County of Elgin / City of St. Thomas

Connect Ontario

Infrastructure Plan Funding

for:

elginconnects.ca

Dec 1, 2000

CONNECT ONTARIO
Infrastructure Plan funding
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Project Title:
elginconnects.ca

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Description of the Elgin Community Development Corporation:
The Elgin Community Development Corporation (CDC) is a community-based, non-profit organization funded by the Industry Canada branch of the Federal Government. The Elgin CDC was formed to assist and encourage job creation and community economic development throughout Elgin County and the City of St. Thomas. Governed by a volunteer Board of Directors comprised of a diverse mix of professionals drawn from the local community, the Elgin CDC undertakes to facilitate both business and community development objectives. The community objectives include strategic planning for all of Elgin; to encourage communication, co-operation and co-ordination between and among groups, agencies and governments.

Consortium Information
The steering committee that was established for the eMIT study will form the base of a task force for *elginconnects*.   The Task Force, which represents the stakeholders in our community, will provide policy direction and ensure community inclusivity.

Governance
 Elgin CDC will act as the overall project manager as the lead agency and will coordinate the activities and facilitate the necessary linkages between the sector partners.   The Task Force will be investigating many options for the structure of *elginconnects* including that of an incorporated body and / or a cooperative under the Canadian Cooperatives Act during our Infrastructure Planning.

 elginconnects.ca is following the Lanark model because of that county's proven success and the experience of our community facilitator in community economic development in rural areas   reiterates their concept of inclusivity of all community stakeholders working together for efficiency.   In order to move forward the   governance model will have to address the future structure, objectives, and sustainability.   We need to   ensure that we will have a process by which the entire community is involved in defining its ongoing interest; an accountability model to ensure all actions taken continue to reflect the needs of the community;   and to secure the broad participation of sectors and geography.

Background to the Initiative

Evolution of the partnership and the proposed project to date.
The Elgin CDC has undertaken two new projects within the past year regarding Information Technology and the community. The first project was successful in attaining and managing 10 urban Community Access Program (CAP) sites in St. Thomas. The second was managing the Elgin - Middlesex Information Technology (eMIT) study. This participatory research was conducted in a 7 month timeframe which began January 1, 2000 and the report completed by the end of August.

The purpose of eMIT was to find information regarding the IT infrastructure present in our counties and to gauge the community's use and response to the knowledge-based economy in order to appropriately plan for our communities adapting to operate within this global information economy. Therefore it was important that we include community stakeholders for their input and direction for the applications needed or seen as important for them. The eMIT study included:
- literature review of existing smart communities
- creating steering committees representative of communities
- organized a DSIP meeting which was successful with over 80 people attending
- forums in small communities - awareness of IT information presentation from summary of DSIP meeting with diverse applications - qualitative data recorded
- surveys - hard copy and on-line which resulted in a good cross section of ages, occupations and locations: quantitative data collected on current use, future use, and barriers

Connect Ontario was unveiled during the eMIT study and the Notice of Intent was developed and submitted for the June deadline. At that time The City of St. Thomas and The County of Elgin along with other stakeholders asked the Elgin CDC to act as the lead agency. On Oct 3 we presented the eMIT report and the NOI to our steering committee and interested stakeholders. A great deal of interest resulted in moving forward with Connect Ontario. The Team approach explained in the NOI was implemented and stakeholders volunteered in the project teams.

When it was learned that we were successful with our NOI a meeting was held Nov 17 with Lanark representatives, Ministry representatives and newly elected municipal councillors. Even with the close deadline we were encouraged to present our Phase I Proposal for Infrastructure Plan Funding by Dec 1 and stakeholders were positive about committing funds.

Description of the Proposed Activities

Summary of Existing Infrastructure
Elgin County is serviced by two telecos - Bell and Amtelecom. Both have extensive wiring throughout the county. Essentially, Amtelecom covers the East End of Elgin and Bell services the Central and West areas of Elgin. Both companies have been able to take advantage of the DSIP upgrade program to the switching boxes and Elgin now has available FT 1 and T1 lines. Accessing the Internet is accomplished largely by dial-up through 56 K modem over the phone lines. Bell has 10 or 100 M dedicated lines in Central Elgin and St. Thomas, with the rest of their territory having access to 10 M shared wireless solution licensed by Industry Canada with Bell.

ADSL - is available in St. Thomas to provide access to the Internet with a 2.2 M connection, with the remaining Bell area having up to 85% access up to 1M modem. Central Offices in St. Thomas were upgraded to 100 M. The Bell delivery of ADSL (up to 8 M) in the City of St. Thomas has a final implementation date of autumn 2000.

