

Competing visions for the Toronto waterfront: A content analysis of the Island Airport expansion debate

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Abstract

In April, 2013, Porter Airlines proposed expanding Toronto's downtown Island Airport and introducing jets to allow for long-haul flights. Growth plans have been met with a mixture of support and opposition from Toronto residents. Given the important relationship the media has with public understanding and evaluation of issues, this research project used quantitative and qualitative content analysis to determine how the debate has been portrayed in the Toronto news media. More specifically, this study examined coverage of the issue in the *Toronto Star* in April, 2013, when Porter Airlines announced its expansion plans, and in the March, 2014 lead-up to a key city council vote to delay making a decision. The study used agenda setting and framing theories to examine what issues attributes have been featured most frequently, and how expansion has been framed. Issue attributes include arguments for or against expansion, background information, and the position of stakeholders. Issue attributes that are prominent in the media relate to public understanding, and are thus a meaningful area of inquiry (Kim et al., 2002). Revealing the framing judgments at play can underscore what the media has determined to be at issue, and what is to be done. The study found dominant arguments for expansion included that it would cause only limited change to the status quo (28% in April), while key arguments against expansion included its negative impact on recreational waterfront use (14% in March). Key opponents to expansion included waterfront residents (44% in April), and supporters included former mayor Rob Ford (42% in March). The qualitative analysis found, in some cases, opponents were framed as alarmist. While the study was underway, the federal transport minister announced that expansion will not be permitted to move forward. The findings are examined in light of this decision.

Keywords: Media framing, Agenda setting, Content analysis, Qualitative analysis, Billy Bishop Airport Expansion

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INTRODUCTION

In April, 2013, Porter Airlines announced its plans to purchase 12 Bombardier CSeries aircraft in order to reach more distant destinations across North America. Porter has operated out of the downtown Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport (BBTCA, or popularly referred to as the Island Airport) since 2006. The airline currently relies upon a series of Bombardier Q400 turboprops for short-haul flights to regional destinations in Canada and the United States (Deveau, 2013). To allow for the introduction of jet aircraft, Porter Airlines proposed extending the land mass at each end of the runway by 400 metres into the Toronto harbor to meet take-off and landing requirements (Swerhun Facilitation, n.d.) (see Appendix A). However, expansion of the airport is governed by a 1983 tripartite agreement that manages noise, restricts additional runways, restricts expansion of airport lands, and restricts the use of jet aircraft (Toronto Port Authority, 2014). In order for Porter to extend the runway and introduce jets, they need the approval of the three signatories to the agreement: the City of Toronto, PortsToronto and Transport Canada (Desfor & Laidley, 2011). In November, 2015, federal Minister of Transport Marc Garneau rejected Porter's proposal and announced via Twitter that "we will not reopen tripartite agreement for YTZ" (Battersby, 2015).

The Island Airport is situated on Toronto Islands, directly across the harbour from the downtown core and in close proximity to Toronto Island Park, bird and wildlife sanctuaries, and a residential community situated on the Islands. The area surrounding the airport is used by local residents, non-residents and visitors for purposes including residential living and recreational and tourist activities. It is also home to schools and commercial operations (PortsToronto, 2015a). The Island Airport is part of a larger system of airports in Southern Ontario that include Toronto Pearson International Airport, the Hamilton International Airport and Region of Waterloo

International Airport. In 1972, the Government of Canada acquired land northeast of Toronto in Pickering to develop a new airport. The plan was met with significant opposition from the group “People or Planes” and put on hold (Massey & Godfrey, 1972; Stewart, 1979). However, the Government continues to retain the lands for a potential, future airport to accommodate traffic growth by 2027 or 2037 (Transport Canada, 2010).

Since opening in 1939, the Island Airport has been subject to a series of expansions and reversals over time (Fairburn, 2013; Hubbard & Cash, 2013). In the 1970s, pressure mounted for the airport to take a greater role in commercial passenger service. Explosive condominium development along the lakeshore in the 1980s required that plans for airport expansion be balanced against the interests of mainland dwellers (Fairburn, 2013). The 1990s saw a sleepy period of decreased commercial activity in the airport (Fairburn, 2013). In the early 2000s, plans were made to construct a bridge linking the airport to the mainland to allow for the establishment of a regional airline. Former mayor of Toronto, David Miller, was elected in 2003 after campaigning vehemently against the construction of the bridge, which he later halted (Stinson, 2004). Porter Airlines launched out of the airport in 2006, and service has since grown immensely (Fairburn, 2013).

Airports and the implications of aviation expansion have recently become a preoccupation for many scholars in the social sciences (O’Doherty, 2015; Griggs & Howarth, 2014; Salter, 2008). On the one hand, aviation is a symbol of power and progress, signifying mobility, economic growth, and job creation (Griggs & Howarth, 2014; O’Doherty, 2015). Yet, while air travel has become a routine practice for many, it remains unequally distributed socially and geographically. The growth of air travel has also caused disruption to local communities through noise and air pollution, the destruction of homes and communities, and negative impacts

upon the environment (Griggs & Howarth, 2014). Budd, Griggs & Howarth (2013) describe a growing list of broader aviation concerns, including security and safety, public health, social injustice, corporate imperialism, expanding urbanization, and reliance on fossil fuels. In fact, airports are the fastest growing environmental polluters, contributing to global warming (O'Doherty, 2015). In the UK, aviation emissions will account for 70% of the permitted carbon budget by 2030 (Bows, Anderson, & Upham, 2008). Subsequently, politicians, policy-makers and citizens have struggled over the location, size, impact, feasibility and growth of airports (Griggs & Howarth, 2014).

Recent and former growth plans for the Island Airport had been met with a mixture of support and opposition from City of Toronto residents, businesses, and community groups. Even after the federal transport minister rejected Porter's proposal, some claimed "this debate is not dead" (Rider, 2015, para. 14). Accordingly, the issue presents a "messy" problem, lacking a clear solution (Griggs & Howarth, 2014). The debate has played out in the media landscape, with groups battling over the "symbolic framing" of the controversy (Griggs & Howarth, 2014). Research has shown that the media play an important, yet complex role in influencing public opinion around certain issues (Castells, 2009), which, in turn, impacts mobilization efforts (Bronstein, 2005). The media tend to promote a particular interpretation or evaluation of issues, dependent upon the way in which issues are framed (Entman, 2007). Additionally, the prominence of attributes relating to local issues portrayed in the media relates to public understanding and evaluation of these issues (Kim, Scheufele & Shanahan, 2002; Morrone, Basta & Somerville, 2012). To illustrate, issue attributes might include arguments for or against something, reference to stakeholders, or background information. Thus, the considerations that people have on certain issues are shaped by the mass media (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

Notably, the federal government rejected the proposal before an environmental assessment on the impacts of expansion had been completed. Prior to the government's decision, PortsToronto had identified an initial list of community assets that could be affected by an expanded airport. This includes waterfront development, economic benefits and costs, public safety, waterfront residential uses, fit and balance with waterfront revitalization, traffic and parking, and recreational use, among others (Toronto Port Authority, 2014). The final design of the environmental assessment lists the areas of interest that were under examination. These include air quality, public health, noise, natural environment, socio-economic environment, marine physical environment and water quality, marine navigation, built form and land use, archaeological and cultural heritage features, and transportation (PortsToronto, 2015a). PortsToronto announced in late December, 2015 that they would not proceed with completing the environmental assessment, in light of the federal government decision.

Despite a lack of evidence on the impact of an expanded Island Airport, opponents and proponents have voiced various claims and counter-claims since 2013 on the positive or negative impacts an expanded airport would have. A MediaMiser (2013) study found that tweets regarding the expansion were decidedly more negative than online media stories, during the weeks immediately following the initial Porter Airlines announcement. Research has not yet looked at how the debate has evolved in the news media in the months and years following the 2013 announcement. In other words, the nature of the "media politics" (the conduct of politics in and by the media) surrounding Island Airport expansion has yet to be examined (Castells, 2009).

Purpose of the study

Using a mixed-methods approach, this study examines how the proposed Island Airport expansion is framed in the *Toronto Star*, one of Toronto's major news dailies, in April, 2013 and

March, 2014. Employing content analysis, the study uncovers the prominence of attributes relating to the proposed airport expansion. These include arguments for and against expansion, arguments to delay making a decision on expansion, background information, and reference to stakeholders. Through quantifying these features of news texts, broader inferences about the politics of representing the issue can be made (Deacon et al., 2007). A qualitative method, frame analysis, is also used to uncover the frames that promote a particular way of understanding the issue, through selecting, omitting, and elaborating certain elements (Deacon et al., 2007). April, 2013 and March, 2014 have been selected for analysis because the issue received the highest coverage in the *Toronto Star* during these months since the proposal was first announced.

The purpose of the research is to understand what attributes are most newsworthy and have likely been most influential on public opinion, mobilization and political decision-making, and what frames have shaped public understanding of the issue. Examining how the media portrays this issue can help decision-makers to understand public sentiment around the proposed expansion (Wakefield & Elliott, 2003). Given the tendency for powerful interests to have more influence on the framing of controversial issues, over public interest, (Culley et al., 2010) media analysis is an important mode of inquiry into this issue.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review will provide information on the history and politics surrounding the waterfront and the Island Airport expansion, and outline the key proponents and opponents. Additionally, it will place airport expansion within a global context, characterized by conflict. It will present the conceptual framework guiding the research, explaining the concepts of media politics, media framing, priming, attribute priming, agenda setting, and attribute agenda setting.

It will introduce related research on media coverage of contentious local issues, thus, uncovering the relationship between media coverage and community concerns. Finally, it will share findings from a MediaMiser (2013) study into media and Twitter coverage of the proposed Island Airport expansion, providing context and rationale for the current study.

The Toronto Waterfront: History and new directions

The Island Airport is located directly across from the Toronto waterfront. Historically, the Toronto waterfront has been home to port and industrial-oriented activity, connecting the city to broader regional and international networks through trade and transportation (Desfor & Laidley, 2011). Beginning in the late 1950s and 1960s, however, the importance of industrial and port activity began to diminish, and the city began to identify new uses for waterfront lands (Desfor & Laidley, 2011). Opposition and roadblocks stalled redevelopment of the area and the dominance of port- and industrial-related uses ended only in the late 1990s (Desfor & Laidley, 2011). In 2001, Toronto began an enormous, multi-year, multi-billion-dollar waterfront revitalization project, focused on sustainability, mixed-use development, and environmental improvements to enhance quality of life and economic activity (Desfor & Laidley, 2011). New waterfront communities that can handle significant growth and change are being established in areas serviced by transit, pedestrian and cycling routes. Waterfront revitalization has championed green infrastructure, public amenities, and affordable housing as catalysts for jobs, investment, and tourism. Notably, the revitalization project has set a new paradigm by incorporating environmental concerns into its prescriptions for economic growth (Laidley, 2001).

The Island Airport: Background

Activities and expansion of the Island Airport are limited under a 1983 tripartite agreement that forbids the commercial use of jets, restricts noise, and prohibits the construction

of a vehicular tunnel or a fixed link bridge to the mainland (Desfor & Laidley, 2011). The signatories to the 1983 agreement vary in terms of their purpose, mission and to whom they are accountable. Toronto City Council is the main governing and legislative body of the City of Toronto, that makes decisions on behalf of Toronto constituents (City of Toronto, n.d.). Transport Canada is a Federal department that aims to serve the public interest through the promotion of a safe, efficient and environmentally responsible transportation system (Transport Canada, 2014). Finally, PortsToronto is a governmental business enterprise that owns and operates the Billy Bishop Airport. Its mission is to effectively manage its entities to reinvest in transportation infrastructure, marine safety, environmental protection and community programming, and to play a role in the economic growth of Toronto (PortsToronto, n.d.).

The Island Airport has been subject to a series of expansions and reversals over time. In 2002, Robert Deluce, in his capacity as head of Regional Airline Holdings Inc., proposed the launch of a Toronto-based regional carrier that would operate out of the Island Airport (Fitzpatrick, 2002). Alongside Deluce, the Toronto Port Authority put forward an expansion plan for the airport, including a new terminal and bridge link, to enable the airline launch (Fitzpatrick, 2002). In November, 2002, Toronto City Council voted to amend the tripartite agreement to permit the construction of a vehicular bridge linking the airport to the mainland (Moloney, 2002). Toronto mayoral candidate David Miller then made reversing the bridge decision the centerpiece of his 2003 election campaign, in response to the opposition of many Toronto residents (Cowan, 2003). Following his election in November, 2003, Miller successfully pushed for the cancellation of the bridge (Stinson, 2004).

Despite the cancellation of the bridge, airport operations continued to expand. In 2004, Robert Deluce filed a \$505 million lawsuit against the City of Toronto over the cancellation.

Allegations that Miller “abused his powers” for “improper purposes” during his campaign to kill the bridge were included in the lawsuit (Harding, 2004). In 2005, the federal government reached a \$35 million settlement with the Toronto Port Authority, effectively ending the lawsuit filed by Deluce (Safieddine & James, 2005). Porter Airlines began operating out of the airport soon after the settlement in 2006, under the leadership of Deluce, President and Chief Executive Officer. Later, Toronto City Council approved the construction of an underwater pedestrian tunnel, linking the Island Airport to the mainland, with financing provided in-part by Porter passengers through airport improvement fees. The \$82.5 million, 240 metre tunnel opened recently in July, 2015 (Pelley, 2015).

In 2013, Porter Airlines put forward a proposal to modify the agreement once again in favour of expansion through the introduction of jet aircraft. To allow for the introduction of jets, Porter requested the land mass at each end of the main runway be extended by 400 metres (Swerhun Facilitation, n.d.). In April 2014, Toronto City Council agreed to negotiate with PortsToronto on the proposal and requested a number of measures be taken prior to any decisions being made, including the completion of an environmental assessment by PortsToronto. Other measures that were to be taken by PortsToronto include addressing issues related to current airport operations, such as traffic and noise monitoring, the commencement of an Airport Master Plan, the commencement of a detailed design for the proposed runway extension, and city implementation of a Bathurst Quay Precinct Plan study. Minister of Transport Marc Garneau rejected the proposal prior to the completion of the aforementioned studies (Battersby, 2015). PortsToronto has since ceased all work on the environmental assessment, the Preliminary Runway Design and the Master Planning exercise.

Since launching in 2006, Porter Airlines has expanded its service and the Island Airport has seen a massive influx of passengers. Initially only serving the Ottawa to Toronto route, Porter now flies to over 20 regional locations in Canada and the United States (Porter Airlines, n.d). Service at the island airport has grown from 25,000 passengers in 2006 to 2.4 million annually, making it the ninth busiest airport in Canada (Fairburn, 2013; Dehaas, 2015). To inform the environmental assessment, PortsToronto (2015a) calculated the degree to which airport operations will continue to grow while abiding by the current tripartite agreement, and the degree to which they would grow with the addition of jets and a runway extension (see Appendix B). The environmental assessment was to consider the effects of both scenarios, to inform the decision to amend or uphold the tripartite agreement (PortsToronto, 2015a).

