

# Regional Electricity Planning – Niagara

## Engagement Plan

### Background

This Engagement Plan outlines the background, objectives and proposed timelines to engage with communities and other interested parties in the development of the 2022 Niagara Integrated Regional Resource Plan (IRR).

Examples of the input the IESO is seeking to inform the IRRP for the region include:

- Information to inform the electricity forecast and needs of the region including details about economic development goals, projected growth and future plans particularly related to new industrial development or expansion of existing projects
- Local options that might address needs identified within the planning period – over the near term (up to five years) to medium term (up to 10 years)
- Opportunities to align future goals within community energy plans, community-based energy solutions, and other economic development plans for consideration in the medium to long term (up to 20 years)

All interested parties are invited and encouraged to participate in this engagement initiative. Interested parties may include, but are not limited to, local municipalities, Indigenous and Métis communities, businesses, stakeholders and members of the general public.

**This engagement plan may be subject to review and update as the process evolves.**

## ABOUT REGIONAL ELECTRICITY PLANNING

Regional electricity system planning is about identifying and meeting local electricity needs to ensure the reliability of electricity supply in each of the 21 electricity regions across the province. Planning for each region involves the creation of a 20-year outlook, considering the region's unique needs and characteristics, conservation initiatives and opportunities, local generation, transmission and distribution, and innovative resources. Regional planning is, however, only one part of system planning, which includes bulk and distribution system planning that also has the goal of maintaining a reliable and cost-effective electricity supply.

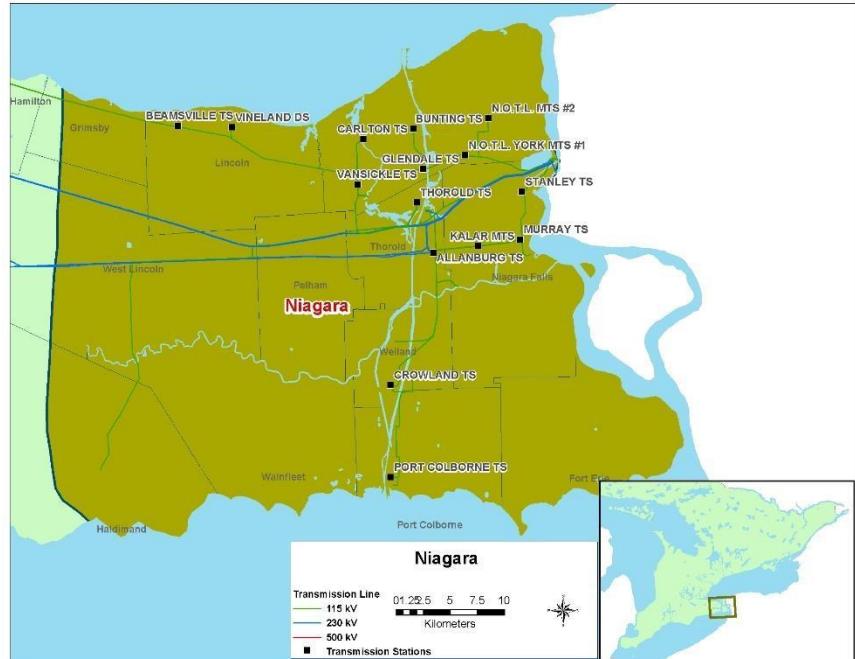
Each of these regions goes through a formal planning process at least once every five years, though at different times. The process unfolds differently each time depending on the region's unique needs and concerns.

## REGIONAL ELECTRICITY PLANNING IN NIAGARA

The Niagara region is located in southwestern Ontario and includes the City of Port Colborne, City of Welland, City of Thorold, City of Niagara Falls, Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, City of St. Catharines, Town of Fort Erie, Town of Lincoln, Township of West Lincoln, Town of Grimsby, Township of Wainfleet, and Town of Pelham.

The current regional planning cycle began with the [Needs](#)

[Assessment](#) report published by Hydro One in May 2021, which identified areas that require further review and assessment and may need to be coordinated with broader regional planning.



Following the [Needs Assessment](#), the IESO engaged on and led the development of the [Scoping Assessment Outcome Report](#) that was published in August 2021. The report determined that an integrated approach is needed to address local identified needs. This study will result in an Integrated Regional Resource Plan (IRRP) for the Niagara region for this planning cycle. A Niagara Technical Working Group, led by the IESO, including the transmitter and LDCs serving the region, will develop this IRRP taking into consideration input from communities and stakeholders.

Members of the Technical Working Group include:

- Alectra Utilities
- Canadian Niagara Power Inc.
- Grimsby Power Inc.
- Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc.
- Niagara-on-the-Lake Hydro Inc.

- Welland Hydro-Electric System Corporation
- Hydro One Networks Inc. (Transmission and Distribution)

The IRRP will include recommendations to maintain reliability of supply to the region over the next 20 years (2022-2041). To develop the IRRP, the Technical Working Group will work to gather data, identify needs and issues, examine integrated options, recommend actions, and develop an implementation plan.

