

January 28, 2016

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **New High-Speed, High-Capacity Internet Access for 14 County Facilities Approved**

#### **NEWS**

Hastings County Council has approved an agreement with Bell Canada that will see vastly improved high-speed Internet connections extended to 14 sites across the County including its ambulance bases and its two long term care homes; Hastings Manor and Hastings Centennial Manor.

The service agreement with Bell was made possible through an initiative by the Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN) to improve broadband access for local governments. On behalf of more than 100 upper, lower and single-tier municipalities across the region, EORN undertook a competitive bidding process to improve connectivity and reduce costs.

Municipal governments that choose to participate can now access reliable fibre-based broadband Internet – with download and upload speeds up to 100 Megabits per second (Mbps) – and high-speed DSL services at more affordable prices. Higher speeds and lower costs can open the door to future savings and greater efficiencies through the increased use and availability of hosted telephone systems, cloud-based computing and public Wi-Fi etc.

#### **QUOTES**

“We are thrilled to be part of this initiative. Increased high-speed connections to our facilities across the County will help us improve the delivery of our services and reduce our operating costs,” said Warden Rick Phillips. “Council has asked our CAO to look at the possibilities for our local member municipalities getting connected through EORN’s master contract and whether the County can help in this effort,” he added.

“By taking a regional approach and leveraging economies of scale, EORN was able to negotiate affordable fibre and DSL broadband solutions for municipal governments across the region,” said EORN Chair Dave Burton. “It’s a great example of how working

together can achieve results and how EORN is using the region's fibre backbone network to improve government services."

"This service agreement creates tremendous opportunities for local governments to improve public services," said Jason St-Pierre, Senior Manager of Network Provisioning at Bell Canada. "Building on previous initiatives to improve the region's communications infrastructure, we are very pleased to again work with EORN so that local government facilities can benefit from better high-speed Internet access."

## **BACKGROUND**

In this case only Bell will be making capital investments to extend the network to the municipal sites.

EORN looks for innovative ways to meet the region's broadband needs. Through some \$260 million in public funding and private investment, EORN helped to create a regional fibre optic backbone and nearly two dozen local access networks, improving broadband access across much of Eastern Ontario. EORN continues to work to expand and leverage broadband access across the region.

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