

SMOKY LAKE COUNTY

A G E N D A: County Council: Committee of the Whole Meeting

for the purpose of **Administration**, to be held on

Wednesday, **September 21, 2022** at 9:00 A.M.

Virtual through Zoom Platform

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88548019566?pwd=VS9NMGezeGdPYWhmbHpTaTZVcldWZz09>

Meeting ID: 885 4801 9566 Passcode: 808078

And with Council physically present in the County Council Chambers, Smoky Lake.

1 Meeting:

1.1 Call to Order

2 Agenda:

2.1 Acceptance of Agenda:
as presented or subject to additions or deletions.

3 Minutes:

No Minutes.

4 Request for Decision:

N/A.

5 Issues for Information:

6 Correspondence:

7 Delegation:

7.1 Jesse Sopko, MPA, CIAPP-C, CLGM (he/him) General Manager, Corporate Services @ 9:00 a.m. – Re: Sturgeon County's Broadband Strategy.

8 Executive Session:

Adjournment.



Smoky Lake County Committee of the Whole Presentation



September 21, 2022

It's time to get connected

Sturgeon County Broadband Fibre Network




sturgeoncounty.ca/GetConnected



Presentation Overview

- Sturgeon County - State of Broadband Connectivity
- Broadband Initiative Goal & Principles
- Broadband Initiative Phase 1 Overview
- Lessons Learned
- Next Steps
- Questions

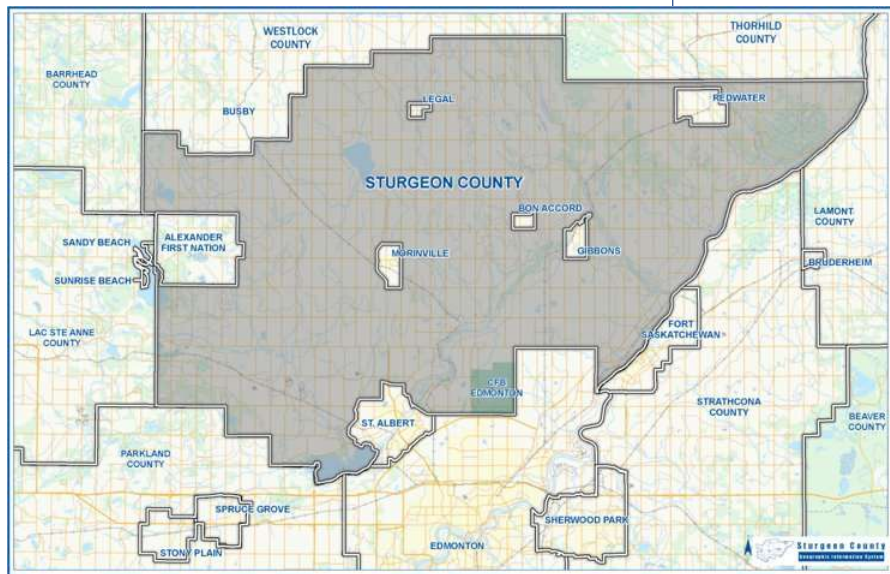


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Sturgeon County - State of Broadband Connectivity

