SUMMARY

Broadband infrastructure is critical to Ontario's economic vitality and competitiveness. **The SouthWestern Integrated Fibre Technology (SWIFT) Initiative is based on the principle that everyone deserves access to high-speed Internet, regardless of the size of their community, their age, education, or where they work**. Initiated by the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus, SWIFT will fund and oversee an affordable, open-access, ultra-high-speed fibre-optic regional broadband network for everyone in Southwestern Ontario, Caledon and Niagara Region. Expanding the fibre footprint will be critical to enabling other technologies like fixed wireless and upcoming 5G mobile. SWIFT is a purpose built not-for-profit created to deliver enhanced broadband with 15 board members, 10 of which are municipal elected officials (a full list of SWIFT's Board of Directors is included at the end of this brief). This means that SWIFT makes its investment decisions based on the communities' best interest, not solely on the bottom lines of the telecom service providers.

SWIFT received a $180 million combined investment in July 2016 from the Governments of Canada and Ontario through the New Building Canada – Small Communities Fund (SCF), which includes $90 million from the Government of Ontario. SWIFT represents more than 2400 member sites across over 350 communities, covering 3.5 million Ontarians, serving 25% of the province's population across a geographic area of 45,000 km^2. SWIFT is connecting the residents, businesses, farms and institutions that power the economic engine of our province and our country. SWIFT funds and provides oversight for broadband infrastructure that will be built, owned and maintained by service providers.

This brief presents a brief review of recent accomplishments of SWIFT as it works to connect everyone in southwestern Ontario, Caledon, and Niagara Region to ultra-high speed broadband infrastructure.

RECENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) went through a prequalification process and twenty-eight (28) TSPs were added to the Vendor of Record (VOR) list released in July 2017. The list of pre-qualified service providers can be found at www.swiftnetwork.ca/procurement.
- In January 2018 the NetCo (Core and Aggregation) RFP was released to procure the backbone provider. This RFP closes in September 2018.
- **In July 2018, SWIFT closed its first RFP for construction of the first section of its access network to serve the Delaware Nation at Moraviantown.** TekSavvy has been awarded the bid for this project and will contribute 5% of its profits on services delivered across its SWIFT-funded infrastructure to a long-term broadband development fund. SWIFT anticipates construction to begin in the fall of 2018 and be completed and have band members and band offices and schools connected before the end of the year.
- Two pilot OpCo (Access) procurements will be released in the fall of 2018 in the Chatham-Kent area. These pilots will provide valuable feedback on our procurement approach prior to the first set of SCF OpCo RFP's being released in early 2019.

NETWORK CONSTRUCTION TO BEGIN IN 2018 TO CONNECT THE DELAWARE NATION AT MORAVIANTOWN

The SWIFT Board of Directors approved the release of an RFP to build fibre into the Delaware Nation at Moraviantown and that the RFP closed August 1, 2018. TekSavvy was awarded the contract on August 9th. **This means that customers will be connected to SWIFT funded infrastructure in 2018.** We anticipate the next phase of construction to spread across the region in 2019. Increased broadband connectivity will help rural, remote and First Nations communities become more competitive in the global marketplace and facilitate their economic growth.

SWIFT is using a multi-stage procurement process to ensure the goals of the project are achieved within our projected timeline. Throughout this period, SWIFT is continuing to consult with members and seek as much

information from TSPs as possible to ensure we invest in the right infrastructure, in the right place, at the right time, in order to maximize the impact of our investments while minimizing any potential for overbuild.

BUILDING BROADBAND FOR EVERYONE

SWIFT received a $180 million combined investment in July 2016 from the Governments of Canada and Ontario through the New Building Canada – Small Communities Fund, which includes $90 million from the Government of Ontario. As a not-for-profit, collective broadband initiative, SWIFT represents an important shift where broadband connectivity is funded and managed as critical modern infrastructure – as important for economic development as good roads and reliable electricity. SWIFT's commitment to working in the best interest of Ontarians means what member communities will have a say in what service providers are doing, rather than leaving the 'big three' TSPs to determine which communities are the broadband winners or losers.

SWIFT is delivering significant return on investment to the people of Ontario by maximizing procurement efficiencies and working in a transparent and effective way to develop new best practices in building broadband for everyone. SWIFT now represents the combined connectivity interests of all 15 members of the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus Inc. (WOWC). This includes: Brant, Bruce, Chatham-Kent, Elgin, Dufferin, Essex, Grey, Huron, Lambton, Middlesex, Norfolk, Oxford, Perth, Simcoe, and Wellington Counties. In addition to leadership from the county members of the WOWC, London, Barrie, Caledon, Mulmer, Orillia, London, Windsor and the Niagara and Waterloo Regions are also supporting the project.

SWIFT has also been working to engage First Nations across the region in the project, and is pleased to welcome support from First Nations members, including Beausoleil First Nation, Chippewas of the Kettle and Stony Point, Delaware Nation – Moravian of the Thames, Saugeen First Nation, Caldwell First Nation, and Six Nations of the Grand River.

Broader public-sector members and consortium members include Connecting Windsor-Essex (CW-E), Georgian College, Grey Bruce Health Services, Chatham Kent Lambton Administrators Group (CKLAG), the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Niagara CIO Consortium (NCC), Simcoe County Access Network (SCAN), and WREPnet (Waterloo Region Education & Public Network).

Private sector members include AgReliant Genetics Inc./Prime Seeds, Ascent LLP, Beyond Air Networks, Bruce Power, FTC Data and InterMarket Real Estate Group.

SWIFT now represents the purchasing interests of more than 2,400 member-sites, including municipalities, First Nations, hospitals, schools, school boards, and other large public and private enterprises across the region.

SWIFT'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board of Directors

- George Bridge (Councillor, Wellington County)
- Bob Campbell (CEO, Connecting Windsor Essex)
- Randy Hope (Mayor, Chatham-Kent)
- April Jeffs (Councillor, Niagara Region Council)
- Bev MacDougall (Councillor, Lambton County) – *Vice Chair*
- Gerry Marshall (Warden, Simcoe County) – *Chair*
- Jim Maudsley (Councillor, Middlesex County)
- David Mayberry (Warden, Oxford County)
- Chief Denise Stonefish (Delaware Nation at Moraviantown)Brent Royce (Director, Ontario Federation of Agriculture)
- Allan Thompson (Mayor, Town of Caledon)
- Mitch Twolan (Councillor, Bruce County)
- Roger Watt (Councillor, Huron County)
- MaryLynn West-Moynes (President, Georgian College) – *Treasurer*
- Stephen Young (IT Manager, Thames Valley District School Board) – *Secretary*

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Several in-depth resources and FAQs can be found on our website at www.swiftnetwork.ca