MAR 26 2008

His Worship Fred Eisenberger
Mayor
The City of Hamilton
Hamilton City Centre
230-77 James Street North
Hamilton ON L8R 2K3

Dear Mr. Eisenberger:

Thank you for your correspondence of February 20, 2008, regarding Hamilton City Council’s meeting of February 13, 2008, and approved Item 18 of the Economic Development and Planning Committee Report 08-003 (File #C08-004).

As mentioned in my previous correspondence, last year Transport Canada completed a rigorous contracting process to determine an appropriate company to complete the previously announced Needs Assessment Study on aviation requirements in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) area. A team of qualified experts from Transport Canada evaluated the bids, and on May 9, 2007, I announced that the contract was awarded to the Greater Toronto Airports Authority.

The Needs Assessment Study will broaden and update previous work on the role and capacity of airports in the GGH in meeting the future needs of passengers, businesses and general aviation. The Study is only one part of the overall process that will allow the federal government to make informed decisions regarding aviation needs in the GGH, including the need for a potential Pickering airport and the timing of its development, if required. The current timeline for the completion of the Study is summer 2008.

I would like to reiterate that John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport is one of the key airports under study. Hamilton Airport officials are participating in the Study and their input is extremely important in this process.
There will indeed be a review period after the findings of the Study are complete. As previously mentioned, in addition to the Needs Assessment Study, Transport Canada will complete a due diligence review of all related planning studies. Since this will be an open and transparent process, stakeholders and public representatives with technical expertise in the areas of review will be asked to participate. Once the due diligence review is complete, the department will make the findings public.

On the basis of the review findings, the Government of Canada will decide whether to proceed with a federal environmental assessment. Should the government decide to take this step, the public would once again be able to participate, because the environmental assessment process involves full public consultation. I can therefore assure you that there will be opportunities for various agencies and organizations to become involved at several stages in this process.

Thank you for your interest.

Yours truly,

[Signature]

The Honourable Lawrence Cannon, P.C., M.P.