

8. Consultation

Consultation is an important part of the EA process. It is a constant exchange of information between the proponent and those who may be interested in, or potentially affected by the Undertaking. The MECP's Code of Practice⁵⁶ provides guidance on consultation activities to be undertaken as part of the EA. This section provides an overview of the stakeholders consulted, communication and consultation activities carried out, as well as the input received on the Ridge Landfill EA. The full report including record of all correspondence, meetings and engagement activities can be found in **Appendix B - EA Record of Consultation**.

8.1 EA Consultation Objectives

The overall goal of the EA consultation program was to prioritize an open dialogue with stakeholders, particularly residents, businesses, and Indigenous Communities and Organizations, throughout the EA process. The objectives of the consultation activities for the EA were to:

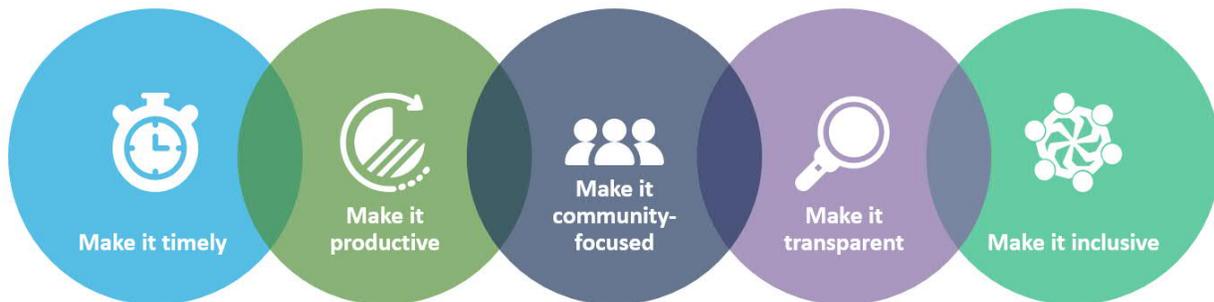
- Generate and maintain awareness of the Project;
- Gain insight into how the community wishes to be consulted; and
- Listen to, and address stakeholder input and concerns about the Project.

Waste Connections adopted five (5) consultation and communication principles for the EA, see **Figure 8-1**. Through on-going effort during the EA, the consultation program was able to:

- Maintain and nurture existing relationships, cultivate new Project contacts, and encourage open communication;
- Notify stakeholders, review agencies and the public in a timely manner regarding opportunities to provide input at key decision points;
- Continue to develop Waste Connections' understanding of any community issues and concerns;
- Identify issues that could arise from the Project and where possible, address and resolve these issues; and
- Provide the MECP with information regarding how issues and concerns were addressed through the process as input to the Minister's decision on the EA.

⁵⁶ Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (2014, January). Code of Practice: Consultation in Ontario's Environmental Assessment Process. Queen's Printer for Ontario. Retrieved from <https://www.ontario.ca/page/consultation-ontarios-environmental-assessment-process>

FIGURE 8-1: GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE EA CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES



