

# REES' Pieces

## Heavy lifting is just starting

Finally after almost three years of persistence and hard work, Colchester has reached its goal of having a plan and approved funding to bring high speed broadband service to the municipality. The topic started when Colchester councillor, Tom Taggart brought the matter before council in 2017.

As things evolved through the process, Colchester teamed up with Cumberland to choose an ISP provider and work with Xplornet Communications in their application to Develop Nova Scotia. It might have been unfair in the opening sentence not to have mentioned Cumberland, but Taggart was the one to applied pressure and got the ball started. In his column printed on Page 5 of this issue, he reviews the process and importance of getting improved broadband service.

On February 7th, one week after last month's issue forecasted a decision would be announced by January 31st, Develop Nova Scotia announced several provincial projects, which included Cumberland-Colchester's \$60.2-Million initiative with Xplornet Communications. Broadband has become a necessity instead of a luxury or "we want" service to ensure businesses are competitive, and students have the proper connectivity to further their education.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) has released research which says implementation of 5-G broadband service, when available in Canada, would result in 250,000 jobs and billions in economic activity. See Taggart's article for more information.. He's in the know because he sits on the national FCM board of directors and is privy to such information.

One problem which may evolve is the impatience of residents and business owners. Just because the announcement has been made, do not think the service will arrive as quick as the weather can change. Construction and build-out to provide the service to 22,000+households and businesses will take up to 3 years to complete. Even at the end of construction, approximately 2,300 addresses will not have fibre-op service, but will be serviced by satellite. This is not to be taken light-heatedly, and the download speed is equal to or better than speeds currently available in populated areas of the province, (i.e. Halifax, Sydney, etc).

When the project is finished, Cumberland-Colchester will be among the top rated areas for connectivity and speeds will rival what is available in urban areas. The program set the stage for the two municipalities to see significant increases in people relocating to the area, and businesses to be more competitive.

Xplornet will deploy nearly 700 kilometres of optic fibre to offer up to 100 Mbps fibre-to-home and fixed wireless services on their network, which will reach more than 21 700 currently underserved 16,000 households and 6,000 businesses. A further 2300 addresses will have access to improved satellite service that will reach up to 50 Mbps by the completion of the full network. The three-year project is aiming for 100% high-speed availability in Cumberland and Colchester.

Having said all the above and the benefits which could result a lot of work remains undone and a possibility successes will not accrue as hoped. The reason, the heavy lifting has just begun. Now that the announcement has been made and contracts are being signed, councils and business leaders must immediately switch gears to look three or five years down the road.

The possibility of not getting as much benefit from the investment of \$60-2-Million could evolve because: tourism operators don't work hard to benefit from the Cliffs of Fundy GeoPark – UNESCO branded initiative; business owners fail to ensure additional staff training is a priority and life-long learning interests fail to ensure people's employment skills are improved.

An FCM study indicates populations in rural area will increase by at least 7% over the next decade. Professionals who work from home and prefer a county lifestyle should gravitate to Cumberland-Colchester. Both municipalities must ensure land or buildings are available for relocating or start-up businesses. Colchester's Debert Business Park for a variety of reasons, including geographical location and highway network, should be among the success winners.

Both municipalities must ensure when construction is completed, training institutions have read the market and trained staff with the necessary qualifications. These things will go a long way towards the areas being an economic leader rivaling or bettering HRM

Maurice

## Colchester to Invest \$2.79-Million

*Continued from page 1*  
includes capacity for reliable, affordable, highest-speeds internet access, as well as mobile telephone, community Wi-Fi, and internet of-things uses such as 'smart agriculture', 5G and other future applications.

Xplornet will deploy nearly 700 kilometres of optic fibre to offer up to 100 Mbps fibre-to-home and fixed wireless services on their network, which will reach more than 21 700 currently underserved 16,000 households and 6,000 businesses. A further 2300 addresses will have access to improved satellite service that will reach up to 50 Mbps by the completion of the full network. The three-year project is aiming for 100% high-speed availability in Cumberland and Colchester.

Through the Nova Scotia Internet Trust Fund, a \$193 million fund established in 2018 by the government, almost \$45 million is committed to these projects. The invest-

ment leverages funds of about \$56 million in private and other public sector funding. Another call for projects will soon be issued by Develop Nova Scotia to seek projects for areas that remain underserved and unserved. Announcements for those projects are anticipated to be announced this summer.

