

Engagement Plan

Central-West Bulk Planning

Introduction

The Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) has launched the Central-West Bulk Study Feedback Initiative to gather input from stakeholders and communities on the scope of the study. This engagement aims to enhance transparency and incorporate stakeholder perspectives in the transmission planning process. The study, which was originally scheduled for 2024, has been expedited due to the announcement of the Volkswagen EV plant in St. Thomas. The scope of the study now also includes assessing bulk reinforcements needed from Hamilton to Windsor to accommodate potential additional economic growth across southwestern Ontario.

Stakeholders and Communities

The engagement is targeted at various stakeholders and communities within the Southwest Regional Electricity Network, including municipalities, local distribution companies (LDCs), the transmitter, generators, storage providers, industrial loads, and Indigenous communities. Additionally, the engagement will involve relevant regional planning distribution lists such as Windsor-Essex, Chatham-Kent/Lambton/Sarnia, London, Kitchener/Waterloo/Cambridge/Guelph, and Burlington to Nanticoke, as well as relevant government agencies.

Engagement Objectives

To provide stakeholders with information about the Central-West Bulk Study, including its scope, objectives, timeline, dependencies, options evaluation criteria, and final outcomes. Information about potential demand growth has been aggregated to a regional planning basis to protect confidential and commercially sensitive information, while balancing transparency and enabling meaningful engagement, so any additional information about potential new growth is welcome.

To enable stakeholders to offer feedback on issues related to the study, potential economic development opportunities, options for reinforcement, and factors considered in the evaluation process.

Approach

The engagement will be conducted in three phases, each with specific outreach plan:

Phase 1: Study need and scope

- Establishing relationships and building awareness with stakeholders through targeted emails and public webinars.
- Informing stakeholders through the Regional Electricity Newsletter.
- Engaging in separate meetings with relevant government agencies to obtain input and support for the study's scope and timeline.

Phase 2: Near-term Recommendations and Long-term Options

- Informing stakeholders of near-term recommendations, with limited engagement during development due to time constraints for accommodating the VW plant.
- Sharing the long-term options with stakeholders and seeking feedback.
- Utilizing targeted emails, public webinars, and the Regional Electricity Newsletter to keep stakeholders informed.
- Holding separate meetings with relevant government agencies to seek their input and endorsement on the study's scope and timeline.

Phase 3: Full Set of Recommendations

- Sharing the outcomes and recommendations of the study with stakeholders.
- Providing information through targeted emails, public webinars, and the Regional Electricity Newsletter.

- Conducting separate meetings with relevant government agencies for their feedback and support on the study's scope and timeline.

Proposed Engagement Schedule

Anticipated timing for this engagement is presented below.

Timing	Engagement Activity
July 27, 2023	Launch Central-West Bulk Plan
August 2023	Public Webinar #1: Engagement on scope of Central-West Bulk Plan
January - March 2024	Public Webinar #2: Engagement on near-term recommendations for Volkswagen EV plant
Q2-Q3 2024	Public Webinar #3: Engagement on options development to enable further economic development in SW Ontario
Q3-Q4 2024	Final recommendations
Q4 2024	Report Publication

Related Information

[Formalizing the Integrated Bulk System Planning Process](#)

[2022 Annual Planning Outlook](#)

[Southwest Bulk Electricity Planning](#)

[Regional Electricity Planning - Windsor-Essex](#)

[Regional Electricity Planning- Burlington to Nanticoke](#)