

Request for Decision

Title	Broadband Initiative Phase 1 Public Communications Plan
Proposed Motion	That Council approve the Broadband Initiative Phase 1 Public Communications Plan as presented.
Administrative Recommendation	Administration recommends that Council endorse the Broadband Initiative Phase 1 Public Communications Plan, which will provide the blueprint for public communications for this initiative.
Previous Council / Committee Direction	<p><u>February 22, 2022 Committee of the Whole Meeting</u> Motion 023/22: That the Committee receive the Broadband Initiative Project Update as information.</p> <p><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.</p>
Report	<p><u>Background Information</u></p> <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 premise in hamlets, subdivisions, and business parks,
- Connecting as many rural residents along the fibre route as possible, 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 in 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 the 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 were in attendance at the February 22, 2022 Committee of the Whole Meeting, and with Administration, provided 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.
- Since the February 22, 2022 Council meeting, and in alignment with the principles and scope approved by Council, the Phase 1 design has been finalized.
- With the finalization of the Phase 1 design, Administration is now focusing on public communications. The proposed Public

	<p>Communications Plan (see Attachment 1) identifies the goals, audiences, and tactics that will be employed to communicate this initiative to residents, businesses owners, and other stakeholders. The Plan presented to Council is an excerpt of an internal plan; administrative matters and draft visuals have been omitted for brevity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration requests that Council review the proposed Public Communications Plan, and if in agreement, endorse the plan as the blueprint for public communications for the Broadband Initiative Phase 1 project. • Council will note that the proposed approach to public communications is multi-faceted, employing various tactics and mediums in order to ensure efficient flow of clear communications to the various audiences impacted by this initiative. • Once the Plan is endorsed by Council, Administration will move quickly to post additional information to the Broadband Initiative page on the County's website and begin employing other tactics outlined within the Plan. <p><u>External Communication</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration will communicate with stakeholders as identified within the Public Communications Plan. • Administration continues to update the Broadband Initiative information on the County's website at www.sturgeoncounty.ca/internet. <p><u>Relevant Policy/Legislation/Practices</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018 Sturgeon County and Town of Morinville Broadband Analysis • 2020 Edmonton Metropolitan Region Broadband Situation Analysis • 2021 Budget • Bylaw 1530/21 – Debenture for Broadband Infrastructure – Phase 1
<p>Implication of Administrative Recommendation</p>	<p><u>Strategic Alignment:</u></p> <p>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 has the resourcing to execute Phase 1 of the Broadband Initiative. The Broadband Program Lead will coordinate the day-to-day activities of the initiative. • In the 2022 Budget, Council approved funding for consulting and legal support.

	<u>Financial:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council has approved \$7.3 million for Phase 1 through Debenture Bylaw 1530/21. • There are sufficient funds in the 2022 operating budget to conduct comprehensive public communications related to this project.
Alternatives Considered	Council could approve the Broadband Initiative Phase 1 Public Communications Plan with amendments.
Implications of Alternatives	<u>Strategic Alignment:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent on the amendments proposed. • Reduced public communication opportunities may reduce stakeholder awareness and support for this initiative. <u>Organizational:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent on the amendments proposed. • Increased public communications efforts may require contracted resourcing to execute. <u>Financial:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent on the amendments proposed. • There are sufficient funds in budget to employ communications tactics in addition to those proposed in the Public Communications Plan.
Follow up Action	1. Conduct public communications in alignment with the Broadband Initiative Phase 1 Public Communications Plan (Information Services & Corporate Communications, Q2 - Q4, 2022).
Attachment(s)	1. Attachment 1: Broadband Initiative Phase 1 Public Communications Plan
Report Reviewed by:	<p>Jesse Sopko, General Manager, Corporate Services</p> <p>Scott MacDougall, Acting 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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"/>