

July 06, 2007
Calabogie, Ontario

Mr. Mitch Wilkie
Economic Development Manager
County of Renfrew
9 International Drive
Pembroke, Ontario
K8A 6W5

Dear Mr. Wilkie:

I am writing to endorse the application of the Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus for the necessary monies to enhance and develop the broadband system in Renfrew County and moist specifically in the Township Greater Madawaska. Our municipality is quite sprawling while at the same time sparsely populated. We are home to a thriving recreational and ecological tourism industry. The efforts to expand this sector by ourselves and by private interests is severely hampered by not having high speed connectivity and reliable cell service.

Our industry has not been able to tap into the conference and trade show market as the participants need to be in constant and reliable contact with their office and contacts. This is an opportunity which has been repeatedly missed as possible consumers cite the connectivity issue as the primary reason for not utilizing our area.

With the recent upgrades and extension to highway 417 our community has seen a sharp increase in visitors to our area and in numerous when they consider relocating permanently to our area whether in a home based business or in some style of e-home employment they are not able to achieve this as they need to have access to high speed connectivity.

It is ironic as the physical transportation infrastructure is updated to meet the demands of the modern traveling public the necessary infrastructure for information transportation is being neglected. It would seem logical this would develop in lock step.

Without the funding this infrastructure development will not occur in our municipality. We do not have the financial resources to construct a system and private industry has taken a pass. Bell Canada (Bell Synpatico), a company which has profited in so many ways over the years, has been slow to respond and the other possible providers cite the sparse and scattered population as well as the diverse geology of the area as reasons for not attempting to develop a business plan.

In recent weeks I have had conversations with five possible service providers who indicate they may be able to utilize broadband technology to provide high-speed connectivity to our area. They indicate it will be an expensive undertaking. We will need the funds applied for by the Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus to make it happen.

Increased connectivity of high-speed broadband and cell will benefit our area immensely. It will bring more visitors to our area. It will allow more conference trade to consider our area as a destination. It will boost our fledgling ecological tourism sector, an emerging important sector for the future of the country. Finally, it will allow more diverse industry to locate in the area.

Our area has always been able to offer beautiful vistas, great recreational activities for all four seasons, affordable and safe housing, a caring vibrant community. But we have not been able to offer diverse employment opportunities for those who wished to relocate to the area. Broadband will complement what we presently offer and open up opportunities for others to reside, play and work in our township.

If I can be of any further assistance, please contact me at 613 752 2922 or via email at peteremon@somuchmore.ca or through the municipality at 613 752 2222.

Best Regards

Peter R. Emon
Reeve
Township of Greater Madawaska