ISDN - is available in the St. Thomas, Dunwich and Port Stanley area
Bell Express View - An announcement by Bell states that service for residential and small business is available this year. This service will allow Internet capabilities by satellite dish.
Cable - rogers@home is rolling out Home Internet Service for residents able to access existing cable TV which covers residential St. Thomas.   Amtelecom owns its own cable company and largely covers their whole region with cable coverage down to the small hamlets.

In 1996 a wide area network developed in partnership with the TVDSB and the London and District Catholic School Board and Bell Canada resulted in a shared licensed wireless network throughout rural areas and fibre delivery within the City of St. Thomas.   Bell owns and operates the network for the school boards and invested about $12 million in the initiative.   The services range from shared 10 M systems to providing 100 M availability to the secondary schools.   The wide area network was completely implemented in May 2000.   The Bell towers can also provide area residents with improved wireless telecommunication.

Fanshawe College St. Thomas Campus is part of Fanshawe's wide area network which runs over a 10 M frame relay.   The Ontario Police College (OPC) - the only one in Ontario - has fibre optics and cable to its facility implemented by Amtelecom.   The OPC is currently investigating the provision of some of their courses on-line with either the student connecting to the college in real time, or the instructor video-conferencing to the students.

The City of St. Thomas Intranet has a combination of wireless from the Justice building to the work yard and a 10 M dark fibre connection between City Hall to the library to the Justice building tower.   It also includes ISDN lines to Valleyview Home for the Aged, the St. Thomas Airport and the Fire Station. The WAN accesses the Internet through a 128 K connection.

The County of Elgin administration building provides an Intranet to all departments in its building. The other Municipalities have access to the Internet through dial up and local ISPs.   The three County Homes of Elgin's long term facilities have been connected through separate ISDN lines since 1995.

The County of Elgin connected its 11 branch libraries to the CAP (Community Access Program) in 1996 offering rural residents access to the Internet and to training in their own local communities.   Currently the access is accomplished through dial-up connections.   In October of 1999, the Elgin CDC agreed to take a leadership role in submitting an application for 10 organizations to become CAP sites in St. Thomas.   The sites are: The Elgin Community Development Corporation, the St. Thomas and District Chamber of Commerce, Fanshawe College, the Senior's Centre, Valleyview Home for the Aged, the Elgin Association for Community Living, the Adult Learning Centre, the YWCA, the Alternative School, and the Family Enrichment Centre.

The local employment office is operating on a fractional T1.   Other agencies are accessing the Internet through a combination of ISDN or dial-up configurations.

The St. Thomas-Elgin General Hospital is currently accessing the Internet through an ISDN connection. The hospital is also participating in an initiative with hospitals in the Thames Valley region moving towards tele-health.   All emergency voice traffic travels over radio through a radio system installed on water towers throughout the county.

There has been an implementation of connectivity by large branch plants (such as Sterling) and its suppliers.   A recent installation of a wireless network solution between Presstran and their warehouse was installed by Cobra Systems Inc. They are now presently installing a point to multi point solution between

Formet Industries and the same warehouse. Formet and Presstran also have implemented a solution using a wireless Intranet

Identified Gaps and Barriers

Due to the relatively small population base in this largely rural area, we are low on the list of priorities for the large telcos. Therefore, the citizens and businesses of this area cannot choose between available services – they simply cannot get the services at a reasonable price. Services such as ISDN that has been available to (and taken for granted by) the residents of Toronto, Waterloo and London for years are not commonly available in Elgin.   With the current pace of technology, that leaves the local businesses and population disadvantaged again.   Residents noted that some areas still have party lines and that does not support faxes let alone the Internet.   Still others claimed that connections are too slow for some downloading and modems work at ½ speed. Many businesses are claiming the need for higher bandwidth and infrastructure to support more sophisticated applications such as videoconferencing**.**

Elgin and St. Thomas is an industrial home to many 'branch plants' whose corporate offices buy and decide what software and Internet access will be used.   However, the head office is not always aware of what the existing infrastructure is at the branch plant locations.   Expensive down time issues results from transferring large files between locations over an existing network that is not supportive of an application which requires greater infrastructure.

The community survey data along with the infrastructure survey results of businesses validate the qualitative data of the forums that training was a major barrier.   Training for skills necessary for using the Internet was cited by businesses for in-service as well by community residents.   Availability of skilled IT support for small and medium businesses was a critical barrier.   The surveys discovered that many people recognized that in order to adapt to the new economy it was necessary to learn the new skills. However, issues of cost, availability, and accessibility were factors to consider for training.   Equitable access for all was cited as a priority.   Training was a major element in all discussions at forums, both business and community. The need for on-going IT support, training that is constant and available, affordable, and relevant was necessary.   In-house training was necessary for specific industries and organizations, such as policing, and manufacturing.   In the community surveys, a full **81 %** answered "yes" to the question of the requirement for training or assistance in using the Internet.   This illustrates that people who use this technology recognize the need for upgrading and learning of new applications.

