

WEBEQUIE SUPPLY ROAD FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REPORT / IMPACT STATEMENT

January 30, 2026

AtkinsRéalis Ref: 661910

SECTION 14: Assessment of Effects on Social Environment



WEBEQUIE FIRST NATION

AtkinsRéalis



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14. Assessment of Effects on Social Environment

The Social Environment identified several Valued Components (VC) during the VC scoping and selection as part of the Environmental Assessment / Impact Assessment (EA/IS) process. This section describes and assesses the potential effects that the Project may have on the Social Environment VCs.

The existing social conditions were established through baseline studies consisting of a review of secondary sources of literature, online sources, government and industry databases, engagement and consultation, and primary data collection (surveys, focus groups and key knowledge holder interviews), as well as expert opinion. The results of the baseline studies are found in Appendix L (Socio-Economic Existing Conditions Report).

The assessment of potential effects for the Social Environment VCs is presented in the following manner:

- Scope of the Assessment;
- Existing Conditions Summary;
- Potential Effects, Pathways, and Indicators;
- Mitigation and Enhancement Measures;
- Characterization of Net Effects;
- Determination of Significance;
- Cumulative Effects;
- Prediction of Confidence in the Assessment;
- Predicted future Condition of the Environment if the Project does not proceed;
- Follow-up and Monitoring Programs; and
- References.

14.1 Scope of the Assessment

14.1.1 Regulatory and Policy Setting

The Social Environment VCs are in accordance with the requirements of the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC), *Impact Assessment Act* (IA Act), the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act*, the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines (TISG) for the Project (Appendix A-1), the provincial approved EA Terms of Reference (ToR) (Appendix A-2), and EA/IA guidance documents.

Key legislation, regulations, frameworks and policies relevant to the effects assessment of the Social Environment VCs for the Project are presented in **Table 14-1**.

Table 14-1: Key Regulations, Legislation, and Policies relevant to Social Environment

Responsible Agency	Regulation, Legislation, or Policy	Project Relevance
Federal		
Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC)	<i>Impact Assessment Act (2023)</i>	The Project is subject to the federal <i>Impact Assessment Act</i> (refer to Section 02). The TISG issued by IAAC (2020) for the Project (Appendix A-1) were used to identify requirements for the assessment of the economic environment.
IAAC	Practitioner’s Guide to Federal Impact Assessments	The Project follows the policy frameworks, guidance documents and templates provided in the Guide to Impact Assessment (IA) by IAAC (2023).
IAAC	Guidance: Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) in Impact Assessment	The Project refers to the guidance document on GBA+, which is a component of the Practitioner’s guide to federal IAs under the <i>Impact Assessment Act (2023)</i> .
Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada / Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)	<i>Indian Act (1985)</i>	Project development on designated reserve land (or implicated via spatial bounds) will be subject to provisions and oversight via the <i>Indian Act (1985)</i> . The assessment will also consider Project effects related to the economic mandate associated with the <i>Indian Act</i> in relation to governance, infrastructure funding, economic development, housing, cost of living and well-being related to First Nations.
ISC	<i>Indian Act</i> and Indian Timber Harvesting Regulations (2002)	Timber removal on Federal land jurisdiction within the Project footprint may be subjected to <i>Indian Timber Harvesting Regulations (2002)</i> under the <i>Indian Act (1985)</i> . Currently, no regulation under this Act applies to Webequie First Nation; however, the <i>Indian Act</i> does have provisions for related to resource management. Project timber harvest may result in changes to the traditional economy and/or represent Crown stumpage fees.
ISC	Framework Agreement on <i>First Nation Land Management Act (2022)</i> / <i>First Nation Land Management Act</i> (repealed)	If opted into the Framework, First Nations can develop their own land use regulation, the environment and natural resources, and take advantage of self-governance and development opportunities with their new land management authorities. The assessment will consider community well-being, community services and skills improvement related development opportunities because of the Project, which may support future opt-in for Webequie First Nation. Environmental authority in land resource decision-making is inherently linked to community’s growth and future. The Framework applies to federally designated areas of the Project footprint (or implicated via spatial bounds).

