
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2016MTICS0002-000016
Jan. 7, 2016

Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services

Government continues connecting communities throughout B.C.

VICTORIA – More than \$1.1 million in grants for a second wave of nine projects funded through the provincewide Connecting British Columbia program will benefit more than 80 B.C. communities located in rural and remote areas of the province by improving access to high-speed Internet.

Connecting British Columbia is a \$10-million, multi-year grant program administered on behalf of the Province by Northern Development Initiative Trust that helps to pay for infrastructure required to deliver high-speed Internet connectivity to homes and businesses in rural locations throughout British Columbia. A total of \$5.8 million in Connecting British Columbia funding for eight projects benefiting 70 communities was provided in the first wave of grants last year.

B.C. is on track to meet its goal of 100% high-speed connectivity before 2021 by providing 94% of British Columbians with access to high-speed Internet. This makes B.C. one of the most connected jurisdictions in the world.

Quotes:

Minister of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services Amrik Virk –

"Government has enabled dozens of rural and remote British Columbia communities with access to the high-speed Internet people need to learn, train, do business, find services and stay connected. This is a direct reflection of our commitment to ensuring 100% high-speed connectivity is available in every area of the province before 2021."

Northern Development Initiative Trust CEO Janine North –

"To date, Northern Development Initiative Trust has administered nearly \$7 million in Connecting British Columbia grants to communities across the province. These funds will ensure that local or regional Internet services providers and other organizations can expand and extend high-speed Internet services to communities in every region of the province."

Peace Region Internet Society system administrator Brad Melanson-

"We are striving to ensure that broadband access is available to all. With the help of the provincial government, our rural and remote broadband connectivity project is connecting local residents, allowing businesses to remain competitive, supporting education and enhancing the delivery of public services."

Quick Facts:

To ensure high-speed Internet connections in communities and cellular access along highways

is available to citizens living in rural and remote areas, the Province works closely with other levels of government and the private sector, including large and small Internet service providers, to offer a number of connectivity programs and services including:

- A \$2-million BC Broadband Satellite Initiative, designed to expand access to high-speed Internet service in remote and geographically challenging locations where no other connectivity options exist. The program contributes toward the installation of Xplornet Inc. satellite Internet with the provincial contribution recently increasing from \$250 to a maximum of \$350 per installation.
- The provincially and federally supported, First Nations-led Pathways to Technology project, which has connected 190 of 203 First Nations communities, up from 85 in 2008.
- A non-monetary agreement with Telus which has completed nearly 1,500 kilometres of new cellular coverage along unconnected primary and secondary highway segments, with the rest to be complete by end of 2016.
- Upgrades to high-speed fibre optic cables in 400 public schools to enable faster access to information for young learners. As of December 2015, 346 schools have been upgraded by Telus.

Learn more:

Internet in B.C.: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/services-for-government/information-technology/internet-in-bc>

BC Broadband Satellite Initiative factsheet: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/factsheets/factsheet-bc-broadband-satellite-initiative>

Connecting BC grant program: <http://www.northerndevelopment.bc.ca/funding-programs/business-development/connecting-british-columbia/>

Pathways to Technology: <http://www.pathwaystotechnology.ca/>

Connecting British Columbia Agreement with Telus:
http://about.telus.com/community/english/about_us/for_our_customers/connecting_bc_program

A backgrounder follows.

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Connect with the Province of B.C. at: www.gov.bc.ca/connect

BACKGROUND

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Connecting British Columbia grant program projects

Columbia Basin-Boundary Rural & Remote Broadband Connectivity Project:

Service Provider – Columbia Basin Broadband Corp. (working with 12 Internet service providers)

Connecting British Columbia grant: \$ 2,287,305 million

- This project will provide the following communities with improved access to high-speed internet: Ainsworth Hot Springs, Baynes Lake, Beaver Valley, Blewett, Boswell, Boundary (Bridestville to Christina Lake), Bountiful, Brisco, Canal Flats, Canyon, Crawford Bay, Deer Park, Edgewater, Edgewood, Elk Valley, Elko, Fairmont Hot Springs, Ferguson, Field, Fruitvale, Genelle, Glade, Grasmere, Gray Creek, Harrogate, Harrop, Jaffray, Kingsgate, Kitchener, Lister, Moyie Lake, Northern Kootenay Lake communities, Parson, Renata, Riondel, Ross Spur, rural Rossland, Salmo, Sirdar, Slocan Valley, Spillimacheen, South Slocan, Tarrys, Thrums, Wasa, West Creston, Whatshan Lake and surrounding area, Wilmer, Windermere, Wynndel, Yahk and Ymir.

North Shuswap Fibre Connection:

Service Provider – Mascon Cable Systems Inc.

Connecting British Columbia grant: \$72,000

- This project will provide the following communities with improved access to high-speed internet: North Shuswap, Lee Creek, St. Ives, Little Shuswap Lake Indian Band, and Chase.

The Future is Now – ABC Communications Deploys TD-LTE Rural Broadband Networks in B.C.:

Service Provider – A.B.C. Allen Business Communications Ltd.