Other barriers cited by communities were:
1   Municipal re-structuring – Elgin restructured in 1998 decreasing our municipal governments from 15 to 7.   As a result, most of our municipal areas are of a larger size. Residents and businesses cited the increased distance to municipal offices and some of the municipal workers and councilors noted that it was now more difficult to service a larger area.

1   Municipal responsibility load increasing – municipal workers and councilors noted that the downloading from the province has increased workloads.   The new responsibility coupled with the increased size of the areas has resulted in some difficulties of service.
2
3   OMAFRA re-structuring - with the restructuring of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs in November of 1999, the 125 year history of OMAFRA with specialized services and specialists available in each county was abruptly halted.   The information and access to provincial specialists is now available on-line, however the infrastructure is not present nor the applications in place

1 Global competition – Businesses noted that global competition was not only important for their product or service, but they also noticed encroaching businesses within their traditional geographic boundary.   Some businesses noted that they have increased business as a result of a web presence.

1 Decreasing employment and revenue in rural areas -- The rural areas have experienced a decrease in employment and revenue as work patterns shift and the labour force moves to where the jobs are available.   There has been a substantial effort to increase local employment and increase youth employment with government incentives.   Many saw IT as an opportunity to provide for home based businesses in the rural area.

Existing portals / websites providing community information and services (public and private)
     (separate page in Appendix)

The Consultative Process

GOAL: to develop a comprehensive business case for an electronic infrastructure project in Elgin and St. Thomas to enable the public access to a range of community information and services through a local portal.

PROCESS: The process for Infrastructure Plan development will be based on the following various activities and building on the community consultative work already completed.
a. Coordination of Task Force - structure, management, visioning, strategic planning
b. community engagement of all sectors
c. furthering refining the needs and requirements of sector specific applications
d. application analysis of priorities and aggregation
e. marketing
f. technical design
g. preparation of the infrastructure plan - communication of the plan, review and evaluation
h. application for implementation Phase of Connect Ontario

Coordination of Task Force (See also page 14 Project Management)
We will follow the plan set out in the NOI of the Management Team and Project Teams to achieve the results of the Infrastructure Plan.   During this time we will investigate other community network models to perhaps adapt to *elginconnects.ca.*   We will formalize the structure and management of the "organization".   Visioning and strategic planning will be accomplished.

The Management Team and the Team Leaders will meet regularly and share information from the groups and teams.   The Coordinator will gather the information, collate, compile a comprehensive list of applications . Dissemination of information for the Task Force will be accomplished through the Team Leaders, the website, and larger workshops with the whole Task Force.
The Teams will meet regularly and conduct their own meetings, gather their specific information, perform their analysis, and the Team Leader will share that with the Management Team.

Our teams will continue to develop concrete demonstration of applications including GIS applications and services.
Portal Team - will focus on the selection of target applications identified by the Task force;
          - we propose to adopt the connect Ontario model for elginconnects
          - develop ease of interaction for citizens using portal

- prepare to communicate portal applications to community, business and sectors

E-government team - working with municipal governments to determine priorities
        - development of common service menues for public
        - development of ease of information exchange
        - prepare to communicate applications to municipalities

E-business team - coordinating with Chambers of Commerce and business associations
        - poll SME for specific challenges and needs, estimated volume of usage, type of e-commerce
    service
        - poll large businesses for volume of usage and costs
        - investigate database interoperability

Community groups - coordinate with not-for-profit groups and services for finer details of possible
    uses and volunteers
        - communicate possible applications to community groups
        - determine infrastructure and training support

GIS team - compile examples of GIS programs and potential uses in community
        - conduct demonstrations of GIS examples for various applications for sectors
        - analysis of possible applications of sectors for aggregate ?

