GOLD RIVER

COMMUNITY BROADBAND PLAN

Strathcona
REGIONAL DISTRICT

ABOUT GOLD RIVER

Tucked in between the Gold and Heber Rivers, Gold River is the gateway to historic Nootka Sound on Canada's pacific coast. Gold panning attracted Chinese miners into the traditional territory of the Mowachaht and Muchalaht peoples in the 1860s, and the name Gold River first appeared on maps in 1871. Incorporated in 1965 as a District, it reincorporated itself in 1972 as the Village Municipality of Gold River.

The Mowachaht/Muchalaht people, who are Nuu-chah-nulth, have deep history in the communities now known as Gold River and Tsa'Xana. Gold River is a small village with a population of 1212, and neighbouring reserve Tsa'Xana has a population of 187, for a total of 1399. [1]

House prices in Gold River are more affordable than many other island communities. The median value of a home is $140,120.[1] The median monthly cost of home ownership is $567. Median monthly cost is the total cost for a mortgage, property taxes, and the cost of electricity, heat, water, and other municipal services.

There is no cell phone coverage in Gold River and Tsa'Xana. Thus, most residents rely on landlines. which costs approximately $40 per month, including unlimited local calling.[2] Cable and DSL are the most utilized internet service types in Gold River and Tsa'Xana. and an individual household can expect to pay between $40 and $100 per month, depending on desired speed and usage.[3] Though not all residents who work from home would utilize home phone and internet, some would. In Gold River, 35 members of the workforce work from home. There are no home-based workers in Tsa'Xana.

Gold River has the second highest median income in the Strathcona Regional District, at $65,344 with only Campbell River residents earning more. Most income in Gold River is generated by employment (82%), while 18% comes from government transfers.

Given that there are no major industries or employers in Gold River or Tsa'Xana, it isn't surprising that 67.6% of Gold River's labour force works part year and/or part time. Similarly, 61.5% of Tsa Xana's labour force works part year and/or part time.[1]

On the edge of Strathcona Park, Gold River has much to offer people who love the outdoors. Caving, rock climbing, mountan biking and fishing in the Gold River ranks with the best in B.C. Easy ocean access to the world's best salmon and halibut fishing, fresh glacier fed rivers and lakes makes Gold River a fishing paradise.

[1] Statistics Canada, Census 2016 - Gold River and Tsa'Xana
[2] Telus.com
[3] Internet Service Provider estimates

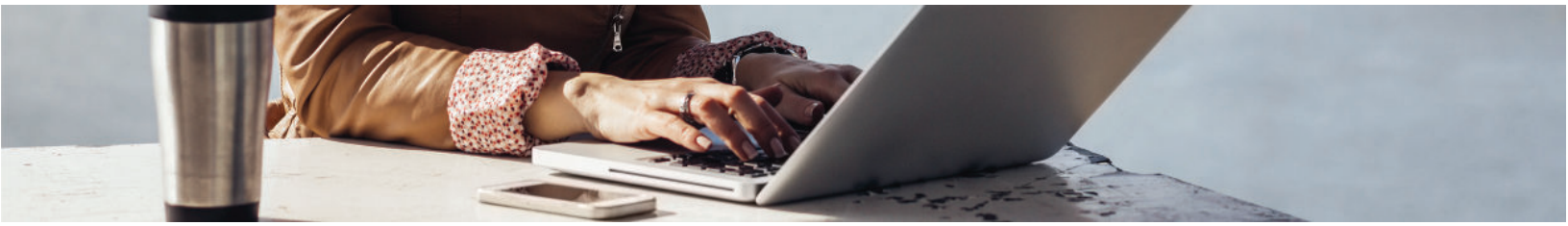
CONTENTS

Community Broadband Plan

Telecommunications Infrastructure Assessment

Prepared by:
Elaine Popove - Strathcona Regional District
Communications Coordinator (May, 2020)

This project is made possible through funding provided by Island Coastal Economic Trust.



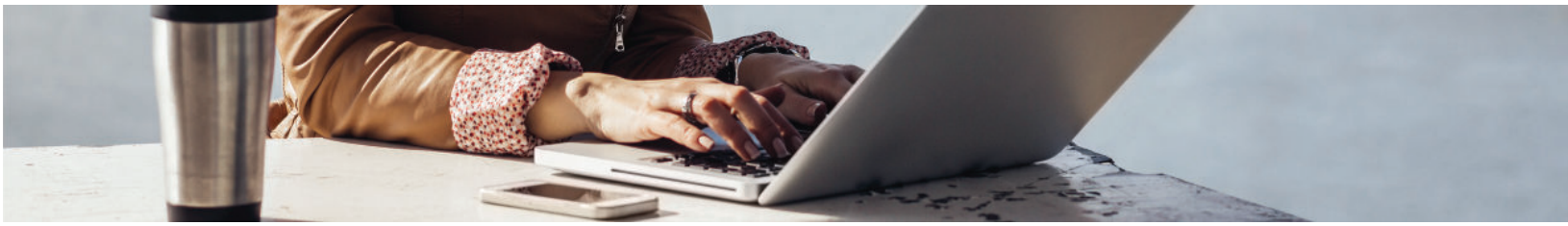
INTRODUCTION

The Strathcona Regional District (SRD) is a partnership of four electoral areas and five municipalities. These communities have relatively small populations and are often separated from each other by undulating landscapes and water.

Of the population of 44,000 residents, most reside within the City of Campbell River. Approximately 12,000 regional district residents live in rural and remote communities spread across a large geographic expanse of approximately 18,500 sq. kms that includes forested hills and alpine areas, islands and remote inlets.

Improved broadband connectivity for rural and remote communities has been a strategic priority of the SRD for several years. There is a significant gap between broadband service levels and affordability in urban areas versus rural areas in British Columbia (Connected Communities in BC, NDIT, 2018). Indeed, many communities within the SRD do not meet basic service levels, if they have any service at all.

Addressing this 'digital divide' will require intensive collaborative effort and multiple funding sources but the benefits are undeniable. It will increase the live-ability of rural and remote communities on Vancouver Island, enabling them to sustain their communities, attract investment and participate directly in social and economic initiatives.