The key proponent to expanding the airport, Porter Airlines, argues that expansion would result in \$250 million in incremental economic impact, as well as the creation of 2,000 jobs (Porter Airlines, n.d.). CommunityAIR emerged during the first “bridge debate” and currently defines itself as a Toronto citizens group promoting a “clean, green waterfront and advocates closing the Island Airport” (CommunityAIR, n.d., para 1). Previously, CommunityAIR argued that construction of a bridge would lead to air, water and noise pollution problems, health issues, safety concerns, interference with boating, economic problems, and would ultimately destroy plans for Toronto’s waterfront revitalization (CommunityAIR, 2003). In the more recent “jets debate,” a number of community groups have expressed concern, a wish to be involved in the environmental assessment process, or outright opposition to the Porter Airlines proposal. NoJetsTO is Toronto’s largest group of citizens committed to preserving the status quo and opposes the expansion of the airport. The group argues that airport expansion would damage Toronto’s waterfront, Lake Ontario and the environment, would create health risks, safety

hazards, and waste taxpayer dollars (NoJetsTO, 2015). NoJetsTO (2015) contends the waterfront is a public investment that needs to be protected, representing “cottage country” to many urbanites. The group argues an expanded Island Airport will become a “Pearson-by-the-Lake” (NoJetsTO, 2015).

Evidently, a multilevel urban political system is at play in the case of the Island Airport (Mossberger & Clarke, 2013). In addition to encompassing a municipal government, a Federal department and a governmental business enterprise; interest groups, nongovernmental actors, and private sector associations are at play in shaping policy and power relations. This complexity mirrors Griggs and Howarth’s (2014) assertions that airport issues are never limited to a single sector, and require the coordination of multiple parties, which can lead to political conflict and “planning paralysis”.

Contextualizing the expansion of aviation globally

As evidenced by the Island Airport expansion debate, transport policy has become embroiled in “divisive conflict” (Ney, 2009). Griggs & Howarth (2014) similarly contend that airport issues have been transformed into a “messy” policy controversy. “Messy” problems produce contentious conflicts over the best way to solve them, and often require “clumsy” solutions (Griggs & Howarth, 2014). According to Schon and Rein (1994) disputes over “messy” policy issues are “intractable, enduring and seldom finally resolved” (p.4). Often, these types of controversies cannot be resolved by resorting to the facts. Instead, parties to a controversy often use strategies of selective attention, where the same facts are interpreted or framed differently. In this view, policy controversies are in fact struggles over framing. Schon and Rein (1994) describe this phenomenon as “symbolic contests over the social meaning of an issue domain,

where meaning implies not only what is at issue but what is to be done” (p. 29). Hence, policy controversies are frame conflicts (Schon & Rein, 1994; Brummans et al., 2008).

The power of media politics

The debate over the Island Airport has played out in the media, with competing stakeholders like Porter Airlines and NoJetsTO struggling to get their message or framing of the issue across. According to Castells (2009), people rely mainly on the media to obtain most of their politically relevant information. Castells (2009) contends that politics is primarily “media politics” (p. 194), meaning that the media constitute the space where power relationships between competing political and social actors are decided. In this view, power relations are constructed through the management of communication processes. He contends that only those who can effectively convey their messages to citizens via the media have the opportunity to achieve their goals, influence decisions, and access or maintain power (Castells, 2009, p.194). This relates to Schon and Rein’s (1994) idea that policy controversies are in fact symbolic contests over framing. To succeed, actors must accept the rules of media engagement, the language of the media, and media interests (Castells, 2009). Castells (2009) goes on to argue that “messages, organizations and leaders who do not have a presence in the media do not exist in the public mind” (p.194). Finally, Castells (2009) contends that messages are constructed in the media via a number of mechanisms that work to frame the public mind. These include framing, priming, and agenda setting.

Tools of power: Framing, agenda setting and priming

Framing

Frames can be understood as windows or angles through which audiences make sense of news events (Douai, 2014). The construction of frames involves “selection, emphasis and presentation” (Gitlin, 1980, p. 7). Thus, framing is the media practice that brings together elements of reality, draws connections amongst them, and constructs a narrative (Entman, 2007). Framing serves to define problems, analyze cause, perform moral judgment, and promote certain remedies (Entman, 2007). Entman’s (2007) ideas relate to Schon & Rein’s (1994) belief that in a policy controversy, framing implies what is at issue and what is to be done. Through framing, political actors can exert power by shaping media texts in ways that influence what people think about (Entman, 2007).

Agenda setting

Agenda setting refers to the process where the media defines what is worthy of public and government attention through assigning special relevance to certain issues (Castells, 2009). Research has shown that public awareness of issues is closely linked to the level of coverage in national media (Castells, 2009; Kim et. al, 2002). An extended version of agenda setting, attribute agenda setting, hypothesizes that when covering one specific issue, such as the Island Airport expansion, certain issue attributes (for example – air quality or economic benefits) emphasized in the media become salient in the public mind (Kim et al., 2002). Research has shown significant correspondence between issue attributes presented in the media and the agenda of issue attributes among audience members (Kim et al., 2002).

Priming

Framing shapes the interpretations and preferences of audience members through priming (Entman, 2007). In this process, frames determine the importance of certain ideas that, in turn, encourage audiences to “think, feel and decide in a particular way” (Entman, 2007, p. 164). Thus, semantic differences in how an issue described will evoke different audience response (Kim et al., 2002). Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007), similarly define priming as the process whereby the considerations that people have when making judgments about political issues are shaped by the mass media. Attribute priming hypothesizes that when covering one issue, issue attributes emphasized in the media become “significant dimensions of issue evaluation among the public” (Kim et al., 2002, p. 12). Thus, the most salient issues or attributes in a person’s mind will influence their decision-making (Kim et al., 2002).

Related previous research

Framing aviation expansion

The way an issue is presented can impact the reception it receives from stakeholders. For example, considerable controversy followed the Canadian government’s 1972 announcement of plans for a second international airport in Pickering, Ontario (Warner, 1981; Massey & Godfrey 1972; Stewart, 1979). The problem faced by the government, in this case, was how to provide balance in their research and adequately represent both the pro and con positions of expansion (Warner, 1981). Airport location studies are particularly problematic because it is difficult for the research to ever be considered complete. According to Warner, (1981) “no matter the expenditure of time and money, there is always room for further research” (p. 256).

Through framing, groups try to influence how meaning is defined and how a situation unfolds (Schon & Rein, 1994; Brummans et al., 2008). In fact, a dispute can be seen as a

“symbolic arena in which disputants with dissimilar framing repertoires differ from and frequently oppose each other” (Brummans et al., 2008, p. 29). Griggs and Howarth (2014) apply Schon and Rein’s (1994) ideas of reframing “messy” controversies to the controversy over airport expansion in the UK. In 2003, Tony Blair’s New Labour government gave the green light to a large-scale program of airport expansion across the UK (Griggs & Howarth, 2014). Plans to expand Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports were met with questions, criticism and opposition from local residents, environmental campaigners and scientific experts (Griggs & Howarth, 2014). Expansion plans have since been stalled, following the formation of a Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government in May, 2010.

Griggs and Howarth (2014) contend that successful opposition to expansion, in this case, is closely tied to a wider problematization of aviation by scientists and experts. More specifically, the authors contend that, in the ‘new’ politics of aviation protest, the reframing of aviation as an ‘emblematic issue’ of climate change has been key to turning the logic of expansion on its head, laying the groundwork for political and policy change (Griggs & Howarth, 2014). Early campaigns tended to revolve around more local concerns, including noise pollution, conserving countryside and protecting the quality of life of residents living near airports (Budd et al., 2013; Litrico, 2011). By tying anti-airport campaigns to the broader climate change issue, campaigners have forged “universal campaigns against airport expansion at *any* site and indeed *against* air travel itself” (Budd et al., 2013, p. 9).

Litrico (2011) similarly describes an important shift in aviation issues from local concerns like noise or air quality, to the global greenhouse gas emission problem. While industry insiders frame aviation as the “single most important catalyst for economic and social development” (Litrico, 2011 p. 80), public opposition to aviation manifests in criticism of the

environmental impacts of the industry. Evidently, competing frames “organize the contested realities of airport transport” (Budd et al., 2013, p. 1).

Media salience of issue attributes: relation to community concern

Similar to airports, nuclear facilities are divisive issues that have wide-ranging impacts upon the environment, jobs, the economy, health, transportation and more. Thus, media content analysis pertaining to the future of nuclear facilities has implications for the current study. While seeking to understand community engagement in decision making around the future of nuclear sites, Morrone et al. (2012) compare the content analysis of a local American paper relating to a major federal nuclear facility with the results of a telephone survey in the region. To ascertain how the local print news portrays the facility, the researchers examine topics portrayed in the news articles relating to the nuclear facility, including health, economy, jobs, environment, risks, benefits and others. They find a relationship between topics identified in the local newspaper and concerns identified by telephone survey respondents living in the area, particularly around the issue of jobs and the economy.

Culley et al. (2010) similarly examine print media coverage of proposed nuclear reactors in the United States. However, they take it one step further by ascertaining whether topics reflect pro-nuclear, anti-nuclear or informational sentiment. The authors group economic benefits, environmental benefits, and stakeholder acceptance or support together as pro-nuclear subthemes. Anti-nuclear subthemes include environmental risks, economic risks and the need for alternative energy. Informational subthemes include the regulatory/permit process and reactor financing. The authors find that both newspapers represented both sides of the debate equally in news articles, with the exception of opinion pieces. Informational text appeared “neutral”, however, deeper analysis revealed that some text contained covert pro-nuclear content. Finally,

the authors found a divergence between what media report on nuclear energy and its well-documented risks.

Similar to airports and nuclear facilities, commercial developments can produce conflict among communities. Kim et al. (2002) use attribute agenda setting theory to examine how the advantages and disadvantages of a proposed commercial development appear in the local media, and the ways in which this influences the salience of issue attributes among readers (Kim et al., 2002). Negative attributes include damage to small business, increased traffic, and increased potential for flooding. Positive attributes include more convenient shopping, more jobs, and increased sales-tax revenues. Similar to Morrone et al.'s (2012) findings, the authors find significant correspondence between issue attributes prominent in the media and the agenda of attributes among readers, which provides support for the notion of attribute agenda setting (Kim et al., 2002). Furthermore, they find that issue attributes salient in the media function as significant dimensions of issue evaluation among the audience, providing support for the notion of attribute priming (Kim et al., 2002). The authors conclude that priming is a process central to decision making and the building of consensus in communities, by way of shaping how and what to think about an issue (Kim et al., 2002).

Analysis of online news and Twitter coverage of Porter's planned expansion

While research in the public domain has yet to examine media coverage of the Island Airport expansion, private company MediaMiser has conducted an analysis of online news and Twitter coverage of Porter Airlines' expansion plans. The MediaMiser (2013) study has important implications for the current research. The media-monitoring firm collected 455 online news articles mentioning Porter Airlines from April 9, 2013 until May 2, 2013 and found a significant disparity in tone between online news coverage and Twitter posts. While 50% of

online news stories were positive and four percent were negative, only 20% of tweets were positive, with 19% being negative. Coverage peaked on April 10, shortly after the Porter Airlines announcement of their plans to purchase Bombardier CSeries jets and expand service on April 9. The majority of positive coverage appeared between April 9 and 11. These articles referenced the positive impacts of an expanded Island Airports and the quiet nature of the CSeries jets, points that Porter had stressed during its announcement. Negative coverage appeared between April 13 and 15, and referenced community concern relating to the expansion.

The study counted key messages that appeared in articles. Thirty-six percent of key messages noted that noise from the CSeries jets would likely not be a concern. In 18% of key messages, expansion was portrayed as environmentally friendly and in almost 15%, economic benefits were cited. On the other hand, in eight percent of key messages, noise concerns were raised, while in five percent of key messages, environmental concerns were raised. Robert Deluce was quoted in over 25% of articles, most of which appeared on April 10. Over half of his quotes appeared in positive articles. CommunityAIR spokesperson Barry Lipton was the next most quoted individual, and was primarily featured in neutral or negative articles. He commented mainly on concerns relating to the expansion. Twitter activity similarly spiked on April 10. Negative tweets focused mainly on community concerns over noise and environmental damage, and often included the hashtag #NoJetsTO. Positive tweets focused on economic benefits and the added convenience, and often included the hashtags #porterplans and #ImWithBilly.

Research questions

Research has not yet looked at how the debate has evolved in the news media in the months and years following the 2013 announcement. Thus, using framing, attribute agenda-

setting and attribute priming theories, this study examines how the Island Airport expansion has been portrayed in the *Toronto Star* during April, 2013 and March, 2014. These months have been selected as they comprise the two months with the highest coverage on the issue since the expansion proposal was announced. Given that issue attributes emphasized in the media relate to the public's evaluation of an issue, the study examines what issue attributes are portrayed most frequently in the media. Issue attributes, in this case, refer to arguments for or against expansion, arguments for delaying decisions on expansion, background information, and stakeholders. These attributes were defined inductively, based on what emerged from the sample. Given semantic differences in how an issue is described evoke different audience responses, the study also examined how the issue is framed.

After reviewing the relevant literature, the research questions for the content analysis of the proposed Island Airport expansion are the following:

- 1) RQ1: How is the proposed Island Airport expansion framed in the articles sampled?
- 2) RQ2: What arguments for expansion have been featured most frequently in the articles sampled?
- 3) RQ3: What arguments against expansion have been featured most frequently in the articles sampled?
- 4) RQ4: What arguments for delaying the expansion decision have been featured most frequently in the articles sampled?
- 5) RQ5: What informational issue attributes have been featured most frequently in the articles sampled?
- 6) RQ6: What key stakeholders have been mentioned most frequently in the articles sampled and what is their stated position on expansion?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research employs a mixed-methods approach to explore the framing of the Island Airport issue in the news media, with quantitative and qualitative methods regularly used in a content analysis (Berger, 2014; Berg, 2007; Krippendorff, 2004). Content analysis is one of the most commonly used methods by scholars studying media and communication (Berger, 2014). Generally, it entails the careful, systematic examination and interpretation of material in order to identify patterns, themes, biases and meanings (Berg, 2007). Moreover, it entails the “systematic classification and description of communication content according to certain usually predetermined categories” (Wright, 1986, p. 125). The purpose of content analysis is to quantify manifest features of texts and use the statistics to “make broader inferences about the processes and politics of representation” (Deacon et al., 2007, p. 119). Content analysis, as a research methodology, holds a number of advantages. It uses material that is easy to obtain and work with, it can deal with current events, and is relatively unobtrusive and cost-effective (Berger, 2014). The method submits all material within a sample to the same set of identified categories and, for this reason, ensures a reasonable degree of reliability (Deacon et al., 2007). Content analysis allows for the methodical observation of trends over time (Krippendorff, 2004).

While the literature has debated whether content analysis should be quantitative or qualitative, many scholars have recommended examining either quantitative or qualitative aspects of communication messages (Berg, 2007). Others have argued that quantitative and qualitative methods should be combined (Berg, 2007; Smith, 1975; Deacon et al., 2007). There are advantages to using both a quantitative and qualitative approach in content analysis. Using mixed methods allow for the triangulation of findings, helping research to overcome the

weaknesses that stem from using a single method (Deacon et al., 2007). Also, using quantitative and qualitative analysis can account for both latent and manifest patterns in media text. Once textual categories are counted, the researcher should then move to analyse the data more deeply, developing ideas about patterns that emerge, and meanings that are conveyed (Berg, 2007). Berg (2007) contends that from this perspective, “content analysis is not a reductionist, positivist approach. Rather, it is a passport to listening to the words of the text” (p. 308). Smith (1975), writes that “qualitative analysis deals with the forms...while quantitative analysis deals with duration and frequency of form” (p. 286).

