Ontario

OMAFA Guidelines for the AIA Components Two and Three Requirement

A supplement to the Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) Guidance Document to support the Second Long-Term (LT2) Procurement

Draft: September 19, 2025

To request this document in an alternate format, please contact omafra-guidelines@ontario.ca.

The following is intended for informational purposes only. In accordance with the RFPs issued for LT2, municipalities or planning boards must be satisfied that the Supplier has adequately demonstrated completion of the AIA Components Two and Three Requirement. Subject to the discretion of the Local Municipality, elements of this process may be scoped to be proportional to the type, complexity, and scale of a proposed project, as well as the anticipated degree or magnitude of impacts from the project.

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Overview

Prime agricultural areas contain Ontario's most productive farmland. Healthy and productive farmland is the foundation for agriculture and is essential to grow the crops and raise the livestock that maintain the province's supply of food, fuel, and fibre. To keep our agri-food sector and supply chain strong, we must balance the needs for community development with the protection of farmland. Planning authorities are encouraged to support local food and foster a robust agri-food network to realize the economic, environmental, and social benefits potential that farmland provides.

Accordingly, under the LT2 RFPs no new electricity projects shall be permitted in specialty crop areas and no new ground mounted solar projects shall be permitted in prime agricultural areas.

Projects utilizing all other eligible resource types (e.g., wind, battery energy storage, biogas, etc.) shall only be permitted in prime agricultural areas when an Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) has been completed to the satisfaction of the Local Municipality.

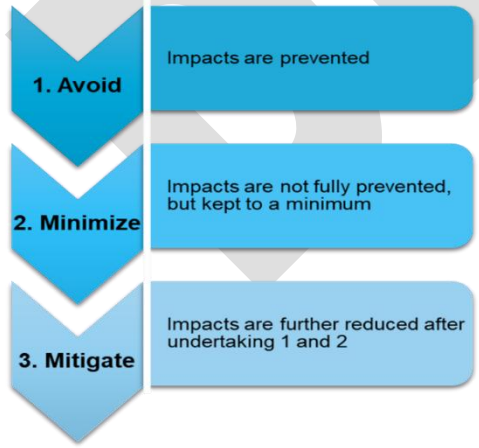
An AIA evaluates potential impacts of non-agricultural uses on the agricultural system and recommends ways to avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate adverse impacts.

AIAs help decision-makers understand what may be impacted by a proposed development. In turn, they can:

- build public support for projects,
- minimize agricultural land taken out of production; and,
- promote compatibility between agricultural and non-agricultural uses.

AIAs help support the long-term viability of the agri-food sector by contributing to the design of proposals in a manner that considers agricultural impacts.

There are three main components of an Agricultural Impact Assessment:



AIAs Components to support the second Long Term Request for Proposals (LT2 RFPs):

AIA Component One Requirement
The first component (avoid) is addressed in a separate document that serves as guidance for the completion of the AIA Component One Requirement when required for the LT2 RFPs. That initial step ensures Proponents have evaluated alternate locations, where feasible, and demonstrate the need to locate the project in a prime agricultural area, or on higher priority agricultural land. This step must be completed at the time of bid submission.

AIA Components Two and Three Requirement
For projects planned to be located in a prime agricultural area that are selected for a contract, the second (minimize) and third (mitigate) components of an AIA, known as the AIA Components Two and Three Requirement for the LT2 RFPs, must be completed to the satisfaction of the Local Municipality[1] . This Requirement may also involve examining the possible avoidance of impacts, for example by considering site-specific avoidance measures. Suppliers confirm Local Municipal satisfaction with the IESO by submitting the Form of AIA Confirmation Certificate (Exhibit T) contained in the LT2 Contract no later than eighteen months after the Contract Date.

The AIA Components Two and Three Requirement is a procurement requirement, separate from other land use planning processes that may also apply. Satisfying this Requirement requires looking at potential impacts from the project on agriculture in the area and identifying whether site-specific avoidance may be possible, or where avoidance is not possible, whether actions that can be taken to minimize and mitigate those impacts. The Requirement includes recommendations and next steps for what actions or measures will become part of the project design and operational plan.

Suppliers may wish to retain the services of a qualified professional, such as a land use planning consultant or professional agrologist to prepare the AIA Components Two and Three Requirement. These professionals may conduct field work, prepare technical reports, provide representation, help interpret local planning documents and navigate any land use planning applications that may be required (e.g., site plan). The OPPI Consultant Directory lists professional planning consulting firms in Ontario and the members of the Ontario Institute of Agrologists are found here.