Technical team - compile information from existing infrastructure and future infrastructure building plans
        - determine costs, volume usage, interoperability of legacy systems
        - liaise with external providers and technical specialists
        - identify the role definition for technical specialist and core competencies required
        - identify some technical requirements for standards and protocols

Building on the eMIT study, further engagement of the community and refining of the needs and
requirements of all community sectors will be accomplished through the teams and workshops.   Initial
surveys of the eMIT have provided current uses and potential useful future applications.   We now need
to further investigate for sector specific applications.   For example : further engagement with the business
community will help explain some incongruencies.   A number of respondents did not know the type of
connectivity their own business utilized.   Fifty -five percent of the respondents utilize less than 50% of
the bandwidth but 72 % indicated that they did not have enough bandwidth. The barriers documented 19
businesses which feel that bandwidth is the stumbling block, however, 17 respondents also note that
availability of skilled IT support and the fact that IT decisions are made out of office are seen as stumbling
blocks.   It may be that the small businesses do not have the dedicated personnel for IT or access to an IT
department that perhaps answer many of the problems encountered that may not be bandwidth related.
Participants also expressed the fear that large corporations would jeopardize the local shops.   In both
small and large businesses, the business- to -business applications is seen as both necessary and
advantageous to the industries, however, the cost was seen as a large barrier for individual businesses.
Workshops will be conducted per sector to define their applications and prioritize - small business,
tourism, agriculture, municipal government, etc.

Training was the most common concern cited by both businesses and individuals.   The identified
concerns that to make training available locally, accessible, affordable and relevant.   We will continue to
utilize the training available at our 21 CAP sites and utilize other funding opportunities such as the federal
Learning Technologies Program.   We are also extremely fortunate to have Information Elgin continuing
their work of provision of free access and offering the equipment and the instruction to make the Centre a
positive learning experience.   We will also work with other agencies responsible for training programs

such as the Local Training Broad whose environmental scan revealed that the Information Communications Technology was priority two in terms of training.   Also necessary will be a recommendation to include further investigation of employment and training needs for persons with disabilities.

A comprehensive marketing plan will be developed to help educate and increase awareness of the new technology. It will need to be directed to both consumers and businesses, not only to utilize the applications but also to increase the awareness of cooperativeness of *elginconnects*.   It is significant that although business applications were prioritized in our surveys and e-commerce was in the future plans, shopping remains at the bottom of the list of potentially useful applications by community respondents. There appears to be a lot of room to sway the opinions however as the answer "somewhat useful" was large and people will be influenced one way or the other once exposed to the technology.   The marketing plan will be aided by the initial investigation of stated potentially useful applications.

The marketing plan of elginconnects.ca will need to be reviewed semi-annually and regularly updated. We need to be inviting new members to use the community network and have an easy-to-apply format asking about their applications, projected volume and requirements, target population, and costs they are spending now or anticipate to expense.

Promotion of services within the County and City will be a responsibility of all stakeholders. Combinations of print, radio, static displays, and use of community agency and organization newsletters will be utilized.   As well, each participating agency and business will build into their marketing budgets for the provision of advertising.   The strength of the diversity and inclusivity of the structure of proposed Task Force will encourage widespread awareness.   A website will be established to facilitate communication - both to the public and a password protected section for meeting notes.

A technological consultant will be hired to design the architecture of the best possible options for our needed requirements.   The technical design activities will take into consideration key initiatives supported by Connect Ontario program and it will follow the specifications set out for community portal architecture and functions.   Included in this consultation will be the planning for process re-engineering based on the types of selected application for initial portal deployment.   The activities will :
- identify key architecture issues
- plan systems design
- plan process re-engineering studies to be conducted
- and include a draft of impact analysis for process for -re-engineering.

Many of our proposed projects will build upon the capacity already present in our community.   The current telephony infrastructure (with help from current coaxial and wireless networks) would be the most convenient and cost-effective method of providing high-speed data services and connectivity to an Elgin LAN/WAN. This majority of this infrastructure is already based on lifeline services (therefore reliable) and would eliminate the need to incur maintenance fees. Also, it has been noted that bandwidth is available from both telcos, with future expansion always an option if/when necessary.

The majority of costs to provide network services over the telephony infrastructure would be in devices to provide TCP/IP connectivity over the "wires". High-speed modems (to send data from hub points to client premises), media converters (to send backbone data between ethernet networks), and switches/hubs (to branch out from central hub points, ideally in each community/telco central office), are required to put Elgin on its network.   Fast, powerful, redundant computers (server farms) will be required to "serve" applications developed by this project over the above network for end users' use.   The software needed will be investigated for organizing the databases, the registration packages for particular sectors (IE recreational package that the City of London has developed), plus a specialized mapping software.

The infrastructure planning material will be assembled from the various teams of the Task Force and collated. The Coordinator will be responsible for developing and writing the document.   Key activities for preparation of the Plan will be:
- gathering information from literature reviews, from Teams, and Technical consultant; collate, and
  aggregate
- plan development and writing
- plan review with sector teams and community partners
- plan revision based on feedback
- the Infrastructure Plan will be distributed to the partners, sector teams and contributing organizations.
  Project and schedule information will be shared through regular email, web postings and workshops.

