

## High-speed fibre internet coming to Aurora through agreement with telMAX

Homes and businesses could soon be able to access high-speed pure fibre internet thanks to an agreement between the Town of Aurora and provider telMAX.

Announced on July 27, the agreement between the municipality and telMAX allows the provider to begin installing the infrastructure on Town rights-of-way ?in the next few months,? said the Town, noting that residents and businesses will be notified ?well in advance? of any construction in their areas.

?This is a very important project for the Town,? said Mayor Tom Mrakas in a statement. ?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. 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.?

Added Stuart Roberts, CEO of telMAX: ?We have enjoyed working closely with the Town of Aurora to bring 100 per cent pure fibre to neighbourhoods and residents throughout the Town. We understand the importance of high-speed, reliable and affordable internet service whether you need that from working from home, staying connected with loved ones, or just being entertained. We understand this because we live and work in the community. We look forward to establishing more economic and cultural partnerships as we bring Canada's fastest internet service to all of Aurora.?

Speaking to The Auroran following the announcement, Mayor Mrakas said the provider has undertaken a similar project in Stouffville while another is underway in Newmarket. Other companies ?do pieces here and there, so no one was really ready to commit to doing it as a single project.?

?We thought it would be obviously beneficial to our residents and businesses,? said Mayor Mrakas. ?We thought it was a great way to move forward and work with a company that is going to essentially pay for all the costs that would come out of installing this fibre network within our Town. All the feedback I have received so far at this point is people are very excited not only at the prospect of having fibre network right across our entire Town but also looking at the benefits from an economic perspective. I think a lot of businesses are excited at the prospect of the Town having made that available to them where they could have access and could sign up with telMAX. A lot of people are excited about the fact it's another company other than the big ones. It allows competition, which is always great, which leads to better pricing, ultimately, for our residents and our businesses.?

The deal, as noted above, will allow Aurora to further explore Town-wide Wi-Fi.

The possibility of a municipal service was first floated by Mayor Mrakas in the previous Council and his subsequent motion to have staff explore the possibilities was approved.

?It's part of the structure of that original motion to look at the possibility of free Wi-Fi and this will provide us with more opportunities to get to that point in time. We're going to look at our parks first, Town Park as well as many of the other parks, and the great thing about this fibre network is the infrastructure will be there for us to be able to do this, so we're one step closer.?  
Further steps in the process, he added, will be coming to Council this fall when lawmakers begin deliberations on the 2024 Municipal Budget.

By Brock WeirEditorLocal Journalism Initiative Reporter