



Date: Wednesday, July 5, 2023

From: Niall Lobley, Acting CAO/Director of Community & Environmental Services

Subject: Eh!Tel Fibre Optic Installation

Report CSD 2023-13

This document and its attachments are public and available in an accessible format upon request.

Recommendation

That the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to enter into a Site Agreement for Points of Presence with Eh!tel at the former landfill site on Stone School Road and at Kilsyth Park on Fleming Drive and;

That Council delegate authority to the CAO and/or Director, Community and Environmental Services, or designate, to sign a Telecommunications/Municipal Access Agreement with Eh!tel to support the installation of Fiber Optic Cables in the Township of Georgian Bluffs and;

That staff be encouraged to work with Eh!tel to secure a local Indigenous artist to complete a mural or other artistic endeavor to be displayed on the outside of the Kilsyth POP location in honor of the traditional territory.

Background

Eh!tel Networks Inc. (Eh!tel) is a Canadian Fibre internet service provider (ISP) located in the County of Grey, founded in 2010 and based in Holstein, Ontario. Eh!tel has been successful at winning eight SWIFT projects and one AHSIP (Accelerated High Speed Internet Program) Lot 32.1.

Eh!tel's focus is, and continues to be, providing services to rural communities. In addition to internet up to 1Gb, Eh!tel provides home phone and IP TV.

Through the provincial programs to support investments into rural internet, Eh!tel has secured funding to support the installation of fiber optic internet services across the Township of Georgian Bluffs. This was announced in summer, 2022:

<https://www.infrastructureontario.ca/en/what-we-do/projectssearch/accelerated-high-speed-internet-program/> .



Analysis

Eh!tel intends to provide a buried fiber optic cable alongside municipally owned and operated roadways to service the residences identified as under served within the selected areas. Providing all Permits and Consents are obtained, Eh!tel will be constructing over 500km of fibre which will be completed in three phases:

- Phase 1: Hepworth

Estimated start date in August, 2023 with an estimated completion date of December 2024

- Phase 2: Wolseley

Estimated start date in August 2023 with an estimated completion date of December, 2024

- Phase 3: Kilsyth

Estimated start date in January 2024, with an estimated completion date of December, 2025

By December 2025, the residents and communities should have access high speed, fiber optic based internet, in addition to the existing options available to residents.

Maps for the three planned service areas are included.

In order to facilitate this installation, Eh!tel are looking to work with the municipality in two ways.

Point of Presence (POP) Locations

Point of Presence (POP) are small buildings that serve as infrastructure hubs for networks of cable. In essence, these are exchanges used to manage the local network. There is one POP for each of the three phases of work. The POP is a small steel shed approximately 10 feet square, built on a concrete pad, with an external concrete pad for a propane back up generator. POPs have an electrical supply and are temperature controlled. Internally they contain electrical equipment which provide access to the network. The POPs are not staffed, but occasionally attended by qualified technicians for maintenance and regular inspections.

The Eh!tel Wolseley POP is located on private property owned by Eh!tel. We are proposing two additional POPs to support the Kilsyth and the Hepworth local networks are proposed to be located on Township property.



- The Hepworth POP location proposed at the front of the former municipal landfill site, facing onto Stone School Road and accessed directly from the road without the need to access to the former landfill site.
- The Kilsyth POP location proposed is at the new community park being developed on Fleming Drive. The POP will be located in the north east corner of the park, fronting onto Fleming Drive. As this location is within a publicly accessible park, staff and Eh!tel have suggested that the outside of the building in this location be made available for a public artwork to be designed.. Eh!tel has agreed to meet the costs of an Indigenous artist to create artwork on the building.

Network Cabling Installation

Approximately 500km of network cable need to be installed to support a Township wide network. At this time, it is proposed that all cables be buried lines and not supported above ground on poles. The integrity of the cable is best installed underground where it is protected.

In order to ensure an effective and collaborative partnership between the Township and Eh!tel, a Municipal (or Telecommunications) Access Agreement (MAA) will be prepared between the Township and Eh!tel. This will not replace the need for individual permits for work as Eh!tel proceed through the Township.

The MAA will define the parameters of the project scope supported by detailed site plans. The MAA will also outline the role of the Township and Eh!tel who will maintain and own the infrastructure within the road allowances operated by the municipality (similar to relationships with Bell and Hydro One).

Financial Benefit

It is proposed that Eh!tel will pay to the Township rent for the two POP locations of \$1,000.000 (one thousand dollars) annually.

All hydro and service costs associated with the POP locations are the responsibility of Eh!tel.

Strategic Priorities

2. Foster Economic Growth

The Township of Georgian Bluffs strives to retain, expand, and attract new businesses that support employment opportunities, promote a diversified economy, support value-added agriculture and capitalize on the Township's strengths, defining natural resources, while protecting the natural environment.



2.2 Support increasing residential development.

(a) Expand existing servicing/utilities to prepare for new development.

(b) Accommodate new and existing utility and service providers wishing to expand their services to residents.

Conclusion

The formation of a Municipal Access Agreement and supporting the development of two Point of Presence locations on the Township of Georgian Bluffs property will support the development of a high speed, fiber optic based internet service to residents and communities across the Township by 2026.

Respectfully Submitted: Niall Loble, Acting CAO/Director of Community Services.