



Report To:	Township of Southgate Council
Meeting Date:	2024-12-04
Report Number:	PL2024-102
Title:	Xplore Communications Tower (ON8410) File C28-24, Marlin and Marilyn Weber, 245019 Southgate Road 24, Concession 17, Lot 1
Open/Closed Session:	Open Session
Prepared By:	Victoria Mance, Junior Planner
Reviewed By:	Bill White, MCIP, RPP, Triton Engineering Senior Planning Consultant
Approved By:	Kenneth Melanson, MCIP, RPP Senior Manager of Development & Community Services
Approved By:	Dina Lundy, Chief Administrative Officer

Executive Summary:

A new 45 metres high freestanding communications base station facility is proposed on-site covering a 3 metre by 3 metre section of the lot. The [FB Connect Planning Justification Report](#) states the location will transmit and receive signals over trees, building and topography and maintain “line of site connections” within their network. The design allows co-location and can accommodate “future” technologies.

Assessed against the Township’s [Tower & Antenna Policy & Guidance Document](#) the tower is +- 220 metres from Southgate Road 24, but just 24 metres from the west lot line, part of the unopened Sideroad 3 road allowance. [Southgate Public Works](#) advises a replacement 911 sign is needed but does not oppose the location. The suggested setback in the Township Policy is 55 metres (tower height plus 10 metres). The [Detailed Site Plan](#) shows the tower east of a tree cluster and moving it easterly 30 metres puts it on usable farmland. The unopened road allowance adds 20 metres setback to the nearest private lot line. Council’s can note the west setback does not meet Township standards in its resolution to Industry Canada.

Recommendation:

Be it resolved that Staff Report PL2024-102 for the proposed Xplore Communications Tower Application (ON8410) File C28-24 245019 Southgate Road 24 be received for information; and **That** the proponent and Industry Canada be advised that the municipal land use consultation process has been completed according to the Township’s Telecommunication Facility Policy; and **That** the proponent and Industry Canada be advised the proposed tower location does not provide a 55 metre setback from the unopened Sideroad 3 road allowance recommended in Township policy; and **That** upon receipt of a letter of undertaking from the proponent permitting the Township to install radio communication equipment on the proposed facility if needed, that Council’s resolution will be forwarded advising the proponent and Industry Canada that the Township concurs with the proposed facility subject to obtaining an entrance permit if needed and a replacement 911 emergency number for the subject lands.

Reasons for Recommendation:

1. The proposed telecommunications tower meets suggested design criteria in Township's [Tower & Antenna Policy & Guidance Document](#) except for west setback recommended at 55 metres.
2. The tower site avoids usable farmland, is screened by large trees west of the proposed location and the unopened road allowance adds 20 metres setback from the abutting private lands.
3. Improved telecommunication is a Provincial, County and local municipal policy direction advanced by this proposal.

Proposal:

This proposed freestanding tower will provide Xplore Inc. customers with improved internet coverage and data services. The tower will be 45 metres in height, occupy roughly nine (9) square metres of the lot, includes anti-climb equipment and is located about 250 metres from the closest residence on the property to the west. According to the [FB Connect Planning Justification Report](#), the proposed tower replaces existing technology on a silo, but staff cannot identify a silo on-site. [Site Information](#) provided by the proponent shows more detail on the tower location including photos of the tree cover in the vicinity.

Background/Site Context:

The subject lands have +-340 metres on Southgate Road 24, +-1.0-kilometre depth, 36-hectares lot area, and is located approximately 900 metres east of Southgate Road 61 and (see **Attachment 1** pictures of driveway to Southgate Road 24). The property is actively farmed with driveway access on the unopened Sideroad 3 road allowance from Southgate Road 24 to the farmhouse and accessory structures on the property. A 2020 aerial photo shows the farm cluster and unopened Sideroad 3 road allowance (see **Attachment 2**) along with the tower location.

Application Review: Planning Act – Provincial Interest:

Section 2 of the Planning Act supports the adequate provision and efficient use of communication, transportation, and other systems.

