



ConnectTO Program

Executive Committee Presentation
March 30, 2022

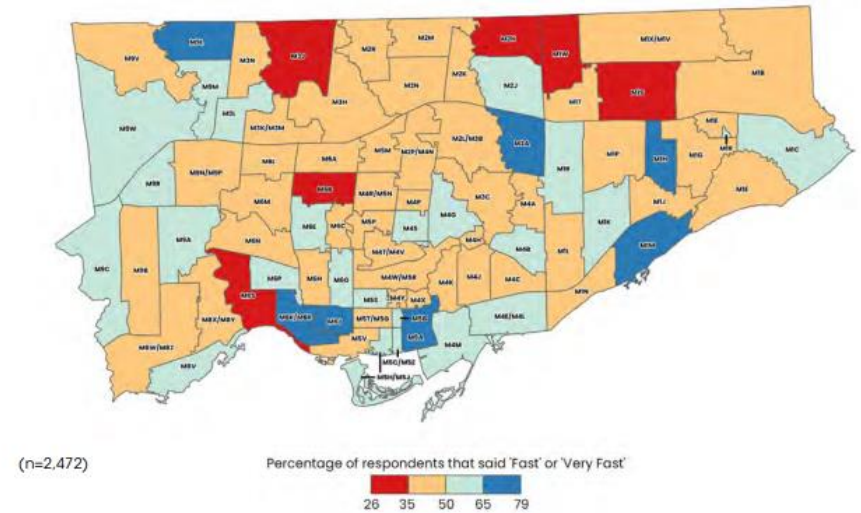
Digital Divide in Toronto

34% of Toronto households are **worried about paying their home internet bills** over the next few months, with rates of worry greatest among low-income, newcomer, single parent, Latin American, South Asian, Black and Southeast Asian residents.

Half of Toronto's low-income households (52%) and of those aged 60 and older (48%) report download speeds below the national target of 50 Mbps

Internet service terminations due to an inability-to-pay are problematic in family households; Private ISPs have no obligation to offer low-cost services, or to ensure connectivity regardless of household financial means

Figure 9:
Proportion of Respondents with Fast or Very Fast Home Internet Service Relative to Needs



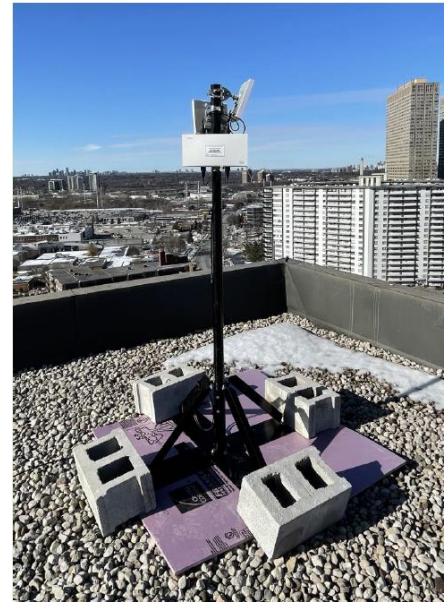
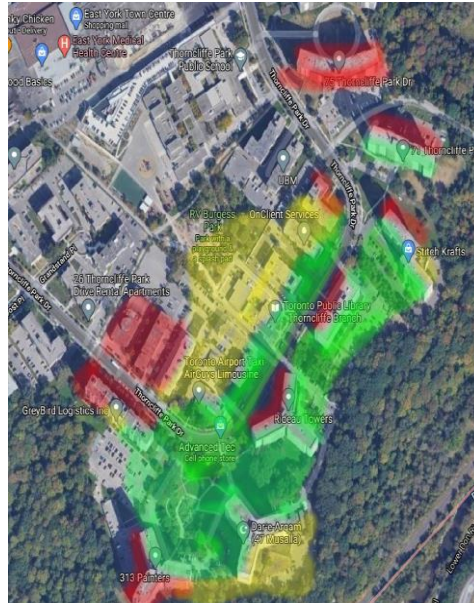
Reasons Why Respondents Have No Home Internet

- The monthly cost of Internet service: **49%**
- No device that can connect to the Internet: **25%**
- Uses a mobile phone data plan instead: **22%**
- Has access to the Internet elsewhere: **16%**

(n=43)

ConnectTO - Connecting the Community

- Digital access is provided to over 3,500 units and roughly 7,700 Torontonians in our Tower Neighbourhood buildings through Digital Canopy
- Approximately 300 City-owned locations are slated to be connected with public Wi-Fi by 2024.
- 9 youths completed 12-week Youth Learning and Workplace program, facilitated for the City through the CEE Centre for Black Youth Professionals.



