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**To:** Community Broadband Advisory Committee

**From:** Christine Gillespie, Communications Officer & Michael Burnie,  
IT Coordinator

**Date:** September 14, 2021

**Subject:** CBAC Survey Responses

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### Report Highlights

- The Township circulated an online public survey regarding local internet service and connectivity on the direction of the Community Broadband Advisory Committee.
- The survey data is required to justify funding for rural community broadband projects from other levels of government.
- Seventy-three (73) survey responses were received during the survey period from May 11 to July 30, 2021.
- This report outlines the survey results, which will be used to determine current service levels as well as areas with the highest need for broadband support.

### Background

At the March 9, 2021 meeting, the Community Broadband Advisory Committee (CBAC) outlined its goal to create and release an online survey for public input on broadband service needs in Springwater. The Committee has identified that data demonstrating need is necessary in order to satisfy requests to other levels of government for funding to support rural community broadband projects. The CBAC Survey was developed to facilitate the collection of valuable information and data regarding current service levels within the Township, as well as areas for potential improvement.

Township staff released the CBAC Survey on May 11, 2021 through SurveyMonkey. The survey included a series of questions asking respondents about their property/premise, internet use and activities, and quality of service. Respondents were also asked to gauge their levels of satisfaction and perceived levels of importance with regards to different aspects of their service. A copy of the survey has been attached as Appendix A for reference.

The CBAC Survey was promoted to residents and business owners through the Township's social media platforms, website and Springwater Link advertisement. Additionally, staff, Council and Committee members were encouraged to share the survey with other community members. The survey closed on July 30, 2021, with a total of 73 responses collected.

Briefly, the CBAC Survey results include the following highlights. Of the 73 respondents:

- 89% consider their property to be rural
- 51% currently have Bell as their Internet Service Provider (ISP)
- 46% never get the advertised download speeds from their ISP
- 68% are extremely dissatisfied with the speed provided
- 63% are extremely dissatisfied with the value for money provided
- 47% are unaware of other ISPs in their area
- 5% currently use StarLink
- 64% wish to receive future communications regarding internet in Springwater

Respondents were varied geographically with many in Hillsdale (19), Phelpston (14), Midhurst (14) and Elmvale (9). There is frustration regarding nearby service that they are unable to subscribe to due to a lack of interest from the ISPs. Reliability appears to be the most important factor with 80% of respondents noting it is extremely important to them.

## Conclusion

This report is to advise the Community Broadband Advisory Committee of the CBAC Survey results and feedback received from the public.

## Survey Results

The Township received a total of 73 responses to the CBAC Survey, with the public choosing to answer one or more questions. Eighteen (18) questions were asked with a majority being multiple choice. Respondents were able to choose one or more options for the multiple-choice questions and could enter short text or numerical answers for other questions. Attached are the complete Survey Results as Appendix B, and the Individual Response Data as Appendix C. Below is a summary of the results for each question.

### Question 1

Respondents were asked to provide their street number, street name and city/town. The chart below indicates the locations where most of the respondents reside.

| Responses | Response Percentage |
|-----------|---------------------|
| Hillsdale | 26.03%              |
| Phelpston | 19.18%              |
| Midhurst  | 19.18%              |
| Elmvale   | 12.33%              |

### Question 2

Respondents were asked whether they consider their property to be urban or rural. They could respond with one of two choices.

| Answer Choices | Response Percentage |
|----------------|---------------------|
| Rural          | 88.73%              |
| Urban          | 11.27%              |

### Question 3

Respondents were asked to choose the most appropriate description of their property. The chart below indicates the three mostly likely responses.

| Answer Choices   | Response Percentage |
|--|---------------------|
| Home or primary residence only   | 83.10%              |
| Home and business (i.e., home-operated business. If you work remotely, this option will be included later in the survey) | 11.27%              |
| Agricultural operation and residence   | 5.63%               |

### Question 4

Respondents were asked to identify the total number of individuals residing at their premise. The chart below indicates the three mostly likely responses.

| Answer Choices | Response Percentage |
|----------------|---------------------|
| Four (4)       | 35.21%              |
| Two (2)        | 30.99%              |
| Three (3)      | 21.13%              |

