

# **APPENDIX 2-I-C**

## **Landowner, Community and Municipal Consultation Plan**

# New East–West Tie Transmission Project

## Landowner, Community, and Municipal Consultation Plan

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*NextBridge Infrastructure*

*Updated January 2016*



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## 1. Introduction

The new East–West Tie Transmission Project (EWT or the Project) is an approximately 445 km double–circuit 230 kV transmission line from the Wawa Transformer Station (TS) to the Lakehead TS in the Municipality of Shuniah, near Thunder Bay, ON, with a connection approximately mid–way at the Marathon TS. The Project will also require new and improved access roads and temporary laydown and work areas.

The Project is required to ensure the long–term reliability of the electricity supply in northwestern Ontario (the Northwest). Industrial activities in the Northwest, particularly in the mining sector, are expected to drive strong electricity demand growth in the coming decade. Coupled with changes to the electricity supply in the area, the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) (formerly the Ontario Power Authority or OPA) has identified supply needs for the Northwest, which can be met with additional transmission or generation. The IESO analyzed these alternatives and recommended expansion of the East–West Tie based on technical, economic and other considerations. The East–West Tie was included as a priority Project in the Government of Ontario’s 2010 Long Term Energy Plan. On August 7, 2013 NextBridge Infrastructure (NextBridge) was designated by the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) to develop the EWT line and to file a Leave to Construct (LTC) application. NextBridge, the proponent for the Project, is committed to consulting with all interested community members, First Nations and Métis, elected officials and municipal staff, agencies, landowners and other stakeholders in a clear and mutually respectful manner throughout the life of the Project.

The initial target in–service date for the Project was the first half of 2018. On September 30, 2014, the OPA (now the IESO) sent a letter to the OEB. In that letter, the (former) OPA proposed that the development schedule for the Project be extended to work toward a 2020 in–service date. In OEB Decision and Order Number EB–2015–0216, dated November 19, 2015, an updated Extended Development Schedule with a new Project in–service date of 2020, filed with the OEB by NextBridge Infrastructure on June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015, was approved. The new target in–service date for the Project is 2020.

To address the change in the development schedule, the Landowner, Community, and Municipal Consultation Plan has been revised to ensure the continuation of timely and meaningful dialogue with interested individuals and groups.

## 2. Regulatory Context for Consultation

An Individual Environmental Assessment (EA) under the *Environmental Assessment Act* is required for this Project and consultation is a required element of the EA process. The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) Code of Practice, *Consultation in Ontario's Environmental Assessment Process* (2014), states the purpose of consultation is:

- To provide information to the public;
- To identify persons and Aboriginal peoples who may be affected by or have an interest in the undertaking;
- To ensure that government agencies and ministries are notified and consulted early in the environmental assessment process;
- To identify concerns that might arise from the undertaking;
- To create an opportunity to develop proponent commitments in response to local input;
- To focus on and address real public concerns rather than regulatory procedures and administration;
- To provide appropriate information to the ministry to enable a fair and balanced decision; and
- To expedite decision-making.

The EA is expected to be filed with the MOECC in May 2017.

An Ontario Energy Board Act LTC application and approval is also required before construction of the EWT Project can begin.

This consultation plan addresses these key pieces of legislation and presents a core program of consultation strategies and activities to engage landowners, municipalities, communities, and other stakeholders in relation to the Project. It is noted that

additional approvals may be required as the Project progresses and is refined. Integration with this consultation plan will be considered or the plan will be modified as required should additional consultation be required to obtain these additional approvals.

This consultation plan is a living document and elements of the plan may be updated and refined based on feedback obtained as the EA and LTC processes evolve.

### 3. Principles and Objectives

NextBridge will engage stakeholders and other interested parties through honest, regular, transparent, and open communication, seeking and respecting each party's input. We are committed to timely and meaningful dialogue with interested individuals and groups, including, but not limited to, governments, First Nations and Métis communities, regulators, tenants, and landowners, and believe that this input will be critical to a successful Project that seeks to address the needs of those involved.

