



Update on Provincial Broadband Activities
York Region Broadband Advisory Task Force Meeting
October 9, 2015

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Purpose

- Introduce MEDEI's Infrastructure Policy Division.
- Provide an overview of:
 - broadband's role in the economy, and
 - recently completed, and current, broadband projects.
- Provide a status update on work of the GTHA's broadband sub-committee.

Infrastructure Policy Division (IPD)

- Works with many partners inside and outside government to advance infrastructure priorities and long-term planning.
- Co-ordinates with municipal governments and the Government of Canada on critical infrastructure, with a focus on alignment to economic development.
- Works with Infrastructure Ontario, providing policy/program oversight for the Alternative Finance & Procurement program as well as the IO Loan program.

- ADM: Karen Maxwell
- Strategic Initiatives, Planning and Analytics Branch
 - Infrastructure Analytics Unit
 - Infrastructure Finance Policy Unit
 - Project Design and Implementation Unit
- Inter-governmental Policy Branch
 - Inter-governmental Infrastructure Policy Unit
 - Municipal Infrastructure Policy Unit

Ontario's Broadband Landscape Today

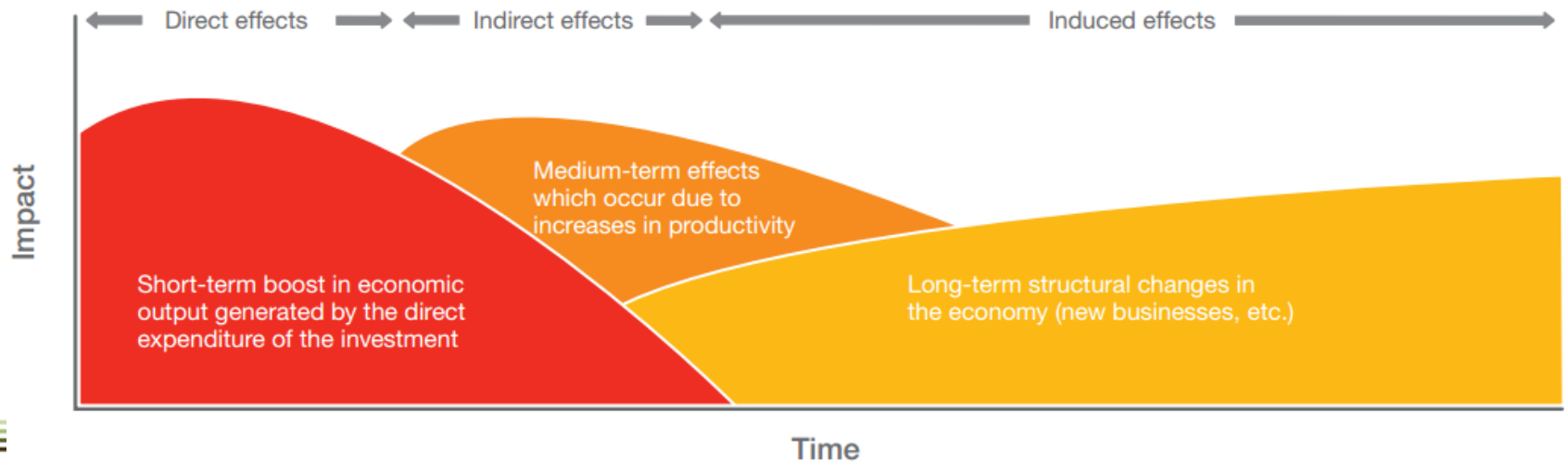
- Ontario is a large province with 13.5 million residents served by almost 50 Internet service providers.
- Our knowledge of Ontario's broadband landscape comes from:
 - Results from recent Government of Ontario funded programs (EORN, NWOBEI)
 - Historic Ookla speed test data (2011 – 2012)
 - Publically available reports
 - CRTC's annual Communications Monitoring Report
 - Ookla's public Net Index (now defunct)
 - Other reports (e.g. Cisco, Akamai, OECD)
- We will be expanding our knowledge by:
 - Acquiring more Ookla speed test data (2014 data acquired in July 2015)
 - Initiating new discussions with municipalities and Internet service providers (e.g. GTHA broadband committee). Some of these municipalities may have conducted their own mapping exercises.
 - Potentially hiring a consultant to conduct additional research to fill in any remaining knowledge gaps.

Broadband and the Economy

- The digital economy is the global network of economic and social activities that are enabled by the development of computer technologies, Internet-based solutions and affordable high-speed broadband connectivity
- These digital technologies are transforming all sectors of the economy, changing business models and driving innovation
- A strong digital economy has the potential to create high skill/high paying jobs, increase productivity and promote innovation
- In order to participate and compete in the digital economy, Ontarians require reliable, secure and affordable broadband Internet services with ultra high speeds and quality
- Ultra high speed is perhaps the most important characteristic for broadband Internet that will allow us to grow our digital economy and be globally competitive

Broadband and the Economy (cont.)

