For Immediate Release
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Council approves Broadband Strategy and Action Plan

Georgina, ON – The Town of Georgina has approved its first-ever Broadband Strategy and Action Plan ahead of schedule. This will allow the Town to move directly to implementation and to prepare for government funding scheduled to become available in the coming months.

"Providing access to broadband is important to the success of our community whether you are operating a business, or taking online courses. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored how critical fast and affordable connectivity is, whether you live in an urban or rural area," said Mayor Margaret Quirk. "We have been planning for enhanced connectivity for Georgina and the provision of additional broadband will support our resiliency and ability to rebound quickly in a new world that will rely more than ever on the internet and virtual connection."

The new Broadband Strategy and Action Plan contains a vision, guiding principles and top priorities, as well as direction on the utilization of the existing Southshore Community Broadband wireless network and funding alternatives.

It has three key actions:

- Appointment of a broadband champion at the Town to drive forward momentum. This will continue to be led out of the CAO's Office by David Reddon, CAO and Shawn Nastke, Head of Corporate Service Delivery Excellence
- Issuance of a Request for Information (RFI) to formally engage internet service providers on collaboration and partnership opportunities for improving connectivity throughout the Town
- Implementation of policies and processes that result in the provision of best practice broadband connectivity in all future developments and capital projects as well as streamlined approval processes

A key element of the plan is to leverage the more than 100 kilometres of fibre backbone being installed in Georgina by York Region – funded in part by a grant received through the Federal Connect-to-Innovate program. York Region's fibre infrastructure is to follow a predetermined path across Georgina, stretching from Keswick to Sutton to Pefferlaw all the way to Udora. The Town and York Region will then be working with private Internet Service Providers to lease the YorkNet fibre to in-turn provide actual service to residents and businesses along and around the path.

Staff will report back to Council in the fall following the Request for Information (RFI) process with a set of recommendations on projects, ideas and funding to pursue. To learn more, visit georgina.ca/**broadband**.

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