Given the advantages to using both a quantitative and qualitative approach, this study employs an explanatory mixed-methods design. This design allows the researcher to collect quantitative data in the first phase, analyse the results, and use the results to plan or build on the second qualitative phase (Cresswell, 2014). Manifest content was counted looking for: a) arguments for expansion b) arguments against expansion c) arguments for delaying a decision on expansion, d) the presence and position of stakeholders on expansion and e) background information. During the open coding phase, the researcher examined latent content, exploring frames that emerged from the text that were not captured in the quantitative phase. A “frame” selects, omits, and elaborates certain elements of an issue, and, in so doing promotes a particular way of thinking about it (Deacon et al., 2007).

Toronto media environment

MediaMiser (2013) found *The Globe and Mail*, *The Toronto Star*, and *CBC News* published the most articles mentioning Porter Airlines online, from April 9 to May 2, 2013. The *Toronto Star* is one of Toronto’s two major English language daily newspapers (the other is the *Toronto Sun*), the *Globe and Mail* is a major national daily, and the CBC is Canada’s national

public radio and television broadcaster. While the Island Airport expansion involves decision-makers at both the municipal and national level, it remains largely a localized Toronto issue, with greater implications for the city versus the rest of the country. A Toronto-focused publication thus grants greater insight into the urban implications of the issue, compared to a national daily. Therefore, this study selected the *Toronto Star* for analysis. The left-of-centre paper has a wide readership, with over 2.3 million weekly readers in print and online (Newspapers Canada, 2014). The *Toronto Sun* was not selected for analysis as it was not included in the top publications listed by MediaMiser (2013).

Scope of the study

The scope of the content analysis consists of content drawn from the *Toronto Star* during the months of April, 2013 and March, 2014. April, 2013 and March, 2014 were selected because they encompass the highest monthly coverage of the issue in the *Toronto Star* since the time the proposal for expansion was announced up until the time of data collection (November, 2015). Berger (2014) recommends using a historical and comparative approach in content analysis, to provide greater perspective. Thus, comparing coverage from when the issue emerged, to a point in time a year later when a key decision was made, will provide insight into the evolution of the debate.

A number of key milestones took place during and shortly after these months. April, 2013, saw the announcement from Porter Airlines of their intent to purchase CSeries aircraft and seek modifications to the tripartite agreement. In March, 2014, former Mayor Rob Ford put forward a motion to endorse the Porter proposal in principle, and Councillor Peter Milczyn introduced a motion to leave the tripartite agreement as is (McCarthy, 2014). On March 25, 2014 the Toronto executive committee instead approved a plan for city staff to negotiate a framework

agreement around the airport, before making a decision on the proposal (Lu, 2014). Finally, on April 1, 2014 city council voted in favour of negotiating with PortsToronto over the expansion, and requested a number of measures be taken prior to any decisions being made, including the completion of an environmental assessment (Lu, 2014; Moloney, 2014). This move did not approve or reject expansion plans, but instead delayed any decision-making on the issue until more information becomes available.

Data collection

An explanatory sequential mixed methods design begins with quantitative sampling in the first phase and purposeful sampling in the second, qualitative phase (Creswell, 2014). In a content analysis, researchers must decide the level at which they will sample and the units of analysis to be counted (Berg, 2007). In this study, news articles comprise the sampling level. Various criteria for selection were utilized to create the data set to ensure reliability and validity. The criteria of selection for the study is as follows:

- Must be an English newspaper article or letter to the editor published in the *Toronto Star* during April, 2013 or March, 2014.
- Must be retrieved using the Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies database using the keywords “Island Airport” or “Billy Bishop” and “expansion” or “jets”.
- The article must specifically reference the 2013 proposed Toronto Island Airport expansion.
- The article must include at least three sentences that reference the 2013 proposed Toronto Island Airport expansion.

Using this criteria, the researcher gathered all relevant articles from the *Canadian Newsstand* database for the *Toronto Star*. This search returned 73 potential articles to examine in April, 2013 (n = 37) and March, 2014 (n=36). Articles that do not significantly relate to the Island Airport and articles that mention the expansion in only one or two sentences were removed from the sample. Consequently, the final sample for the study consists of 40 articles from April, 2013 (n = 19) and March, 2014 (n = 21) (see Appendix C). When researchers can examine all texts of a particular population of texts, sampling problems do not arise (Krippendorff, 2004). After cleaning the data set, the researcher in this study was left with a manageable population of texts for the quantitative phase. Thus, the researcher did not engage in any additional sampling techniques for the quantitative phase. The qualitative data was selected purposefully to build directly on the quantitative results.

Data analysis procedure

An inductive approach to content analysis starts with researchers immersing themselves in documents to identify meaningful themes, and then moving to develop analytic categories by sorting the themes (Berg, 2007). Then, typically a researcher will develop grounded categories that arise from the sample (Berg, 2007; Berger, 2014). To create a reliable study, the categories must be mutually exclusive and exhaustive (Krippendorff, 2004). Developing categories entails creating and applying criteria of selection for identifying and recording data (Berg, 2007).

Accordingly, the data analysis procedure for this study included the following steps:

- 1) The researcher used the *Canadian Newsstand* database to collect news articles. Any articles not meeting the criteria of selection were removed, leaving a final sample of 40 articles (n=40).

- 2) During the open coding process, the researcher read through the articles, inductively determining categories of analysis, based on the research questions. Determining the categories inductively served to ground the categories to the data from which they emerge (Berger, 2013). A coding guidebook (Appendix D) and coding checklist (Appendix E) were created and modified as the researcher re-read the articles, to ensure exhaustive and mutually exclusive categories.
- 3) Each article was read again and coded, according to the coding guidebook. A coding checklist was completed for each article. At the same time, articles were cross-referenced to the coding checklist to ensure accuracy of the coding.
- 4) The data collected was then transcribed into one file for analysis. Berg (2007) states that patterns occur when there is three instances of something in a data set. Thus, any category that appeared less than three times in April or March was removed from the results.
- 5) In the second phase of open coding, the articles were read from a qualitative perspective, looking for themes emerging from the data.
- 6) The results were then analyzed.

Validation strategies

This study is explicit in stating the range of sampling, how variables have been operationalized, what qualifying criteria has been used, and the way that units of analysis have been selected, thus ensuring a reliable method (Deacon et al., 2007). Berger (2014) contends that a reliable study depends upon operational definitions of activities in the text to be coded. This ensures that every coder will classify elements in the text the same way. The method used in this study submits the sample to the same set of exhaustive and mutually exclusive categories and,

for this reason, ensures a reasonable degree of reliability (Deacon et al., 2007; Krippendorff, 2004). The coding guidebook was reviewed and revised by a University of Ottawa professor, thus ensuring inter-coder reliability. The terms of inclusion in the sample have been clearly defined in this study, ensuring validity (Deacon et al., 2007). Finally, utilizing both a quantitative and qualitative approach allows for the triangulation of findings, thus avoiding the weaknesses that stem from using a single method (Deacon et al., 2007).

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

This section provides the findings from the quantitative content analysis, with the findings from the qualitative inquiry following in the “qualitative findings and discussion” section. The results are organized in light of the research questions, and overall they reveal how the proposed expansion has been framed (RQ1), by presenting the key issues, stakeholders and possible solutions to the controversy. RQ1 will also be elaborated upon in the “qualitative findings” section that follows. The findings highlight key differences and similarities in coverage between April and March, and thus provide an overview of how the debate has evolved.

Balance of arguments

Arguments against expansion accounted for 54% of all arguments that appeared in the *Toronto Star* in April, 2013, while arguments in favour of expansion accounted for 46% (Appendix F, Graph 1). In April, the top attribute was that jets and an expanded runway would bring limited change to the status quo. For example: “a dozen or so extra takeoffs and landings won’t break any sound barrier covenant” (#10), and “noise tests show the CSeries jet would be comparable to Bombardier’s Q400 turboprops, which make up Porter’s current fleet” (#7). In March, 2014, arguments against expansion remained in the lead at 51%, while arguments in

support of expansion fell to 25%. A new category, arguments to delay expansion, emerged in March, 2014, and accounted for 24% of arguments (Appendix G, Graph 2). The top attribute in March was to delay an expansion decision because too many questions remained unanswered. For example: “the city, with few details of Porter’s plans, is being asked to say yes today and discover what it said yes to tomorrow” (#39), or “city bureaucrats...say there are too many unanswered questions” (#38).

Research question #2 asked: what arguments for expansion have been featured most frequently in the articles sampled?

The results of the content analysis show that in April, 2013 the top argument in favour of expansion was 1) limited or no change to the status quo, at 28% (Appendix H, Graph 3). Many articles indicated the noise profile of the CS100 jet is comparable to the turboprops used now, the Island Airport will remain small, and strict noise restrictions will remain in place. For example: “The new jets won’t be completely noiseless, and there would be more flights. But that wouldn’t be a jarring departure from what’s happening now” (#5), or “Deluce insists the airport’s restrictions...all ensure that the airport will remain a ‘small little airport’” (#15). Interestingly, this argument appears to be more of a reason not to reject expansion, rather than an argument for the benefits of expansion. Second, 2) the success of Porter Airlines was given as a reason to expand in 21 percent of articles. This attribute included statements such as, “perhaps the success of Porter has softened people on the notion that being a busy airport is OK” (#11) and “Porter has become a rare success story and a healthy employer” (#10). Third, 3) benefits to travelers (15%) included arguments that travelers “want more routes and competitive fares” (#3) and that an expanded airport will bring “increased convenience for people who live or work downtown” (#5). Fourth, 4) economic benefits (15%) of expansion mentioned included “1,000 jobs at Porter” (#3) and “an injection of healthy stimulus for the local economy” (#5). Fifth,

arguments that questioned the legitimacy of opponents to expansion (13%) included “the left is reactionary...indulging in flights of preposterous rhetoric” (#10) and “fears of over-commercialization are unfounded” (#15). Finally, 6) the importance of the jets deal to manufacturer Bombardier Inc. was cited in 8 percent of articles. For example: “Porter’s order is critical for Bombardier, which has invested billions to develop the new aircraft” (#3).

In March, 2014, 1) economic benefits (36%) rose to be the top argument in favour of expansion (Appendix I, Graph 4). Proponents argued expansion would bring “\$250 million of incremental economic impact” (#24), and that “tourism dollars into Canadian cities will increase” (#20). Statements questioning the legitimacy of opposition rose to 29% percent. For example, one article mentioned that many opponents “have never flown out of the island; others haven’t even seen it” (#36). Also, Mark McQueen, PortsToronto chair, was often quoted saying that city requests to curb expansion by limiting takeoff and landing slots were “poison pills” that would “affect the long-term viability of the airport” (#21). Third, 3) benefits to travelers rose slightly to 16 percent. For example: “a much greater scope of destinations...can be served” (#20) and “residents of cities in which Porter operates directly benefit from lower airfares” (#20). Fourth 4) limited or no change to the status quo fell to 13 percent. Deluce continued to argue that expansion would not impact the status quo: “if the CS100 doesn’t meet the airport noise levels or if there is any material impact to the harbor or to boating, we will not proceed” (#40). Finally, 5) the success of Porter Airlines fell to six percent: “Porter’s success is what fuels, equally, opposition and support for expansion” (article 34). The importance of the jets deal to Bombardier Inc. was not mentioned in March.

The frequency of arguments in support of expansion dropped from 46% in April, 2013 to 25% in March, 2014. The leading arguments varied. In April, “limited or no change to the status

quo” was in the lead at 28%, with the “success of Porter Airlines” coming in second at 21%. In March, “economic benefits” led at 36%, and “illegitimate opposition” came second at 29%.

There were a few notable changes. “Economic benefits” more than doubled from 15% in April to 36% in March. “Limited or no change to the status quo” dropped from 28% in April to only 13% in March. The “success of Porter” dropped from 21% in April to six percent in March. Finally, “illegitimate opposition” more than doubled from 13% in April to 29% in March.

Research question #3 asked: what arguments against expansion have been featured most frequently in the articles sampled?

Results of the content analysis show that in April, 2013 the top arguments against expansion were: 1) traffic (15%) and 2) Porter Airlines credibility issues, at 15% (Appendix J, Graph 5). Traffic concerns included: “more passengers will mean more cars, cabs, rentals, limos as well as parking spots.” (#2). Charges against Porter Airlines included: “the company has fought every demand placed upon it by the city, but always gets away with it” (#2). Third came 3) impact on recreational waterfront use and 4) impact on residential waterfront use at 11%. Fifth came 5) unresolved issues with the Island Airport (9%), 6) the risk of loud, polluting jets (9%) and 7) environmental damage (9%). Unresolved issues included “Noise and traffic generated by the growing airport” (#16). Some articles highlighted fears that should access be granted to the CS100 jet, access would also be granted to loud, polluting jets. Threats of environmental damage included: “planes are...environmentally big-footing” (#10). Finally, 8) noise concerns, 9) Island Airport may become a busy hub, and 10) economic risk were each present in seven percent of articles. Allegations including “Deluce would have us build him a second Pearson on the waterfront” (#2) reveal fears over an increasingly busy airport. The financial risks Porter would face should they expand made up most of the economic risks discussed. For example:

“moving from a single aircraft to two aircraft is always risky. It drives up complexity and cost” (#1).

In March, 2014 1) impact on recreational waterfront use (14%) rose to be the top concern (Appendix K, Graph 6). Opponents warned expansion would result in “selling out the future of our prime waterfront recreation area” (#23). Second, warnings of 2) economic risk and 3) environmental damage rose slightly to 12 percent. For example, opponents charged expansion would “siphon Canadian dollars from the local economy to foreign markets” (#23) and “destroy the aquatic environment of the largest freshwater water system in the world” (#24). In April, economic concerns revolved around the financial risk to Porter, while in March, economic risk focused on the broader economy. Traffic concerns fell to 12 percent, with Olivia Chow arguing the waterfront “can’t handle any more traffic jams” (#22). The impact on waterfront revitalization, an urban regeneration project geared to generate economic growth and employment, emerged for the first time in March, at 11 percent. Waterfront Toronto claims “enabling the airport to expand would...profoundly and negatively affect the revitalization prospects” (#27). Impact on residential waterfront use remained at 11 percent. For example: “the quality of life of those already living along the lakeshore” (#32) is threatened. Credibility issues with Porter Airlines fell to nine percent, with one article (#24) reporting criticism of an online poll by Porter that misleads voters into supporting expansion. Noise concerns remained steady at seven percent. Health and safety risks emerged in March for the first time at seven percent. While air quality concerns were raised (#39), often health and safety risks were not elaborated upon in detail. Finally, unresolved issues with the Island Airport fell to five percent. For example, article 39 refers to the Island Airport as an “incomplete, unintended and bottomless pit

of congestion, pollution and disappearing quality of life”. The risk of loud, polluting jets was not touched upon in March.

The frequency of arguments against expansion fell slightly from 54% in April to 51% in March (Appendix G, Graph 2). The frequency of arguments against expansion was relatively evenly distributed, with no argument clearly dominating. “Credibility issues with Porter Airlines” and “traffic” were the dominant arguments in April, however each only held a 15% share. The top argument in March, “impact on recreational waterfront use”, held only a 14% share of frequency. For the most part, arguments against expansion in April appeared with comparable frequency in March, however, there were a few notable changes. The frequency of “economic risk” rose from 7% in April to 12% in March. Credibility issues with Porter fell from 15% to 9%. “Risk of loud polluting jets” and “island airport may become busy hub” disappeared from the sample in March. Also, new issues emerged in March: “impact on waterfront revitalization”, and “health and safety risks”.