AIAs to support land use planning approvals:
In addition to satisfying LT2 RFP and Contract requirements, an AIA may also be prepared to demonstrate consistency with policies contained in the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 under the *Planning Act* and any applicable provincial plans (e.g., Greenbelt Plan). Engagement with municipalities is important to understand all local expectations.

[1] *For the purposes of this guidance document, the term 'municipalities' and the singular term 'municipality' are used in a generic manner to indicate any governing body with decision making authority that affects a planning matter, such as upper-tier, lower-tier and single-tier municipalities, as well as planning boards. The term "Local Municipality", where applicable, is a term used in the LT2 RFP which is as defined in the Municipal Act, 2001, SO 2001, c 25 or the City of Toronto Act, 2006, SO 2006, c 11, Sched A, both as amended from time to time.*

Municipalities are encouraged to develop a Terms of Reference (TOR) to establish consistent local expectations for the approach and scope of an AIA for electricity projects. Adopting a TOR makes it clear what information will be included to satisfy the municipality, which helps avoid potential delays from unnecessary revisions of material prior to being accepted. The use of a TOR may also provide opportunities for the scope of the AIA to align with other local requirements (e.g., those under the *Planning Act*).

The following provides guidance on the steps that can be taken to complete AIA Components Two and Three Requirement for LT2 projects.

PART A: Content of the AIA Components Two and Three Requirement

A checklist to assist the Local Municipality in reviewing the AIA Components Two and Three Requirement can be found at Appendix A of this document. It covers the following sections:

A1. Introduction

This section provides an overview of the energy project and summarizes the AIA work undertaken to support it. It includes elements, such as:

- A brief description of the energy project (e.g., what is being proposed, what purpose, and by whom).
- A purpose statement noting why the study is being completed (e.g., to understand project impacts better, to support Contract requirement, to build community support, etc.).
- An outline of study methods and information sources (e.g., how the agricultural information was collected and documented; what background material and data was used, such as soil mapping and aerial imagery; an overview of any fieldwork, such as windshield surveys or soil sampling; and how anticipated impacts were predicted and evaluated).
- The record of consultation, as applicable (e.g., a description of outreach and communication methods, as well as consultations that occurred to support the study, including how parties were notified and identifying who was engaged, such as individual landowners, farm operators and agri-businesses, agricultural advisory committee, farm organizations, etc.). A summary of tools used, such as pre-consultation engagement, interviews, project website, public meetings and signage should be included.
- An overview of any references to coordination with, or information sourced from, other studies (e.g., noise, geotechnical, transportation) or land use planning reports.
- A listing of study authors and contributors, as applicable, and their qualifications and experience, demonstrating knowledge of Ontario agriculture.
- The period over which the study was completed, including the timing of any field investigations.

A2. Project study areas

When undertaking an AIA, it is important to identify both the primary and secondary study areas. This section explains how to identify these areas and provide a detailed description of existing agricultural features and conditions within each area.

Defining the primary study area

The primary study area should include the whole parcel(s) on which the project, or parts of the project, will be physically located. This may also be referred to as the subject lands.

For this exercise, consider that energy projects commonly impact portions of the primary study area both directly and indirectly.

- Directly impacted areas*:* land which is physically disturbed for project construction and will continue to be unavailable for agricultural purposes over the duration of a project's lifespan.

- Indirectly impacted areas: land which may not be disturbed at all (such as portions of the area between wind turbines), or lands which are only temporarily disturbed during the construction phase but will be restored and available for agricultural purposes over the duration of a project's lifespan.

In addition to delineating the extent of the primary study area, this section should also include a rationale for the size and configuration of this area.

Defining the secondary study area

The secondary study area is broader and includes surrounding lands, farm operations and elements of the agri-food network beyond the primary study area.

The size of the secondary study area is determined on a project-by-project basis. The distance beyond the primary study area can range depending on the nature of each project (e.g., technology type, size of the project and the impacts being evaluated). This section of the AIA Requirement should include a rationale for the chosen secondary study area based on the potential area(s) of influence of the project. The extent of secondary study area should be reasonable and defensible.

Both the primary and secondary study areas must be shown on a map (see two examples in Appendix B).

