

Feedback and IESO Responses

Eastern Ontario Bulk Plan

On May 27, 2026, the IESO hosted a public webinar to provide the draft recommendations for feedback and comment. The following is a summary of the feedback the IESO received.

The IESO received written feedback submissions from:

- [City of Ottawa](#)
- [Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation](#)
- [Power Workers' Union](#)
- [Town of Smiths Falls](#)
- [United Counties of Leeds and Grenville](#)

The presentation and the webinar recording, along with the IESO's responses to feedback are available on the [Eastern Ontario Bulk Plan webpage](#).

Note on Feedback Summary and IESO Responses

The IESO appreciates receiving feedback about this work. The feedback and the IESO responses are organized by theme.

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Theme	IESO Response to Feedback
Inclusion of St. Lawrence Region Needs & Planning Alignment Summary: Feedback expressed concern that the St. Lawrence Region is not adequately reflected in the draft recommendations due to timing misalignment with the ongoing IRRP. They noted existing reliability issues, including potential circuit overloads, and emphasized that directing power toward Ottawa could limit availability for local needs and economic growth.	The IESO acknowledges the importance of ensuring that the St. Lawrence Region’s needs are appropriately reflected in bulk system planning. Electricity planning in Ontario occurs at multiple levels: bulk planning assesses the high-voltage transmission system from an inter-regional perspective, while regional planning (e.g., IRRPs) evaluates more localized needs. Bulk planning is informed by sources such as the Annual Planning Outlook and ongoing regional planning processes. The current Eastern Ontario Bulk Plan reflects the best available information at the time of analysis. The IESO recognizes that the ongoing St. Lawrence IRRP will provide additional insights into regional electricity needs and development priorities. Existing studies have already identified potential constraints that may require further solutions. The proposed 230 kV transmission reinforcement between Cornwall and Ottawa is expected to help alleviate some capacity constraints in the Leeds-Grenville area. However, additional regional infrastructure needs may still be identified through the IRRP. The IESO will continue to coordinate closely with the IRRP, and as regional needs are further defined, additional bulk system opportunities will be considered and reflected in future planning updates.
Regional Equity in Infrastructure Investment Summary: Concerns that infrastructure investments appear concentrated in certain areas, while the St. Lawrence Region has experienced limited upgrades. Affordability and rate impacts related to the cost of new and upgraded electricity infrastructure were	The IESO recognizes the interest in the affordability implications of major infrastructure investments. Recommended solutions are developed through detailed technical assessments and are advanced through regulatory processes that consider cost effectiveness and impacts to electricity consumers. IESO recommendations are based on identified system needs, reliability requirements, and forecast demand growth across the province.

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also raised.	While the IESO identifies needs and recommends investments, decisions regarding cost allocation and funding are made by the Ontario Energy Board (OEB). Transmission investments are evaluated under principles such as ensuring costs are “just and reasonable” and applying a beneficiary-pays approach. As new information becomes available, including updated regional forecasts and IRRP outcomes, the IESO will continue to reassess priorities to ensure emerging needs across all regions are captured.
Local Energy Solutions and Municipal Coordination Summary: Feedback highlighted the importance of coordinating electricity planning with municipal planning initiatives, including growth management, industrial land development, and district energy planning. The City of Ottawa noted that emerging high-demand uses such as data centres, as well as future economic growth in knowledge-based industries, may influence future electricity needs and should be considered in long-term planning. The IESO was encouraged to continue consideration of local and distributed energy resources, district energy opportunities, renewable energy development, and rural energy solutions as part of future supply planning activities.	The IESO appreciates the City of Ottawa’s proactive planning efforts and recognizes the importance of co-ordination between electricity planning and municipal initiatives. The IESO will continue to consider information arising from municipal planning activities, including growth management, district energy planning, and economic development initiatives, as these become available. The IESO also recognizes the evolving role that local energy resources, distributed energy resources, and demand-side measures may play in supporting future electricity system needs and resilience. Future planning activities will continue to assess a range of supply- and demand-side options to meet reliability needs cost-effectively.
Consideration of Communities Between Lennox TS and Ottawa Summary: Requests for more clarity on the needs and growth expectations of communities between Lennox TS and Ottawa, and whether these areas will benefit from transmission investments.	The IESO recognizes that communities between major system nodes play an important role in regional planning. Bulk planning analyses have primarily focused on system-level needs; however, stakeholder input and regional planning activities will help refine understanding of localized demand and growth trends. The IESO will continue to work with local distribution

