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15 May 2024

Regional Telecommunication Review 2024 Committee

RE: REGIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION REVIEW 2024

The Corrigin community identified telecommunication reliability and coverage as a key risk during consultation as part of the Strategic Community Planning process.

Reliable telecommunication is critical to the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of the Shire of Corrigin.

The economy in the Shire of Corrigin and wider region is primarily based on agriculture and associated support industries. Broadacre farmers in the wheatbelt region of Western Australia are among the most innovative in the world and there are significant opportunities for increased efficiency and productivity from reliable and fast telecommunications access.

Mining, health, education, and construction also contribute to the economy of the wheatbelt region. The uptake of information technology systems to assist business growth and development is high in modern agriculture, mining and associated business systems.

Inadequate internet access is a significant impediment to the use of information and communication technology and to the operation of local government and small businesses in the Shire of Corrigin.

Faster and more reliable telecommunications would benefit the Corrigin community by:

1. Improved productivity and efficiency for small businesses, community groups and sporting organisations using cloud-based software and services.
2. Efficiency and operational savings for agricultural industries that require high speed data transfer for technology throughout the supply chain from farm to the consumer.
3. Improved decision making with easier and quicker access to reliable information to improve traceability, security and automation including:
 - CCTV monitoring
 - Water sensors for tanks, troughs and irrigation.
 - Weather stations and soil moisture monitoring.
 - Gate and fence sensors.
 - Electronic identification tags for livestock records and monitoring.
 - Autonomous vehicles.
 - Prescriptive fertiliser programs.
 - Crop yield data and grain marketing
 - Geospatial mapping tools.
4. Savings in operating expenditure from targeted weed and pest management, fertiliser application and reduced fuel and transport costs.

5. Environmental sustainability by reduction in chemical and fertilisers and increased water use efficiency.
6. Fast and reliable telecommunications is essential for safe and efficient mining operations including data collection and analysis, plotting test holes on mapping systems and automated machinery operations.
7. Operational efficiencies from greater data storage, bandwidth options, increased data speeds to facilitate the use of robots, drones and computer imaging and integration with analytical tools.
8. Fast and reliable internet and mobile phone coverage are critical for the safe and efficient transportation of key commodities from the wheatbelt such as grain, wool, and mining materials. Real-time communication with drivers, tracking of freight and route optimisation are essential for enhancing productivity, reducing freight and logistics costs, and driving economic growth in the wheatbelt region.
9. Communication during an emergency including:
 - Making calls to 000
 - Emergency services receiving calls to respond to emergencies.
 - Inter agency communication including voice over internet (VOIP) communication.
 - Sending and receiving community information and emergency warnings.
10. Reduced social isolation from greater connectivity with friends, family and social support networks.
11. Improved health care with better access to telehealth and mental health support services located in metropolitan areas.
12. Additional job and training opportunities enabling young people and families to live and work in rural areas.
13. Greater ability to work from home and access systems remotely, download and upload files and reduce transportation costs as well as improve work life balance.
14. Support education and training programs by increasing the range of subjects available through remote or distance learning.
15. Streaming videos, entertainment, online gaming and movies.

Please contact me on [REDACTED] or email [REDACTED] if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely

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