The goal of the IRRP is to illustrate the integration of forecast electricity demand growth, energy efficiency and demand management with transmission and distribution system capability, relevant community plans, other bulk system developments, and the potential of distributed energy resources (DERs). Both non-wires and wires solutions will be examined and communities and stakeholders will be engaged on the options.

The previous planning cycle was completed in 2017 following the assessment of needs by the local transmitter (Hydro One) for this region and found that there were no needs that required regional coordination.

More details can be found on the Niagara regional planning [webpage](#).

## **2022 Niagara Integrated Regional Resource Plan**

The Technical Working Group is responsible for gathering data and assessing the adequacy and security of the electricity supply to Niagara, and, through this engagement, recommending an integrated set of actions to meet the needs of the region.

Their work is intended to focus on, but is not limited to station capacity needs focused in Welland, Thorold, Grimsby, and Lincoln<sup>1</sup> as outlined in the 2021 Niagara Scoping Assessment Outcome Report (Section 3.3.2).

### **ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE**

The objective of this engagement plan is to ensure that interested stakeholders and community members understand the scope of the IRRP and are in a position to provide input into the development of the document.

The IESO is seeking input to ensure the IRRP:

- Aligns with community perspectives on local needs
- Incorporates options to meet the growing electricity demand in the Niagara region
- Ensures a reliable source of electricity in the region over the next 20 years.

Through the planned initiatives to engage stakeholders and community members, the IESO will seek input on:

- Local and regional growth and economic development

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<sup>1</sup> Through the IRRP process additional needs may be identified or the ones identified may be revised.  
2022 Niagara IRRP Engagement Plan – January 2022

- Plans and projects that may have an impact on local growth rates and electricity demand (e.g. regional transit expansion, electrification, large incremental loads connecting to the system, significant DER projects, etc.)
- Options for addressing local electricity needs, including non-wires alternatives (e.g., CDM and DERs) and local support and interest for developing those options in the near- (five year), medium- (10 year) and long-term (20 year)
- Information from municipal plans including the implementation of those projects that could impact electricity use, specifically from community energy plans, energy reporting/CDM plans, official plans and secondary plans

Topics out of scope for discussion include:

- Projects and plans already underway as part of the previous planning cycle
- Policy-level decisions or direction
- Existing program rules
- Local connection requirements of any individual projects unless there is an opportunity to align with broader regional needs

## **INTERESTED PARTIES**

Input into the development of the IRRP is encouraged and welcomed from any community member or interested stakeholders, however, those that may be particularly interested include:

- Municipalities (e.g., planning, sustainability, climate change and economic development staff)
- Indigenous and Métis communities
- LDCs
- Consumer groups and associations (e.g., community/resident associations, business improvement areas, home builders' associations, etc.)
- Local boards of trade and/or chambers of commerce
- Academia and research organizations (e.g., colleges and universities)
- Environmental groups and associations
- Other public sector organizations (e.g., hospitals and school boards)
- Energy service providers
- Generators
- Businesses and other private entities

The IESO will also conduct targeted outreach to specific stakeholders and communities where specific local needs and issues need further investigation. The content and outcome of these discussions will be shared through the other activities that will be undertaken as part of this engagement initiative.

## **APPROACH AND METHODS FOR DEVELOPING THE IRRP**

Any engagement with the community and interested stakeholders will be conducted in accordance with the IESO's [Engagement Principles](#).

This is a public engagement process. Materials will be posted on the [dedicated webpage](#). In addition, any information/input supplied by interested parties will be posted (with consent).

Input will be collected from interested parties through a number of different channels, including face-to-face meetings, webinars, information sessions, conference calls and/or written feedback. The IESO

will consider all relevant input and illustrate how feedback was considered in the production of the final recommendations.

This engagement will be supported by:

- Public engagement to ensure that all interested parties have an opportunity to provide input in the development of the Niagara IRRP. Details will be posted on the engagement webpage
- Targeted outreach and discussions with specific communities and stakeholders, where necessary. A summary of any discussions will be shared as part of the final report.

## PROPOSED ENGAGEMENT SCHEDULE

Date	Event/Objective	Expected Actions/Notes
<b>January 20, 2022</b>	<b>Launch Niagara IRRP engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Register to attend public webinar #1</li></ul>
<b>February 3, 2022</b>	<b>Public Webinar #1:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summary of input from targeted discussions</li><li>• Provide update on planning activities underway</li><li>• Summarize preliminary regional demand forecast, draft engagement plan</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seek input to inform electricity demand forecast</li><li>• Seek input on draft engagement plan</li><li>• Post feedback and IESO response to feedback, including rationale</li></ul>
<b>February 24, 2022</b>	<b>Feedback due for Public Webinar #1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Feedback posted</li></ul>
<b>Q1 2022</b>	<b>One-on-one discussions</b> with key communities and stakeholders, as identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seek input on local priorities, preferences and development to inform potential solutions</li><li>• Consider input to inform next engagement phase</li></ul>
<b>Q2 2022</b>	<b>Public Webinar #2:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summary of input from targeted discussions</li><li>• Overview of defined needs and range of potential options/solutions to be examined</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seek input on options and potential solutions to be examined</li><li>• Post feedback and IESO response to feedback, including rationale</li></ul>
<b>Q2 2022</b>	<b>One-on-one discussions</b> with key communities and stakeholders, as identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seek input on local priorities, preferences and development to inform recommendations</li><li>• Consider input to inform next engagement phase</li></ul>
<b>Q3 2022</b>	<b>Public Webinar #3:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summary of input from targeted discussions</li><li>• Overview of options analysis and draft IRRP recommendations</li><li>• Discuss considerations for communities and interested</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Post feedback and IESO response to feedback, including rationale</li><li>• Seek input on further discussions needed</li></ul>