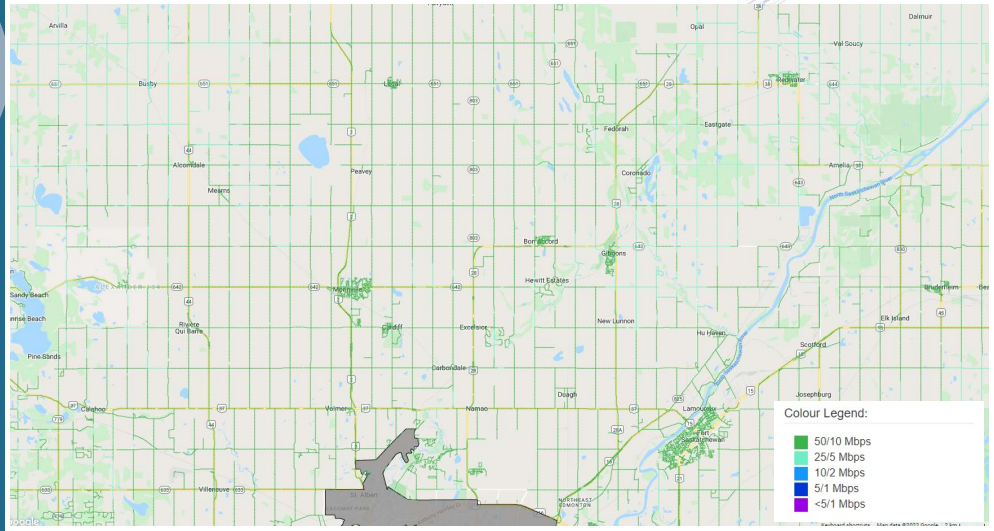
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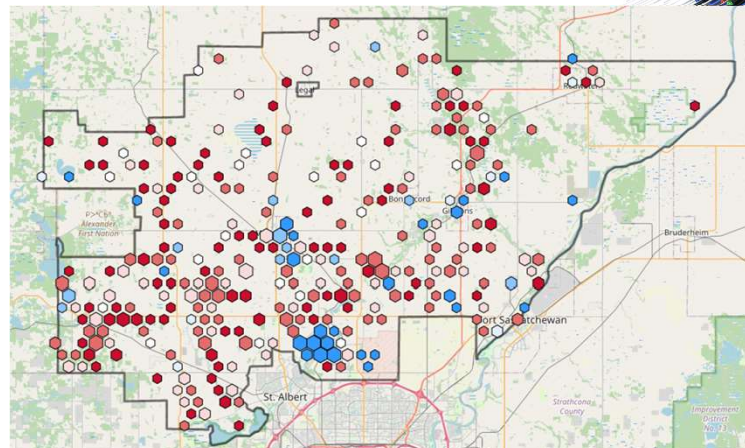
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National Broadband Internet Service Availability Map



Canadian Internet Registration Authority (CIRA) Speed Tests



Dark Blue = Minimum federal standards or better
 Dark Red = 6 Mbps or less
 Source: cira.ca, May 6, 2022

STURGEON COUNTY INTERNET CONNECTIVITY BUSINESS SURVEY

In 2020, Sturgeon County conducted two separate surveys regarding internet access: one for businesses located within the county and another for all County residents. The survey results clearly show high-speed internet access is increasingly important in everyday life but residents and businesses may not have access to the internet speeds required to meet their needs.

What do you use your business internet for?

- 72% Download/upload files
- 66% Work and/or communication
- 66% Access and/or provide cloud services
- 63% Managing online business website

Internet Service Providers (ISPs) have challenges serving rural areas with relatively few customers. Sturgeon County investment can encourage ISPs to deliver faster speeds and increase availability.

What level of involvement should Sturgeon County take in ensuring that Sturgeon County's future internet speed requirements can be met at a reasonable cost?

None (the County has no involvement in Sturgeon County internet needs)

Low (County encourages and/or supports the private sector, no County investment)

Medium (County encourages and/or supports the private sector, possible County investment)

High (County partners with the private sector and/or invests as required)

STURGEON COUNTY INTERNET CONNECTIVITY RESIDENT SURVEY

In 2020, Sturgeon County conducted two separate surveys regarding internet access: one for businesses located within the county and another for all County residents. The survey results clearly show high-speed internet access is increasingly important in everyday life but residents and businesses may not have access to the internet speeds required to meet their needs.

What do you use your home internet for?

- 96% Social media
- 83% Shopping and product research
- 73% Work and/or school
- 62% Cloud services and storage

Internet Service Providers (ISPs) have challenges serving rural areas with relatively few customers. Sturgeon County investment can encourage ISPs to deliver faster speeds and increase availability.


What level of involvement should Sturgeon County take in ensuring that Sturgeon County's future internet speed requirements can be met at a reasonable cost?

