

The Corporation of the City of Kawartha Lakes

Council Report

Report Number CAO2017-007

Date: **October 24, 2017**

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Place: Council Chambers

Ward Community Identifier: All

Subject: **Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN)**
 Improved Mobile Broadband Project

Author Name and Title: Ron Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer

Recommendation(s):

RESOLVED THAT Report CAO2017-007, **Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN) – Improved Mobile Broadband Project**, be received;

THAT the City of Kawartha Lakes supports EORN's submission of the Eastern Ontario Regional Cellular Mobile Broadband Project as the Region's highest economic development priority;

THAT the City of Kawartha Lakes will work as a partner with the EOWC and EORN, along with the federal and provincial governments and the private sector to improve mobile broadband access and services for the people and businesses of Eastern Ontario; and

THAT the City of Kawartha Lakes will support this project by making a financial contribution once the full extent of the project is determined by the Federal and Provincial Governments.

Department Head:_____

Financial/Legal/HR/Other:_____

Chief Administrative Officer:_____

Background:

The City of Kawartha Lakes is an active member of the Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus (EOWC). One priority focus of EOWC is improving mobile broadband and cellular networks to facilitate innovation and economic growth in all sectors of the regional economy.

The Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN), on behalf of EOWC, has undertaken extensive analysis and identified gaps in cellular coverage and capacity across the region, and prepared a full business case to support improvement and expansion of cellular networks and mobile broadband services across Eastern Ontario. This proposed project totals approximately \$213 million.

EORN has also reviewed and is proposing the development of a pilot Public Safety Broadcast Network (PSBN) for first responders covering Eastern Ontario.

The total cost of both projects is \$299 million, saving nearly \$50 million through a combined build approach.

Details of the proposed projects and EORN are provided in Appendix A to this report. A project overview was also provided to Executive Committee of Council on September 8, 2017.

Rationale:

The EOWC and EORN are seeking support resolutions from member municipalities and other potential project partners. Depending on the scope of project approved (cell networks only vs. cell and PSBN), the estimated municipal contributions would total approximately \$10.1M - \$14.2M. Details of the City's potential financial contribution are outlined in the Financial Impacts section of this report.

The proposed mobile broadband expansion project, when fully implemented, would provide 99.5% cellular coverage throughout Eastern Ontario. Currently, 16% of the region has no cellular coverage, and an additional 20% does not have enough cellular capacity.

Other Alternatives Considered:

Council could choose not to be a partner in this project. Doing so could limit cellular improvements in our community, and potentially impact the overall project scope and viability.

This is not recommended as the City of Kawartha Lakes is an active partner in the EOWC and EORN, and partnering in this project will improve local cell network and mobile broadband to the benefit of the local economy.

Financial Impacts:

Work is underway to look at a variety of cost-sharing formulas, as was the case in the first EORN project that CKL supported (to improve high speed and high capacity broadband communication service throughout Eastern Ontario).

As mentioned, the estimated municipal contributions would total approximately \$10.1M - \$14.2M. If all municipal partners participate, then the estimated CKL contribution share would total approximately \$450K - \$900K. These estimates depend on a number of variables including final project design, funding support from other levels of government and total participating municipal partners.

Staff has included in our long term financial plan an estimated project contribution cost of \$900K. Should the provincial and federal governments approve all or portions of the proposed project(s), Staff would then bring forward budget details to Council for consideration and approval.

Relationship of Recommendation(s) To The 2016-2019 Strategic Plan:

Improving the local and regional cellular and mobile broadband networks (and public safety broadcast network) aligns with Council's strategic goals, namely:

- Goal 1 – A Vibrant and Growing Economy, and
- Goal 2 – An Exceptional Quality of Life

Council has also established a strategic priority to enhance emplacement of third party public infrastructure (i.e. telecommunications, utilities, etc.) to support economic growth and the provision of efficient municipal services. The proposed EORN projects directly support this stated goal.

Consultations:

EOWC (www.eowc.org)

EORN (www.eorn.ca – background and CRTC submission)

Attachments:

Appendix A:



Improving Mobile
Broadband in Eastern

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