



Telecom Order CRTC 2025-50

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Reference: 2022-207

Gatineau, 19 February 2025

Public record: 1011-NOC2019-0372

Broadband Fund – Change request – TELUS Communications Inc.’s mobile project in Quebec (including Route 138)

Summary

Canadians need reliable, affordable, and high-quality Internet and cellphone services for every part of their daily lives.

Through its Broadband Fund, the Commission contributes to a broad effort by federal, provincial, and territorial governments to address the gap in connectivity in underserved rural, remote, and Indigenous communities across Canada.

With this order, the Commission approves TELUS Communications Inc.’s request to postpone the completion date for its mobile project in Quebec.

Background

1. In Telecom Regulatory Policy 2018-377, the Commission set out objectives and governing frameworks for the Broadband Fund. In the Application Guide appended to Telecom Notice of Consultation 2019-372, which initiated the second call for Broadband Fund applications, the Commission defined a material change as including a major change in the cost or scope of a project.
2. TELUS Communications Inc. (TCI) participated in the second call for Broadband Fund applications. In Telecom Decision 2022-207, TCI received approval for its funding application. The approved application supports a project to introduce mobile wireless services, fixed wireless access services, and transport capacity to approximately 175 kilometres of eligible roads along parts of Quebec’s Route 138 and in eligible areas in three Quebec communities: Port-Menier, Rivière-au-Tonnerre, and Rivière-Saint-Jean.
3. The Commission later received written acceptance of the funding award from TCI and approved TCI’s related statement of work in Telecom Order 2023-345. That order included changes to the scope of the project. First, funding was increased by 26.5% to address sustainability, resiliency, cyber security, and increased labour and other direct costs. Second, the Port-Menier access and transport components were removed, since they had been completed before funding was awarded. As a result, the project now serves 132 kilometres of eligible roads along parts of Route 138, and eligible areas in two communities including

533 households. The approved statement of work remains subject to the conditions of funding set out in Telecom Decision 2022-204.

4. Among the conditions of funding is the requirement, set out in paragraph 33 of Telecom Decision 2022-204, that any material changes to the project be approved by the Commission. An application for a material change is known as a change request.

Change request

5. The Application Guide appended to Telecom Notice of Consultation 2019-372 stipulated the Commission's expectation that projects be completed within three years of the funding award. Telecom Decision 2022-207 was issued on 4 August 2022. This project was therefore expected to be completed by 4 August 2025.
6. On 27 September 2024, TCI submitted a change request seeking an additional year to complete the project past the internal plans approved, in confidence, by the Commission. Such an extension would not meet the expectation that the project be completed by 4 August 2025. TCI stated that the additional time is needed due to delays during the consultation process for two of its sites and submitted confidential documentation as evidence of the nature of the delays.

Commission's analysis

7. The Commission has reviewed the documents submitted with the change request, including those submitted confidentially.¹ The Commission underlines the importance of addressing connectivity gaps quickly by completing Broadband Fund projects in a timely manner.
8. Given the substantial progress TCI has made towards project completion and the importance of the consultation process, the Commission considers that the delays were necessary due to circumstances beyond TCI's control.
9. The Commission considers that, under the circumstances, approving TCI's change request would satisfy the objectives identified by the approach set out in Telecom Regulatory Policy 2018-377.

Conclusion

10. The Commission approves TCI's change request and expects that the project be completed by 31 March 2026. All funding conditions and conditions imposed under section 24 of the *Telecommunications Act*, as set out in Telecom Decision 2022-204, continue to apply.

Secretary General

¹ Detailed operational information in respect of funded Broadband Fund projects is generally treated as confidential. See Telecom Regulatory Policy 2018-377, paragraphs 405–408, and section 11 (“Confidentiality”) of the Application Guide cited in paragraph 1 of this order.

Related documents

- *Broadband Fund – Acceptance of statements of work for TELUS Communications Inc.’s mobile and combination mobile/access/transport projects in Quebec*, Telecom Order CRTC 2023-345, 20 October 2023
- *Broadband Fund – Project funding approval for TELUS Communications Inc.’s mobile and combination mobile/access/transport projects in Quebec*, Telecom Decision CRTC 2022-206 encompassing Telecom Decisions CRTC 2022-207, 2022-208, 2022-209, and 2022-210, 4 August 2022
- *Broadband Fund – Second call for applications – Introductory decision regarding the August 2022 round of project funding approvals*, Telecom Decision CRTC 2022-204, 4 August 2022
- *Broadband Fund – Second call for applications*, Telecom Notice of Consultation CRTC 2019-372, 13 November 2019; as amended by Telecom Notices of Consultation CRTC 2019-372-1, 20 March 2020; and 2019-372-2, 27 April 2020
- *Development of the Commission’s Broadband Fund*, Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2018-377, 27 September 2018