Monitoring and evaluation of the structure will be ongoing - determining the demand for proposed applications; identify strategies for marketing and possible revenue generation; developing the marketing plan.   A measurement component will be included in an evaluation plan - to include, satisfaction analysis, cost, and efficiency.

Options for the *elginconnects* organization will be identified and analysed.   Financial sustainability will be explored through literature review of existing community networks, cooperative structures, fees, advertisements and local commitment.   During the Infrastructure Planning phase we will also be conducting and promoting the Implementation Phase and inviting businesses, organizations, and individuals to invest.

Proposed "business needs" of consortium partners
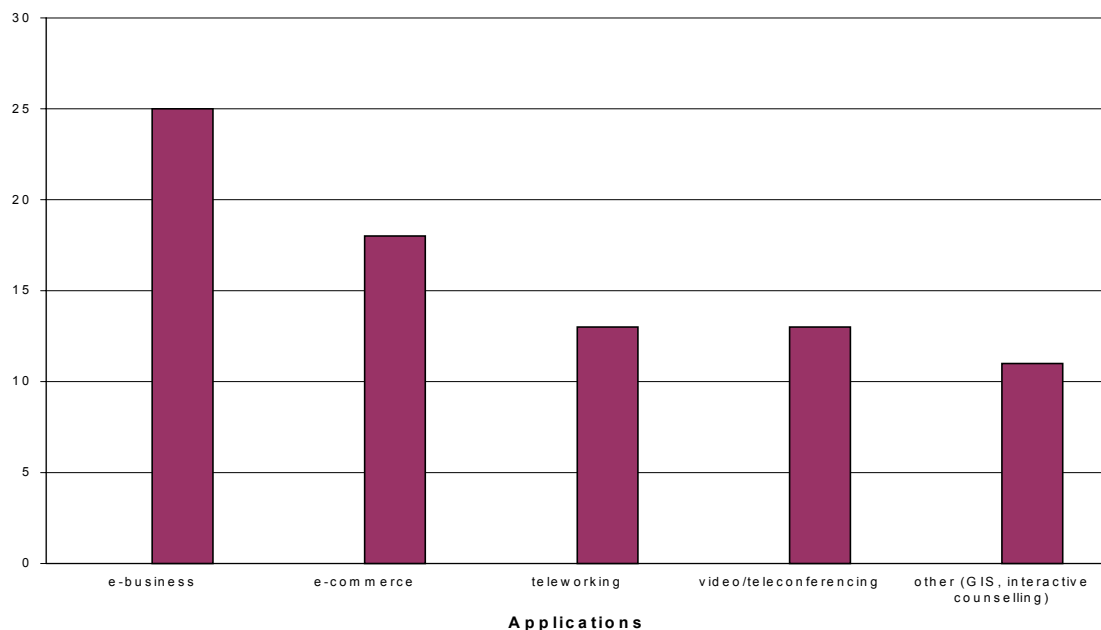
Summaries of the "smart applications"/services that the partnership has identified thus far

1 **Health applications**
     - Community residents noted that public health information available on-line would be welcome. Especially in light of the water quality issues in rural areas dependent on shallow wells, information regarding well water testing, and disease prevention was crucial.   A community calendar of upcoming events and registry was cited, for example, prenatal classes.   Health information for appropriate class levels could be available from the Health Unit to the school classes.

- The highest priority for survey respondents was for emergency services.   Very close to the top was the identification of the need to help medical services communicate and slightly further down was the need to attract physicians to our area through provision of IT needs for them.

-       Health practitioners noted that a common database would be beneficial for increased communication among each other and among facilities.   An enclosed

system for health practitioners is currently being explored.   The hospital and the Public Health Unit are on-line and the West Elgin Community Health Centre installed an Intranet this past Spring. Connections are being planned for connectivity between sites and to the London Health Sciences Centre.

1   **Small business** – Small businesses recognized the need for increased marketing and promotion with a presence of a web site.   Many residents saw home-based businesses and tele-working as an alternative of driving to a work site out of their community everyday. It allows them to be able to work from home with either a technological way to link to work or to provide for their own business connections on line.

1   **Tourism** – Mapping was seen as essential for recreational spots, bed & breakfasts, accommodations, tourist attractions and eateries. The promotion and marketing was seen as a great boon for the tourism industry in Elgin. The Conservation Authorities mentioned that they would also like to increase their usage perhaps by creating registration online for camping and renting of facilities. The chance for increased employment and revenue to the whole of Elgin County would result.

