

CONNECTIVITY COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, April 8, 2021
2:00 p.m.
Meeting to be held electronically.

Agenda

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Adoption of March 11, 2021 Minutes
3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof
4. SWIFT Request for Proposal Update (Verbal) – Warden Marks
5. Fibre Installation Guidelines and Tower Wireless Service Opportunity – Director of Engineering Services
6. Correspondence
 - a. Email from Mike Bachner Re: Connectivity in Elgin and SWIFT RFP Results
7. Date of Next Meeting
8. Adjournment

Meeting: Connectivity Committee
Date: March 11, 2021
Time: 2:00 p.m.
Location: Webex

Attendees: Tom Marks, Warden and Committee Chair
 Dominique Giguère, Councillor and Committee Vice Chair
 Duncan McPhail, Councillor
 Mike Andrews, Community Member
 Justin Pennings, Community Member

Regrets: Joshua Kiirya, Community Member

Staff: Julie Gonyou, Chief Administrative Officer
 Jim Bundschuh, Director of Financial Services
 Al Reitsma, Manager of IT
 Jeremy Sharkey, IT Coordinator
 Cecil Coxen, IT Manager – Township of Malahide
 Katherine Thompson, Supervisor of Legislative Services
 Carolyn Krahn, Legislative Services Coordinator

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The Connectivity Committee met this 11th day of March, 2021. The meeting was called to order at 2:12 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Councillor Giguère
 Seconded by: Justin Pennings

RESOLVED THAT the agenda be approved.

Recorded Vote

	Yes	No
Councillor Giguère	Yes	
Councillor McPhail	Yes	

Mike Andrews	Yes	
Justin Pennings	Yes	
Warden Marks	Yes	
	5	0

- Motion Carried.

3. Adoption of February 25, 2021 Minutes

Moved by: Mike Andrews

Seconded by: Justin Pennings

Resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting be adopted.

Recorded Vote

	Yes	No
Councillor Giguère	Yes	
Councillor McPhail	Yes	
Mike Andrews	Yes	
Justin Pennings	Yes	
Warden Marks	Yes	
	5	0

- Motion Carried.

4. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

None.

5. Review of Draft RFP for Technical Consultant

The Chief Administrative Officer presented the Draft RFP for Technical Consultant, and the Committee provided feedback. Staff were directed to incorporate Committee feedback and issue the revised RFP with a closing date of April 9, 2021.

Recorded Vote

	Yes	No
Councillor Giguère	Yes	

Councillor McPhail	Yes	
Mike Andrews	Yes	
Justin Pennings	Yes	
Warden Marks	Yes	
	5	0

- Motion Carried.

6. Correspondence

i. Email from Alvin Burkhart regarding Starlink Satellite

The Committee received the email from Alvin Burkhart.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The Committee will meet again on April 8, 2021 at 2:00 pm.

8. Adjournment

Moved by: Councillor McPhail

Seconded by: Justine Pennings

RESOLVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 3:08 p.m.

Recorded Vote

	Yes	No
Councillor Giguère	Yes	
Councillor McPhail	Yes	
Mike Andrews	Yes	
Justin Pennings	Yes	
Warden Marks	Yes	
	5	0

- Motion Carried.



REPORT TO CONNECTIVITY COMMITTEE

FROM: Brian Lima, Director of Engineering Services

DATE: March 3, 2021

SUBJECT: Fibre Installation Guidelines and Tower Wireless Service Opportunity

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the report titled “Fibre Installation Guidelines and Tower Wireless Service Opportunity” from Elgin County’s Director of Engineering Services dated March 3, 2021 be received and filed.

INTRODUCTION:

At its meeting on February 25, 2021, the Director of Engineering Services provided information to the Committee regarding fibre installation requirements on County roads and recent work with local ISPs.

