

V4.1 – Communications and Consultation Plan

**MOVING
WATER
FORWARD**



Niagara  Region

Communication & Consultation Plan

South Niagara Falls Wastewater Solutions
Class Environmental Assessment

July 2020



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1 Introduction

This Study, South Niagara Falls Wastewater Solutions (SNFWWS), is being conducted in accordance with Municipal Engineers Association (MEA) Schedule 'C' Class Environmental Assessment (EA) process (October 2000, as amended in 2007, 2011 and 2015). The Schedule 'C' planning process must satisfy all five (5) phases of the Class EA process as approved under Ontario's Environmental Assessment Act.

As with any EA process, it is as much about public relations as it is about technical solutions. Allowing either approach to dominate may impede the process as the study proceeds. The SNFWWS Project Team recognizes the fine balance between providing the best technical solution and providing the solution most acceptable to the public.

The SNFWWS Communications and Consultation Plan will:

- Provide an outline of consultation groups, key future meetings and Public Information Centres (PICs);
- Document meetings, including agendas, presentations and meeting minutes;
- Document: notifications, contact lists, comment and response tracking, project website, and a correspondence summary;
- Provide details on how external agencies were involved in the study; and,
- Provide details for Indigenous Communities consultation.

1.1 Project Background

SNFWWS is a key component of Niagara Region's long-term plan to provide wastewater services to South Niagara Falls and Thorold South.

The existing Stanley Avenue Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), operated by Niagara Region, is located within the City of Niagara Falls and services a population of approximately 90,000. Flow from the service areas south of Lundy's Lane must travel through several pumping stations, principally the South Side High Lift Sewage Pumping Station, as well as the Stamford Interceptor, to reach the plant. The projected growth in South Niagara Falls will result in constraints at this existing plant, with flows beyond its maximum capacity by 2041.

The new WWTP will be located near the projected long-term growth area in South Niagara Falls to support a flexible servicing strategy that maximizes gravity conveyance and potential to reduce the number of existing sewage pumping stations (SPSs).

The key objectives of the SNFWWS Class EA are to:

1. Protect the Environment

- a. Reduce pollution into rivers and the environment
- b. Minimize flooding

2. Accommodate Growth

- a. Increase system capacity
- b. Support economic development

3. Provide Flexibility for the Future

- a. Ensure the facility has the ability to respond to changing regulations and needs
- b. Free up capacity in existing infrastructure such as the Stanley Avenue WWTP

4. Establish the new WWTP as a Community Asset

- a. Ensure the new facility fits well within the local community
- b. Engage the local technical and academic community in the solution
- c. Mitigate and manage issues such as odour, noise, and traffic

1.2 Communications and Consultation Approach

This document guides SNFWWS communications and consultation efforts through the Class EA process. This includes a catalogue of internal and external communications which will form a record for the final Environmental Study Report (ESR).

The Plan has been developed using an issues mitigation lens, recognizing that introducing a new WWTP in a community is highly contentious. Throughout the Class EA process, the Project Team will look for opportunities to educate and inform audiences in an effort to build public buy in early and reduce issues later on in the process.

In planning the communication and consultation program, the overall approach is to:

- Meet the public and agency notification and consultation requirements for Phases 1 through 5 of the MEA Municipal Class EA;
- Build on past communication protocols and consultation plans from previous Class EA and municipal planning initiatives the Region has undertaken to ensure consistency and continuity; and,
- Complete additional tasks to enhance the proposed consultation program and overall Class EA process, as needed throughout the study.

The SNFWWS approach to communicate and consult with stakeholders is driven by six key principles:

- **Respect:** for all parties engaged in the process;
- **Clear, consistent communication:** to ensure broad understanding, and that all communicators on behalf of the project are using consistent messages;
- **Demonstrated organizational and community values:** ensure all communications reflect the values of Niagara Region as an organization and as a community;
- **Transparency:** communicate the Class EA process openly;
- **Flexibility:** the Plan will be a living document allowing adaptability when opportunities arise throughout the Class EA process; and,
- **Offer a variety of feedback options:** to ensure as broad a range of input as possible

1.3 Goals and Objectives

Clear and effective communication, coordination and cooperation with all stakeholders will start at the earliest stages and continue throughout. Different methods will be used to ensure effective and efficient two-way communication including public notices (with full contact information and invitations to participate), direct mailings, informative website content, and clear meaningful information available at PICs.

