

Hornby & Denman High Speed Internet Referendum Q&A

Two open houses regarding the Hornby and Denman Islands high speed internet referendum were held on October 6th and October 7th, 2021.

This document is a compilation of the most frequently asked questions and answers (Q&A). This document is not a transcription of the Q&As from the open houses. Answers have been reviewed and edited for clarity. Recordings of the meetings including the complete Q&A sessions are available on the CVRD website, www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/islandsinternet.

Q: Will every household and business on Denman and Hornby Islands have the opportunity to have a fibre optic internet connection?

A: Yes. The goal of this process is to provide internet to every household and business.

Q: My property has a long driveway or is located in a rural area, will we still be able to receive fibre optic internet?

A: Yes. CityWest is committed to providing internet to all households and businesses on the Hornby and Denman Island and will work with individual property owners to ensure that this happens.

Q: How will CityWest address protecting natural areas and natural obstacles such as large rocks, or big tree roots?

A: Maintaining and preserving natural areas is important to CityWest. When possible, CityWest runs underground lines within one foot of existing roads, where there is little impact on vegetation. CityWest and its contractors use a variety of tools to work around tree roots and something go right through rocks. For more information please watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5fv6DHAAnorU>, or reach out to CityWest for more details. Email: marketing@cwct.ca Telephone: 1-800-442-8664

Q: How will CityWest address waterlines, septic fields, and other exiting infrastructure on resident's property?

A: CityWest works closely with residents to ensure that the service teams know where existing infrastructures are located. If it is not known, there are many tools used by our teams to help discover exactly where below ground infrastructure might be located. Please watch this video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5fv6DHAAnorU>, or reach out to CityWest for more details. Email: marketing@cwct.ca Telephone: 1-800-442-8664

Q: How long will phones continue to function in the event of a prolonged power outage?

A: Phones will have a battery pack installed with them. When an outage occurs the phone batteries will last 8-12 hours, however if you are using the phone during the outage, the charge of the battery will decrease.

Q: When and how can I vote?

A:

Voting Day	Date	Location	Voting Hours
Advance Voting	November 17, 2021	770 Harmston Avenue, Courtenay	8:00 am to 8:00 pm
Special Voting	November 24, 2021	Denman Island Senior's Centre, 1111 NW Road, Denman Island	9:00 am to 12:00 pm
Special Voting	November 24, 2021	Hornby Island Community Hall, 4305 Central Road, Hornby Island	2:00 pm to 5:00 pm
General Voting	November 27, 2021	Denman Island Senior's Centre, 1111 NW Road, Denman Island	8:00 am to 8:00 pm
General Voting	November 27, 2021	New Horizons Seniors Hall, 1765 Sollans Road Hornby Island, BC	8:00 am to 8:00 pm

Voting by mail is also available. Electors can request a mail ballot package by filling out the online form or by contacting the Legislative Services Department at elections@comoxvalleyrd.ca or 250-334-6000. Mail ballot applications will be received up until 4:30 p.m. on Thursday November 25, 2021. For more information about mail ballots and also for information about resident elector requirements and non-resident property elector requirements please visit www.comoxvalley.ca/islandsinternet.

Q: If I have a Telus.net email address will that be accessible? Does CityWest provide email domains?

A: Yes, you can keep your current email address, provided you stay with that service provider. Also, CityWest does provide email addresses. For more information please visit <https://www.citywest.ca/support/email-support>

Q: Is there any lag or sound quality issues with the internet provided by CityWest?

A: No. Fibre optic internet is the best quality, most reliable internet available today.

Q: If the project goes ahead, and I am the only resident on my road or in my area to request a 'drop' will I still be able to have one installed? Or, if a road only has one or two homes, are they still able to request to have the fibre optic internet connected to their homes?

A: Yes. CityWest will work with property owners to provide this service to all properties.

Q: Are the prices for CityWest services going to go up after we sign on? Will CityWest be calling my household regularly offering promotions and upgrades?

A: The prices on CityWest's website are the regular prices, there are sometimes opportunities for special promotions, such as when a new customer comes onboard. Price increases do occur from time to time, to stay current with market trends. CityWest has a no-call list. If you wish to be included on this list please call: 1-800-442-8664.

