

November 18, 2024

Northumberland County  
Honorable Warden Brian Ostrander and Council  
Cc: Jennifer Moore, Chief Administrative Officer; Dan Borowec, Director - Economic Development Planning Strategic Initiatives

**Re: Internet Services for Northumberland County**

I am writing on behalf of the Northumberland Federation of Agriculture (NFA), which represents over 750 farm families across Northumberland County. Our members are a vital part of the local agricultural community and are deeply committed to providing fresh, local food to their neighbors and the broader community.

In the spring of 2022, a significant announcement was made regarding a \$45,000,000 investment in joint federal and provincial funding towards an initiative aimed at delivering high-speed internet access to all households and businesses across Northumberland County by the end of 2024. This partnership, involving Northumberland County and private sector partners, was hailed as an innovative solution to address the county's internet connectivity challenges.

As you are aware, reliable and fast internet access has become a fundamental necessity for daily life, not just for urban residents, but also for rural communities, including our farming families. While we appreciate the commitment and ambition of this initiative, there are growing concerns among residents and businesses regarding its progress.

Many of our members have noted that while fibre-optic lines have been installed in various parts of the county, very few households have been connected to these lines. Additionally, there have been reports of prohibitively high costs for residents to hook up to the fibre network. As a result, many are beginning to question the feasibility and impact of this project, especially considering the significant public investment involved.

In light of this, we would appreciate an update on the status of this initiative. Specifically, we would like to know:

1. **What stage is the high-speed internet initiative currently at?**
2. **When can Northumberland County expect to see widespread access to high-speed internet service?**
3. **What has happened to the \$45,000,000 in taxpayer dollars allocated for this project? How have these funds been utilized to date, and what is the anticipated timeline for completion?**

Understanding the answers to these questions is critical not only for the residents of Northumberland County but also for the agricultural community, where reliable internet access is essential for everything from farm management and market access to participation in broader economic opportunities.

We look forward to your response and hope for a timely resolution to these concerns.

Sincerely,  
Allan Carruthers  
President, Northumberland Federation of Agriculture

Articles cited:

<https://www.northumberland.ca/en/news/province-funds-innovative-approach-to-deliver-high-speed-internet-across-northumberland-by-2024.aspx>

[https://www.northumberlandnews.com/news/province-feds-invest-45-million-to-connect-northumberland-households-businesses-with-high-speed-internet-access/article\\_8828398a-4301-599e-918b-25fc826ff59c.html?](https://www.northumberlandnews.com/news/province-feds-invest-45-million-to-connect-northumberland-households-businesses-with-high-speed-internet-access/article_8828398a-4301-599e-918b-25fc826ff59c.html?)