### Question 5

Respondents were asked to indicate the types of activities for which they use the internet. For each activity, they could respond with one of six options based on the prevalence of internet issues experienced for that activity. The chart below indicates the most likely response for each listed activity.

| Activity  | Response Percentage  |
|---|--|
| Social networking   | Most (55.07%) currently use with some issues   |
| Streaming / downloading video content                           | Most (55.07%) currently use with some issues   |
| Online shopping   | Most (53.52%) currently use with some issues   |
| Business / agriculture applications                             | Most (50.0%) do not use, though not due to issues  |
| Adult e-learning  | Most (41.79%) do not use, though not due to issues   |
| Remote learning (school aged children)                          | Most (50.0%) do not use, though not due to issues  |
| Working remotely  | Most (49.28%) currently use with some issues   |
| Gaming  | Most either currently use with some issues (33.33%) or currently do not use, though not due to issues (33.33%) |
| General browsing and online services                            | Most (67.61%) currently use with some issues   |
| Smart home features (i.e., thermostat, Alexa, Google Home etc.) | Most (27.14%) currently use with some issues   |

### Question 6

Respondents were asked to indicate how many hours per day on average the internet is actively used at their premise. The chart below indicates the three mostly likely responses.

| Answer Choices | Response Percentage |
|----------------|---------------------|
| 6 to 9 hours   | 30.00%              |
| 9 to 12 hours  | 22.86%              |
| 3 to 6 hours   | 21.43%              |

### Question 7

Respondents were asked to enter the results of their CIRA Internet Performance Test conducted online at [performance.cira.ca](http://performance.cira.ca). The chart below indicates the average upload and download speeds in megabits per second (Mbps), and latency in milliseconds (ms).

| Performance Criteria | Average    |
|----------------------|------------|
| Upload speed         | 4.83 Mbps  |
| Download speed       | 15.68 Mbps |
| Latency              | 44.80 ms   |

### Question 8

Respondents were asked if they are getting the advertised upload/download speeds from their ISP. They could respond with one of six options, ranging from never to better than advertised. The chart below indicates the most likely response with regards to upload speed and download speed.

| Performance Criteria | Response Percentage                            |
|----------------------|--|
| Upload speed         | Most (48.53%) never get their advertised speed |
| Download speed       | Most (45.71%) never get their advertised speed |

### Question 9

Respondents were asked to indicate their current ISP. The chart below indicates the three most likely responses.

| Answer Choices | Response Percentage |
|----------------|---------------------|
| Bell           | 51.47%              |
| Xplornet       | 32.35%              |
| Rogers         | 7.35%               |

### Question 10

Respondents were asked to indicate what type of internet service they currently receive. The chart below indicates the three most likely responses.

| Answer Choices  | Response Percentage |
|---|---------------------|
| Satellite   | 38.57%              |
| Mobile wireless - uses mobile data network and has an adaptor (i.e., turbo stick) | 15.71%              |
| Fixed wireless (Wi-Fi)  | 14.29%              |

### Question 11

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with their current ISP based on six criteria. For each criterion, they could respond with one of five options, ranging from extremely dissatisfied to extremely satisfied. The chart below indicates the most likely response for each criterion.

| Criteria        | Response Percentage                      |
|-----------------|--|
| Affordability   | Most (53.42%) are extremely dissatisfied |
| Reliability     | Most (56.16%) are extremely dissatisfied |
| Speed           | Most (68.49%) are extremely dissatisfied |
| Data allowance  | Most (43.84%) are extremely dissatisfied |
| Overall         | Most (55.56%) are extremely dissatisfied |
| Value for money | Most (63.01%) are extremely dissatisfied |

### Question 12

Respondents were asked to indicate the total monthly cost of their current internet service. The chart below indicates the three most likely responses.

| Answer Choices | Response Percentage |
|----------------|---------------------|
| \$101 to \$149 | 42.47%              |
| \$75 to \$100  | 32.88%              |
| \$150+         | 16.44%              |

### Question 13

Respondents were asked to indicate their monthly data limit. The chart below indicates the three most likely responses.

| Answer Choices | Response Percentage |
|----------------|---------------------|
| Unlimited      | 53.42%              |
| 51 to 250 GB   | 21.92%              |
| 251 to 500 GB  | 12.33%              |

### Question 14

Respondents were asked whether they are aware of another ISP available at their premise. They could respond with one of two choices.