Q: If I sign up for the drop but then decide it's not right for me, is there an opportunity to change my mind?

A: Yes. CityWest will work with property owners to ensure the service is right for them.

Q: Can multiple homes or buildings on the same property receive their own connections?

A: Yes. The original home on the property would be connected to the fibre optic feed. From there, based on the location of the other buildings, multiple connection options are available. If the buildings are within 100 metres, of the main home they can be hardwired.

Q: Does internet speed slow down if there is high use in the area?

A: No.

Q: Where is customer service located for CityWest?

A: Prince Rupert, British Columbia.

Q: Will CityWest be establishing a local office for technical support? Will any local jobs be established on Hornby or Denman Islands?

A: CityWest will be evaluating this possibility.

Q: If the referendum does not pass, will CityWest still be providing services to Hornby and Denman Islands?

A: If the referendum does not pass then the Comox Valley Regional District will not be establishing a service or borrowing the ten percent in funding that would need to be provided to CityWest to see the last mile of infrastructure installed.

Q: Many households on Hornby and Denman Islands are seasonally occupied. Does CityWest offer packages that can be activated and billed for only six months of the year?

A: Yes. CityWest has a vacation suspend package. A resident can go on vacation for up to six months of the year. The cost for the package is \$40, you can keep your equipment in your house and there is no fee to turn it back on.

Q: Is it possible that the borrowing can exceed \$767,677?

A: No. It is a fixed borrowing amount, set by the loan authorization bylaw that is the subject of the November 27 referendum.

Q: Can only property owners vote?

A: No. Residents, who might be renting or living on Hornby and Denman who meet the requirements may vote. Here are the requirements for resident electors:

Resident electors will be required to make a declaration that you meet the following requirements:

- 18 years of age or older on general voting day;
- Canadian citizen;
- resident of BC for at least 6 months immediately before the day of registration;
- resident of OR registered owner of real property in the Denman and Hornby Islands High-Speed Internet Contribution Service area for at least 30 days immediately before the day of registration, and

- not disqualified under the Local Government Act or any other enactment from voting in the assent voting and not otherwise disqualified by law.

You must bring at least two documents that prove who you are (BC Driver's Licence, BC ID, Care Card, SIN card, Citizenship Card, bank credit or debit card) and where you live (Driver's License, telephone, hydro, or gas bill, property tax document); one of these documents must contain your signature.

For more information please visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/islandsinternet.

Q: What is the interest rate on the loan the Comox Valley Regional District will be taking?

A: The Comox Valley Regional District will borrow for this project through the Municipal Finance Authority. The current posted rate for 10 year borrowing is 2.24%. The rate fluctuates with the market and it would depend on when the CVRD could lock-in for long-term borrowing.

Q: How many votes are required to proceed?

A: There is no number which needs to be met. The referendum will pass if the majority of votes are in favour, over 50%.

Q: Can non-profit organization who own property get to vote?

A: No. Corporations and other similar entities are not eligible to vote.

Q: What hardware is required for this service inside the home?

A: CityWest will provide customers with all the required hardware. Some of the hardware details are:

- For Internet, you'll require a Gigaspire. You can hardwire your devices to this unit. It also has Wifi 6 capabilities.
- For Internet, you have the option to buy an "Enhancer," which boosts your wireless signal in your house. This is typically used for larger houses. Enhancer information is available here: <https://www.citywest.ca/south/shop/internet/personal/wifi-enhancer>
- For TV, you'll have a set-top box, which allows you to view HD programming and record shows. For more information on recording, you can go here: <https://www.citywest.ca/south/shop/television/personal/cloud-dvr>
- For phone, you'll need the backup battery.

Q: Will the proposed tax levy be removed after the loan is paid off in a maximum of 10 years?

A: Yes, once the loan is paid off the tax is removed.

Q: I already have an underground sleeve carrying electric/telephone/internet/water. Can CityWest use this existing sleeve?

A: Yes. CityWest will work with property owners to establish the best routes for the internet cables, which can include existing underground pathways.

For more information on this project please visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/islandsinternet or call 250-334-6000.