NextBridge will use a proactive, plain language, public communication and consultation program to support two-way communication with

interested parties. NextBridge's philosophy is to be as transparent as possible with individuals, communities, and groups.

*Our consultation principles are:*

- *open and honest*
- *proactive*
- *accessible (i.e. information that is easy to understand and access)*
- *respectful*
- *transparent*

Our consultation program is based on a Public Involvement Program (PIP) approach with the following objectives:

- Build public awareness and understanding;
- Gather interested individual and group input;
- Answer questions;
- Learn about community interests and perspectives; and

- Implement changes to Project design or scope to minimize adverse impacts where feasible.

NextBridge knows that its neighbours during development and construction will also be its neighbours for the many years that the Project will be in operation. Therefore, we welcome the opportunity to invest in long-term collaborative relationships.

## 4. Key Decision Making Milestones

Consultation will be a continual process and input into the Project will always be welcome. There are specific times, however, when consultation activities will be focused to obtain input on key Project decision points or milestones. There are also mandatory consultation requirements as regulated by the MOECC, which include the Notice of Commencement of the Terms of Reference, Notice of Submission of the Terms of Reference, Notice of Commencement of the EA, and Notice of EA Submission. Notices will also be published and distributed as required by the MOECC for public consultation events.

Figure 4.1 shows the anticipated steps in the EA process and how the general and specific consultation activities are integrated into the technical process steps.

Interactions with stakeholders will vary depending on their level of interest in the Project. Some stakeholders may be satisfied to receive Project information at inception with periodic updates. Others may have interests or concerns that require personal consultations ranging from discussions of impact mitigation strategies with recreational users of public land, to engagement with multi-stakeholder advisory groups, to discussions about economic opportunities with local contractors.

Recognizing the diverse needs and levels of interest among communities and stakeholders, this consultation plan provides diverse opportunities to participate in the consultation process for the new EWT Project. The tools and techniques to be used are presented in sections below.

Figure 4.1

	Regulatory Process	Ongoing Consultation Activities	Specific Consultation Activities
Terms of Reference	Pre-Consultation	<p style="text-align: center;">Hot Line – Open Houses – Meetings and Presentations – Community Investment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Municipal, Agency &amp; Key Stakeholder Meetings</li> <li>Landowner Contact by Land Agents</li> <li>First Nations &amp; Métis Meetings</li> </ul>
	Terms of Reference Initiated		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notice of Commencement and Notice of Open Houses Published, Mailed, and Posted on Website</li> <li>Newsletter #1 Distributed</li> </ul>
	Terms of Reference Prepared		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open House Round One – Project Information, EA and Ontario Energy Board Processes, How to Get Involved</li> <li>Municipal, Key Stakeholder, First Nations and Métis, Agency, and Landowner Meetings Continue</li> </ul>
	Draft Terms of Reference Review  (Revisions if Necessary)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notice of Review Published, Mailed, and Posted</li> <li>Draft Document Distributed as Appropriate</li> <li>Minimum 30-Day Comment Period</li> <li>Discussions with Review Agencies, Municipalities, Landowners, First Nations and Métis, and Stakeholders to Resolve Issues if Necessary</li> </ul>
	Terms of Reference Submission and Review		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notice of Intent to Submit to the Ministry of the Environment Three Weeks Before Submission</li> <li>Notice of submission of Terms of Reference to Ministry of the Environment Two Weeks Before Submission</li> <li>Documents Distributed to Review Agencies, First Nations and Métis, Municipalities, Public Viewing Locations and Posted on Website</li> <li>Notice of Submission Published and Posted as Required</li> <li>Minimum 30-Day Public Comment Period</li> </ul>
	Anticipated Terms of Reference Approval		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notification of Minister’s Decision to Commenters, Agencies, First Nations and Métis, and Posted</li> </ul>
	EA Initiated		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notice of Commencement of EA Published, Mailed, and Posted</li> </ul>
	EA Prepared		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notice of Open Houses</li> <li>Municipal, Key Stakeholder, First Nations and Métis, Agency, and Landowner Meetings Continue</li> <li>Open House Round Two – Review Alternative Route Assessment, Criteria, Background, Proposed Studies, and Land Matters</li> <li>Open House Round Three – Review Alternative Route Assessment and Proposed Mitigation Measures</li> </ul>
	Draft EA Review  (Revisions if Necessary)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notice of Review Published, Mailed, and Posted and Notice of Open Houses</li> <li>Draft Document Distributed to Review Agencies, First Nations and Métis, Municipalities, Public Viewing Locations and Posted on Website</li> <li>Minimum Five-Week Public Comment Period</li> <li>Open House Round Four – Draft EA Review</li> <li>Discussions with Review Agencies, Municipalities, Landowners, First Nations and Métis, and Stakeholders to Resolve Issues if Practicable</li> </ul>
	EA Submission and Review		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notice of Intent to Submit to the Ministry of the Environment Three Weeks Before Submission</li> <li>Notice of submission of EA to Ministry of the Environment Two Weeks Before Submission</li> <li>Documents Distributed to Review Agencies, First Nations and Métis, Municipalities, Public Viewing Locations and Posted on Website</li> <li>Notice of Submission Published and Posted as Required</li> <li>Minimum Seven-Week Public Comment Period</li> </ul>
Ministry Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry Review Taking Into Account Public Comments Received during Public Comment Period</li> </ul>		
Notice of Completion and Inspection of Ministry Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notice of Completion Published, Mailed, and Posted</li> <li>Five-Week Ministry Inspection and Public Comment and Hearing Request Period</li> </ul>		
Final Ministry Evaluation and Minister’s Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final Ministry Evaluation</li> </ul>		
Lieutenant Governor in Council Approval and Decision Notification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notice of Approval Issued and posted on the Ministry of the Environment’s EA webpage.</li> </ul>		
Environmental Assessment			

