

# Town, Vianet continuing partnership to improve local broadband

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The Town of Caledon has taken another step in improving broadband for the community.

On Nov 2, customers who frequently visit local businesses in south Bolton will now have access to high-speed internet. An agreement between the Town of Caledon and telecommunications company Vianet is reason behind the project.

The project has been ongoing since last year when the collaboration came together to install eight kilometres of fibre-optic cable across south Bolton.

"When we announced this project last fall it was before the pandemic," said Mayor Allan Thompson. "If anything, the pandemic has really brought home how important broadband is to our local economy. Congratulations to Vianet for getting the job done; this is a huge boost for business in the Bolton industrial area and it fills the gap for one of our most underserved areas."

The Town and Vianet split funding down the middle, each investing \$250,000, equalling a total of \$500,000 for the project.

This isn't the pair's first time working together, as Vianet partnered together with the Town back in January, when 35 kilometres of cable was installed along the Caledon Trailway.

With the positive feedback from local businesses in Caledon, Vianet wanted to push their services further.

"We are very proud of this project and excited to serve the businesses in the Bolton industrial park," said Brian McCullagh, Director of Business Development for Vianet. "We've already heard from many businesses who are eager to access our ultra-high-speed service. In fact, response was so positive we decided to go beyond our original scope and instead of 8km, we installed over 14km of fibre."

The announcement for the installation was held at TSA Process Control Integrators at 25 Nixon Road, where President Thomas Toliopoulos explained how the high-speed internet will improve his customer service, and overall business.

"We are thrilled about this project," said Toliopoulos. "In this day and age you have to have high-speed internet, it's so important not only for customer service, but all aspects of our business. For businesses in south Bolton it instantly makes us more competitive."

The project is a part of the 2018-2022 Council Work Plan, which prioritizes high-speed internet for Caledon residents. Included was a proposal to provide high-speed internet connectivity to the eight locations in Caledon that have been identified in the Town's Broadband Gap Analysis.

Because some internet providers are refraining from building infrastructures in the poor connection locations, the Town decided to take it upon themselves to join forces with companies like Vianet, as well as Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology (SWIFT), to make the necessary changes to ensure all residents have access to broadband.

"This positive demand for our services is indicative of how crucial broadband service is to remain competitive in today's economy, and we're optimistic that the service will only grow over time," said McCullagh. "Thank you to our staff, to the Town of Caledon and all those involved who have worked so hard over the past months to bring this project forward."