Responsible Agency	Regulation, Legislation, or Policy	Project Relevance
ISC	<i>Federal Sustainable Development Act (2008)</i>	Social assessment discussion will consider the principles of sustainable development as presented in the <i>Federal Sustainable Development Act (2008)</i> with relevancy to Federal land areas of the Project footprint (or implicated via spatial bounds). Additionally, the Project's contribution to Sustainability is assessed under Section 26 in accordance with TISG.
Environment and Climate Change (ECCC)	Canada's National Adaptation Strategy: Building Resilient Communities and a Strong Economy	In the context of climate change and adaptation strategies, the social assessment will consider Project effects related to infrastructure, well-being and safety, and climate change related inequities facing northern remote communities.
Provincial		
Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP)	Ontario <i>Environmental Assessment Act (1990)</i>	The Project is subject to the Ontario <i>Environmental Assessment Act (1990)</i> . The Terms of Reference (ToR) (Webequie First Nation 2020), which was approved by the MECP on October 8, 2021, were used to identify requirements for the assessment of Social Environment VCs.
MECP	Ontario Declaration Orders MNR-71 and the former Order MNR-75 (Forest Management Planning Exemption)	The Project footprint does not overlap with Class EA area of undertaking assessed for exemption, and therefore, does not apply to the Project. Forest management and harvest activities on Crown land within the assessed area of undertaking has been exempted from the Ontario <i>Environmental Assessment Act</i> since 1994 following the outcome of the Class EA and Ontario Declaration Orders MNR-71 and the former Order MNR-75 (now revoked).
MECP	<i>Environmental Protection Act (1990)</i> , <i>Ontario Water Resources Act (1990)</i>	Project effects assessed for the bio-physical environment (e.g., air, water) will be considered in relation to potential changes in the well-being of community members.
Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR)	<i>Far North Act (2010)</i>	Project components and activities that affect land use are generally consistent with Webequie First Nation Draft (in-progress/early version) Community Based Land Use Plan and other available Community Based Land Use Plan information from other First Nation communities.
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing	<i>Planning Act (1990)</i>	The <i>Planning Act (1990)</i> outlines how Ontario Crown land may be used and controlled, and the purpose of this Act is to make sure that processes are fair, open, accessible, timely, efficient and promote the best economic and environmental interest within the provincial policy framework. The <i>Planning Act (1990)</i> allows the province to integrate matters of provincial interest into municipal and regional planning decisions by requiring that all decisions that are made are in conformance with provincial plans.
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing	Provincial Policy Statement of Ontario (2020)	The Project assessment considers and follows the policy directions of the Provincial Policy Statement



Responsible Agency	Regulation, Legislation, or Policy	Project Relevance
		of Ontario, which details directives on-land use planning and development.
Ministry of Energy and Mines	Growth Plan for Northern Ontario (2011)	This plan documents the growth plan for northern Ontario for the next 25 years. The plan includes a commitment by the province to work with remote communities and other orders of government towards improved access for community residents (Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry [now Ministry of Northern Economic Development and Growth], 2011).
Ministry of Transportation	Northern Ontario Transportation Plan (2020)	The Project is aligned with the objectives of this plan and will support in the endeavour of supporting sustainable development of northern Ontario.
Ministry of Transportation	<i>Highway Traffic Act</i> (1990)	The Project assessment considers government obligations for administration of the <i>Highway Traffic Act</i> (1990), with respect to the Webequie Supply Road (WSR) expanding Ontario provincial highway infrastructure.
Ministry of Infrastructure	<i>Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act</i> (2015)	The assessment will describe changes in employment as a Project effect arising from road infrastructure development.
Webequie First Nation		
Webequie First Nation	Webequie First Nation On-Reserve Land Use Plan (ORLUP) (2019)	The Webequie First Nation ORLUP provides information and guidance for community land use and development projects that occur on the reserve. This includes, for example: housing, power, water and sewer, community buildings, roads, camps, the airport, the landfill, the pow wow area, gardens, etc.
Webequie First Nation	Webequie First Nation 2023 Comprehensive Community Plan February (2023)	The 2023 Comprehensive Community Plan lays out a roadmap for the First Nation's future. The planning process is designed and led by the Webequie First Nation.
Webequie First Nation	Webequie First Nation in-progress/early version Draft Community Based Land Use Plan (2025)	The in-progress Webequie Draft CBLUP outlines the vision, goals, objectives and principles set out by Webequie First Nation and government of Ontario. The Draft CBLUP forms the basis for proposed land use areas and direction for land use activities and highlights the shared development and protection interests of Webequie First Nation and Ontario. It advances the Webequie community economic and social development goals and community direction for the protection of land, water, species habitat, cultural heritage features and community values. The in-progress Draft CBLUP acknowledges Webequie customary environmental stewardship responsibilities, including those that overlap with other First Nations, and <i>Far North Act</i> , 2010 objectives that together enable social development benefitting First Nations, protecting areas of cultural and natural significance and providing for interconnectedness in protected areas. The Draft CBLUP is awaiting joint final approval from Webequie First Nation and Ontario.