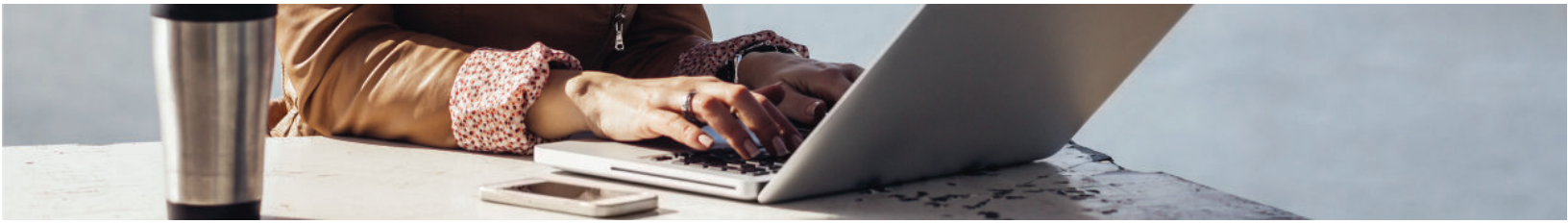
PROJECT METHODOLOGY

The Community Broadband Plans (CBP) project methodology was founded on design principles set-out by Connected Communities BC, weaving together a combination of diverse skill-sets; technical network engineers with community facilitators. 7 communities within the regional district were visited throughout a 2 week block in June of 2019.

Presentations from guest speakers and videos showcasing possibilities for a digital future while gathering ideas from the community about their current state of use as well as plans for housing, economic, environmental and social developments took place.

Information was presented about the SRD's broadband initiatives including the Connected Coast project (V.Smith, SRD), broadband technology and the existing connectivity landscape (D.Sinclair, Driftwood Communications), Innovate BC inspiration (G. Truax, Innovation Island) and the provincial Connected Communities program (C. McCormick and J.Wilkins, Ministry of Citizens' Services). A video produced by Connected Communities, showcasing how improved connectivity has been useful in Haida Gwaii was also shown.

An open discussion followed and participants provided a great deal of information about the current state of connectivity in their community as well as how improved broadband might be utilized to address community challenges and opportunities.



DIGITAL ASPIRATIONS

A Community Broadband Plan forum was held on June 18th from 4:00 – 6:00 pm at the Gold River Aquatic - Sports Centre. The forum was promoted as a 'Let's Connect' workshop advertised by posters hung in high traffic locations throughout the community and online via local social media channels and community websites.

The workshop was 2 hours in length with the first hour consisting of presentations, technical info and a Connected Communities video was featured while the second hour included an open forum.

How would improved broadband address community challenges and opportunities in Gold River?

Improve Economic Development

- Mowachat/Muchalaht foreshore redevelopment
- Assist forestry with GIS data

Create Business Opportunities

- Opportunity for home based businesses
- Crypto currency (needed for bitcoin factory)

Improve Safety / Well-Being

- 9-1-1 calling through WIFI
- WIFI hot spots

Increase Tourism

- People currently shy away

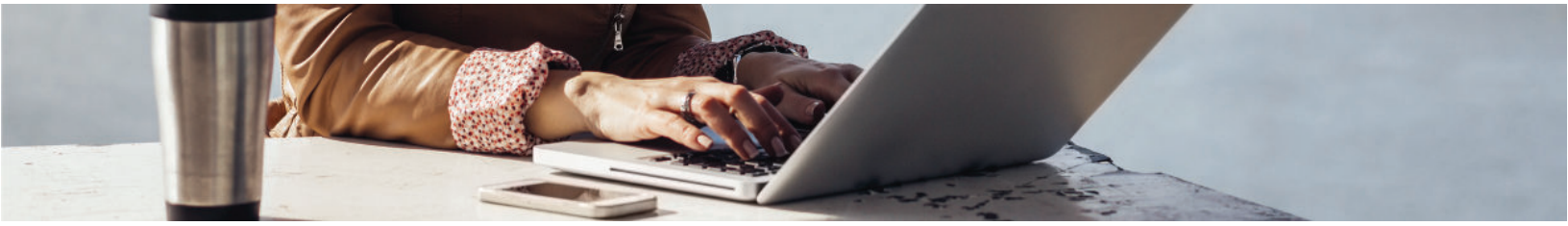
Improve Entertainment Opportunities

Access to Music Streaming

Provide More Educational Opportunities

- Language learning
- Student courses
- Access to VIRL digital resources

(Videos, books, audiobooks, music, etc.)



DIGITAL ASPIRATIONS (cont.)

A Better Sense of Place

- People can choose to use cell phones or not
- Community can choose how the connectivity gets implemented for community good
- Currently it's a great place to raise children – kids throwing rocks in the river, playing in parks and getting exercise and not playing online video games
- Some people are relieved not to have cell service

Improve Ambulance Service / Well-Being

Get computerized patient records

- Currently inaccessible when ambulance is not in cell coverage area
- Access is slow
- Can input info, but doesn't upgrade until reaching Campbell River
- Can't communicate with dispatch

Electronic CAD systems on vehicles

- Requires cellular to function

Shift to E-Health, assumes ambulances are in urban coverage areas

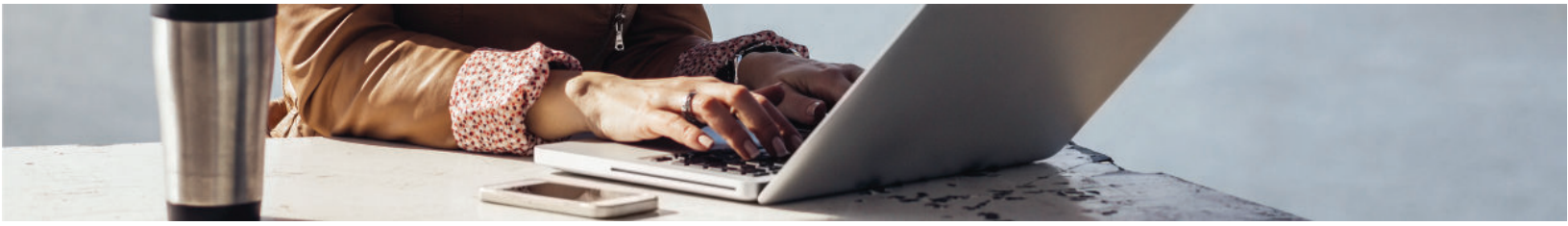
Allow for internet based BC Ambulance courses, suitable bandwidth not available currently

Increase Volunteering Opportunities

- Get young people involved
- Same individuals show up and take part in volunteering opportunities
- Apathy in the Valley; people don't come out to support issues
- They had a campaign for cell service along highway a year ago with low traction

Opportunity for a Different Community Engagement Approach

- When frustrated; change tactics
- Scale back; don't try to do it all or do more
- Do one thing - well!
- Work with the willing



CONCLUSION

The information gathered from the Let's Connect CBP forums has created a unique snapshot of the community's digital readiness and aspirations.