In it's press release about projects in other areas announced on February 7th, Develop Nova Scotia says wired technology projects will provide minimum speeds of 50 Mbps to download, and 10 Mbps to upload, while wireless technologies will provide minimum speeds of 25 Mbps to download, and 5 Mbps to upload, allowing users to browse email, download music and large files, play online games, and stream high definition video.

Colchester and Cumberland residents and business owners will have much higher speeds that Develop Nova Sco-

tia's template because Xplornet will deploy nearly 700 kilometres of optic fibre to offer up to 100 Mbps fibre-to-home and fixed wireless services. The 2,300 addresses which are more remote and can only be served by satellite will still enjoy speed of 50 Mbps.

To achieve the joint collaboration, the Municipalities formed a Joint Internet Committee comprised of: Alison Gillis, Warden, Municipality of Cumberland; Tom Taggart, Councillor, Municipality of Colchester; Michael Gregory, Councillor, Municipality of Colchester; Joe van Vulpen, Councillor, Municipality of Cumberland; Rob Simonds, CAO, Municipality of Colchester; Rennie Bugley, CAO, Municipality of Cumberland; Mark Austin, Economic Development Officer, Municipality of Colchester and Michelle Byers, Manager of Community Economic Development, Municipality of Cumberland.

## Broadband Initiative Project Details

By Maurice Rees

Xplornet Communications Inc., Woodstock, NB has approximately one million customers internet customers from coast-to-coast across Canada and its territories. The company was chosen after the municipalities issued a Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI). The company will build a fibre optic network to connect approximately 22,000 rural homes and businesses in the Municipalities of Cumberland and Colchester, which currently have limited access to the latest Internet speeds and unlimited data typically offered in the cities.

When completed, the broadband network will make

the two municipalities one of the most connected areas in Canada. To deliver this service, Xplornet will deploy fibre optic cable, as well as 5G-ready broadband infrastructure to it-existing network, delivering fibre-to-the-home and wireless services to approximately 22,000 homes in the two Counties. This includes 16,000 homes as part of the Nova Scotia Internet Funding Trust (NSIFT), and an additional 6,000 homes outside of the scope of the program.

The result will be access to affordable Internet packages, unlimited data, and speeds up to 100 Megabits per second (Mbps) and beyond, exceeding targets established by the

CRTC. This project was made possible because of major investments by Xplornet, the Province of Nova Scotia, and the Municipalities of Cumberland and Colchester. Project funding and investment includes the following: Xplornet Communications Inc, \$34.3-Million; Nova Scotia Internet Funding Trust, \$19.9-Million; Municipality of Cumberland, \$3.21-Million and Municipality of Colchester, \$2.79-Million for total initiative investment of Total \$ 60.2 Million

To learn more about the specific options that will available to you, you can reach out directly to Xplornet by calling 1-877-969-3152 or visiting [www.xplornet.com](http://www.xplornet.com)

## Backgrounder to Broadband Network Development

By Maurice Rees

When talk about getting broadband for Colchester and Cumberland was becoming a hot topic, the Municipalities recognized that to bring reliable highspeed internet to the Cumberland-Colchester region, they needed experts. The external expertise was to provide: Design, installation, and maintaining a major network of fibre-optic and wireless connectivity skills not normally found within municipal staffing compliments.

Develop Nova Scotia released a Request for Proposals for the Internet for Nova Scotia Initiative. Working within the Develop Nova Scotia process offered the best opportunity for the municipalities o create a core network as quickly and reliably as possible. The next action involved the Municipalities of Cumberland and Colchester jointly is-

suing a Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) aligned with the timing of Develop Nova Scotia's Request for Proposals for the Internet for Nova Scotia Initiative, issued on behalf of the Nova Scotia Internet Funding Trust.

The purpose of the RFEI was to assist the two Municipalities in selecting which proposal to Develop Nova Scotia from an internet service company to officially endorse for our zones. The RFEI gave the Municipalities the opportunity to evaluate what the internet service providers were willing to give the Municipalities as well as what they expected to receive in return.