FREE WI-FI

The City of Toronto and other technology partners have launched free temporary Wi-Fi internet access in your building

Please keep your physical distance (2 metres or 6 feet) while using the Wi-Fi and avoid gathering in groups

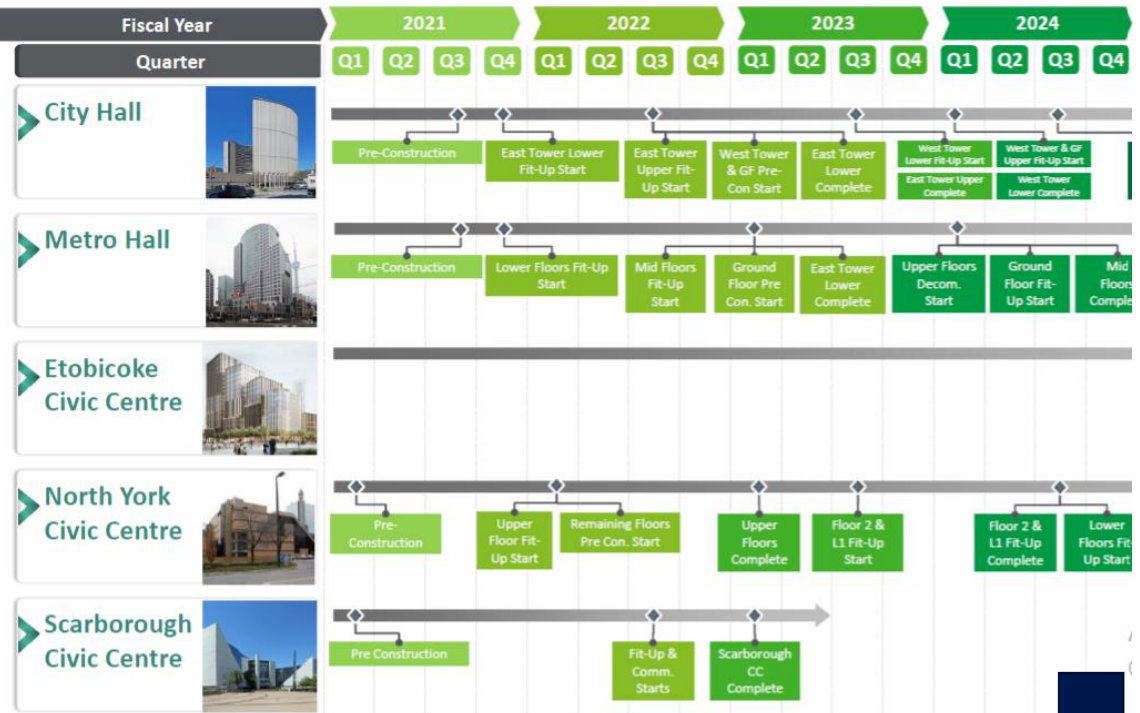
TORONTO

CONNECT AT:
toronto.ca/wifi

*“I don’t know where to start!!! *Members names program staff* have each played a role and have impacted my life in a way that they might sadly never fully understand. My words could express so much about how I feel but I’m utterly thankful!”*

“Improved as a person for my personal life throughout my time in the digital canopy program, I also improved as a professional person as well.”