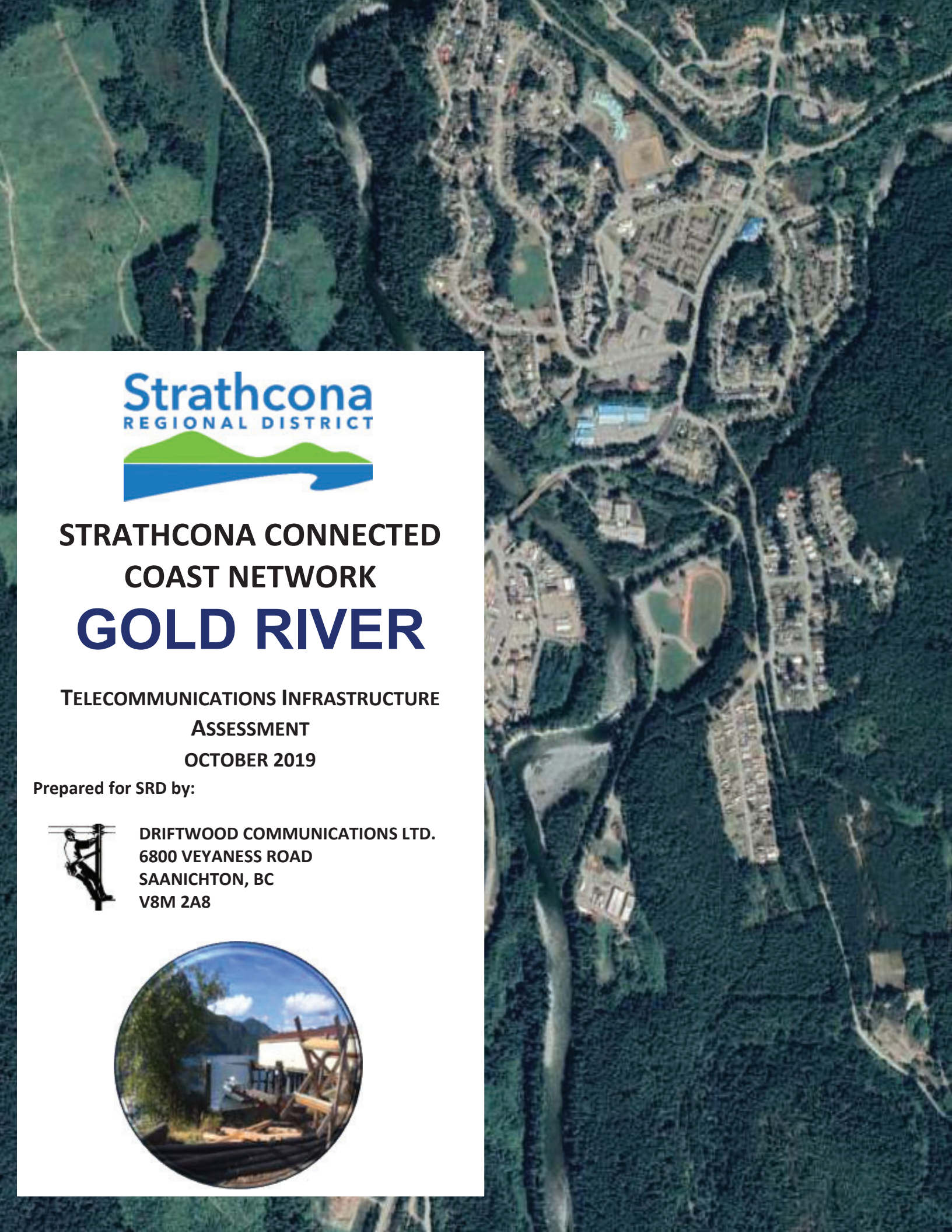
The world is increasingly 'online' bringing opportunities for information exchange, social connection, improved service delivery and income generating opportunities along with it. In the Regional District, improved connectivity will allow residents in rural and remote communities access to essential services, participation in the modern economy and civic life.

New economic development opportunities will allow residents to work remotely and participate on e-commerce and online business development. Access to phone and internet services is necessary for reasons related explicitly to health – including access to health and emergency services and opportunities for telehealth – but also to meet other needs as aforementioned. Improved internet connectivity will also significantly enhance the ability to take part in civic and social participation, education and professional development, improve connection to friends and family, and entertainment, among others.

For some residents, this can mean the difference between staying and improving the capacity in local communities versus having to move or board elsewhere which can be prohibitive.

This snapshot will be provided to last-mile broadband infrastructure solution designers to develop a plan based on the community snapshot along with analysis of the community's topography, climate, housing density, location of key institutions.

In this way, the infrastructure is informed by the community aspirations amongst other important technical considerations.



Strathcona
REGIONAL DISTRICT

STRATHCONA CONNECTED COAST NETWORK

GOLD RIVER

TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT

OCTOBER 2019

Prepared for SRD by:

DRIFTWOOD COMMUNICATIONS LTD.
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Purpose of Study and Methodology

The SRD engaged Driftwood Communications to provide an understanding of the current connectivity landscape in Gold River and to investigate any improvements required to last-mile infrastructure in order to better serve the community. Suggestions for last-mile improvements must consider the proposed new high-speed capacity link being planned for Gold River through the Connected Coast project, as well as responding to the community's digital aspirations.

Methodology

A visit to Gold River was completed on Tuesday, June 18th, 2019

A general survey of the area was conducted to identify:

- the proposed fibre landing location
- existing utility infrastructures, conditions and capacities
- existing ISP infrastructure
- potential anchor tenant locations
- potential opportunities

Interviews with the local ISP were undertaken to further understand their existing capabilities and where the gaps exist to achieve the targeted service levels.

A representative from Driftwood participated in a community Let's Connect forum in Gold River on June 18th. The purpose of the forum was to share the Connected Coast plan and what benefits it could bring to the community. Driftwood delivered a presentation of the various types of technologies that could potentially be deployed to provide these services. The open forum also provided the important opportunity for community members to share any concerns they may have had about any particular delivery method or any specific need within their community.

Observations and information gathered was then analyzed by our staff to determine what potential options could best meet the objectives of providing the desired service levels to the community.