Effective consultation with government agencies, conservation authorities, indigenous communities, utilities, community groups, and other stakeholders will be vital to the success of the Project. Thus, a primary goal and objective of this Plan is to ensure consultation with members of the public, regulatory agencies, the City of Niagara Falls, the City of Thorold, and Niagara Region staff.

The Goals and Objectives of Communications and Consultation Plan is to:

- Present clear and concise information to stakeholders at key stages in the study process;
- Meet Schedule 'C' MEA Class EA consultation requirements;
- Solicit community, regulatory agency, City of Niagara Falls, City of Thorold, and Regional Municipality of Niagara (Niagara Region) staff input;
- Ensure that factual information is provided to interested and affected stakeholders as soon as reasonably possible; and,
- Make contact with external agencies to obtain legislative or regulatory approvals, or to collect pertinent technical information.

The following table outlines objectives of the Plan and how it will be measured for success.

Table 1. Measures of Success for Communication and Consultation

Objective	Measurement of success
Meet legislative requirements for Schedule C Class Environmental Assessment (EA) communications and consultation	Approval/acceptance of the plan by Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP), additional stakeholder engagement
Build awareness and understanding of EA study and purpose	Media coverage messaging, social media feedback, website and phone call statistics
Promote active public participation in Public Information Centres (PICs), community events and online feedback mechanisms	PIC attendance numbers, online feedback submission numbers
Meaningful and timely consultation and engagement with local indigenous communities	Feedback from indigenous community key contacts, participation by indigenous representatives
Increase understanding of Niagara Region's wastewater management practices and needs	Possible resident survey at PICs or post PICs

2 Strategic Project Considerations

2.1 Project Sensitivities

Given the complexity and potentially sensitive nature of the study, it is imperative to reach out to stakeholders in efforts to provide information, listen to, and then work to address issues and concerns. To accomplish this, the SNFWWS Project Team includes Redbrick Communications. Redbrick Communications will review information that will be presented publicly to ensure clear and transparent messaging.

The Communication and Consultation Plan ensures, where possible and logical, the coordination of communication activities, messaging, and public engagement with other Niagara Region projects. It is in all parties' best interest to provide a coordinated and unified public consultation program.

Niagara Region's Strategic Communications and Public Affairs division was a critical resource during the development and will be a critical resource during the implementation of the Plan. GM BluePlan will also consult with Niagara Region for approach, material and timing throughout the life of the study. Working together, appropriate audiences will be targeted (such as Business Improvement Areas and neighbourhood associations).

The Plan is aligned with the Niagara Region's public engagement and communications policies and protocols, leverages knowledge and lessons learned on past initiatives in reaching and engaging the Niagara Region's audiences, such as Shape Niagara, to better understand and anticipate potential sensitivities or issues related to the project.

2.2 Key Messaging Framework

One of the key principles driving this Plan is clear, consistent communication. Throughout the EA process it is critical that the project team, regional and local councillors and other involved stakeholders use similar language when talking about the project and the new wastewater treatment plant. Therefore, establishing and sharing clear anchor messaging at the outset will provide a foundation to build from throughout the EA process.

This messaging should highlight the importance of a new wastewater treatment plant in South Niagara Falls, why its needed and some of the benefits. It should also demonstrate the Region's commitment to an open and transparent process where residents and stakeholders will have opportunities to learn more and have a voice in the process.

Ahead of public events, Redbrick Communications supplied the Project Team with key messaging documents to ensure consistency in Project information. The key messaging highlighted study objectives.

2.3 Project Branding

This project will be branded using *Moving Water Forward*, a Niagara Region initiative to highlight water and wastewater related projects. Each SNFWWS document will include a Niagara Region branding logo for consistency.