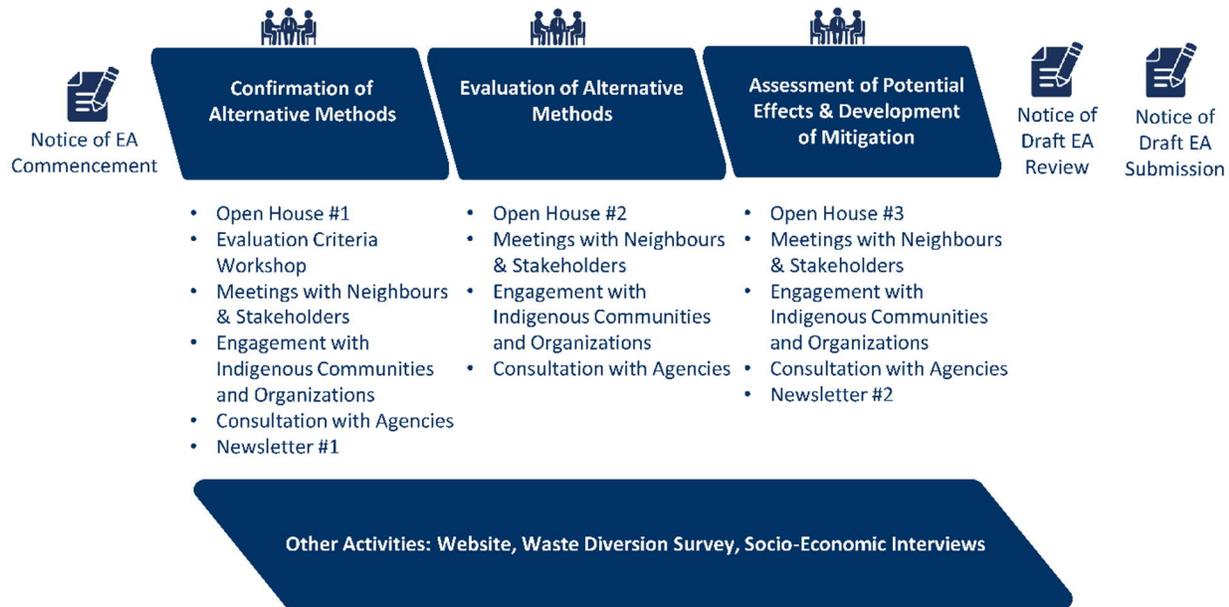
8.2 Overview of EA Consultation Process

Consistent with the ToR Record of Consultation, there were three (3) key milestones during the EA process where input from stakeholders was specifically sought out.

1. **Confirmation of Alternative Methods** – One-on-one neighbour, stakeholder and Indigenous Communities and Organization meetings, an evaluation criteria workshop, Open House #1 and a newsletter provided opportunities for the community to learn about and provide input on the alternative methods and the evaluation approach and criteria;
2. **Evaluation of Alternative Methods** - One-on-one neighbour, stakeholder and Indigenous Communities and Organization meetings and Open House #2 provided opportunities for the community to learn about and provide input on the evaluation of alternative methods; and
3. **Assessment of Potential Effects and Development of Mitigation Measures for Preferred Alternative Method** - One-on-one neighbour, stakeholder and Indigenous Communities and Organization meetings, Open House #3 and a newsletter provided the community opportunities to learn about and provide input on the preferred alternative including measures to mitigate potential effects.

Figure 8-2 illustrates the consultation that occurred at each of the three (3) key milestones during the EA process.

FIGURE 8-2: EA KEY MILESTONES AND ASSOCIATED CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES



8.3 Stakeholders Consulted

The Project was of interest to many in the community and consultation activities were designed to reach a wide audience. The stakeholders consulted over the course of the EA included:

- Landowners within 1 km of the site and along the haul route;
- Ridge Landfill Liaison Committee;
- Ridge Landfill Community Trust;
- Municipality of Chatham-Kent elected officials;
- Municipality of Chatham-Kent municipal staff;
- Adjacent municipalities;
- Provincial and federal elected officials;
- Provincial and federal regulatory agencies;
- Participants from past EA processes;
- The general public;
- Indigenous Communities and Organizations; and
- Other stakeholders (e.g., agricultural organizations, local conservation authority, businesses and business organizations, school boards, etc.).

In a dedicated effort to keep everyone informed and updated, contacts from the last Ridge Landfill EA project (1997) and the last environmental screening process (2012) to increase the maximum annual fill rate were included on the project contact list. As a living document, the Project contact list was continuously updated to include new participants as the Project unfolded.

A detailed list of stakeholders consulted during the EA is included in **Appendix B - EA Record of Consultation**.