- “We find that the deployment of broadband in 1997-2011 promoted rural employment and wage growth in service industries. ... The findings suggest that broadband helps service industry businesses overcome geographical barriers that have traditionally hampered rural growth.”
 - From “The Employment and Wage Impact of Broadband Deployment in Canada” by Olena Ivus and Matthew Boland
- “Broadband Internet has particularly enabled small businesses and community organizations in accessing information, promoting brand names and increasing visibility in competitive markets through better networking opportunities.”
 - From “Outcome Analysis Of Rural Broadband Programs” by Laxmi Prasad Pant and Helen Hambly Odame



Recently Completed Broadband Connectivity Projects

- Since 2007, the Government of Ontario has invested over \$170M in broadband connectivity projects across the Province. These investments have leveraged over \$300M of municipal, federal, and private sector funding.

Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN)

- EORN phase one ended March 31, 2015.
- MEDEI provided government technical oversight.
 - Reviewed technical plans, participated in field audits, etc.
- The project was successful with 89% of the region's households now having access to a 10 Mbps broadband connection.

Northwestern Ontario Broadband Expansion Initiative (NWOBEI)

- Construction of over 2,000 km fibre optic backbone network to 19 First Nation communities within the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) in the Northwestern Ontario Region.
- MEDEI provided engineering, technical support, advice and audits.
- Completed in May 2014 with high speed broadband services successfully provided to all the First Nations communities.

Current Broadband Projects: Small Communities Fund

- Through the SCF, Ontario and Canada will each provide \$272 million to support projects in municipalities with populations less than 100,000.
- Broadband is an eligible category for funding under this program.
- So far, one broadband project has been announced:
 - Lakeland Energy in the Muskoka Communities. Ontario is providing \$2.8M along with matching funds from the federal government. Lakeland will be rolling out gigabit services to residents and businesses in Bracebridge and Huntsville.
- The Second Intake of SCF was announced in mid-August with the Expressions of Interest due September 30th.

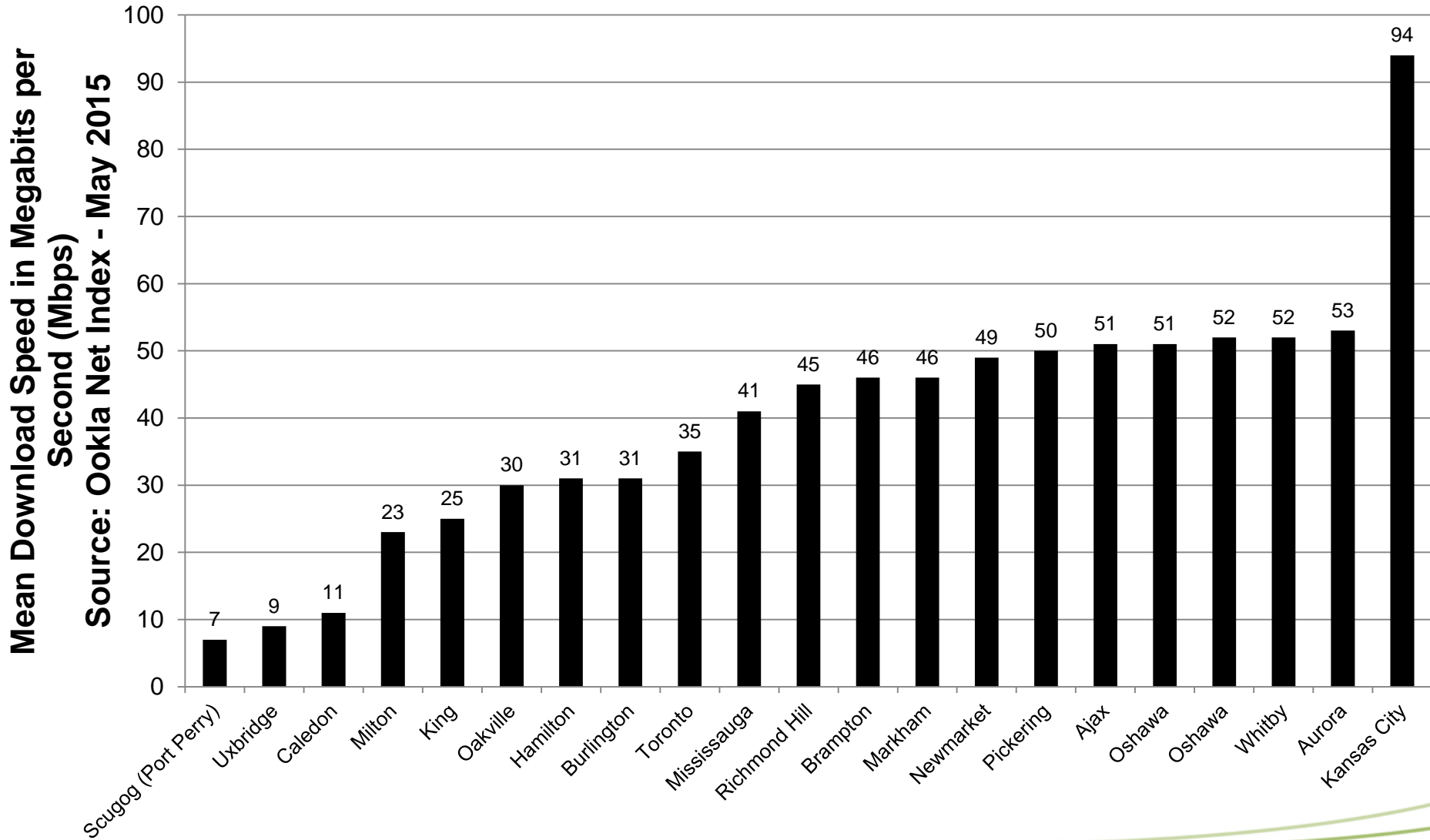
Current Broadband Projects: Regulatory Initiatives