## 5. Stakeholder Identification and Comment Tracking

NextBridge has worked to identify stakeholders who might be affected by, or interested in the Project including landowners, First Nations and Métis communities, government agencies, municipal staff, elected officials, and other interested groups and individuals.

### 5.1. Consultation Tracking and Database

A stakeholder tracking database has been established and will be employed throughout the life of the Project to record stakeholder contact information as well as concerns, responses, and proposed mitigation measures to address comments raised by stakeholders. Feedback obtained from consultation activities and submitted through the Project Hotline and Project Email will be documented and tracked within the database. The database will also be used to create mailing lists and produce reports that will be used in EA documentation.

Following key milestones and events, a summary of comments received and responses to the comments will be assembled. Project related comments received and responses will be documented in a Record of Consultation and submitted as part of the EA documentation. We note that to protect privacy, personal information will not be included in the Record of Consultation.

## 6. Planned Consultation Activities

### 6.1. Public Notices

Regulatory required public notices will be published in local papers throughout the Project area. Notices will meet the requirements established by the MOECC for Individual EA Projects.

Newspapers identified for publication include:

- Algoma News
- Marathon Mercury
- Nipigon Red Rock Gazette
- Ontario News North
- Thunder Bay Chronicle Journal
- Thunder Bay's Source
- Terrace Bay Schreiber News
- Wawa-News.com

Notices will also be distributed via Canada Post and email to the stakeholder mailing list. French language notices will also be available.

## 6.2. Newsletters

Newsletters have been and will continue to be developed and distributed to the stakeholder mailing list, available at public events, and posted on the Project website. Newsletters are intended to correspond with Project commencement and other key milestone events to provide additional information and invitation to events. The following summarizes the issued and anticipated Newsletters:

- Newsletter 1 – Introduce the Project, provide background information, describe the EA process, and let recipients know how they can participate and an invitation to the first round of Open Houses (issued November 2013).
- Newsletter 2 – Invite participation in the second round of Open Houses and provide information on the background study results (issued July 2014).
- Newsletter 3 – Invite participation in the third round of Open Houses and provide information on the Alternative Route Assessment, and upcoming EA study activities (anticipated time frame – Spring 2016).<sup>1</sup>
- Newsletter 4 – Invite participation in the fourth round of Open Houses and provide information on the draft EA (anticipated time frame – Early 2017)<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Newsletter 3 was originally anticipated to be sent in the fall of 2014. The date has been revised to reflect the updated Extended Development Schedule

<sup>2</sup> Newsletter 4 has been added as a result of the updated Extended Development Schedule

Additional newsletters may be prepared if necessary.

