



Township of The Archipelago
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June 18, 2020

20-086

**Moved by Councillor Barton
Seconded by Councillor Frost**

RE: Connectivity – Rural Internet

WHEREAS broadband limitations restrict the services that rural and northern residents can receive;

AND WHEREAS the majority of the Township of The Archipelago does not have good connectivity coverage which is increasingly challenging to our residents and business community;

AND WHEREAS broadband is a social and economic driver for all communities;

AND WHEREAS dealing with the COVID-19 global pandemic crisis has proven that access to high speed internet will provide better access to health care, education and economic development;

AND WHEREAS in 2019, the Government of Canada announced its commitment to set a national target, in which 95 per cent of Canadian homes and businesses will have access to internet speeds of at least 50/10 MBPS by 2026 and 100 per cent by 2030, no matter where they are located in the country;

AND WHEREAS in 2020, the Provincial government has announced that they are investing \$150 million in reliable broadband and cellular service, to create more economic and educational opportunities in rural, remote and underserved areas of the province, as part of their \$315 million initiative called *Up to Speed: Ontario's Broadband and Cellular Action Plan*;

AND WHEREAS all residents of this Province are equally entitled to efficient high and affordable speed internet;

AND WHEREAS the need for investment in and development of broadband infrastructure is now;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council for the Township of The Archipelago establish the provision of better and affordable connectivity as a priority for the Township and West Parry Sound area by allocating monies in our

2020 budget or directing funds to be used from our reserves (up to \$500,000), including our Modernization Funds, for connectivity for shovel ready projects;

AND FURTHER THAT Council for the Township of The Archipelago direct staff to:

1. Liaise with the Federal and Provincial Government including requesting a meeting with Federal and Provincial Ministers and/or requesting a delegation at AMO;
2. Pursue any and all funding opportunities; and
3. Develop a short term strategy for project implementation including sources of funding.

AND FURTHER THAT staff be directed to acquire the necessary resources (staffing; service providers; consultants) to assist with the development and implementation of a connectivity strategy;

AND FURTHER THAT the Township continue to liaise with the other 6 West Parry Sound municipalities in the riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka, area First Nation communities, West Parry Sound SMART and Parry Sound-Muskoka Community Network to develop Terms of Reference for collaboration on the basis of connectivity;

AND FURTHER THAT this resolution be forwarded to all municipalities in Ontario, AMO, FCM, Mr. Scott Aitchison MP Parry-Sound-Muskoka, Mr. Norm Miller Parry Sound-Muskoka MPP and the following Ministers in our Federal and Provincial governments:

Federal

- The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada
- The Honourable Melanie Joly, Minister of Economic and Official Languages
- The Honourable Catherine McKenna, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities
- The Honourable Maryam Monsef, Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Rural Economic Development
- The Honourable Mary Ng, Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade

Provincial

- The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
- The Honourable Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
- The Honourable Greg Rickford, Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines
- The Honourable Laurie Scott, Minister of Infrastructure
- The Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Carried.