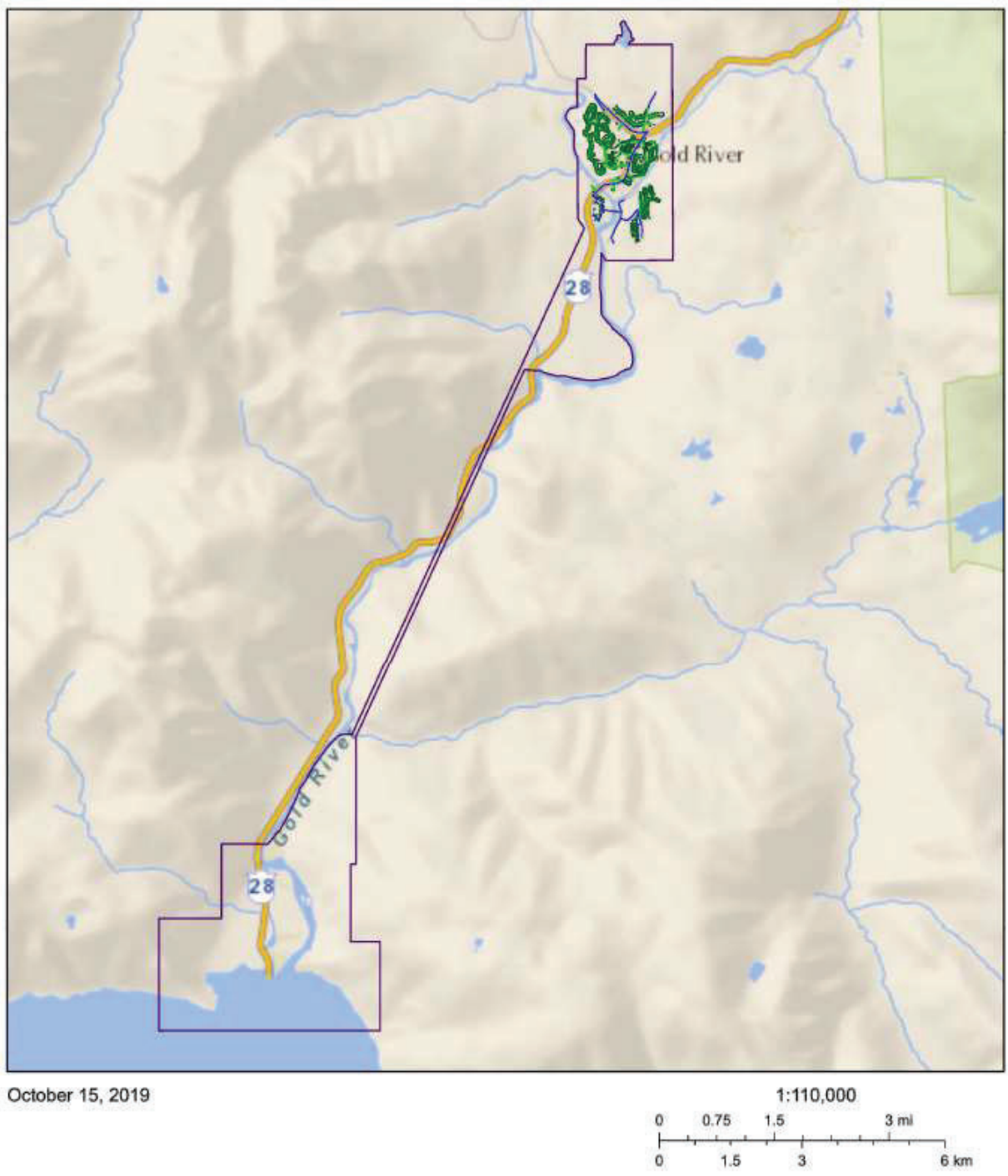
Connected Coast Submarine Fibre Routes

Connected Coast - Proposed backbone submarine fibre path and landing points
(Estimated Completion 2021)
Red = Main submarine fibre
Yellow = Proposed terrestrial SRD fibre to Gold River Municipal Hall
Green = Existing Conuma Cable fibre from Gold River to Tsaxana First Nation

Connected Coast Terrestrial Fibre Routes

Connected Coast submarine fibre landing site at Gold River and start of terrestrial fibre build
Red = Submarine fibre
Yellow = Proposed terrestrial SRD fibre to Gold River

Population & Address Density



Village of Gold River boundary

The residents within the boundary of Gold River are concentrated in the northern area of the village boundary. There are no visible residents in the southern area or the narrow connecting route. There appears to be four commercial businesses in the south oceanfront area. Western Forest Products, Grieg Seafood, Air Nootka and Nootka Sound Service.

Description	Quantity	Source
Population	1212	(2016 Census) Sayward
Addresses within Gold River boundary	610	2019 ICI Society Address BC
Addresses adjusted with satellite imagery	831	2019 ICI Society ABC + Visual
Report number used	831	2019 ICI Society ABC + Visual

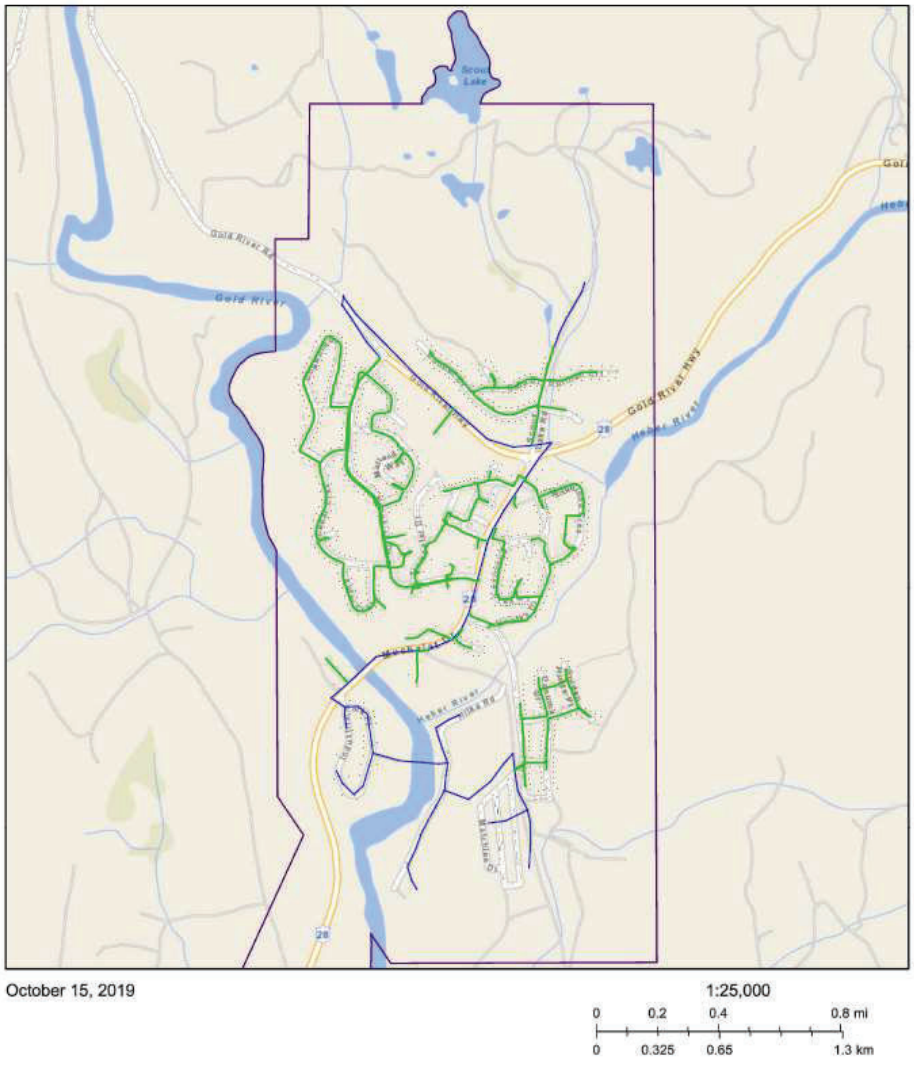
Site Visit Observations

Utility Service Provider	Services
Conuma Cable	Television, Internet & Phone
Xplornet	Satellite internet services
TELUS	Landline telephone
BCHydro	Electricity