Documenting existing agricultural features and conditions

After identifying the primary and secondary study areas on a map, a detailed description of both areas is documented, including:

- Land use planning information (e.g., parcel fabric, official plan designation(s) and zoning);
- Existing agricultural features and conditions present, such as:
    - number and type of farms and agribusinesses operating in the study areas;
    - area of land in agricultural production (e.g., amount of cultivated annual or perennial cropland, farm woodlots, windbreaks and wetlands, summer fallow,

tame or seeded pasture, natural land used for pasturing, typical crop rotations, etc.);
    - predominant or special agricultural activities (e.g., livestock; type of grains and oilseed production, such as conventional, organic, identity-preserved or seed production; processing vegetable production; horticultural rootstock; typical crop rotations; etc.);
    - area of land (acreage) expected to be disturbed directly or indirectly;
    - soil type and Canada Land Inventory (CLI) soil ratings of farmland expected to be disturbed directly or indirectly;
    - type, size and condition of farm buildings and structures (e.g., dwellings, livestock facilities, manure storages, greenhouses, equipment storages, grain storages, etc.);
    - location and width of existing field and other farm operation accesses;
    - presence of municipal and private tile drainage infrastructure;
    - location of private wells;
    - presence of existing farm dwellings, additional residential units and/or farm worker housing;
    - presence of on-farm diversified and agriculture-related uses, or other elements of the agri-food network, including their connections and importance to agriculture in the area (e.g., grain terminals, livestock yards, fertilizer chemical and seed distributors and applicators, food processors, irrigation infrastructure, etc.); and,
    - transportation network (e.g., traffic patterns and volumes, use by farm vehicles, modes).
- Pre-disturbance soil sampling is typically only needed in the portions of the primary study areas that will be disturbed. This baseline information is important for supporting future site restoration goals if the site is being returned to an agricultural condition. Visit this webpage for more information on soil sampling techniques.

A3. Assessment of impacts:

Once the study areas are identified and existing features and conditions documented, then an assessment of potential impacts from the project on agriculture is undertaken within the primary and secondary study areas. The magnitude of temporal (i.e., duration) or spatial (i.e., extent) impacts need to be considered in this section. Once completed, the impact assessment will then inform what actions or measures can be taken to avoid, minimize or mitigate those impacts.

Where applicable, it is recommended to include an explanation of how consultation influenced the identification of impacts. In addition, it is recommended to consider how impacts may have a cumulative effect (e.g., additive for all turbine bases proposed in a project or when considering other existing non-agricultural uses in the area).

The impact assessment forms the core of the AIA Components Two and Three Requirement and the analysis in this section should comprise the majority of the report. A table is often used to summarize the anticipated impacts and corresponding mitigation measures (see Appendix C for an example). Questions to consider when examining impacts may include:

- how much farmland would be removed from agricultural production in the primary and secondary study areas in the long-term? (i.e., removed from production for the duration of the project's lifespan, if rehabilitation is planned; or permanently, if rehabilitation is not planned);
- how much farmland would be removed from agricultural production in the primary and secondary study areas in the short-term? (i.e., temporarily disturbed for construction activities, but fully restored);
- are there farm operations or other assets the agri-food sector relies on that would be removed or constrained? What would be the impact of their removal or constraint?
- could references be made to other studies that highlight relevant agricultural impacts? (e.g., noise, water, light, traffic, etc.);
- are there beneficial impacts anticipated? (e.g., electrical capacity for agricultural investments like greenhouses, revenue diversification for farm operations, farm partnerships to utilize agricultural inputs, etc.);
- what impacts are expected to be limited to direct portions of the primary study area, versus those which may be indirectly experienced in the secondary study area or beyond? (e.g., possible regional perspective for certain elements of the agri-food network).

A more comprehensive list of potential impacts, tailored to those anticipated for energy projects, can be found at Appendix D; however, this is not an exhaustive list and should only be used to supplement project specific impact assessment. In addition, Appendix G contains links to resources that can support this work, such as the Agricultural Systems portal.

A4. Measures to address impacts:
Once project impacts have been identified and their potential magnitude evaluated, measures to avoid them at the project site should then be proposed to address each impact. Where avoidance is not possible, measures to minimize and/or mitigate impacts should be proposed to address each impact. These measures are then recommended to be incorporated in the detailed design stage of a project and eventually implemented in key project elements, such as in:

- site plans, to incorporate specific layout and configuration of project facilities that maximize compatibility and minimize the amount of land taken out of agricultural production;
- construction and operational plans, to address temporary activities, on-going maintenance and monitoring; and,
- decommissioning plans, to include details that support future rehabilitation.

Effective measures are those which are deliverable, meaning they are feasible, and that are reasonably expected to result in a desired outcome when implemented (e.g., if 'x' measure is implemented, the result will be 'y'). They should be clearly defined with as much detail as possible so that they are actionable.

It is important to explain how the measures will avoid impacts, where possible, and if avoidance is not possible, how they will minimize or mitigate impacts from the project on agriculture or the agricultural system. At the project site level there may be some design measures that can be implemented to avoid an impact from occurring altogether. When

avoidance is not possible then the next step is to consider approaches that may minimize an impact (e.g., measures intended to manage or keep impacts to a minimum by limiting or reducing their severity). Lastly, approaches to mitigate an impact are explored (e.g., measures intended to rectify the impact by repair, rehabilitation or restoration).