8.4 Overview of Consultation Activities Completed

The consultation activities that were conducted for the EA were developed in accordance with the requirements of the MECP's Code of Practice, and created opportunities for interested parties to provide feedback. This section summarizes the consultation activities completed as part of the development of the EA. A detailed overview of the consultation activities carried out with public stakeholders, Indigenous Communities and Organizations, and agencies is included in **Section 4.0 to Section 6.0 of Appendix B – EA Record of Consultation**.

8.4.1 Public

Public consultation is a critical part of a project as it aids in developing a clearer understanding of community issues and priorities. Waste Connections has a history of positive relations with the local communities of Charing Cross, Cedar Springs, Blenheim and the broader community of Chatham-Kent. To maintain this strong relationship, Waste Connections put considerable effort into developing a consultation program that was inclusive and flexible to meet the needs of the community. This included a personalized approach to notification regarding the Project.

Consultation with the public during EA development occurred through a variety of touch points, see **Table 8-1**.

TABLE 8-1: EA CONSULTATION TOUCH POINTS

Touch Points	Description
Mandatory Notices and Other Notifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EA Notices were published in local newspapers (Blenheim News Tribune, Chatham Voice, Chatham Daily News and Chatham This Week). Personalized notification of the Project was undertaken for all those on the Project contact list. This included on-site residents, landowners within 1 km of the property and those along the haul route, as well as municipal staff, agencies and other stakeholders. Effort was made to ensure that neighbours and haul route residents/businesses received information about the Project concurrent with the placement of notices in the newspapers. Ongoing communication with municipal, provincial and federal officials was undertaken to ensure they were aware of the Project in a timely fashion to allow for discussion with their constituents.
Landfill Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The “Future Plans” section of the landfill website, which was added during the ToR development, provided easy access to information about the Project as well as an on-line contact form to provide comments.
Community Newsletter and Operational Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ridge community newsletter was distributed to landowners around the site, along the haul route and within the communities of Blenheim, Charing Cross and Cedar Springs providing information about the Project as well as information about the Ridge Landfill. Waste Connections has also been sending periodic Operational Updates to neighbours. These updates are provided to neighbours within 1 km of the site when there is a specific topic to share (e.g., installation of new wells added to the gas collection system, planned maintenance event).
Stakeholder Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings were held with stakeholders who expressed an interest in the Project to provide information about the proposed expansion.
Evaluation Criteria Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An evaluation criteria workshop was held to gather input on the Study Areas, criteria and evaluation approach that Waste Connections intended to use to evaluate the alternative methods for the proposed site development alternative, LFG and leachate collection system.

Touch Points	Description
Open Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three (3) public Open Houses were held during the EA development. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ July 25, 2018 Open House: provided an update on the project, and sought feedback on evaluation criteria for alternative methods, technical discipline study areas, proposed site development alternatives, and ways diversion activities could be enhanced, either at the Ridge or within Waste Connections' integrated system. Attendees had the opportunity to sign-up to participate in an interview for the socio-economic impact assessment, see Appendix D9 – Socio-Economic Impact Assessment. ○ December 6, 2018 Open House: focused on gathering feedback on the preliminary evaluation of alternatives to expand the Ridge Landfill. ○ July 11, 2019 Open House: provided an update on the project and sought feedback on the results of the detailed impact assessment of the preferred alternative for the Ridge Landfill.
Draft EA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The draft EA was made available for a 45-day public and agency review to provide an opportunity for members of the community to provide feedback on the Project. The draft EA Report was made available for public review beginning on July 23, 2019 and ending on September 6, 2019.
Final EA	<p><i>A letter regarding the Notice of Submission will be sent to public stakeholders in the Fall of 2019 when the EA is formally submitted. This letter will be authored by the MECP.</i></p>

8.4.2 Indigenous Community and Organizations Engagement

Indigenous Communities and Organizations have constitutionally protected rights and offer a unique environmental understanding based on indigenous relationships with the land. It was the objective of Waste Connections to develop meaningful opportunities to engage with Indigenous Communities and Organizations throughout the EA process by providing information as well as receiving input and being responsive to concerns that may arise.

