

OTTAWA

Airport soccer field plan rejected

A developer's last-ditch attempt to build 30 soccer fields near Ottawa's airport received a critical blow yesterday as council voted against supporting the project.

"It's a sad day for Ottawa," said Larry Pegg, owner of Ecoview Developments.

Ecoview has been working towards building the world's largest soccer facility near the future north-south light rail corridor, on lands near the Ottawa

Airport.

Mayor Bob Chiarelli and council voted against supporting the project

citing a lack of authority over the airport lands.

"It is not within the city's authority to rezone this land," said Chiarelli. "It's zoned industrial now, which is what the airport wants."

But Pegg believes council made a decision based on erroneous information, including the zoning argument made by Chiarelli.

"We want a fair assessment," Pegg said. "We are absolutely devastated that council is disregarding this project."

Some councillors did want to send the item to a committee meeting so it could be opened up to public debate.

"I think this is an important issue and deserves debate," said Coun. Alex Cullen (Bay ward).

safety first?

► Ottawa Airport Authority spokesperson Krista Kealey said that the proposed site is not compatible with safety regulations. The lands lie directly beneath a flight path.