The Township of The Archipelago

Information Report to Council

Report No.: Connectivity 2023_01   **Date:** January 16, 2023

Originator: Joe Villeneuve, Manager of Corporate Services

Glen Barnden, Connectivity Advisor

Subject: Connectivity – Activity Report

HISTORY

Internet Connectivity remains a topic of interest for many residents and Council is active with various initiatives, news and service providers in understanding how our residents will acquire service or benefit from enhanced services. A complete list of undertakings and events spreading over multiple years can be found on our website's Connectivity page.
The Township of the Archipelago was named as one of the municipalities that will be partially served by the service agreements under the AHSIP- **Ontario Accelerated High Speed Internet Program (AHSIP).**

The announcement references The Archipelago in a project awarded to Bell Canada. The Township's Connectivity Ad Hoc Committee continues to engage Bell representatives to express interests and learn details of their project. So far we've learned the rules of this funding are to *service residential addresses on roads*. Service type will be Fibre To The Home (FTTH) and it will be the better part of a year before planning efforts result in any new service hookups.

Identified by the Connectivity Committee is the issue that mapping, used to establish the scope and deliveries in Bell's project contract, is largely incomplete and misrepresenting the water access properties/community. *There remains a need to also provide a solution to service water access residents within our municipality*. Township representatives continue to engage Bell - and all Internet Service Providers to identify the offshore/water access community and facilitate internet solutions for these markets.
Reference: https://www.thearchipelago.on.ca/p/internet-connectivity

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NEW INFORMATION

Winter Interim 2023 Activity Update

A meeting with Vianet and the Connectivity Committee was held on November 1st 2022 to discuss Vianet's findings from the autumn boat tours and their proposed high-level service plan. This was an opportunity for the committee and staff representatives to ask any questions and address any township criteria and concerns. It was agreed that it would be necessary for further

assistance in funding the costs of any upfront new infrastructure and that a meeting with CENGN and the Ministry of Infrastructure (MOI) would be the next step to explore for this purpose.

Upon contacting CENGN it was discovered that they are no longer funding community development projects therefore they are no longer a source for infrastructure funding.
A preliminary discussion was held with the MOI to determine their receptiveness to funding a possible connectivity solution for the residents in our community that are not identified in the AHSIP program. It was communicated that while they have some funding dollars remaining for under and non-serviced residents in Ontario the MOI is not in a position to ensure or guarantee that the proposed solution for the Township of Archipelago will (or will not) align with the work underway to identify remaining areas of underservice and determining, based on available funding, the appropriate technological solution to ensure high-speed internet access.

The ISP (Vianet) meeting was held on January 13th with the MOI to present the high-level service plan described above acknowledging the MOI's current perspective. It remains hopeful that consideration may be given towards this solution soon in that it will enable at least the 50/10 minimum connectivity speeds proposed by the province with proven technology.

Ongoing Internet resource communication

Blue Sky – In correspondence with Blue Sky they confirmed that MOI techs are working on trying to figure out the best model to get the last bits and those areas (Lots) that were not bid on in the AHSIP program funded. At this point it is the technical solution that eludes them as they try to figure out the best approach. Blue Sky believes that there will be something coming in the next month or so.

Next Steps

In a recent seminar presented by CIRA, (Canadian Internet Registration Authority), it was noted that Rural Networks are 4 years behind Urban Networks. We are not alone in our desire for high-speed connectivity and competition for funding is a natural consequence.
We will continue to seek community funding solutions including NOHFC and FEDNOR in support of ISP solutions. We will dialogue with First Nation neighbours for updates and opportunities to collaborate for suitable funding initiatives.

<u>Broadband One Window</u>

The Township has successfully joined with the Province's Broadband One Window (BOW). BOW will serve as a GIS platform, an enhanced document management system, a permit application status tracker, and a repository for infrastructure and other data. This will allow for a seamless portal that will allow municipalities to engage with ISP's, Telco's, and other service providers for applications, permits, rights-of-way requests etc. in a timely manner. Click to see a short video explaining the Application. https://youtu.be/rZRfo0EVelk

Ongoing Internet Service Provider (ISP) Connectivity Initiatives

Vianet
- As outlined above

Bell
- A meeting with Bell was held on January 9th 2023 to discuss current status of the AHSIP program in the township.
- High level fibre plan is completed including cable sizing, remotes Optical Line Terminal (OLT)s & Communication Service Providers (CSP) placements.
- Leverage feeder fibre has previously been placed
- Installation of fibre has begun on Bell owned poles
- Construction vendors are in place
- Detailed Plan is underway
- Islands targeted to start are Sans Souci, Wahsoune, Bernyk (south Archipelago islands).
- Marine fibre targeted to start in May.

A breakdown of what homes are scheduled to connect to fibre with be forthcoming later in January early February.

Rogers
- https://www.rogers.com/internet

Lakeside Wireless
- https://www.lakesidewireless.ca/wireless-internet-services

NetSpectrum
- https://netspectrum.ca/en/blog/process-to-get-netspectrum-wireless-internet-at-your-rural-location/

Other ISP News/Announcements

Starlink
- https://spacenews.com/spacex-preparing-to-start-starlink-gen2-launches-this-month/

Telesat
- https://www.telesat.com/press/press-releases/spacecom-completes-successful-testing-campaign-of-telesats-leo-demonstration-satellite/

Respectfully Submitted,

Glen Barnden

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Joe Villeneuve   **Glen Barnden**
Manager of Corporate Services   Connectivity Advisor