



January 25, 2021

DEVELOP NOVA SCOTIA--Access to High-Speed Internet for More Nova Scotians

Access to reliable, high-speed internet across the province gives Nova Scotians options in choosing where to live and work and helps attract those who can work remotely to our province.

That is why Develop Nova Scotia continues to advance projects that extend internet networks and service through government's investment in the Nova Scotia Internet Funding Trust.

Today, January 25, Develop Nova Scotia announced more expansions to existing contracts for Internet for Nova Scotia Initiative projects. These expansions provide access to high-speed internet connections to an additional 5,600 homes and businesses, extending coverage to 99 per cent of Nova Scotia.

"Bringing high-speed internet access to more Nova Scotian homes and businesses remains the priority of the Internet for Nova Scotia Initiative. As we've promised from the beginning, we have never stopped working and we continue to push farther as fast as we can," said Minister of Business Geoff MacLellan. "We heard loud and clear how important access to high-speed internet is. It is critical to businesses and families, and today's announcement is another step in bringing access to as many Nova Scotians as possible."

Projects associated with the expansions are in Zones 1 (Western Nova Scotia), Zone 3 (Annapolis/Hants), and Zone 4 (South Shore). By expanding existing projects, Develop Nova Scotia continues to accelerate timelines for these homes and businesses to be connected. The trust is investing \$29 million in these contract extension projects, with leveraged funds of \$8 million from other levels of government and the private sector.

These contracts are with pre-qualified internet service providers Mainland Telecom, Bell Canada and Cross Country Communications and will provide small communities across the province with high-speed internet, at speeds higher than Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) targets.

Preparatory and engineering work will begin immediately on the contract extensions, and it is expected all homes and businesses covered by these extensions will have access to improved network by the end of or before 2023. Timelines for access to connections will vary by community and will be further refined by providers within the next several months.

Quotes:

"While tens of thousands of Nova Scotians have already or will soon benefit from this effort, it's not time to rest just yet. We're getting close, but we have more work to do to make sure as many Nova Scotians as possible can work, study, build their businesses and connect with family and friends virtually. We must also continue to attract people to our province and robust internet infrastructure is critical in capturing our share of the growing work from anywhere movement."

- Jennifer Angel, president and CEO, Develop Nova Scotia

"After spending years with many of our neighbours advocating for high-speed internet for our community, during the summer of 2020, in the midst of the pandemic, we were connected. As a mother of two school age children, business owner and volunteer this has significantly impacted our family for the better. We no longer have to drive to our office if work requires, as we are now able to use our home office. As a volunteer, I have many Zoom calls during the evenings and previously this was challenging. High-speed internet has significantly improved work/life balance for our family. "

- Julie Gilby, co-owner, CKG Elevator Ltd., Board of Directors – East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce

"Today's Internet for Nova Scotia announcement is great news for Nova Scotians. This pandemic has highlighted the need for faster, more efficient internet service in our communities. The internet connects us all. By prioritizing the development of high-speed internet, we make our communities more accessible and attractive places to live, work and play."

- Chris Peters, president, Nova Scotia Association of REALTORS

Quick Facts:

-- since the first Internet for Nova Scotia Initiative projects were announced in February 2020, approximately 31,000 of a total of 87,200 homes and businesses already have the network in place to provide new or improved high-speed internet, and providers are working to connect the rest as quickly as possible

-- work will continue with internet providers in an effort to reach as close to 100 per cent of homes and businesses as possible

-- the total investment to date of \$163 million by the province through the Nova Scotia Internet Funding Trust has leveraged \$137 million of additional funding, of which \$118 million is from the private sector

-- all projects approved to date for funding by the trust provide at least target speeds required by the CRTC (50 Mbps down/10 Mbps up for wired, 25 Mbps down/5 Mbps up for wireless, with a demonstrated plan to reach 50 Mbps)

Additional Resources:

For a breakdown of communities, partners, access to connection numbers and more details, visit: <https://internet.developns.ca>. Information on the Internet for Nova Scotia Initiative is available by visiting this site, by emailing info@developns.ca or by calling 1-833-422-6591

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