2.4 Accessibility Compliance

Ensuring accessibility is not just a matter of legal compliance, as defined in Ontario Regulation 191/11 – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), governed by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005. GM BluePlan takes special considerations to provide deliverables that are accessible in both digital and print applications to ensure effective and inclusive communication to everyone. All reporting and public consultation related deliverables will be created with accessible compatibility first and foremost, to the best of the Project Team's abilities.

Accommodation will be supplemented for documents that could not be made accessible due to its technical nature such as software modelling exports, CAD drawings, and/or technical graphs. In these cases, additional support can be provided to those upon request.

2.5 COVID-19 Protocol Implementation

Following PIC No. 3 on March 11, 2020, SNFWWS initiated COVID-19 protocols for the Project Team. To maintain engagement with external stakeholders, the Project Team posted frequent updates to the Project Website and responded to public commentary, when received.

Key review agencies were contacted remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. Indigenous Communities were called prior to field survey work to determine best communication approach. MECP successfully provided digital and hardcopies of the detailed Assimilative Capacity Study report. OPG staff were able to complete outdoor site visits with the key Project Team to enable linear works for conceptual design.

The Project Team continues to work effectively and efficiently remotely. SNFWWS is expected to be completed on schedule with its' proven ability and adaptability to enhance online engagement for stakeholder input.

3 Communications Plan

The Communications and Consultation Plan has been developed as per the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) methodology. The Plan is value-based (aligned with Niagara Region priorities), decision-oriented and goal-driven. Stakeholders identified through this EA have been identified and assigned a participation level based on the IAP2 Spectrum. The Plan goes beyond the mandated Class EA process. The Plan lays the foundation and provides long-term value for the Niagara Region's wastewater management beyond the EA process.

The five (5) spectrum levels of public participation are outlined in **Table 2**. Further, the study contact list, provided in **Appendix B**, identifies levels of participation for each stakeholder group.

3.1 Pre-Class EA Communications

Prior to the official commencement of the SNFWWS Class EA, the Project Team planned key communication meetings to align project goals and approach with Niagara Region guidelines.

3.1.1 Communications Planning Workshop

The Communications Project Team (GM BluePlan, Niagara Region, and Redbrick Communications) completed a Pre-Class EA workshop to confirm the communications approach.

The meeting highlighted the EA process and Consultation Requirements; the Project specific communication goals and objectives; Niagara Region Protocols and Processes; past successes and lessons learned; and, project initiation.

A copy of the communication planning materials is available in **Appendix A**.

3.1.2 MECP Communications

The SNFWWS Project Team reached out to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks (MECP) ahead of study commencement to obtain a list of indigenous communities for contact. This allowed the Project Team to engage at the very on set of the Class EA process.

Table 2. The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum of public participation

					
	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Public Participation Goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the Public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decisions.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Example Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact sheets • Websites • Open houses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Comment • Focus Groups • Surveys • Public meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Deliberative polling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen advisory committees • Consensus building • Participatory decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen juries • Ballots • Delegated decision

3.2 Key Stakeholder Communications

SNFWWS established key stakeholders based on scope and proximity to the new WWTP and associated deep trunk sewer study area. The following stakeholders were contacted during key Class EA points to solicit input, guidance, and approvals.

Key Stakeholders Identified:

- Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks (MECP);
- Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR);
- Ministry of Transportation (MTO);
- Ontario Power Generation (OPG);
- Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA);
- Indigenous Communities
 - Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation;
 - Six Nations of the Grand River; and,
 - Haudenosaunee Confederacy Chiefs Council.
- Property Owners (Long-list to preferred WWTP site);
- City of Niagara Falls; and,
- City of Thorold.

3.3 Class EA Stakeholder List

All relevant agencies, stakeholders and interested parties will be included in the study stakeholder list. A list of relevant review agencies, stakeholders and potentially affected parties has been prepared for this study based on the study area, Class EA requirements, and information provided by Niagara Region and the City of Niagara Falls. The list includes provincial ministries and agencies, municipal departments and agencies, utilities, emergency services, indigenous communities, and other special interest groups.

