

Volunteer Committee at Work on 5th Mayor's Charity Golf Tournament

by ANDREW CHOMENTOWSKI



Last year's event raised an incredible \$65,000, but organizers hope to raise even more this year.

A social and sports highlight of the summer season, the Mayor's Charity Golf Tournament is also an essential fundraiser for local not-for-profit charities. Since 2015 the tournament has raised \$189,000 for 30 different local causes.

"The Mayor's Charity Golf tournament has two main functions," explains Deputy Mayor Steffen Walma. "It's a riot (of fun) that creates a cohesive community atmosphere and raises much needed awareness and funds for local charities." An added bonus, says Walma, is that this initiative does not impact the general levy. All funds are raised through participating golfers and sponsorship. "It's a win-win."

Any day now the volunteer organizing committee will be announcing the date and location, as well as this year's beneficiaries. The committee strives to strike a balanced choice of recipients who represent a broad range of services to the community. An annual recipient is the Township of Tiny Bursary Program, which receives \$5,000 to assist students entering a post-secondary educational institution. Approved bursaries are based on applicants' successful admission status.

Watch for updates in the next issue of FoTTSA Flash, an e-newsletter featuring local news and events. Not on the mailing list? Sign up at www.tinycottager.org.

Sign up as a sponsor

Sponsorships are an integral part of the event's fundraising activities and a valuable opportunity to raise your brand awareness among active and committed members of the Tiny community. For example, FoTTSA is honoured to be the Tiny Township Mayor's Charity Golf Tournament's Founding Sponsor.

Various levels of sponsorship are still available. For information on sponsorship opportunities or to participate in the event, visit www.tiny.ca/ or contact Maggie Off: 705-526-4204 or at moff@tiny.ca.

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Status Report on Accessing High-Speed Internet in Tiny

by STEFFEN WALMA

In Tiny we have wonderful sights that the city doesn't have: stunning views of Georgian Bay, sunsets, and magnificent flora and fauna. We also have large gaps in our broadband and cell service, which may make Tiny a wonderful escape from the constant connectivity of the world. However, this does not provide a nourishing environment for young families, home businesses, telehealth, video calls with the grandkids, and many other socioeconomic practices.

We're not the only ones with this problem. The CRTC (Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission) has recognized consistent access to high-speed Internet in rural areas as an essential service, and has set service targets:

- speeds of 50 mbps download and 10 mbps upload or fixed broadband services
- an unlimited data option for fixed broadband services
- access to the latest mobile wireless technology for all homes and businesses, and along major roads

To help achieve these targets, the latest federal budget includes \$750 million in CRTC funding that would help service providers expand high-speed internet service into rural Canada. The CRTC is accepting and reviewing funding applications this year.

The challenge facing Tiny

At present, areas of Tiny without high-speed Internet may not meet the CRTC's funding criteria. However, SWIFT (Southwestern Internet Fiber Technology) is petitioning the CRTC to reconsider these criteria. SWIFT is a

not-for-profit initiative undertaken by the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus that is already working with local governments and local providers to construct an affordable, open-access, ultra-high-speed fibre-optic broadband network for everyone in Southwestern Ontario, Caledon and the Niagara Region.

The SWIFT project is entering its initial phase of construction, but the way the CRTC funding currently operates could have a negative effect on implementation by allowing private service providers to sidestep the SWIFT program instead of working in collaboration with them.

Where does this leave Tiny? While the SWIFT program is the long-term answer to our internet woes, it is several years from fruition. Tiny Council has struck an ad hoc committee to create a work plan and brainstorm on bridging this gap. Partnering with other communities to build the required infrastructure, working collaboratively with private service providers and outside the box thinking are going to be key in charting a path forward.

Among the concepts that will be explored are laying conduit as we replace roads, building municipal communications towers, and how superfast "fifth generation" 5G mobile internet connectivity fits into this model. Being connected is imperative to education, business and play, and has been identified as a priority in the township's strategic plan. We are working both independently and collaboratively to achieve better services. If you have any thoughts or ideas you'd like to share, please email them to council@tiny.ca with the subject line Tiny Internet.

Steffen Walma is Deputy Mayor of the Township of Tiny.

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