

Briefing Note

Title	10:00 a.m. Sturgeon County Broadband Initiative Project Update
Issue	Administration is providing an update on the progress of Sturgeon County's Broadband Initiative.
Proposed Motion(s)	That the Committee receive the Broadband Initiative Project Update as information.
Previous Council / Committee Direction	<u>September 14, 2021 Regular Council Meeting</u> Motion 448/21: That Council authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to execute the Broadband Initiative Phase One Agreement with the top-ranked proponent subject to the successful conclusion of contract negotiations.
Report	<u>Background Information</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• At the February 23, 2021 Council meeting, Council directed Administration to proceed with the procurement of Phase 1 of the Broadband Initiative project.• On April 27, 2021, Council passed Bylaw 1530/21 to authorize a debenture of \$7.3 million for Phase 1 of the Broadband Initiative.• The goal of the initiative is to build and operate a fast, reliable, and affordable broadband network through a partnership where the County and a private sector partner contribute financially to the creation of the network, the partner builds, operates, and maintains the network, and retailers offer services to residents and businesses.• The principles of this initiative include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Investing along with the private sector to expand fibre-based broadband service availability in the County,○ Ensuring that taxpayer investments are protected,○ Providing services that are reliable, fast, and affordable,○ Encouraging innovation,○ Allowing residents and businesses to obtain broadband services from their choice of competitive retail provider,○ Providing fibre to the premises in hamlets, subdivisions, and business parks, and

- Enabling rural residents not serviced by fibre to the premises to benefit from improved backhaul and potential future fibre network expansion.
- The County's strategy includes two phases:
 - Phase 1 includes the hamlets, subdivisions, business/industrial parks, and residences along the fibre path the southwest portion of the County. This includes a number of strategic priority areas including Villeneuve Airport, ProNorth Industrial Park, and Heritage Industrial Park as well as the hamlets of Villeneuve, Calahoo, and Rivière Qui Barre. This phase will be funded through the \$7.3 million debenture approved by Council. It is anticipated that construction of the network will commence in the spring of 2022, to be completed by end of 2022.
 - Phase 2 includes the remaining hamlets, subdivisions, business/industrial parks, and residences along the fibre path in the County. This phase will be funded through future budget consideration. If fully funded, it is anticipated that construction can commence in early 2023 and be completed as early as the end of 2024.
- Following an extensive procurement process, at the September 14, 2021 Regular Council Meeting, Council authorized the Chief Administrative Officer to execute the Broadband Initiative Phase One Agreement with the top-ranked proponent subject to the successful conclusion of contract negotiations.
- Administration concluded contract negotiations in November 2021 and awarded the project to Canadian Fiber Optics Corporation (CFOC). CFOC is experienced in funding, designing, building, and operating fast and reliable rural internet networks.
- Representatives from CFOC will be in attendance at the February 22, 2022 Committee of the Whole Meeting where Administration will provide an update on recent activity, next steps, and key messages as the County and CFOC prepare to complete the Phase 1 Broadband Initiative in 2022.

External Communication

- Administration will engage with residents, businesses, and Internet Service Providers on how to participate in the Phase 1 project. A proposed Communications and Marketing Plan will be presented to Council for consideration at a March 2022 Council meeting.
- Administration continues to update the Broadband Initiative information on the County's website at www.sturgeoncounty.ca/internet.

Relevant Policy/Legislation/Practices:

- 2018 Sturgeon County and Town of Morinville Broadband Analysis

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2020 Edmonton Metropolitan Region Broadband Situation Analysis • 2021 Budget • Bylaw 1530/21 – Debenture for Broadband Infrastructure – Phase 1
Implication	<p><u>Strategic Alignment:</u> Planned Growth - Modern broadband and digital capabilities.</p> <p>Operational Excellence - Future focused thinking to proactively respond to emerging opportunities and challenges.</p> <p><u>Organizational:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration is recruiting for a Broadband Program Lead to support this project, as approved in the 2022 Budget. • In the 2022 Budget, Council also approved funding for consulting and legal support. <p><u>Financial:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council has approved \$7.3 million for Phase 1 through Debenture Bylaw 1530/21.
Follow Up Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finalize Phase 1 detailed design (Information Services, Q1 2022). 2. Prepare public communications and marketing plan for Council's approval (Information Services, Q1 2022).
Attachment (s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attachment 1: Sturgeon County Broadband Initiative Project Update
Report Reviewed by:	<p>Jesse Sopko, Director, Corporate Services</p> <p>Reegan McCullough, County Commissioner – CAO</p>

Strategic Alignment Checklist

Vision: *Offering a rich tapestry of historical, cultural, and natural experiences, Sturgeon County is a municipality that honours its rural roots and cultivates desirable communities. Uniquely situated to provide world-class agricultural, energy, and business investment opportunities, the County prioritizes responsible stewardship and dreaming big.*

Guiding Principles: Collaboration | Accountability | Flexibility | Excellence | Safety | Future Readiness | Affordability | Innovation

Community Outcome	Not consistent	Consistent	N/A
Planned Growth			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internationally competitive to attract, grow and sustain diverse businesses; tenacious focus on new growth and innovation 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modern broadband and digital capabilities 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low cost, minimal red-tape regulations 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reliable and effective infrastructure planning; comprehensive land use and infrastructure planning 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Thriving Communities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beautiful, surprising places with high standards; integrated natural spaces & trail systems; healthy and resilient 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging cultural, historical, and civic amenities; strong community identity and pride 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe, welcoming, and diverse communities; small community feel and personal connection; commitment to high quality of life 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Environmental Stewardship			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean air, land, and water; Carbon neutral municipal practices; circular economy opportunities 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation of natural areas and agricultural lands; enhanced greening and biodiversity; safekeeping ecosystems 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable development; partnerships with industry and others to drive emission reductions 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Collaborative Governance			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predictable and stable external relationships; volunteer partnerships 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meaningful connections with Indigenous communities 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing community consultation and engagement; transparent and action-oriented decision making based on sound rationale 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respectful and informed debate; clear and supportive governance processes 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Operational Excellence			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged and effective people – Council, Admin and Volunteers; continuous learning and improvement mindset; nimble and bold, with strong leadership 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality cost-effective service delivery; robust procurement and operational practices and policies; asset management and performance measurement; careful debt and reserve stewardship; long-term financial planning and sustainability 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future focused thinking to proactively respond to emerging opportunities and challenges 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative revenue generation and service delivery models integrated strategic and business planning 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>