Research question #4 asked: what arguments for delaying the expansion decision have been featured most frequently in the articles sampled?

Arguments to delay the expansion decision emerged only in the March sample and accounted for 24% of argument share (see Appendix G: Graph 2 and Appendix L: Graph 7). At the time, city staff recommended implementing a phased growth framework prior to considering amendments to the tripartite agreement (Livey, 2014). Also, Rob Ford had put forward a motion to endorse the Porter proposal in principle, and councilor Peter Milczyn had put forward a motion to leave the tripartite agreement as is, both of which were rejected (McCarthy, 2014). The main argument to authorize negotiations on a growth framework (and hence delay making a decision until more information became available) was that too many unanswered questions

remained (50%). Questions included “how large can the airport become before a tipping point is reached...?” (#27), “what is the overall sensory and experiential experience created by an expanded airport...?” (#27), and “who pays for infrastructure improvements?” (#34). Second, many argued an agreement on managed growth needs to be negotiated prior to making decision (32%). Royson James wrote of the city staff recommendations that, “in essence, it says council should not reject or approve the proposal- in principle or otherwise- until staff has negotiated conditions to protect the interests of the city, the waterfront users and the waterfront community” (34). The third argument to delay revolved around issues relating to the Island Airport that needed to be addressed (18%), including “transportation, road congestion and community impact issues” (#27). On April 1, 2014, city council approved negotiations on managed growth to go forward, and stated that approval of the item “does not in any way imply City Council’s support for or against the airport expansion or the introduction of jets” (City of Toronto, 2014).

Research question #5 asked: What informational issue attributes have been featured most frequently in the articles sampled?

Informational issue attributes include information pertaining to the proposed Island Airport expansion that is neither overtly in favour of or opposed to expansion. Results of the content analysis show that in April, 2013, the top informational attribute was: 1) CS100 jets are unobtrusive, at 37% (Appendix M, Graph 8). This category included reference to the CS100 series as “whisper jets”, and also included references to the CS100 series as the “quietest plane in production” (#17). Second, 2) positive attributes of Island Airport (22%) included reference to the efficiency, quietness, or convenience of its operations (#7). Third, 3) success of Porter Airlines (19%), included a statement from Councillor Joe Mihevc indicating that “Porter is a thriving business” (#11), while others declared Porter a “tremendous success” (#4). Given Porter

controls the majority of slots at the Island Airport, 4) other airlines were cited as wanting greater access to the Island Airport (13%). For example: Air Canada and WestJet would “fight for access” (#6) if jets are permitted. Finally, 5) information on current flight or passenger traffic came in at nine per cent and included reference to the airport’s “202 daily slots of takeoffs and landings” (#1) and to the “two million passengers per year” (#11) that the island airport now serves.

In March, 2014, the top informational attribute was: 1) information on managed growth framework (33%), which mainly discussed city managers’ desire to negotiate a new agreement managing growth at the Island Airport, “in clearly defined phases, whether jets are permitted or not (#32) (Appendix N, Graph 9). This attribute emerged for the first time in the March sample. Second, 2) “information on current flight/passenger traffic” rose to 23% percent and similarly highlighted the 2.3 million passengers per year handled by the airport (#32). Third, 3) positive attributes of the Island Airport declined to 13 percent and included statements such as “the airport provides a service valued by Torontonians” (#27). Fourth, 4) public cost (13%) emerged for the first time in March, and revolved around the estimated costs of projected infrastructure work needed to support expansion, ranging from \$100 million to \$300 million. Fifth, dialogue on the unobtrusiveness of jets declined to 10 percent, including statements such as “the CS100 jets will meet noise guidelines and produce lower emissions than similar planes” (#24). Finally, mention of Porter’s success fell to 8 percent. For example: “the fact that Porter Airlines is successful...doesn’t deter them” (#36).

Research question #6 asked: what key stakeholders have been mentioned most frequently in the articles sampled and what is their stated position on expansion?

Results of the content analysis show that in April, 2013, 43% of stakeholders referenced in the *Toronto Star* opposed expansion, 33% were neutral or undecided and 24% supported it (Appendix O, Graph 10). As the position of Porter is known, the airline was excluded from the sample. The top opponents to expansion were waterfront residents, who held 44% of opposition mentions (Appendix P, Graph 11). Royson James wrote (#12): “or course waterfront residents should panic. And be mad as well”, while an editorial piece ran: “for years Toronto waterfront residents...have been assured that no jets would fly...so anger, and even a sense of betrayal, are understandable” (#5). City councilor Adam Vaughan held a 22% share of opposition mentions. Vaughan is quoted as saying Deluce wants to “pave over the lake” (#15), challenged Deluce’s claim that the CS100 is comparably quiet to the turboprops in use (#15), and warned that allowing Bombardier’s new jets would open the door to “other, louder aircraft” (#5). City councilor Karen Stintz and CommunityAIR both held 17% of opposition mentions. Stintz noted amending the agreement would “open the door to jets from...other tenants” (#8), while CommunityAIR said “we are concerned...we do continue to oppose the island airport. We would like to see it shut down” (#1).

In April, 2013, Toronto City Council and Transport Canada each constituted 36% of neutral or undecided stakeholders, while PortsToronto accounted for 28% of neutral or undecided stakeholders (Appendix Q, Graph 12). One article contended Toronto council is unlikely to sign off “without a protracted debate” (#15), while another argued there would be a “fulsome debate among city councilors” (#3). Transport Canada and PortsToronto often indicated they would not consider changes to the airport “until a determination is first made by

the elected representatives on Toronto city council” (#3). Of the supporters, former mayor Rob Ford accounted for 60% of mentions, while Toronto residents constituted 40% (Appendix R, Graph 13). Rob Ford was cited as saying the idea of jets is “great” (#11) and “I support Porter Airlines. I think Bob Deluce is doing a fantastic job” (#1). A number of articles cited polls showing Torontonians supported jets at the Island Airport.

In March, 2014, undecided stakeholders rose slightly to 35%, including conditional supporters of expansion (Appendix S, Graph 14). Expansion supporters fell slightly to twenty-three percent of stakeholders. In March, a new category of stakeholders who supported delaying a decision on expansion emerged, at 18 percent. Opponents fell to 17 percent. At the time, city staff proposed implementing caps on growth prior to considering Porter’s proposal. Seven percent of stakeholders rejected caps. The top undecided/conditionally supportive stakeholders were Toronto City Council (42%), PortsToronto (21%), Transport Canada (17%), former Mayoral candidate David Soknacki (10%) and John Tory (10%) (Appendix T, Graph 15). At the time, John Tory was running for mayor; he has since been elected to that post. City council was often described as undecided in lead-up to the April vote on whether to negotiate a growth framework, and delay a decision. One article, claimed that “while (PortsToronto) insists it is neutral...it did foot the \$1.2 million bill for initial consultant studies” (#35). Soknacki was described as a “conditional supporter” (#31) while Tory claimed he was “very skeptical of the proposal” (#31).

Former Mayor Rob Ford again constituted the top supporter, at 42%, city councilor Norm Kelly was next at 37% and Toronto residents fell to 21% of supporters (Appendix U, Graph 16). Ford had at the time put forward a motion to endorse the Porter plan in principle, and Kelly similarly “vowed...to try and win conditional approval at city hall before the October election”

(#31). Again, opinion polls suggesting voters support expansion were cited a number of times. For example: “more Torontonians are in favour of putting jets on Billy Bishop Airport than oppose the idea, according to a Forum Research poll”. Toronto city staff were the top stakeholders in favour of delaying a decision (80%), with authors of letters to the editor next at 20% (Appendix V, Graph 17). For example, Harry J. Rollo wrote: “the ramifications of a hasty decision on the expansion of Toronto’s island airport are too numerous to calculate” (#37). The makeup of the opponents to expansion changed considerably from April. The top opponents to expansion were NoJetsTO (36%) and authors of letters to the editor (36%). Olivia Chow held a 28% share of the opposition (Appendix W, Graph 18). Notably, CommunityAIR, Adam Vaughan and waterfront residents were almost absent from the debate. NoJetsTO said, in opposition: “there are enough red flags, there are just way too many open issues that have not been adequately addressed” (#31). PortsToronto constituted 100% of those who rejected caps, and was cited as such in six articles. Mark McQueen issued a letter accusing city staff of “inserting poison pills to make it difficult for the airport operator and Transport Canada to approve the Porter proposal” (#28), referring to caps.

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study paints a picture of how the Island Airport expansion issue has been framed, by discovering what issues were at stake, and revealing possible solutions to the controversy. The quantitative findings reveal the key attributes of the Island Airport expansion debate featured in the *Toronto Star* in April, 2013 and March, 2014. These results guided the qualitative inquiry, which adds to the discussion of how the proposed Island Airport expansion is framed in the articles sampled (RQ1). A number of qualitative themes were of interest, including: 1) disputes over the facts, 2) putting a value on the impact of expansion, 3) the framing of Robert Deluce

and Porter Airlines, 4) the framing of opponents to expansion, 5) personalization of the conflict, 6) competing visions over the future of Toronto's waterfront, and 6) the framing of aviation expansion. The discussion will elaborate on the portrayal of activists in the media, and decision-making on the issue. What follows is a discussion of the qualitative and quantitative findings in light of relevant literature.

Dispute over the facts: just how quiet is the CS100 jet?

Schon and Rein (1994) contend that parties to a controversy often interpret or frame the same facts differently. This dynamic played out interestingly in the Island Airport debate. In some cases, disputes over the facts became cause for debate and power struggle. In an article from April (#15), Deluce claimed the CS100 jet is the “quietest jet in production” and is “comparable” in noise profile to the Q400. This argument was repeated in multiple articles. He charged the CS100 jet is six percent quieter than the Q400. Adam Vaughan countered, on the other hand, that Porter's data represent “average noise levels” and thus the CS100 series are no quieter than the Q400 (#15). Later, an Urban Strategies Inc. report claimed in November, 2013 that “noise data for the new CS100 aircraft are not yet available” (p.12), but that they are “expected to meet existing requirements” (p.12).

The CS100 planes were referred to constantly as “whisper jets” and “ultraquiet new planes” in April. For example, Robert Deluce said at an early news conference: “the CS100 is a whisper jet that couldn't have been envisioned when the tripartite agreement was signed and written 30 years ago” (#7). However, in March, they were more often simply called “jets,” without reference to their quietness. Subsequently, information on the unobtrusiveness or quietness of jets in the *Toronto Star* fell considerably from 37% in April to 10% March. Also, in March, the nature of the “unobtrusiveness” argument appeared to focus more on the lower

emissions the CS100 series produced, rather than their quietness. Arguments that expansion would bring limited change to the status quo, including noise levels, fell from 28% in April to 13% in March. It is unclear why the “quiet” or “unobtrusive” frame lost steam in March, however, one can speculate that the Urban Strategies Inc. report might have had an impact. Could it be that Deluce managed to define the narrative in April, effectively setting the media agenda on the noise issue? Once it became clear that noise levels had not yet been confirmed, perhaps journalists felt compelled to change their tone.

Frame conflict: putting a value on the impact of expansion

Scholars have pointed out that “messy” controversies over airport issues often cannot be resolved by resorting to the facts (Schon & Rein, 1994). Instead, policy controversies are often struggles over framing. In some cases, opponents and proponents did indeed resort to the facts, using strategies of selective attention, as a way to gain support. For example, proponents of expansion often cited a City of Toronto Economic Impact Study that claimed expansion would result in 2,000 new jobs and \$250 million of incremental economic activity. Also, proponents to expansion cited previous research that demonstrates Porter’s entrance into the airline market has lowered fares on some routes by as much as 30 percent, and increased the number of passengers (#20). On the other hand, the economic risks discussed were often speculation. For example, in April, experts questioned Porter’s expansion plans, speculating, based on the fate of other airlines, it would be a “risky move” (#1), where “in the long term, Porter may not survive” (#1). Other speculations on economic risk included “burning fossil fuels is the main cause of climate change – with wacky weather causing huge economic losses” (#23) and “what it will do is siphon Canadian dollars from the local economy to foreign markets” (#23).

However, this is not to say that all impacts of expanding can be captured in numbers, and in some cases speculation may be the only effective tool available. Some attributes, including economic benefits, are easier to quantify than others, like the impact on recreational waterfront use. A letter to the editor spoke to the importance of not only relying upon the “overwhelming polls and opinion that show all the support and the benefits to business” (#18). The author of the letter described how “even just a bus ticket to walk the waterfront on a beautiful summer day is a precious investment for many poor souls in this city” (#18), and asked “how can you calculate such an experience on a hot summer evening in money?” (#18), lamenting that “it’s unfortunate that you can’t put a value on the peace that will be lost by these people...these folks can’t show hard numbers of what will be lost, so they can’t show the worth of keeping it” (#18). The author is indicating that as it is difficult to quantify the value of quality of life issues, they cannot be captured by resorting to the “facts”. Instead, the author of the letter relies on framing to situate expansion as an issue for the city’s poor, using emotional appeals to mobilize sympathy for their plight.

Robert Deluce and Porter Airlines: belligerent, divisive, selfish

According to Castells (2009), the practice of media politics entails producing images that best serve the interests of each power player. Media coverage framed opponents and proponents in positive and negative ways, often to support arguments for or against expansion. Credibility issues with Porter accounted for 15% of arguments against expansion in both March and April. The airline was charged with accusations of corporate belligerence, divisiveness, and selfish behaviour. Many shots were targeted directly at Robert Deluce, who came to personify the airline in news coverage. Shortly after the initial announcement, Christopher Hume wrote that it was “another sign of Deluce’s delusional misunderstanding of the business he runs” and that “in

his quest for domination, biggest being best, the corporation man looks no further than the bottom line” (#2). Royson James similarly claimed shortly after the expansion announcement that it was the “first really bad move” that Deluce has made (#12). He described the conditional offer on 12 jets as a “blindside so provocative and unnecessarily divisive that it borders on arrogance” (#12) and framed the offer as a “declaration of war on the airport’s neighbours” that “kicked dirt in the face of residents” (#12). Later, in March, Councillor Mike Layton alluded that public funds spent on the project would “enrich Deluce” (#24), while NoJetsTO chair Anshul Kapoor claimed “a private entity should not define the timelines of the city....for some reason Robert Deluce and Norm Kelly are hell-bent on getting their way” (#29). The airline and its success were also spoken of quite highly in other articles, as demonstrated in the quantitative results.

Opponents: alarmist, uncivilized, unreasonable

The illegitimacy of opponents held a 13% share in April, and rose to 29% in March. Opponents were framed as alarmist, uncivilized and unreasonable in some coverage. Rosie DiManno called them “left-wing pterodactyls” (#10) who are “reactionary opposed to expanding service, indulging in flights of preposterous rhetoric” (#10), while Deluce dismissed some of their claims as “misinformation” and “fearmongering” (#40). Deluce claimed Porter did not alert waterfront residents to their expansion plans because “we knew what their reaction would be” (#15). He went on to say that the majority of noise complaints are from a tight group of residents: “of 119 noise complaints generated, over half came from four individuals” (#15). Deluce likened all expansion opponents to the more extreme opponents of the airline itself, who “watched and waited for us to fall” (#40) when the airline launched in 2006, and “were wrong the first time and have no credibility now” (#40). However, many opponents to expansion were

not of the more extreme view that the airline and the Island Airport should be shut down. For example, NoJetsTO (2015) is instead “committed to preserving the status quo”. He framed opponent behaviour as unreasonable, stating “they literally stood there and counted the number of people in shuttle buses and predicted our demise” (#14). Waterfront residents opposed to expansion were framed as selfish, at the expense of the rest of Toronto. DiManno wrote that waterfront residents, “endlessly put their wishes first, even though they’re sitting pretty inside the tall residential compounds that have severed city from shoreline” (#10). In these cases, Deluce and DiManno used communication strategies to “mark” opponents as uncivilized, thereby limiting their participatory opportunities, and silencing their voices (Kisselburgh & Dutta, 2009).

