

AIRPLANE NOISE CONCERNS PERSIST IN HALTON

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While steps have been taken to reduce airplane noise over Halton, local residents and politicians are saying that more needs to be done.

Representatives from the Greater Toronto Airports Authority went before regional council at its most recent meeting to present an annual report and field questions, with several members raising the ongoing concern of noisy planes flying over the region on their way to and from Pearson International.

Greater Toronto Airports Authority director of public affairs Lorrie McKee said the authority rolled out an updated noise management action plan last year and "we've made good progress."

THE ISSUE:
AIRPLANE NOISE
LOCAL IMPACT:
HALTON
POLITICIANS SAY
PEARSON'S NOISE
MITIGATION SOLUTIONS
AREN'T ALWAYS WORKING
AND MORE NEEDS TO BE
DONE

Among the plan's initiatives are an updated complaints process for the public, a series of noise forums and a quiet fleet incentive program.

"We're making excellent progress working with the air carriers on retrofitting the A320 aircraft, which had a particular whine," she said.

Other steps being taken

to reduce noise include more nighttime arrivals and departures, having the planes continuously descend, and increasing speeds for arriving aircraft so that they don't have to use their flaps, thus making them quieter.

But Halton Hills Coun. Jane Fogal contended that from what she's observed and heard from residents, these steps aren't always being taken.

"My residents are very disappointed that we're not seeing that implemented on a more regular basis," she said. "What we need is implementation of the solutions you've come up with."

Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette shared similar sentiments and raised concerns about how low planes are flying over his municipality.

"Some airlines that fly by, I could wave and I swear all the passengers are waw-

ing back at me. That's how low they're flying," he said. "That's definitely a concern."

According to authority staff, arriving aircraft must be no lower than 2,400 feet above ground, or 3,000 feet above sea level.

McKee committed to following up with Fogal to address the local concerns.

Milton Coun. Mike Cluett pointed out that the number of registered noise complaints in Milton jumped dramatically from 2,443 in 2017 to 18,461 in 2018. "Is there a rash of airplanes flying over Milton that some of us haven't noticed to have that kind of increase in noise complaints?" he asked.

McKee said there've been no major changes in flight paths or volumes, and that 98 per cent of the complaints came from one person.

Council also heard a del-



Torstar file photo

A plane comes in for a landing at Pearson International. Low-flying, noisy airplanes are among the concerns recently brought up by Halton regional council members.

egation from resident Olga Shewchun, who appeared on behalf of Quality Airspace for Campbellville/Milton, seeking support for the creation of a committee with representation from across Halton that would work with the Greater Toronto Airports Authority, regional staff and council and focus on local aircraft noise and air pollution.

"Halton residents from all four municipalities have been complaining about

the noise and pollution," she noted.

For more information on airplane noise, toronto-pearson.com/en/community/noise-management.

STORY BEHIND THE STORY

With Halton's proximity to Pearson International, airplane noise has long been an issue raised by local residents and councillors.

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