Over the course of the EA, Waste Connections continued to build on its relationship with Indigenous Communities and Organizations that were initiated as part of the ToR. Indigenous Communities and Organizations that may have a territorial interest in the Ridge Landfill were identified in collaboration with the MECP and through the previous environmental screening process in 2012.

The Indigenous Communities and Organizations contacted as part of the EA were as follows:

- Aamjiwnaang First Nation;
- Caldwell First Nation;
- Chiefs of Ontario;
- Chippewas of the Thames First Nation;
- Kettle-Stoney Point First Nation;
- Métis Nation of Ontario;
- Moravian of the Thames First Nation;
- Munsee-Delaware Nation;
- Oneida Nation of the Thames First Nation; and
- Walpole Island First Nation.

Indigenous Communities and Organizations were notified at various stages of the EA process, see **Table 8-2**. Waste Connections continued to retain Counsel Public Affairs Inc., specifically Mr. John Beaucage, a well-respected First Nation leader to lead the engagement process throughout the EA. Letters and emails were sent to all on the Indigenous Communities and Organizations contact list to notify them of the public Open Houses before announcements were made through the local media. The letters requested that John Beaucage be contacted if they wanted an in-person meeting.

Aamjiwnaang First Nation, Caldwell First Nation, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation (COTTFN) and Walpole Island First Nation (WIFN) contacted Waste Connections over the course of the EA. Aamjiwnaang First Nation requested to be kept informed on how the Project progresses and Caldwell First Nation requested an overview of consultation between Waste Connections and the community. The COTTFN and WIFN expressed an interest to meet with Waste Connections. Waste Connections met once with COTTFN and three (3) times with WIFN during the EA.

TABLE 8-2: EA NOTIFICATIONS FOR INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Method of Communication	Purpose
Letter and Phone Call June 14 th , 2018	A letter was distributed to inform Indigenous Communities and Organizations that the ToR received approval from the MECP and to formally announce the EA commencement. The letter also included an invitation to Open House #1. In addition to the letter, Counsel Public Affairs Inc. contacted the Indigenous Communities and Organizations by telephone on June 25 th , 2018.
Letter November 16 th , 2018	A letter was distributed to invite Indigenous Communities and Organizations to Open House #2.
Email January 14 th , 2019	An email was distributed to inform the Indigenous Communities and Organizations that the Interim Alternative Methods Report and the Review of Diversion Options Report were available for review. The email also provided information that the materials for Open House #2 are available online.
Letter June 24 th , 2019	A letter was distributed to inform Indigenous Communities and Organizations that the draft EA will be available for review beginning on July 23, 2019 and ending on September 6, 2019. The letter also included an invitation to Open House #3.
Letter Fall, 2019	<i>A letter regarding the Notice of Submission will be sent to Indigenous Communities and Organizations in the Fall of 2019 when the EA is formally submitted. This letter will be authored by the MECP.</i>

8.4.3 Agency

Throughout the EA development, agencies were invited to participate and provide comments. Local, provincial, and federal agencies were included on the Project contact list and received all Project notices. The objectives of consultation with agencies was to inform them of the Project, understand their issues and obtain their feedback on the data collection, evaluation, and assessment steps in the EA.

Waste Connections proactively reached out to key agencies to set up conference calls and meetings with agencies that were expected to have an interest in the Project and who may have important information related to completion of the EA. Conference calls were held with the MECP, MNRF, MTO, and the LTVC. In-person meetings were held with the MECP,

Municipality of Chatham-Kent and the Chatham-Kent Municipal Airport. Input received at these meetings was documented through meeting minutes, which are included in **Appendix B – EA Record of Consultation**.