Throughout the Class EA process, the list will be revised, as appropriate, to reflect those agencies or parties who wish no further involvement in the study as well as those new agencies/parties who wish to be added to the mailing list. In this manner, the study contact mailing list will constantly be updated to ensure that all possible efforts are made to include all interested agencies/parties throughout the EA process.

All communication with external parties will be tracked, with exception of private information (including name and address of public members) to inform part of the Environmental Study Report (ESR).

3.4 Study Notifications

Public Notices for this project had been distributed starting April 2019. The following notices were scheduled throughout this project:

- Notice of Commencement
- Notice of PIC No. 1;
- Notice of PIC No. 2;
- Notice of PIC No. 3;
- Notice of PIC No.4; and,
- Notice of Study Completion.

All draft notices will be developed by GM BluePlan and finalized by the Region’s Communication Department in conjunction with the GM BluePlan project team.

The notices were published in the following local newspapers:

- *Niagara This Week*
- *Niagara Falls Review*

In addition to the newspaper, website and social media (e.g. Facebook), GM BluePlan will prepare a notice in letter format and mail or email to the established list of stakeholders. The GM BluePlan project team will follow-up with select agencies in person, by mail, e-mail or phone to facilitate the collection of information relevant to the study. The GM BluePlan project team maintains a file with all correspondence sent and received from these agencies. A summary of tasks and responsibilities for tasks associated with all Notices are provided below.

Table 3. Summary of Tasks and Responsibilities

Task	Responsibility
Prepare draft Ad / Letter format Notices for review	GM BluePlan
Organize and place Notices in the papers	Niagara Region
Finalize and mail Ad / Letter format Notices	GM BluePlan
Distribute Notices to internal Niagara Region Staff (e.g. Fire and Emergency Services, Councillors)	Niagara Region
Prepare and maintain a Comment Tracking Sheet	GM BluePlan
Prepare any required written responses to questions and issues	GM BluePlan & Niagara Region

3.4.1 Notice of Study Commencement

A Notice of Study Commencement was first issued on April 4, 2019. The Region published the Notice of Study Commencement in local newspapers and on the project website.

Contact information for the Project Manager was provided in the notice, from whom interested parties could obtain additional information or request that they be added to the Study Mailing List.

The Notice of Study Commencement was published as follows:

- *Niagara This Week*: Thursday April 4 and 11, 2019
- *Niagara Falls Review*: Saturday April 6, 2019

In addition to newspaper notices, the GM BluePlan Team prepared a notice in letter format and mailed/e-mailed to the established list of stakeholders. The GM BluePlan Team followed-up with select agencies either in-person or by mail, e-mail or phone to facilitate the collection of information relevant to the study. The GM BluePlan Team maintains a file of all correspondence sent and received. This documentation will be included in the appendices of the final Environmental Study Report (ESR).

3.4.2 Notices of Public Information Centres No. 1 to 4

There are four (4) PICs planned as part of this project. The GM BluePlan Team is responsible for preparing a Draft Notice of PIC for each PIC event. Once approved, the Region publishes the Notice of PIC in two rounds of the local newspapers: *Niagara This Week* and *Niagara Falls Review*.

The Notices are also published on the Region's website. The first notice will be issued two weeks in advance of the PIC. In addition to the newspaper notices, the GM BluePlan Team will prepare a notice in letter format and mail to the established list of stakeholders.

Prior to PIC No. 3, the stakeholder list will be expanded to include properties adjacent to the preferred deep trunk sewer alignment. This will provide the opportunity for potentially affected residents to attend a PIC or learn more about the project through the provided website material.

3.4.3 Notice of Study Completion

Once the study has been finalized, a Notice of Study Completion will be prepared. The purpose of this notice is to announce the study's completion and begin the minimum 30 day public review period for the final ESR. Due to the complex nature of the SNFWWS project, the Project Team along with Niagara Region have decided to hold a 45 day public review period. Hard copies of the final report will be filed at agreed public facilities. Electronic copies of the ESR and supporting appendices will also be made available on the project website.