Any anticipated residual, or net, impacts are also documented in this section. Net impacts may be addressed through other agreements or mechanisms, such as direct compensation or offsetting residual impacts by providing equivalent or enhanced alternatives.

The following table is offered as an example to help illustrate avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating impacts and determining any net impacts:

Potential impact	Avoid, where possible	Approaches to minimize	Mitigation measures	Anticipated net impacts
Example: • *Soil compaction during project construction negatively impacted soil health and long-term agricultural productivity.*	*Example:* *Avoid soil compaction:* • *Use properly sized (thickness and width) temporary ground protection mats to prevent compaction for all access and laydown areas where heavy equipment will be operating.*	*Example:* *Minimize the amount of soil compaction:* • *Limit heavy equipment work to dry soil conditions.* • *Use tracked machines to reduce load.*	*Example:* *Mitigate the effects from soil compaction:* • *Use a penetrometer to assess soil compaction in the soil surface and sub-surface layers post construction.* • *Work with the landowner or farm operator to establish a tillage plan to address the depth of compaction.*	*Example:* • *Soil compaction in project laydown area is partially remediated, but decreased productivity is anticipated for 5 years following construction.* • *Where necessary, enter into an agreement with the farm operation for pro-rated compensation for yield loss attributed to the area and degree of compaction.*

For additional examples, see Appendix E.

A5. Project decommissioning:
The following section may be applicable if the project site is to be returned to an agricultural condition once the project has reached its lifespan. Successful rehabilitation of a site requires foresight and preparation that begins before the site is disturbed.

A decommissioning or rehabilitation plan is used to establish the sequencing of operations and details of the site restoration work. For an agricultural site, these plans must include documenting pre-disturbance (baseline) soil conditions. This is important to understand the capability of the site and to establish a target for a final state of the farmland that is similar or better capability. Depending on the size of the parcel in relation to the project, pre-disturbance soil sampling may be limited to the portion of the subject lands being disturbed or may be appropriate across the entire parcel.

Decommissioning plans also typically include the approximate timelines for committing to return a site to an agricultural condition (e.g., facilities fully removed and cover crop seeded within 2 years of contract expiration). Timelines may vary if a phased or progressive rehabilitation approach is taken.

Decommissioning plans should be written in conjunction with operational plans, so that actions in each focus on ensuring the long-term ability of the soil at the host site to be utilized for agricultural production by incorporating techniques to protect soil health and productivity throughout the lifespan of a project.

Decommissioning plans and the posting of security to provide financial assurance that the decommissioning process will be completed may be a requirement for some projects. Where decommissioning plans are not required as part of the approval process, the parties involved are encouraged to seek mechanisms to ensure they are binding into the future.

A6. Recommendations and conclusion:
Once the expected impacts have been assessed and mitigation measures evaluated, the final step is to recommend actions that will be incorporated into various aspects of a project's design.

This section identifies the key measures that will be implemented to avoid, where possible, or where avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate impacts and establishes a brief implementation plan for each measure.

The implementation plan addresses who will implement the measure, how effectiveness will be determined, contingencies, and implementation timing. This should also identify the specific instruments or mechanisms to be used to implement each measure. In addition, this may demonstrate how the AIA Components Two and Three Requirement recommendations will be incorporated into the other permits/approvals, if applicable.

Beyond implementation, this section also identifies anticipated net impacts of the projects, which explain what residual impacts are expected, despite the recommended measures being implemented. This summary should outline the anticipated extent and severity of any net impacts.

Lastly, this section typically closes with a concluding statement explaining how the authors believe the AIA Components Two and Three Requirement have been fulfilled and the overall effect of the project on agriculture.

PART B: Scoping of AIA Components Two and Three Requirement for agriculturally-integrated projects

The AIA Components Two and Three Requirement for agriculturally-integrated projects may be streamlined, subject to the discretion of the Local Municipality. For example, if a Supplier demonstrates that an agriculturally-integrated project is compatible with and does not adversely impact surrounding agricultural operations then the Local Municipality may deem it appropriate to scope certain aspects of the AIA Components Two and Three Requirement.

An agriculturally-integrated project must:

- demonstrably need to be co-located with a farm operation and/or be located in a prime agricultural area;
- be compatible with, and shall not hinder, surrounding agricultural operations (see Publication 851: Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Prime Agricultural Areas for more information on compatibility);
- support continued agricultural production by minimizing the amount of land taken out of agricultural production; and,
- rely on a defined interdependency with agriculture, for example by:
    - utilizing agricultural source materials (e.g., an input/feedstock dependency); and/or,
    - generating byproducts such as soil amendments, heat or CO_2 that are primarily utilized by the farm on which it is located or by surrounding farm operations (e.g., an output dependency).