Responsible Agency	Regulation, Legislation, or Policy	Project Relevance
Additional First Nations		
Marten Falls First Nation	Marten Falls First Nation in-progress/early version Draft Community Based Land Use Plan	The Draft CBLUP may provide the vision, goals, objectives, community values, principles, land uses, direction for management of land uses and proposed activities to protect the territorial lands, waters, habitats, and cultural heritage features and values of Marten Falls First Nation. This document has not yet been shared with the Project Team or released publicly.

14.1.2 Consideration of Input from Engagement and Consultation Activities

The engagement and consultation activities for the Social Environment VCs were carried out in several stages during the planning phase of the Project. The engagement and consultation program were guided by the Webequie First Nation Elders to ensure respect for the cultures and traditions of the Webequie people and their clans and neighbours outside the Webequie First Nation. In coordination with other provincial government agencies, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) identified 22 potentially affected and/or interested Indigenous communities to be consulted by the Webequie Project Team as part of its project planning. Of these, 16 communities may be affected by the Project, whereas the other six (6) Indigenous communities may have potential interest in the Project.

Table 14-2 summarizes key feedback related to the social environment received during engagement and consultation activities listed above, and how the comments and inputs were addressed in the EAR/IS. This feedback includes concerns raised by Indigenous communities and groups, the public, government agencies, and stakeholders and prior to the formal commencement of the EA/IA, during the Planning Phase of the IA and ToR phase of the EA. The Project Team considered the comments received on the Draft EAR/IS in finalizing the EAR/IS. Details of responses and how the comments have been addressed are provided in the Record of Engagement and Consultation.

Table 14-2: Social Environment – Summary of Inputs Received During Engagement and Consultation

Received Comment	How the Comments are Addressed in this EAR/IS	Indigenous Community or Stakeholder
With respect to the socio-economic impact assessment, include the review and reference to current Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP)/Economic Development Plans for alignment. "Identify opportunities for businesses and current assets that could provide local opportunities, [and] a Skills inventory and Training development for opportunities that could present themselves for the community and members."	Indigenous communities' CCPs were reviewed as part of the socio-economic baseline study. The EAR/IS identifies opportunities for businesses and current assets for local opportunities in Section 15 of the EAR/IS.	Ministry of Energy and Mines

Received Comment	How the Comments are Addressed in this EAR/IS	Indigenous Community or Stakeholder
In Table 8-1: Select Preliminary Criteria and Indicators for Evaluation, consider adding additional criteria to provide better indication of the health of the community, including changes to relationships, community cohesion, stability, etc.	The criteria (described as VCs herein) and indicators for the Social Environment VCs are presented in Section 14.1.4 of the EAR/IS. Human health VCs are assessed in Section 17 (Human Health) of the EAR/IS.	Ministry of Energy and Mines
Concerns about providing details in the draft Impact Statement to demonstrate that the Regional Study Area boundaries include Indigenous communities which are listed in the Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan and that this area must encompass the spatial boundaries for cumulative effects.	Details of the spatial boundaries for the Social Environment VCs is provided in Section 14.1.5 and this includes a list of the Indigenous communities in the Regional Study Area (RSA). The Indigenous communities were identified by the Crown, selected based on federal and provincial government requirements.	IAAC
Concerns about providing a description in the draft Impact Statement on how Gender-Based Analysis Plus was applied to the route selection analysis to consider the effects on diverse or vulnerable subgroups.	Section 14.2.1.3 on Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) provides a description on how GBA+ was applied in the context of the EAR/IS to assess potential effects of the Project on vulnerable groups (women, youth, two-spirited and gender diverse persons, disabled persons and Elders). GBA+ has been applied and is presented the existing conditions, assessment of effects, mitigation and characterization of residual effects sections for the Social Environment in this section of the EAR/IS.	IAAC
Constance Lake First Nation would like to provide training opportunities for people in construction; however, there is low uptake in the community. This is due to community members going off-reserve to secure employment and staying off-reserve.	Effects on education and training and skills development, and out-migration, are considered in Section 14.3.4 .	Constance Lake First Nation – Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and Interests (ATRI) Forum
Is the Webequie Supply Road (WSR) project currently looking for people to construct the road.	The proponent welcomes any information that Constance Lake First Nation wishes to share, including suggestions for job creation opportunities through the ongoing engagement and consultation and Indigenous Knowledge (IK) programs.	Constance Lake First Nation – ATRI Forum # 2
Elders are interested in meeting with other Elders outside of their community to connect and discuss this project.	Thank you for sharing this information. See Section 2 for a description of ATRI Forums and Three Project Gatherings where Elders were invited to participate in plenary sessions with other First Nation communities' Elders.	Constance Lake First Nation – ATRI Forum # 2



