



# Community and Indigenous Engagement Plan

**Name of Long-Term Reliability Project:**

**BESS Belleville 2**

Project location: City of Belleville, Ontario

Qualified Applicant: Hydromega Services Inc

**Long-Term (LT1) RFP**

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## Introduction

The province of Ontario has benefited from strong electricity supply for more than a decade and is now entering into a new period, now facing emerging electricity system needs, driven by increasing demand, the retirement of the Pickering nuclear plant, the refurbishment of other nuclear generating units, as well as expiring contracts for existing facilities. To address these needs, IESO has issued the Long-Term Request for Proposals (LT1 RFP) for the procurement of 2,518 MW of year-round effective capacity from dispatchable new build resources.

In 2022 the IESO issued the Long-Term Request for Qualifications (LT1 RFQ) to establish a list of applicants with the experience and capability to successfully develop, construct and operate facilities acquired through the Expedited Process and the LT1 RFP.

Hydromega Services Inc. (“Hydromega” or the “Proponent”) has been approved by the IESO as a Qualified Applicant as part of LT1 RFP applicants with the experience and capability to successfully develop, construct and operate facilities, and is currently developing, in response to the LT1 RFP, the BESS Belleville 2 Battery Energy Storage System project (“BESS Belleville 2” or the “Project” or “Long-Term Reliability Project”), located in the City of Belleville in the province of Ontario. The Project will provide up to 451 megawatts (MW) of electricity to the grid when dispatched by the IESO to help ensure a reliable electricity supply in the region.

## 1. Proponent Information

Hydromega Services Inc. is a Quebec pioneer in the production of renewable energy. For more than 35 years, Hydromega Services Inc. has been developing, building, and operating electricity production facilities, first in Quebec and then in Ontario since 2005. Hydromega was the first independent producer to operate hydroelectric power plants transferred by HydroQuébec. Hydromega was also one of the first developers of wind farms with an installed capacity of 949 MW, which represents nearly 25% of the installed capacity in Quebec. Hydromega Services Inc. also has a portfolio of solar, battery and biogas projects in Quebec and Ontario.