8.5 Summary of Issues and Concerns Raised

Maintaining an open dialogue with public stakeholders, Indigenous Communities and Organizations, and agencies is important to Waste Connections and represents a key part of the EA process. Key issues and concerns raised through the various consultation activities with public stakeholders, Indigenous Communities and Organizations, and agencies included specific discussions the evaluation of the preferred alternatives; management of odour, blowing litter, groundwater, traffic, and visual impacts; woodlot removal and compensation; property values and compensation; and, waste diversion.

Table 8-3 provides a summary of the key issues and concerns raised over the course of the EA. A complete record of issues and concerns raised and Waste Connections responses is included in **Appendix B - EA Record of Consultation**:

- Comment and Response Table for engagement with public stakeholders;
- Comment and Response Table for engagement with Indigenous Communities and Organizations; and
- Comment and Response Table for engagement with agencies.

Stakeholders who attended the various consultation events indicated that they appreciated being included in continued discussions during the EA process, and valued the willingness of the Project Team to consider their suggestions.

TABLE 8-3: SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Key Issues and Concerns	Response
Odour is a concern amongst neighbours.	All available means including daily soil cover, odour control systems, and LFG capture are employed to minimize odour. These practices will continue to be included as part of the expansion.
Blowing litter, and site maintenance need to be addressed.	Litter pick-up and site maintenance are undertaken regularly at the site. Please contact the Ridge Landfill with specific site maintenance concerns and landfill staff will work to address them.

Key Issues and Concerns	Response
Back-up beepers are noisy	Back-up beepers are used to ensure the safety of all site users and staff. We are currently investigating lower decibel back-up beepers for our equipment.
Will there be additional truck traffic?	The annual waste disposal tonnage at the site will not increase. Additional waste truck traffic is therefore not anticipated.
Road conditions on the haul route are poor.	Waste Connections will continue to work with Chatham-Kent to complete timely road maintenance on the designated haul route.
Landfill trucks use roads other than the haul route and don't obey traffic rules (speed, stop signs).	Drivers will be reminded to use the designated haul route and new signs have been put up to better direct drivers. Develop a protocol for truck drivers to use the haul route.
Will the site contaminate my residential well?	There is greater than 30 m of natural clay below the landfill and each landfill cell has been constructed with a leachate collection system to prevent impacts from the site. 20+ years of monitoring has not identified any impact to groundwater.
Will hazardous waste be brought to Ridge?	Only IC&I Waste and Chatham-Kent municipal waste will be allowed at Ridge Landfill. No hazardous waste is or will be allowed.
What will be done about crows?	The fill area is covered daily to reduce the attractants for birds. The landfill also uses proactive measures (birds of prey / falconry and noise scare) to control the amount of birds.
Woodlot removal is a concern.	For every tree removed two trees will be replanted.
Need to communicate more with neighbours.	Waste Connections is committed to more regular dialogue. Operations Updates are regularly mailed to all neighbours within 1 km of the site. Neighbours are also encouraged to contact the landfill management staff with any questions or to discuss concerns.
Will property value protection and compensation	Waste Connections will update the current

Key Issues and Concerns	Response
be provided?	compensation and property value protection plan once the EA is complete.

8.6 Summary of How Stakeholder Feedback Mattered

In every consultation program, participants want to know that their input mattered. All comments received were reviewed by the EA team and adjustments were made where appropriate. The following outlines some of the specific changes made to address the input received:

