

From: Emmanuel Casalino <M.F.I.P.P.A. Sec. 14(1)>

Sent: Friday, September 23, 2022 2:00 PM

To: clerks <clerks@oshawa.ca>; * Council <council@oshawa.ca>

Subject: Matter re: high speed internet for Oshawa communities and farms north of Hwy 407

To whom it may concern, I am hoping that this letter could be included as part of the package related to this coming Monday's meeting related to the topic of high-speed Internet access for Oshawa communities/farms north of Highway #407. I would like to add my voice to the discussion related to ongoing challenges in accessing reliable Internet services and the real impact it has on area residents' daily lives and our ability to access critical business and public safety services.

I am a resident of Columbus and want to bring to your attention an ongoing challenge for Columbus residents in accessing reliable and effective Internet. Columbus is located within walking distance of one of Ontario's most advanced universities, is next to Oshawa's fastest-growing communities, and sits beside highway 407 which is central to the modernization of the province's transportation infrastructure - yet, access to cellular and internet networks is consistently unreliable.

In today's day and age, stable, reliable, and effective networks are no longer a luxury but core to accessing emergency services (police, fire, and ambulance), and supporting work-from-home.

Personally, I had been hosting my elderly father as a result of the pandemic and had to request an ambulance on a couple of occasions due to his failing health. Each time, one of my first thoughts was whether would I be able to connect to 911. Cellular coverage in Columbus is extremely spotty and drop calls are not an uncommon experience. Having to drive closer to the 407 in order to make a call is something we regularly do. Due to the real risk of not being able to gain access to 911, we had to install a landline and incur added household expenses.

With the pandemic, working from home was a necessity for both my wife and me. However, there is no high-speed internet available in Columbus! Residents must rely on expensive satellite services or if you are lucky enough to be within line of sight of a tower you can access a slightly more reliable microwave network. x. This meant, my wife and I are not able to be online for work at the same time. I had to resort to going to Starbucks / Tim Hortons to use their WIFI. Remember, we are less than 4 kilometers from Ontario Tech University / Durham college.

Enabling citizenry access to reliable and affordable high-speed internet access is a key government priority, with various initiatives underway to make this a reality for all Ontarians. My question to the Oshawa council is - why is this critical service not available in the community of Columbus?

I thank you for your attention and would be happy to provide additional information.

Yours truly,

Emmanuel Casalino

A long-time resident of Oshawa, a new member of the Columbus Community