



2022 Message from the **CEO**



Since 2014 Matawa First Nations Management has been working under the direction of the Chiefs Council to develop a plan and feasibility assessment, raise funding and construct a “Fibre to The Home” project named “Rapid Lynx.” Funding was approved three years ago for Phase 1 of the Rapid Lynx project to connect all of our remote communities together and to the global Internet on an advanced fibre-optic “backbone” network spanning nearly 800 km from Aroland First Nation to Nibinamik First Nation, and to construct fiber-optic connections to the Internet to every

premise in the remote communities. We are currently constructing the backbone and we expect this portion of the project to be completed by Fall of 2023.

Just recently, Matawa was confirmed for funding for Phase 2 of the Rapid Lynx project which would extend the backbone network and connect every premise in all four of our road access communities to the Internet over fibre.

The Rapid Lynx backbone network is being interconnected to the Internet at Ginoogaming First Nation over fibre from a major Canadian carrier that runs to Toronto, which is one of the major metropolitan areas in Canada where the fiber-optic cable that forms the Global Internet Backbone is physically accessible. This will connect the Rapid Lynx network only one “hop” off of the Global Internet backbone crossing every continent and ocean in the world, providing access to reliable and affordable Internet connectivity for the Rapid Lynx network and the Matawa First Nations. We will also connect Nibinamik First Nation to an existing carrier in Wunnumin Lake First Nation to provide a second connection to the global Internet at Toronto through Thunder Bay. Together with the connection at Ginoogaming, this connection at Wunnumin Lake will create a fibre-optic ring connecting our Matawa First Nations to the Global Internet at Toronto and ensure that our communities will remain connected. If there is damage to the Rapid Lynx fibre at any location on the ring, Internet traffic can be rerouted to Toronto in the opposite direction, maximizing network reliability and uptime.

As you may be aware, internet connectivity is vital to our Peoples of the Land as many of you are connected via satellite in the remote communities and outdated copper wire in the road access communities. Speed and capacity of these older technologies limit or prevent use of the Internet for working remotely, video calling and video meetings, uploading or downloading large files, and streaming videos from online services such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, or YouTube. Speed and reliability will be maximized with fibre connectivity. Of even greater importance to our Matawa First Nations is: enhanced distance learning, telemedicine and telehealth applications provided by remote educational institutions, hospitals and emergency services will be fully available.

As an example, real-time imaging and diagnostics will be available from medical professionals, specialists and emergency services providers using internet-enabled technologies located at remote major hospitals to rapidly and accurately identify medical conditions and pinpoint life-saving treatments. These technologies can be used to provide medical check-ups for patients with chronic illnesses while at home, decreasing the number of trips to medical institutions in Thunder Bay or Toronto.

The educational benefits of fibre to the home connectivity will be virtually endless as the number of educational institutions including primary schools, high schools, and universities continue to increase the type and number of online distance learning programs, making education more accessible and affordable for connected students, as well as more enjoyable and personal through one-on-one instruction for students that require special help.

Fibre-optic connectivity has become a gateway to equal opportunities of almost every type that are available online over the Internet. The Rapid Lynx Network will ensure that our Matawa First Nations will have access to online jobs and business opportunities, and healthcare, education, and public safety and security applications to increase their prosperity and quality of life.

We at Matawa First Nations Management are proud to say that this fibre network will be wholly owned, governed and operated by the Matawa First Nations under the control of our nine First Nations members. Although Rapid Lynx will not generate huge revenues from our communities, which is the reason why our communities have remained unserved by the large national carriers and cable companies, it will operate based on income received from our First Nations institutions and members from our nine communities.

We ask for your patience as we complete Rapid Lynx which is a vast undertaking traveling nearly 1,200kms over land and under water through areas with no roads and difficult terrain. When complete, the Matawa First Nations will have access to the Internet at reliability and speeds that will rival some of the largest metropolitan areas in Canada, and at affordable pricing, and that will be worth the wait. We look forward to providing this service very soon.



May 26, 2022 big cheque presentation. L to R: David Sertic, Senior Advisor, Commercial Industrial Energy Conservation; David Paul Achneepineskum, Matawa FNM CEO; Nicole Lehto, Enbridge Gas Northern Region Director of Operations, and; Mark Glasier, Enbridge Gas Energy Solutions Supervisor.