MEMO / NOTE DE SERVICE

To / Destinataire	Mayor and Members of City Council	File/N° de fichier:
From / Expéditeur	Valerie Turner, General Manager, Innovative Client Services Stephen Willis, General Manager, Planning, Infrastructure & Economic Development	
Subject / Objet	Update on Connectivity	Date: December 6, 2021

The purpose of this memo is to provide an overview of recent activities that have been undertaken to support the ongoing advancement of the Connected City pillar of Ottawa's Smart City Strategy, Smart City 2.0.

This memo documents developments over the past few months and includes information on the City's Public Wi-Fi program, updates on the review of rural connectivity, and progress on the City's Municipal Access Agreement templates.

Expansion of the City's Public Wi-Fi Offering

Staff have been exploring new funding opportunities to support the expansion of the City's Public Wi-Fi program.

Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program

Earlier this year, the Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development (PIED) Department led an application to the Government of Canada's *Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream (Local Government Intake)* program on behalf of the City. As part of this application, the City was awarded $104,147.06 in "Digital Connectivity" funding to initiate a Phase 2 of the City's Public Wi-Fi program.

Phase 2 of this program will be focused rolling out this service to City-run facilities located in some of the most vulnerable neighbourhoods in Ottawa, as identified by the Integrated Neighbourhood Services Team (INST) in the Community and Social Services Department (CSSD). See Table 1 below for a list of locations.

Table 1: Digital Connectivity Sites for the ICIP

Ward	Facility
7 – Bay	• Foster Farm Community Centre • Bayshore Community Building • Michele Heights Community Centre • Carling Family Shelter
10 – Gloucester Southgate	• Sawmill Creek Community Centre and Pool
11 – Beacon Hill-Cyrville	• Pat Clark Community Centre
12 – Rideau-Vanier	• Jules Morin Park Fieldhouse • Sandy Hill Community Centre
16 – River	• Carlington Recreation Centre • Alexander Community Centre • Banff Ledbury Pavillion
18 – Alta Vista	• Dempsey Community Centre

Canada Healthy Communities Initiative

This past summer, the City also applied to the [Canada Healthy Communities Initiative (CHCI)](#) to continue the expansion of its wi-fi services. Innovative Client Services (ICS) coordinated the application on behalf of the City and worked with the CSSD and the Recreation, Culture and Facility Services (RCFS) Department to identify the priority locations listed in Table 2.

Table 2: Digital Connectivity Sites for the CHCI

Ward	Facility
5 – West Carleton-March	• Carp Memorial Hall • W. Erskine Johnston Arena
6 – Stittsville	• Johnny Leroux Stittsville Community Arena
10 – Gloucester Southgate	• Greenboro Pavilion and Food Bank
12 – Rideau-Vanier	• Lowertown Pool • Routhier Community Centre
19 – Cumberland	• Navan Memorial Centre • RJ Kennedy Arena
20 – Osgoode	• Metcalfe Community Centre and Larry Robinson Arena • Osgoode Community Centre and Stuart Holmes Arena
21 – Rideau-Goulbourn	• Richmond Community Centre

On August 23, 2021, it was confirmed that the City would receive $75,000 in funding from the CHCI to expand the public wi-fi services to these locations in vulnerable communities, as well as underserved areas of rural Ottawa. This funding will be used to initiate a Phase 3 of the City's Public Wi-Fi program.

Implementation of Phase 2 and 3 of the Public Wi-Fi Program

Information Technology Services (ITS) in ICS is using the funding allocated under these sources to order the required hardware to implement a standardized wi-fi service at the locations identified for the Phase 2 and 3 expansion of the City's Public Wi-Fi program.

Due to global supply chain disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, however, some technology products – including those required for the City's public wi-fi expansion – are in short supply and have been subject to significant shipping delays. That said, ITS anticipates that installation of some Phase 2 locations will begin before the end of 2021, and that by mid-2022, the City will have completed the installation of this service all Phase 2 and 3 locations. This will increase the total number of City facilities offering free public wi-fi from the current 30 to 53.

ICS has committed to covering the ongoing operation of this service at all new locations and has identified the estimated $31,500 in annual operating fees as a new budget pressure for 2022.

New Partnerships

As discussed in the November 2020 [Update on Connectivity: Interim Response to Directives (ACS2020-ICS-ST-004)](#), staff have committed to exploring partnerships in the broader community to help address the connectivity needs of Ottawa residents.

In light of this commitment, City staff have just recently confirmed a partnership with [eduroam](#) – a secure, global, wi-fi roaming service that leverages the City's wi-fi networks to allow for seamless network authentication for participating universities from around the world for registered students, researchers and staff. This partnership demonstrates the City's support of Ottawa's goals of a more connected city by providing greater connectivity to the post-secondary community.

Implementation in City facilities will take place in Q1 of 2022.

Next Steps

Updates to the Municipal Access Agreements

The Right-of-Way Branch of the PIED Department continues its review of the City's existing Municipal Access Agreement (MAA) template, which is the document used to negotiate access to the City's rights-of-way for telecommunication companies.

The City has retained a consultant to undertake this evaluation – which has included a review of MAAs from other Canadian municipalities – and advise on a renewed template that will represent the City's interests in preserving its right-of-way assets; respect the need to provide for broadband services; and align with past CRTC decisions and relevant court cases.

As the existing MAA with Rogers Communications is currently at the end of its term, staff are targeting having a revised MAA with this provider before Transportation Committee and Council in Q1 of 2022. Following that, staff will craft new MAA agreements with other telecommunication companies using the template where necessary.

Committee Updates

As per directions from the Information Technology Sub-Committee (ITSC) in September 2020, staff – with the help of professional services with expertise in this area – is examining the opportunities for the City to address concerns with access to and affordability of the internet in Ottawa. To date, this assessment included consultation with members of ITSC and internal City subject matter experts (completed in early November 2021).

Likewise, following direction from Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee (ARAC) in February 2021, Economic Development Services is working on a rural connectivity report, including mapping the state of rural connectivity in Ottawa, describing the current policy and financial environment for rural broadband, the role of senior governments, and areas that the City can advance and advocate for improved service

In response to these directives, staff are planning an update on connectivity in 2022.

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