



INTERNET UPDATE - OVERVIEW

MARCH, 2019

Improving rural internet service is a priority. Having a strong internet network will help our province build places where businesses and people flourish. In 2018, the government placed \$193 million in an internet funding trust to help connect more communities, homes and businesses across the province, one of the largest per-capita investments in internet made by a province. In July, 2018, Develop Nova Scotia became the Crown Corporation responsible for developing and implementing a strategy to bring reliable, high-speed internet to rural Nova Scotia.

Develop Nova Scotia has created the Internet for Nova Scotia Initiative and has taken the first step to find solutions. In December, 2018, we announced a call to organizations interested in providing internet services in Nova Scotia to pre-qualify to bid on projects across the province. This process closed on March 13th, and 11 submissions were received. Develop Nova Scotia is now evaluating these submissions against the criteria laid out in the pre-qualification documents. Those that can demonstrate they have the financial capacity, human resources and experience to build, maintain, grow and evolve networks will be invited to respond to the broader call for bids. All submissions that are successful will be announced publicly.

Solutions must meet or exceed provincial speed targets of 50 mbps for wired connections and 25 mbps for wireless and must evolve with changing technology. Projects will begin in some communities in 2019.

Notes

- Access to high speed internet is vital to the economic and social growth of our province. That's why Develop Nova Scotia has created the implementation strategy, the Internet for Nova Scotia Initiative.
- A process to pre-qualify organizations closed March 13, 2019, and 11 submissions were received. A further call for bids will follow.
- Solutions using all technologies that meet minimum standards will be considered.
- Projects will begin in some communities in 2019.

Questions and Answers

When will I see projects in my area?

At this stage, we are unable to provide specific timelines for any part of the province. However, based on current timelines, some projects could begin this year. Develop Nova Scotia will continue to engage with elected officials and provide updates as projects progress.

What technology will be used in my area, and what about 5G?

As part of our procurement process, we are looking to the bidding organizations to provide solutions that will meet or exceed our standards. We are open to all technologies. We fully expect solutions will employ different types of technology, however it's too early to predict which technologies might be used in specific areas of the province.

What about CTI projects that have been funded in my area?

Connect to Innovate (CTI) is a program run by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada that has funded rural internet projects in Nova Scotia. The Nova Scotia Internet Funding Trust has approved additional funding to some of these projects, and work should begin in the coming months.