



February 24th, 2026

The Honourable Melanie Joly,
Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry
melanie.joly@ised-isde.gc.ca

Dear Minister Joly,

Re: Request for Intervention on Delayed Broadband Project in the Municipality of East Ferris

I am writing to request your assistance regarding the ongoing lack of reliable broadband service in the Municipality of East Ferris, despite a previously announced broadband infrastructure project supported by both levels of government.

In 2021, a Universal Broadband Fund (UBF) and ICON-supported project for Bell Canada was announced for East Ferris, with funding committed by the federal and provincial governments to improve broadband connectivity in the community. To the best of our knowledge, this project has not yet started, and there has been no visible progress on deployment. As a result, many residents in East Ferris remain without access to the standard broadband service level of 50/10 Mbps.

This continued lack of adequate broadband has serious impacts on residents' ability to work, study, access health care, and participate fully in the digital economy. The community has been patient and hopeful following the 2021 announcement, but after several years with no construction activity, they are now asking their governments to intervene and ensure the promised improvements are delivered.

Given your responsibility for broadband and infrastructure policy and funding, I respectfully request that your office:

- Review the status of the UBF/ICON-funded Bell project in the Municipality of East Ferris.
- Clarify whether the project is still proceeding, and if so, the expected timelines for design, construction, and service availability.
- Identify any barriers that are preventing this project from moving forward and outline what steps the federal and provincial governments will take to address them.
- Provide a clear update that can be shared with East Ferris residents and municipal leaders, so that expectations and timelines are transparent.

The residents of East Ferris simply seek the same basic level of broadband access (50/10 Mbps) that is now considered a standard requirement for participation in modern life.



I urge you to treat this matter as a priority and to work with Bell and the relevant departments to ensure that the commitments made in 2021 are honoured as soon as possible.

I would welcome the opportunity to provide any additional information that might assist your review, and I would appreciate a written response outlining the actions your office will take to address this situation.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue and for your continued work to improve broadband connectivity in Ontario.

Yours sincerely,

Rick Champagne, Mayor
On behalf of the Council of the Municipality of East Ferris

CC: Hon. Pauline Rochefort, MP Nipissing-Timiskaming
Hon. Vic Fedeli, MPP Nipissing
Hon. Sam Oosterhoff, Associate Minister of Energy – Intensive Industries