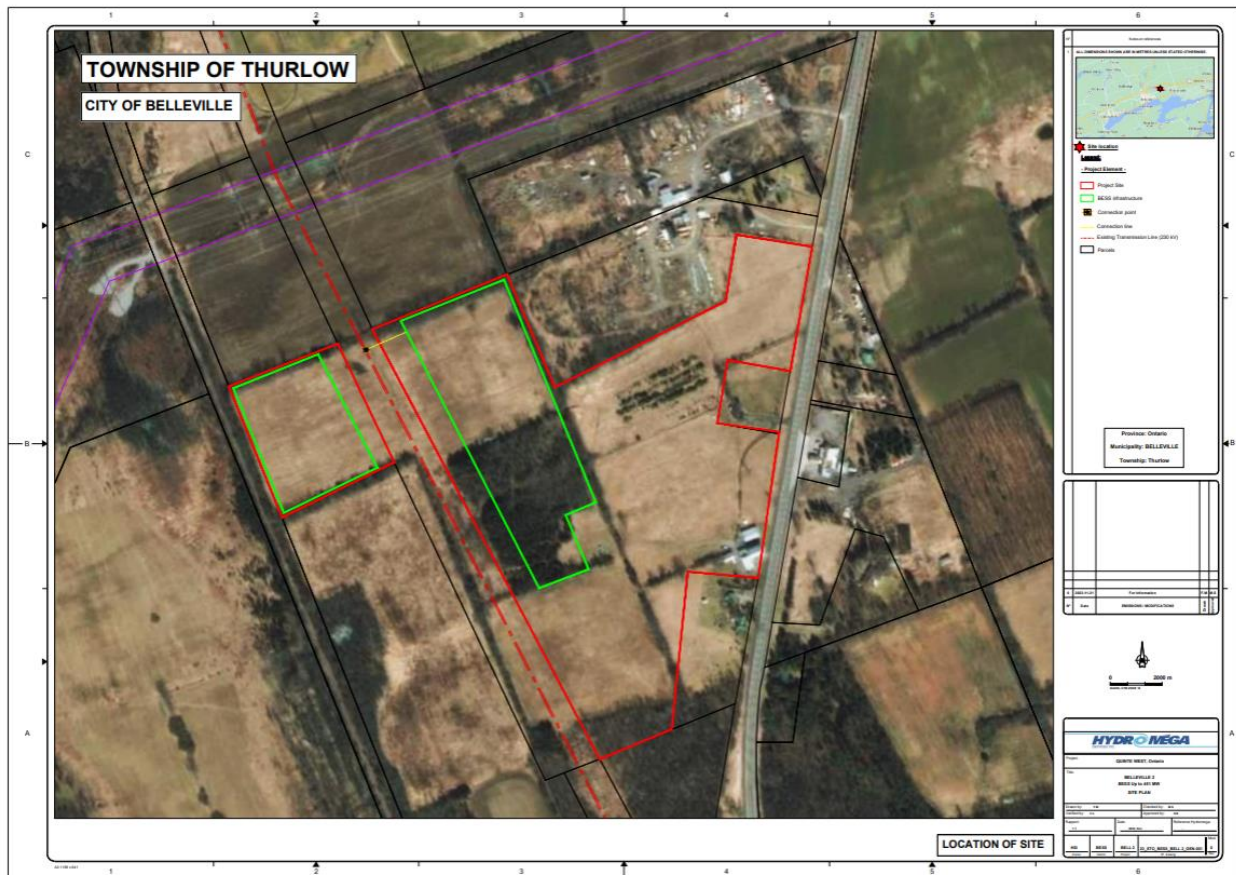
For the purpose of BESS Belleville 2, in addition to its proven track record in developing successful renewable projects, Hydromega will be able to rely on additional expertise from FirstLight Power ("FirstLight"). On September 13 2023, FirstLight, a leading clean power producer, developer, and energy storage company serving North America, announced that it has finalized an agreement to acquire Hydromega Services Inc. With a diversified portfolio that includes over 1,650 MW of operating renewable energy and energy storage technologies and a development pipeline with 2,000+ MW of solar, battery, and offshore wind projects, FirstLight specializes in hybrid solutions that pair hydroelectric, pumped-hydro storage, utility-scale solar, large-scale battery, and offshore wind assets. The company's mission is to accelerate the decarbonization of the electric grid by supporting the development, operation, and integration of renewable energy and storage to meet the world's growing clean energy needs and deliver an electric system that is clean, reliable, affordable, and equitable.

Please be advised that there have been changes since we initially sent the invitation to the public meeting for the project. The project proponent and the project name have both been updated.

The new project proponent is now **BESS ONCAN II LP**, and the revised project name is **BESS Belleville 2**

## 2. Project Information

A plan of the Project site will be shared with all Project's stakeholders and will be amended as needed, based on discussions held.



### 3. Community Engagement Objectives

Hydromega has created this Community and Indigenous Engagement Plan in respect of the Long-Term Reliability Project and as a tool to provide structured and relevant way to communication and engage with stakeholders and indigenous communities and other interested parties throughout the Project's development and with having in mind that giving a voice to the community and indigenous groups for them to share their views on the Project will be instrumental to its success. For the purpose of developing BESS Belleville 2, Hydromega will put the emphasis on the following engagement objectives:

- Provide an overview of LT1 RFP process and engagement objectives;
- Share Proponent and Project Information;
- Identify potential community stakeholders;
- Outline the engagements activities completed to this date and to come;
- Maintain open communication with key interested parties for future engagement initiatives;
- Provide opportunities for feedback;
- Gather and address any community feedback, concerns, questions.
- Foster and maintain open, transparent, and effective communications with all stakeholders to build a trusting and supportive environment.

It should be noted that the proposed objectives are relevant but may be adjusted to include additional outreach and engagement activities as part of the on-going discussions between the Proponent and all interested parties during the Project development phase or during the Project construction, operation and decommissioning phases should BESS Belleville 2 be selected by the IESO as a contract recipient of the LT1 RFP.

### 4. Stakeholders Identification and Engagement Process

Hydromega recognizes the importance of identifying in an early stage of the development of the Project stakeholders and opportunities for engagement with the local community to ensure the Project is developed through an open, inclusive, and transparent approach. The Proponent summarizes in sections 3.1 and 3.2 the Stakeholders identified for BESS Belleville 2 along with the associated engagement initiatives completed and to come.

