

# Internet Study Behind Schedule

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6. Critically consider other jurisdictions where municipalities have had central roles in internet improvements (eg. Ammon Idaho, Olds Alberta, Stratford Ontario, Annapolis County Nova Scotia);

7. Community engagement and funding structures and

8. Report on other topics identified in the project design or implementation phases.

In addition to producing the study staff were to report back to Council at the November meeting to present the report. Austin's progress report stated: Project components 1 and 2 (above) are in progress, but not completed. A work plan for the third set of tasks has been designed, but not yet undertaken. It will involve more research and fieldwork.

Some of the work involved in tasks 1 - 3 has already been done by the Province, but the information has

not been shared. The Province is using the information gleaned from its consultants to prepare a strategy on rural high-speed internet. The recent Provincial budget promised \$14.5 million for rural high-speed internet in its section called "New Ideas for a Better Economy". A FOIPOP application to obtain the information will soon be filed. Task 4 requires completion of the prior project tasks.

No new funding programs have been announced since the project was commissioned. Noninternet-specific funding sources are being investigated (eg. ACOA, Building Canada). A jurisdictional scan of rural internet initiatives has been completed. Meetings with municipal staff in East Hants and Annapolis Counties are scheduled. These discussions will inform an analysis of two approaches to municipal involvement in this issue in Nova Scotia.

# Annapolis Leading the Way with \$13.8-Million Commitment

By Maurice Rees

In stories earlier this year, the Shoreline Journal published information about the County of Annapolis approving a resolution to borrow \$13.8-Million. Subsequent discussions with an Annapolis councillor who helped spearhead the project said, councillors held a total of 56 public meetings, updating data and resident's wishes after each meeting. It was the insistence of resident's wishes for much better internet service which convinced council to proceed by borrowing \$13.8-Million.

In early April other reports about rural internet service around the province, it was widely reported high speed rural internet initiatives were underway in other areas, which included Hants, Kings, Digby Counties and District of Clare.

The Annapolis County website contains the following information: On April 28, 2017 the Municipality of

the County of Annapolis Council approved a Temporary Borrowing Resolution (TBR) that puts forward a formal request to the Province of Nova Scotia for approval of the County's intent to borrow \$13,000,000 to build back bone fibre optic cable in key areas within the County boundaries. The Annapolis County contribution is part of a fund-

ing formula that includes federal, provincial and private sector contributions totaling almost \$18,000,000.

Additional information can be found using the following link: <https://www.annapoliscounty.ca/government/news-media-releases/1238-annapolis-county-approves-multi-million-internet-investment>



# Colchester Not Included in 22 Internet Initiatives

By Maurice Rees

In late March over \$1.4-Million for 22 rural internet projects. As reported at that time the projects have the potential to provide or improve service for up to 5,400 homes and 420 businesses, as well as some business parks, community centres, fire halls and other facilities. The March announcement did not suggest fibre-speed internet would be created, as the Annapolis County initiative is mandated to do.

Unfortunately Colchester was not included other than Community Technology Network Association for Nova Scotia receiving \$75,000. The 22 areas or groups receiving funding for smaller areas within a municipality includes but not limited to:

**Southwest Nova:** Cedar Lake Wireless Cooperative, \$41,879; Municipality of the District of Yarmouth, with Forest Glen Community Centre, \$75,000.

**South Shore:** Municipality of the District of Shelburne, \$75,000; Region of Queens Municipality, \$75,000;

North Queens Business Centre and Innovation Hub Coop, \$10,812 and Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, \$75,000.

**Fundy-Annapolis Valley:** Shore Drive Community Development Association, \$75,000; Shore Drive Community Development Association, \$48,248; Municipality of the County of Annapolis, \$75,000; Glooscap First Nation, \$75,000; Municipality of West Hants, \$75,000; Grand Pré and Area Community Association, \$75,000 and Municipality of the County of Kings, \$25,000.

**Eastern Shore:** Sheet Harbour and Area Chamber of Commerce, \$75,000; Municipality of the District of St. Marys, \$66,922; Moser River United Board of Trade, \$75,000 and Moser River Community Hall Assn, \$75,000.

**Central HRM:** Halifax Regional Business and Community Economic Development Association, with Goffs-Devon Internet Initiative, \$75,000.

**Colchester County:** Community Technology Network Association of

Nova Scotia, \$75,000.

**Pictou County:** Lismore and District Recreational Committee, \$73,240.

**Cape Breton:** Cape Breton Partnership, \$54,128 and Municipality of the County of Victoria, \$68,990.



# Council Approves Trial Test of Sidewalk Plowing Changes

By Maurice Rees

In providing an update to council committee on November 16th regarding possible changes to street and sidewalk snow removal, Michelle Newell, Director of Public Works, was able to develop a plan which spreads shifts over a 19 hour period from 5:30 am to 12 midnight. During snow events most of the resources allocated to earlier part of the day from 8 am to 2:30 pm.

Staff proposed allocating more resources during the early shifts to allow for the immediate deployment of three (3) sidewalk plows during snow events. This will reduce the number of plow trucks dispatched on the early shift by 50% and therefore residents may observe a reduction in level of service on County roads in the early morning. Priority 1 Roads for plow trucks will be Teviot Place, Coldstream Drive, Village Line Avenue.

There are 8 schools within the County Sidewalk network there are 10,600 metres (10.6 km) of sidewalks. Within 500 metres of a school the sidewalk distance is listed as follows: Debert Elementary, 240 m; Brookfield (Elementary/High School), 835 m; North River Elementary, 891 m; Valley Elementary, 2,408 m; Hilden Elementary, 1,613 m; Harmony Heights (Salmon River), 3,397 m; Red-

cliffe (Valley), 802 m and Onslow Junior (Mingo's Corner), 410 m.

Newell noted that overtime will be kept to a minimum, but the timing of snow events could have an impact on overtime costs. Additional equipment is not proposed at this time.

Council supported staff's approach for re-assigning County resources over existing shifts to provide more coverage for sidewalk plowing earlier in the day. This is a trial approach for the upcoming season; and will be reviewed at the end of the 2018 winter season.

# Council Considering Cancelling Tender

By Maurice Rees

When bids for water line extension to the Fundy Discover Site, (former Palliser Property) came in at a cost overrun of \$30,962 staff and the CAO were not authorized to award the tender. On October 26th council had authorized awarding the tender within 10% of original projections.

After reviewing the scope of work Sackville Trenching bid was reduced by reduced by \$11,400 by eliminating the budget line item of General Provisions while an additional \$14,000 could be realized through an early award (before November 20) to avoid mobilization costs and adjustments to the thickness of asphalt reinstatement.

The adjusted bid price stands at \$149,552 or \$155,962 including net HST. Upon further investigation

Colchester staff received an expression of interest from the Town of Truro to participate by supplying equipment and human resources, with Colchester providing the materials. Council decided that if the town and county can perform the contract, then the tender would be cancelled. Otherwise the tender will be awarded to Sackville Trenching.

Seven contractors bid the project with pricing ranging from \$174,952 to \$296,000 (a range of \$121,048), Excluding HST. The bid amounts are as follows: Byron Construction \$296,000; Atlantic Road Construction & Paving \$261,140; Dexter Construction \$255,650; S.W. Weeks Construction \$188,085; J.R. Eisener Contracting \$188,720; Sackville Trenching \$174,952 and Ian Sinclair Contracting \$245,602.

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