

# LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES TERMS OF REFERENCE

Part of the Regional Planning Process in Ontario



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On January 1, 2015, the Ontario Power Authority and the Independent Electricity System Operator were merged into one agency, effective January 1, 2015. The merged agency is known as the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO).

## **Local Advisory Committees**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **1. Introduction and Background**

Community engagement is an important aspect of the regional planning process. Building understanding around the electricity planning processes and the role of regional planning, and explaining where there are opportunities for participation throughout, is pivotal to the success of electricity planning in Ontario.

An integral part of the engagement process is the development of a Local Advisory Committee (LAC). The LAC will be informed of regional planning activities in the region and will provide input and recommendations throughout this planning process, including information on local priorities and ideas on the design of community engagement strategies. LACs can also provide an avenue to have a broader energy dialogue and act as a bridge between the five year regional planning cycles.

LACs are generally established at the start of the Integrated Regional Resource Plan (IRRP) process and will remain in place throughout the 18-month planning timeframe and beyond if required. For the Integrated Regional Resource Plans (IRRP) posted prior to May 2015, LACs will be established in regions where there are longer-term needs and options to be discussed with the communities. .

The establishment of LACs as a forum for a regional planning dialogue resulted from the August 2013 report titled “[Engaging Local Communities in Ontario's Electricity Planning Continuum](#)” produced by the former OPA and the Independent Electricity System Operator. The report outlines recommendations to enhance regional electricity planning including: strengthening the process for early and sustained engagement with municipalities and First Nation and Métis communities; linking local and provincial planning; and enhancing electricity awareness and access to information. In October 2013, the report's recommendations were adopted by the provincial government and subsequently referenced in the 2013 Long-Term Energy Plan. All of the report recommendations related to the development of Local Advisory Committees are included as Appendix A.

The Local Advisory Committees and the engagement on the regional plans provides context for, but does not replace, community engagement undertaken by the transmitter or LDCs on specific projects.

These terms of reference are intended to provide guidelines for the establishment and operation of a LAC and can be customized to suit the needs of a region and assist it in providing advice and recommendations in the development of a specific regional plan. The LAC will also be provided with updates on other planning processes and procurements to provide context for the discussion of the regional plan.

## 2. Purpose of the Local Advisory Committee

### 2.1. Purpose

2.1.1. The Local Advisory Committee's primary role is to provide advice on regional electricity planning, looking at conservation, generation, transmission and distribution including innovative solutions, if applicable. The Local Advisory Committee will liaise with the Regional Planning Technical Working Group (Technical Working Group) consisting of the IESO, transmitters and/or distributors as part of the regional planning process. The Technical Working Group is responsible for the development of regional plans.

The Local Advisory Committee is a forum for communities to be informed of regional planning activities within their region, including:

- Information-sharing and updates on progress and results from the Technical Working Group involved in the regional electricity planning process
- The costs and benefits of alternative solutions for meeting the region's electricity needs
- Information regarding local priorities to be considered in the procurement of generation and conservation resources identified in the IRRP.

2.1.2 Through its participation in regional planning activities, the Local Advisory Committee is expected to provide the following to the Technical Working Group:

- Input and recommendations throughout the electricity planning process
- Input in the design of engagement approaches related to regional planning
- Information on local priorities, which will be considered in the planning process when assessing alternative solutions for meeting the region's electricity needs
- Information to and advice based on municipal or community energy plans and priorities such as local energy self-sufficiency, growth plans and plan implementation
- The appointment of a liaison member to the Technical Working Group (see section 4.4)

## 2.2. Relationship to other community and stakeholder engagement mechanisms and processes

- 2.2.1. The IESO will continue to use other ongoing and incremental community and stakeholder engagement mechanisms and processes to seek advice from stakeholders and Aboriginal communities on a range of issues related to conservation, electricity planning, and generation procurement. In addition, the IESO will continue to work with First Nation and Métis communities in each region to ensure they are aware of the regional plan and have an opportunity to provide input.
- 2.2.2. Local Distribution Companies (LDCs) and transmitters will continue to use other ongoing stakeholder and community engagement mechanisms related to their other processes.

## 3. Composition of the Local Advisory Committee

### 3.1. Members

3.1.1. The Local Advisory Committee will be comprised of up to 18 members from the following areas:

- Up to 5 persons representing municipalities including elected officials and staff with relevant expertise (E.g. planning and economic development representatives), including a representative involved in any Municipal or Community Energy Plan (MEP or CEP, respectively) development
- Up to 3 persons representing consumers and citizens
- Up to 2 persons representing the business community
- Up to 2 persons representing First Nation communities or the First Nations Local Advisory Committee, if one is established in the regional planning area
- Up to 2 persons representing Métis communities and/or groups
- Up to 2 persons representing the environment/sustainability and conservation
- Up to 2 persons representing the Secretariat (see section 3.2)

*At its discretion, the Secretariat may amend the sector representation of the Local Advisory Committee to provide flexibility in its formation. The Secretariat may also appoint one or more ad hoc members as needed for specified terms.*

3.1.2. A First Nations Local Advisory Committee (FNLAC) will be established where appropriate. Where requested by local First Nation communities, inclusion of representatives from local tribal councils and/or political territorial organizations will be considered.