Connecting British Columbia grant: \$2,507,737 million

- This project will provide the following communities with improved access to high-speed internet: 92 Mile, Bear Lake, Beaverdell, Bridge Lake, Burns Lake, Fort St. James, Green Lake, Hixon, Horsefly, Little Fort, Lumby, Prince George Rural, Quesnel Rural, Rock Creek, Sinkut, Cluculz Lake, 122 Mile (Lac La Hache), and Fraser Mountain.

SLRD Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Rural and Remote High-Speed Internet:

Service Provider – Base Technology Ltd.

Connecting British Columbia grant: \$490,000

- This project will provide the following communities with improved access to high-speed internet: Paradise Valley, Cheekeye and Mile 10, Pemberton/Mount Currie Industrial Park, Lil'wat Nation, Lillooet Lake Region, Pemberton Meadows, and Pemberton Airfield

Bridge River Valley Internet Upgrade:

Service Provider – Minto Communications

Connecting British Columbia grant: \$50,017

- This project will provide the following communities with improved access to high-speed internet: Gold Bridge and Bridge River Valley.

Port Alice Microwave Bandwidth Project:

Service Provider – Brooks Bay Cable Corp.

Connecting British Columbia grant: \$139,941

- This project will provide the following communities with improved access to high-speed internet: Port Alice.

Sunnybrae Fibre Build:

Service Provider – Mascon Cable Systems Inc.

Connecting British Columbia grant: \$130,063

- This project will provide the following communities with improved access to high-speed internet: Sunnybrae.

Lookieloo.net 2015 Network Upgrade:

Service Provider – Lookieloo.net Sales & Purchases Ltd.

Connecting British Columbia grant: \$97,850

- This project will provide the following communities with improved access to high-speed internet: Spences Bridge, Boston Bar/North Bend, Yale, Chilliwack's remote areas and Steelhead.

Provide High-Speed Internet in B.C.'s Peace Region:

Service Provider – Peace Region Internet Society

Connecting British Columbia grant: \$366,011

- This project will provide the following communities with improved access to high-speed internet: Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Arras, Chetwynd, Hudson's Hope, Charlie Lake, Rose Prairie, Blueberry First Nation, Pouce Coupe, West Doe, Kiskatinaw, South Dawson, Progress, Swan Lake, Grand Haven, Cecil Lake, Two Rivers, and Baldonnel.

Granisle Goes Digital:

Service Provider – Village of Granisle

Connecting British Columbia grant: \$117,662

- This project will provide the following communities with improved access to high-speed internet: Granisle and Topley Landing.

Okanagan/Shuswap Upgrade:

Service Provider – MYBC Datacom Ltd.

Connecting British Columbia grant: \$106,000

- This project will provide the following communities with improved access to high-speed internet: Seymour Arm, Anstey Arm, Skimikin Valley, East Notch Hill, underserviced areas of Salmon Arm, Silver Creek, Tappen, Sorrento, Celista, Anglemont, Eagle Bay, St Ives
Okanagan: Grandview Bench, Grandview Flats, Larch Crossing and Otter Crossing, Yanky Flatts, Glennema, Splitsin Nation, Salmon Valley and rural Armstrong, Enderby, Mara, and Deep Creek.

Fibre to the Home:

Service Provider – Lytton Area Wireless Society

Connecting British Columbia grant: \$134,400

- This project will provide the following communities with improved access to high-speed internet: Lytton 17 Reserve and Lytton 18 Reserve.

Lytton First Nation 2, 3 and 4 Mile Fibre to the Home:

Service Provider – Lytton Area Wireless Society

Connecting British Columbia grant: \$110,150

- This project will provide the following communities with improved access to high-speed internet: rural Lytton (North Hwy 12) areas: Lytton 2 Mile Reserve, Lytton 3 Mile Reserve, St. Georges Rd., and Lytton 4 Mile Reserve.

Tatlayoko Think Tank Broadband Upgrade and Expansion:

Service Provider – Tatlayoko Think Tank Ltd.

Connecting British Columbia grant: \$53,791

- This project will provide the following communities with improved access to high-speed internet: Tatlayoko Lake, Kleena Kleene, Eagle Lake, and West Branch.

Lookout Ridge:

Service Provider – Network Integrated Communications Ltd.

Connecting British Columbia grant: \$37,550

- This project will provide the following communities with improved access to high-speed internet: rural Chilliwack, Lookout Ridge, Rosedale and Ryder Lake.

Connecting Gulf Islands:

Service Provider – Beacon Wireless Inc.

Connecting British Columbia grant: -\$134,250

- This project will provide the following communities with improved access to high-speed internet: Salt Spring Island, Mayne Island, Reid Island, Genoa Bay, and Galiano Island.

Tsaxana Broadband Network Expansion:

Service Provider – Conuma Cable Systems Ltd.

Connecting British Columbia grant: \$63,550

- This project will provide the following communities with improved access to high-speed internet: Gold River and Tsaxana.

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