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Transmission Planning, Phasing, and Generation Integration Summary: Clarity is sought on the timing and need for Phase 2 investments, noting that transmission development should align with future generation siting, including consideration of local resources.	companies and municipalities to better understand these needs and will consider how transmission investments may provide broader regional benefits. The IESO recognizes the important role that local generation, distributed energy resources, demand-side measures, and emerging energy solutions such as district energy may play in supporting future electricity needs. These resources are considered through broader provincial and regional planning activities and will continue to inform future assessments of supply and demand options. Phase 2 development will be triggered based on monitored conditions, including demand growth and system performance. The IESO will continue to co-ordinate bulk transmission planning with provincial supply planning initiatives and ensure flexibility in design to accommodate uncertainty in generation timing and location.
Land Use, Corridor Impacts, and Municipal Planning Considerations Summary: Concerns were raised regarding potential expansion of the 500 kV corridor affecting employment lands and economic development.	Transmission planning will prioritize the use of existing corridors and rights-of-way wherever feasible. Detailed routing and siting decisions are not made at the bulk planning stage and will be subject to further study, environmental assessment processes, and consultation with municipalities. The IESO will continue to work with local stakeholders, including transmitters and municipalities, to identify solutions that balance system needs with local planning priorities.
Economic Development and Power Availability Summary: Feedback noted that limited electricity capacity is constraining economic growth and development readiness. This	The IESO recognizes that evolving economic development trends, including potential growth in data centres and knowledge-based industries, may influence future electricity needs. The IESO will continue to incorporate updated regional growth

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included highlighted emerging high-demand sectors, including data centres and knowledge-based industries, as important drivers of future electricity demand. It was also noted the importance of aligning electricity planning with municipal growth strategies and industrial land development plans.	forecasts and new information from municipalities into future planning assessments and demand outlooks.
Ongoing Engagement and Collaboration Summary: Feedback expressed appreciation for engagement and a desire for continued collaboration. Feedback also emphasized the importance of early municipal engagement, early visibility regarding infrastructure development processes, and timely coordination on routing, land use planning, and community engagement activities.	The IESO will continue to engage municipalities and stakeholders, provide updates as planning evolves, and incorporate new information such as IRRP outcomes into future publications. The IESO also recognizes the value of early engagement and co-ordination with municipalities to provide early information regarding major planning, procurement, and infrastructure development processes wherever possible. As projects advance, municipalities will have opportunities to engage with transmitters and participate in applicable consultation processes related to project development, routing, siting, and environmental assessment requirements.
Rights-Based Options Consideration Summary: MSIFN expressed that the Final Report should incorporate: a) A rights-based planning lens - not a project-stage lens. - Bulk planning must identify where Indigenous jurisdiction is a determinative factor, not a downstream consideration. b) Early identification of rights-sensitive areas and constraints. - This includes the unceded bed of Lake Ontario, Michi Saagiig cultural landscapes, Michi Saagiig harvesting rights and	The IESO remains committed to ongoing, meaningful dialogue with communities to help shape long-term planning in regions across Ontario, as your input is appreciated in helping shape an inclusive and collaborative planning process. The IESO can share an overview of the draft recommendations that considers the highest reliability performance, system operability, resilience, and system benefits.

