

Connecting Eastern Ontario

The EORN Gig Project aims to deliver ultra-fast internet to homes and businesses to meet the needs of the region for a generation. EORN is seeking federal and provincial support for the project, which takes a regional approach to help maximize coverage and stretch tax dollars further.

Both governments have stepped up with important broadband funding programs. The EORN project would work in tandem with local broadband initiatives to achieve this shared goal. It will take a range of solutions to fix rural broadband.

The EORN Gig Project would support the region's COVID-19 recovery, economic growth and help provide more equitable access to education and health care:

- Increase regional GDP by \$300 million.
- Create more than 9,700 new jobs.
- Increase home values by 3 per cent.
- Increase property tax revenue by \$20 million.
- Lower health care delivery costs by 4 per cent.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions (telecommuting).

The EORN Gig Project leverages previous investments and projects by building on the fibre optic backbone and other infrastructure across the region. Taking a regional approach avoids having a patchwork of connectivity that could leave some communities behind.

EORN proven model:

- **Coordinated and comprehensive.** Coordinating at a regional scale helps ensure widespread coverage and provides administrative efficiencies to stretch public investments further.
- **Partnership that multiplies private investment.** EORN's first project generated private sector investment that was more than three times the initial ask, including more than \$100 million in expansions after the project finished.
- **Experience and expertise.** EORN's team knows the region and its broadband needs best. Detailed engineering work for the Gig Project is completed. Long-term contract oversight ensures accountability for public funds.
- **Cost effective.** EORN's project management and overhead costs are low, in the 6% range, for managing and delivering regional projects.

Quick Facts:

- EORN is seeking \$200 million each from the federal and provincial governments, with the balance of the \$1.2 to \$1.6 billion project coming from the private sector and Canada Infrastructure Bank.
- Currently only 63 per cent of homes and businesses in rural eastern Ontario can access speeds of 50 Mbps download and 10 Mbps upload. The Canada Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) declared that the minimum basic service objective, with a goal of ensuring 90 per cent of all Canadians have this access by December 2021.
- EORN's approach has the unanimous support of the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus and Eastern Ontario Mayors' Caucus, who have sent letters of support. They represent local governments across the region including every town and city, representing 1.1 million citizens.
- EORN anticipates it could provide up to 95 per cent of the region or more than 550,000 premises with Gig service by 2025-6 if fully funded.

Gig: Internet speed of 1,000 Mbps or 1 Gbps (gigabit per second). Provides seamless, reliable connectivity for business, healthcare, education and other services. Smart technologies that depend on reliable, continuous high-speed connectivity for real-time data sharing also need gigabit speeds.