Etobicoke Greenway | What We Heard

Project Background

To meet the growing demand for electricity in west and central Toronto, Hydro One initiated a Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA) in June 2022 to rebuild a non-energized 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission line into an energized 230 kV line. This 6.5 km line is located on the east side of an existing hydro corridor that extends between the Richview and Manby Transformer Stations (TS) in Etobicoke. This project was identified in the Toronto Integrated Regional Resource Plan, led by the Independent Electricity System Operator, to help meet the rapidly growing electricity demands of homes, businesses, and public transit initiatives in the City of Toronto.

As a key part of the Class EA, we are committed to working closely with the community and feedback from residents, interest groups, elected officials, and Indigenous communities will be used to inform all aspects of the Class EA, the project, and our commitment to reimagine the corridor. In the summer, our team held open houses, corridor walks and workshops where we had the opportunity to meet with community members and share project details. We've uploaded the panels, and a video of the virtual meeting to our website: www.HydroOne.com/Etobicoke**.**

Our priority is to deliver electricity in a safe and responsible way. Throughout our engagements with the community, key question themes we've heard include:

Why is this project needed?

- Electricity demand in west and central Toronto is expected to rise significantly and add additional pressure to the electricity system due to the demands of homes, businesses, and public transit initiatives in the City of Toronto.
- This project was identified in the Toronto Integrated Regional Resource Plan, led by the Independent Electricity System Operator.

What's required to energize the line?

- Hydro One is proposing to rebuild and energize the line by:
    - Removing towers and wires on the east side of the corridor
    - Installing new towers and wires that can carry a voltage of 230 kV
    - Connecting the new line to Richview and Manby TS, which will require minimal work within the stations
- To support these activities, our team will prepare the area for construction and the future energizing of the line by trimming, or removing vegetation, installing temporary access roads in certain key areas, and installing construction equipment pads near tower bases and to support the stringing of wires.

- We are continuing to refine our construction plan and more details will continue to be shared.

Where will the new towers be placed and what will they look like?

- Based on our preliminary design, the new towers will be:
    - Generally constructed near or within a few meters of existing tower locations.
    - Taller than existing towers, but similar to those on the west side of the corridor.
    - Similar in design to the lattice structures on the west side of the corridor.
    - Similar tower footprint to those on the west side of the corridor.

Will a new access road be installed in the corridor?

- Temporary access roads will be installed in certain sections to provide safe access to tower bases and the delivery of equipment and personnel for construction work.
- The temporary access roads will be made of gravel.
- Once the work has been completed, our crews will remove the access roads and restore these areas to existing corridor conditions.

Why can’t you bury the lines?

- Burying the line on the east side of the corridor in parallel to the two existing energized overhead lines presents challenges from a technical, environmental and cost perspective.
- Burying this line is not technically feasible as underground cable properties differ from overhead lines, resulting in the flow of power being unequally distributed between the lines. This could result in the underground facilities becoming overloaded and is therefore inadequate to meet the reliable supply need.
- Burying all three of the lines would be highly disruptive to the environment, community and existing infrastructure in the area, and comes at a higher cost. Burying all the existing overhead infrastructure could cost hundreds of millions.
- Given this, re-building the existing line on the east side with lattice steel towers is the recommended solution to help meet the City of Toronto’s energy needs.

Will any power outages be required?

- No power outages to residents will be required to safely re-build the line.

How are you protecting the natural environment?

- Hydro One takes our commitment to the environment seriously, and this project is being planned in accordance with the approved Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA) for Minor Transmission Facilities process, which is an approved process under the provincial Environmental Assessment Act.
- Potential effects to vegetation, water bodies/aquatic habitat, terrestrial wildlife, and species at risk/sensitive species are considered as part of the Class EA process.
- The Class EA will also look at ways to avoid, mitigate, and/or restore areas that will be affected by the project.

How are you protecting trees?

- We recognize that hydro corridors provide important greenspace to the community.
- Trimming and removal of vegetation will be required for construction and the safe and reliable operation of the line.
- Our team is committed to preserve vegetation and is exploring construction methods and ways to stage the timing of vegetation management to preserve as much as safely possible.

How can Hydro One complete work in Echo valley when it is protected by TRCA?

- Hydro One always strives to avoid and mitigate effects to the natural environment and to restore areas that are temporarily affected during construction.
- We recognize Echo Valley is a regulated area and an important green space for the community.
- We are looking for opportunities to preserve vegetation and minimize the removal of trees wherever possible by looking at alternative construction approaches and staging the timing of work required.
- Avoiding this ecologically sensitive area has also been taken into consideration for proposed tower placement, and throughout the project, Hydro One will work closely with Toronto and Region Conservation Authority on mitigation and restoration measures in the regulated area in Echo Valley.

Is it safe to be in hydro corridors?

- We recognize that some members of the public continue to have concerns about safety in the corridor and we take seriously our responsibility to understand, appropriately address, and communicate information on this issue.
- Hydro One has a dedicated team that regularly monitors global studies around electric and magnetic fields (EMF) and ensures that our infrastructure is built and maintained following best practices and industry standards.
- We look to **Health Canada**, the **World Health Organization** and the **International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection**, for guidance on EMF and our approach.
- Based on global studies which have and continue to be regularly monitored, Health Canada and the World Health Organization indicate that members of the public do not need to take precautions to protect from fields produced by extremely low frequencies such as transmission lines.

What are the timelines for this project?

- In June 2022, Hydro One initiated the Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA) process to re-build the line.
- Throughout 2022 and 2023 Hydro One will be hosting a series of community engagement opportunities to provide more details about this important work, listen to community feedback and answer questions.

- Following completion of the Class EA, approval from the Ontario Energy Board under Section 92 (Leave to Construct) of the Ontario Energy Board Act will be required.
- Construction is anticipated to be begin in 2024 and will be completed in 2026.

How have you notified the community?

- In summer 2022, Hydro One mailed notices, posted signs, placed an ad in the Etobicoke Guardian, and hosted two open houses, a virtual meeting, corridor walks and community workshops.
- In fall 2022 and throughout 2023, Hydro One will be hosting additional community engagement opportunities to provide more details about this important work, listen to community feedback and answer questions.
- If you would like to be added to the mailing list for this project, please email Community.Relations@HydroOne.com.

What do you mean by re-imagining the corridor?

- As a key part of this project, we are committed to working closely with the community to create a shared vision for how the hydro corridor could be used once the project has been completed.
- As part of the planning process for the project, Hydro One is engaging with community members to understand current uses, desires and concerns about the possibility of turning this corridor into a publicly accessible space.
- We have heard public ideas and feedback on ideas like paths and trails, as well as other recreational amenities and incorporated these into a concept plan that is undergoing technical review.

If you have any questions, please contact Hydro One's Community Relation's team:

1-877-345-6799
Community.Relations@HydroOne.com
www.HydroOne.com/Etobicoke