Application Review: Provincial Policy Statement (PPS 2024):

Section 3.1 (1) of [Provincial Planning Statement 2024](#) states that infrastructure, such as telecommunications, shall be provided in an efficient manner to accommodate projected need. [Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas](#) state that renewable energy projects are exempt from municipal approvals have been changed by the Provincial legislation. Federal telecommunications towers are also exempt from local approvals.

Application Review: County of Grey Official Plan:

Schedule A Map 2 in the Grey County Official Plan designates the applicant's lands Agricultural and Hazard Lands. Section 8.9.4(1) states,

The County supports the provision of high quality telecommunication services through the entire County including broadband/fibre and cellular services both within settlement areas and rural areas.

Section 8.9.4(5) states Telecommunication towers are exempt from municipal zoning by-laws and Section 41 of the Planning Act. A minimum 250 metre setback from all residential zones and dwellings is recommended wherever possible, unless necessary to provide adequate service to such areas. County Planning Staff recommend the proposed tower be relocated 250 metres from the nearest dwelling not owned by the property owner, if possible.

Application Review: Southgate Township Official Plan:

The site is designated Agriculture and Hazard Lands [Schedule A Map 1](#) in the [Township Official Plan](#). The Official Plan recognizes the importance of utilities, like telecommunication facilities, and permits them in all designations. Section 6.9(9) requires utilities avoid Natural Heritage Systems, especially Core Areas. This site is not located within any identified Natural Heritage Systems or Core Areas [in Schedule D](#) of the Official Plan.

Application Review: Southgate Zoning By-law:

In the [Township Zoning By-law](#) , telecommunication antennae are exempt from height restrictions in Section 5.3, and are permitted in all zones by Section 5.19 (c).

Application Circulation and Public Comments:

The following comments were received:

Comments from:	Comments received:
Grey County (November 22, 2024)	No concerns.
Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority (October 9, 2024)	Proposed tower not located within SVCA Approximate Screening Area, no concerns.
Township Public Works Department (October 31, 2024)	9/11 Civic Address sign is missing, requires 9/11 sign.
General Public Comments, Bell Canada, Enbridge Gas, Township Fire Department, and Historic Saugeen Metis	No comments received as of report writing.

Conclusion:

1. Telecommunication tower proposals are subject to [Southgate Communication Tower & Antenna Policy & Guidance Document](#) which provides a consistent process to review facility proposals and make recommendations to Industry Canada, the approval authority for these installations.
2. The submission followed the policy including a consultation meeting with Staff, documentation for review, and a public meeting held November 27. Documentation submitted included the [FB Connect Planning Justification Report](#), and [Site Information](#).
3. Alternative locations were considered to meet the 55-metre suggested setback from all lot lines. The +/- 24 metre setback can work given the unopened road allowance and tree cover to the west and usable farmland is protected. The recommendation to Council advises Industry Canada the setback does not meet Township policy.
4. The proposal otherwise complies with the Township policy, in the follow ways:
 - Distances from residential, schools and active parks appear to be maximized.
 - No natural features or environmentally sensitive features are likely impacted.
 - No cultural heritage features were identified nearby.
 - Public views and vistas are not obscured, and tower is compatible with adjacent uses.
 - The tower location is 150m from the closest residential property; and
 - Co-location with other suppliers can be provided under Township Policy.

Link to Township of Southgate Strategic Plan:

The proposal has links to the Township [Community Strategic Plan](#) as follows:

- 1.C Ensure the distribution of technology and services to local businesses by referring them to correct supports

11.D Modernize administration of services through optimization of technology to meet or exceed industry best practices.

Attachment(s):

Attachment 1 – Site Photo

Attachment 2 – Air Photo

Attachment 3 – 500 Metre Buffer from the Proposed Tower Site

Attachment 1 – Site Photo



Attachment 2- Air Photo



Attachment 3 – 500 Metre Buffer from the Proposed Tower Site