Existing Support Structures

Utilities in the community are provided via three existing infrastructures:

1. Joint Venture aerial pole network owned by BCHydro and TELUS
2. TELUS underground duct network
3. Conuma Cable underground duct network

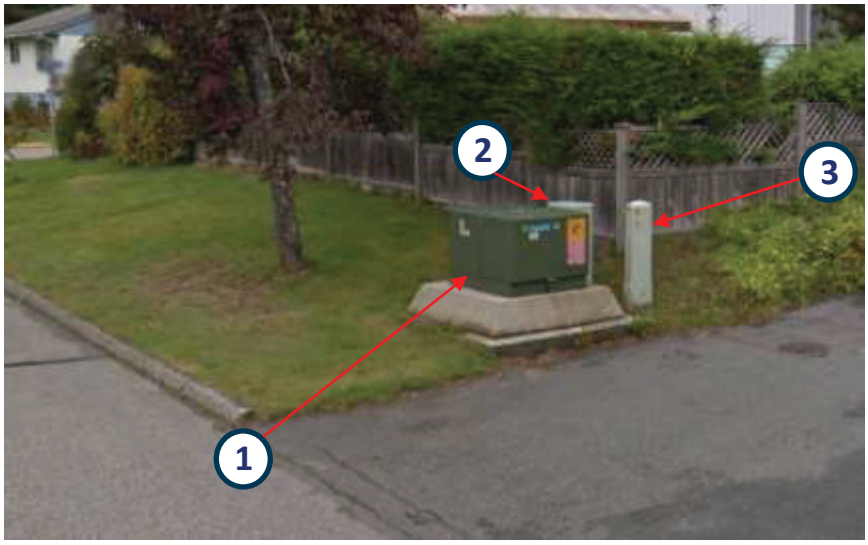


Underground Utilities (~12,500 meters / 71%)

Aerial Utilities (5,000 meters / 29%)

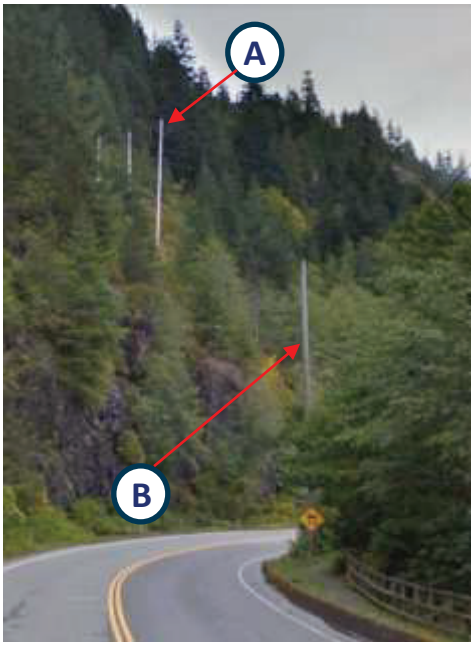
A significant portion of the underground infrastructure within the Village of Gold River was constructed in the mid 1960's and as such we anticipate the existing conduits will likely have sections that are full to capacity or are damaged to the point where new cables cannot be pulled in. In addition, it is our understanding that many of the service drops to the older home areas are direct buried.

Within the Village of Gold River all utilities are predominantly underground. Access to the underground structure for an additional ISP not owning structure will present a greater challenge and may not be possible is some or all locations. As a result, civil permits and excavation to construct sections of a new duct system would be necessary.



Underground Structure Example

1	BCHydro power
2	Coaxial cable plant
3	TELUS cables



Aerial structure example

A	Transmission Line
B	Distribution Line

There are two existing aerial pole line structures that stretch from the SRD Connected Coast landing site location to the Village of Gold River. These are a BCHydro Transmission pole line and a BCHydro / TELUS joint venture pole line. The joint venture pole line offers the greatest opportunity for the addition of the SRD terrestrial fibre from the submarine landing location to the Village of Gold River.

Existing Internet Connectivity

Presently there are two internet service options for the community of Gold River.

1. Conuma Cable has a 750 MHz coaxial cable system and a DOCSIS 3.0 internet service provided to the community of Gold River. In addition, Conuma Cable has placed a fibre optic cable connecting to the Tsaxana First Nations village ~ 3.5 kilometers northeast of Gold River as well as a coaxial cable system connecting the residents to internet services comparable to those received in Gold River. Conuma Cable receives its internet connectivity via a TELUS microwave system.

