



Intro: Good evening Mr. Reeve and council.

Four and a half years ago I drove through a snow storm to come and introduce myself and my business to council, and to let you all know that Apex Helicopters was moving to the airport to conduct an air charter and aerial work business.

At that time, I made a 25 year commitment to all of you when I signed my land lease for my hangar. Since that time, I have made further efforts to reassure you of my commitment as I signed another hanger lease last year and have submitted plans for a 3rd and much larger hangar this year.

Unfortunately, due to the current circumstances of the airport Feasibility Study and the uncertainty of the future of the airport, I have had to halt business growth in Wingham to a certain degree.

My purpose for being here tonight, is not to rehash old news or past issues, but to bring some strong points and key information to council and the general public that they may or may not already know. My desire is to help with making an educated decision about the future of the airport.

For the record: may I say that my recommendations to council and the tax payers of Wingham and surrounding area is that they retain the airport as an asset and put more focus into its development.

The following are my points and suggestions. I will give a brief explanation as I go and you are free to stop me at any time to ask me a question.

- 1) Apex Helicopters Inc. would not be here if there was not an airport here already.
- 2) Apex Helicopters injects \$111,011 per year into the local economy, and has done so for the past 4.5 years. That is a very conservative number.
- 3) Apex Helicopters does not need an airport to operate business but I believe in the airport and the vital role it serves the community thus the reason we chose to make it home.
- 4) If you take away the airport, Apex will go with it.
- 5) I cannot afford to put down any roots here in Wingham if you are not going to commit to me like I have to you. Before I can expand further I need the certainty of knowing that the airport will be here for the long term. We need to put this to rest so we can all move on.
- 6) Just this past year, Apex and surrounding area came together in mid-October to participate in a charity event that we at Apex Helicopters started. The end result was that many families in the area that could never afford to take a ride in a helicopter were able to do so while helping support a great cause. In one day, and because you had an airport here, we raised enough money at the airport to build 9.5 houses in a third world country. That is 9.5 families that now have a roof over their head all because Wingham had an airport.
- 7) Did you know that some doctors that serve the Wingham hospital come from Toronto and KW on a weekly basis fly here and ride their bike to the hospital to do specialty work?
- 8) If the airport closes and we don't come up with a solution for Medevac to land, what will you say when it is one of your own that doesn't make it because we took a short term gain for a long term loss. I spend A LOT of time at the airport and a lot of times it is well into the wee hours of the morning when I am here that Ornge lands here to pick up a shock trauma victim. As I am writing this, we have just had Ornge out 6 times in the last week and already once this week and



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its only Monday. Do we really want to give this asset up over \$1800 per year? WHAT is a life worth to us?

9) I am not the only player out at the airport and do not in any way want it to come across as such. We need to think about this as a whole "The Big Picture".

- What is the risk to the tax payer for keeping the airport open? \$1800?
- What are the benefits?
 - A) Medvac
 - B) Business growth
 - C) A place for your kids to learn to fly for free (Cadets)
 - D) \$111,011 in cash injected into the local economy and that's just Apex not the Wingham Jets or the Cadets
 - E) Specialized doctors for our hospital
 - F) Recreational flying
 - G) A place to have special events and fundraisers that touch places around the world

You may think that closing the airport and selling the land makes the most sense, but you would be very wrong in my opinion. Have you really sat down and thought things through? If you voted for closing and selling the land, this is what you would be voting for.

- 1) If you close the airport, you will need to move or buy out existing hanger contracts. I have my 2 hangers insured at \$489,000 and I know the other hanger not owned by Apex would need to be bought for \$100,000.
- 2) Also you would need to build a heli pad for Ornge to land at with that price tag around \$1,000,000 if you wanted to retain that service.
- 3) I talked to a construction company, and the cost to tear up and dispose of the runway would be well over \$200,000. + or -
- 4) If my math is correct and you sold the land at the air port for 2.5 million, you would only be left with \$700,000.
- 5) You would lose out on the Cadets, specialized doctors and the Wingham jets, and recreational pilots who come here just because there is an airport to fly out of.

In conclusion:

My recommendation is to keep the airport and continue to operate as we have in the past years with a focus on development.

Chris Vankoughnett

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A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CV' with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.