Projects such as wind facilities and battery energy storage systems are generally not considered agriculturally-integrated projects because they do not have a defined interdependency with agriculture.

If a project is deemed to be agriculturally-integrated, then the following elements of the AIA Components Two and Three Requirement may be scoped. It is important to work with the Local Municipality on individual project specifics, as these will influence the amount of detail and information required to satisfy the Local Municipality. In addition, any criteria developed by the Local Municipality, for example through local planning documents, should also be considered.

Scoping for agriculturally-integrated projects may be appropriate for the following sections:

B1. Introduction:
While it is important to include a summary of the project, depending on the nature of the project, this section may exclude details around study methods and consultation.

B2. Project study areas:
Subject to the discretion of the Local Municipality, the study areas for an agriculturally-integrated project may be scoped, for example:

- they could be limited to the parcel on which the project is being proposed (e.g., because offsite impacts are not anticipated due to the nature or limited size of the project);
- the primary study area may align with the project area, if it only occupies a portion of the property, with the secondary study area being a specified distance away from limits of the project area; or,
- the secondary study area may be limited to a short description of surrounding land uses and farm operations on adjacent lands.

B3. Assessment of impacts:
Impacts from agriculturally-integrated projects may be limited, especially if the project is designed to avoid or reduce the amount of agricultural land taken out of production (e.g., by

clustering the project with existing farm buildings, configuring the project layout to be buffered from other farm buildings, utilizing existing laneways and adding vegetative screening, as needed).

Each Supplier will still need to undertake an assessment of potential impacts based on the project location and other site specific circumstances.

B4. Measures to address impacts:
Agriculturally-integrated projects may result in a negligible or net-beneficial impact on agriculture. It is anticipated that few, if any, measures to mitigate or minimize impacts will need to be addressed in the actions section of an AIA, where a Supplier can demonstrate the project would be compatible with and would not hinder surrounding agricultural operations and that it is inextricably linked to the agricultural operations in the area. If this is not the case, then impacts need to be documented and actions taken to minimize and mitigate impacts. This will depend on the impacts anticipated. Measures should focus on enabling continued farm operations on the site and adjacent properties.

B5. Project decommissioning:
While not always required for agriculturally-integrated projects, some larger-scale projects may include decommissioning plans committing the Supplier to rehabilitate disturbed project areas back to a pre-development agricultural condition.

B6. Recommendations and conclusion:
Suppliers for agriculturally-integrated projects will summarize the potential for impacts and the measures being integrated into the project design and planned operation for site-specific avoidance, where possible, and to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts.

Summary

It is important for Suppliers to engage early and regularly with Local Municipalities and the local agricultural community to understand potential project impacts.

Once prepared, the AIA Components Two and Three Requirement information is provided to the Local Municipality to demonstrate the Supplier has considered agricultural impacts and incorporated design and planned operational measures for site-specific avoidance, where possible, and to minimize and mitigate potential impacts.

If satisfied with the information provided, the Local Municipality will indicate this through signing the Form of AIA Confirmation Certificate (Exhibit T) contained in the LT2 Contract.

Suppliers may choose to incorporate findings from the AIA Component One Requirement in their AIA Components Two and Three Requirement submission to demonstrate how they considered alternate locations or demonstrated the need to site the project in a prime agricultural area.

Appendix A: Checklist for the AIA Components Two and Three Requirement

The following checklist is not prescriptive but may be used to assist in assessing the completeness of the AIA Components Two and Three Requirement for LT2 projects.

Depending on the nature of the project being proposed, certain elements may not be applicable or may be addressed through cross-referencing other studies (e.g., land use planning, Renewable Energy Approval, noise, traffic, hydrogeology, etc.) to avoid duplication.

Subject to the discretion of the Local Municipality, some elements (indicated via grey highlighting) may be scoped for agriculturally-integrated projects.

