

HIGH-SPEED INTERNET FUNDING ANNOUNCED FOR HALTON HILLS

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In a recent announcement, area MP Adam van Koeverden said the federal government is providing \$123,400 in funding to connect 310 homes in Halton Hills and Flamborough to high-speed internet.

van Koeverden said the investment breaks down into \$39,400 for 47 households in the Carlisle area, and \$84,000 for 263 households in the Limehouse area.

The funding announcement was made virtually during a Zoom call that was interrupted several times by lewd videos and crude comments from internet trolls.

van Koeverden said the COVID-19 pandemic has shown the reality that reliable high-speed internet access is essential in the "increasingly digital and online world."

"The pandemic has shown us how essential high-speed internet access is for school, work, telehealth and our daily lives," he said. "For rural communities in particular ... not having access to reliable internet has made it really, really challenging and the impact of the pandemic has been more difficult than in other areas of the country."

"This investment will help to ensure that rural communities in Flamborough and Limehouse are no longer limited to access-

ing the services that they need because of a lack of broadband connectivity."

The funding is part of the federal government's \$2.75 billion Universal Broadband Fund, which has the goal of connecting 98 per cent of Canadians to high-speed internet by 2026 and to achieve 100 per cent connectivity by 2030. The Flamborough and Limehouse projects are specifically funded through the Rapid Response Stream of the program, which is focused on rural and remote communities.

van Koeverden said the Rapid Response Stream consists of about \$150 million to fund shovel-ready projects across the province and across the country.

"It's going to bring high-speed internet to more communities in the near term."

The funding is a partnership with Bell Canada and will see the telecom company contribute \$546,700 to the project, said Bell Canada's Simon Dwyer, during the announcement.

"This project will allow us to provide local residents with access to the social and economic benefits that come with being on the best broadband network," he said.

Dwyer said the project in Flamborough — which is in the area of Carlisle Road and Milborough Line — got underway last year and should be up and running within the next eight weeks.

While the Limehouse project has not yet begun, he said the work is expected to begin shortly and be complete — with households connected — by April.

KNOLL RE-ELECTED AS POLICE BOARD CHAIR

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Jeff Knoll has been re-elected chair of the Halton Police Board.

The Oakville councillor officially earned another term on Jan. 27.

The Halton Police Board is the civilian governance body that collaborates with police and makes decisions about policing policy and direction. Knoll was appointed by Halton regional council in 2012.

"I am honoured to be re-elected to serve as the chair of the Halton Police Board," he said in a statement. "This term we will

continue to focus on refining governance policies and finding new ways to reach out to the community to better understand their needs and expectations for our police service."

Halton Police Chief Stephen Tanner said that he and Halton police "look forward to working closely" with councillor Knoll.

"As chief of police, our senior command team works closely with the Halton Police Board and the chair in particular, to ensure we meet both our community's needs and expectations of a modern and progressive police service."

Business consultant Ingrid Hann was re-elected vice-chair.

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