Media Politics is personalized politics

In the examples above, journalists and stakeholders treated the issue as a conflict among individuals, and their emphasis on characteristics and values served to personalize the dispute. When news is personalized via a particular figure and presented in ways that relate to the receiver’s emotions and interests, it is “more easily processed and stored in the memory” (Castells, 2009, p. 205), and thus has more of an impact on the receiver. Therefore, media politics is personalized politics (Castells, 2009). In the examples cited above, Deluce and NoJetsTO chair both engage in “spin” tactics, by framing matters in a way that favours their own interests, and inflicts damage on their opponents (Castells, 2009). Media organizations also have a vested interest in personalizing politics because it helps them to expand their audience and deepen their influence (Castells, 2009). To attract a large audience, news organizations often seek to maximize the entertainment effects of news by presenting it in the language of infotainment or human drama (Castells, 2009). This is because audiences often find it taxing to

understand complex policy issues, but are confident in their ability to judge character. According to Castells (2009), “exposing the wrongdoing of the powerful has always been the solace of the populace” (p. 202). Thus, Hume and James’ vocal criticism of Deluce may have pandered to the desires of their audience.

Competing visions over the waterfront: a symbolic contest

The debate over the Island Airport expansion played into broader discussions over the purpose and future of the waterfront. One vision that was evident in some *Toronto Star* coverage was for the waterfront to act as a key transportation link, connecting Toronto with business and tourism opportunities. For example: “airfares will fall, passenger volumes will grow, tourism dollars into Canadian cities will increase and intercity commerce will expand” (#20). Aviation, in this view, ties into the “power and progress” narrative, where it serves as a key driver of economic and social development (Girggs & Howarth, 2014; Litrico, 2011). Another, competing narrative in this symbolic contest envisioned the waterfront as an important public resource for Torontonians to enjoy. For example: “the island...should be guided toward its bright potential as a place of recreation for those who can’t afford to get out of town on holiday” (#9). In this view, an expanded Island Airport would privilege a small cohort of business travellers over the recreational needs of residents and visitors to the area. Proponents of waterfront revitalization, on the other hand, argued for a balance of mixed-uses on the waterfront to ensure economic growth. Revitalization aims to reconnect Toronto to its waterfront in a way that ensures no one element dominates, seeking a careful balance between neighbourhoods, commercial uses and public spaces. In this view, an expanded airport would “tip the balance that now suits boats, business, condo dwellers, and recreational users” (#34).

The framing of aviation expansion in Toronto: local concerns still predominate

The reversal of expansion plans for the Island Airport reflects broader trends in the United Kingdom, where expansion plans for London's Heathrow Airport have been stalled. At the time of writing, the British government has delayed a decision on whether to build a third runway at Heathrow until 2016, when more environmental research will be available ("Heathrow Airport Delay", 2015). Scholars examining the new politics of aviation protest in the U.K. claim that the reframing of aviation as an 'emblematic issue' of climate change has been key to turning the logic of expansion on its head (Griggs & Howarth, 2014). Litrico (2011) similarly describes an important shift in aviation issues from local concerns like noise or air quality, to the global greenhouse gas emission problem. Interestingly, this was not the case for discussion around the Island Airport. Rather, local concerns such as traffic, infrastructure, and quality of life issues still predominated as reasons to stall expansion, reflecting the early politics of aviation protest in the UK (Budd, 2013). For the most part, the proposed growth of the Island Airport was not linked to the expansion of aviation as a whole. Environmental concerns were raised, however rarely in the larger global warming context. These concerns touched on local air quality issues, pollution, and the aquatic environment of Lake Ontario. Only one article drew a connection between aviation and global warming, and it was a letter to the editor: "burning fossil fuels is the main cause of climate change – with wacky weather causing huge economic losses" (#23).

Activists in the media

Castells (2009) states that for political players to effectively influence the media agenda, they must accept the rules of media engagement, the language of the media, and media interests. The makeup of opponents to expansion changed considerably from April to March. In April, CommunityAIR accounted for 17% of opponents, and yet disappeared from the sample in

March. NoJetsTO, on the other hand, emerged in the March sample and accounted for 36% of opponents. CommunityAIR takes the more extreme view of advocating for closing the Island Airport. NoJetsTO, on the other hand, is not against the existence of the Island Airport. Instead, it is committed to preserving the status quo.

Mass media organizations have a powerful influence in determining the presence and reception of activist groups, and have an interest in perpetuating the status quo (DeLuca et al., 2012). Therefore, activist groups advocating social change have strained relations with traditional mainstream mass media (Gitlin, 1980; DeLuca et al., 2012). DeLuca et al. (2012) claim that news organizations engage in two strategies to marginalize activists. The first is ignoring them, and the second is framing them negatively. As mentioned earlier, Deluce and the *Toronto Star* engaged in the negative framing tactic. The media influence of CommunityAIR diminished in March, however it is unclear why this happened. There are many possible explanations. Perhaps the *Toronto Star* ignored them, as a marginalization tactic. Or, perhaps CommunityAIR refused to accept the rules of media engagement. It is also possible that the more moderate NoJetsTO group was granted greater legitimacy by the media and therefore came to replace them in media coverage.

Decision making on the issue

While a relationship cannot be determined, it can be interesting to identify parallels between attributes emphasized in the media and decision-making on the issue. On April 1, 2014, Toronto city councilors authorized negotiations with PortsToronto and Transport Canada on a phased growth framework to move forward, in essence, delaying a decision on expansion. In lead-up to this decision, 24% of arguments featured in the *Toronto Star* were to delay making a decision, falling behind arguments against expansion (51%) and arguments in support of

expansion (25%). Thus, the council decision did not directly parallel the balance of arguments, where arguments against expansion dominated. Eighteen percent of stakeholders referenced in the *Toronto Star* supported delaying a decision at the time, and 35% of stakeholders were “undecided”. Therefore, the council decision to delay making a decision did indeed parallel the position of the majority of stakeholders who were either undecided or favoured delaying a decision.

In November, 2015 Minister of Transport Marc Garneau announced that the federal government would not amend the Tripartite Agreement to lift the jet ban at the Island Airport, even though an environmental assessment, preliminary runway design and a master planning exercise were underway. Marc Garneau made this decision in spite of a lack of evidence on the positive and negative impacts an expanded airport would have. With limited evidence available, what was the basis for the decision? One might speculate that Garneau’s decision reflects Schon and Rein’s (1994) idea that “messy” controversies over airport issues often cannot be resolved by resorting to the facts. In this case, perhaps the framing of the issue was more important. Responding to criticism, Garneau pointed out that “sometimes issues are quality of life issues and those are important” (Press, 2015, para. 8). This statement reflects the sentiment that not all impacts can be reasonably quantified or captured in environmental assessments, as pointed out in a letter to the editor mentioned earlier. Garneau also stated the decision goes beyond concerns about noise: “It’s an issue that is an election promise and its main focus is on the fact that Torontonians want to have a greater say in the development of their waterfront” (Press, 2015, para. 6). In this case Garneau is referring to Member of Parliament, Adam Vaughan, who campaigned on the platform that he would kill expansion plans.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to discover key attributes of the Island Airport expansion debate as featured in the *Toronto Star* in April, 2013 and March, 2014, with the intent to examine how the debate has evolved. By counting and analyzing arguments for expansion, arguments against expansion, information on expansion, arguments to delay an expansion decision, and stakeholder position, this study revealed how the issue has been framed in the *Toronto Star*. This study also revealed how the *Toronto Star* has set the agenda, through determining what issues it has deemed relevant for public and government attention (Castells, 2009). The study discovered a number differences in the debate between April, 2013 and March, 2014, that have been highlighted throughout the results and discussion. Evidently, debate over the Island Airport reflected broader concerns over the purpose and future of Toronto's waterfront, which became a symbolic battleground.

Implications

As discussed, “messy” policy controversies often cannot be resolved by resorting to the facts, but are instead struggles over framing (Schon & Rein, 1994). This study adds to the literature by revealing that the Island Airport controversy, a divisive transportation conflict, was ultimately not resolved by resorting to the facts. Instead, Marc Garneau barred expansion based on an election promise, and in support of preserving quality of life (Press, 2015). In this case, it turns out the framing of the issue was more important in shaping public opinion, rather than resorting to the facts – given a decision was made in the absence of an environmental assessment. Lacking evidence; emotional appeals, personalization and strong rhetoric emerged as convincing ways in which to frame the issues. Evidently, these framing tactics are newsworthy and appeal to a large audience.

Given the well-documented relationship between issue attributes present in the media and public opinion (Kim et al., 2002; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007), the findings from this study suggest that Toronto remains a divided city when it comes to the waterfront. While a decision has been made, for now, to stall expansion, it is inevitable that the issue will come into play again as the city continues to grow and change. The waterfront has varying significance for Torontonians. For some, it is a vital transportation link – connecting Toronto with tourism and economic growth. For others, it is a recreational resource for everyone to enjoy. For others – it serves a balance of mixed uses that generate economic growth. This study has captured the diverse voices and opinions of some Torontonians at specific moments in time – providing a meaningful snapshot into the many sides of Toronto waterfront politics.

Limitations

There are a few limitations to this study. Attribute agenda setting hypothesizes that issue attributes emphasized in the media become salient in the public mind (Kim et al., 2002), while attribute priming hypothesizes that they become dimensions of issue evaluation among the public (Kim et al., 2002). This study did not examine the agenda of issue attributes among the public. Thus, we cannot know for certain whether media coverage had an impact on public understanding of the issue, or whether it affected political decision-making. The study only examined coverage in the *Toronto Star* and therefore the findings are not generalizable to other Canadian newspapers.

Also, the methodology does not account for differences in emphasis on particular attributes. For example, an article may have mentioned economic benefits multiple times, and noise concerns only once. Despite these differences in emphasis, each attribute would have only been counted once.

Making a comparison between the two months was difficult, due to the sheer volume of attributes being counted. In the future, I would design a content analysis like this with clear points of comparison in mind. Also, I would narrow the scope of what is being compared.

The study could have been enhanced by examining the expansion debate on social media. Dewitt Lee, an activist, said of the expansion reversal: “This was a big win for an online movement. I think this is going to be the model for these kinds of citizen-driven movements. When you win the hearts and minds of people on social media it transfers over to the physical space” (Bateman, 2015, para. 9).

Future research

Castells (2009) describes a new form of interactive communication that has emerged with the diffusion of the internet: mass self-communication. Mass self-communication is characterized by the “capacity of sending messages from many to many” (Castells, 2009, p. 55). The production of the message is self-generated, and it can potentially reach a global audience. Given Dewitt Lee’s comments, future studies may wish to examine how the debate evolved on social media, using the conceptual framework of mass self-communication. Studies (DeLuca et al., 2012) have examined how social movements are made manifest in markedly different ways in the traditional mass media versus on social media. Also, MediaMiser (2013) compared the Island Airport debate as manifest in social media to its coverage in the traditional media. Accordingly, future research may wish to build on these studies by comparing coverage of the Island Airport debate in the traditional mass media, to its representation in social media.

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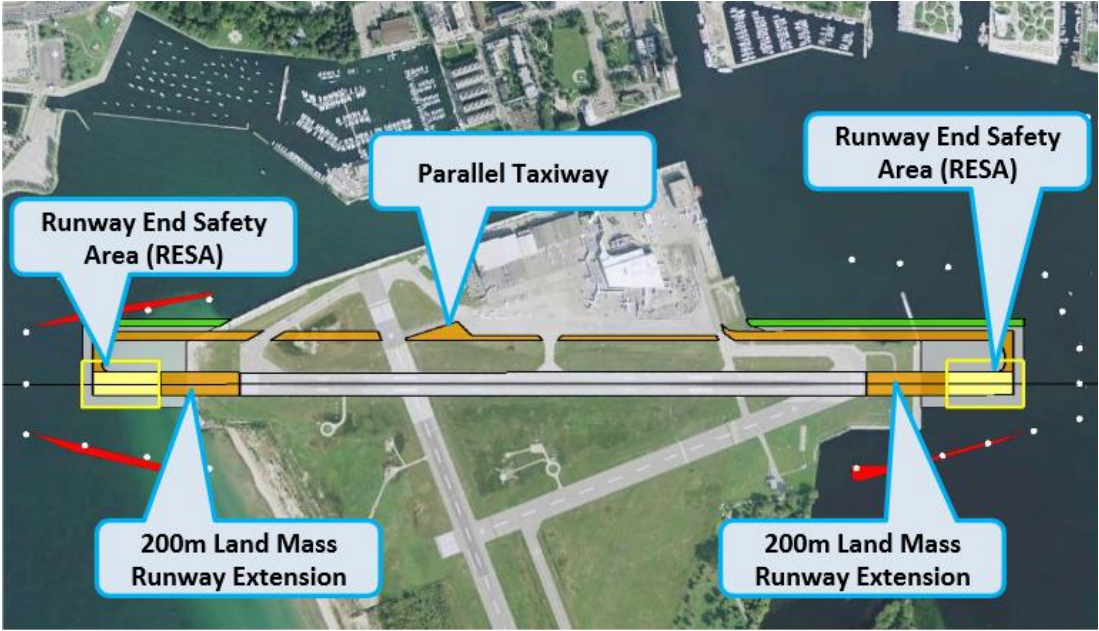
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**Appendix A: Initial conceptual proposal
(Toronto Port Authority, 2014)**



**Appendix B: Anticipated growth of Island Airport with and without runway extension and jets
(PortsToronto, 2015a)**

BBTCA Details	Today 2014	Anticipated Growth 2012 Master Plan	Proposed growth With runway extension and jets
Land mass extension required	No	Yes, for <i>Runway End safety Area</i> (approx. 43m)	Yes, for jets (200m) includes RESA
Runway Length (TORA)	1,216 m	1,216 m	1,658 m
# of Daily Commercial Slots	202	202	242
# of total Passengers/Year Groundside <i>Number in brackets reflects total passengers moving through the airport, including those in transit that don't exit BBTCA</i>	2.0 million (2.43 million)	2.7 million (3.8 million)	4.1 million (5.5 million)
# of Total Annual Aircraft Movements	114,428	140,700	138,170
# Total Annual Non-commercial Aircraft Movements	Approx. 53,166	Approx. 66,098	Approx. 64,778
# of Passengers in Peak Hour Groundside <i>*Number in brackets reflects total passengers moving through airport, including those in transit that don't exit BBTCA</i>	708 (944)	1,085 (1,447)	1,306 (1,741)
Type of Commercial , Aircraft	Q400	Q400	Q400, CS100 & other qualifying jets
Changes to the MEZ	No change	No change	No change in length, 10 to 25 m increase in width

