EORN backgrounder

About EORN

Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN) works to fuel economic development and growth by working on regional projects that drive growth and deliver value for municipalities. EORN is a non-profit organization created by the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EOWC). Since 2010, it has helped bring hundreds of millions of dollars in federal, provincial and private sector investment to the rural region.

EORN uses in-depth analysis to develop solutions. It advocates for public-private partnerships to fund large scale projects and oversees projects to completion. EORN is governed by an independent Board of elected officials from the EOWC and the Eastern Ontario Mayors' Caucus (EOMC), as well as two members of the public.

Cell Gap Project

Launched in 2021, the Cell Gap Project is now complete. In August 2026, EORN and Rogers Communications announced its successful delivery of a 5G cell network now available in service across eastern Ontario for residents, businesses, first responders and visitors. EORN also worked with Indigenous communities and organizations to ensure that the new cell infrastructure respected treaty rights and heritage.

Cell Gap Project goals met in eastern Ontario demand area (where people live, work and travel on major roadways)

- → 99 per cent of the area can make voice calls.
- → 95 per cent has standard-definition service (video-app calls, basic apps, SD streaming).
- → 85 has high-definition service (HD streaming, data-heavy apps.

Funding partners: the federal and provincial governments each invested $71 million. Municipal members of the EOWC and participating EOMC members added $10 million. Rogers Communications, chosen

346

new wireless sites built (new towers and colocations)

311

existing sites upgraded with 5G equipment

$300 million

public-private partnership

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If you have further questions please reach out to EORN at info@eorn.ca | eorn.ca | 613-213-8520

Improving connectivity and beyond

Broadband

Current broadband project
EORN is nearing completion of a regional broadband project that is helping to close remaining broadband coverage gaps in parts of eastern Ontario by connecting roughly 3,000 previously unserved premises. This approximately $23-million project is being completed in partnership with the Government of Ontario and five local internet service providers (ISPs). Eleven new fixed wireless towers, 13 upgraded towers and approximatly 248 kilometres of new fibre built.
Local partners: Kingston Online Services, Storm Internet Services, WTC Communications, IGS Hawkesbury and NRTC Communications.

Last Mile Challenge
EORN has applied to the province's Last Mile Challenge, a program to connect Ontario's hardest-to-reach homes and businesses. Building on its past broadband work with the Province, EORN's application proposes 12 projects with six local internet service providers. The projects use fibre-to-the-home and next-generation fixed wireless to bring speeds that meet or exceed the provincial 50/10 Mbps standard to unserved homes and businesses across eastern Ontario. If approved, the work would be completed by December 31, 2028.

Broadband Phase 1
From 2010 to 2014, EORN first project helped to enhance broadband access for nearly 90 per cent of eastern Ontario through a $175 million public-private partnership. The network was funded by federal, provincial, and municipal governments and private sector service providers. By the end of the project, 423,000 homes and businesses were able to access services of up to 10 Mbps download. It also spurred an additional $100 million of private sector investment in the region beyond initial commitments.

Beyond connectivity

The skills we built on large regional projects now help municipalities with other challenges. We also speak up for the region with the federal and provincial governments.

- **Municipal Services Corporations (MSCs)**
  A MSC is a separate corporation that runs local services like water and wastewater. EORN completed business cases for Renfrew and Peterborough counties and partner with Frontenac Municipal Services.
- **Affordable housing**
  EORN wrote the business plan for the EOWC's 7 in 7+ Regional Housing Plan: 28,000 homes in seven years, including 7,000 affordable rental units. We also help towns unlock land for housing with shared water and wastewater systems.
- **Governance review**
  EORN led Haliburton County's Affordability and Governance Structure Study.

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