1   **Large business** – Large businesses remarked that on-line access was essential for connection between subsidiaries and central plants.   It was also necessary for businesses to order their supplies through I.T. connections.   Businesses made special note of increased speed and bandwidth that was necessary for applications like videoconferencing for modern business today.

1   **Agriculture** – As noted, the sudden change in OMAFRA structure has forced farmers to take a sudden leap into the I.T. world if their infrastructure allows them to.   The increasing global market of competitiveness and tight margins makes it essential that the operator can access critical information, weather, and markets at any time of the day.   Farmers now have the opportunity to connect directly with their buyers worldwide instead of being dependent on the Chicago Board of Trade.   Producers of Tofu beans can direct market to buyers in Japan through the Internet.   Where once the information was useful it now becomes a management tool and essential for internal business operation.   As the second highest gross domestic industry it is also essential for supplying jobs and sustaining other small businesses and services.   Farmers are also using e-commerce increasingly for machinery and input needs. The largest agricultural portal in the world was created in Southwestern Ontario.   Many farmers in Elgin have invested in GIS and satellite mapping combined with grid soil samples for field information.

1   **Government services** – Municipal workers and councilors remarked that they would welcome the increased efficiency to connect with the other municipalities and the upper tiers for communication.   They also remarked that if all were on the same network that networking and receiving forms would be more efficient. Both the public and municipalities saw that easy access to government forms would save time and money.   If taxes could be paid directly on line, permits purchased it would be so convenient.   Public information regarding permits, building zones and requirements, and municipal meeting notes, could be posted and accessed on-line.   The Public also wanted connection to all levels of government for information, and easy access to government forms. The Public doesn't necessarily want to know which level of government it is dealing with, and sees that the one window access solution would result in more efficiencies and less frustration as then one would not need to know which section of the blue pages to look into.   The convenience of not having

to drive over two hours to reach some government services that are only located in a regional area such as London was not only attractive to save time but essential for those who experience difficulty accessing transportation or, as within the rural regions of the County, there is no public transportation available.   Information sharing, removing barriers for ill and seniors were also high on the priority list indicating the need for public and/or private services to be accessible.

1   **Distance education** – Again, the time saved travelling 2 or 3 hours to a post secondary educational institution was seen as reducing a barrier for many people who need to keep up with their education and ongoing training.   The difficulty some had experienced was that the increased traffic after hours and the slow servers sometimes made the Internet difficult to access.   Increased bandwidth was necessary and local training and support to supplement the programs were seen as essential.

1   **Email** – Seniors especially noted the convenience of staying in touch with family, with grandchildren away at university, with neighbours. Our immigrant families, of which agriculturally we have many, find it necessary to link with their families across the sea.   Housebound individuals also found email to be a godsend.   Email was cited as a high use by respondents presently using the Internet and discussions at the forums reinforced that.

Priorities

Access to information and interaction with services
On-line access to government information and services
As both residents and municipal workers recognized, information and service delivery is changing due to the re-structuring and changing of responsibilities of the various levels of government.   Ease of finding information and interacting with it is necessary.
The provision of the selected federal information available at the CAP sites in our libraries has enabled our population to access HRDC information and forms.   However the local government information is not included.   We propose to include local government information from city by-laws, to ward divisions to land development to on-line purchasing permits or paying taxes.
At the click of a mouse, citizens will see a directory of their choice displaying:
City/County government information
        - map of the city showing the wards/ townships - councilors names and options how to notify
          them;
        - taxes - comparisons; proportions of how taxes are divided; future - pay taxes on-line
                - heritage buildings - map of locations with descriptions of each
        - by-laws- garbage pickups; dog control, building permits, snow clearing, etc.
                - land development – zoning, drainage routes, water pipelines
        - historical archives - the county has recently invested $125,000.00 for the preservation of our public history and it is to be available on the website**.**
Access to community information and services - including health, social services and informal.   The inclusion of a mapping system for locations as well as calendar of events and registration forms would be invaluable for citizens to gain access to services and programs that may not be known to them or save them the inconvenience of travel for forms or registration.   The burden of geographic distance and time inconveniences for administration purposes would be decreased.
<u>**Recreation and Leisure**</u>
        - Map showing the locations of parks, recreational sites, trails;
        - Links to the various facilities and to the websites of those facilities if available for rental information, registration, etc.
        - Calendar of events - schedules

- Clubs and groups - sports, cultural, service clubs, neighbourhood associations.- contacts, meeting dates, - register for events and clubs
- Banquet, conference and meeting rooms - location, logistics (size, etc), rental forms, contacts

Protective Services
- Fire departments – map locator; crisis numbers; by-laws; guidelines;
- Police departments – map locations; crisis numbers;
- Emergency services – explanations; map locations; critical numbers;
- internal information for hazardous materials, gun ownership, etc.

