

# Four survive crash landing

*Sightseeing flight crashes at Markham IBM building*

BY MIKE ADLER  
Staff Writer

A sightseeing flight from Buttonville Airport turned perilous for four women who survived a crash-landing in Markham Thursday.

Three friends and their pilot set out in a single-engine plane around 1:10 p.m. but the craft had difficulty gaining altitude, York Region Police said.

The pilot, a 33-year-old Toronto Airways employee and instructor, managed to land the Cessna 172 beside the lawn of an IBM building in Markham.

The Richmond Hill woman had turned the Cessna around in an apparent attempt to return to the airport.

*Her competency is very obvious in how she landed this aircraft.*

She guided the Cessna down northeast of Steeles Avenue and Pharmacy Road, where it crashed through a double row of trees there and stopped in the middle of more trees.

"Her competency is very obvious in how she landed this aircraft," said Derek Sifton, vice-president of Toronto Airways.

A 27-year-old Stouffville resi-

dent received the most severe of what police said were not life-threatening injuries to all four occupants.

The woman's lower leg was injured, but Mr. Sifton said the leg was not broken in the crash.

Police spokesperson Const. Steve Morrell said other passengers were a Toronto woman, 59, and a resident of Mansfield, Ont., whose age was unknown.

"Everything went very well, considering the turmoil that was happening upon arrival," he said at the scene.

No one on the ground was injured in the accident, said Mike Quinn, a spokesperson for IBM Canada.

The building was evacuated until firefighters from Markham cleaned up the spilled fuel.

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### Reduce Traffic Gridlock

As the largest municipality in York Region, Markham is experiencing traffic gridlock today. It is only going to get worst unless something is done. Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area will see their population grow by three million people during the next 20 years.

Toronto and the GTA are the economic engines of Canada, but we must realize that we are competing with Chicago, New York, Los Angeles and other American cities for economic prosperity.

An urban strategy that includes transportation and transit for the GTA must involve all three levels of government. We don't need a \$3 billion dollar high-speed rail link between Toronto and Montreal until we can move people at higher speeds in the GTA.

### Planning For Our Growth

Official plans have to mean something. When people locate in Markham and York Region, there should be some degree of certainty that official plans and zoning are implemented as approved. We must ensure that schools, libraries and parks are in place as new residents arrive so that the whole Markham community does not have to constantly deal with over-crowded and over-used resources.

The Town needs to be more vigorous in defending our official plans at the Ontario Municipal Board. All meetings should be open and accessible to the public.

### Keep Our Streets & Children Safe

York Region has one of the highest concentrations of gangs and illegal drug activity in Canada. We need to support the York Regional Police Force by giving it the tools and legal instruments to take action against these activities.

### Cost Of Growth

Rapid growth in York Region has created the need for additional sewerage capacity. Installation of the sewerage trunk line up the Ninth Line and along 16th Ave has created a financial burden for our rural residents whose wells have gone dry. The "Cost of Growth" must include ensuring rural residents have access to a clean, fresh water supply.

### Build Regional Rapid Transit System

We need York Region's transit system to be totally integrated with the TTC and GO Transit. At present, a trip from Markham to downtown Toronto can take more than two hours on public transit. Transit system needs to be planned, well-funded and aggressively implemented.

We need to build a high-speed transit system that works for the 7 million people who make up the GTA area, plus the 3 million additional people who will arrive here during the next twenty years.

The federal government collects between \$7 billion and \$10 billion annually in a gasoline excise tax. Very little of this tax money is spent on transportation infrastructure. Ontario's portion of the gasoline excise tax needs to be returned to the province and directed solely at funding a high-speed integrated transit system. We should demand nothing less.

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