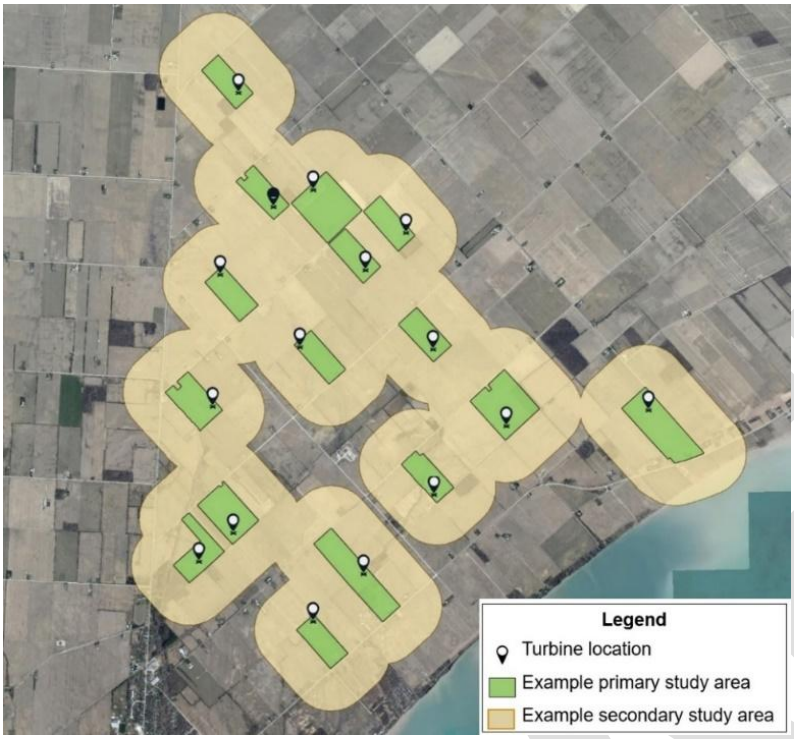
Suppliers should consult with the Local Municipality and agricultural community to confirm specific aspects to include to support their project.

Where, based on their review, a Local Municipality deems a section as being partially complete, it is expected that the Supplier be provided with an opportunity to address any deficiencies and provide additional information where needed.

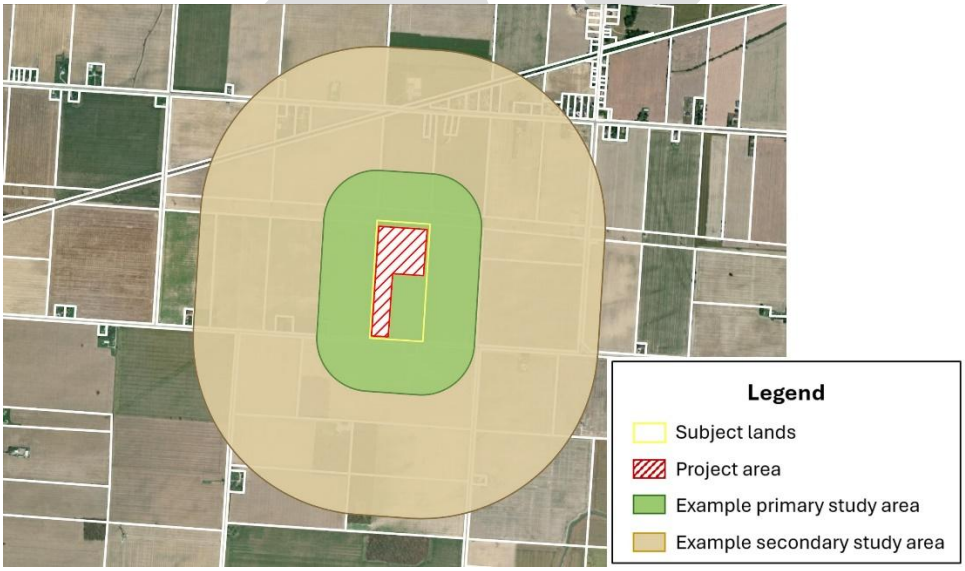
Checklist: AIA Components Two and Three Requirement	
Sections	*Included*
1.0 Introduction 1.1 Project overview 1.2 Purpose 1.3 Methods 1.4 Consultation 1.5 Coordination with other approvals/permits 1.6 Authors 1.7 Timing	☐ Yes ☐ Partially ☐ No ☐ N/A
2.0 Project study areas 2.1 Primary study area 2.2 Secondary study area 2.3 Documentation of existing features and conditions	☐ Yes ☐ Partially ☐ No ☐ N/A
3.0 Assessment of impacts 3.1 Cross-references to other studies 3.2 Agricultural land use impacts 3.3 Soil impacts 3.4 Drainage impacts 3.5 Fragmentation impacts 3.6 Compatibility impacts (e.g., noise, visual, traffic, etc.) 3.7 Economic and community impacts 3.8 Cumulative impacts	☐ Yes ☐ Partially ☐ No ☐ N/A
4.0 Measures to address impacts 4.1 Actions for minimizing impacts	☐ Yes

