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BY EMAIL and WEB POSTING

September 17, 2026

To: All Rate-regulated Electricity Distributors
All Rate-regulated Electricity Transmitters
Independent Electricity System Operator
All Rate-regulated Natural Gas Distributors
Regional Planning Process Advisory Group Members
All Other Interested Parties

Re: **Regional Planning Reform Implementation**
Ontario Energy Board File No.: EB-2026-0245

What You Need to Know

- **The OEB is launching its Regional Planning Reform Implementation initiative to implement recommendations set out in the OEB's March 2026 Report to the Ministry of Energy and Mines.**
- **The initiative will advance reforms to compress regional planning timelines and ensure the regional planning process is responsive to the province's energy needs.**
- **The OEB is reconvening the Regional Planning Process Advisory Group, with a call for some new members to provide stakeholder advice.**

The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) is launching its Regional Planning Reform Implementation (RPRI) initiative to implement recommendations set out in the OEB's March 2026 Report to the Ministry of Energy and Mines, [Review of Ontario's Regional and Bulk Electricity Planning Processes](#).

The Report responds to the Minister's June 2025 [Integrated Energy Plan Directive](#), which called on the OEB to review the regional and bulk electricity planning processes to identify process improvements and other enhancements that can be made to match

the pace of load growth, including achieving time savings and increasing flexibility in the process.

A. Background

The OEB submitted the Report on March 31, 2026. The recommendations outlined in the Report were informed by input from stakeholders in the Regional and Bulk Planning Process Advisory Group.¹

The OEB stated that implementation of the recommendations will improve the regional planning process by clarifying responsibilities and expectations for the benefit of planning participants, municipalities, Indigenous communities, industry and electricity consumers. The OEB expects process improvements to result in integrated, co-ordinated and cost-effective plans that will guide prudent investments by Ontario's electricity distributors and transmitters and support Ontario's economic growth.

B. Scope

The OEB will undertake the following four workstreams through the RPRI initiative to implement those recommendations:

1. Streamline the regional planning process by amending OEB regulatory instruments.
2. Strengthen process governance by developing guidance documents.
3. Enhance the quality of forecasts entering the regional planning process.
4. Improve consideration of distributed energy resources (DERs) in the regional planning process.

Those four workstreams are discussed in more detail below.

B.1 Streamline planning process by amending OEB regulatory instruments

The OEB identified two opportunities in the Report to achieve time savings in the planning process:

- Eliminate the Independent Electricity System Operator's (IESO) 90-day Scoping Assessment stage.

¹ [EB-2025-0248](#)

- Take steps to reduce the duration of the lead transmitter's Regional Infrastructure Planning stage by two months, unless there is a material change during that process.

The OEB will amend its regulatory instruments to enable the above changes as follows:

- Issue a notice of proposed amendments to the Transmission System Code and the Distribution System Code, for stakeholder comment, to remove any references to the Scoping Assessment stage and reduce the duration of the Regional Infrastructure Planning stage.
- Under delegated authority and on the OEB's own motion, amend the IESO's licence to remove the requirement to complete a Scoping Assessment.
- Update the Filing Requirements for Electricity Transmission Leave to Construct Applications to remove any references to the Scoping Assessment.

The OEB aims to release a consolidated set of changes to its regulatory instruments discussed above when it issues the final notice of code amendments. The changes will result in an overall reduction of up to five months in the regional planning process.

B.2 Strengthen process governance by developing guidance documents

The OEB will issue two guidance documents to strengthen Technical Working Group (TWG) governance:

- Terms of Reference (TOR)
- Regional Planning Process Document

The TOR will apply to all regional TWGs – comprised of the IESO, lead transmitter and applicable distributors in each region – to support the IESO's formalization of convening TWG meetings at least once a year. The TOR will define accountabilities and responsibilities and identify specific information that distributors must bring to each TWG meeting in a region, including gas-electric coordination-related information (see section B.3 below).

The Regional Planning Process Document will replace the current planning process document – [Report to the OEB](#) – that was developed by an industry working group and endorsed by the OEB in 2013. The OEB will issue the new document that will consolidate all changes to the planning process to date and provide guidance to the TWG members.

The OEB will publish both the TOR and Regional Planning Process Document on its website once they are finalized.