As with all the notices, the Notice of Study Completion will be advertised in local newspapers *Niagara This Week*, *Niagara Falls Review* and *Thorold Today*.

3.5 Online Communications

3.5.1 Project Website

Niagara Region will be setting up a page on their corporate website for this study. This website will provide a space for any interested party to obtain information on the project, consultation timelines, upcoming events, and contact information. This website will be maintained by Region staff and the GM BluePlan team will provide information and materials for posting as required.

3.5.2 Region Social Media Platforms

Niagara Region manages Facebook and Twitter accounts. Prior to each PIC, Niagara Region will post event details on each platform. During each scheduled PIC, Niagara Region will host a Facebook Live event. The Facebook Live video will post GM BluePlan Project Manager, Chris Hamel, walking through display materials available at the respective event.

Niagara Region will upload each Facebook Live event to the Region's Facebook with a link to the Project Website where visitors can receive additional project information and opportunity to provide questions and comments to the Project Team.

4 Consultation Plan

Clear and effective communication, coordination and cooperation with all stakeholders will start at the earliest stages and continue throughout. Different methods will be used to ensure effective and efficient two-way communication including public notices (with full contact information and invitations to participate), direct mailings, informative website content, promotional material, and information distributed at the Public Information Centres (PICs).

The SNFWWS enhanced the mandatory points of contact to include an additional PIC to present evaluation criteria and methodology. This event was an opportunity to receive buy-in and input from the public on what is most important when weighting decisions of a new WWTP and associated servicing strategies.

4.1 Pre-Class EA Consultation

Prior to the formal start of the Class EA Study process, Niagara Region and the greater Project Team (GM BluePlan, Golder Associates, and CIMA) undertook pre-study consultation with external stakeholders to solicit early input. The Pre-Class EA consultation was an important stage in laying the foundation for open and transparent communication with key stakeholders.

Pre-Class EA meeting materials, including agenda, presentation, and summary of minutes are available for review in **Appendix A**.

4.1.1 Existing System Review

GM BluePlan, CIMA and Golder Associates met with Niagara Region prior to study commencement to review data inventory on the existing wastewater collection system and outline assimilative capacity approach. This meeting was held on December 17, 2018 and informed baseline investigations prior to key review agency review.

4.1.2 MECP Pre-Class EA Consultation

MECP was identified as a key SNFWWS stakeholder. A major component of this Project is determining an outfall location for the new WWTP. The discharge location must complete an Assimilative Capacity Report, which will be reviewed by MECP.

The team met with MECP representatives on **February 19, 2019** during the Pre-Class EA phase. This meeting was used to discuss data inventory, regulatory requirements and project logistics. MECP also used this meeting to identify key Indigenous Communities for consultation.

4.1.3 OPG Pre-Class EA Consultation

The team met with OPG representatives on **February 11, 2019** during the Pre-Class EA phase. This meeting was used to introduce the study and to discuss potential opportunities and constraints associated with OPG's operations within the study area.

4.1.4 NPCA Pre-Class EA Consultation

The team met with NPCA representatives on **February 13, 2019** during the Pre-Class EA phase. This meeting was used to introduce the study and to discuss data inventory, permitting requirements and project logistics.

NPCA is a key external stakeholder for this project. The Conservation Authority will have particular interest in this study as potential wastewater treatment plant siting's and outfall may be located within or in close proximity to regulation limits.

4.1.5 Indigenous Communities Pre-Class EA Consultation

Niagara Region spoke with three identified Indigenous Communities prior to the official Notice of Study Commencement. Each call provided a brief overview of the study, timing of the upcoming notice, and Project Manager contact information for any further questions or comments.

Calls were made to the following Indigenous Communities:

- Haudenosaunee Confederacy Chiefs Council;
- Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation; and,
- Six Nations of the Grand River.

4.2 Council Drop-in Sessions

Outside of scheduled PICs, the Project Team will meet with Region and Local Municipal Councillors for focused drop-in session related to the SNFWWS Class EA.

These meetings will present Project overview, evaluation methodology, preferred solution, financial considerations, and conceptual design.

A summary of council materials will be documented in the final ESR.

