

Provincial Broadband Strategy

AUMA Webinar

September 19, 2018



Background

- 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

- 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?

- 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?

- 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?

- 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

- 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

- 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

- 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

- 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?