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interests, and areas where archaeological sensitivity is high. c) A commitment that no preferred option will be advanced if it is incompatible with MSIFN's territorial rights or consent requirements.	
Support for the Napanee–Belleville Reinforcement Summary: MSIFN supports the IESO's draft recommendation to reinforce Belleville through a new double-circuit 230 kV line from Napanee to Belleville and expressed that the Final Report identify the Napanee–Belleville line as the preferred and prioritized reinforcement.	While final route selection is not determined during the planning stage, the identification of potential transmission line corridors is a key consideration in developing and evaluating options. Where feasible, preference is given to alternatives that maximize the use of existing rights-of-way. During the implementation stage, when the recommended transmission reinforcement is designed and constructed, the selected transmitter will engage with potentially affected communities as part of the route evaluation process. This consultation will inform the selection of a final transmission line route.
The IESO Must Treat the Lakebed as a Rights-Determining Factor Summary: MSIFN expressed that: a) The lakebed south of the Gunshot Treaty boundary is unceded Michi Saagiig territory. - Any disturbance - submarine cables, landing stations, anchoring, trenching - requires MSIFN consent, not merely consultation. b) Bulk planning must identify Lake Ontario as a rights-constrained zone. c) Options that rely on submarine infrastructure must be flagged as "rights-dependent" and cannot be advanced without early government-to-government engagement. - This includes any future HVDC intertie	The IESO remains committed to ongoing, meaningful dialogue with communities to help shape long-term planning in regions across Ontario, as their input is appreciated in helping shape an inclusive and collaborative planning process. The IESO recognizes the importance of early and meaningful engagement and values the insights, perspectives offered by Indigenous communities. Input into draft recommendations for the Eastern Ontario Bulk Plan can be provided to the IESO by continuing to provide written feedback in response to engagement sessions or posted documents, or by requesting a dedicated one-on-one meeting with the Indigenous Engagement Team. While environmental requirements are outside the scope of the Eastern Ontario Bulk Plan, the successful proponent selected to develop, construct and operate the Toronto Third Line will be responsible for obtaining all required permits and

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expansions or underwater reinforcements.	approvals, including completing any required Environmental Assessment. Where an Environmental Assessment is required, Indigenous consultation will be undertaken by the proponent as part of that process and may be triggered by other applicable regulatory processes. The relevant Crown entity is responsible for consultation but may delegate certain aspects of the Duty to Consult in respect of any transmission project that is recommended by the Eastern Ontario Bulk Plan to the respective project proponent. A project proponent will be responsible for conducting an Environmental Assessment as part of the project development process. If the project meets criteria under the Impact Assessment Act, a federal impact assessment may be triggered.
Indigenous Equity Participation Summary: MSIFN expressed that embedding equity expectations at the planning stage ensures that proponents design viable, partnership-aligned projects from the outset, and requests that the final report: a) Identify Indigenous equity participation as a core planning principle. • Not an optional program, not a proponent-stage add-on. b) Recommend that all Eastern Ontario transmission reinforcements include mandatory Indigenous equity participation. • Hydro One’s 50-50 model is now the provincial standard. c) Recognize MSIFN and other Michi Saagiig Nations as priority equity partners for projects in our territory. • This reflects both rights and reconciliation commitments.	The IESO recognizes that Indigenous engagement and economic participation are critical to the success of electricity infrastructure projects in Ontario. The IESO is subject to policy direction from the Ministry of Energy and Mines with respect to the inclusion of requirements related to Indigenous economic participation in any IESO programs or procurements. The IESO will share the feedback with the Ministry to inform the approach for any transmission projects arising from the Eastern Ontario Bulk Plan. The IESO offers funding support through the Indigenous Energy Support Program (IESP). The IESP promotes broad equitable participation in Ontario’s energy sector for Indigenous communities and organizations, including by offering funding to support assessment and development of opportunities for partnerships and participation in new or existing energy infrastructure projects. The IESO Indigenous Engagement Team encourages Indigenous communities to reach out with any questions that they may have regarding the IESP at

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	iesp@ieso.ca .
Cumulative Effects and System-Level Impacts Summary: MSIFN requests that the Final Report include: a) A cumulative effects screening at the bulk planning level. - This is not a full EA - this is early identification of system-level risks. b) A map of overlapping bulk, regional, and generation-enabled impacts. - The map should be transmitted to MSIFN Consultation as a GIS shapefile. This will enable MSIFN Consultation to help identify areas where cumulative effects intersect with Michi Saagiig rights and cultural landscapes.	For transmission projects that fall within Ontario’s approved Class Environmental Assessment for Transmission Facilities, the project proponent (for example, Hydro One or another eligible transmitter) is responsible for carrying out the Class EA planning process under the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act and the approved Class EA document. That process includes environmental analysis, consultation with Indigenous communities and other potentially affected parties, consideration of alternatives, and the identification of mitigation, monitoring and documentation measures.