

The Township of The Archipelago

Information Report to Council

Report No.: Connectivity 2023-12

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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.

DECEMBER INTERIM

- 1) Township staff are monitoring the Province's Broadband One Window - <https://aship-landing-bow2.hub.arcgis.com/pages/broadband-one-window> for work applications that require municipal sign-off. To date nothing has been submitted through the BOW application. Staff are in receipt of the one project interest for the Healey Lake area that was submitted by Bell's Planning and Implementation Team in October.

2) Staff from Archipelago and Seguin townships continue to 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.

3) Staff continue to liaise with regional connectivity advocates - Blue Sky Net - to identify and pursue additional funding options and solutions for consumer internet interests.

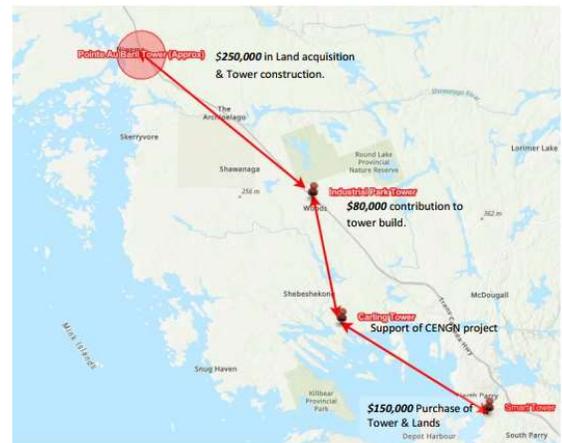
4) Staff had dialogue with Infrastructure Ontario (IO) representatives in early December. Staff's take-away from the discussions were IO's interests in further examining what AHSIP "out-of-scope" areas exist and evaluating future servicing opportunities with the support of Infrastructure Ontario.

Staff have highlighted Council's investment in several internet infrastructure builds (Tower Hill, Industrial Park and Pointe au Baril towers) and its efforts through GIS analysis in mapping the anticipated outcomes of ASHIP in our region. These efforts have resulted in The Archipelago being the only coastal municipality to have assessed the ASHIP infrastructure investments while also exhibiting an interest in continued work with Infrastructure Ontario to advance the Province's connectivity goals. Staff are addressing the need for equal value investment to its off-shore community on the same basis of what is being afforded to mainland property interests.

It is expected that staff will have more to report on opportunities with IO in February.

Township of The Archipelago Investments in West Parry Sound Area Connectivity

Approximately \$500,000 invested in addressing connectivity – Parry Sound to Pointe au Baril



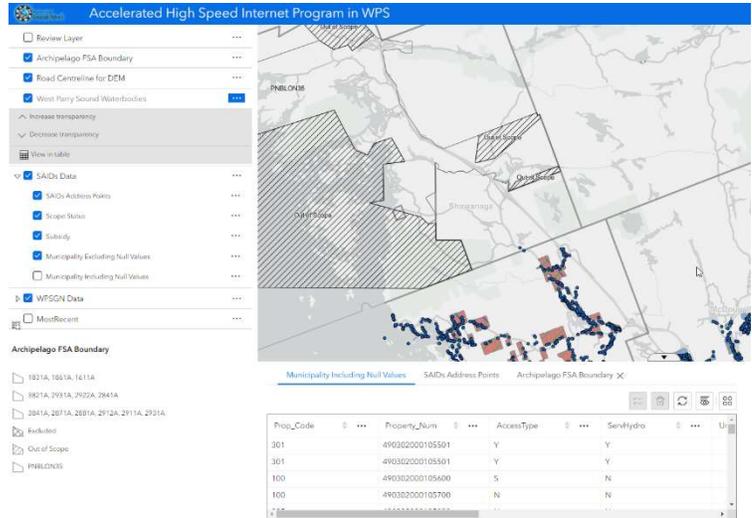
Infrastructure and an OPEN ACCESS model to support connectivity growth in the West Parry Sound area.

5) Staff continue to evaluate all internet service methods/options for residents and businesses in the township. Ongoing discussions with area Internet Services Providers are also solution aspects of this research.

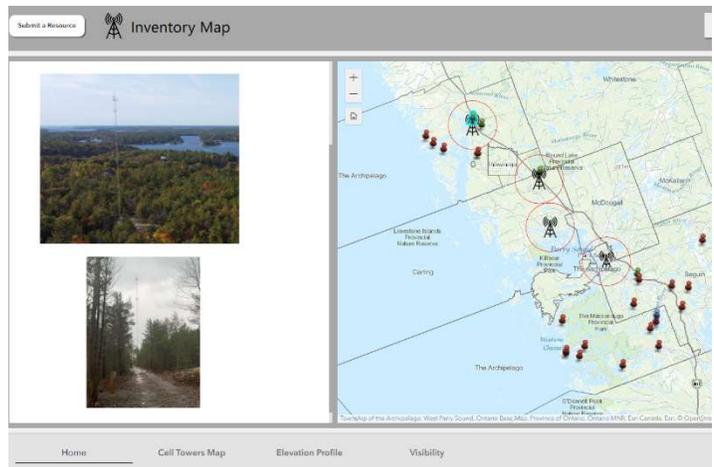
NEXT STEPS ON GOING

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

Also, analysis of the AHSIP in-scope/out-of-scope properties continues with the intent to engage Infrastructure Ontario with interests to fund projects that provide internet solutions to all properties in the township.



Efforts continue to 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.



Respectfully Submitted,

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 Manager of Corporate Services

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