| Answer Choices | Response Percentage |
|----------------|---------------------|
| Yes            | 53.42%              |
| No             | 46.58%              |

### Question 15

Respondents were asked to rate the level of importance they place on four criteria regarding their internet connection. For each criterion, they could respond with one of five options, ranging from not important to extremely important. The chart below indicates the most likely response for each criterion.

| Criteria                  | Response Percentage                  |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Speed (upload / download) | Extremely important to most (67.12%) |
| Cost / affordability      | Extremely important to most (47.95%) |
| Data usage amounts        | Extremely important to most (69.44%) |
| Reliability               | Extremely important to most (79.45%) |

### Question 16

Respondents were asked whether there are any topographical or site issues based on their property location. They could respond to any of four choices and provide their own additional comments under “Other”. The individual responses can be found in Appendix C.

| Answer Choices      | Response Percentage |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| Trees               | 66.67%              |
| Other               | 25.00%              |
| Located in a valley | 6.67%               |
| Very remote         | 1.67%               |

### Question 17

Respondents were asked if they would like to provide any additional comments regarding their internet service. The individual responses can be found in Appendix C.

### Question 18

Respondents were asked to enter their contact information if they would like to receive future communications regarding broadband internet in Springwater. Slightly more than half of respondents (64.38%) provided either their phone number and/or email address.

## Survey Analysis

The survey results indicate that most respondents use the internet for a substantial portion of their day, and for a wide variety of activities. Regardless of the activity, however, a strong majority report experiencing at least some issues with their current service. Though not as prevalent, many respondents also indicated that they would like to use their internet service for certain activities, but only if that service was better.

Respondents with four household members were the mostly likely group to complete the survey. This could indicate that families or households with greater numbers are experiencing a higher level of frustration with their local internet service.

Strong preferences were revealed through questions that asked respondents to gauge their levels of satisfaction and perceived levels of importance with regards to different aspects of their service. A large number of respondents indicated that they are strongly dissatisfied with their current service and consider internet reliability and speed to be extremely important factors to them. Additionally, many respondents indicated frustration with their inability to access nearby service due to a lack of interest from the ISPs.

Almost half of respondents reported that they are not getting the internet service that was advertised through their ISP. Furthermore, it appears most respondents are not getting the national standard of Basic Service Objective (BSO) set by the federal government. The BSO for fixed internet access service is that all Canadians have access to at least 50 Mbps download speed, 10 Mbps upload speed and latency lower than 50 ms. When compared to the survey data, it is apparent that the average reported upload and download speeds fall well below the BSO at 4.83/15.68 Mbps, while average latency falls within the acceptable range at 44.80 ms.

When examining the data geographically, a few notable trends emerge between respondents from the most cited areas: Hillsdale, Phelpston, Midhurst and Elmvale. First of all, the type of internet service varied despite respondents from all geographic areas reporting to be extremely dissatisfied with their service. Respondents from Phelpston (71%) and Midhurst (62%) were more likely to have satellite internet, while Elmvale and Hillsdale respondents were more likely to have a combination of different service types. Elmvale respondents were the only group who reported having access to DSL internet. Additionally, Elmvale respondents were more likely to pay less for their internet service at \$75 to \$100 per month, compared to their counterparts at \$101 to \$149 per month. Phelpston respondents, on the other hand, were the least likely group to report having access to unlimited internet and an alternative ISP in their area. They also reported some of the lowest CIRA scores at 2.43/7.69 Mbps and latency of 72.44 ms on average. Midhurst and Hillsdale CIRA scores were slightly better (though not by much) and Elmvale CIRA scores were the highest at 11.58/43.24 Mbps and latency of 32.86 ms on average.

## Pillars of Commitment

The above initiative supports the following Strategic Pillars of Commitment:

- Infrastructure, Financial Management & Service Delivery

## Approvals

**Submitted by:** Christine Gillespie, Communications Officer & Michael Burnie, IT Coordinator

**Reviewed by:** Jeff Schmidt, CPA, CGA, Chief Administrative Officer

**Approved by:** Jeff Schmidt, CPA, CGA, Chief Administrative Officer

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## Attachments

Appendix A – Community Broadband Advisory Committee Survey

Appendix B – Survey Results

## Appendix C – Individual Response Data