



Staff Report

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Report To: General Government Committee

Date of Meeting: March 3, 2025

Report Number: CAO-005-25

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Submitted By: Mary-Anne Dempster, CAO

By-law Number:

Resolution Number: GG-048-25

File Number:

Report Subject: Clarington Cellular Service Enhancement Project - Update #2

Recommendation:

1. That Report CAO-005-25, and any related delegations or communication items, be received for information.

Report Overview

This report provides Council with a milestone update on the progress of the Clarington Cellular Enhancement Initiative. Significant work has been undertaken to negotiate two signed agreements with Shared Tower Inc., for the construction and operation of telecommunications antennas / tower systems on Municipal property.

Staff have also worked to identify municipal property to assist in addressing significant coverage gaps in North Bowmanville.

Preliminary investigation was undertaken of the proposed sites in rural Clarington. The Tyrone Community Centre preliminary proposal will not be advanced by Shared Tower Inc.

1. Background

- 1.1 While telecommunications are a federal government responsibility and federally regulated industry, Council has prioritized through its 2024-27 Strategic Plan taking action using tools available to the Municipality to help enhance the level of cellular connectivity across Clarington.
- 1.2 Actions completed to date include:
 - Updating the [Radiocommunication and Broadcasting Antenna Systems Protocol](#) to further enable the development of a high-calibre telecommunications environment throughout Clarington, including through siting on Municipal owned property.
 - A formal call to industry to identify partnership opportunities utilizing municipal land and/or infrastructure.
- 1.3 In October 2024, Council received the results of the Municipality's Request for Information (RFI2024-1) for High Calibre Wireless Telecommunications Service ([Report CAO-006-24](#) and [Memo-009-24](#)) and directed that staff negotiate agreements with Shared Tower Inc., for the construction and operation of telecommunications antennas / tower systems (Resolution #C-115-24, October 28, 2024), as follows:
 - At Fire Station 1 (Bowmanville), Fire Station 3 (Orono), and South Courtice Arena;
 - On appropriate Municipally owned land to support addressing cellular coverage gaps in north Bowmanville; and
 - At Solina Community Hall and Tyrone Community Centre, including engagement with the respective Hall Boards as part of the process.

- 1.4 The Municipality's partnership with Shared Tower Inc. is an innovative step forward in addressing known cellular service gaps, with Clarington being one of the first municipalities in Canada to take this approach due to lack of private sector investment.

2. Current Status of Cellular Infrastructure Negotiations

Fire Station 1, Fire Station 3 and South Courtice Arena

- 2.1 Lease agreements for the construction, operation, and maintenance of new 25-30 metre monopole cell towers at Fire Station 1 (Bowmanville) and South Courtice Arena have been fully executed with Shared Tower.

Fire Station 1 - Bowmanville

- 2.2 It is anticipated that construction at Fire Station 1 will begin in July and be operational by September. Over the coming months detailed design, permitting and public consultation processes will be undertaken. For clarity, Shared Tower Inc. will be required to carry out public consultation, including a Public Information Centre (PIC).

South Courtice Arena

- 2.3 Similar to Fire Station 1, this location will undergo detailed design, permitting and public consultation over the coming months.
- 2.4 This location requires further confirmation of a carrier commitment, a process which Shared Tower Inc. owns. They anticipate with the signing of this agreement it will support those conversations.

Fire Station 3 - Orono

- 2.5 Agreement negotiations for replacement of the existing Municipally owned tower at Fire Station 3 (Orono) are nearing completion. Site-specific matters relating to the existing tower and the emergency services equipment that it supports represent additional considerations. Given that a template agreement is now in place, staff anticipate execution in the near future.

North Bowmanville

- 2.6 In Report CAO-006-24 Staff were directed to negotiate agreements to address cellular coverage gaps in north Bowmanville, subject to identifying an appropriate Municipally owned property.
- 2.7 Work has been underway between staff and Shared Tower Inc. to further review the Middle Park option as well as others to help address the significant coverage gap.

Shared Tower Inc. re-assessed their initial proposal, inclusive of the comments from staff. The following mix of locations have been identified to help provide a more robust network across north Bowmanville and are acceptable in principle (Figure 1):

- 3301 Middle Road (Middle Park), with a smaller design than previously contemplated
- Vacant municipal lands on Mearns Avenue north of CP railroad (Roll#181703013021300)

Solina Community Hall and Tyrone Community Centre

- 2.8 In November, staff met with both the Solina and Tyrone Community Hall Boards to discuss the Shared Tower proposal, with representatives of Shared Tower Inc. in attendance. The valuable information gained at the meetings about the site activities and use, through site walkabouts conducted by Shared Tower, and the review of site servicing details informed further assessment of each property's feasibility for cellular infrastructure.
- 2.9 Upon further assessment of the Tyrone Community Centre location, Shared Tower Inc. has informed staff that the property does not fully satisfy their site suitability requirements for the proposed cellular tower. As a result, Shared Tower Inc. has informed staff that they are removing their preliminary proposal for the site.
- 2.10 Shared Tower Inc. has expressed that they will continue to independently investigate potential siting options in rural Clarington to service their clients and contribute to building out of the local network.

3. Financial Considerations

All tower construction, operation, and maintenance will be undertaken by Shared Tower Inc. at their cost, in accordance with any applicable requirements set out in an agreement. The leasing of each municipal property is subject to a negotiated lease rate taking into account fair market value.

4. Strategic Plan

C.1.1: Enhance internet and cellular connectivity across the community.

5. Climate Change

Not Applicable.



Figure 1 – Location of municipal properties proposed to lease to support the enhancement of cellular coverage in north Bowmanville.

6. Concurrence

This report has been reviewed by the Deputy CAO of Planning & Infrastructure Services who concurs with the recommendation.

7. Conclusion

The execution of agreements for the construction of new cell towers on municipal property at Fire Station 1 (Bowmanville) and South Courtice Arena marks a key milestone for the Clarington Cellular Service Enhancement Project.

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Attachments:

Not Applicable

Interested Parties:

List of Interested Parties available from Department.