



EORN

EASTERN ONTARIO REGIONAL NETWORK

The Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN) has signed a contract with Rogers Communications, aiming to dramatically improve cell phone coverage and capacity in the areas of eastern Ontario where people live, work and travel. Please encourage others to [sign up](#) for the newsletter as well.



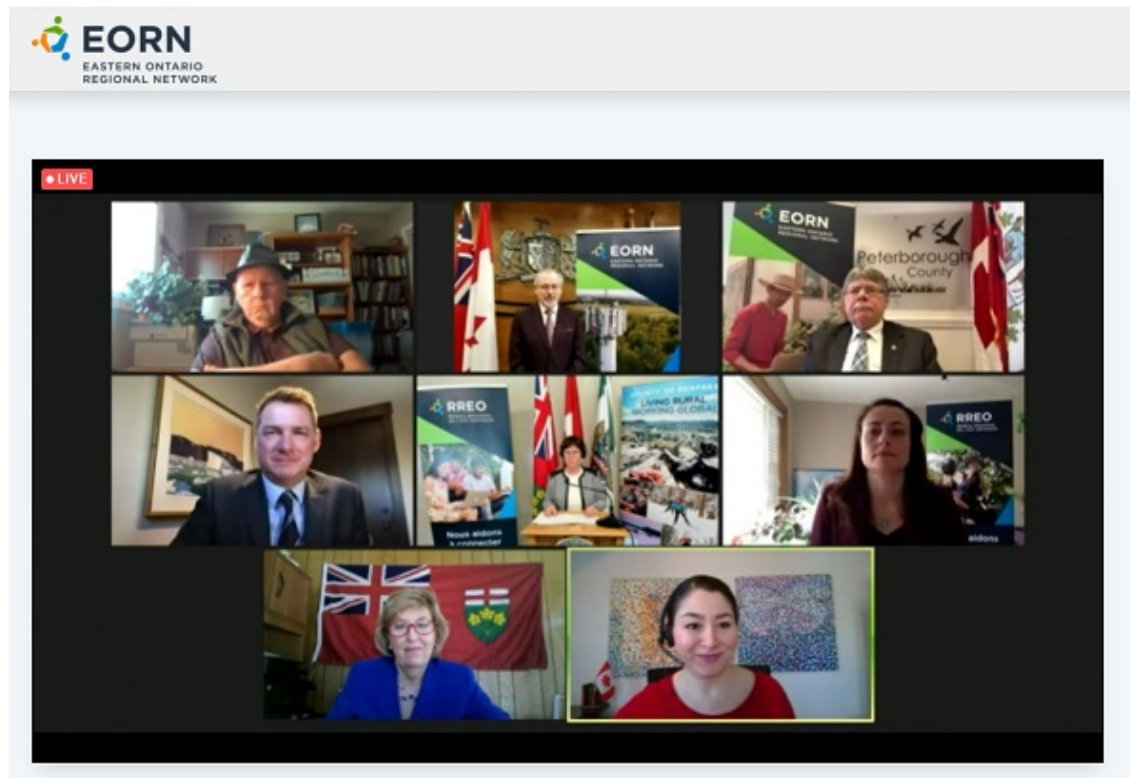
Message from Chair J. Murray Jones

After years of preparation, March 19 marked one of the most exciting days in the history of EORN, certainly in my time on the board. The [Cell Gap Project](#) contract is now formally signed and we are looking forward to improving the quality of life for people across eastern Ontario through an extensive network of new and updated telecommunications infrastructure deployed by our partner Rogers Communications. As with any larger infrastructure project, solving gaps in cell connectivity will take a few years. This is a five-year project but as we begin with improvements to existing towers this spring and later with the construction of more than 300 new sites, communities will begin to see better

service. Meanwhile, we have more good news as we have formally submitted a proposal to bring ultra-high-speed internet to our region to Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) and the Ministry of Infrastructure.

Yours truly,

J. Murray Jones.



Cell Gap Project

On March 19, EORN [announced](#) that it is partnering with Rogers Communications to improve both the reach and quality of mobile broadband services in eastern Ontario.

Rogers Communications' investment brings the total value of the public-private partnership to more than \$300 million. The federal and provincial governments have committed \$71 million each. All members of the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus and most municipalities within the Eastern Ontario Mayors' Caucus are contributing to the \$10 million municipal share.

The Cell Gap Project is designed to improve cell coverage across the area where people live, work and travel. It aims to provide:

- 99 per cent of the area with voice calling services.
- 95 per cent of the area with standard-definition (SD) level services, such as video-app calls, basic app usage and streaming of SD video.

- 85 per cent of the area with services level that can support streaming high-definition video and more data-intensive apps.



5G (or fifth generation) refers to the next generation of mobile wireless standards and technologies. 5G is a new technology and as such there are questions about it. In an effort to assist municipalities, elected officials and staff in preparing for questions about 5G, EORN has developed this [5G Resource Guide](#) (15 MB/PDF). It is an overview of what the government and some other organizations such as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the American Cancer Society and the World Health Organization are saying about 5G.



EORN Gig Project

On March 1, EORN [submitted a proposal for ultra-fast Gig internet](#) to federal Minister Maryam Monsef, who has responsibility for rural economic development, and Ontario's Minister of Infrastructure Laurie Scott, who is tasked with rural broadband matters for the province.

The EORN Gig Project would use a competitive process to choose a

telecommunications partner and maximize coverage across the region. EORN seeks to fund the \$1.2 to \$1.6 billion project through a combination of funding, with \$200 million each from the federal and provincial governments and the remainder from the Canada Infrastructure Bank and the private sector.



Tech corner - augmentation or uplift

At EORN we spend a lot of time analyzing data and developing models that are ultimately meant to improve cell coverage and capacity as well as broadband. It can be challenging to “translate” some of the technicalities of our industry. In this edition of the EORN newsletter we’ll try to unravel the mystery around the technical term “augmentation” also known as "uplift".

Augmentation simply means adding equipment to an existing cellular tower to extend the reach of its coverage. It is easier and less time consuming than building a new tower, so this work will begin sooner.

Installing new antennas (each over two metres tall and weighing one hundred and thirty pounds) will require ensuring that a tower is physically strong enough to take the extra load (re-engineering may be necessary). New radio equipment will be installed at the base of each tower, and the data links to the tower will be upgraded if needed. Once the physical work is complete, each augmentation is commissioned, tested and brought into full service. This work takes considerable coordination of multiple teams and vendors, working concurrently, on sites across the region without interrupting existing services.



Questions and answers

Every day we receive emails from residents in eastern Ontario with questions about cell and broadband issues. In this newsletter we'll highlight and answer some of your questions.

Question: Will the Cell Gap Project help me to get better internet speed for my home computer?

Answer: The Cell Gap Project is focused on improving cellular service. Users will see improvements if they are using their mobile devices (cell phones) for internet activities such as email or online banking, or even streaming video in some locations. In the future, there may be an indirect benefit to broadband in your home, as the new infrastructure being put in place will help with future fixed wireless expansion and service opportunities.

Question: Now that you have launched the Cell Gap Project, when can I expect improved coverage in my area?

Answer: Some residents and businesses will begin to see improvements as soon as this summer as Rogers begins to upgrade existing towers. We are still in the process of finalizing new tower locations, but are hopeful that construction will begin this year as well. Towers will come 'on-line' as they are ready, so there will be steady improvements to the network throughout the project.