None (the County has no involvement in Sturgeon County internet needs)

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Municipalities	Households	Benefits, \$/year
Counties		
Leduc County	6537	2,287,950
Parkland County	14034	4,911,900
Strathcona County	37559	13,145,650
Sturgeon County	7830	2,740,500
Cities		
Beaumont	6433	2,251,550
Edmonton	387950	135,782,500
Fort Saskatchewan	10675	3,736,250
Leduc	12556	4,394,600
St. Albert	26541	9,289,350
Spruce Grove	14120	4,942,000
Towns		
Devon	2622	917,700
Morinville	381	1,330,350
Stony Plain	7149	2,502,150
Region Total:		\$188,232,450/year



Source: Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board
Broadband Situation Analysis Final Report August 2020



Broadband Initiative Goal & Principles




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Broadband Initiative Goal

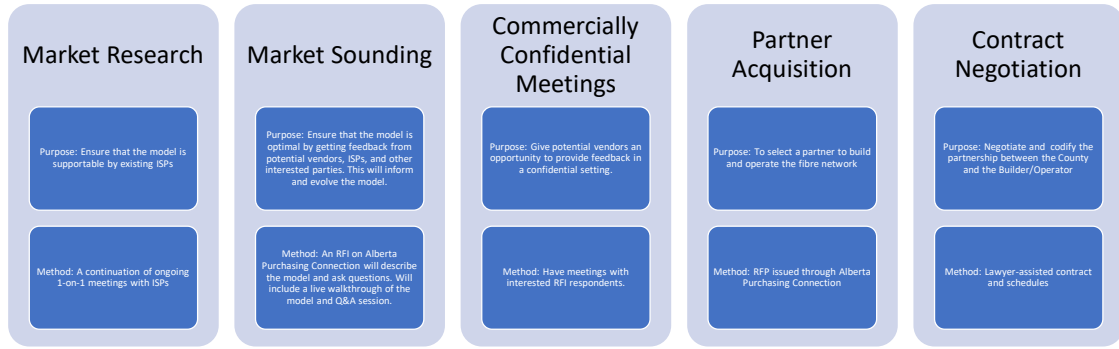
Build and operate a fast, reliable and affordable broadband network through:

- a partnership where the County and a Network Provider contribute financially to the creation of the network,
- the Network Provider builds, operates, and maintains the network, and
- retailers offer services to residents and businesses.



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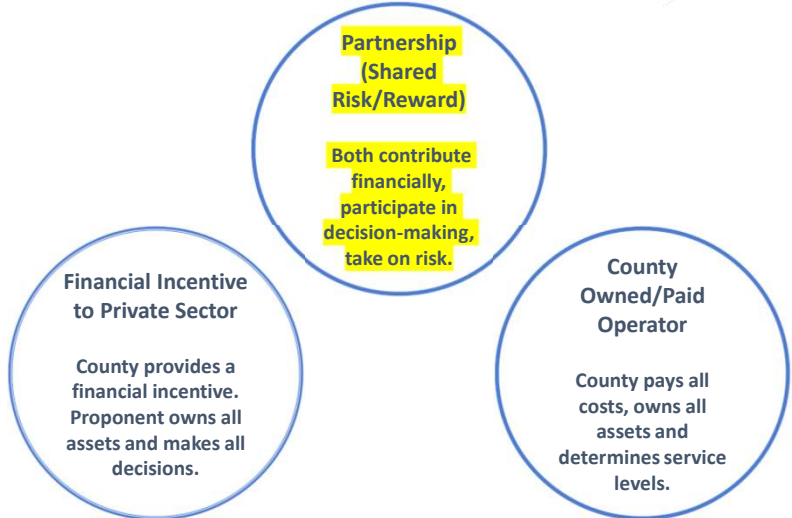
Industry Engagement





Key Inputs from Industry

- Leverage lower interest rates
- “Open” Network
- Leverage industry experience
- Improve wireless service through fibre backhaul


Vendor Models

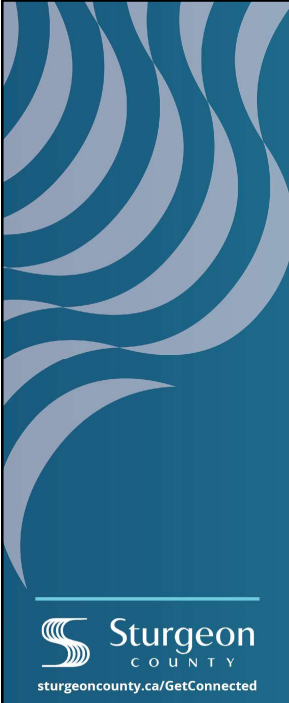
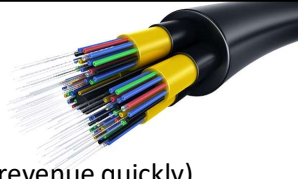