	4.2 Actions for mitigating impacts 4.3 Net impacts	□ Partially □ No □ N/A
5.0	**Project decommissioning, where applicable** 5.1 Pre-disturbance agricultural conditions report 5.2 Decommissioning plan	□ Yes □ Partially □ No □ N/A
6.0	**Recommendations and conclusion** 6.1 List of recommended measures to minimize and/or mitigate impacts 6.2 Implementation plan for each measure 6.3 Summary of net/residual impacts 6.4 Concluding statement	□ Yes □ Partially □ No □ N/A
7.0	**Appendices** 7.1 Data collected from fieldwork 7.2 Record of consultation 7.3 Optionally attach previously submitted AIA Component One Requirement documentation for evaluating alternative locations 7.4 Curricula vitae of study team 7.5 References	□ Yes □ Partially □ No □ N/A

Appendix B: Example maps illustrating primary and secondary study areas



Mapping example of a sample non-contiguous/distributed project (e.g., wind project)



Mapping example of a sample contiguous/contained project (e.g., a battery energy storage system)

Appendix C: Example impact summary table

Type of impact	Description of potential impacts	Measures to avoid impacts, where possible (once site is selected)	Measures to minimize impacts	Measures to mitigate impacts	Mechanisms to implement measure(s)
• Damage, disruption or loss of private agricultural tile drainage systems	• The use of heavy equipment for construction and maintenance activities has potential to damage or crush surface and subsurface elements of private agricultural tile drainage system. • Impact is anticipated in the project construction portion of the primary study area and along the new transmission corridor.	• The review of tile drainage maps, in consultation with landowners and in-field assessments, will be utilized to avoid damages during the planning and construction phases; • Individual landowners will be consulted to determine existing field tile locations in support of avoidance/protection measures; • Impacts to tile drains will be avoided (e.g., by preventative measures such as culverts, alternate accesses or trenching that route between tile runs), to the extent feasible;	• Work will be limited to the planned permanent or temporary accesses, staging and work areas. If any later expansions to these areas is required, it will be discussed with the landowner in advance; • Where temporary accesses or construction laydown areas are built in tiled agricultural areas, mats, or geotextile fabric topped with gravel, or equivalent means, will be utilized to protect tile drains; • Where practical, equipment with low bearing capacity will be used to minimize potential damage to tile drains; • Where practical, some construction and maintenance activities will be scheduled to avoid sensitive times of the year (e.g., extreme wet periods), although it is recognized that this may not be feasible in all circumstances.	• If damage to tile drains occurs due to construction or maintenance activities, the tile will be repaired or enhanced by a licensed tile drainage contractor, in consultation with the affected landowner; • In consultation with the landowner additional private tile runs will be added, post construction, to improve drainage in areas that may be accessed over the duration of the project lifespan (e.g., for maintenance); • Compensation for crop losses due to drainage damage will be available through a pre-determined formula.	• detailed design phase of the project; • landowner consultation; • remedy terms codified in any lease agreements; •
Project team to add additional rows for other potential impacts identified.	*Project team to add additional rows for other potential impacts identified.*	*Project team to add additional rows for other potential impacts identified.*	*Project team to add additional rows for other potential impacts identified.*	*Project team to add additional rows for other potential impacts identified.*	*Project team to add additional rows for other potential impacts identified.*

For more examples, visit www.ontario.ca/page/agricultural-impact-assessments to download a copy of the draft Guidance Document for Agricultural Impact Assessments.

There may also be applicable information contained in assessment documents guiding the construction of other projects. For example, the following resources contain agricultural impact information:

- The Ontario Energy Board's - March 2023 Environmental Guidelines for the Location, Construction and Operation of Hydrocarbon Projects and Facilities in Ontario, 8th Edition
- Hydro One's - February 2024 Class Environmental Assessment for Transmission Facilities, approved by the Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks

Appendix D: List of potential impacts

Note - This list is being developed in more detail concurrent to public review of the draft guidelines, and the final version will include potential impacts to consider for energy projects, such as:

- Farmland removed from agricultural production;
- Soil compaction;
- Soil contamination;
- Soil erosion;
- Impaired or altered surface or subsurface field drainage;
- Obstructed field accesses;
- Damaged fencing;
- Alteration to farming practices;
- Impairment to aerial application of crop inputs;
- Loss of vegetation;
- Impacts to water sources (surface water and groundwater);
-

Appendix E: List of potential mitigation measures

Note - This list is being developed in more detail concurrent public review of the draft guidelines, and the final version will include potential impacts to consider for energy projects, such as:

- limiting farmland disturbance to preserve topsoil and soil health;
- using low-impact construction techniques, vegetation buffers and stormwater control measures to prevent erosion and runoff;
- maintaining drainage systems and repairing or replacing them using licenced drainage contractors, where necessary;
- maintaining field entrances for agricultural use, especially during the growing season (planting, spraying, harvesting, etc.) and replacing any damaged or relocated entrances with accesses of sufficient width with installed gates and culverts, where appropriate;
- establishing an operational plan that addresses ongoing maintenance and access issues (e.g., who can neighbouring landowners contact about issues that come up through duration of project?);
-

Appendix F: Key terms

Agricultural condition: means, in regard to *prime agricultural land* outside of *specialty crop areas*, a condition in which substantially the same areas and same average soil capability for agriculture will be maintained, restored or enhanced.