Received Comment	How the Comments are Addressed in this EAR/IS	Indigenous Community or Stakeholder
Constance Lake First Nation has shared history, values and relationships with Fort Albany First Nation and Marten Falls First Nation. Constance Lake First Nation indicated that a typical meeting spot is the English River Reserve Land also known as Mamawmatawa.	Thank you for sharing this information. The proponent will ensure that the mapping is updated and will use the traditional location name of Mamawmatawa going forward.	Constance Lake First Nation – ATRI Forum # 2
Constance Lake First Nation was created, people came together from other settlements (e. Kabinakagami River, Hornepayne) and areas. Within Constance Lake First Nation there are different family trees within the reserve but with the same last name.	Thank you for sharing this information. The proponent welcomes any information that Constance Lake First Nation wishes to share regarding Constance Lake First Nation's history and lineage.	Constance Lake First Nation – ATRI Forum # 2
Concerned about the potential of an all-season road to attract off-reserve members back to the community to live. However, there is a shortage of housing. There are currently no procedures for members to build their own house on-reserve. Need a land registry system such as the First Nation Land Management Act land code. It is currently difficult for individuals to build and own a house.	The impacts of the Project on housing and temporary accommodation have been described in Section 14.3.3 of this report. The proponent is working with the community to set up meetings with Band members as well as focus groups and surveys, to understand key socio-economic issues affecting the community.	Marten Falls First Nation – ATRI Forum February 2023
Concerned about conducting the Federal Regional Assessment of the Ring of Fire.	A Regional Assessment is not a requirement for the proponent to complete the EAR/IS for the WSR Project. The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) is engaging with interested Indigenous communities on the Regional Assessment.	Aroland First Nation Attawapiskat First Nation
There was some discussion about the Regional Assessment: the Regional Assessment process has to be conducted in partnership with the communities, or the communities could lose control of the process.	A Regional Assessment of the Ring of Fire is not a requirement for the proponent to complete the EAR/IS for the WSR Project; however, the IAAC has engaged Indigenous communities on the Regional Assessment, and the results can be integrated with ongoing WSR Project planning.	Marten Falls First Nation – ATRI Forum February 2023
Concerns about issues related substance use and addiction and the overall well-being of the Eabametoong First Nation.	Comment noted. The potential effects of the Project on community well-being and safety are considered in Section 14.3.7 , as well as mitigation measures and enhancements to community well-being and safety and potential effects on human health are considered in Section 17 (Human Health) of the EAR/IS.	Eabametoong First Nation
Information on training received by community members on conducting EAR/IS review and participation of community members in the EA/IA of a mining project.	The Project is committed to enhanced measures for training opportunities for Indigenous communities' members. The potential effects of the Project on Education, Training and Traditional Learning Programming and Facility Space are considered in Section 14.3.4 of the EAR/IS.	Ginoogaming First Nation



