

The Township of The Archipelago

Information Report to Council

Report No.: Connectivity 2023_02

Date: February 07, 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 as they roll out fibre-to-the-home (FTTH) service to *residential addresses on roads*.

Identified by the Connectivity Committee, *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 (ISPs) to identify the offshore/water access community and facilitate internet solutions for these markets.

Reference: <https://www.thearchipelago.on.ca/p/internet-connectivity>

NEW INFORMATION

Mid-Winter Interim 2023 Activity Update

The AHSIP program funding has closed, and we know that not all the "LOTS" were bid on due to several factors including lack of interest and high costs for delivery. We know that the smaller ISPs could not bid on the "LOTS" because the qualifying criteria was too restrictive. The Ministry of Infrastructure (MOI) have limited funds remaining after the AHSIP program is completed, to address the connectivity issue for communities and residents not included in the AHSIP coverage contracts.

The MOI knows we have an option on the table for a local ISP to build some infrastructure within our township, however, they have contracted consultants to look at possible solutions for distributing the remaining funds for connectivity to all the remaining underserved communities.

In a recent conversation with Blue Sky a plan was discussed whereby Blue Sky could apply for funding from MOI and be the distributor of these funds to successful applicants through various means such as RFP's. Blue Sky would act to qualify applications to determine which ones are most likely to succeed. We could test this proposal with a local ISP to see if there is any interest in a program such as this incorporating Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) and the province.

A recent conversation with TELESAT was held to determine if they would be open to exploring potential partnerships with local ISPs to provide backhaul capabilities through their Telesat LEO Lightspeed program. ***This is precisely their business plan for future development.*** They are currently testing the LEO satellite configuration and said they will be in a position to offer service by 2026. This would be a Canadian solution and provide us with an opportunity to work with local ISPs to create local Points of Presence (POP's) in areas currently difficult to reach with fibre. Telesat said they will keep us informed of developments and any updates.

Ongoing Internet Service Provider (ISP) Connectivity Initiatives

Vianet

- As outlined above – being ISP described in possible micro projects for funding.
- Tower infrastructure existing in northern portion of the Township – Pointe au Baril.

Bell

We are waiting for a breakdown of what residents are scheduled to connect to fibre.

- High level fibre plan is completed including cable sizing, remotes OLTs & 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, Wahsouné, Bernyk.
- Marine fibre targeted to start in May.

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

Maplewifi

- AT&T SIM from the US. Since AT&T have blanket roaming agreements with major Canadian Carriers using this service means you likely could be on any of the major carrier networks. They just route the traffic back to AT&T and you look like you're a US customer roaming on those agreements in Canada.

Starlink

- <https://www.pcmag.com/news/spacex-prepares-to-test-next-generation-starlink-dishes>
- <https://www.thestar.com/business/2023/02/01/elon-musk-just-got-competition-for-satellite-broadband-over-canadas-northern-skies.html>

Telesat

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

CRTC

- <https://mobilesyrup.com/2023/01/30/new-crtc-chair-promises-revamped-internet-pricing-model-coming-soon/>

Respectfully Submitted,



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