(Provincial Planning Statement, 2024)

AIA Component One Requirement: means a written notice by way of e-mail delivered by the Proponent to the chief administrative officer or equivalent of an applicable Local Municipality which:

(A) acknowledges that the Project Site in respect of a proposed Long-Term Energy Project (other than a Non-Rooftop Solar Project) includes any lands located in areas designated as Prime Agricultural Area as of the delivery of the Pre-Engagement Confirmation Notice; and

(B) includes documentation that the Proponent has evaluated alternative locations for its proposed Project Site, as informed by OMAFA Guidelines.

(September 5, 2025, LT2 RFP)

AIA Components Two and Three Requirement: means an evaluation of project impacts with supporting evidence on approaches for minimizing and mitigating adverse impacts, as informed by OMAFA Guidance.

(September 5, 2025, LT2 Contract)

Canada Land Inventory (CLI): a 7-class rating system used for classifying soil based on its capability for growing common field crops. The lower the capability rating of the soil, the lower its priority for protection relative to soil in higher capability classes.

Local Municipality: means any corporation that is a “local municipality” as defined in and for the purposes of the *Municipal Act, 2001,* SO 2001, c 25 or the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*, SO 2006, c 11, Sched A, both as amended from time to time.

(September 5, 2025, LT2 RFP)

Note to reader: under the *Municipal Act* and the *City of Toronto Act*, ‘local municipality’ means a single-tier municipality or a lower-tier municipality.

Prime Agricultural Area: has the meaning given to that term in any Official Plan and includes any substantially similar designation in any Official Plan, or in any substantially similar instrument issued pursuant to the Northern Services Boards Act, RSO 1990, c L.28, for agricultural land use designation purposes based on the definition of “Prime Agricultural Area” in the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024.

(September 5, 2025, LT2 RFP)

Prime agricultural areas: means areas where prime agricultural lands predominate. This includes areas of prime agricultural lands and associated Canada Land Inventory Class 4 through 7 lands, and additional areas with a local concentration of farms which exhibit characteristics of ongoing agriculture. Prime agricultural areas may be identified by a planning authority based on provincial guidance or informed by mapping obtained from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness and the Ontario Ministry of Rural Affairs or any successor to those ministries.

(Provincial Planning Statement, 2024)

Prime agricultural land: means specialty crop areas and/or Canada Land Inventory Class 1, 2, and 3 lands, as amended from time to time, in this order of priority for protection.

(Provincial Planning Statement, 2024)

Rural lands: means lands which are located outside settlement areas and which are outside prime agricultural areas.

(Provincial Planning Statement, 2024)

Specialty crop area: means areas within the agricultural land base designated based on provincial guidance. In these areas, specialty crops are predominantly grown such as tender fruits (peaches, cherries, plums), grapes, other fruit crops, vegetable crops, greenhouse crops, and crops from agriculturally developed organic soil, usually resulting from:

- soils that have suitability to produce specialty crops, or lands that are subject to special climatic conditions, or a combination of both;
- farmers skilled in the production of specialty crops; and
- a long-term investment of capital in areas such as crops, drainage, infrastructure and related facilities and services to produce, store, or process specialty crops.

(Provincial Planning Statement, 2024)

Supplier: someone who has executed an LT2 Contract to build, maintain, and operate a facility to supply energy or capacity services.

(*June 27,2025, LT2 Contract*)

Appendix G: Resources

The following may be consulted for more information, or mapping tools:

- IESO's Long-term 2 (LT2) RFP website
- Ontario.ca webpage (for draft guidelines on Agricultural Impact Assessments)
- IESO's Agricultural Impact Assessment Questions and Answers, Version 3 (July 9, 2025)
- AgMaps (for Canada Land Inventory soil mapping, municipal and private tile drainage system, Agriculture and Agrifood Canada's agricultural use data, etc.)
- Agricultural Considerations for Siting Non-Agricultural Uses story map (for information about evaluating alternative locations)
- Agricultural Systems Portal (for plotting elements of the agri-food network)
- ConnectON (for identifying elements of the agri-food network)
- Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (for definitions of key terms and land use planning policies)

Visit these websites to learn more about Ontario's soils:

- Use of soil and Canada Land Inventory information for agricultural land use planning in Ontario
- Soil capability for agriculture in Ontario
- Guidelines for detailed soil surveys in Ontario