Received Comment	How the Comments are Addressed in this EAR/IS	Indigenous Community or Stakeholder
Request to measure the community health status by assessing addiction rates, water quality and housing availability and conditions.	It is acknowledged that Ginoogaming First Nation has concerns about community overall well-, including community health status by assessing addiction rates, water quality and housing availability and conditions. The potential effects of the Project on human health VCs are considered in Section 17 (Human Health), drinking water services in Section 14.3.6 , and housing in Section 14.3.2 of the EAR/IS.	Ginoogaming First Nation
Inquiry on whether Webequie First Nation has plans to provide additional source of electricity in the community.	The Project will not be examining the potential for community electricity supply. However, the road studies will be assessing the potential for combined impacts of the Project together with other projects (e.g. planned transmission lines) through the cumulative effects assessment. As per Section 8.1 of the Project's Terms of Reference, the EAR/IS will include a cumulative effects assessment that will consider other current or reasonably foreseeable projects and activities in the region and their potential effects in combination with the potential effects of the Project.	Nibinamik First Nation
Request for the Proponent to confirm there will be no environmental impacts from the Project including but not limited to impact to water quality/supply.	The Final EAR/IS report will be shared with Weenusk First Nation for review and comment on predicted effects of the Project. The proponent anticipates collaborating with Weenusk First Nation throughout the EAR/IS process and beyond, including discussing environment stewardship during the construction and operation of the Project (i.e., mitigation measures). The participation of Weenusk First Nation in sharing its views on the effectiveness of the identified mitigation and enhancement measures would be helpful in refining Project planning.	Weenusk First Nation
Concerns that roads will primarily be used by large trucks, which will create volumes of dust in the territory.	Dust and noise mitigation is an impact which is currently considered within the Project design for the construction and operation phases. Mitigations proposed for dust control are provided in Appendix E (Mitigation Measures) and in Section 14.4.7 .	Marten Falls First Nation

Received Comment	How the Comments are Addressed in this EAR/IS	Indigenous Community or Stakeholder
<p>Concerns from community members were raised with regard to housing and infrastructure, with the current shortage, lack of appropriate living arrangements, health concerns (mental and physical) due to old housing, lack of space and lack of proper funding from government were discussed.</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that Webequie First Nation's community well-being is a concern, including considering issues such as lack of proper services/facilities for community health and challenges on housing availability and conditions. The potential effects of the Project on housing and infrastructure are considered in Section 14.3.2 and effects on community well-being and safety is provided in Section 14.3.7 of the EAR/IS. Mitigation measures for impacts on housing and infrastructure are provided in Section 14.4.2 and mitigations related to community well-being and safety are provided in Section 14.4.7.</p>	<p>Webequie First Nation – Meeting on May 13 & 14, 2024</p>
<p>Concerns with regard to community safety with the development of the WSR, such as community instability due to increased alcohol and drugs usage, and lack of treatment centres and health facilities.</p>	<p>Webequie First Nation's comment is acknowledged, and the existing conditions due to drug and alcohol abuse as well as inadequacy of the existing facilities have been noted. This concern has been raised in many engagement and consultation activities, and has been considered in the EAR/IS in Section 14.3.7, with mitigations identified in Section 14.4.7.</p>	<p>Webequie First Nation – Meeting on May 13 & 14, 2024</p>
<p>Concerns on lack of facilities, nursing stations, school, airport, band office, admin buildings, and lack of progression on funding from government.</p>	<p>Webequie First Nation's challenges on current inadequacy of facilities and spaces in the community are noted. The EAR/IS has developed a 'Community Readiness Plan' (CRP) aligned with the community's 'Comprehensive Community Plan' (CCP) to provide a framework for meeting these gaps in the community. The CRP can be found in Appendix N.</p>	<p>Webequie First Nation – Meeting on May 13 & 14, 2024</p>
<p>Concerns regarding dust generation due to WSR, and pollution of food sources, medicines and waterways.</p>	<p>The Project design has considered the impacts of dust and noise during both the construction and operation phases. To address these concerns, specific mitigation measures have been integrated into the planning process. For dust control, detailed strategies are outlined in the Appendix E (Mitigation Measures) and in Section 14.4.7.</p>	<p>Webequie First Nation – Meeting on August 20-22, 2024</p>
<p>Suggestion on keeping the construction camps 'dry' (free of drugs and alcohol) due to concerns on increased substance abuse due to Project.</p>	<p>The Project Team has taken into consideration the current issues on Webequie First Nation, including substance abuse. The Project has proposed mitigations of procedures and plans regarding drug and alcohol usage during Project work, which are described in Section 14.4.7.</p>	<p>Webequie First Nation – Meeting on August 20-22, 2024</p>



