

## Mackenzie joins with the Regional District, McBride and Valemount to close the digital divide

The District of Mackenzie is working together with the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George, the Village of McBride and the Village of Valemount to get a better understanding of how Internet and cellular service within the region can be improved. The Regional District has contracted with TANEx Engineering Corporation, a British Columbia engineering consulting firm specializing in technology and communications to assist in this work. The first step in this process is to identify the current state of connectivity throughout the region.

To help with this work, residents and business owners in the region are invited to participate in a survey to show what cellular and Internet services are being utilized, where the service gaps are and where people would like to see service improved.

Surveys are 100% confidential and available online. Hard copies of the surveys are also available at the District of Mackenzie municipal office, or by contacting the Regional District office at 1-800-667-1959.

Surveys for residents are available here: [www.surveymonkey.com/r/rdffg-res](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/rdffg-res) Survey for business operators are available here: [www.surveymonkey.com/r/rdffg-bus](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/rdffg-bus)

Additionally, people are encouraged to test the speed and quality of their Internet through this free, confidential link: [www.performance.cira.ca/fraserfortgeorge](http://www.performance.cira.ca/fraserfortgeorge)

Following the surveys, further work will be undertaken to set connectivity goals for region, identify gaps and provide a strategy for closing the digital divide.

Closing the connectivity gap in our rural and remote areas is critical for not only the immediate need of keeping our residents safe and able to participate in an online world but is critical in positioning our region as a viable place to live and do business.

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