

Ministry of Government Services

Office of the Corporate Chief Strategist  
I & IT Strategy, Policy and Planning Branch

5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Ferguson Block  
77 Wellesley Street West, Toronto ON M7A 1N3  
Telephone: (416) 327-2085  
Facsimile: (416) 327-2190

Ministère des Services Gouvernementaux

Bureau du stratège en chef de l'information pour la  
fonction publique  
Direction des stratégies, des politiques et de la  
planification en matière d'ITI

Édifice Ferguson, 5<sup>e</sup> étage  
77, rue Wellesley Ouest, Toronto ON M7A 1N3  
Téléphone: (416) 327-2085  
Télécoieur: (416) 327-2190



July 20, 2009

As you may know, Industry Canada (IC) has \$225 million to extend broadband coverage across Canada. The objective of this Federal Broadband Program is to provide unserved and underserved Canadian households access to broadband services (minimum 1.5 Mbps), including broadband coverage for First Nations communities. This initiative represents an important opportunity for the continued expansion of broadband access in Ontario.

For this program, eligible applicants include the private sector or consortiums of companies, not-for-profit organizations, and provincial/territorial entities that build and operate broadband infrastructure. Program details are available on the Industry Canada website at <http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/719.nsf/eng/home>.

The program provides for federal funding of up to 50% for projects covering First Nations communities; however, project areas can be funded up to an additional 50% from other federal First Nations funding programs.

The first phase of the Federal Broadband Program involves an extensive, time-limited mapping exercise to identify and validate unserved or underserved geographic areas, followed by a competitive call for applications in late summer 2009. ISPs (Internet Service Providers), municipalities, businesses, citizens and any organization with knowledge of this issue are invited to assist with mapping broadband coverage by providing their input.

I would encourage you to access Industry Canada's interactive broadband maps and provide your feedback online regarding the availability of broadband coverage within your respective geographic area. The Industry Canada website can be found at [www.ic.gc.ca/broadbandmaps](http://www.ic.gc.ca/broadbandmaps). There is also a hotline toll-free number for those without Internet access at 1-800-575-9200.

Everyone can play a crucial role in ensuring remaining gaps in rural and remote regions of the province are accurately identified and in encouraging applications to the Federal Broadband Program for any unserved or underserved areas. Please note that ISPs are being asked to verify their coverage areas by **July 24<sup>th</sup>**, and we encourage all citizens to participate as soon as possible to inform the program.

For current information on broadband and related initiatives in the Province of Ontario please visit <http://www.digitalontario.mgs.gov.on.ca>.

I would like to thank you for your efforts and I encourage you to share this information with any of your relevant contacts.

Sincerely,

Barb Swartzentruber  
Strategic Projects Manager  
Ministry of Government Services