Community services
- Map locator services of health, educational, and social service facilities.
- Access to health promotion information; registration on line for events such as pre-natal classes or immunizations; lists of services with links; any calendar of events with registration forms.
- Kettle Creek Conservation and Catfish Creek Conservation Authorities
- Banking facilities - information, contacts, locations, links
- local newspapers

Promotion and Marketing of E-business

E-commerce is recognized as the single most important factor in allowing businesses and consumers to reach each other directly at low cost. The low cost of operating a business on-line means that smaller businesses and start-ups can compete with larger businesses. The ability of a rural business to reach marketplaces internationally may ensure their survival. The difficulty of small businesses to enter into the e-commerce arena is a barrier that will be addressed in this proposal.   The list of priorities for e-commerce includes: agricultural information, marketing and expansion of markets, shopping on-line, establish and expand home-based business presence, tourism and employment recruitment

- Agriculture - weather links; mapping for local pick-your-own markets; link to agricultural information; link to OMAFRA
- Tourism - mapping capability for local businesses, recreation spots, accommodations including camping, links to local websites for businesses
        -Calendar for county and city to promote and advertise
- e-Mall: a directory of businesses in the county with map locations and links to their sites if applicable; contact information
- business -to-business: directory; events; forums; save money by direct transactions and just-in-time scheduling of supplies
- Business information - directories and location sites available on map; transportation routes; industrial parks; demographics of community; links to business websites; serviced lots

Overview of Related Projects

Locally - The Elgin CDC is seen as a leader and enabler both by City and County municpal governments and the county as a whole. The research activities and CAP sites have increased our profile county wide as the leader in community IT.   The hospital, which is taking the lead on the technical team, is investing in superior infrastructure and with connecting to the community health centre and other other medical centres through a health alliance.

Regionally - We have been involved with the surrounding counties in regard to DSIP and Connect Ontario events.   Elgin CDC managed the Information Technology Study in both Elgin and Middlesex counties this past year.   The DSIP meeting was also arranged by the facilitator at the CDC and included regional attendance.

Provincially - The Elgin CDC has been consulting the LCN in regards to its model of IT organizing. Collaboration provincially will be encouraged on all fronts and with all sectors. We feel we have much to offer information, and resources in regards to community linkages and agricultural involvement.

Federally - our rural and urban CAP sites are connected to the HRDC services and are now involved with youthstart.   Our libraries are an important linkage within our community and *elginconnects.*

Benchmarks, Milestones, and Deliverables

Task	Timeline	Outcome
Task Force Structure	Q 1- first month	organizational structure
Team Meetings - - completion of detailed surveys, - targeted applications and analysis of sectors - investigation and compilation of databases of sectors - additions to infrastructure survey	Q1	- sector specific applications - analysis of applications - documented volume usage and costs
Options of Community Networks	Q1 - Q3	- options for operations
Application Analysis	Q1 - Q 2	- aggregation of applications
Technical Infrastructure Planning, including applications	Q1 - Q 2	- plan for infrastructure: portal design
Draft of Governance Issues for Portal	Q2 - Q3	- portal design & operationalize
Draft of key architectural issues and process of re-engineering impact	Q 2	- impact on community for IT community network
Preparation of Plan Communication of Draft Plan	Q 2 - Q3	- document for feedback and input of a community network
Submit Final Plan to Connect Ontario	Q 3	- Business case

Project Budget
The proposed budget to develop the comprehensive, community-based Infrastructure Plan for submission to Connect Ontario is $80,000.00   The community of Elgin and St. Thomas has committed $40,000.00 in cash and $20,000.00 of in-kind contribution of staff time and meeting facilities, office space and equipment.   The website has also been donated by a local provider. Budget details in Appendix 1.

The funding request from Connect Ontario is $40,000.00.   The planned start date for Infrastructure Plan development will begin immediately and be completed and submitted by September 2001.