Connectivity that Serves a Digital Toronto



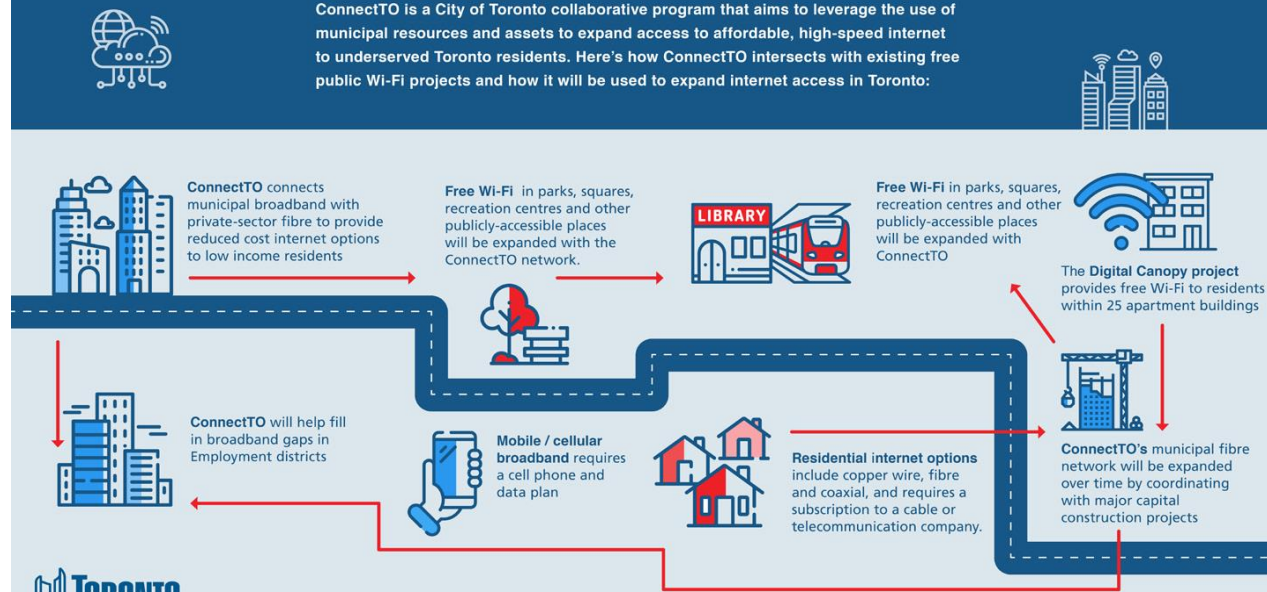
Investing in fibre that connects City infrastructure



Leveraging public fibre to benefit underserved communities

Internet Connectivity – ConnectTO

ConnectTO is a City of Toronto collaborative program that aims to leverage the use of municipal resources and assets to expand access to affordable, high-speed internet to underserved Toronto residents. Here's how ConnectTO intersects with existing free public Wi-Fi projects and how it will be used to expand internet access in Toronto:



Lessons Learned on nRFP

Through an nRFP process, the City looked for private sector partners to provide physical network connectivity and service management for sites with specific buildings to address the digital divide.

Goal of these pilot sites is to test out:

- Market and community response
- **Physical network/connectivity**
- **Service management**
- **Partnership business model** (governance, financial structure incl. transfer of assets to City)