Received Comment	How the Comments are Addressed in this EAR/IS	Indigenous Community or Stakeholder
Suggestion to include a traditional or cultural monitor be present on the lands with all project teams (i.e. Environmental Data Collection, Construction).	The requirement of having community members engage in Project work with respect to keeping liaison between the Project and the community has been considered and proposed as a mitigation measure. Please refer to Section 14.4.7 which describes information on employing Community Liaison Officers for the WSR.	Webequie First Nation – Meeting on August 20-22, 2024
Confirm whether and how relevant community background, and historical experiences related, to similar infrastructure and resource development projects and changes to social division will be considered in the Impact Statement as per Section 10 of the TISG.	Engagement and consultation efforts included socio-economic surveys, focus group discussions, key informant interviews and other methods which are described in Section 14.2.1 and EAR/IS Section 02 (Engagement and Consultation).	IAAC
Provide detail to demonstrate how current expectations within the community for the Project to bring social and economic development opportunities, as a component of community well-being, will be incorporated into the assessment.	Engagement and consultation efforts included socio-economic surveys, focus group discussions, GBA+ focused discussions, key informant interviews and other methods which are described in Section 14.2.1 and EAR/IS Section 02 (Engagement and Consultation); which included specific questions/ themes on community well-being expectations. The results are provided under Section 14.2.2.7 .	IAAC
Please ensure the EAR/IS makes clear how baseline data with respect to municipalities has been collected and assessed.	Please refer to Section 14.2.1 and EAR/IS Appendix L (Socio-Economic Existing Conditions Report) for information on data collection.	MECP
The Red Sky Métis Independent Nation (RSMIN) mentioned that it is a signatory to the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850. 84 'half-breeds' were recognized and signed the treaty. Citizens of RSMIN are related to one of the 84 signatories, most of whom were affiliated to the Hudson's Bay or Northwest fur trading Companies. Unfortunately, many RSMIN citizens lost their land-base and their ability to exercise their treaty rights.	This information will provide useful historical context and the Proponent appreciates to participation of RSMIN.	Red Sky Métis Independent Nation (RSMIN) – ATRI Forum Feb 2023
The community has been discussing and has an interest in ownership and control of the road. It is recognized that there could be several ownership models to consider, including a privately-owned road or a provincial road. Although RSMIN recognizes there would be governance advantages to an Indigenous-owned road, there could be disadvantages, including liability and insurance costs. Whatever the ownership structure, RSMIN expects that development, construction and operation would be funded by the province.	Comment acknowledged. The ownership model for WSR will be considered as part of the planning process with the proponent, and provincial and federal regulatory stakeholders, as well as participating Indigenous communities.	Red Sky Métis Independent Nation (RSMIN) – ATRI Forum Feb 2023



Received Comment	How the Comments are Addressed in this EAR/IS	Indigenous Community or Stakeholder
Is Webequie First Nation is interested in owning the WSR.	The proponent will continue to share information regarding the WSR with the community as the design is finalized and additional information is known regarding ownership. Please refer to Section 04 (Project Description) for information on this aspect.	Long Lake #58 First Nation – ATRI Forum Feb 2023
Concerned about the negative impacts a transient population will have on Indigenous women from both a safety and economic perspective.	The Proponent acknowledges that the Project has the potential to result in increased social issues including the safety of Indigenous women. The potential effects on and mitigations/enhancements for Community Well-being and Safety are discussed in Section 14.3 to 14.7.	Marten Falls First Nation – ATRI Forum Feb 2023

14.1.3 Incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge and Land and Resource Use Information

To enable Indigenous Knowledge communication and engagement, Webequie First Nation formed a Webequie Project Team consisting of community members and elected councillors, who provide guidance to the consultant Project Team (AtkinsRéalis). The Webequie Project Team reported directly to the Chief and Council at crucial stages and decision-making junctures throughout the EAR/IS preparation. The Elders guided the Webequie Project Team to ensure that engagement and consultation for the Project were (and continue to be) conducted respectfully and inclusively, aligning with the Elders' guiding principles. This approach aimed to reflect the culture and traditions of the Webequie people, including their clans, as well as neighbouring communities beyond the Webequie First Nation.

To-date, the following First Nations have provided knowledge via the Indigenous Knowledge and Land and Resource Use (IKLRU) study or the Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program as input for the EAR/IS:

- Webequie First Nation;
- Marten Falls First Nation;
- Weenusk First Nation;
- Kashechewan First Nation; and
- Fort Albany First Nation.