The Committee requested that the Director prepare fibre installation guidelines, confirm the possibility of the installation of fibre crossing MTO highway corridors, and present follow-up information regarding Turris Communications Ltd. and the possibility to install other third-party wireless equipment to the communications tower located at the County’s Whites Station Operations Centre property.

This report provides an update on the preparation of fibre installation guidelines, and addresses the latter two items.

DISCUSSION:

Fibre Installation Guidelines

Preparation of County wide ‘Fibre Installation Guidelines’ remains ongoing in partnership with municipal partners and in consultation with several local fibre installation contractors to ensure the guidelines reflect today’s industry best practices.

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist ISPs, and public agencies as they begin or continue to develop their fibre optic cable programs and to create a shared understanding with consistency to help facilitate sharing agreements among agencies. The guidelines are intended to cover a variety of topics that include the technical aspects of a fibre optic network, agreements with other organizations and range from before the network to after it has been installed.

The manual once completed is also intended to be a living document, so feedback and comments throughout its existence are welcome for further editions.

A draft copy of said guidelines is planned to be presented at a future Committee meeting for its consideration and endorsement to County Council.

Fibre Crossing Installation of MTO Highway Corridors

Following staff consultation with the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) West Operations Branch Corridor Management Section, MTO staff advised that all fibre optic cable installations which cross a provincial highway, whether aerial or underground, shall require an Encroachment Permit from the MTO prior to installation. A broad set of requirements are contained within Chapter 3 of the MTO's Highway Corridor Management Manual (2018) and provides guidance for utility installations within MTO's permit control.

Generally speaking MTO does not allow for proactive installation of conduits under its highways if they are not related to a specific fibre installation permit request. The MTO prefers to see the whole installation to ensure conflicts are eliminated and options are considered, especially in locations that may affect intersections and interchanges.

Highway 401

The placing of fibre infrastructure within the limits of Highway 401 is prohibited unless in the opinion of MTO it is the only route available or unless a utility corridor has been established by the MTO. A utility may cross Highway 401 subject to the review and approval of MTO. Further, crossings attached to a structure are prohibited and crossings at interchanges should be located outside the functional interchange area.

Highway 3 and Highway 4

Utilities are permitted on Highways 3 and 4, subject to meeting satisfactory arrangements as set out by MTO to ensure the safety of the public, and further to ensure that changes do not conflict with the requirements of MTO. Parallel installations are required to be placed within a 2m horizontal strip parallel to and immediately adjacent to the highway right-of-way limit. At intersections, the installation is further required to follow the daylighting triangles.

Depth of Cover

The depth of cover for any buried fibre infrastructure shall be as determined by the MTO based on the requirements of each individual installation. Installations under Highway 401 require a deeper installation than Highways 3 and 4. For reference the attached sketches provided by MTO illustrates their desirable depths of installations under Highway 401 (5.0m depth) and another for Highways 3 and 4. (1.5m depth) for other roads.

Plans and Reports

Each permit application is to be accompanied by a plan of the proposed work identifying location of the plant in plan and profile views. Plans submitted to MTO for approval must clearly show the location and extent of the proposed installation as it relates to the highway; highway property limits; property lines; roadway structure; accurate scale, dimensions and north arrow. Any other obtrusive feature not limited to existing utilities, sidewalks, trees, entrances and signs are also required to be identified.

For aerial installations MTO's Clear Zone requirements shall be met, and vary depending on highway crossing location across the province.

There may be situations where the installation of utilities will have to meet MTO's tunnelling guidelines. Attached for reference is the MTO's the most recent version of its Tunneling Guideline. It is advisable to consult MTO early in the process to confirm if a geotechnical report is also required.

Permits


Each permit for utility installations is accompanied by an *'Appendix – A Conditions for Encroachment Permits and Utility Installations On or Under a King's Highway'*. These general conditions apply to every installation, with additional conditions added on a project specific basis. The appendix also includes a Notification of Field work that must be filed with the MTO's Traffic Operations Centre prior to commencing work.