## 4.1 Stakeholders Identification

Hydromega will establish the Project contact list that identify all Stakeholders group that will be consulted for the Project. The entities included in this list will be regularly notified of the

Project milestones, events, and opportunities for involvement. The initial contact list for the Project includes:

- Landowners
- Property owners adjacent to the Project property boundaries
- Indigenous communities
- Non-profit/non-governmental interest groups
- Municipalities and Elected Officials
- Quinte Conservation Authority

The list will be updated throughout the Project's lifecycle, as applicable, to include all entities, groups, or persons, who have demonstrated an interest in or who could be impacted by the Project.

## 4.2 Engagement Process

Hydromega Community and Indigenous engagement process includes a number of communications methods to inform the public on Project details and to engage with stakeholders and indigenous communities to gather their feedback and address questions, in compliance with the requirements outlined in the IESO LT1 RFP and drawing from industry best practices as well. The optimal engagement approaches and activities to inform and consult the community and indigenous groups from the early stage of development through the decommissioning phase of the Project are described below. The Proponent may adjust the means of communication or initiatives of this list from time to time, as deemed relevant, as new information is gathered on the Project during the engagement process.

### Pre-Contract/ Development Phase

Following the identification of key stakeholders, Hydromega will emphasise on the following engagement initiatives which will be deploy according to the provision outlined in the IESO LT1 RFP document.

- Deliver a notice (via registered mail) of the Public Community Meeting to the following groups, depending on what will be applicable to BESS Belleville 2 project:
  - Each owner or occupant of Property located adjacent to the boundaries of the Properties that, in whole or in part, constitute the Project Site;
  - Chief Administrative Officer of the City of Belleville; and
  - Each local Indigenous Community corresponding to the Indigenous Lands on which the Project Site is located in whole or in part.
- Create and publish of a Project website

- Create and publish of a Community and Indigenous Engagement Plan on the Project website. BESS ONCAN II LP will also share a copy of such plan with the City of Belleville where the project is located and seek inputs, as applicable.
- Hold one (1) in-person Public Community Meeting prior to LT1 RFP deadline of December 12, 2023. BESS ONCAN II LP is working on the planning of such meeting for the second week of November 2023.
- Create and publish Public Community Meeting Minutes on Project website following the completing of the Public Community Meeting.
- Hold, during the first Public Community Meeting, a question-and-answer session for the public attending the meeting in order to provide them with an opportunity to ask questions, raise concerns and get answers from the Proponent.
- Inform and consult on an on-going basis, stakeholders and indigenous communities and adjust development approach or initiatives or update Project Documentation, as deemed relevant.

As the development of the Project progresses, Hydromega will continue to inform and consult stakeholders and indigenous communities of any relevant update, monitoring and managing inputs from these groups as applicable, along with ensuring to meet all applicable municipal and provincial environmental and permitting requirements. Other engagement initiatives will include to update the Project website on a regular basis, pursue on-going collaboration and discussions efforts with Indigenous groups, Municipal officials, public agencies, and any other parties that may be affected, involved and/or interested in the Project..

#### Construction Phase

Should the Project be awarded a contract with IESO as part of the LT1 RFP, BESS ONCAN II LP engagement activities initiated during the development of BESS Belleville 2 will carry on during the construction phase. Those activities will include, but won't be limited to:

- Ensuring that all identified stakeholders remain informed of any Project update;
- Develop, in coordination with the City and local first responders, a Security and Safety Response Plan
- Training of the local first responders prior to the start of Project operations and on an annual basis thereafter;
- Gathering feedback, addressing concerns, requests, complaints raised by the community;
- Update the Project website and any other relevant Project Documentation as new Project information is gathered.

#### Operation Phase

During this Phase, Hydromega will ensure that engagement efforts focus on the management of the safe operation of the BESS facility, on developing and coordinating any public safety protocol as applicable, manage/update any landowner/municipal and Indigenous agreements relating to the Project and support local communities' initiatives and causes when possible.

#### Decommissioning Phase

At the end of the Project's life, it is anticipated that the Project will be decommissioned and

consequently, Hydromega will prepare a Decommissioning Plan based on industry best practices and compliant with all municipal and provincial requirements and regulations. Landowners, the City, and other interested parties will be engaged to ensure that the community is informed of the Decommissioning Plan.

