

ConnectTO: The Beanfield Way



As the City of Toronto sets out to provide affordable high-speed Internet access to under-served communities, Beanfield lends its assistance and expertise.

Providing fair and equitable connectivity has always been at the core of what we do here at Beanfield. That's why we are committed to supporting City of Toronto's [ConnectTO](#) initiative. As part of its mandate, ConnectTO is proposing to use its existing fibre optic capabilities, in conjunction with ISP's (Internet Service Providers), to better ensure under-served communities currently without fibre access, get that fibre access. These communities experience little to no competition because of numerous cost and regulatory hurdles, and that means they pay higher prices for slower speeds and worse service than the rest of the city. This is hardly fair.

So, why does this matter? These areas have Internet access, so what's the big deal? Why not just give them a stipend and be done with it? One word: equity.

We believe that everybody, no matter where they live, deserves equal access to quality Internet and in this day and age, quality = fibre-optics and the speed/bandwidth that provides. Not DSL.

Not copper. That's the ethos on which Beanfield was founded, and how we still think to this day.

As with all policy, however, achieving that goal is seldom easy. So, what's the solution?

Some providers suggest a *subsidy* for residents of these low-income areas (which, conveniently, would allow big Telecom companies to keep making the same amount of money). The problem with this approach is that it doesn't encourage investment in fibre infrastructure and leads to a major lack of competition in those areas – keeping the residents of those areas overpaying for mediocre service. Beanfield, as usual, is taking a different approach.

We want to support ConnectTO's mission, by providing our expertise in building fibre-optic networks to find the best solution. Why? Simple. We think everybody deserves equitable and affordable access to fibre-optic Internet service.

On May 4th, Beanfield attended Mayor Tory's Executive Committee meeting to support the ConnectTO initiative. Our founder and CEO, Dan Armstrong, and our Director, Property Relations, Todd Hofley, spoke directly to the Executive Committee about how the city is set up to discourage fibre Internet investments in certain urban areas, and addressed how it can remove these impediments. We want to do our best to help guide the success of this incredible initiative. If you're interested to see how that went, you can watch the recording [here](#).

We've been thinking about this for some time and we're proud to see conversation and action around this topic. While this is just one of the first steps for Beanfield in its support of ConnectTO, we hope we've made it clear – we're here to help. We encourage everyone to take an interest and learn what your local government is doing to help close the digital divide.