3.1.3. To determine a Local Advisory Committee member representing the Métis communities and/or groups, the Secretariat will work, where applicable, with independent Métis communities and/or the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) to identify a representative(s) within the planning area.

### 3.2. Secretariat Members

3.2.1. A Secretariat will be established to provide support through the following functions: preparing and circulating the agenda, facilitating the meeting, preparing the minutes, acting as the primary point of contact outside of scheduled meetings.

3.2.2. The Secretariat is comprised of members from the Local Distribution Companies, transmitter and IESO involved in the development of the regional plan, two of which will be members on the Local Advisory Committee. The allocation of duties within the Secretariat will be discussed and agreed upon by the Secretariat members.

### 3.3. Process for Nomination of Local Advisory Members

3.3.1. The Local Advisory Committee members will be selected through the following call for nominations process. The nominations process may be changed depending on the needs of the individual planning region:

- The Secretariat will place an advertisement in local newspapers notifying of the call for nominations.
- The Secretariat will provide written notification (by email) of the call for nominations to the Clerk and Mayor's Office of each municipal government within the regional planning area.
- The Secretariat will provide written notification (by email) to the Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade within the regional planning area.
- The Secretariat will provide written notification (by email and regular mail) to all First Nations and Métis communities with a presence in the regional planning area.
- The Secretariat will send an email (identifying the planning area for nominations) to the subscribers' list for the particular planning area and the general regional planning subscribers list.
- Information will be posted to the IRRP webpage on the IESO website
- Nominees will have three weeks to complete and submit a nominations form, which will require a recommendation letter or other form of endorsement from the leadership of a community or organization that demonstrates the nominee's competence to participate.
- A nominations review committee will be established by the Technical Working Group and Secretariat to review the submitted nomination

forms and compare them against the qualifications outlined below (section 3.4).

- The First Nation and Métis community representatives will be appointed by their leadership and will not follow the nomination and selection process.
- Members will be notified in writing within 2 weeks of the final selection process.

### 3.4. Qualifications of Members of the Local Advisory Committee

- 3.4.1. Members should have a current and direct connection to the constituency they wish to represent.
- 3.4.2. Members should be knowledgeable about the constituency and the regional planning area they are to represent.
- 3.4.3. If members are part of an organization or community, they should commit to regularly report to the organization or community they represent.

### 3.5. Local Advisory Committee Membership Term

- 3.5.1. Other than the Secretariat members, members will be appointed for up to three-year terms (should the LAC meet for that length of time) and may serve up to two consecutive terms. Despite the above, in certain circumstances, the Local Advisory Committee may approve the reappointment of a member to sit beyond two consecutive terms.
- 3.5.2. When a new member is appointed mid-term due to the resignation of a current member, then the new member will continue with the remaining term of the current member.
- 3.5.3. A Local Advisory Committee member will forfeit membership if three consecutive meetings are missed.

## 4. Organization and Administration of Meetings of the Local Advisory Committee

### 4.1. Number and Location of Meetings and Agenda Preparation

- 4.1.1. For the IRRPs posted prior to May 2015, LACs will be established in regions where there are longer-term needs and options to be discussed with the communities. For subsequent IRRPs, LACs are generally established at the start of the IRRP process and will remain in place throughout the 18-month planning timeframe and beyond if required

- 4.1.2 The Local Advisory Committees will meet approximately twice per year. If members collectively determine that a meeting is not required or must be re-scheduled, the Secretariat will notify members in advance of the scheduled meeting.
- 4.1.3. The Secretariat or the members may call additional meetings as required.
- 4.1.4. The Secretariat will endeavor to distribute meeting agendas and related materials to members, and post materials to the IESO's regional planning web pages for public access, at least one week in advance of each regular meeting.
- 4.1.5. Meetings will be held at a location within the regional planning area.
- 4.1.6. The Local Advisory Committees may continue to meet on an annual basis between formal planning cycles to maintain an electricity planning dialogue. When no planning is underway, the Secretariat will, on request, provide an annual update to the Local Advisory Committee to keep its members apprised of developments in their area.

#### 4.2. Quorum

- 4.2.1. The quorum for meetings of the Local Advisory Committees is at least half of the Committee members plus one participating in a meeting in person, by telephone conference call or by proxy.

#### 4.3. Meeting Authority and Normal Order of Business

- 4.3.1. A Secretariat member shall preside at meetings of the Local Advisory Committees.
- 4.3.2. The Secretariat will document where opinions of the LAC members are in common and where opinions differ. Voting will only be used as necessary and when requested by the committee members, and will not be normal operation of the Local Advisory Committee.
- 4.3.2. Regular Local Advisory Committee meetings will be open to any individual wishing to observe the meeting. Time will be allocated to hear questions or comments from individual observers.

