



## SWIFT Releases Provincial Broadband Position Paper

Today, SouthWestern Integrated Fibre Technology Inc. (SWIFT) published a position paper that gives prominence to Ontario's increasing digital divide and provides an evidence-based case for continued investment in equitable access to ultra-high-speed broadband networks. The perspectives and recommendations outlined in this paper highlight broadband as a catalyst for innovation, economic prosperity, and global competitiveness.

### **In particular, the position paper focused on the following recommendations:**

1. Develop and implement a provincial broadband plan that is aligned with federal, regional, municipal and Indigenous partners. This plan should leverage the collective voice of the 3.5 million residents in SWIFT's region (and voices from other funded community projects and unfunded communities) to maximize broadband infrastructure investments and create equitable, evidence-based provision of services;
2. Provide long-term, predictable funding to models like SWIFT which are overcoming Ontario's connectivity barriers and meeting the unique needs of each community;
3. Help Ontario to realize the CRTC's universal service objective and SWIFT to achieve its goal of "broadband for everyone" by continuing to invest in the expansion of broadband infrastructure;
4. Facilitate the deployment of communications infrastructure by introducing a Broadband Conduit Deployment Act, like that of the United States, to facilitate the faster and lower cost deployment of fibre optic infrastructure by municipalities and TSPs;
5. Unlock the tremendous potential of our province and create a safety net for individuals who cannot currently access Internet services due to remoteness of location or financial hardships by declaring broadband internet an essential utility.

"In advance of the upcoming provincial election, SWIFT is calling on the Government of Ontario to acknowledge the integral role that broadband plays in supporting all aspects of modern society and

address the longstanding broadband infrastructure gaps that our province faces,” said Gerry Marshall, Board Chair at SWIFT.

“Creating a fully integrated, fibre optic broadband network is the key to growing our communities and unlocking Ontario’s economic potential,” said Geoff Hogan, Chief Executive Officer at SWIFT. “To ensure that all Ontarians, whether they be in rural or urban areas, have access to the services they need to participate in the digital economy we are looking to the Province of Ontario to provide long-term, predictable funding to models like SWIFT.”

To read the full position paper, please visit [www.swiftnetwork.ca/resources](http://www.swiftnetwork.ca/resources).

### **About the SWIFT Initiative**

SouthWestern Integrated Fibre Technology Inc. (SWIFT) is a not-for-profit, collective broadband initiative that is funding the construction of an affordable, open-access, ultra high-speed fibre-optic regional broadband network for everyone in Southwestern Ontario, Caledon and the Niagara Region. To overcome our region’s broadband infrastructure gaps, SWIFT has developed a long-term plan to help more than 3.5 million Ontarians to connect and keep pace in a changing digital world. SWIFT membership is open to any community or organization in southwestern Ontario that needs connectivity to any of its locations. Members benefit from SWIFT’s significant procurement expertise, including aggregated demand, negotiated rates, and support in preparing RFPs for broadband services. As a buying group, SWIFT also ensures greater competition between telecom service providers which will lead to better services at lower prices in member communities.

Help SWIFT build “broadband for everyone” by completing an Internet usage survey:  
[www.swiftnetwork.ca/survey](http://www.swiftnetwork.ca/survey)