Appendix C: Chronological sample list
April, 2013

ID	Date	Author	Title	Type
1	April 10, 2013	Vanessa Lu	Possible headwinds for Porter expansion	News
2	April 11, 2013	Christopher Hume	Deluce's jet dreams could crash-land	News
3	April 11, 2013	Vanessa Lu and Daniel Dale	Porter's jet plan faces turbulence	News
4	April 11, 2013	Royson James	Porter's power is propelled by success	News
5	April 12, 2013	Toronto Star	Don't panic over jets	Editorial
6	April 12, 2013	Vanessa Lu	Porter's push into jets could shake up skies	News
7	April 12, 2013	Vanessa Lu	Porter CEO Deluce calls new plane the 'whisper jet'	News
8	April 12, 2013	Paul Moloney and David Rider	Jets back as election issue	News
9	April 12, 2013	Joe Fiorito	Zen and the island airport	News
10	April 13, 2013	Rosie Dimanno	Planes v.s. pedals an urban contest	News
11	April 13, 2013	Daniel Dale	Island jet debate surfaces again on new landscape	News

12	April 13, 2013	Royson James	Porter declares war on airport neighbours	News
13	April 13, 2013	Alyshah Hasham	Support flies for Porter	News
14	April 15, 2013	Various	No surprises at airport	Letters
15	April 16, 2013	Royson James	Island airport runway issue heats up	News
16	April 17, 2013	Alyshah Hasham	If Porter gets jets on island, others want in, too	News
17	April 18, 2013	Vanessa Lu	Porter seeks 'exemption' for CSeries airplane	News
18	April 24, 2013	Heino Molls	And now a word for the hoi polloi	Letter
19	April 27, 2013	Jim Byers	Rude and crude, but it's our home	News

March, 2014

ID	Date	Author	Title	Type
20	March 7, 2014	Ambarish Chandra and Mara Lederman	Why it would pay to expand island airport	News
21	March 13, 2014	Vanessa Lu	City accused of trying to block jet plan	News
22	March 14, 2014	Robyn Doolittle	'The time for divisive politics is over'	News
23	March 16, 2014	Various	Airport proposal faustian	Letters

24	March 17, 2014	Laura Kane	Porter poll prodding proponents on Facebook	News
25	March 18, 2014	Leslie Armstrong	Support for jets at billy bishop takes off	News
26	March 19, 2014	Vanessa Lu	Norm Kelly has high hopes for island jets	News
27	March 19, 2014	John Campbell and Mark Wilson	Expanded airport would mar waterfront	News (opinion)
28	March 21, 2014	Vanessa Lu and Betsy Powell	Kelly all in despite staff concerns	News
29	March 22, 2014	Vanessa Lu	Deadline hovering for porter's jet purchase	News
30	March 24, 2014	Colin Rovinescu	No urgency to bring jets to billy bishop airport	News (opinion)
31	March 25, 2014	Alex Ballingall	Porter's jet plan on the table at city hall	News
32	March 25, 2014	Toronto Star	Don't rush decision on jets	Editorial
33	March 26, 2014	Vanessa Lu and Paul Moloney	Ford's bid to rush approval of island airport plan denied	News
34	March 27, 2014	Royson James	Council should take its time with airport	News
35	March 27, 2014	Vanessa Lu	Island jets debate faces long flight	News

36	March 27, 2014	Bob Hepburn	Can chow ride her anti-jets stand to victory?	News (Opinion)
37	March 29, 2014	Letters to editor	Postponing island airport jet decision the right move	News (opinion)
38	March 29, 2014	Vanessa Lu	Porter CEO deluce softens tone on jets plan	News
39	March 31, 2014	Christopher Hume	Time to tell porter to cool its jets	News
40	March 31, 2014	Robert Deluce	Porter airlines' expansion plan hopes to fly high	News (opinion)

Appendix D: Coding Guidebook

Research Questions:

- RQ1: How is the proposed Island Airport expansion framed in the articles sampled?
- RQ2: What arguments for expansion have been featured most frequently in the articles sampled?
- RQ3: What arguments against expansion have been featured most frequently in the articles sampled?
- RQ4: What arguments for delaying the expansion decision have been featured most frequently in the articles sampled?
- RQ5: What informational issue attributes have been featured most frequently in the articles sampled?
- RQ6: What key stakeholders have been mentioned most frequently in the articles sampled and what is their stated position on expansion?

Coding protocol: Operationalized definitions

- A) **Article ID:** Each article will have an assigned number. The coder should write the number as it appears on the article. A sample of 40 articles is being used for this study. Each article will have a number between 1-40 located above the headline on the top right-hand corner of the article.
- B) **Date:** The date of the article should be coded with a two-digit month, two-digit day, and four-digit year. For example, February 20, 2015 should be coded as 02/20/2015.
- C) **Type of article:** The coder should indicate the type of article as noted at the top of the article. The coder will place the corresponding number for the type of article as follows:
- **News – 1**
 - **Editorial – 2**
 - **Letter to the editor- 3**
 - **Opinion - 4**
- D) **Arguments in support of expansion:** The coder should indicate “1” for appearance and “0” for non-appearance.
- **Economic benefits:** Including, for example, tourism, investment, jobs, or economic output.
 - **Limited or no change to status quo:** Including, for example, no change in waterfront redevelopment and use, no change in size of Island Airport; that jets will abide by noise restrictions.
 - **Benefits travellers:** Including, for example, added convenience.
 - **Illegitimate opposition:** Including, for example, criticism of the legitimacy of opposition or opponents to expansion.

- **Success of Porter Airlines:** Including, for example, the success or reliability of Porter Airlines as a reason to support expansion. If their success is mentioned in a neutral manner, count this within the “informational issue attributes” section.
 - **Importance of jets deal to Bombardier Inc.**
- E) **Arguments against expansion:** The coder should indicate “1” for appearance and “0” for non-appearance.
- **Noise**
 - **Traffic:** Including, for example, plane traffic and car traffic
 - **Environmental damage:** Including, for example, pollution, loss of green space, or climate change.
 - **Health and safety risks**
 - **Impact on recreational waterfront use**
 - **Impact on residential waterfront use**
 - **Island Airport may become busy hub**
 - **Economic risk:** Including, for example, that expansion will direct Canadian dollars away from local economy or will drive away tourists.
 - **Porter Airlines holds monopoly at airport**
 - **Risk of loud, polluting jets**
 - **Impact on waterfront revitalization:** Including, for example, negative impact on balance of waterfront assets.
 - **Current Island Airport issues unresolved:** Include if this is framed as an argument against expansion. If it is used as an argument for delaying expansion, include it in that category.
 - **Porter Airlines credibility issues:** Including, for example, Porter’s claims are unfounded, they will never stop trying to expand the airport, or that they have a history of broken promises
- F) **Arguments for delaying Island Airport expansion decision:** The coder should indicate “1” for appearance and “0” for non-appearance.
- **Too many unanswered questions:** Include this if it is an argument for delaying the expansion decision.
 - **Agreement on managed growth is needed**
 - **Current Island Airport issues unresolved:** Include this if it is an argument for delaying a decision on expansion. If it is presented as an argument against expansion, include it in that category.
- G) **Informational issue attributes:** Text that is not overtly in favour of or against expansion. The coder should indicate “1” for appearance and “0” for non-appearance/
- **Positive attributes of Island Airport as it currently operates**
 - **Success of Porter Airlines:** Include this is if it is presented in a neutral manner. If presented as an argument for expansion, include it in that category.
 - **Public cost**
 - **Other airlines want more access to the Island Airport**

- **CS100 jets are unobtrusive:** Including, for example, their quietness or environmentally friendly nature.
- **Information on current flight or passenger traffic**
- **Information on framework for managed growth**

H) **Stakeholders:** Any individual, organization, organizational representative or group affected by or holding an interest in the Island Airport expansion that is directly or indirectly quoted or referenced.

Whenever an individual, organization, or group is directly or indirectly quoted or referenced, identify their perspective on the proposed expansion. If they support expansion, indicate “1” beside the name. If they appear neutral or undecided, indicate “2” beside their name. If they oppose expansion, indicate “3” beside their name. If they support delaying a decision until more information is available, indicate a “4” beside their name. If the stakeholder is a spokesperson or employee, count them as the organization they represent.

- Authors of letters to the editors
- Olivia Chow, former Toronto city councillor, member of parliament and Toronto mayoral candidate
- CommunityAIR (Airport Impact Review)
- Rob Ford, former mayor of Toronto
- NoJetsTO
- Norm Kelly, Toronto city councillor
- PortsToronto, including Mark McQueen, chairman
- David Soknacki, former Toronto city councillor and Toronto mayoral candidate
- Karen Stintz, former Toronto city councillor and Toronto mayoral candidate
- Toronto City Council
- Toronto city staff
- Toronto residents
- John Tory, Mayor of Toronto
- Transport Canada
- Waterfront residents
- Adam Vaughan, member of parliament and former Toronto city councillor

Appendix E: Coding checklist

A. Article ID: _____

B. Date of publication: _____

C. Type of article: _____

D. Arguments in support of expansion:

1. Economic benefits _____
2. Limited or no change to status quo _____
3. Benefits travelers _____
4. Illegitimate opposition _____
5. Success of Porter Airlines _____
6. Importance of jets deal to Bombardier Inc. _____

E. Arguments against expansion:

1. Noise _____
2. Traffic _____
3. Environmental damage _____
4. Health and safety risks _____
5. Impact on recreational waterfront use _____
6. Impact on residential waterfront use _____
7. Island Airport may become busy hub _____
8. Economic risk _____
9. Porter Airlines holds monopoly at airport _____
10. Risk of loud, polluting jets _____
11. Impact on waterfront revitalization _____
12. Current Island Airport issues unresolved _____
13. Porter Airlines credibility issues _____

I) **Arguments for delaying Island Airport expansion decision:** The coder should indicate “1” for appearance and “0” for non-appearance.

- Too many unanswered questions _____
- Agreement on managed growth is needed _____
- Current Island Airport issues unresolved _____

J) **Informational issue attributes:** Text that is not overtly in favour of or against expansion. The coder should indicate “1” for appearance and “0” for non-appearance.

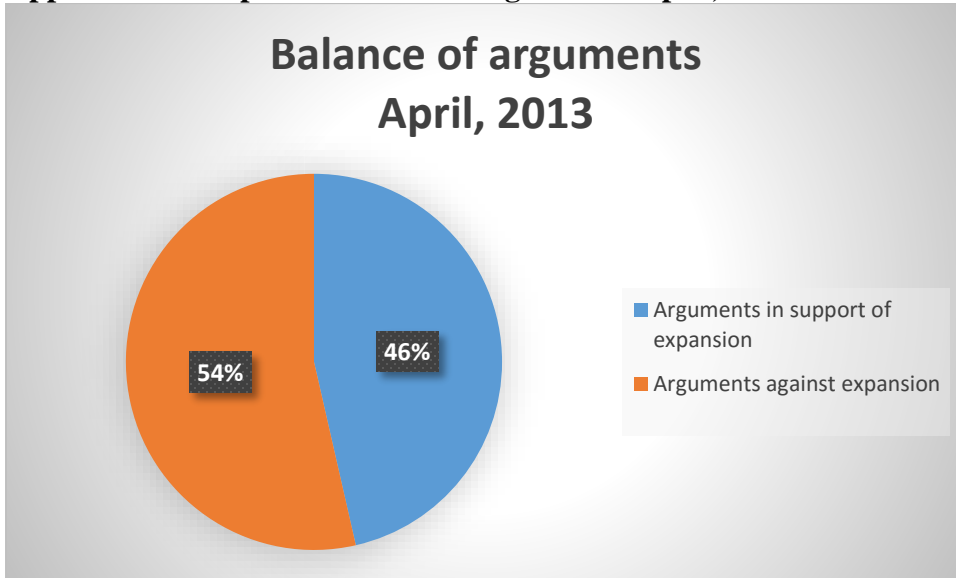
- Positive attributes of Island Airport as it currently operates _____
- Success of Porter Airlines _____
- Public cost _____
- Other airlines want more access to the Island Airport _____
- CS100 jets are unobtrusive _____
- Information on current flight or passenger traffic _____
- Information on framework for managed growth _____

K) Stakeholders: Any individual, organization, organizational representative or group affected by or holding an interest in the Island Airport expansion that is directly or indirectly quoted or referenced.

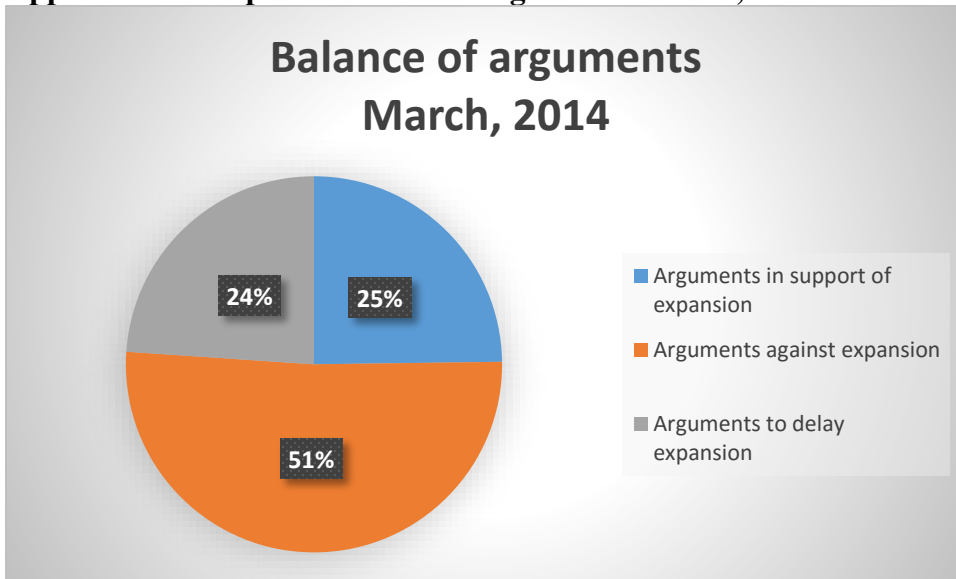
Whenever an individual, organization, or group is directly or indirectly quoted or referenced, identify their perspective on the proposed expansion. If they support expansion, indicate “1” beside the name. If they appear neutral or undecided, indicate “2” beside their name. If they oppose expansion, indicate “3” beside their name. If they support delaying a decision until more information is available, indicate a “4” beside their name. If the stakeholder is a spokesperson or employee, count them as the organization they represent.

