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Internet for Nova Scotia Initiative – Fall 2021 Update

We are pleased to provide an update on the progress of the Internet for Nova Scotia Initiative. With some projects now complete and others underway in various stages, we want to provide you with an overview, an update on estimated completion timelines, as well as provide you with tips and tools and answers to frequently asked questions. We know high-speed Internet can't come soon enough to you or your community. Know that we continue to advance this project with urgency, working closely with our qualified providers and partners.

Our team has been responding to numerous individual inquiries, updating the site as changes occur and new information is available, and having conversations with different community partners. We're also looking ahead to host some in-person and hybrid/virtual community sessions in the coming months.

Where We Are – More Than Halfway There

Since the first projects were announced in February 2020, approximately 47,000* of approximately 90,000 homes and businesses now have the network in place to provide new or improved high-speed Internet. Providers are working to complete the rest, with new connections happening daily.

To date, 3,200 kilometres of fibre has been laid and 19 towers installed. 4,300 kilometres of make ready work is complete.



Tree trimming work in the Cooks Brook area by Lucas Tree Experts earlier this spring.

Bell Round 1 projects were completed on time. Xplornet wireless project was completed ahead of schedule. Round 1 projects with Eskasoni Communications, Seaside Communications, Cross Country, and Mainland Communications are expected to be substantially complete by the end of this year. Round 2/Scope Expansion projects are all well underway.

The goal is that all homes and businesses included in the projects underway as part of the Internet for Nova Scotia Initiative will have access to improved network by the end of 2023, with connections being made every day between now and then.

**As of October/21*

Updates - Estimated Completion Timelines

Despite pandemic pressures on the project including labour, supply chain, business slowdowns and general challenges related to health and safety, the overall project is currently on time and budget. Our partners and our team continue to work hard to troubleshoot timeline risks every day.

As we have noted previously, estimated completion dates for project areas are based on the best information available at that time. Individual project timelines for areas not yet complete have recently been updated at <https://internet.developns.ca>.

Some original estimated completion dates have shifted, either earlier or later by several months, with the overall initiative still on track for completion by the end of 2023.

Items that can cause timelines to shift can include:

- additional tree trimming
- pole engineering inspection and replacements
- water and railway crossing permits
- supply chain shortages/slowdowns
- reallocation of crews from one project area to another based on the work that can be advanced most efficiently

Efforts are made to advance projects wherever possible. We work closely with providers and partners to mitigate any items where possible and stay within our overall project timeline.

In terms of your specific project area, remember that projects are completed in phases. The completion dates are for the full project area. Individual addresses may have service available before the full project area is complete. As connections become available, the provider feeds that information through to their customer service centre.

Tips & Tools

If you are in a Round 1 Bell project area, we have added address lists that show the civic address of homes and businesses for which connections have been made available. You can view the project areas at <https://internet.developns.ca>

Coverage maps are also available on our site for many projects. Parcels with or without a civic address in a red zone, off a blue road and serviced by power lines are anticipated to be covered

We will continue to update project pages as new information is available including completed address lists.

What's Next For Those Not Served

Through our work we identified additional underserved and have captured where possible bringing us to 102,000* underserved homes and businesses across the province.

There are approximately 4,500 remaining underserved homes and businesses. We're working with qualified providers, with a variety of available technologies, on potential solutions. Work will continue in an effort to reach as close to 100% of homes and businesses as possible.

*(*This includes the additional 7,700 homes and businesses anticipated to be covered as part of municipal led projects in Annapolis and Pictou counties.)*

Frequently Asked Questions

Some of the common questions we hear are below. You can read more at <https://internet.developns.ca/faqs>

>What is make-ready work and why does that impact some estimated completion dates?

When a project area is announced, the provider still needs to do some detailed site and engineering work. This helps refine the footprint so more detail around street and address level detail can be provided.

Part of the project work is make-ready work. This can include tree trimming, pole inspections, pole replacements with new poles, and water and road/railway crossing permits. The level of work can vary and providers also work with other levels of government and private sector on these items. We continue to work with partners to speed up regulatory approvals and optimize coordination among all of the partners.

>They've come to do work in our area (trim trees, run cable etc.) but haven't been back?

To help projects stay on track, crews may move from project area to project area depending on what work can be completed or advanced at the time in a certain area.

>It looks like fibre is now outside of my house. How do I know?

Access to connections is the final step in the process. Items including networks that are downstream, termination equipment, and back-office support must be in place prior to making service available to customers. Please refer to our list of complete addresses on project pages as available or Internet Service Provider websites to know when service is available to order.

>Why are some areas complete and others not until 2023?

Projects announced in Round 1 were projects that could be substantially complete in 6-12 months. These areas often had some or all of the required backbone, or key infrastructure in place. Round 2 and expansion projects are generally much larger in scope than round 1 projects, requiring greater amounts of planning, make-ready, materials and labour to complete.

Internet Service Provider's outline what they expect to cover within an estimated timeframe and in different project areas. Projects are completed in stages, so access to connections can happen and not all necessarily at the end of the estimated timeline.

Community Notes

Often we hear from communities and individuals who are getting connected to high-speed Internet through the project.

The growing community of Eskasoni First Nation in Cape Breton now has access to high-speed Internet for its approximately 1,100 homes. This is a fibre to the home/business project – a partnership with Eskasoni Communications/Seaside Communications. To date, more than 850 homes and businesses are connected.



Loran Tweedie and Chief Leroy Denny sign a partnership between Eskasoni Communications and Seaside Communications in June 2020.

And from the Clare area and our project with Mainland Telecom.

"Oh gosh! We are super excited to share the results of a recent Internet speed test at our Church Point office. Speeds that felt unattainable just a few short years ago are now available through Mainland Telecom. I highly recommend this service! We are happy campers with these numbers—this gives us the ability to conduct long-distance business effortlessly. We serve clients in five countries from our little corner in Clare, Nova Scotia and it is extremely comforting to know that we have extra strength with these speeds getting us to market."

~ Shelley Bellefontaine, Atlantic Online Marketing

2020/21 Annual Report

To read about our year in review, including the Internet for Nova Scotia Initiative, visit <https://annualreport.developns.ca>



If you have questions, please contact us at info@developns.ca or by calling 1-833-422-6591.

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