

Region of Waterloo
Planning, Development and Legislative Services
Community Planning

To: Committee of the Whole
Meeting Date: April 13, 2021
Report Title: Comments on Environmental Registry Ontario Posting #019-3007 – Review of Ontario’s long-term energy planning framework

1. Recommendation:

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo endorse the submission of Appendix A as the Regional Municipality of Waterloo’s response to Environmental Registry Ontario Posting #019-3007 – Review of Ontario’s long-term energy planning framework, as set out in Report PDL-CPL-21-08, dated April 13, 2021.

2. Purpose / Issue:

This report provides Regional Staff’s response to the Province’s January 27, 2021 Environmental Registry posting on the Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines review of Ontario’s long-term energy planning framework. The response focuses on the need to eliminate GHG emissions from the provincial electricity grid, to support local renewable energy generation, and to maintain a resilient and affordable energy system.

3. Strategic Plan:

This report addresses the Region’s Corporate Strategic Plan 2019-2023, Focus Area 3: Environment and Climate Action, Strategic Objective 3.1.to reduce GHG emissions.

4. Key Considerations:

The framework for Ontario’s long-term energy planning will provide the foundation for future long-term plans and implementation plans, directives and regulations, agency mandates, and processes for communication and decision making. The Province is proposing to “empower independent, agency-led planning that will result in protecting the interests of ratepayers, improving investment certainty, and restoring confidence in energy decision-making”.

Regional staff comments urge the Province to ensure the framework is developed with

the understanding and acknowledgment that energy planning and responding to climate change are inextricably linked, and that the resulting long-term energy planning framework must support a Provincial transition to an equitable, prosperous, resilient, low carbon future.

More specifically, as the Province reviews its framework for long-term energy planning, the Province should ensure that:

- The framework will enable the Province to reach or exceed Ontario's 2030 greenhouse gas targets as committed to in Ontario's Environment Plan;
- The resulting plan for Ontario's electricity production will support individuals, businesses, and municipalities in achieving their greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets, including Waterloo Region's current target of 80% below 2010 levels by 2050;
- Ontario has access to affordable, reliable, and clean energy choices, right now and as demand for electricity increases (i.e. HVAC electrification, EVs);
- Ontario advances emerging energy systems that will enable our communities to be more resilient and competitive in the future, including options to meet local energy needs with local electricity generation using renewable sources and alternative energy storage and distribution solutions;
- Communication and alignment between provincial ministries and agencies and municipalities is enhanced and acknowledges our shared goals of creating the livable, resilient and economically competitive communities Ontarians desire; and
- The framework will facilitate the transition of the provincial electricity grid off of remaining fossil fuels in the coming decades.

The attached letter (Appendix A) will be submitted to the Province prior to the end of the comment period which will close on April 27, 2021

5. Background:

Key context for this letter is the critical role that the Ontario electricity system will play in meeting the Region's target to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 80% by the year 2050.

Since removal of coal from the system, Ontario's electricity grid has been very low carbon. However, current projections from the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) show the potential for GHGs produced by the electricity system to almost double in the next decade, and to triple by 2040. This projected increase is directly related to current plans to meet increasing demands for more electricity by using additional natural gas generation. Such an increase in emissions would have a significant effect on efforts across the province to meet ambitious local GHG reduction targets.

In this context, both the City of Kitchener and the City of Waterloo have joined

municipalities across Ontario in passing Council resolutions calling on the Government of Ontario to phase-out Ontario's gas-fired power plants by 2030.

The Region's comments are aligned with recent efforts to promote Smart Energy Communities. Through the Smart Energy Communities movement, a growing number of communities are developing and implementing energy and climate change policies based on:

- the compelling challenge of climate change;
- the reality of community energy needs and priorities;
- the integration of local, renewable, and conventional energy sources; and
- the need to meet energy needs efficiently, cleanly, safely and affordably.

6. Area Municipality Communication and Public/Stakeholder Engagement:

These comments have been shared with Area Municipal Staff.

7. Financial Implications:

Nil.

8. Conclusion / Next Steps:

Regional staff will monitor the Province's response to comments received and notify Council should there be any significant changes to the legislation.

9. Attachments / Links:

[Appendix A](#): Letter to Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines, Strategic Network and Agency Policy Division in response to ERO Posting #019-3007, dated January 27, 2021.

Prepared By: Kate Hagerman, Manager, Environmental Planning and Sustainability

Approved By: Michelle Sergi, Acting Commissioner, Planning, Development and Legislative Services

Appendix A: Letter to Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines, Strategic Network and Agency Policy Division in response to ERO Posting #019-3007, dated January 27, 2021.

Rachel Thompson
Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines,
Strategic Network and Agency Policy Division
77 Grenville Street, 6th Floor
Toronto, ON
M7A 2C1
Canada

April 21, 2021

Ms Thompson;

The Region of Waterloo would like to submit the comments below in response to ERO Posting #019-3007 – Review of Ontario’s long-term energy planning framework, dated January 27, 2021.

Ontario’s long-term energy planning framework must be developed with the understanding and acknowledgment that energy planning and responding to climate change are inextricably linked, and the resulting planning framework must support a Provincial transition to an equitable, prosperous, resilient, low carbon future.

More specifically, as the Province reviews its framework for long-term energy planning, the Province should ensure that:

- The framework will enable the Province to reach or exceed Ontario's 2030 greenhouse gas targets as committed to in Ontario's Environment Plan;
- The resulting plan for Ontario's electricity production will support individuals, businesses, and municipalities in achieving their greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets, including Waterloo Region’s current target of 80% below 2010 levels by 2050;
- Ontario has access to affordable, reliable, and clean energy choices, right now and as demand for electricity increases (i.e. HVAC electrification, EVs);
- Ontario advances emerging energy systems that will enable our communities to be more resilient and competitive in the future, including options to meet local energy needs with local electricity generation using renewable sources and alternative energy storage and distribution solutions;
- Communication and alignment between provincial ministries and agencies and municipalities is enhanced and acknowledges our shared goals of creating the

- livable, resilient and economically competitive communities Ontarians desire; and
- The framework will facilitate the transition of the provincial electricity grid off of remaining fossil fuels in the coming decades.

Please feel free to contact Kate Hagerman, Manager of Environmental Planning at khagerman@regionofwaterloo.ca or 519-501-8271 if you require any additional information or have any questions.

Regards,

Rod Regier
Commissioner of Planning, Development and Legislative Services
Region of Waterloo