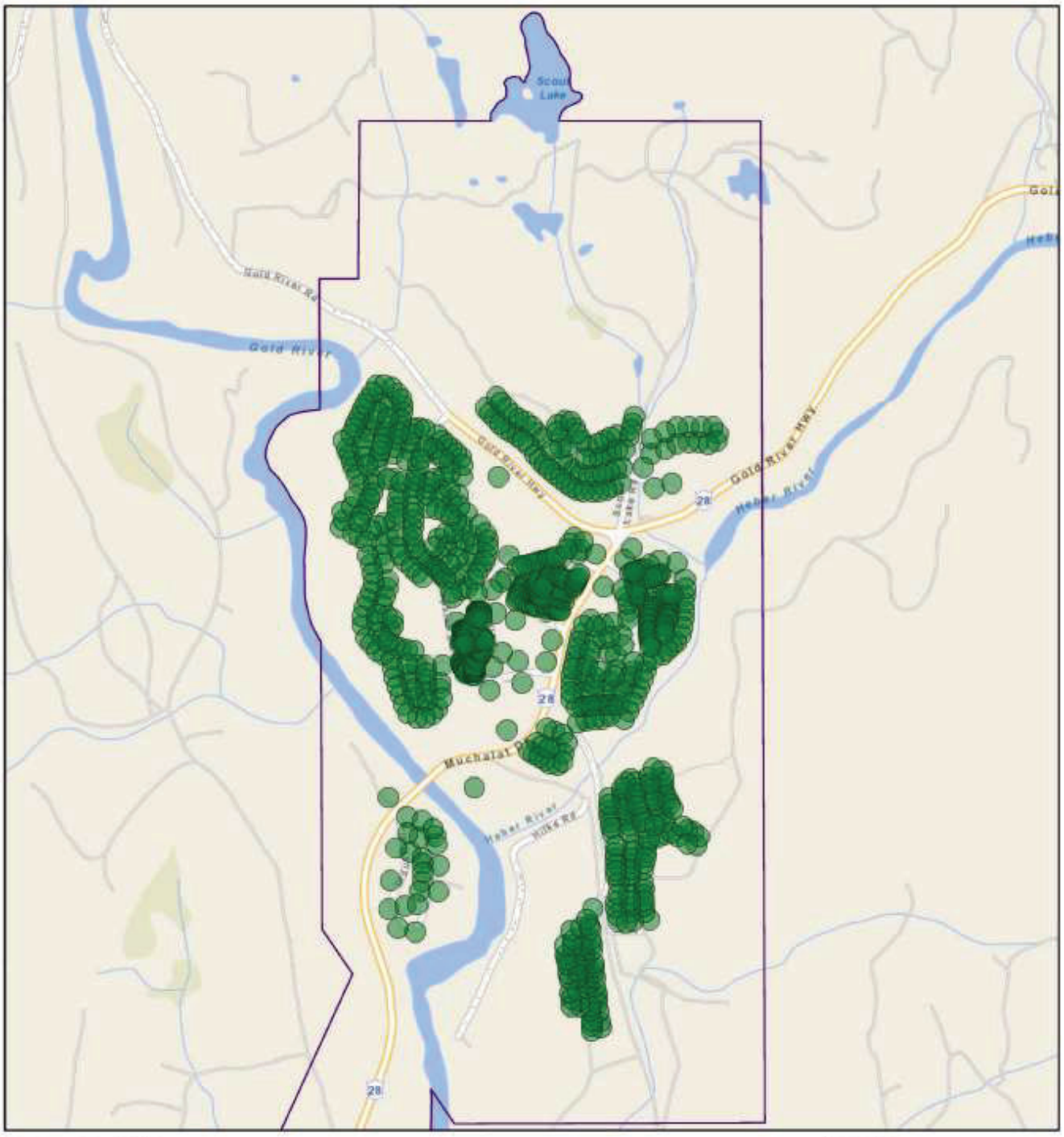
   TELUS currently provides a 500 Mbps input connection.

Packages	Residential	Residential +	Gamer	Extreme	Extreme +
Download	10 Mbps	12 Mbps	15 Mbps	20 Mbps	30 Mbps
Upload	3 Mbps	3 Mbps	7 Mbps	7 Mbps	10 Mbps

2. Satellite internet through Xplornet[i]

Packages	SAT 5	SAT 10	SAT 25
Download	5 Mbps	10 Mbps	25 Mbps
Upload	1 Mbps	1 Mbps	1 Mbps

Satellite signals are also subject to weather conditions that will cause periods of degradation in service levels.



