

The Township of The Archipelago

Information Report to Council

Report No.: Connectivity 2024-03

Date: March 21, 2024

Originator: Joe Villeneuve, Manager of Corporate Services

Glen Barnden, Connectivity Advisor

Subject: Connectivity – Activity Report

BACKGROUND

Ongoing activities related to the *Province's Accelerated High Speed Internet Program (AHSIP)* for application-based Designated Broadband Projects which will support the government's commitment of providing access to high-speed internet to every region of Ontario by the end of 2025. Note: within the Township of The Archipelago projects will be undertaken by Bell.

Designated Broadband Projects have been created with the goal for everyone in Ontario to have access to reliable highspeed internet connections at home, work, and in our communities. Supported by legislative and regulatory changes and backed by a nearly \$4 billion investment, the projects seek to solve the challenge of inadequate access to broadband by working closely with stakeholders and making legislative and regulatory changes to ensure that broadband connectivity can be achieved. This is an exciting step forward to support the objective of expanding the reach, quality, and connectivity of high-speed internet to all Ontarians.

Infrastructure Ontario (IO) is working closely with the Ministry of Infrastructure to support delivery of the projects and working with stakeholders to accelerate broadband infrastructure deployment. Partners involved in application-based designated broadband projects are being coordinated through IO's Technical Assistance Team to work together to enable connectivity in an expedient way.

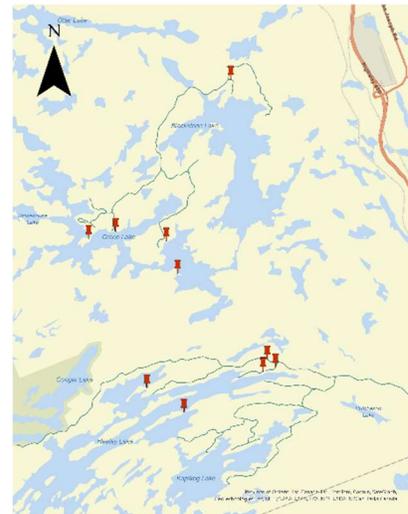
MARCH INTERIM

- 1) Township staff are monitoring sources for work applications - Municipal Consent (MCs) - that require municipal sign-off.

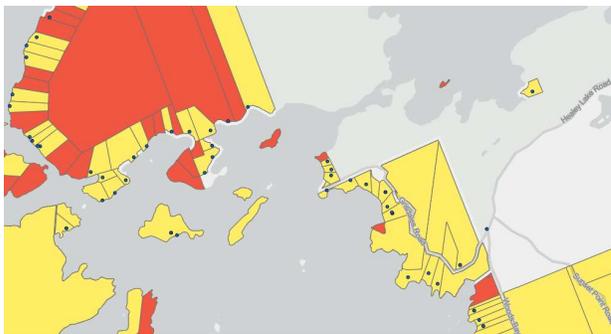
This month, staff received two MCs bringing the total requests for AHSIP work to three (3) submissions. Activities are rooted in the south portion of the Township and involve requests

to use the Road shoulder, unopened Road Allowance or Shore Road Allowance to place new fibre-optic infrastructure.

NOTE: Municipal Consent (MC) is the municipality's authorization for a utility to occupy a specific established location within the City's Rights-Of-Way (ROW). Permission to install a new or move existing facilities within a ROW is required prior to commencement of work. Once a permit request application is submitted, Municipalities shall respond within the legislated performance timelines included in the Building Broadband Faster Act.



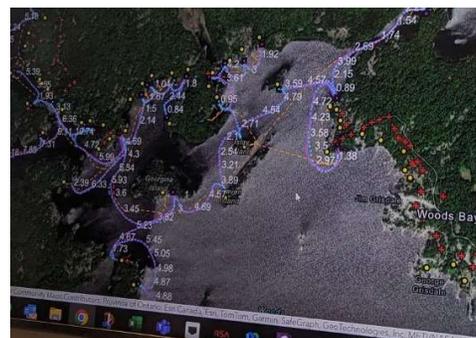
- 2) Staff from Archipelago and Seguin townships continue to collaborate and converse with Bell's primary contractor (Pickard Construction) around the scope of work starting in the respective municipalities. Coordinated municipal mapping activities are underway to examine and assess the potential for improved internet servicing and communicate interests back to Bell and contractor.



