

Fibre survey gauging interest

Paul Frey, Olds Albertan, September 7, 2010

A survey gauging the level of support for the Fibre to the Premise project is now available for completion at www.oldsinstitute.com/survey. Stirling McLeod, chair of the Olds Institute for Community and Regional Development, said the survey is being conducted now rather than previously to allow time to confirm all the types of services to be offered on the network.

"We weren't wanting to do that survey until we had a clearer picture of how our network services were going to be offered. It's tough to ask questions when you really don't have the foundation of what your package might look like," he said.

As of Friday, over 100 surveys had been completed in the first three days of being available. McLeod said the hope is that 500 surveys are filled out. He said most of the responses thus far have been positive.

"Some of the responses we've got are that, while it's a fairly long survey, it's almost like an educational survey. In other words people feel that when they're done, they feel much more informed as to what we're talking about and what the fibre project is all about," he said.

The timing of the survey also feeds into the town's decision to borrow on behalf of the OICRD.

"There's some critical go-ahead decisions that will be made ... relative to town's financing support. That loan is conditional on us having a business model that supports a sustainable project," he said.

McLeod said he has generally been pleased with the level of knowledge about the project prior to the survey going out.

"But how that transformed into something meaningful for them as a citizen or business, there was a lack of understanding and so we're trying to move that forward with the significant amount of advertising," he said.

The last day for the survey will be Sept. 17. Results will be tabulated by the first week of October.