Project Management

Management Team, **includes Team Leaders** (see page 5)

Name	Related Experience	Proposed involvement

Helen LeFrank	General Manager, ECDC	Director
		    Stewardship of project
		    Monitor milestones
		    Liasion with various levels of government & corporate partners

Patricia Sorokowski	Executive Assistant	Marketing and Promotion
		    Preparation of communications materials
		    Media relations

Debbie Stojkovic	Accounts Manager, ECDC	Financial Controller Oversee financial administration

Donna Lunn	Community Facilitator, eMIT
	Rural Community Consultant
		Project Management
		    Strategic planning; Proposal writing
		    Community engagement
		    Coordination of Teams

Cathy Bishop
Carolyn Kneeshaw
	Chief Librarian, County
	Chief Librarian, City
		Municipal Relations
		    Oversee relationship with municipal officials
		    Coordinate business process issues

Suzanne Edwards
 	
Sean Southern
	County of Elgin Information Technology.
	
	Foundation Networks
		Technical co- managers
		    Coordinate sharing of resources
		    Contact for partners' technical managers

Team Leaders

Andy Lester
Fanshawe College
(Education sector)
	Community Portal Interface with Connect Ontario
	    Ensure portal is relevant to other Ontario communities
	    Oversee development of utility

Ron Cutway,
City of St. Thomas Treasurer
(Government sector)
	e-Government
	    Work with county, city and municipal governments and staff
	    Development of common service menu for public

Brad Hammond
Economic Development Corporation
(business sector)
	e- Business
	    Work with Chambers of Commerce and Business Associations
	    Facilitate in development of e-commerce solutions
	    Work with external partners for capabilities

Richard Harding
Information Elgin
(community sector)
	Community Services
	    Work with local community groups
	    Coordinate development of all databases to common structure
	    Help groups define applications and services

Pat Keenan, Director of City Planning
(municipality sector)
	GIS
	    Work with GIS provider
	    Define mapping needs of all sectors

Ed Dunn, Technology Specialist & Larry Vanier, Director of Information	**Technical** Work with external providers

Services, St.Thomas-Elgin Hospital (health community)	Work with community to ascertain needs and options

Project Teams

Role / Team	Sector	Agency	Name
Portal	Education Private Business commmunity	Fanshawe College Webworks Unlimited Information Elgin	Andy Lester - Lead Carrie Beardsley Richard Harding
e-government	city go't county gov't municipal gov't Private individual	City of St. Thomas Treasurer County of Elgin Treasurer Town of Aylmer Clerk Municipal councillor	Ron Cutway - Lead Linda Veger Bobbi Irwin George Cleminshaw
Technical	Private - health Private - telecomm. city gov't county gov't Private -software Public Network	St. Thomas- Elgin Hospital Amtelecom Inc City of St. Thomas County of Elgin Foundation Networks LargNet	Ed Dunn - Lead Jeff Witzcak Paul Giza / Ron Cutway Suzanne Edwards Sean Southern Gary Higgs
e-business	Public- business Private - business Private - business Private - business Public - Prov gov't Private - banking	Economic Development Corp Chamber of Commerce Agriculture Sector Elgin Tourism Association Min of Agriculture & Food Bank	Brad Hammond - Lead Dave Daye Gayle Bogart Jenny Philips Peter Biondi TBA
GIS	city gov't county gov't coutny services city gov't	City Director of Planning County - Engineering County 9-1-1 Services City Engineer	Pat Keenan - Lead Justin Lawrence Karen Dunn John DeWanker
Community	Not-for-Profit community health Public - community non-profit funder training Public - community Public -social service Public - Prov gov't	Information Elgin Assoc of Community Living St. Thomas Elgin Health Unit City Library United Way Local Training Board County Library Continuing Care Access Centre Min of Agriculture & Food	Richard Harding - Lead Tom McCallum Kim Eitel Peter Bailey Terry Carroll Deb Mountenay Shelley Fleming Nancy Fazackerley Valerie Clark

APPENDIX 1: Infrastructure Plan Proposal

BUDGET INFORMATION

STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS AND EXPENDITURES

Sources of Revenues	Cash	In-Kind
Partner Contributions	$ 40,000.00	$20,000.00
Fund Raising		
Donations		
Others (Please specify)		
TOTAL REVENUES (R)	**$ 40,000.00**	**$20,000.00**

Expenditures	Cash	In-Kind
Project Management	$ 35,000.00	$5000.00
Administration	$ 8,000.00	
Consultant Expenses (technical)	$ 20,000.00	$5000.00
Surveys	$ 2,000.00	
Community Engagement	$ 4,000.00	$3,000.00
Marketing and Promotion	$ 5,000.00	$2,500.00
Training and Awareness	$ 4,000.00	$2,500.00
office supplies	$ 1,000.00	$1,000.00
Communication	$ 1,000.00	$1,000.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES (E)	**$ 80,000.00**	**$20,000.00**
Surplus (Deficit) (E-R)	**$ 40,000.00**	
Contribution – Connect Ontario	**$ 40,000,00**	