union System. I also worked for elected officials in Metro Toronto, before the amalgamation into the City of Toronto, and the province of Ontario."

4. Where did you receive your education?

McKee - "I received a Masters in International Relations from Dalhousie University, Halifax, and a BA in Political Studies from Queen's University, Kingston."

5. What is your business philosophy?

McKee - "I try to be open and transparent with the public, since this is a process/project that will have a great impact on the community. I think it is crucial to not only listen, but to understand the community's point of view."

"People are concerned about this project, so you cannot be blasØ. Using this open and upfront approach, you can get a true idea of what's important to the community."

6. Please talk about some of the projects you are currently working on.

McKee - "Currently we are working to complete studies for the draft Master Plan, which is scheduled for release in 2004. My responsibilities include sharing the information from these studies with the appropriate parties, such as the Pickering committees, as well as publishing information as it becomes available."

7. What do you see as the next steps in the Pickering project?

McKee - "Our goal is to put together the best plan possible, but it is up to the government to decide whether or not an airport should be built. We will continue to hold public meetings in Pickering in order to keep the public informed."

Study added to Master Plan

Continued from front

A key lesson learned from the secondary airports studied is that advance planning and land use designations are critical to ensuring development of compatible land uses adjacent to airports.

Compatible land uses include green space, open space and agricultural uses that do not attract birds. Industrial

and commercial land uses are also compatible with airport operations and contribute to its efficiency, which allows it to meet the needs of the community it serves.

A draft of the study was recently presented to the Government Affairs Working Group (GAWG) for its review and input. Once completed, the study will be further reviewed by all levels of governments, and its findings included in the draft master plan to be released in

Pickering Bulletin

Publisher:

Corporate Affairs and Communications

Design, Layout and Contributions:

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