

Construction Begins On Eastern Ontario's Broadband Mega-Network

Canada, Ontario and the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus
Move Landmark Partnership Forward

August 31, 2010

Hastings County, Ontario — Ontario's largest rural broadband network is ready to begin construction. The high-speed Internet infrastructure project will connect with local delivery systems to expand service to an estimated one million residents and businesses in Eastern Ontario.

The Honourable Chuck Strahl, Canada's Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, and the Honourable Carol Mitchell, Ontario's Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, together with Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus Inc. (EOWC) moved forward on a landmark partnership today to start construction of the broadband network in Eastern Ontario. The EOWC comprises the 13 upper- and single-tier municipalities within Eastern Ontario, as well as separated municipalities and First Nations communities.

"Our Government remains committed to delivering investments that help create jobs and build strong, sustainable communities now and for years to come," said Minister Strahl. "The construction of a broadband network in Eastern Ontario will help to expand and improve local businesses and their services, connect family and friends to one another, and significantly boost our regional economy."

"The McGuinty government is working to build partnerships that help bring vital health, education and business services to Ontarians living in rural and remote communities," said Minister Mitchell. "This large-scale broadband project is a major achievement for Eastern Ontario, and one we are proud to invest in. This is part of our Open Ontario plan to create jobs and economic opportunities."

"Providing broadband access to residents, businesses and First Nations communities is one of the keys to unlocking the enormous economic potential of our region. This network is essential to our prosperity," said EOWC Chair, David Burton.

"Bell Aliant and Bell are pleased to have been selected to complete this significant communications infrastructure project together for the homes and businesses of Eastern Ontario," said Chuck Hartlen, Senior Vice President of Customer Solutions, Bell Aliant. "By building this core backbone fibre network and by using our extensive communications and technology expertise, we will be enabling access to faster, next generation broadband technology to 95% of this Eastern Ontario region."

"We are proud to be working with EOWC, an organization that is as passionate about connecting rural Ontarians to high-speed Internet as we are," said John Maduri, CEO of Barrett Xplore Inc. "Our mission is to provide innovative broadband solutions to rural customers at work, home, and play."

This is great news for residents and businesses alike,” said Dave Burton, Warden, County of Haliburton. “Affordable, fast and reliable internet service will transform our economic potential and local quality of life.”

Through the Building Canada Fund – Major Infrastructure Component, the governments of Canada and Ontario target larger, strategic projects of national and regional significance. Projects that support economic growth, such as connectivity and broadband, qualify for joint funding under this fund.

LEARN MORE

- About the [EOWC Broadband Plan and construction schedule](#)
- About [Canada’s Economic Action Plan](#)
- About [Ontario’s Rural Broadband Progress](#)

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Front Row: Honourable Minister Mitchell, Ontario's Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Dave Burton, EOWC Chair/Warden Haliburton County, Honourable Chuck Strahl, Canada's Minister of Transport and Infrastructure

Back Row: J.M. Jones – Warden, Peterborough County; Ric McGee – Mayor, City of Kawartha Lakes, Bill MacDonald – Barrett Xplorenent; Peter Dilworth – Bell Aliant/Bell; Peter Delanty – Warden, Northumberland County; Gary Davison – Warden, Frontenac County; Daryl Kramp – MP Prince Edward/Hastings; Henry Hogg – Warden, County of Lennox and Addington; Honourable Minister of Education and MPP Prince Edward/Hastings - Leona Dombrowsky, Leo Finnegan, Mayor – Prince Edward County; Bryan McGillis – Warden, United Counties of Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry; Susan Freeman, County Councillor, Lanark County; Bill Thake, Warden – United Counties of Leeds & Grenville.

Eastern Ontario Broadband Network Backgrounder

- The broadband network will deliver high-speed, high-capacity Internet service to an estimated 95 per cent of the residents and businesses in Eastern Ontario.
- The construction of the network's fibre-backbone will occur in stages over the next two years. A schedule projecting when service is expected to be ready for Internet Service Providers in each county and municipality will be available at the [Eastern Ontario Warden's Caucus \(EOWC\) website](#) in the near future.
- Since unveiling the project in mid-summer 2009, EOWC has undertaken: engineering plans, regional gap studies, public presentations, and tendered the construction of the project.
- Bell Aliant and Bell have been chosen by EOWC to build the fibre-backbone of the broadband network project. Local Internet Service Providers will connect to the backbone infrastructure to bring high-speed Internet service to customers.
- Barrett Xplore Inc. has been chosen by EOWC as the preferred proponent to provide satellite services for remote and terrain challenging locations where no other technology options are feasible.
- Through the Building Canada Fund – Major Infrastructure Component, the governments of Canada and Ontario are jointly providing two-thirds of the total eligible costs of the project, to a maximum combined contribution of \$110 million or \$55 million each. EOWC Inc. will contribute up to \$10 million to the project.
- Bell Aliant and Bell, who have been contracted by EOWC to build the physical infrastructure, will contribute \$27 million as well as in-kind services. Barrett Xplore Inc. is also contributing in-kind services.
- The total cost of this project, including future investment by local Internet Service Providers, is estimated to be \$170 million.
- The service area for this broadband network project includes the counties of Hastings, Peterborough, Renfrew, Northumberland, Haliburton, Frontenac, Lanark, Prince Edward, Lennox & Addington, the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry, the United Counties of Prescott & Russell and the United Counties of Leeds & Grenville as well as the City of Kawartha Lakes.