Key Indigenous Knowledge that was shared and subsequently incorporated and/or considered in the assessment of the Social Environment VCs is presented in **Table 14-3**. Further details related to methods of IKLRU data collection are provided in the baseline report (Appendix L) and summarized in **Section 14.2.1.1**.



Table 14-3: Social Environment VCs – Summary of Indigenous Knowledge

Common Theme	Key Information and Concerns	Response and/or Relevant EAR/IS Section
Community	<p><u>Information Shared</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Historically, traditional community habitation included a group of up to 10 families would live together and divide labour based on gender; ▪ In a systematic way, the government's assimilation efforts through colonial policies altered the lifestyles and culture of the First Nation people; ▪ Historically, settlements became more permanently located with amenities like grocery stores, schools, mission-run churches and nursing stations; ▪ Chronic housing shortage have been commonplace; and ▪ As a common stewardship practice, conditions of the land should remain unchanged and camps must always be cleaned up. <p><u>Concerns</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not able to survive and practice our traditional ways of life if confined to the reserve; ▪ Lack of vital community infrastructure and services; ▪ Greater access to legal and illegal drugs; ▪ Traditional food sources and water are crucial for nutrition and affordable living; loss of access due to a decrease in wildlife/fish quantity and quality would heighten food insecurity; ▪ More government regulations are feared to impede traditional way of life; ▪ Road traffic will cause increased noise and potential for accidents; ▪ Environmental impacts (e.g. pollution and contamination) from the Project may negatively impact Omushkegowuk/Cree cultural practice; ▪ With the region being opened up to more outside people, this could lead to social issues in the communities, reduce land access, and impact cultural identity and well-being of First Nation communities; and ▪ By limiting First Nation community members' ability to travel and spend time together at camps and traditional sites across their Territory, the Project could disrupt cultural transmission. 	<p>Section 14.2.2.1 (population and demographics), Section 14.2.2.2 (housing and temporary accommodation), Section 14.2.2.3 (community services), Section 14.2.2.7 (community well-being and safety)</p>
Education and Traditional Learning	<p><u>Information Shared</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Principles, traditional protocols, culture and customary land-based knowledge of First Nations peoples are revived and brought forward to the next generation through education and practice; ▪ Community stewardship remains shared knowledge and a collective responsibility; ▪ Hunting, fishing, and gathering skills have been successfully passed down through generations. This requires access to suitable habitat for culturally important species; and 	<p>Section 14.2.2.4 (education, training and traditional learning programming and Facility Space)</p>



Common Theme	Key Information and Concerns	Response and/or Relevant EAR/IS Section
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintaining language, speaking it, and living off the land are essential aspects of the traditional way of life. <p>Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited western-based educational attainment due to lack of resources has impacted social and health well-being; ▪ Need for specialized programming such as, improved literacy, children with disabilities and adult education; and ▪ Importance of investment in education. 	
Social Trauma	<p>Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trauma of residential schools have negatively influenced mental health and substance abuse and addiction issues within the communities; ▪ Substance abuse has resulted in impacts to exercising of traditional way of life through social trauma and removing the ability and desire to go out on the land; and ▪ Heightened exposure to outsiders and external influences that can adversely effect communities. 	<p>Section 14.2.2.7 (community well-being and safety)</p>

14.1.4 Valued Components and Indicators

VCs were identified in the TISG and ToR and serve as the basis for identifying Project-VC interactions and how potential Project effects on VCs will be assessed. Indigenous communities and groups, the public, government agencies, and stakeholders place high value on social environment as these are complexly important to future social stability, professional growth, well-being and safety of community members.

Social Environment VCs were identified and are intended to capture features of the social environment that may be affected by the Project. These VCs help inform the report structure and better assess and present the data and assessment results. The assessment was conducted using the methodology as outlined in Section 5 (Environmental Assessment / Impact Assessment Approach and Methods).

The identified Social Environment VCs are:

- Population and Demography;
- Housing and Temporary Accommodations;
- Community Services;
- Education, Training and Traditional Learning;
- Emergency and Protective Services;
- Community Infrastructure; and
- Community Well-Being and Safety.

Recreation, Navigation and Cultural Heritage were also identified in the TISG as forming part of the Social Environment; however, these have been defined as separate VCs. The effects assessment for these VCs is provided in following sections:

- Section 16 Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use (Recreation and Navigation); and
- Section 20 Cultural Heritage Resources.