Phase 1 Approach


- Invest along with the private sector to expand fibre-based broadband service availability in the County
- Ensure that taxpayer investments are protected
- Provide services that are reliable, fast, and affordable
- Encourage innovation
- Allow residents and businesses to obtain broadband services from their choice of competitive retail provider

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Sustainability

- Focus on areas of high density first (to generate revenue quickly), with potential for future expansion
- Subscription model means benefiting properties pay back portion of capital investment over time (addresses issues of equity)
- Potential for future grant funding for areas of lower density
- Increased property values provide increased municipal taxes for the County
- Promote economic development opportunities (connecting industrial parks)
- Controlling service levels and affordability

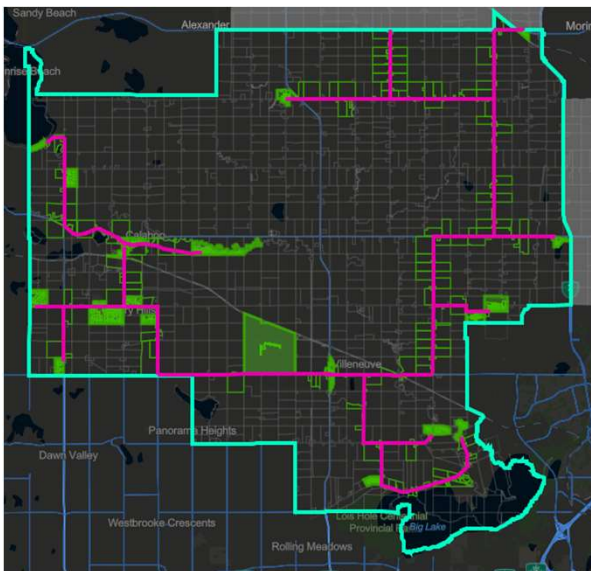
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Broadband Initiative Phase 1 Overview

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Phase 1 – Villeneuve Area



947 in-scope premises


- 15 subdivisions with 462 premises
- 3 hamlets with 175 premises
- 3 industrial parks with 67 businesses
- 243 premises along the fibre distribution route

- Sturgeon County investment: \$7.55 million
- CFOC investment: \$1 million



Shared Investment with CFOC



- **Phase 1**
 - Sturgeon County's contribution: \$7.55 million
 - CFOC contribution: \$1 million
- **Future Phases**
 - Will be based on learnings from Phase 1 and within the context of other priority capital projects in the County.

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Lessons Learned

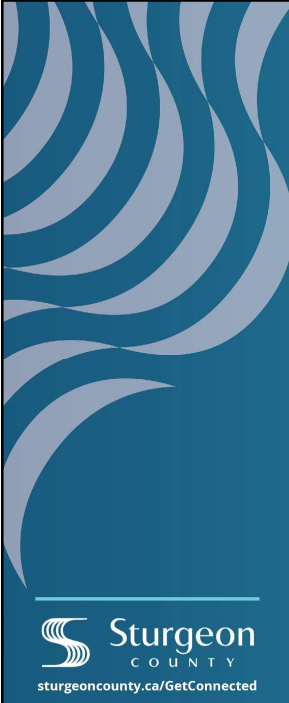

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Lessons Learned


- **Accessing Funding**
 - Inflexible grant program eligibility criteria
 - Provincial government piggy-backing on federal grant program
 - Need for shovel-ready project with a private sector partner
- **Engagement is Critical**
 - Resident and business engagement through speed tests and surveys
 - Industry engagement through procurement process
- **Addressing Concerns of Equity**
 - Perpetuation of serving densest areas first (economies of scale)



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Lessons Learned

- **Determining Appropriate Governance Model**
 - Municipally-owned and operated
 - Subsidize private sector only
 - Public-private partnership
 - Utility model
 - Other
- **Funding Considerations**
 - MGA is inflexible (municipalities cannot lend money)
 - Using borrowing for long-term strategic initiatives
 - Considerations of equity – paid through municipal tax or other (Local Improvement Tax, split residential tax rate, other)

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Next Steps



Next Steps

- Execute Phase 1 (2022)
- Planning and engagement for Phase 2 (2023)
- Continue advocacy to provincial and federal governments for grant funding
- Continue to share our experience with others, share information, and collaborate





Questions?

Jesse Sopko
General Manager, Corporate Services
Sturgeon County