- IPD made a submission to the Canadian Radio-television and Communication Commission's (CRTC's) review of basic telecommunications services.
- The submission:
 - asked the Commission to designate broadband Internet as a basic service at faster speeds than the current target speeds of 5 Mbps download, 1 Mbps upload.
 - asked that the Commission consider regulating retail prices in markets where there is insufficient competition.
 - backed the Commission's proposed transport facilities funding plan for remote areas as well.
- IPD is monitoring other issues as they arise. For example, Industry Canada's 600 MHz band changes might affect the availability of basic broadband Internet in a small number of remote Ontario communities.

Current Broadband Initiatives: GTHA Working Group

- In March 2015, the Premier held a Summit for GTHA mayors and chairs. The goal was to find opportunities where the Province and municipalities could work together to improve growth and economic development.
- Broadband was an important area of focus both in the meeting and during pre-meeting consultations.
- The summit led to the creation of the Economic Growth across the GTHA Working Group. The group is tasked with addressing:
 - Economic Development Coordination
 - Infrastructure
 - High-speed broadband Internet.
- A broadband sub-committee has been formed under this rubric, with the initial goal of undertaking a needs assessment for ultra-high speed broadband in the GTHA.

Download Speeds in the GTHA



GTHA Broadband Sub-Committee

Potential Objectives and Deliverables

Objectives	Deliverables
1. Identify local broadband needs and priorities , including current and future planning activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Needs assessment, including identification of key gaps and pressing issues• List and summary of some key priority areas for GTHA municipalities
2. Share information on current projects, lessons learned from past projects and relevant studies and research	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Body of research and municipal reports to aid in understanding key issues , potential opportunities and best practices
3. Analyze the interplay between the private sector and governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• List of partnership opportunities for broadband in the GTHA• Approaches to leveraging the private sector and other key partners• Recommendations on how best to leverage private service provider support to help address GTHA needs and priorities

Existing Initiatives in the GTHA

A number of initiatives are currently underway at the municipal, provincial and federal level and within the private sector. Some examples include:

Municipal Initiatives	Internet Service Providers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • York Region Broadband Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy outlines need for key public-private investments to provide higher connectivity speeds within York Region • Caledon Broadband Gap Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified urban and rural differences in connectivity and challenges with existing phone lines and wireless infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 2015 Bell Canada announced new Gigabit Fibre service expansion in Toronto (gigabit-per-second Internet speeds) – one of the largest infrastructure investments by Bell Canada in recent years
Provincial Initiatives	Federal Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure funding in the GTHA has historically focused on transportation needs across the region • There is now an opportunity under the Economic Growth working group, to learn more about the other local infrastructure needs, particularly access to ultra high speed broadband Internet • Ontario is working with the federal government through the Small Communities Fund to support infrastructure projects in municipalities with populations less than 100,000 - broadband infrastructure is an eligible category 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) has been consulting on the potential inclusion of Broadband as basic service (MEDEI’s submission shared with working group) • As the results of those consultations and options become available, there may be additional opportunities to leverage federal government support on key Ontario and GTHA broadband related priorities

GTHA Broadband Sub-Committee – Status and Next Steps

- The first meeting was held on August 5, with participation from Caledon, Newmarket, Scugog, and Hamilton.
- The group discussed potential objectives and deliverables for the sub-committee such as a needs assessment, improved information sharing, and a review of existing GTHA broadband initiatives.
- The sub-committee has developed a survey for all GTHA municipalities as a means of conducting the needs assessment and informing next steps.
 - The survey covers a wide range of topics including current broadband coverage, private sector involvement, municipally-owned utilities, and much more.
 - Survey results will lead to eventual information sharing amongst the GTHA municipalities.
- The survey will be issued to all GTHA municipalities within the next few weeks. Results of the survey will inform next steps for the group.

Questions?