October 15, 2019

1:25,000

0 0.2 0.4 0.8 mi

0 0.325 0.65 1.3 km

AVAILABLE SERVICE LEVELS

● Up to 30 Mbps down / 10 Mbps up

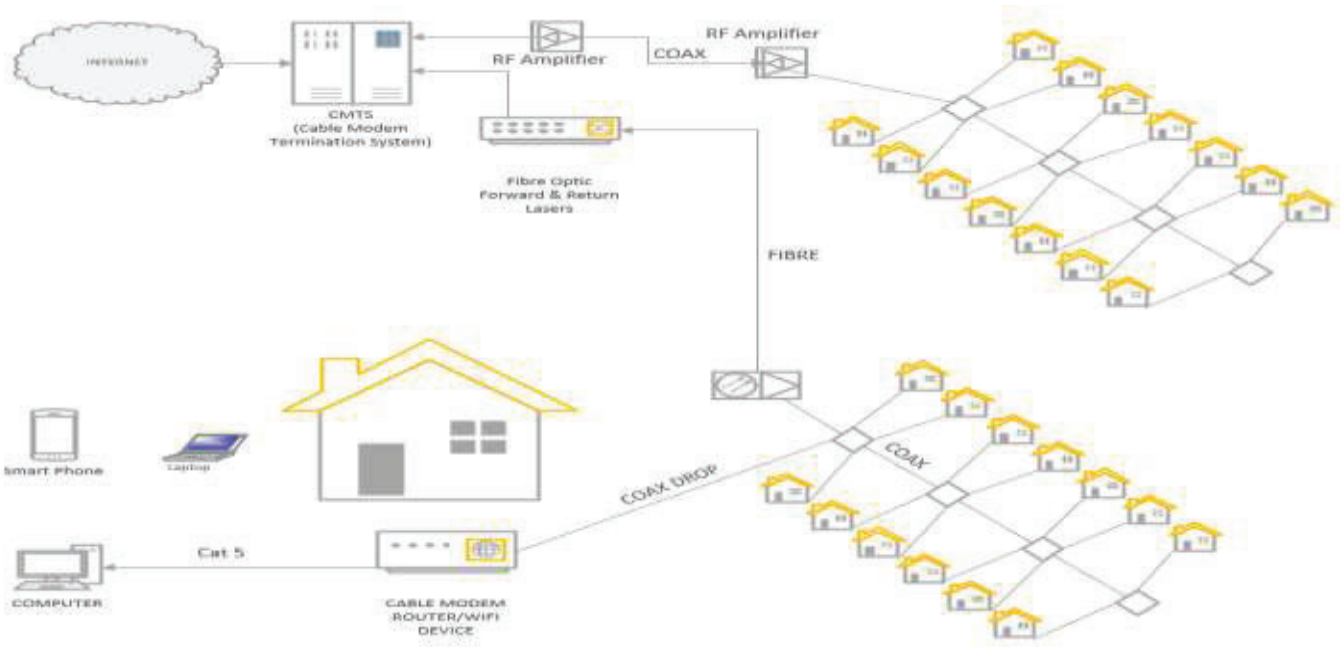
Delivery Methods Comparisons

	F.T.T.H. Fibre to the Home	HFC or Coaxial Cable Network	WIFI Wireless Network	Satellite
Current Industry Offerings	Download/Upload 940 Mbps / 940 Mbps	Download/Upload 1 Gbps / 125 Mbps	Download/Upload 25 Mbps / 12 Mbps	Download/Upload 25 Mbps / 1Mbps
Future Planned Offerings	Virtually Unlimited	10 Gbps / 10 Gbps	Unknown	Unknown
Build Costs	High	Medium	Low	Low
Construction	Aerial &/or underground fibre placement, splicing, drops to buildings, building wiring and transceiver installation	Aerial &/or underground coax &/or fibre placement, splicing, outdoor active & passive installation, drops to buildings, building wiring and transceiver installation	Single &/or multiple towers &/or building mounted transceiver installation, user building external antenna (if required) building wiring and transceiver installation	Mount dish antenna at a location that provides line of sight to satellite. Could be building, pole or tower. Wiring to building, building wiring and appliance installation
Maintenance	Very Low Typically, once the fibre has been installed there is little to no maintenance other that unpredicted damage or forced relocation.	Medium to High Requires ongoing maintenance of outside active electronics, battery maintenance	Low Requires tower safety maintenance, repairs to unpredicted damage and electronic equipment failures	Low Dish antenna may move or be pushed out of alignment, unpredicted damage or electronic equipment failure
Vulnerabilities	Direct damage from exterior forces such as tree falling, auto accident, cut by excavator etc... water infiltration into a splice	Direct damage, electronics failure, power outages	Direct damage, electronics failure	Direct damage, electronics failure
Service Impacting	Fibre break, electronic device failure, water in splice location	Fibre or coaxial cable break, electronic equipment failure, extended power outage	Anything that impedes the line of sight will impact the service quality i.e. rain, snow, fog, obstructions such as tree and buildings, other WIFI signals interference	Anything that impedes the line of sight will impact the service quality i.e. rain, snow, fog, obstructions such as tree and buildings.

Construction Methods Comparisons

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Aerial Leased	• Widely available • Can be several potential leasers • Not responsible for structure or its maintenance costs • Construction costs generally lower than underground	• Open to weather & traffic • More susceptible to service interruption due to damage • Approval to use required • Ongoing lease costs
Aerial Built & Owned	• No leasing cost	• Rarely done as there are usually poles already on both sides of road or little desire by local government to approve if not already there • Expensive to build • Structure maintenance costs • Approval to construct is required • Taxable asset cost
Underground Leased	• Commonly available • Less susceptible to weather • Not responsible for structure maintenance costs • Construction cost comparable or slightly higher than aerial leased	• Available capacity issues more likely • Approval to use required • Ongoing lease costs
Underground Built & Owned	• Less susceptible to weather	• More costly • Approval to construct is required • Structure maintenance costs • Taxable asset cost
Submarine	• Provides connectivity where no other viable or cost-effective option is available	• Expensive • Approval to construct is required
Towers	• Fewer locations • Less infrastructure overall	• Unpopular to public • Land availability challenging • Land leasing cost • High construction cost • Approval to construct is required

Broadband Coaxial Cable Network Example



Coaxial cable system technologies continue to evolve at a rapid pace. With the latest version being developed to provide 1 Gbps up and 1 Gbps down connections. This method requires customers to be serviced via coaxial cables connected to a local area fibre node with no additional amplifiers.

Today there are two basic methods of design.

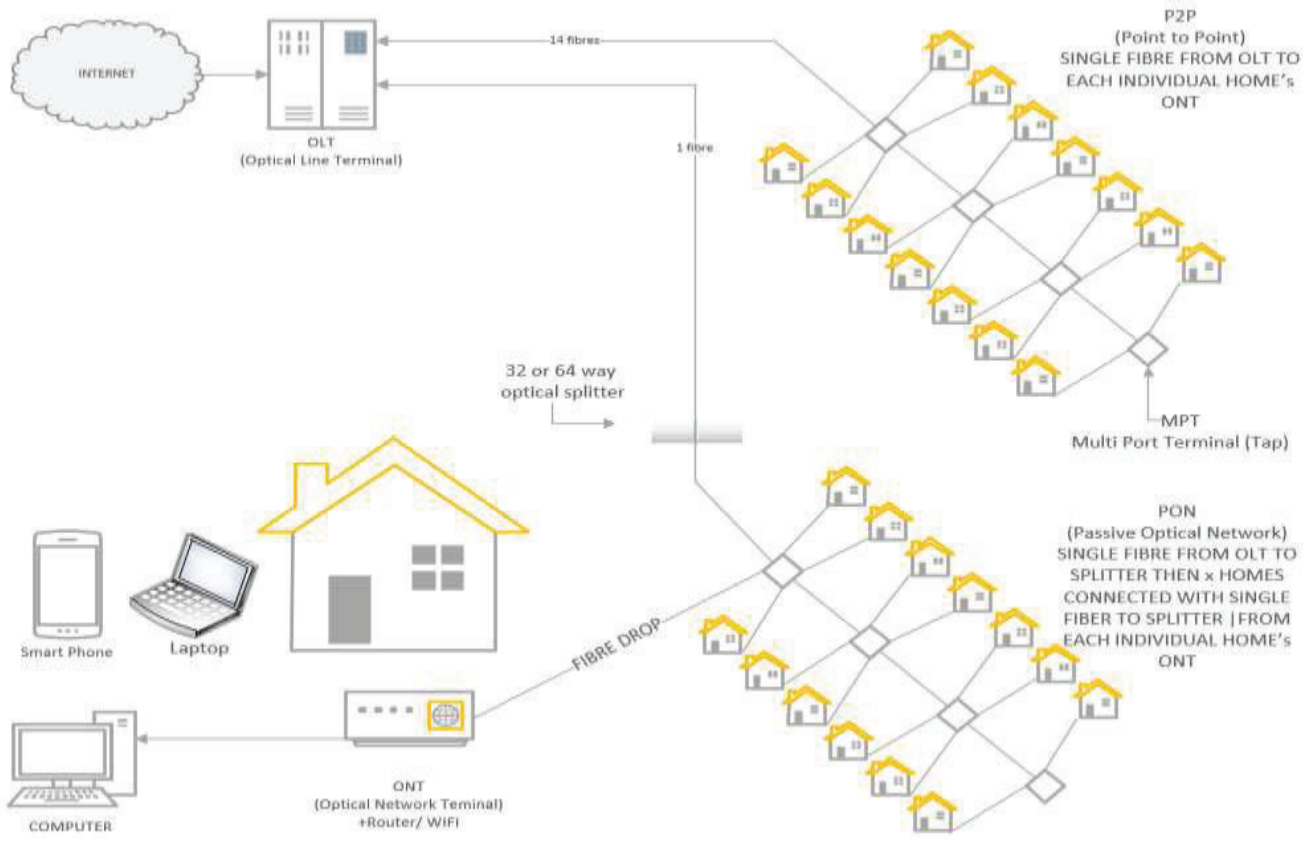
1. A coaxial cable only system with amplifiers placed at intervals to extend the area serviced. For the delivery of internet only services this method would work well in a smaller community with a few hundred customers.