### 6.3. Update Letters

In addition to Newsletters, occasionally Project update letters are developed and distributed to the stakeholder mailing list when other important Project updates are identified.

### 6.4. Project Website

A dedicated website, [www.nextbridge.ca](http://www.nextbridge.ca), has been established for the Project. Project information, notices, newsletters, updates, and other documents will be posted on the website to enhance access to Project information for interested parties. Project contacts are also provided on the website to facilitate exchange of information and issues with stakeholders and Project staff.

### 6.5. Project Hotline

A dedicated telephone number, [1-888-767-3006](tel:1-888-767-3006), has been established for the Project. Messages left on the hotline will be reviewed regularly and forwarded to relevant individuals for appropriate handling. Project related comments and inquiries made through the hotline will be documented. French language service is also available through the hotline.

### 6.6. Project Email

A dedicated email address, [info@nextbridge.ca](mailto:info@nextbridge.ca), has also been established for the Project. Messages and comments sent to the email address will be reviewed regularly and forwarded to relevant individuals for appropriate action. Project related comments and inquiries made via email will be documented. French language service is also available.

### 6.7. Land Agent Meetings

To be as responsive as possible to landowner and tenant needs, a team of land agents will be available to provide personal, one-window contact with potentially affected landowners and tenants. It is expected that land agents will help landowners understand the approval process and address property-specific questions. This relationship will continue through post-EA, LTC, construction, and reclamation

activities. A dedicated French language land agent will respond to inquiries and work with French speaking landowners and tenants.

### 6.8. Meetings and Presentations

Project staff has met with several agencies to date and will continue to be available to meet with key stakeholder groups, First Nations and Métis communities, agencies, municipal staff and elected officials. Requests for meetings and presentations will be entertained from stakeholders throughout the Project area and regular meetings will take place with relevant municipalities, First Nations and Métis communities, federal and provincial agencies and authorities as required for Project planning purposes.

### 6.9. Open Houses

Open houses have been and will continue to be held in communities along the Project route to provide community members a forum to understand more about the Project, speak directly with NextBridge subject-matter experts, and for NextBridge representatives to gather community input on the Project. Display panels and maps will be presented to help describe and illustrate Project elements and the planning process. Information presented at the Open Houses will also be made available on the Project web site.

Four rounds of public Open Houses are planned for the development phase of the Project:

- Open House Round 1 – To present the Project to interested individuals and groups and obtain feedback on the EA Terms of Reference (held – December 2013).
- Open House Round 2 – To obtain feedback on Alternative Route Assessment, criteria, background, proposed studies, and land matters (held – August 2014).

- Open House Round 3 – To obtain feedback on the Alternative Route Assessment, and upcoming EA study activities (anticipated time frame – April 2016).<sup>3</sup>
- Open House Round 4 – To obtain feedback on Draft EA documentation (anticipated time frame – early 2017).<sup>4</sup>

Open Houses have been held in eight locations: Thunder Bay, Nipigon, Marathon, Wawa, White River, Dorion, Schreiber, and Terrace Bay. The number and location of venues for subsequent rounds of Open Houses may be revisited based on the level of participation and feedback during the initial rounds.

Similar to the first two rounds of Open Houses, attendees will have the opportunity to submit comment forms at events and for a specified period after the events for consideration by NextBridge. Comments can also be made directly to NextBridge via email, mail, fax, and telephone hotline. Attempts will be made to document comments provided verbally to Project staff during one-on-one conversations at Open Houses; however, given the nature of these conversations, it is not possible to guarantee comments provided in this manner will be comprehensively captured. As such, parties are always advised to submit written feedback wherever possible.

