

Ministry of Infrastructure

Office of the Minister

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August 4, 2022

His Worship Fred Eisenberger
Mayor
City of Hamilton
mayor@hamilton.ca

Dear Mayor Eisenberger:

Thank you for your letter regarding intergovernmental partnerships to improve digital infrastructure and address the digital divide.

We understand how important it is for people and businesses to have reliable access to high-speed internet. To that end, the Ontario government has been working to ensure that unserved and underserved communities across the province gain access to high-speed internet by the end of 2025.

Ontario has committed nearly \$4 billion to fill the infrastructure gaps in the province. A range of initiatives have been developed and are currently underway to deliver funds to internet service providers and other eligible entities to build out internet networks and bring faster service to these premises.

To date, we have committed over \$950 million to nearly 190 high-speed internet, cellular and satellite projects. These projects will bring high-speed internet access to over 375,000 homes and businesses across the province. The reverse auction is also coming to a close, and I anticipate it will help us take another enormous stride towards our 2025 commitment. The government has also implemented important legislative and regulatory measures to reduce barriers to high-speed internet infrastructure deployment.

With all that in mind, I am pleased to receive your letter and the recommendations included. Municipalities have long been our most important partners in helping to identify problems and solutions in underserved areas. All levels of government must find ways to work together and leverage our respective strengths to close the digital divide for all.

The Ministry of Infrastructure officials have been meeting regularly with the Digital Advocacy Working Group under the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area Regional Prosperity Alliance, and your recommendations are being discussed at that table. These conversations are important for us to learn more about connectivity and affordability challenges in urban, rural and remote parts of Ontario.

As always, my door remains open should you want to discuss anything further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KS', is placed on a light gray rectangular background.

The Honorable Kinga Surma
Minister of Infrastructure