4.3 Media Release and Drop-in Sessions

Prior to each public event, the internal team will host an additional information session for interested media representatives to meet the project team and learn more about the study.

The anticipated outcome is that relevant project information can be shared across a larger platform.

4.4 FAQ Handout

A Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) handout will be provided at each public event. This will be updated following the completion of each Phase of the Class EA process. The latest update of the FAQ package will be uploaded to the Project Website.

The FAQ package will highlight Project: Background; Need; Associated Benefits; and Outcomes.

4.5 Public Information Centres

As mentioned in the Section 4, there were initially three (3) scheduled PICs for the SNFWWS Class EA. Due to the complexity of the evaluation process, an additional PIC was included in late Fall 2019 to gather further input from the public. PICs are important events used to collect public concerns, encourage involvement, and discuss the decision-making process.

After each PIC, a summary report will be prepared to document participants, comments, discussion topics, and displayed materials. These reports will form part of the final ESR document to track EA consultation.

The planned meetings are listed below:

- **PIC No. 1** – The first PIC will review background information, introduce the study, provide an overview of the EA process, present the environmental inventory for the study area, educate and ensure attendees are aware of opportunities to provide feedback.
- **PIC No. 2** – The second PIC will present the long-list of potential WWTP sites and the evaluation criteria and weightings that will be used to select the preliminary preferred solution for the new WWTP site; outfall location; and collection system strategy.
- **PIC No. 3** – The third PIC will present the evaluation of alternative sites and the preliminary preferred WWTP site; outfall location; and collection system strategy.
- **PIC No. 4** – The final PIC will present the design alternatives for the preferred solution, preliminary preferred design solution and impacts and mitigation measures.

All PICs will be located at a venue(s) within the study area and follow an “Open House” format with printed display boards and interactive e-communication presenting the study information.

4.6 Internal Stakeholders

4.6.1 Internal Technical Steering Committee

Representatives of relevant Niagara Region departments will be invited to participate in a Niagara Region Technical Steering Committee to facilitate technical input, support decision making and provide an opportunity for regular progress updates.

This Technical Steering committee will also include the GM BluePlan Team and representation from the City of Niagara Falls and City of Thorold

4.6.2 Niagara Region Technical Team

Further representatives of relevant departments will be invited to participate in Niagara Region technical and project meetings.

This includes meeting with the following Niagara Region Departments:

- Water and Wastewater Services
- Wastewater Operations
- Quality and Compliance (Water/Wastewater)
- Transportation Engineering
- Transportation, Planning and Sustainability
- Infrastructure, Planning and Engineering
- Biosolids
- Property
- Communications

4.6.3 Thought Leaders Advisory

To enhance technical discussions, Thought Leaders specializing in Wastewater Treatment, Assimilative Capacity, Approvals and Regulation, and International Waters have been added to the internal team.

Ahead of the evaluation of alternatives, a Thought Leader meeting will be held with GM BluePlan and Niagara Region's technical leads as well as representatives from City of Thorold and City of Niagara Falls.

An additional Thought Leader meeting will be held in Mid-July 2020 to discuss WWTP technologies. Appropriate Thought Leaders will be involved in the discussions with Niagara Region and CIMA.

4.6.4 Online Engagement Team

The Region is committed to engage the public at key study milestones. This engagement team will leverage the Region's existing Facebook page to promote material to all interested parties. This page will be managed and maintained by Region staff with input from GM BluePlan and Redbrick Communications.

4.7 External Stakeholders

4.7.1 External Technical Steering Committee

Representatives of the key external technical stakeholders including OPG, NPCA, MECP, MNRF and MTO will be invited to participate in an External Technical Steering Committee to facilitate technical input, support decision making and provide an opportunity for regular progress updates.

4.7.2 Local Municipalities

The City of Niagara Falls and City of Thorold are key stakeholders in this study and will be consulted throughout the process. A number of staff across several departments will be engaged through all phases of this Class EA.

4.7.3 Councillors

Regional and Local Councillors, in addition to City Clerks, will be notified of all opportunities for consultation for the duration of this Class EA.

