

June 22, 2020

The Honourable Steve Clark
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
minister.mah@ontario.ca

Dear Mr. Clark,

Re: Appreciation for Support of Rural Access to Broadband

On behalf of the County of Essex and our 7 local municipalities, thank you for your letter dated June 4, 2020.

Your commitment to enhance broadband access in Ontario through the Broadband and Cellular Action Plan is appreciated. The \$315 million over five years to expand broadband and cellular infrastructure, will serve to support many of our rural and underserved residents in Southwestern Ontario.

Additional funding for rural broadband in the wake of COVID-19 is essential. As a critical component of the economic relief and stimulus measures, important investments must be made to boost the pace and scale of broadband deployment efforts.

Increased funding from both the Province of Ontario and the Government of Canada is urgently needed to address our region's large connectivity gaps, so that we can close the digital divide and restart our economies.

The County of Essex supports the funding of existing shovel ready, municipally led models that will connect our rural economies at an accelerated pace. We support SWIFT as Southwestern Ontario's funding mechanism to advance the expansion of critical broadband infrastructure across the region. The model works, it delivers results and can be immediately leveraged to upgrade networks and coverage in our region's underserved areas.

Families and business in our rural areas have been shut out of the economy and society as a result of the pandemic. COVID -19 has underscored the need in urgency to address gaps in broadband services across our region.

Appreciation for Support of Rural Access to Broadband
June 22, 2020

Your support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Gary McNamara
Warden, County of Essex

Cc:

The Honourable Ahmed Hussen
Minister of Families, Children and Social Development
Ahmed.Hussen@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Navdeep Bains
Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry
Navdeep.Bains@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Catherine McKenna
Minister of Infrastructure and Communities
Catherine.McKenna@parl.gc.ca


The Honourable Maryam Monsef
Minister of Rural Economic Development
Minister for Women and Gender Equality
Maryam.Monsef@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Laurie Scott
Minister of Infrastructure, Ontario
laurie.scott@pc.ola.org

Chris Lewis
Member of Parliament, Essex
Chris.Lewis@parl.gc.ca

Dave Epp
MP Chatham-Kent Leamington
Dave.epp@parl.gc.ca

Taras Natyshak
Member of Provincial Parliament, Essex
tnatyshak-co@ndp.on.ca

 519-776-6441 ext. 1327
TTY 1-877-624-4832

 360 Fairview Ave. W.
Suite # 314 Essex, ON N8M 1Y6

 countyofessex.ca

Appreciation for Support of Rural Access to Broadband June 22, 2020

Percy Hatfield
Member of Provincial Parliament, Windsor-Tecumseh
PHatfield-CO@ndp.on.ca

Rick Nicholls
Member of Provincial Parliament, Chatham-Kent-Leamington
rick.nichollsco@pc.ola.org

Jim Ginn
Chair, Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus
warden@huroncounty.ca

Town of Amherstburg
Aldo DiCarlo, Mayor, aDicarlo@amherstburg.ca
John Miceli, CAO, jmiceli@amherstburg.ca

Town of Essex
Larry Snively, Mayor, lsnively@essex.ca
Chris Nepszy, CAO, cnepszy@essex.ca

Town of Kingsville
Nelson Santos, Mayor, nsantos@kingsville.ca
Jennifer Astrologo, Director of Corporate Services/Clerk, jastrologo@kingsville.ca
Ryan McLeod, Director of Financial Services, rmcleod@kingsville.ca


Town of Lakeshore
Tom Bain, Mayor, tbain@lakeshore.ca
Truper McBride, CAO, tmcbride@lakeshore.ca

Town of LaSalle
Marc Bondy, Mayor, mbondy@lasalle.ca
Joe Milicia, CAO, jmilicia@lasalle.ca

Municipality of Leamington
Hilda MacDonald, Mayor, macdonald@leamington.ca
Peter Neufeld, pneufeld@leamington.ca

Town of Tecumseh
Margaret Misek-Evans, CAO, mevans@tecumseh.ca

County of Essex
Robert Maisonville, CAO, rmaisonville@countyofessex.ca

 519-776-6441 ext. 1327
TTY 1-877-624-4832

 360 Fairview Ave. W.
Suite # 314 Essex, ON N8M 1Y6

 countyofessex.ca