B.3 Enhance the quality of forecasts by creating a Forecast Standard

The OEB will create a Forecast Standard that establishes enhanced expectations for forecasting and information sharing in regional planning. Electricity distributors will be expected to provide prescribed templates and information data points for discussion at annual TWG meetings. This work is intended to maintain forecast readiness, identify emerging developments and support timely, evidence-based planning decisions.

The following prescribed templates will be created based on documents developed by the Regional Planning Process Advisory Group (RPPAG) in 2022:

- Load forecast template: which will build on the [Load Forecast Guideline for Ontario](#).
- Municipal information template: which will build on the [Municipal Information Document](#).

Transit agencies and Indigenous communities will be invited to provide relevant information to distributors through new templates. Distributors will consolidate and provide that information through the regional planning process.

The OEB will align this work with the [Gas-Electric Co-ordination](#) Forum, which will identify gas-electric information sharing requirements. The RPRI initiative will operationalize these forecasting and information sharing requirements.

B.4 Improve consideration of DERs in regional planning

The OEB will also leverage the RPPAG to do the following:

- Discuss improvements in DER assessments to better ensure the regional planning process adequately considers cost-effective DER deployment.
- Assess if DERs that are identified in Integrated Regional Resource Plan recommendations are being appropriately implemented and identify process improvements (e.g., responsibilities, etc.), as appropriate.

C. RPPAG and Invitation to Participate

To support this initiative, the OEB will reconvene the RPPAG, which is an OEB standing committee of industry stakeholders established in 2014 to advise on improvements to the regional planning process. The current membership of the RPPAG is set out in Appendix A.

The RPPAG will provide advice and feedback to the OEB on the TOR, Regional Planning Process Document, forecasting requirements and improvements in DER assessments.

The OEB invites the existing members of the RPPAG to confirm their respective participants. The OEB is also inviting expressions of interest from stakeholders who can represent perspectives not currently reflected in the RPPAG's membership (e.g., embedded distributor, specific municipality).

Both existing and potential new members should submit a letter to registrar@oeb.ca by **October 1, 2026**, with the subject line "Regional Planning Reform Implementation – RPPAG Participation EB-2026-0245."

For those expressing an interest in becoming a member of the RPPAG, due to the technical nature of the advice sought, the OEB will prioritize practical and technical experience relevant to the assessment of regional planning activities in selecting members. The letter must include the following:

- Organization name
- Proposed member name and job title in the organization
- Contact information (phone and email)
- A brief description of the proposed member's experience in regional planning activities and the relevance of the individual's role within their organization

The group will be appropriately sized to promote effective collaboration in providing advice and feedback to the OEB in implementing the activities in the RPRI initiative.

All materials related to the RPRI initiative will be available for public viewing on the OEB website under file number EB-2026-0245 and on the project [webpage](#).

D. Cost Awards

Cost awards will be available to eligible participants under section 30 of the OEB Act for participation in the RPPAG. Any existing member of the RPPAG that has already been determined to be eligible for an award of costs is deemed eligible for costs in relation to their continued participation in the advisory group and need not reapply. Stakeholders expressing an interest in joining the RPPAG that plan to seek an award of costs for their participation should indicate this in the letter discussed above.

The OEB has determined that costs awarded will be recovered from all rate-regulated electricity distributors (65% of the costs awarded) and all rate-regulated transmitters (35% of the costs awarded). Within the distributor class, costs awarded will be

apportioned based on respective customer numbers. Within the transmitter class, apportionment between transmitters will be based on the percentage of revenue of each transmitter (using the most recent calendar year).

Information about how to request eligibility for cost awards is included in Appendix B to this letter. Cost awards will be available to eligible participants in relation to the RPPAG meetings and comments on proposed code amendments.

