



Office of the Warden

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January 28, 2021

Mr. Steve Van Groningen
Manager, Corporate Affairs
Xplornet Communications

Via E-mail steve.vangroningen@corp.xplornet.com

It is our pleasure to write a letter in support of Xplornet's proposal to the *Universal Broadband Fund* stream regarding the company's substantial broadband infrastructure project for Southern Ontario.

Grey County understands that Xplornet's project will result in hundreds of kilometres of new fibre. This will establish a robust backbone for Xplornet's 5G wireless broadband network, with existing tower sites in Grey County connected to fibre. Once completed, this project will enable rural households in communities such as Shallow Lake, Arnott, Kiowana Beach, Feversham and Priceville to enjoy affordable and accessible 1 Gbps fibre services, while those beyond the fibre path will be able to connect to 5G wireless broadband services up to 100 Mbps.

The past months have demonstrated the importance of connectivity, especially for rural Canadians. The post-pandemic recovery offers the long overdue opportunity to provide the necessary tools for rural Canada's success in the digital economy. Indeed, the expansion of broadband access through Xplornet's project will facilitate commercial and industrial development in our community as Xplornet will be positioned to offer enhanced Enterprise Services. The project will also enable local businesses to grow by providing improved connectivity to customers beyond the region. Xplornet's project will provide improved services to support residents working from home, engaging in online learning, and accessing telehealth services. The improved access will benefit all residents of our region, including underrepresented groups, whose access to the digital economy will be improved by the provision of fibre-based Internet services. This will assist the Government of Canada in pursuing other strategies around poverty reduction, digital literacy, official languages and women's entrepreneurship.

Xplornet has a proven track record of providing fixed wireless access to rural residents in places unserved and underserved by others – we look forward to their long-term presence in Grey County through this project.

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Should you have any questions, please contact my office at 519-372-0219 ext. 1225

Yours truly,

Selwyn Hicks
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