



Telecom Order CRTC 2024-48

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Broadband Fund – Change requests – Columbia Basin Broadband Corporation’s British Columbia transport fibre project

Summary

Canadians need reliable, affordable, and high-quality Internet and cellphone services for every part of their daily lives.

Through its Broadband Fund, the Commission contributes to a broad effort by federal, provincial, and territorial governments to address the gap in connectivity in underserved Indigenous, rural, and remote communities across Canada.

With this order, the Commission grants Columbia Basin Broadband Corporation’s request to remove two points of presence and postpone the completion date by five-and-a-half months for its British Columbia transport fibre project.

Background

1. In Telecom Decision 2021-46, the Commission approved Columbia Basin Broadband Corporation’s (CBBC) funding application to build over 60 kilometres of fibre optic transport infrastructure along the Highway 3B/3/6 Corridor between Trail and Nelson, British Columbia, to serve the following communities: Erie, Hall, Meadows, Park Siding, and Ymir. The Commission later received written acceptance of this funding award from CBBC and approved CBBC’s related statement of work in Telecom Order 2021-330, subject to the conditions of funding set out in Telecom Decision 2021-46.
2. Among the conditions of funding is the requirement, set out at paragraph 14 of Telecom Decision 2021-46, that any material changes to the project be approved by the Commission. In the Application Guide appended to Telecom Notice of Consultation 2019-372, the Commission defined a material change as including a major change in the cost or scope of a project. That notice initiated the second call for applications and led to Telecom Decision 2021-46 and other decisions introduced in Telecom Decision 2021-43.

Change requests

3. On 31 August and 25 October 2023, CBBC submitted two change requests for its project approved in Telecom Decision 2021-46. Specifically, CBBC requested to remove two points of presence (PoPs), in Hall and in Meadows, due to land use limitations and relocate the equipment to existing alternative project PoP sites. CBBC stated that this change in equipment location would not affect the number of communities served or the level of service offered, since the target communities would be within the reach of network equipment at the new locations, and the original sites in Hall and in Meadows would be used as fibre breakout points that could be used to connect future projects proposing to build high-speed access Internet infrastructure.
4. CBBC also requested an additional five-and-a-half months to complete the project due to factors submitted in confidence but including permitting delays and the redirecting of contractor crews due to wildfire restoration efforts in northern British Columbia. CBBC indicated that, with this additional time, it expected the project to be complete by the spring of 2024. This delay would not meet the Commission's expectation set out in Telecom Decision 2021-46 that the project be completed within three years of the date of that decision; however, the delay is due to circumstances beyond the control of CBBC.

Commission's analysis

5. The Commission has reviewed the materials submitted and factors described for the proposed relocation of the equipment and for the delay. The Commission notes CBBC's continuing commitment to the same community service levels and open access requirements in both Hall and in Meadows.
6. The Commission further underlines the importance of addressing connectivity gaps quickly by completing Broadband Fund projects in a timely manner.¹ However, the Commission considers that, under the circumstances, approving the change requests would satisfy the objectives identified by the approach set out in Telecom Regulatory Policy 2018-377, and expects CBBC to complete the project by the spring of 2024.
7. The Commission therefore **approves** CBBC's change requests. All funding conditions and conditions imposed under section 24 of the *Telecommunications Act*, as set out in Telecom Decision 2021-46, continue to apply.

Secretary General

¹ Detailed operational information in respect of funded Broadband Fund projects is generally treated in confidence. See Telecom Regulatory Policy 2018-377, paragraphs 405–408, and section 11 (“Confidentiality”) of the Application Guide cited in paragraph 2 of this order.

Related documents

- *Broadband Fund – Acceptance of statement of work for Columbia Basin Broadband Corporation’s British Columbia transport fibre project*, Telecom Order CRTC 2021-330, 1 October 2021
- *Broadband Fund – Project funding approval for Columbia Basin Broadband Corporation’s British Columbia transport fibre project*, Telecom Decision CRTC 2021-46, 4 February 2021
- *Broadband Fund – Second call for applications – Introductory decision regarding project funding approvals*, Telecom Decision CRTC 2021-43, 4 February 2021
- *Broadband Fund – Second call for applications*, Telecom Notice of Consultation CRTC 2019-372, 13 November 2019; as amended by Telecom Notices of Consultation CRTC 2019-372-1, 20 March 2020; and 2019-372-2, 27 April 2020
- *Development of the Commission’s Broadband Fund*, Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2018-377, 27 September 2018