## 5. Community Feedback and Questions

Hydromega takes responsibility in actively engaging and in gathering and timely addressing feedback and answering questions or making frequently asked questions available to inform and support, as needed, all Project's interested stakeholders. This collaborative approach is imperative for the Proponent in gaining a better understanding of potential social, economic, environmental and/or archeological impacts and developing a project where Community satisfaction is central to its success.

### 5.1 Community Feedback Mechanism

As part of this Community and Indigenous Engagement Plan, Hydromega commits to analyse, respond, and act on any community questions, concerns, suggestions, requests received via the Public Community Meeting, the Project website (<https://hydromega.com/en/belleville2/>) and/or through any other project-related engagement activities.

For Hydromega, feedback from the stakeholders and indigenous community is critical to mitigate impacts and improve Project's success and will be recorded, analysed, and addressed by the Proponent, as deemed relevant.

### 5.2 Frequently Asked Questions

The Proponent summarizes below some of the most frequently asked questions asked by the Community on BESS project and its responses. This list isn't exhaustive and will be updated as necessary as we receive new question from on-going and future discussion with the various project's stakeholders. To be noted that a separate document, the Meeting Minutes of the Public Community Meeting, will be posted on the Project website, will incorporate additional project-specific questions and answers asked by the public at the Public Community Meeting and will be posted on the Project website, under Project Documentation section.

#### **What does a BESS look like and how does it connect to the grid?**

A BESS facility is typically a containerised, modular systems that can be configured based on specific site and capacity requirements. However, BESS technology is continuously evolving, with BESS components becoming increasingly more efficient and compact in size. A BESS facility connects to the grid either via an overhead or underground transmission connection to a nearby terminal station or substation.

#### **Is a BESS considered clean energy?**

Yes. Battery Energy Storage System plays an important role in accelerating the energy transition in Ontario and more specifically in the replacement of fossil fuels with renewable energy. BESS is a source of energy that emits almost no pollution in the air. The electricity system has historically operated on a “just-in-time” basis, with decisions about electricity production based on real-time demand and the availability of transmission to deliver it. Now, with energy storage technology on the rise in markets such as the province of Ontario, greater amounts of electricity can be captured and dispatched to the grid whenever they are needed as a BESS can absorb surplus generation from renewable and other energy sources during off-peak hours and inject it back into the system when demand is higher.

**What are the potential noise impacts of a BESS?**

The impact of a BESS on the quality of life should be minimal or zero, in some instances. Primary noise sources that may arise from a BESS are inverters, primary transformers, low-voltage to medium-voltage transformers and/or the cooling system for the battery containers. The noise will vary depending on the relative location of residents’ home or property from the BESS facility, the time of day, and the weather conditions. Hydromega will conduct a detailed analysis of potential noise impacts prior to the Project being permitted and constructed, share study results with the public and required agencies, mitigate impacts as applicable and ensure that the BESS facility is compliant with applicable provincial noise regulations. To be noted that options exist to reduce the noise emission of BESS, should it be necessary, such as the determination of the battery system used, orientation of the HVAC units, deployment of sound barriers (e.g., noise wall and/or landscaping option), etc.

**Can a BESS generate fire hazards, and should the local residents be worried?**

BESS projects in operation are safely installed in urban areas and should not be a concern for local residents. That said, it is important to select the best technology and Hydromega will go through a detailed and rigorous process for the selection of the battery manufacturer. Nowadays, all BESS facilities in Ontario will be developed and designed in compliance with UL Standard 9540A which requires a battery design to control fire propagation. Additionally, battery design typically incorporates battery spacing, feature to monitor onboard temperature, and suppression systems to ensure the BESS facility is considered as safe as possible. Therefore, while the risk of a fire is considered an unlikely event, Hydromega will ensure to take a number of preventive measures to avoid such fire hazard or mitigate the risk as much as possible, namely by ensuring that its local operations team to maintain the highest safety standards relating to the operation and maintenance of the BESS facility, by maintaining a collaborative and open communication approach with the City and local first responders on Site Security and Safety Response protocol and trainings and by maintaining the Project area around the containers clear of vegetation (where applicable).