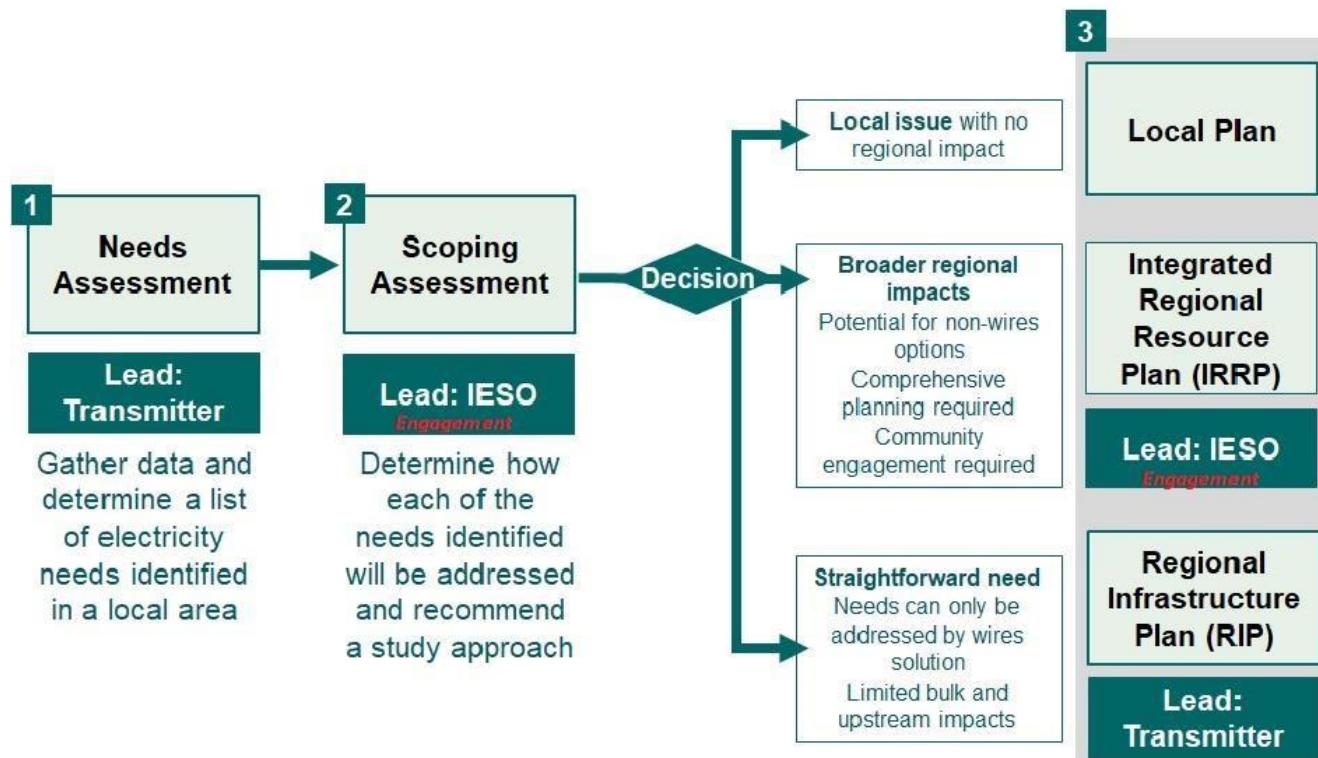
<b>Date</b>	<b>Event/Objective</b>	<b>Expected Actions/Notes</b>
	parties to consider in the medium- to long-term planning	
<b>Q3 2022</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Finalize Niagara IRRP</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post final report</li> <li>• Close engagement</li> <li>• Conduct survey on engagement process</li> </ul>

## Appendix

Regional planning is ongoing, with electricity reliability evaluated at least once every five years in each region. Community engagement is a critical part of the planning process and the IESO encourages all interested parties to join this discussion to:

- Learn more about the regional planning process and local electricity needs
- Provide input into shaping a community's electricity future by discussing options for meeting local needs, including applicable non-wires alternatives, and discussing the local community's support for development of these options
- Share perspectives for future growth in the area, and how to work together to shape the area's future electricity supply
- Determine opportunities for coordinating and aligning local planning activities and initiatives with the regional planning process

The following diagram illustrates the steps, parties and outcomes of the regional planning process.



For more information, visit the Regional Planning Process webpage at:

<https://www.ieso.ca/en/Get-Involved/Regional-Planning/About-RegionalPlanning/How-the-Process-Works>