#### 4.4. Appointment of the Technical Working Group Liaison

- 4.3.1. The Local Advisory Committee will designate one member as the liaison with the Technical Working Group as described in section 2.1.1 and that individual will be invited to attend the technical working group meetings as scheduled in addition to the Local Advisory Committee meetings.
- 4.3.2. This resource will assist in communicating information between the Local Advisory Committee and the Technical Working Group.



## 5. Conduct and Conflict of Interest

### 5.1 Conduct

- 5.1.1. Each member of the Local Advisory Committee shall conduct himself or herself honestly, fairly, ethically and with integrity.

### 5.2 Conflict of Interest

- 5.2.1. Given the diverse nature of the Local Advisory Committee membership, conflicts of interest may arise with the regional planning or procurement generation processes. In these instances, Local Advisory Committee members are required to declare a conflict of interest to the Secretariat of the Local Advisory Committee and refrain from providing advice or recommendations that may result in gain for their organization or for the Local Advisory Committee member individually.

### 5.3. Termination of Membership

- 5.3.1 Membership on the Advisory Committees may be terminated if a member breaches the conflict of interest provisions outlined in section 5.2, is no longer a representative of the organization they were selected to represent, or no longer continues to have ties to the region. Any potential terminations will be determined by the Local Advisory Committee members and/or the Secretariat, with the final decision communicated by the Secretariat.
- 5.3.2 Once mid and long term plans are developed, the Local Advisory Committee will only continue if/when the Local Advisory Committee Members determine there is still value in meeting. The Secretariat will communicate the decision.

## 6. Finalization of Meeting Minutes

- 6.1.1. The Secretariat shall prepare the meeting minutes. The Secretariat will endeavor to distribute the draft meeting minutes, including any accompanying written submissions, to the Local Advisory Committee members within three weeks following a meeting.
- 6.1.2. Members will review the draft minutes and provide any comments to the Secretariat within three weeks of receipt of the draft.
- 6.1.3. The Secretariat will finalize the minutes and distribute the minutes and related written submissions to the members of the Local Advisory Committee.

6.1.4. Local Advisory Committee minutes will be posted on the IESO website once finalized.

7. Payment for Out-of-Pocket Expenses

7.1.1. Local Advisory Committee members will not be compensated for their participation. Meetings will be held in the local region and members are entitled to reimbursement from the IESO for out-of-pocket expenses such as parking and mileage. Any additional expenses, such as accommodation when extensive travel to the LAC meeting is required, must be approved by the IESO in advance of incurring the cost and in advance of the meeting. These costs will be paid in accordance with the Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive of the Government of Ontario.

7.1.2 Section 7 does not apply to meeting observers.

**Appendix A – LAC-related Recommendations from the report  
“Engaging Local Communities in Ontario’s Electricity Planning Continuum”**

**Recommendation 5 – Create regional electricity planning Advisory Committees**

- An Advisory Committee should be convened as part of each regional electricity planning process. Members of the Advisory Committee should include elected officials, First Nation and Métis community representatives, economic development officers, and other community/business representatives. Communities should identify representatives, taking into account expertise required in the process. The OPA could provide guidance upon request.
- The OPA, the IESO, transmitters and distributors involved in the regional electricity planning process should meet with the Advisory Committee on a regular basis to share information, update the committee on progress and results, and obtain input and direction from the committee throughout the planning process.
- The Advisory Committee should be consulted regarding local priorities to be considered in the planning process when assessing alternative solutions for meeting the region’s electricity needs. The committee should be informed of the costs and benefits of alternative solutions.
- The Advisory Committee should continue to meet between formal regional electricity planning cycles, should be regularly updated on plan status, and should provide information and advice on local energy plans and priorities such as local energy self-sufficiency, growth plans and plan implementation.

**Recommendation 6 – Invite participation of local representatives in the regional electricity technical planning working group**

- The Advisory Committee should be invited to identify a representative with relevant experience (for example, planning or economic development) to participate in technical planning. Currently, the OPA, local electricity distribution companies in the region, and the IESO are responsible for conducting the technical planning work.

**Recommendation 7 – Develop stakeholder engagement strategies and plans with Advisory Committee input**

- To develop the engagement strategy, the OPA, in partnership with local electricity distribution companies, will involve the Advisory Committee in the design of the engagement plan, including posting the draft engagement plan for comment prior to finalizing the approach.
- The engagement process should, to the extent possible, be based on best practices, including municipal and individual environmental assessment processes.

- The engagement strategy should adopt a phased approach, with multiple feedback loops throughout the planning and implementation phases, so that as community and First Nations/Métis input is incorporated into the plan, there are meaningful opportunities for them to comment on how their input is being reflected. Regional electricity plans should take this feedback into consideration.
- The engagement process should include reports to the local governments and First Nations and Métis communities.

The Advisory Committee is also referenced in **recommendation 13** regarding the consideration of broader criteria in the generation procurement process, such as local priorities. This recommendation includes that the Advisory Committee should be consulted regarding the local priorities to be reflected in the design of the procurement process, including evaluation criteria and weighting for assessing proponents.