ConnectTO MBN approach based on lessons learned

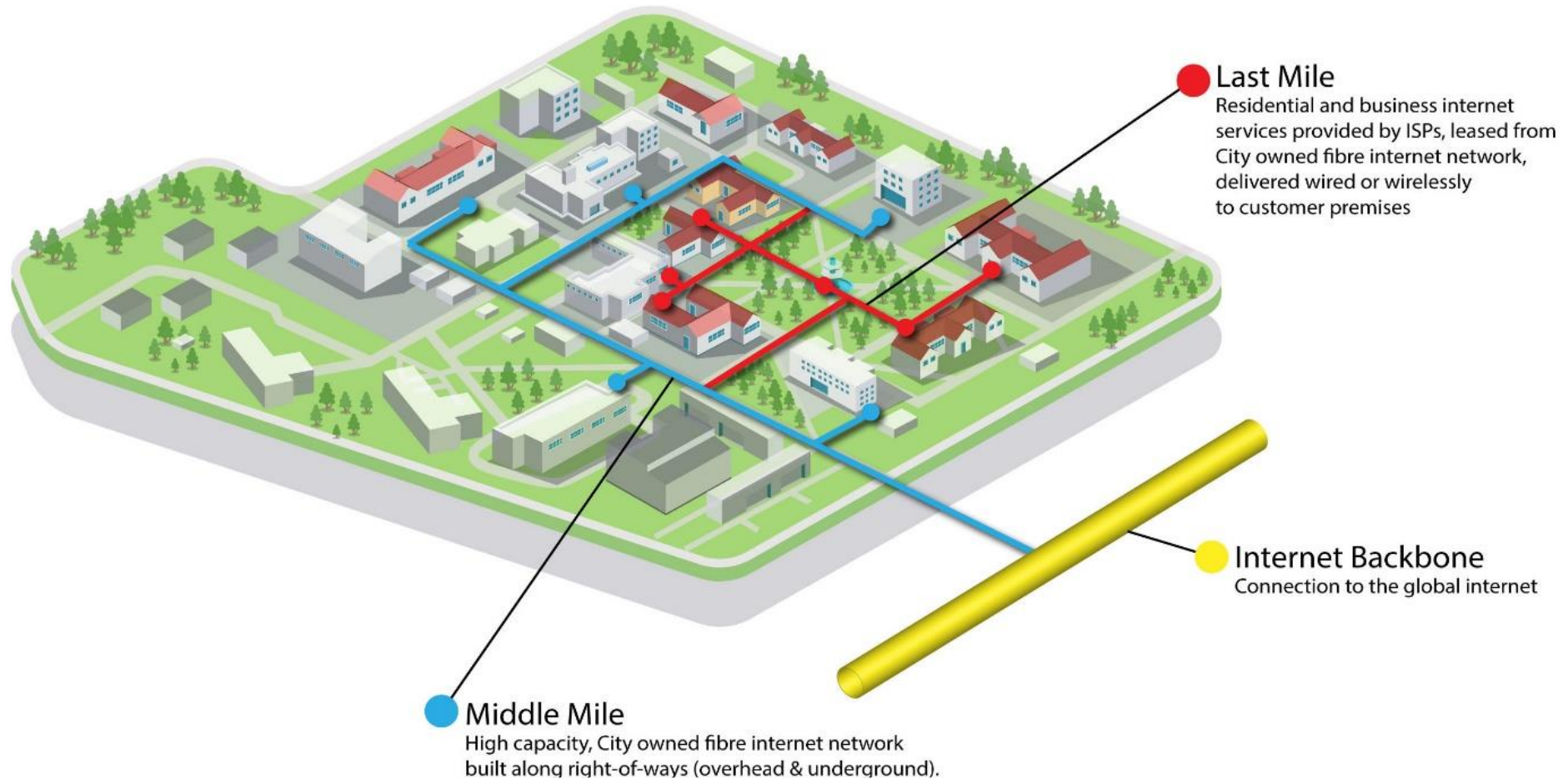
- **Create a MBN to create better incentive in City asset that can be leveraged;**
- **Review of Official Plan and requests to other levels of government address the need for private sector competitive last-mile infrastructure;**
- **The pilot sites in the nRFP were in older buildings in 4 neighbourhoods, as they were evaluated to be in the most need. However, the MBN would be City-wide.**
- **The MBN would look to increase City-Owned fibre and duct, as well as providing opportunities for non-dominant service providers to increase their fibre and duct assets.**

Municipalities Operating Their own Municipal Broadband Networks

Municipalities are leveraging public assets for public good. Across Canada, municipally owned fibre is being used to support public services + close the digital divide

City	Type of Network	Background	Notable
Montreal	Public Services; Open Access	Deployed 30 km of fibre, Focus on linking municipal buildings and future free Wi-Fi	MTL-WiFi has 825 access points across the island of Montreal, Plans to expand fibre even further
Calgary	Public Services; Dark Fibre	City owns over 400 kms of leasable fibre	Free public Wi-Fi at LRT stations and City facilities
Peel Region	Public Services	Over 800 kms of fibre, Owned/governed by constituent municipalities	Generated over \$100 million in savings on \$25 million total investment
Eastern Ontario Municipalities	Dark Fibre; PPP	5,500 kms of fibre connecting 60+ business parks and clusters	Broadband coverage to 90% of Eastern Ontario, 140,000 (2018)
York Region	Dark Fibre	Over 200 kms of fibre connecting Public Sector buildings, Governed as a Municipal Services Corporation	Serves all networks and operators, Receives federal grants from the Universal Broadband Fund

Toronto's Middle Mile Opportunity



MBN Benefits to the City



Well-Run City

- Delivers operational and financial efficiencies across City divisions. Centralizing and streamlining network services for its own operations and enabling open-access to its network will enhance network capacity, reduce risk and lower costs.



