

8 Wing Expansion Project

Launching the next generation of Canada in space

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In the early 2000s, the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces began considering a new location to accommodate the growing needs of the Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM), as their current facility in Dwyer Hill, Ontario was too small.

Following the identification of this requirement, an extensive options analysis was conducted in 2005 and 2006 to determine the best possible option. The key criteria for a new location included close proximity to an existing DND/CAF facility; easy access from all parts of Canada; and an area large enough to support various requirements such as water-oriented training.

That said, the primary criterion was to identify potential locations that would result in minimal disruptions to the local population, affecting the fewest people and avoiding impacts to public infrastructure such as roads and railways. With the view to limiting disruptions to surrounding communities, particular attention was given to areas where the Government of Canada owned unused property contiguous with Canadian Armed Forces facilities.

In light of these criteria, DND/CAF analysis determined that expanding 8 Wing Trenton was the most appropriate course of action. It was then determined that expanding directly north of the wing was the most appropriate course of action, considering the significantly higher number of residents and established businesses whose land and installation would have had to be purchased or

expropriated east and west of the selected area. Furthermore, expanding east of the selected area would have meant expanding in an area not contiguous to the Wing and creating additional restrictions due to the landing strip final approach. Also, a storage unit, pharmaceutical warehouses and a municipal works depot are being built immediately west of the selected area, thus making this area unsuitable for the expansion.

8 Wing Trenton is the largest Royal Canadian Air Force Base in the country and the hub of Canada's strategic airlift capability, which will facilitate the deployment of our Special Forces. 8 Wing Trenton's prime location along Highway 401 allows for a rapid response to emergencies in major Canadian population centres, like Montreal, Toronto and Ottawa.

In 2007, with a view of purchasing their properties, the Government of Canada began approaching residents of the area bordering the northern edge of 8 Wing, RCAF Road to the west, Whites Road to the east and the railway track to the north. A total of twelve homeowners were affected. The situation was explained in detail to each homeowner and a price for their land was negotiated based on market value (through legal representatives for both sides). As of May 2012, all but two landowners voluntarily sold their properties to the Government of Canada. The last two properties were expropriated in May 2012 and, subsequently, confidential compensation agreements were signed.

Over the years, the Wing has been able to build and maintain solid working relationships with the Municipality of Quinte West. The municipality has been consulted and continues to be consulted on various aspects of the project to ensure local concerns were addressed; including the increased traffic flow on municipal roads around the site.

In May 2010, the municipal council of Quinte West unanimously adopted a resolution supporting the acquisition of “all lands required for the relocation of the JTF2 unit to the City of Quinte West through the use of all means necessary up to, and including, expropriation.” Shortly thereafter, the municipal council of Belleville adopted a similar motion.

Work on the 400-acre expansion of 8 Wing Trenton and the construction of a new training and administrative campus has begun with the site preparation, which includes the demolition and removal of buildings on DND property. Once completed, detailed design and construction of the new campus will commence.

The expansion of 8 Wing Trenton, and the associated construction, is expected to have a long-lasting positive economic impact on the community and the region, generating many direct and indirect job creation opportunities stemming from the construction of the project and the arrival of new families once the installations are completed.

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