1. Authors of letters to the editors_____
2. Olivia Chow _____
3. CommunityAIR_____
4. Rob Ford _____
5. NoJetsTO
6. Norm Kelly _____
7. PortsToronto, including Mark McQueen, Chairman _____
8. David Soknacki_____
9. Karen Stintz _____
10. Toronto City Council_____
11. Toronto city staff_____
12. Toronto residents_____
13. John Tory _____
14. Transport Canada_____
15. Adam Vaughan _____
16. Waterfront residents_____

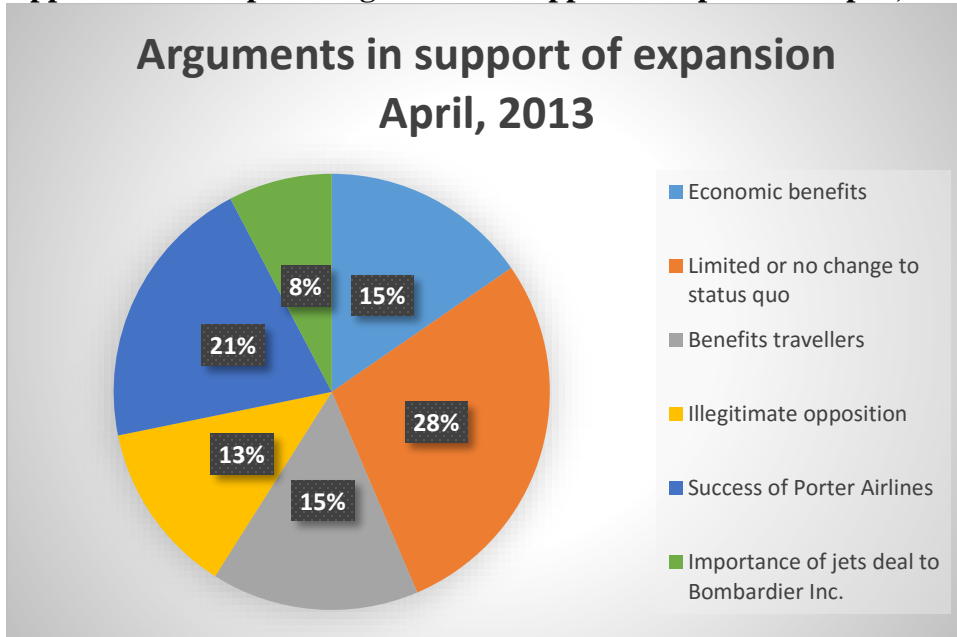
Appendix F: Graph 1. Balance of Arguments: April, 2013



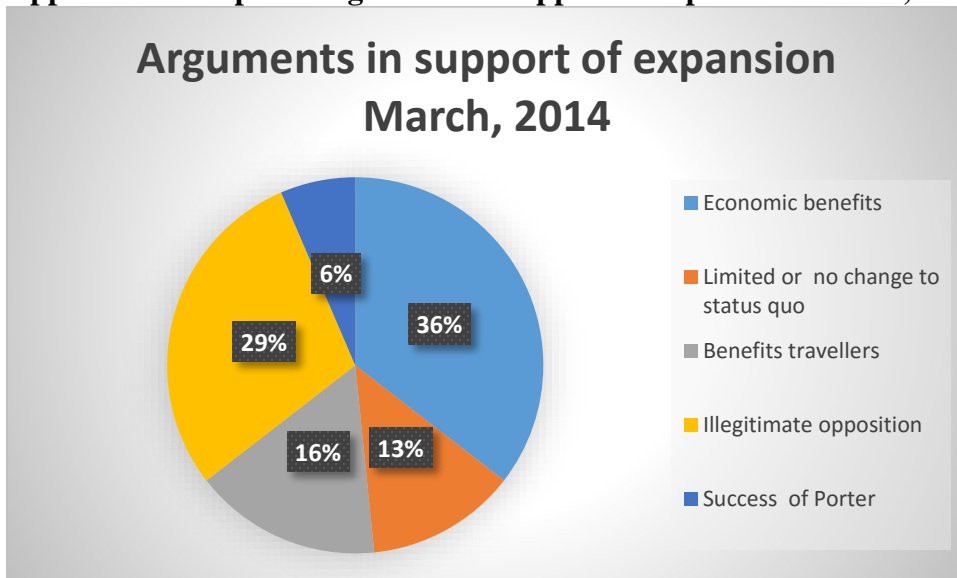
Appendix G: Graph 2. Balance of Arguments: March, 2014



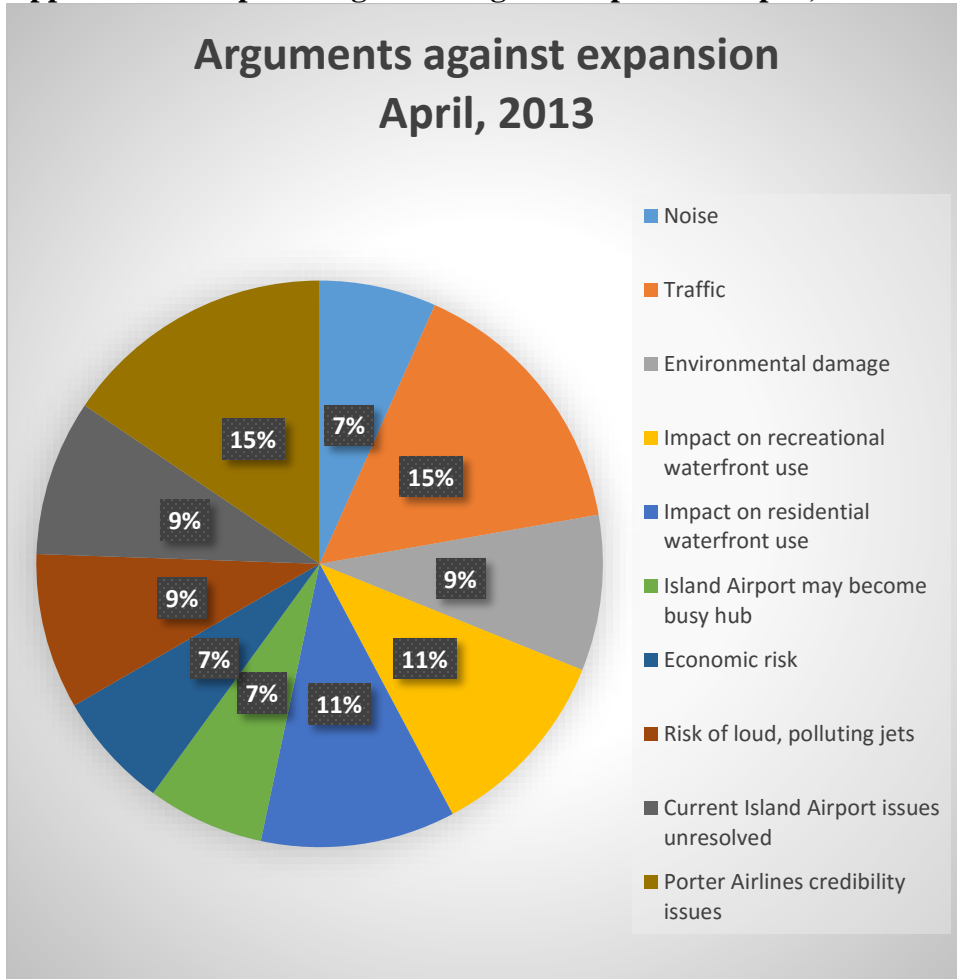
Appendix H: Graph 3. Arguments in support of expansion: April, 2013



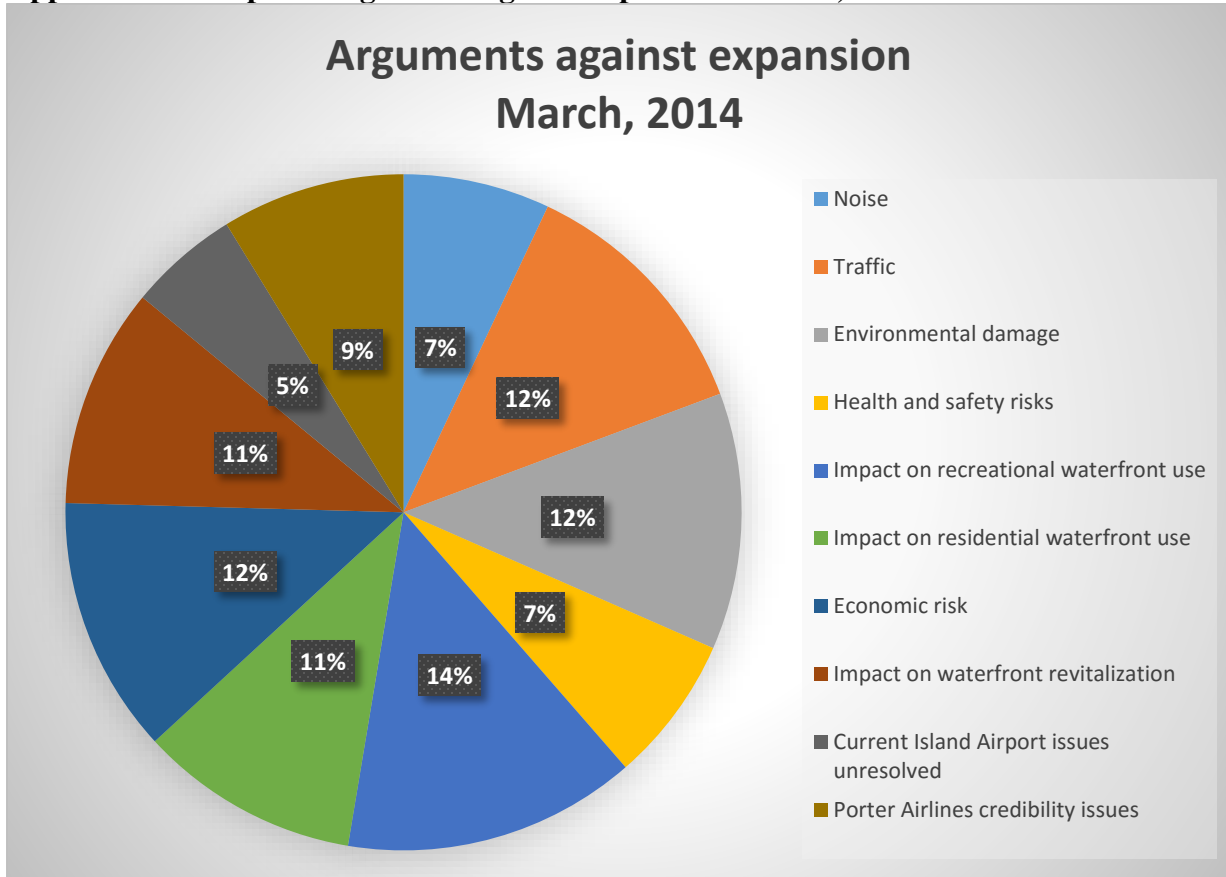
Appendix I: Graph 4. Arguments in support of expansion: March, 2014



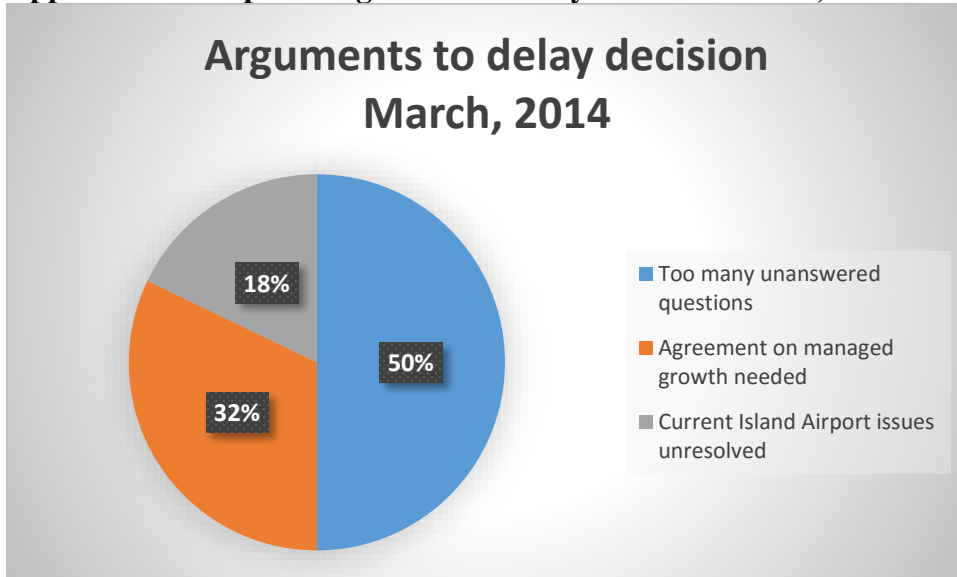
Appendix J: Graph 5. Arguments against expansion: April, 2013



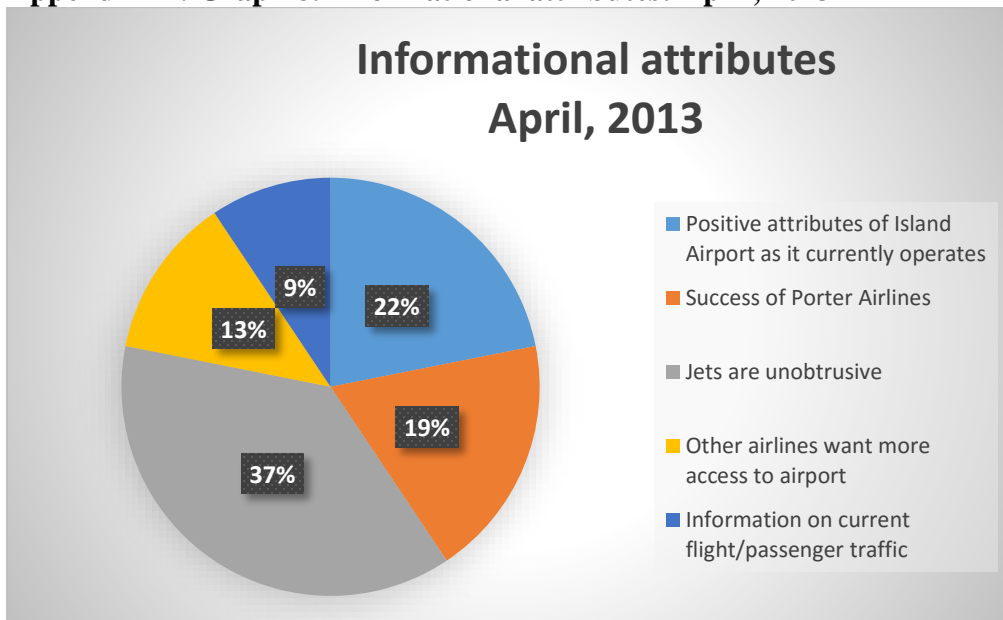
Appendix K: Graph 6. Arguments against expansion: March, 2014.



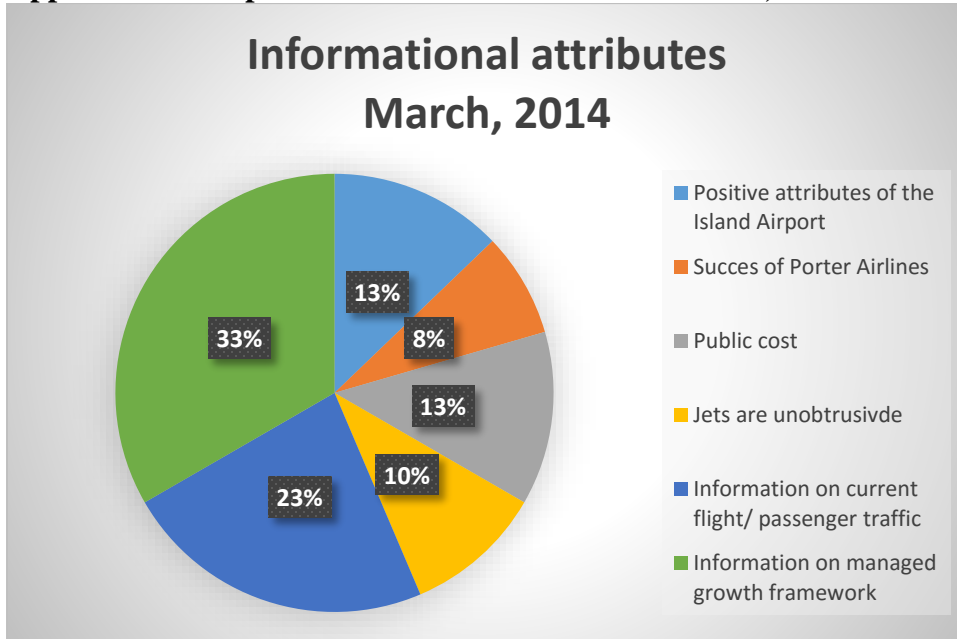
Appendix L: Graph 7. Arguments to delay decision: March, 2014.



