



September 21, 2021

TO: The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Email: Doug.fordco@pc.ola.org

AND TO: Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
200 University Avenue, Suite 800
Toronto, Ontario M5H 3C6
Email: amo@amo.on.ca

Re: Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) 2021 Conference

Dear Premier Ford,

At its Regular Council Meeting of September 7, 2021, Essex Town Council received information from Councillor Bjorkman concerning his attendance at the recent Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) 2021 Conference. In particular Councillor Bjorkman advised that the importance of bringing reliable Broadband to all Ontarians was discussed at the conference. During this discussion Council took note of the ongoing concern that a lack of reliable and affordable access to Broadband poses a significant challenge to many Ontarians in particular Ontarians and businesses located in rural/smaller communities. Council then discussed the desire for broadband/high speed internet to be classified and funded by the Province as an essential service so as to ensure all can be a part of and enjoy the benefits of the digital economy. Declaring broadband/high speed internet as an essential service would ensure that the provision of broadband services be given the same priority for Ontarians as the provision of clean water, electricity, health care, education and postal services. Making the provision of broadband service mandatory across every rural and remote corner of the Province will bolster economic development and ensure affordable, reliable and fair access for all to the digital economy.



As a result of the discussion Council passed the following resolution:

R21-09-378

Moved by: Deputy Richard Meloche

Seconded By: Councillor Bondy

That the verbal report/presentation by Councillor Bjorkman regarding his attendance /participation at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) 2021 Conference be received;

That Council recognizes the need for broadband internet to be an essential service by adopting the following resolution:

Whereas broadband internet is essential for life tasks including education, workforce, healthcare, and is a fundamental element of an inclusive and sustainable world;

Whereas the global pandemic has heightened the awareness of the problems that the lack of reliable and stable access to broadband and digital connectivity have on residents;

Whereas an increasing number of information resources, including government resources and services, are available solely online; and

Therefore, be it resolved that the Council of the Town of Essex does hereby call upon the Province of Ontario to deem Broadband Internet as an essential service and to provide support to all municipalities so that all residents of Ontario can have access to broadband as an integral part of their daily lives; and further that a letter requesting support be sent to the Honorable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and all local municipalities.

Carried



I trust you will find this satisfactory. If you have any questions or comments please feel free to contact the undersigned.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Auger", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Robert W. Auger, L.L.B.
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