

October 26, 2023

PUBLIC WORKS/BUILD NOVA SCOTIA/SERVICE NOVA SCOTIA--Province Taking Action to Bring Cell Service to All Nova Scotians

The Province is taking action to make sure all Nova Scotians have access to cellular service, no matter where they live or travel.

The government is investing \$47.3 million to start the new Cellular for Nova Scotia Program, which will expand telecommunications infrastructure and communications networks throughout the province.

“Having reliable cell service is essential for Nova Scotians. It’s a matter of safety, and it’s something we all count on constantly,” said Kim Masland, Minister of Public Works and Minister responsible for Build Nova Scotia. “The current situation needs to be addressed, and we are the first government in 30 years to address this critical issue.”

Build Nova Scotia will lead the program, which will include a comprehensive strategy to improve cell coverage for both civic addresses and roads. The strategy will involve partners across the telecommunications industry as well as other levels of government.

Phase 1 of the program will improve cell coverage in the short term using existing infrastructure. A request for proposal for innovative and cost-effective solutions will be issued today, October 26.

In Phase 2, the aim will be closing remaining gaps in coverage with new infrastructure.

The Province will also invest \$3.3 million to build four new trunked mobile radio towers to expand radio coverage for first responders in West Bay Road/Marble Mountain and Pleasant Bay in Inverness County; Framboise, Richmond County; and Greenfield, Queens County.

Quotes:

“Expanding the Province’s trunked mobile radio network is a big win for first responders and an investment that will improve safety for all Nova Scotians. As a former paramedic, I know how dangerous it can be when you can’t communicate with other emergency responders. This announcement will give them confidence that their communication network will be there when they need it.”

- Colton Leblanc, Minister of Service Nova Scotia

“The Cellular for Nova Scotia Program includes a phased approach to improve cell coverage to underserved locations. In Phase 1, we’re seeking more immediate innovative solutions followed by a second phase seeking innovative solutions and new infrastructure to address remaining gap areas. We’re working closely with service

providers and government partners to ensure reliable cell coverage for all Nova Scotians as quickly as possible.”

- David Benoit, President and CEO, Build Nova Scotia

“Reliable high-speed internet and cell connectivity is an essential service for residents and businesses provincewide. We have worked with all levels of government for three years to address 911 uptime and cell service coverage. We applaud this program to increase cell coverage and Bill 198, which says 911 actually has to work. Problems are being solved.”

- Bill Murphy, Inverness County Connectivity Committee

Quick Facts:

- the federal government’s Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) is responsible for regulating telecommunications companies
- cellular service is provided by privately owned telecommunication companies
- Build Nova Scotia has a mandate to expand telecommunications infrastructure and enable access to global information and communications networks throughout the province
- there are more than 21,000 civic addresses with no cellular coverage out of 461,000 in the province and many commonly travelled roads across the province with poor service or none at all

Additional Resources:

Build Nova Scotia website: <https://buildns.ca/>

Build Nova Scotia on the X platform, formerly known as Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/BuildNovaScotia>

Department of Public Works on the X platform, formerly known as Twitter:

https://twitter.com/NS_PublicWorks

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