

# Provincial Broadband Strategy

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AUMA Webinar

September 19, 2018



# Background

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- December 21, 2016 CRTC Telecom Regulatory Policy 2016-496:
  - Internet is now considered a basic telecommunications service for all Canadians; and
  - Target speeds of 50 Mbps download and 10 Mbps upload for 90% of residences and businesses by 2021
- Summer 2017 approval given to work on broadband policy options

# Current State

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- Taylor Warwick Consulting completed a current state analysis of advertised residential speeds in communities across Alberta, excluding Edmonton and Calgary
- Advertised speeds in only 105 of the 826 communities (12.7%) meet the CRTC speed objective of 50 Mbps download and 10 Mbps upload

- When counting the population of Edmonton and Calgary, approximately 83.1% of Albertans meet the CRTC objectives
- Excluding Edmonton and Calgary, 65% of Albertans meet the minimal CRTC objective
  - 650,000 Albertans in the study regions do not
- Larger communities meet the CRTC minimal objectives while smaller communities do not

# Information Gathering: Who did we talk to?

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- Municipalities, Districts, and Counties (via AUMA/RMA)
- Regional Economic Development Alliances (REDAs)
- Indigenous representatives
- TELUS as ILEC
- Major network/infrastructure owners e.g. Bell, Rogers
- ISPs/WISPs
- Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada
- Not-for-profit/research groups e.g. Cybera, Van Horne Institute, Universities
- Alberta Chambers of Commerce members
- All Government of Alberta Ministries

# Information Gathering: What did we ask?

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- Scope of questions:
  - Opportunities and limitations currently facing residents, businesses, and other organizations based on the broadband services available
  - Timing and priorities of broadband access for communities
  - Financial and economic feasibility for communities to improve broadband services
  - Industry plans for improving broadband services

# Information Gathering: What did we hear?

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- Majority of responses focused on:
  - Limitations facing communities due to a lack of broadband
  - Concerns over the level of broadband connectivity in communities across Alberta
  - Lack of accessible infrastructure that promotes broadband connectivity

# Moving Forward

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- Based on an analysis of the information gathering responses, three key themes began to emerge:
  - The priority for improving broadband connectivity
  - Coordinated approach
  - Ways that will help promote enhanced broadband connectivity

# Moving Forward

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- The Provincial Broadband Strategy will look to:
  - Identify measurable targets for broadband speeds
  - Close the urban-rural divide in access to broadband services
  - Work towards ensuring all Albertans have access to high-quality, reliable, and affordable broadband services
  - Accelerate Alberta's ability to participate in the global knowledge-based economy and take advantage of emerging digital innovation opportunities

# Moving Forward

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- Implementing a strategy will take collaboration, planning, and funding from all levels of government together with the private sector
- Work is underway to identify and confirm possible federal and provincial funds
  - Provincial funds to align with the anticipated approval of a Provincial Broadband Strategy

# Potential Funding

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- CRTC Telecom Regulatory Policy 2016-496 (Closing the Broadband Gap)
  - Will invest up to \$750 million over the first five years
  - Be complementary to existing and future private investment and public funding
  - Focus on underserved areas
- CRTC held a consultation on the set up and the funding mechanisms are currently being developed

- Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program
  - Alberta has been allocated \$159.7 million within the Rural and Northern Communities stream to support infrastructure priorities in communities of 100,000 or fewer
  - The Province is required to cost-share 33.33 % on municipal projects; if a project is submitted by the private sector or a not-for-profit, the Province will not be required to share costs
  - Provincial funding for cost-share has been requested to align with the anticipated approval of a strategy
    - Fiscal 2019-2020

# Questions?

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