2. With the addition of fibre optic nodes placed closer to the customers the design now allows for segmentation of groups of customers. In addition to higher quality service and greater reliability it also results in increased internet connection speeds.

F.T.T.H. (Fibre to the Home) Network Example

An Optical Line Terminal (OLT) is the endpoint hardware device in a Passive Optical Network (PON). An OLT has two primary functions: Converting the standard signals used by a FiOS service provider to the frequency and framing used by the PON system.

ONT stands for Optical Network Terminal. The ONT connects to the optical fibre cable.
It connects to your router via a LAN / ethernet cable and translates light signals from the fibre optic line into electronic signals that your router can read.



Potential Solution Option 1 – Conuma Cable Connects to the SRD Service

Conuma Cable has existing fibre presence in the Gold River Secondary School. The proposed SRD terrestrial fibre is planned to pass by this location. With the addition of a splice location at a suitable location, Conuma Cable could connect their existing fibre outside of the school property. Conuma cable could then pull back their existing fibre entrance into the school to create a new splice location to facilitate the interconnect to the SRD fibre. Alternately if the SRD chose the Secondary school as the meet me location only a fibre jumper would be required.
The cost for Conuma Cable to perform the connection under these conditions would be less than $10,000.

Proposed route of Connected Coast terrestrial fibre placement

Vicinity of proposed splice location – Potential connection point for Conuma Cable

The connection of their existing network to the SRD system would result in an immediate improvement in customer internet service levels. Once connected, the existing 750 MHz cable plant and DOCSIS 3.0 system could offer service levels greater than the 50 Mbps down / 10 Mbps up objective.

DOCSIS release	Max download	Max upload
DOCSIS 2	40 Mbps	30 Mbps
DOCSIS 3	**1.2 Gbps**	**200 Mbps**
DOCSIS 3.1	10 Gbps	1 Gbps
DOCSIS 3.1 Full Duplex	10 Gbps	10 Gbps

Potential Solution Option 2 – New ISP Fibre To The Home

This option would involve undertaking a Flex NAP fibre build to all residential, commercial and government buildings in Gold River.

Corning Cable Systems Flex NAP™ System provides a cost-effective method of deploying optical fiber in outside plant distribution networks at speeds several times faster than traditional field installations. The Flex NAP System utilizes standard optical fiber cables upon which network access points are pre-installed at customer-specified locations along the length of the cable. The cable and network access points are tested and shipped as a complete distribution cable/terminal system.

This option would offer a complete future proof service directly to all members of the community and greatly exceed the Federal Government's internet service objectives.

Cost Estimate

	Customers *(see page 6)*	**Cost Per Address**	**Route Meters**	**Cost Per Meter**	**Total**
Low Make-Ready Low Duct Construction	831	$1,191.00	17,500	$57.00	$990,000.00
Medium Make-Ready Medium Duct Construction	831	$2,310.00	17,500	$110.00	$1,920,000.00
High Make-Ready High Duct Construction	831	$4,181.00	17,500	$199.00	$3,475,000.00

The above costs are based on equal levels of aerial make-ready for 29% of the infrastructure and duct make-ready for 71% of the total route meters. Duct capacity takes into consideration the need to construct a new duct system in the paved portion of the road (a worst-case scenario).

There are many variables that will impact the final cost of these types of projects including the condition and capacity of existing infrastructure. A complete engineering and permitting application process and tendering of construction would be required to ascertain a true final cost.

There are several factors that have a direct impact on the construction costs for a specific project and are unpredictable.

I. Make-Ready
   a. Condition of existing poles/duct and need for remediation / replacement or new duct
   b. Capacity of existing strand/duct and need for replacement or new additional placement
   c. Adequate anchoring and need for replacement or additional anchoring
   d. Easement agreements with landowners for additional anchors that extend into private property
   e. Engineering and application costs
II. Mobilization/demobilization – cost is increased for remote areas relative to the contractor's home base and local per diem rates
III. Transportation costs to get equipment and materials to the build site

Access Agreements

An access agreement will need to be signed with either BCHydro and/or TELUS to build and maintain an aerial network. These access agreements come with annual lease costs and responsibilities including construction standards and maintenance aspects.

BCHydro	Master Service Agreement
TELUS	Support Structure Agreement
Conuma Cable	Unknown

Conuma Cable has ~70% (~8,750 meters) of its own duct system in the underground service areas.

Conuma Cable *(These rates were not available at the time of this report)*

BCHydro Support Structure Rental Fees *(These rates were not available at the time of this report)*

TELUS Support Structure Annual Lease Fees[ii]

TELUS General Tariff – CRTC-21461			
Structure Type	**Tariff Rate**	**Estimated Usage**	**Annual Fees**
Monthly Pole Rental Rate *(Route Meters/50 Meters avg. span)*	$1.61	100	$1,932.00
Monthly Strand Rental Rate (per 30 Meters)	$0.43	5,000	$860.00
		Total	$2,792.00

TELUS General Tariff – CRTC-21461			
Structure Type	**Tariff Rate**	**Estimated Usage**	**Annual Fees**
Type A Duct (per 30 Meters per mo.)	$2.25	12,500	$11,250.00
Type B *Duct* (per 30 Meters per mo.)	$1.16	0	$0.00
Type C Duct (per 30 Meters per mo.)	$0.69	0	$0.00
Type D Duct (per 30 Meters per mo.)	$1.12	0	$0.00
		Total	$11,250.00

Specific types of conduit and percentage of the total conduit are not available for this report. Highest rate shown for all conduit routes used as example.

Additional operating costs would include such items as:

- building space lease
- property taxes
- plant maintenance
- internet connectivity fees

Conclusions

[iii]	OPTION 1	OPTION 2
	|	F.T.T.H. New ISP with Fibre To The Home
Downstream Data	>60 Mbps	> 60 Mbps
Upstream Data	>10 Mbps	>10 Mbps
Reliability	Excellent	Excellent
Maintenance Requirement	Medium	Low
Operating Costs	Medium	Medium
Quality of Service	Excellent	Excellent

Option 1 would provide a level of service greater than the desired service level objective. Conuma Cable is already operating in the community with established operating and maintenance methods in place.

Option 2 would require a significant capital investment to build the fibre network but once completed it would also offer service levels exceeding the desired objective.

References

[i] **Extranet Website**
[ii] **TELUS website September 2019**
[iii] **WIFI & Data Rates information provided by High Pro Computer Consulting**

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GOLD RIVER
Community Broadband Plan