As a result of the RFEI

process, the Municipalities of Cumberland and Colchester agreed to exclusively endorse and participate in a proposal for the entirety of their region submitted by Xplornet Communications Inc. The Municipalities jointly signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Xplornet and will soon formalize their commitment to contribute financially to their project. The basic terms of the Municipalities project with Xplornet are: Municipal commitment of \$6 million (split between both Cumberland and Colchester) in exchange for a 20-year lease for irrefutable rights of use of two pairs of dark fibre strands included in Xplornet's fibre-

The Shoreline Journal

Here's where to find us:

**BASS RIVER:**  
Bayside Pharmacy  
Dominion Chair Factory Store

**BIBLE HILL:**  
C.W. Fraser Pharmacy  
MacQuarries Pharmacy  
Kennedy's Deli - Ryland Ave

**DEBERT:**  
Debert Mini-Mart

**FIVE ISLANDS:**  
Masstown Market Five Islands

**GLENHOLME:**  
Double "C" Truckstop

**GREAT VILLAGE:**  
Wilson's Gas

**MAITLAND:**  
Frieze & Roy General Store

**MASSTOWN:**  
Masstown Market  
MTM Retail Gas (Petro-Can)

**MILLBROOK:**  
Super 8 Motel  
Hampton Inn & Suites

**NORTH RIVER:**  
Grant's Grocery

**PARRSBORO:**  
CrossRoads Co-op  
Ken's Grocery  
Wright's Pharmasave

**TRURO:**  
Atlantic Superstore  
Best Western Glengarry  
Holiday Inn  
MacQuarrie's Pharmasave (Esplanade)  
Rath Eastlink Comm Centre  
Colchester East Hants Health Centre - Coffee Shop

**NEWSPAPERS IN EDUCATION:**  
Each classroom at the following schools will receive a copy of the Shoreline Journal:  
Bass River Consolidated;  
Great Village Elementary; Debert Elementary; Chiganois Elementary; Central Colchester Junior High School; Parrsboro Elementary and Parrsboro Regional High School.

We are interested in placing the Shoreline Journal in additional locations. If you have a suggestion, or wish to have the Shoreline available from your store, please contact:  
Maurice Rees, Publisher,  
902-647-2968, or E-MAIL:  
[maurice@theshorelinejournal.com](mailto:maurice@theshorelinejournal.com)

ALSO See the

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

on Page 21.



XPLORNET

Reliable | Rural | High Speed

The Shoreline Journal (circ. 1650) is a monthly community newspaper serving communities along the Glooscap Trail from Truro to Parrsboro, Nova Scotia serving the communities of Belmont/Debert, Wentworth/Londonderry, Onslow/Masstown along the shore to Great Village, Bass River, Economy, Five Islands and Lower Five Islands. It is published on the last Wednesday of each month (earlier in December) with a deadline of the 20th of the month.

MAILING ADDRESS: The Shoreline Journal, P.O. Box 41, Bass River, Nova Scotia, B0M 1B0.

PHONE: 902-647-2968; Fax: 902-647-2194 Toll Free 1-800-406-1426; Cell: 902-890-9850 • E-MAIL: [maurice@theshorelinejournal.com](mailto:maurice@theshorelinejournal.com)

EDITOR PUBLISHER: Maurice Rees • ADVERTISING: Maurice Rees • CIRCULATION: Maurice Rees

Canadian Publications Mail Products Agreement #40048924, ISSN #1209-9198



SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

LOCAL SUBSCRIPTIONS: B0M / B2N / B6L - \$23.00, PLUS HST = \$26.45 • OTHER PARTS OF NS: \$28.00 plus HST = \$32.20  
ALL OTHER AREAS OF CANADA: \$30.00, plus HST = \$34.50 • USA SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$45.00  
HST: #890564404RT001. Printed by Advocate Printing & Publishing Ltd, Pictou, Nova Scotia

All rights reserved. Material published in The Shoreline Journal may not be reproduced in an form without prior approval of the publisher. Material to be returned to sender must be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

1996 Heritage Award recipient. Listed with Canadian Advertising Rates & Data (CARD) and Bowden's Media Monitoring Service.

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada. | Canada

The publisher is not responsible for minor errors in ads, which do not lessen the value of the item(s). The publisher is not responsible for space beyond that portion of the advertisement containing the item(s) in error. Letters to the editor are subject to editing or rejection, must be signed by the author and contain a phone number.



NEWSPAPERS ATLANTIC  
TRUSTED | CONNECTED | TARGETED