



2018 Provincial Election Priorities: Key Messages & Q&A

Enhance. Expand. Empower.

Eastern Ontarians need a provincial government that will support connectivity for all of Ontario regardless of geography.

1. The province should improve mobile connectivity and improve public safety by funding a share of EORN's cellular project.

- More than a quarter of rural eastern Ontario has little or no cellphone service. And many areas with service don't have the capacity to handle growing demand for data.
- EORN has developed a \$299 million plan to improve cell coverage and capacity as well as help build a public safety broadband network, with funding from federal, provincial and municipal government and the private sector.

2. The region's economic future depends on a robust mobile network.

- Building the project is projected to create 3,000 jobs over the next ten years and generate \$420 million in private sector revenues.
- Connectivity is important for all businesses today. It is also critical to support innovations, like the evolution to 5G technology and autonomous vehicles.
- If we want to retain and attract people – especially youth and newcomers -- to rural communities, connectivity is a priority.

3. We must keep pace with new broadband standards.

- The CRTC now calls broadband a basic telecom service for all Canadians, with the goal of 50 Mbps downloads
- Infrastructure to deliver to these new standards will require critical investment and planning.

4. The Eastern Ontario Regional Network has a proven track record of improving connectivity.

- The Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus created EORN to expand high-speed internet access across the region through a public-private partnership.
- The original \$175 million broadband project is now valued at \$260 million with additional private sector in-kind contributions. There are now 140,000 more broadband subscribers and the number is growing.
- The project was a catalyst. Since the project was completed, the private sector has invested more than \$100 million in additional new broadband infrastructure, and even more is in the pipeline.

Q&A

Why isn't Eastern Ontario better served?

- Rural communities simply don't generate enough revenue for cell carriers to spend on expanded services across a large, sparsely populated area. The result is market failure.

What could the project do for Eastern Ontario?

- The project could create more than 3,000 full-time job equivalents over 10 years and more than \$420 million in private sector business revenues.
- It would also help improve online access to public services, improve public safety and help people stay connected socially.
- The CRTC has said that both fixed and mobile broadband should be a basic telecom service available to all Canadians. The EORN project would be a major step forward in making this a reality for people in Eastern Ontario.

What is a public safety broadband network?

- This is a dedicated, secure network for first responders to communicate seamlessly and share information in real-time across the region.
- Canada has set aside 20 MHz of 700 MHz spectrum for such a national network. EORN's design builds on its proposed cellular improvements to reduce the overall costs of the public safety network, saving nearly \$50 million.

What would the project involve?

- Building on its extensive fibre optic backbone network, the Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN) has developed a plan to improve the reach and quality of cellular coverage across the region.
- This plan would involve creating new connectivity points to the fibre backhaul network, building new cell towers and installing new equipment on existing infrastructure.

How did EORN develop the plan and costing?

- The EORN proposal is based on a thorough analysis of current services from the two major telecom providers, and projections about growing needs.
- The work included an engineering cell gap analysis, costing study, cell market analysis and economic impact study. It takes into account the expansion of the 700 MHz spectrum, and the model has been tested through a Request for Information from mobile providers.

