

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau  
Office of the Prime Minister of Canada  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

**July 26, 2017**

**Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,**

**As the digital economy continues to grow it is imperative that all Canadians have access to broadband internet in order to effectively participate and compete in the world economy. With unique geographical challenges to overcome it is critical that a national strategy be enacted to provide equitable broadband access to all Canadians. This is why the Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce is advancing a policy asking the Federal Government to declare Digital Broadband to be an essential utility.**

**A national utility strategy must have an actionable plan to extend service to every corner of our country, something that is unlikely to happen under the current regulatory regime. If Canada does not pursue an ambitious course of action, our level of connectivity will continue to fall behind that of our trading partners and we will miss out on the immense economic returns, social benefits and new business opportunities that would arise from a more connected nation. In the meantime, the lack of connectivity and digital penetration into both aging urban centers and rural and remote areas will only serve to deepen economic and social divides.**

**We are grateful for the leadership the Government of Canada has already shown in promoting innovation and increased connectivity across Canada as this issue impacts so many parts of our country. It is our hope that you will support the recommendations brought forward in the attached document and that they will be taken into consideration as policy priorities for your administration.**

**Thank you for taking the time to consider this document. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you or your representatives to discuss the recommendations contained in this policy further at your convenience.**

**Sincerely,**

**Mr. Ryan Miller  
President and Chair of the Board  
Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce**

**cc. Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada  
Hon. Navdeep Singh Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science, and Economic Development  
Mr. John Knubley, Deputy Minister of Innovation, Science, and Economic Development  
Hon. Amarjeet Sohi, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities  
Mr. Jean-François Tremblay, Deputy Minister of Infrastructure  
Hon. Deron Bilous, Minister of Economic Development and Trade**

**Mr. Jason Krips, Deputy Ministry of Economic Development and Trade**  
**Ms. Rachael Harder, Member of Parliament for Lethbridge**  
**Hon. Rachel Notley, Premier of Alberta**  
**Hon. Shannon Phillips, MLA Lethbridge – West**  
**Ms. Maria Fitzpatrick, MLA Lethbridge – East**  
**Hon. Chris Spearman, Mayor of Lethbridge**  
**Mr. Trevor Lewington, Chief Executive Officer, Economic Development Lethbridge**  
**Local and National Media Partners**

**Enclosure:**

*Digital Broadband: The Essential Utility*