MTO attachments include:

1. MTO's tunnelling guidelines;
2. Appendix 'A' - Conditions for Encroachment Permits and Utility Installations On or Under a King's Highway';
3. Directionally Drilling under Highway 401 (5.0m depth);
4. Directionally Drilling under Highway 3 and Highway 4 (1.5m depth).

Whites Station Operations Centre Communication Tower

In 1965, the County installed the existing approximate 65 m (215-foot) tall radio communications tower located onsite of its Whites Station Operations Centre property



to provide two-way radio system communications between the County Engineer's Office, then located in the current Elgin County Courthouse in St Thomas and former County administration building, Whites Station, and all mobile vehicles within the boundaries of the County. Two-way communications utilizing this tower remains operational today.

In 2016, the County granted permission to Turriss Communications Ltd. (hereinafter referred to as Turriss), to install, operate, maintain, additional radio communication equipment on its tower. Turriss' equipment includes:


1. One VHF Antenna on a crossarm mount at the 64m (210-foot) level.
2. One 900 Mhz Antenna on a crossarm mount at the 64m (210-foot) level.
3. One UHF Antenna at the 46m (150-foot) level.
4. One Satellite Dish and GPS Antenna at the 7m (20-foot) level.
5. Equipment Shelter at Tower Base (approximately 50 sq. ft.).

The current Lease Agreement term between Elgin and Turriss Communications Ltd. relating to the aforementioned equipment began on July 1, 2016 and ends on June 30, 2021. Turriss is also responsible for all costs associated with the separate electrical meter and supporting connections for the equipment.

Space on the County's tower could be further leased to support other third-party wireless equipment subject to prohibiting interference with existing equipment.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None at this time. This report is for investigative purposes only.



ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Serving Elgin	Growing Elgin	Investing in Elgin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ensuring alignment of current programs and services with community need. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exploring different ways of addressing community need. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engaging with our community and other stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning for and facilitating commercial, industrial, residential, and agricultural growth. <input type="checkbox"/> Fostering a healthy environment. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhancing quality of place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ensuring we have the necessary tools, resources, and infrastructure to deliver programs and services now and in the future. <input type="checkbox"/> Delivering mandated programs and services efficiently and effectively.

LOCAL MUNICIPAL PARTNER IMPACT:

None.

COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS:

None.

CONCLUSION:

Elgin County recognizes the importance of adequate broadband infrastructure for the well-being and economic competitiveness of the County's residents, businesses, and institutions. Through the potential implementation of fibre installation guidelines and existing physical infrastructure opportunities, these actions may support broadband network expansion and facilitate increased connectivity throughout the County.

All of which is Respectfully Submitted

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Brian Lima
Director of Engineering Services

Julie Gonyou
Chief Administrative Officer

Good evening Katherine.

Further to our ongoing dialogue on rural broadband internet service for my property at 6596 Fairview Road in Central Elgin, I can advise that Xplornet has confirmed that they cannot service my property. In addition, the made-in-Elgin solution, Uplink Wireless from Belmont, is also unable to provide service.

I was, however, very encouraged to read the recent announcement of \$6 Million of SWIFT-funded fibre and fixed wireless broadband expansion in Elgin County; that is, until I accessed their site and noted that none of the approved projects are within Central Elgin. This was very disappointing.

- Southwold, with an estimated population of 4807 (2020 estimates, Stats Can), will receive service expansion.
- Dutton-Dunwich, with an estimated population of 4805, will receive service expansion.
- West Elgin, with an estimated population of 5157, will receive service expansion.
- Bayham, with an estimated population of 7929, will receive service expansion.

And yet, the more heavily-populated Municipality of Central Elgin, with an estimated population of 13,271 residents, will not receive service expansion.

As a rate-payer in rural Central Elgin, I am at a loss to understand this situation. I will welcome contact from a representative of the Connectivity Committee to further discuss this situation. Please feel free to relay this correspondence to the Committee.

Thank you.

Best regards,

Mike Bachner

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