.In-scope area & proposed servicing (yellow)



<main fibre....



detailed design (fiber layouts)

All parties have interests in joint communications around expected ASHIP work undertakings, highlighting the various subcontractors expected to be seen in coming months and start-work dates in various locations. Seguin Township and Archipelago Township staff continue working with contractors on creating some information to disseminate to ratepayers.

3) Staff continue to liaise with regional connectivity advocates - Blue Sky Net and WPS SMART- to identify and pursue opportunities and solutions for consumer internet interests in the region.

4) Staff continue discussions with Infrastructure Ontario (IO) representatives examining what AHSIP “out-of-scope” areas exist and evaluating future servicing opportunities with the support of Infrastructure Ontario.



5) Staff continue to evaluate all internet service methods/options for residents and businesses in the township and engage with existing Internet Service Providers to evaluate opportunities.

Spectrum Telecom (Skerryvore and Pointe au Baril tower infrastructure) has recently acquired Lakeland Network’s fixed wireless division.

Vianet has completed installation of an additional repeater tower in Pointe au Baril that will support service enhancements to properties along Hwy 69 near the Pointe au Baril Station. Additionally, Vianet has expressed interests in enhanced service coverage for the Pointe au Baril Islands though additional antennas placed on the Pointe au Baril Range Tower.

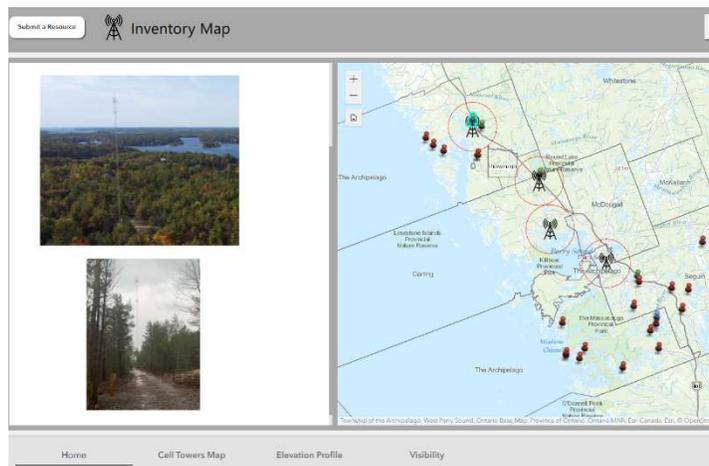
Rogers Communications has expressed expansion in services using existing Skerryvore tower and proposed expansion in multiple services via interests in new Crane/Blackstone Lake tower.

Bell’s activities appear currently rooted in the Accelerated High Speed Internet Program (AHSIP) and a previously announced project – proposed Healey/Kapikog tower – has no current news or indications of 2024 work undertakings.

NEXT STEPS ON GOING

Staff continue to update the Township website – Connectivity page – with updates and pertinent information relating to the activities referenced in this report.

- Continued applied efforts with Seguin staff and Bell Contractor on creating communications for ratepayers around AHSIP activities locally.
- Further discussion expected planned with Infrastructure Ontario around analysis of the AHSIP in-scope/out-of-scope areas.
- Attendance of upcoming CRRBC (Canada’s Rural & Remote Broadband Community) Eastern Conference – May 27-29, 2024.
- Review Tower Management opportunities for Smart Tower – includes establishing current tenant agreements.
- Applied work in GIS to identify and review potential infrastructure/assets in the township with the intent to leverage resources and engage ISPs to advance services and solutions that increase the connectivity possibilities and choices for our residents.
- Work with area ISPs on interests for further service coverage.



Respectfully Submitted,

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 Manager of Corporate Services

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