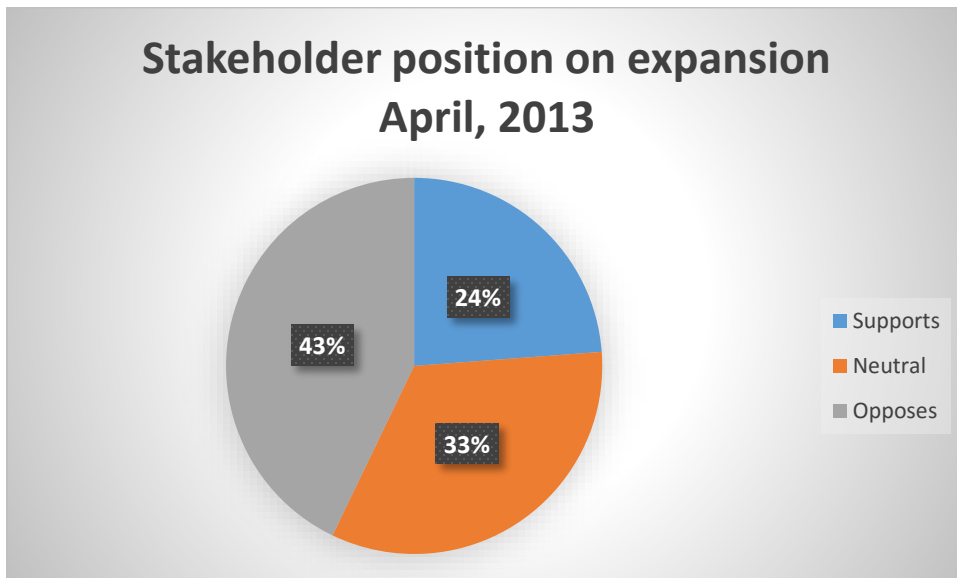
Appendix M: Graph 8. Informational attributes: April, 2013



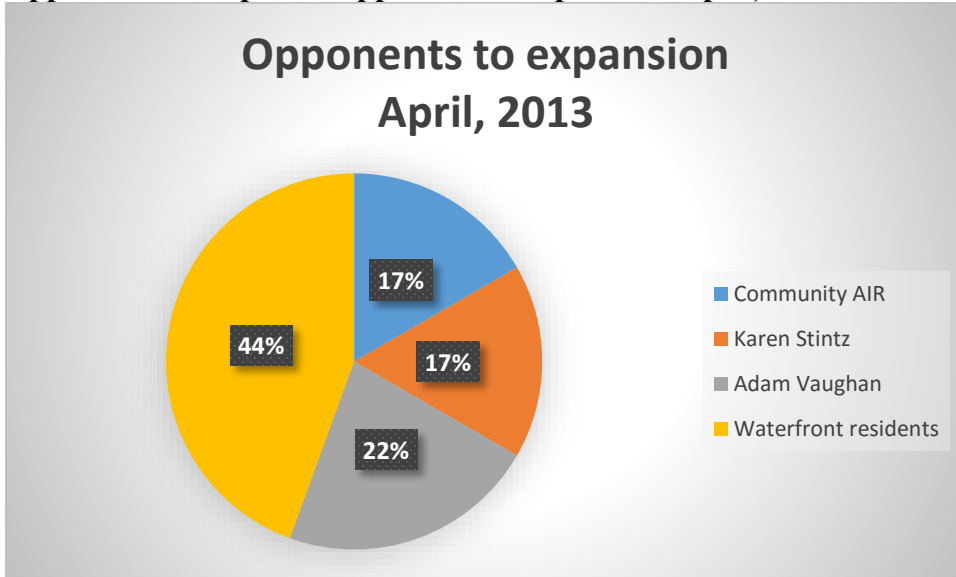
Appendix N: Graph 9. Informational attributes: March, 2014



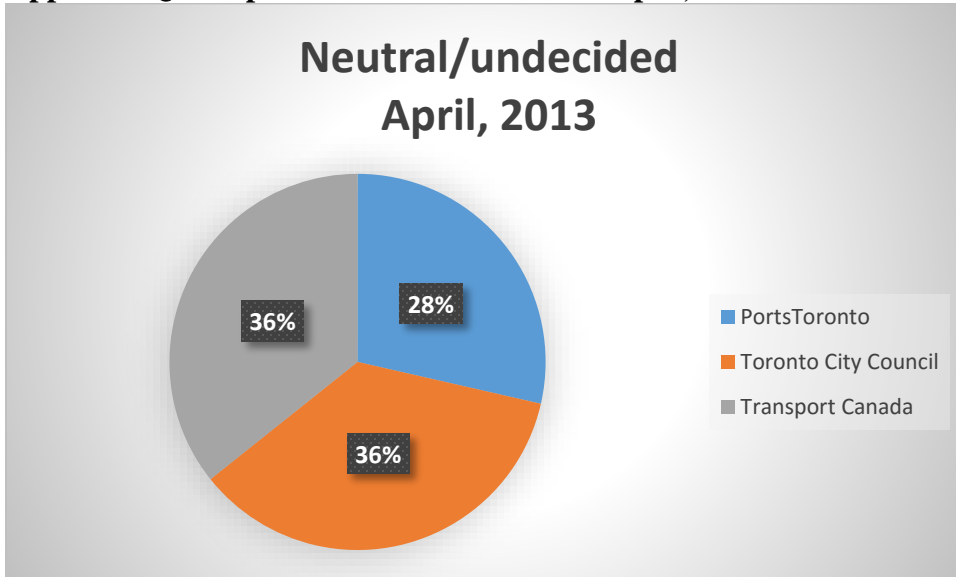
Appendix O: Graph 10. Stakeholder position on expansion: April, 2013



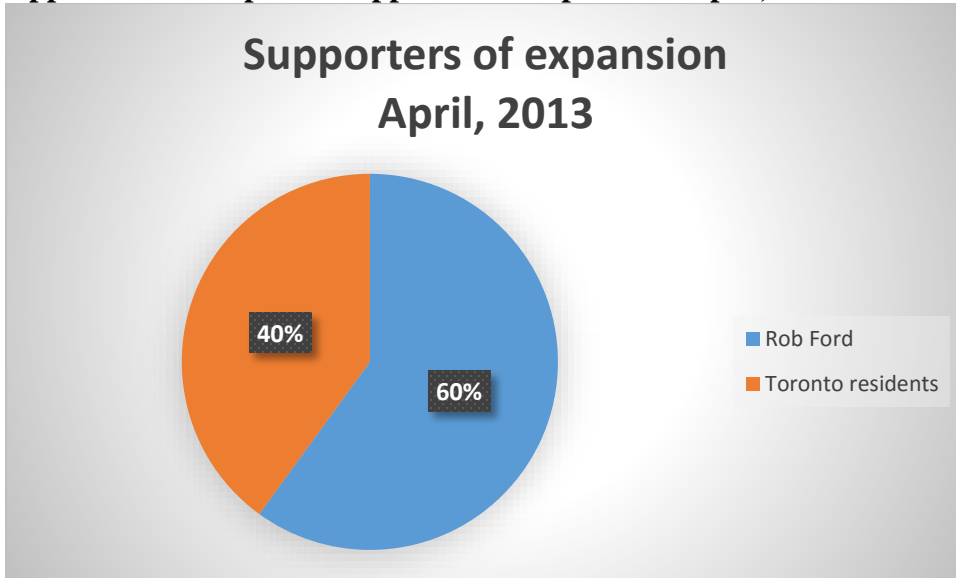
Appendix P: Graph 11. Opponents to expansion: April, 2013



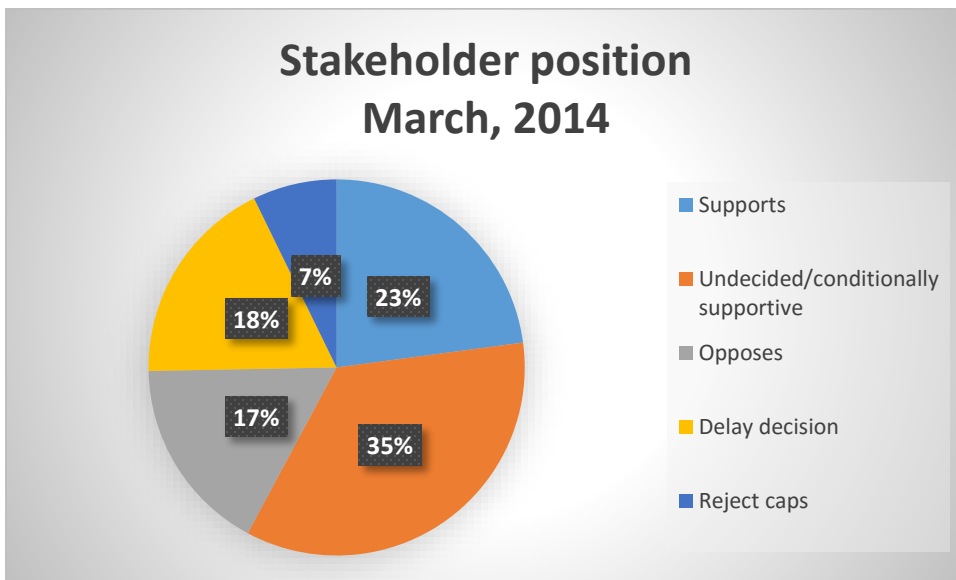
Appendix Q: Graph 12. Neutral/undecided: April, 2013



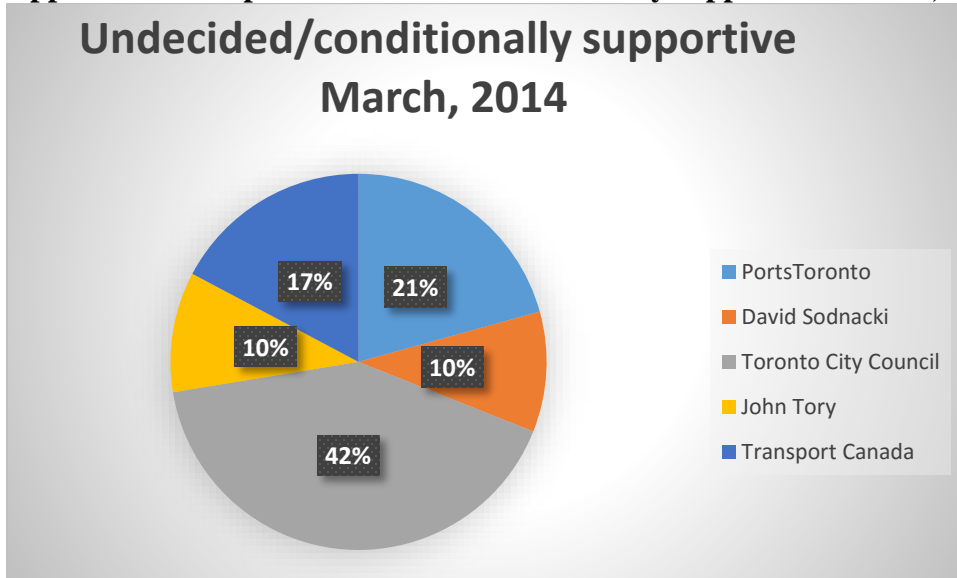
Appendix R: Graph 13. Supporters of expansion: April, 2013



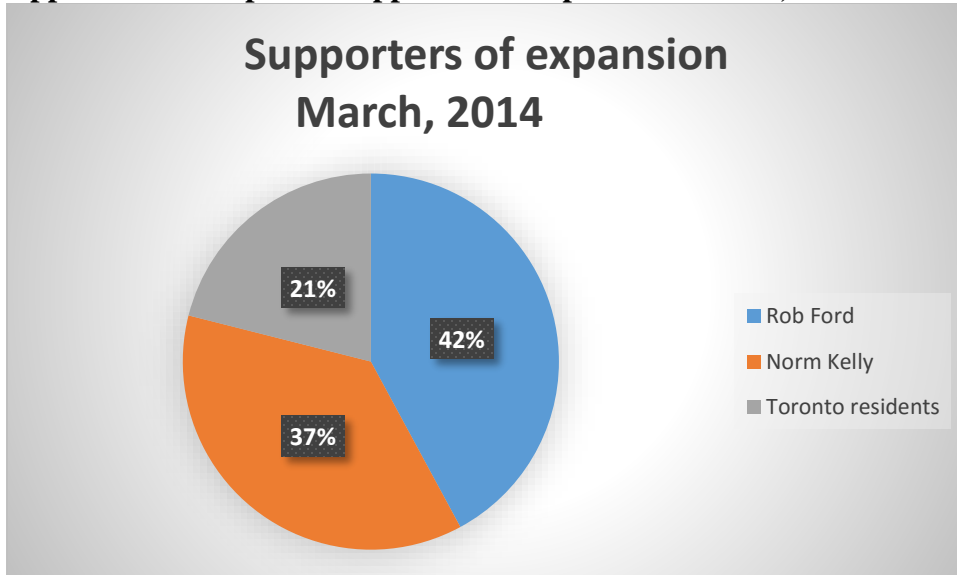
Appendix S: Graph 14. Stakeholder position on expansion: March, 2014



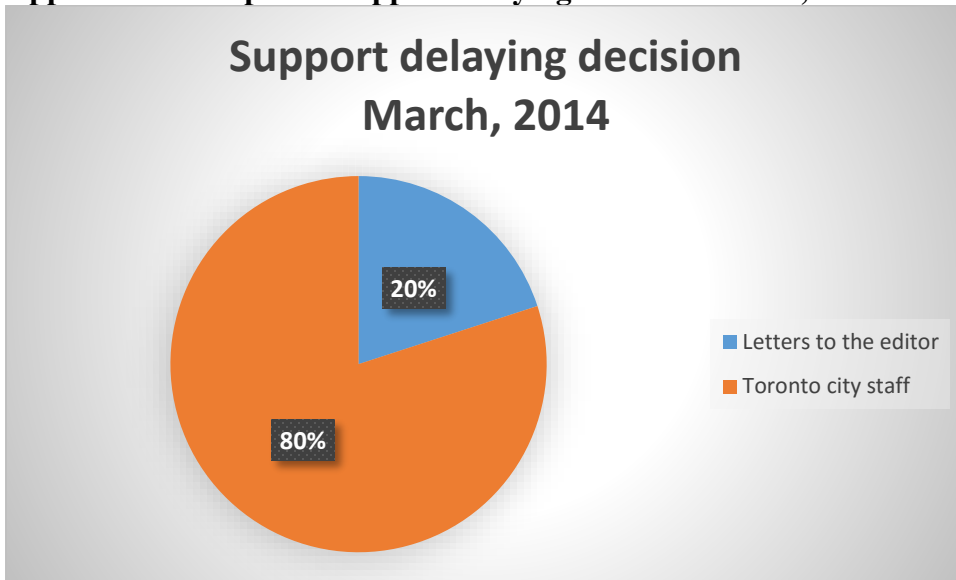
Appendix T: Graph 15. Undecided/conditionally supportive: March, 2014



Appendix U: Graph 16. Supporters of expansion: March, 2014



Appendix V: Graph 17. Support delaying decision: March, 2014



Appendix W: Graph 18. Opponents to expansion: March, 2014