- Based on feedback received during the development of the ToR, Waste Connections re-designed its website to make it easily navigable for viewers. The “Future Plans” page of the website was launched on the date the Notice of Commencement for the ToR was released, announcing the proposed expansion.
- At the Evaluation Criteria Workshop in June 2018 attendees noted that they would like Waste Connections to communicate more with neighbours. Since the workshop, Waste Connections has been sending periodic Operational Updates to neighbours. These updates are provided to neighbours within a kilometer of the site either when there is a specific topic to share, or on a quarterly basis to keep neighbours informed.
- Waste Connections received a variety of traffic-related feedback at the Evaluation Criteria Workshop and Open House #1 and #2. Following the workshop and Open House #1, Waste Connections met with Chatham-Kent departments, including waste services, transportation services and the public utilities commission, to discuss community concerns related to traffic safety and road improvements. Actions so far include:
 - Chatham-Kent has added new signs to the haul route to help ensure that drivers stay on the right path;
 - Waste Connections ran an education blitz to the drivers and the companies that use the Ridge to remind them to follow the signs; and
 - Council recently approved repairs to Drury Line using the Ridge Landfill’s Roads Maintenance Fund and these upgrades will occur this year.
- At Open House #1, attendees voiced concerns with landfill mining being considered as an alternative due to potential odour, dust and noise impacts. The input was considered in consultation with the technical work completed as part of the EA and the site development alternative that included landfill mining was not selected as the preferred

alternative. Support for the decision to remove landfill mining as an alternative was also voiced by WIFN.

- At the Open Houses, blowing litter was identified as a concern to the neighbouring agricultural land uses. As a result, a high perimeter fence will be installed downwind of the predominant wind direction at the working area boundary of the landfill. In addition temporary litter fences will continue to be used to control blowing litter at the active landfill face. To further reduce the potential effects of litter on adjacent farm fields, regular off-site patrols near neighbouring properties will continue to be conducted. The landfill has a litter control plan for high wind conditions and this plan will be refined with climate change future predictions in mind. The revised plan will continue to be used and updated regularly by Waste Connections.
- Waste Connections received feedback from local residents and staff at the Chatham-Kent Municipal Airport that bird control activities at the Ridge should be coordinated with flight activities at the Chatham-Kent Municipal Airport. Waste Connections' project manager is in communication with airport staff regarding coordinating bird management activities. Waste Connections' project manager is also a member of the Airport Committee.
- Waste Connections altered the berm design based on a request received from a landfill neighbour.
- Stakeholders expressed that they would like to see the southeast woodlot remain unaltered. This input was considered during the technical work and the southeast woodlot will remain. Restoration plantings associated with the removal of the southwest woodlot are being planned for 2020 in collaboration with Indigenous Communities and Organizations (e.g., COTTFN and WIFN) and the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA). Tree removal will be compensated at a 2:1 ratio.
- Based on one-on-one meetings and concerns heard from local residents, the criteria "potential impacts to water supply wells" was added to the alternative methods evaluation. Private off-site groundwater well monitoring will continue where requested.
- The MECP identified that climate change should be added as an evaluation criteria. The following climate change criteria were added:
 - Potential for greenhouse gas emissions during construction and operation; and
 - Resilience of engineered systems.
- Waste Connections heard a variety of perspectives on waste diversion at the Ridge Landfill. Overall, local residents noted that more diversion is a good thing; however, concern was

expressed that a large-scale facility at the Ridge would add traffic and other disruptions to neighbours. This input, in addition to communication with the MECP, has led to the conclusion for Waste Connections to explore ways to support provincial waste initiative in other locations.

- WIFN provided comments on the Ridge Landfill: Annual Site Development, Operations and Monitoring Report. The comments focused on creating a clearer conceptual site model and obtaining a better understanding of the monitoring practices. The comments were considered as part of the Design and Operations Report in the following Appendix to the EA document - **Appendix D6 – Design and Operations Report**.
- WIFN expressed an interest in overseeing the archaeological field work for the proposed expansion of the Ridge Landfill. Waste Connections' project manager kept WIFN informed about the timing of the archaeological fieldwork. The archaeological fieldwork was attended by six (6) WIFN community members.
- Chippewas of the Thames First Nation expressed an interest in the replanting of trees inquiring whether some of the planting could occur on their property. Waste Connections' project manager discussed this opportunity with the Nation and 3,000 trees will be planted on their lands which are in the same ecoregion as the Ridge.