

June 22, 2020

Ian Scott
Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer
Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission
ian.scott@crtc.gc.ca

Dear Mr. Scott,

Re: Fair and equitable funding to support broadband infrastructure projects in Southwestern Ontario

As the Warden for the County of Essex, I am writing to you today to request the allocation of fair and equitable funding to support broadband infrastructure projects in rural Southwestern Ontario, including in underserved areas of Essex County.

Southwestern Ontario broadband funding cannot be undervalued. It has been estimated that it would cost approximately \$2.5 billion to provide a fibre-based solution to address all Southwestern Ontario's underserved areas, including in areas of Essex County – wireless could help to reduce these costs in some areas.

The region which is 90% rural and represents 10% of the Canadian population has been overlooked in the past for funding.

Connectivity is key to the social and economic success of our communities – we need to ensure that the residents living in our underserved communities do not go unnoticed.

Adequate and equitable funding for the region is required to ensure that broadband, an essential utility, is accessible for all.

The COVID-19 outbreak has laid bare the challenges our underserved communities in Essex County and across Southwestern Ontario are facing.

In today's unprecedented times, where children are required to attend school remotely, online ordering is the new norm and virtual meetings are now a workplace requirement, broadband is not a luxury, it is essential.

On behalf of Essex County we are respectfully asking the Canadian Radiotelevision and Telecommunications Commission to support Southwestern Ontario broadband infrastructure projects.

Sincerely,



Gary McNamara
Warden, County of Essex
Mayor, Town of Tecumseh

cc.
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