Additional sessions will be held with Councillors prior to any public events to ensure Councillors are kept informed.

Due to the scale of the project, GM BluePlan will also prepare regular briefing notes to Council and Staff to ensure they were aware of study progress.

4.7.4 Ministries

Further to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, provincial and federal ministries will receive notifications throughout the EA process. The extent of further consultation with government agencies will be based on the need for mandatory review and input further to the findings and recommendations of the environmental baseline studies and field studies. The Communication and Consultation Plan will ensure that as a minimum the Class EA process is met.

Ministries included on the stakeholder list include:

- Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
- Ontario Ministry of Indigenous Affairs and Housing
- Ontario Ministry of Transportation
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
- Niagara Parks Commission
- Niagara Escarpment Commission

- Peace Bridge Authority
- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- Ontario Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture
- Metrolinx/GO Transit
- Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure
- Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Infrastructure Ontario

4.7.5 Utilities

Relevant utility companies will be contacted to identify any potential conflicts with existing or planned infrastructure. The project team will also consult with utility companies to identify any major utility infrastructure within the study area.

The following local, provincial and federal utility companies will be contacted throughout the Class EA process:

- Bell Canada
- CAA Niagara
- Canadian Automobile Association – South Central Ontario
- Cogeco Cable Niagara
- Canadian Niagara Power Inc.
- Enbridge Gas Distribution Inc.
- Grimsby Power Incorporated
- Hydro One Networks – Zone 2 Scheduling
- Niagara Parks Energy
- Niagara Region Broadband Networks
- Telus
- Ontario Power Generation

4.7.6 Conservation Authorities

Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority is located within the study area and will be actively engaged throughout the study process. The Work Plan includes regular contact with Conservation Authority staff throughout the study process. This close collaboration will ensure a cohesive stakeholder advisory team.

4.7.7 Indigenous Communities

Following the Pre-Class EA meeting with MECP, a list of local indigenous communities for contact was provided to GM BluePlan. Each contact was added to the stakeholder list and will be consulted at all key points and where appropriate for the duration this Class EA.

The following indigenous communities will be contacted throughout the Class EA process:

- Six Nations of the Grand River
- Haudenosaunee Confederacy Chiefs Council
- Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation

4.7.8 Property Owners

Prior to PIC No. 2, property owners will receive notification via phone or direct mail that their property has been selected under the long-list of potential WWTP sites. Respective property owners will be notified as the Project Team progresses through the evaluation process.

During the evaluation process, the long-list of potential WWTP sites will be short-listed. Property owners of the short-listed sites will be invited to meet with GM BluePlan and Niagara Region to discuss siting opportunities and input for evaluation. Properties that are no longer considered under the Class EA will be notified via phone call through Niagara Region.

The Project Team will work with the property owner of the preliminary preferred site directly to ensure subsequent fieldwork and siting investigations are well communicated.

Similarly, properties adjacent to the preliminary preferred deep trunk sewer to reach the preliminary preferred WWTP site will be notified via direct mail of opportunities to consult with the Project Team.

Additional property owners that express concern with the preliminary preferred site will be given opportunity for direct consultation with the Project Team.

5 Class Environmental Assessment Documentation

The final ESR will provide thorough public and agency documentation. The ESR will include a summary of: project notifications; meeting materials; workshops; PICs; comments received; and responses provided. The document will be made available for public review as part of the filing at the conclusion of the SNFWWS Class EA.

5.1 Comments Received Tracking

All comments received from agencies and the public will be documented in the ESR. Comments are likely to be received during PIC events, comment submissions via the Project Website, and review points with respective agencies.

This tracking sheet will include a summary of all comments received and answers provided. All personal information from the public will be redacted in the final ESR document.

5.2 Study Review Period

Once the study is finalized, a Notice of Study Completion will be prepared. The purpose of this notice is to announce the study's completion and begin the minimum 30-day public review period for the final report. Hard copies of the final report will be filed at agreed public facilities. Electronic copies and supporting appendices will also be made available on the project website. As with all the notices, the Notice of Study Completion will be advertised in the local newspaper.