### 6.10. Community Investment

NextBridge will seek out and support community investment opportunities and initiatives with various organizations to assist in building and maintaining long-term collaborative relationships.

## 7. Key Stakeholder Identification and Engagement

NextBridge will consult with potentially affected stakeholder groups in a manner that is respectful of their needs and expected levels of interest.

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<sup>3</sup> Open House Round 3 was originally anticipated to be held in October, 2014. The date has been revised to reflect the updated Extended Development Schedule

<sup>4</sup> Open house Round 4 has been added as a result of the updated Extended Development Schedule

## 7.1. First Nations and Métis

NextBridge considers consultation with First Nations and Métis to be an essential component of successful transmission Projects in Northern Ontario. We are committed to working with First Nations and Métis peoples in Ontario to provide sustainable benefits to those communities. A dedicated consultation process has been established for First Nations and Métis located in proximity to the Project. A First Nations and Métis Consultation Plan has been prepared and submitted to the OEB that sets out a process that will be continually enhanced, with the benefit of community input.

## 7.2. Landowners

Issues faced by landowners are of the utmost importance to NextBridge. NextBridge identified potentially affected landowners along the Reference Route (i.e. within 500 metres of the centerline of the existing East West Tie) and along the proposed Reference Route Alternatives. Work to assemble landowner information was initiated in September–October 2013. An introductory package, containing the Notice of Commencement, Newsletter and a cover letter, was mailed to landowners as contact information became available. The same package was hand delivered to potentially affected landowners along the routes under consideration where mailing information was not readily available in mid–November 2013. Landowners will continue to receive direct mail, continue to interact with their land agent(s), and will be invited to attend public Open Houses for the Project.

## 7.3. Districts, Townships, and Municipalities

The reference route and alternatives are located within or in close proximity to; one city, one town, two municipalities, and six townships in the Districts of Algoma and Thunder Bay;

### Algoma District

- Municipality of Wawa
- Township of White River

### Thunder Bay District

- City of Thunder Bay

- Municipality of Shuniah
- Town of Marathon
- Township of Dorion
- Township of Nipigon
- Township of Red Rock
- Township of Schreiber
- Township of Terrace Bay

Due to their proximity to the proposed Project, these entities were invited to meet with NextBridge representatives. Meetings with municipal staff and elected officials were initiated prior to the first round of Open Houses. When possible, municipal staff and elected officials will receive copies of notices, newsletters, and reports to be made public in advance of public release to allow them to become informed in anticipation of questions from community members. Additional meetings will be held with municipalities as required, and municipal representatives and staff will be invited to the public Open Houses.

Several unincorporated areas exist along the reference and alternative routes. Notification for these areas will be conducted through advertisements in local newspapers, direct mailings where addresses are publicly available, personal visits to potentially affected landowners that reside in those areas, and consultation with agencies that represent the interests of those unincorporated areas. If specific representatives of unincorporated areas identify themselves during the Project, communication will be directed to them, and in-person meetings may be held if requested.

#### 7.4. Agencies

The input and cooperation of government agencies is necessary for completion of an effective EA process. Relevant agencies were identified through the Government Review Team list provided by the MOECC. Pre-consultation meetings with identified agencies took place in September–November 2013 with the MOECC, Ministry of Natural Resources, Parks Canada, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, Ontario Northern

Development and Mines, Ontario Parks, and Ontario Infrastructure. Agencies will be provided with newsletters, notifications and reports for review and comment throughout the Project and meetings will be held as needed.

## 7.5. Other Key Stakeholders

It is important to include a diverse range of stakeholders at the beginning of the Project for potential issues to be heard and considered early in the process. Efforts have been made to identify a diversity of stakeholders through web searches, review of OEB and IESO documentation regarding the Project, and by asking local municipal staff about active groups and individuals that should be included on the mailing list. Publication of notices in commonly read newspapers throughout the study area also allows stakeholders to self-identify.

Stakeholders on the Project contact list will receive Project information, such as newsletters and notices via mail and email, are invited to attend Project Open Houses, and may submit input via mail, email, Open House comment forms, calls to the Project hotline, or fax. Meetings with stakeholders may also be held.