Equity & Inclusion

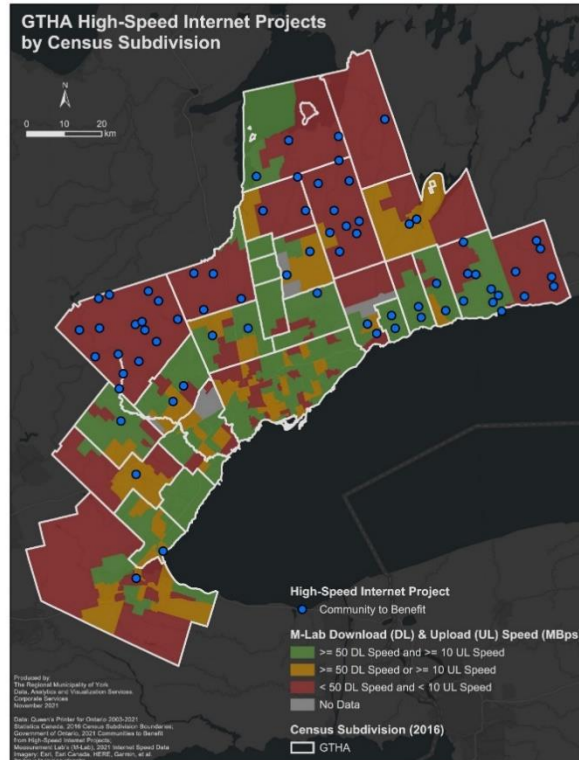
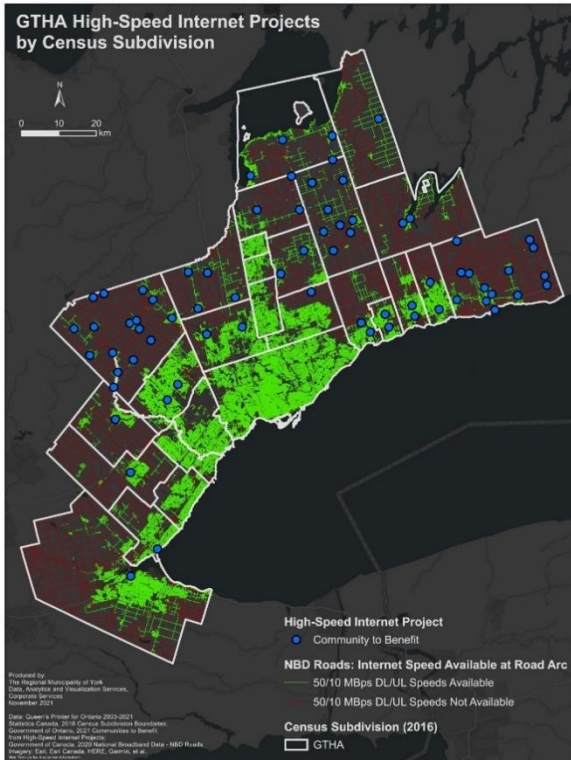
- Addresses Social Equity - Helping to ensure broadband access for all regardless of financial means or circumstances will mitigate the economic, health and social costs associated with the digital divide.



Digital Autonomy

- Provides the City with a direct voice to enable affordable broadband internet delivery in Toronto
- Embeds internet connectivity in planning and execution of City activities

United Advocacy – GTHA, Coast to Coast, and FCM



- Invest in GTHA
- Identify provincially owned fibre that can be leveraged to help close the digital divide
- Collect and share local level data
- Enable municipalities to more easily promote access to their fibre
- Ensure that new developments include digital infrastructure
- Recognize broadband as an essential service