Any questions relating to this letter should be directed to Chris Cincar, Senior Policy Advisor, Electricity Supply, at Chris.Cincar@oeb.ca and Tayyab Chaudhry, Advisor, Integrated Planning, at Tayyab.Chaudhry@oeb.ca. The OEB's toll-free number is 1-888-632-6273.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Theodore Antonopoulos', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Theodore Antonopoulos
Vice President, Natural Gas & Energy Integration

Attachment(s):

Appendix A – Current RPPAG Membership

Appendix B – Cost Award Matters and Filing Instructions for RPRI

Appendix A
Current RPPAG Membership

#	Organization	Type of Representative
1	School Energy Coalition	Consumer
2	Common Voice Northwest	Consumer
3	London Hydro	Distributor
4	Alectra Utilities	Distributor
5	Toronto Hydro	Distributor
6	Elexicon Energy	Distributor
7	Hydro One	Transmitter
8	Association of Power Producers of Ontario	Generator
9	Independent Electricity System Operator	System Operator
10	Pollution Probe (Clean Air Council & Clean Air Partnership)	Municipalities
11	Association of Municipalities of Ontario	Municipalities
12	REASCWA (CanREA, ESC, OWA) ²	Non-Wires Solutions Developers
13	CAP Strategies	Non-Wires Solutions Developers
14	Enbridge Gas	Natural Gas Distributor

² CanREA is Canadian Renewable Energy Association, ESC is Energy Storage Canada, OWA is Ontario Waterpower Association.

Appendix B

Cost Award Matters and Filing Instructions for the RPRI

The OEB will determine eligibility for cost awards in accordance with its *Practice Direction on Cost Awards*. Any participant intending to request cost awards in respect of their participation in this consultation must file a written submission with the OEB by **October 1, 2026**, in accordance with the filing instructions below, identifying the nature of their interest in this process and the grounds on which they are eligible for cost awards (addressing the OEB's cost eligibility criteria in Section 3 of the OEB's *Practice Direction on Cost Awards*). An explanation of any other funding to which the participant has access must also be provided, as should include the name and credentials of any lawyer, analyst or consultant that the person intends to retain, if known. All requests for cost eligibility will be posted on the OEB website.

Rate-regulated electricity distributors and transmitters will be provided with an opportunity to object to any of the requests for cost award eligibility. If an electricity distributor or transmitter has objections to any of the cost eligibility requests, those objections must be filed with the OEB by **October 6, 2026**, in accordance with the filing instructions set out below. Any objections will be posted on the OEB website. The OEB will then make a final determination on the cost eligibility of the requesting participants.

Eligible Activities

Cost awards will be available to eligible participants for their participation on the advisory group. Cost awards will be available to a maximum of actual meeting time plus 1.5 times the actual meeting time for preparation and reporting per eligible participant.

Cost Awards

The OEB will apply the principles in Section 5 of its *Practice Direction on Cost Awards*, when determining the amount of the cost awards. The maximum hourly rates in the OEB's Cost Awards Tariff will also be applied. The OEB expects that groups representing the same interests or same type of participant will make every effort to communicate and co-ordinate their participation in this process. Cost awards are made available on a per eligible participant basis, regardless of the number of professional advisors that an eligible participant may wish to retain.

The OEB will use the process in Section 12 of its *Practice Direction on Cost Awards* to implement the payment of the cost awards (i.e., the OEB will act as a clearing house for all cost award payments in this process).

How to file materials

Stakeholders are responsible for ensuring that any documents they file with the OEB **do not include personal information** (as that phrase is defined in the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*), unless filed in accordance with rule 9A of the [OEB's Rules of Practice and Procedure](#). Stakeholders must quote file number **EB-2026-0245** for all materials filed and submit them in searchable/unrestricted PDF format with a digital signature through the [OEB's online filing portal](#).

- Filings should clearly state the sender's name, postal address, telephone number and email address.
- Stakeholders must use the document naming conventions and document submission standards outlined in the [Regulatory Electronic Submission System \(RESS\) Document Guidelines](#) found at the [File documents online page](#) on the OEB's website.
- Stakeholders are encouraged to use RESS. Those who have not yet [set up an account](#) or require assistance using the online filing portal can contact registrar@oeb.ca for assistance.
- Cost claims are filed through the OEB's online filing portal. Please visit the [File documents online page](#) of the OEB's website for more information. All participants shall download a copy of their submitted cost claim and serve it on all the parties required as per the [Practice Direction on Cost Awards](#).

All communications should be directed to the attention of the Registrar and be received by end of business, 4:45 p.m., on the required date.

Email: registrar@oeb.ca

Tel: 1-877-632-2727 (Toll-free)