

February 09, 2009

West Sault Broadband Project – Stakeholder Support

The purpose of this letter is provide information concerning ADnet's continuing efforts to get broadband (Internet) service in the unserved West Sault area which for project planning purposes is considered the area west from Town Line to Gros Cap, Prince Township, Denis Township (Red Rock), Nokomis Beach, the airport area and the 'Points' area south of the airport.

Holes in broadband availability in the area currently exist. For various reasons, the private Internet Service Providers (ISP) in the abutting areas considers it uneconomical to extend their coverage.



Bell Canada and Shaw Cable are the major terrestrial based private sector vendors providing both commercial and residential service in the nearby area. PUC Telecom provides commercial service though an agreement with Ontera. In addition, there are a number Value Added Retailers (VAR) such as Vianet that use the infrastructure of major distributors to deliver commercial and residential service. Finally there are a number of terrestrial Wireless ISP (WISP) such as OmniGlobe and Xplornet that are licensed to operate in the area or provide serve in the unlicensed bands.

Overarching all these terrestrial based systems is the satellite service offered by Xplornet through local VARs.

I had a teleconference with representatives from MNDM (NOHFC), FedNor and Bell Canada in early February 2009 to discuss the overall status of broadband coverage in the Algoma District.

With particular regard to the West Sault area, all three agreed in principle to take on the project subject to the normal due diligence and some caveats.

- Bell wanted some capital funding support but expressed a willingness to work with us. This is a positive step as they would never commit before.
- MNDM wanted a competitive procurement process. This is a normal requirement for expending public money.
- MNDM would like to see a show of local support. They are looking for council motions, letters from businesses and individuals in the affected area.
- MNDM wants an overview of the requirements in order to understand the scope of the project
- MNDM indicated that depending on other factors it might be of value to create an omnibus project to cover other gaps and holes in the immediate areas.
- FedNor would support backbone construction requirements



Algoma District Community Network

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- FedNor and was prepared to support some admin funding.

It needs to be understood that the process to get broadband into an area using public funds can be a long and drawn out progression with many twists and turns.

The next step, as noted above, is to update the overall coverage area plan and submit a written overview to the principals. I would like to do this in the next few weeks.

As part of this submission, I am asking for indicators of public support from you the stakeholders that I can forward to the authorities. This support can take any of the following formats

- a. council resolutions or signed letters from the Mayor or Reeve clearly stating their full support of the CBN partnership and the community's desire for improved cellular and broadband coverage;
- b. letters of support from local economic development organizations indicating the importance of improved cellular and broadband service to the economic well being of the area;
- c. letters of support from private sector businesses and public sector organizations indicating the importance of cellular and broadband to their growth;
- d. letters from community and property owner organizations; and
- e. letters from individuals

Therefore I ask that as a stakeholder for this project, you take the necessary action within your organization to provide an appropriate indication of support from the list above. This is not a request for financial support but only an indication to the funders that there is widespread community support and desire for improved service.

Please send them to ADnet at the address in the letterhead or preferably sent them electronically to wlefresne@adnetalgoma.ca. We will include your input as enclosures to the various documents we are required to produce.

If you have any questions concerning this matter, do not hesitate to contact me at 705-649-1252 from 9:00 AM to noon or e-mail wlefresne@adnetalgoma.ca.

Yours sincerely

Executive Director
Algoma District Community Network (ADnet)



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I am often asked about the funding process and this protracted timeline. As you can appreciate, as public funds are involved, detailed review and due diligence is exercised at each of the following steps, each of which can have numerous sub-requirements:

- a. Development of project scope and management plan
- b. Competitive procurement process for preferred vendor selection
- c. Discussions with funding agency staff
- d. Development of detailed business plans and funding applications
- e. Submissions to provincial and federal ministerial staffs for vetting and review
- f. Submission to funding agency approval authority for a decision
- g. Public announcement of approval
- h. Finalize contracts amongst the funding agencies, the project sponsors and the vendors
- i. Start project implementation