

Ground broken for new high-speed fibre internet in Aurora



Work is now underway to bring new high-speed fibre internet to Aurora.

telMax formally kicked off their first Aurora installations on October 25 at a small ground-breaking ceremony held at Wilson Park in Aurora's northwest quadrant that was attended by Mayor Tom Mrakas and Councillors Ron Weese (Ward 1) and Rachel Gilliland (Ward 2).

The Stouffville-based company, which has seen success in Newmarket, is beginning work in Aurora's north end to connect with infrastructure they already have in the neighbouring municipality.

telMax's arrival in Aurora was first announced by the Town in July with Mayor Mrakas hailing it as a 'very important project' for the community.

'We know that Aurorans increasingly need more reliable and faster internet, especially with the massive shift we've seen in the number of people working from home,' he said at the time. 'The reality is that access to high-speed and affordable broadband service is now a necessity not a luxury, especially in today's economy. And what's incredibly important for us is that this project will only strengthen the Town's ability to get critical information to residents and businesses, while also allowing us to explore exciting new initiatives like offering free Wi-Fi at places like Town Park.'

While it might take a little while for municipal Wi-Fi to become a reality, telMax CEO Stuart Roberts said last week he and his team were eager to get started.

'It typically takes us about six to eight weeks to construct a neighbourhood that is around 200 to 250 homes and about six to eight weeks from now people can expect to hear they can get service from telMax,' said Roberts. 'They will be able to get high-speed internet and because it is pure fibre, it is between 250 mgs and 2.5 gigs a second. We believe we're price competitive. We're a local based company, so our headquarters are in Stouffville and we have offices in Newmarket and we're looking for our office in Aurora. We will bring jobs to the community, so we're not like one of our competitors somewhere else.'

'Our plan will see us build the areas of Aurora we're going to build between now and the end of the summer. Will there be lots of disruption? No, we try to keep it a minimal amount. Will there be questions about, 'My grass isn't growing. What happens?' We plant the grass seed to replace the damage we do. It is small damage and we try to keep it to a minimum. We plant grass season in the growing season, not in the winter, so now it is probably too late for us to sow grass. Ongoing, anywhere we construct from April and May, we do the restoration. By two or three months, people should not see a lot of evidence that we have been here.'

Asked how telMax prioritizes areas of new communities in which they are making inroads, he said northwest Aurora was the most logical place to start given the infrastructure in place north of St. John's Sideroad.

?It's an extension that will spread through Aurora from here,? he said. ?We'll try to balance the load around the area and we will be in various neighbourhoods around Town and that helps to minimize construction.?

Once construction in a designated area is complete, their door-to-door sales team will head out to introduce residents to their services. They offer fibre high-speed internet, cable, and home phone, but Roberts says their primary demand is internet.

Currently, their price points include \$55 for 250 mgs, \$60 for 500, \$70 for 1.5 Gb, and \$80 for 2.5.

In addition to offering their services within Aurora, Roberts says that, before long, he hopes telMax will be recognized as a part of the community, just as they are in Stouffville and Newmarket.

?Our call centre is in York Region and our company is in York Region,? he said. ?We participate in lots of community events and we will be doing that in Aurora just like we do in Newmarket and Stouffville as well. In Newmarket, for example, where we launched construction earlier this year, we sponsored the Home Show, we sponsored New'bark'et, the big dog event. We have sponsored a number of other events through the summer; we were the second sponsor for the music series in Newmarket and we sponsored all the ward movies that the Councillors hosted. We envisage we will do something similar in Aurora next year. We're also talking with the Mayor about other opportunities for being a real member of the local community. We want people to identify us as part of the Aurora community.?

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