



Southern Bruce natural gas expansion project moving forward:

EPCOR files “Leave To Construct” application with OEB

Residents, schools, hospitals, farms and other local businesses are one step closer to realizing natural gas supply in the Municipality of Kincardine, Huron-Kinloss and Arran-Elderslie with EPCOR having recently filed applications for the final regulatory approval needed from the Ontario Energy Board.

Known as the leave to construct and rates applications, EPCOR seeks approval to construct the natural gas distribution system and to establish rates for Southern Bruce consumers.

On September 20, 2018 the Province introduced new legislation to facilitate natural gas expansion. “We are extremely encouraged by Premier Ford’s prompt action in introducing Bill 32, the *Access to Natural Gas Act, 2018*” said Mayor Mitch Twolan.

Bill 32, if passed, will provide the necessary tools for the provincial government to enable the private sector, working with local communities, to expand natural gas infrastructure. But regulatory tools are also required to make sure that the extensive work the Southern Bruce communities have made over many years is recognized and respected, and that no further delays arise.

“During the recent provincial election campaign, the Conservatives emphasized the importance of new investment and jobs and lower energy prices for Ontarians. Our Southern Bruce natural gas expansion project will deliver significant benefits in all these critical areas” said Mayor Anne Eadie. “We cannot wait any longer, and need the provincial government to act to provide us and EPCOR with the legal and regulatory mechanisms to bring the project to completion.”

“My fellow Mayors and I are grateful that Premier Ford is committed to eliminating wasteful bureaucratic red tape to ensure quick and efficient regulatory approvals. We are all relying on EPCOR being able to receive its final OEB approval by the early New Year so construction on our gas expansion project can start in the spring, 2019” said Mayor Paul Eagleson. “We also applaud the Premier’s commitment to respect local decision-making, like the process we went through to select and approve through a competitive process EPCOR as the utility to serve our communities.”

With major equipment and preconstruction activities planned for this fall, the province needs to act as quickly as possible to achieve the goal of natural gas expansion in Southern Bruce in a way that will not affect taxpayers.

Mayor Eadie said, "Over the past 6 years our municipalities have worked tirelessly to bring natural gas to our region. It is critical that the Province continue to move swiftly to enact Bill 32 and its regulations so EPCOR can begin to lay pipe as soon as possible after receiving OEB approval."

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