Key stakeholders identified to date include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Economic Development Corporations;
- Local Chambers of Commerce;
- Provincial federations representing a variety of interests such as hunting, fishing, trail users, and tourism organizations;
- Crown Land Tenure holders;
- Intervenors in the OEB process;
- “Friends of...” organizations;
- Local emergency medical, fire and police services;
- Railways;
- Mining, and forestry industry; and
- Those who have expressed an interest in being kept informed about the Project.

The stakeholder list will be updated as new stakeholders are identified or ask to be included on the Project mailing list.

# 8. Issues Response and Mitigation

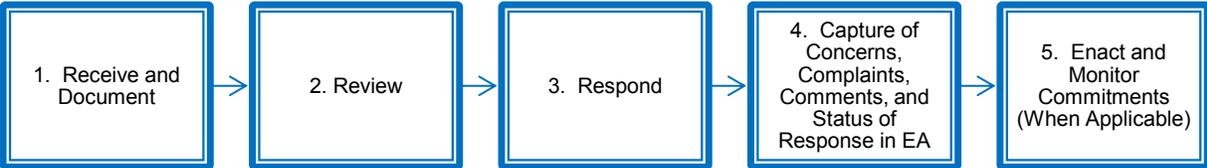
As with any consultation process, there can be a number of issues which must be carefully addressed. The previous experience of the NextBridge partners with such consultations has allowed NextBridge to define various issues and effective mitigation strategies which could be applied to the Project. Issue identification will continue through early consultation with agencies and municipalities and through consultation efforts throughout the EA process as outlined in this plan.

Based on research and early consultation, a preliminary list of potential issues has been established and is summarized below.

- Routing concerns
- Property issues and landowner concerns;
- First Nations and Métis community concerns;
- Habitat, recreational, and protected area disruption;
- Human health and safety; and
- Access to and loss of land resources.

## 8.1. Comment Management and Complaint Resolution Process

All comments, concerns, and complaints are important to NextBridge and are taken into careful consideration. A Comment Management and Complaint Resolution Process has been instituted to capture, manage, and promptly address Project-related community comments, complaints, or concerns.



### 8.1.1. Receive and Document

Concerns, complaints, and comments are typically communicated during public consultation activities, or received through our Project Hotline or Project Email. Once a concern, complaint, or comment is raised, it is captured and documented to the extent possible. Attempts will be made to document comments provided verbally to Project staff during one-on-one conversations during public consultation activities; however, given the nature of these conversations, it is not possible to guarantee comments provided in this manner will be comprehensively captured. As such, parties are always advised to submit written feedback wherever possible. If the concern, complaint, or comment is communicated through the Project Hotline or Email, efforts are made to ensure an initial response to the individual or group is made promptly to inform them that their concern, complaint, or comment has been received, documented, and is under review (when applicable).

### 8.1.2. Review

Once the concern, complaint, or comment is documented, it is then sent to the appropriate Project subject matter expert(s) for review and evaluation. In some cases, inquiries will require a dedicated review by various Project subject matter experts to ensure an appropriate response and identification of potential mitigation measures and Project impacts.

### 8.1.3. Respond

Many questions, complaints, and concerns that are raised can be addressed through the use of our publically available materials, such as our Project Frequently Asked Questions document, and/or Fact Sheets. Depending on the results of the inquiry review, responses can range from thanking the individual or group for their comment, to potentially making changes to the Project, if warranted.

### 8.1.4. Capture of Concerns, Complaints, and Comments, and Status of Responses in EA

Concerns, complaints, and comments, and their associated responses and required prevention and mitigation strategies, will be documented as part of the EA, and will be available for public and agency review through the EA process.

#### 8.1.5. Enact and Monitor Commitments (When Applicable)

Where appropriate, prevention and mitigation strategies may be developed in response to inquiries. In cases where Project changes or additional commitments are identified after review, these actions will be incorporated and enacted within the scope of the Project and recorded in the EA.

This consultation plan may be updated to reflect community concerns and issues as they emerge.