



Policy

Rural Broadband

Policy Number: PDS 7001-01

Supersedes Policy Number: NEW

Approved by Council: April 19, 2022

Next Review Date: 2026

Resolution No: 2022-37

Last Review Date: N/A

POLICY STATEMENT

To provide the framework for the continued support of a sustainable broadband industry throughout the County and to enable municipal operations and its partnerships to support essential broadband development.

PURPOSE

The County of Minburn recognizes that the vast majority of County residents and businesses are underserved by current internet services, with the rural areas of the County not meeting CRTC Basic Standards for broadband activity. The County of Minburn recognizes that broadband is an essential service and that its accessibility, affordability, and quality are fundamental to the long-term success of the municipality and region.

DEFINITIONS

Broadband means wide bandwidth data transmission which transports multiple signals and traffic types, including internet. The medium can be coaxial cable, optical fiber, radio, or twisted pair.

County means the County of Minburn No. 27.

CRTC means Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission that serves as a quasi-judicial independent body and telecommunications regulator for Canada.

CRTC Basic Standards means the universal service objectives with targets set to deliver connectivity of 50 Mbps download and 10 Mbps upload speeds.

End-User means a person or business that ultimately uses or is intended to

ultimately use a product.

Essential Service means those daily services essential to preserving life, health, public safety, and basic societal functioning that people have come to rely on in their daily lives. Access to affordable, quality internet is considered an essential service in Canada.

Gbps means “gigabit per second” which is a unit of measurement for bandwidth and throughput on a network. Each gigabit is equal to 1,000 Mbps.

ISP or **Internet Service Provider** means an organization that provides services to access and use the Internet.

Qualified ISP means an ISP that meets the County’s standards set for service quality and security.

Mbps means “megabit per second” which is a unit of measurement for bandwidth and throughput on a network. Each megabit is equal to 1 million bits.

NSP or **Network Service Provider** means a network service provider (NSP) a company that provides backbone services to an Internet Service Provider (ISP).

OAN or **Open-Access Network** means a telecommunications network architecture and business model that separates physical access to the network from delivery of services. Owner of an OAN does not supply services; these services are supplied by separate ISPs. OAN can include physical towers, physical network equipment such as fibre or radios, or conduit that is large enough to support multiple ISPs access.

GUIDELINES

1. County supports the following Strategic Priorities:
 - a) Broadband Accessibility – Providing enhanced coverage that aims to support current broadband standards along with consideration for future needs.
 - b) Broadband Quality – Adherence to industry standards and best practices for design, implementation and operations of infrastructure and networking options.
 - c) Broadband Affordability – Service offerings enhanced or developed new remain comparable and competitive with local service providers for business and residential broadband.
2. Principles for Sustainable Broadband Development
 - a) The County will look to develop broadband throughout the County that supports County residents and businesses in meeting the minimum CRTC’s broadband standards.
 - Emphasis will be put on network options that facilitate speeds that scale past basic service levels, with targets of 1 multi-Gbps download speeds where achievable.

- b) A fiscally responsible approach to investment and partnerships will be taken to support the best possible infrastructure at the most efficient and effective capital cost.
 - Grant opportunities and partnerships will be pursued and leveraged as a top priority.
 - c) Expected service life of broadband infrastructure will be at a minimum of 30 years depending on the type of infrastructure. Broadband considerations must be applied to all future development, including but not limited to subdivisions, road construction/improvements, and during the evaluation of any existing development broadband requests.
 - d) The County will look to develop broadband that addresses transport infrastructure needs within the municipality.
3. The County will consider cellular network coverage improvements as a secondary goal of broadband infrastructure investment. Principles for Open-Access Network.
- a) Broadband investments and partnerships will support OAN of broadband infrastructure.
 - b) Investing in OAN will create a competitive environment in which all qualified ISP's have equal access to all end-users, customers, and common infrastructure.
 - c) The County will develop a phased project plan to construct and implement the OAN and broadband infrastructure.
 - The OAN will be built with capacity to accommodate growth in demand for its expected lifetime.
 - Initial investment in excess capability and design that facilitates cost-effective future expansion.
 - d) The County reserves the right to consider non-OAN investments when no other feasible options exist, usually due to large or sole market share in nearby infrastructure.
 - e) The County will not provide end-user internet services.