"Indicators", are used to assess potential effects to a VC. In general, indicators represent a resource, feature or issue related to a VC that if changed from the existing conditions may demonstrate a positive or negative effect. The VCs and indicators used to assess the Social Environment were refined following input received during Project engagement and consultation activities. Indicator metrics were developed using Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) methods (InterGroup, 2024).

Social Environment VCs, indicators and rationale for the inclusion of the VCs are presented in **Table 14-4**.

Table 14-4: Social Environment VCs –Indicators and Rationale

Valued Component (s)	Indicators	Rationale
Population and Demographics ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Change in population, including gender and age; ▪ Loss of Indigenous identity; ▪ Loss of languages; and ▪ Change in mobility and increased migration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project temporary workforce could increase the population in the community, as well as reduced emigration or return of off-reserve members could affect the community population.
Housing and Accommodations ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduced housing availability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Total occupied private dwellings; ▫ People per household; ▫ Rental housing; ▫ New housing growth; and ▫ Plans for land development. ▪ Reduced housing affordability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Housing sales; ▫ Average cost of house; ▫ Average rent; and ▫ Households 'spending 30% or more of income on shelter costs' or 'not suitable' or 'major repairs needed'. ▪ Change in housing condition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Private dwellings by period of construction; and ▫ Private households by housing suitability including overcrowding and need of repairs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project impacts on population with regard to reduced emigration or return of off-reserve members can create increased housing and accommodation requirements.
Community Services ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased demand for community services; and ▪ Change in supply and capacity of community services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project impacts on population can increase requirements for community services.
Education, Training and Traditional Knowledge ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved education and training attainment¹: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Highest certificate, diploma, or degree; ▫ Field of study; and ▫ Occupations. ▪ Improved training opportunities; ▪ Increased demand for community education and training services; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project will increase opportunities for employment. ▪ Project will create a need for education and training requirements. ▪ Potential for limited employment and training opportunities for women due to childcare and other domestic responsibilities.

Valued Component (s)	Indicators	Rationale
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Change in supply and capacity of community education and training services; and ▪ Greater opportunity for learning of traditional knowledge, as equal of importance to western education and training. Traditional knowledge is sought by community members, whether it be through programs or at a grassroots level. 	
Emergency and Protective Services ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased demand for community emergency and protective services; and ▪ Change in supply and capacity of community emergency and protective services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project's impacts on population can increase requirements for emergency and protective services.
Community Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased demand for community services and/or infrastructure; and ▪ Change in supply and capacity of community services and/or infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project's impacts on population can increase requirements for community infrastructure.
Community Well-Being and Safety ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Change in social cohesion and culture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Quantity of social connections; and ▫ Quality of social connections. ▪ Change in participation in social and/or cultural events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Participation rate (by event); ▫ Number of new (first-time) attendees to regularly held (e.g., annual) events; and ▫ Total number of social and/or cultural events held. ▪ Change in safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Perceptions of safety; ▫ Traffic safety; ▫ Domestic violence rate; ▫ Sexual assault rate; and ▫ Physical assault rate. ▪ Change in nuisance effects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Air quality (e.g., dust); ▫ Noise levels; and ▫ Visual effects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project will result in changes to community well-being and safety due to non-local temporary workforce, construction activities and future operations activities.

Notes: * Lightcast products provide detailed information about occupations, skills in demand, and career pathways, providing labour market insight to employers, educational institutions, and government agencies.

¹ GBA+ disaggregated where possible.

14.1.5 Spatial and Temporal Boundaries

The following assessment boundaries have been defined for the Social Environment VCs.

14.1.5.1 Spatial Boundaries

The spatial boundaries for the Social Environment VCs are shown on **Figure 14.1** and include the following:

- **Project Footprint (PF)** – the area of direct disturbance (i.e., the physical area required for project construction, and operations). The Project Footprint is defined as the 35-metre wide right-of-way (ROW) of WSR; and temporary or permanent areas needed to support the Project that include access roads, construction camps, laydown and storage yards, aggregate pits/quarries, and a maintenance and storage facility.
- **Local Study Area (LSA)** – the area within which largely direct and indirect effects of the Project on the social environment are likely to occur. The LSA encompasses the following communities:
 - Webequie First Nation;
 - Attawapiskat First Nation;
 - Eabametoong First Nation;
 - Kasabonika Lake First Nation;
 - Marten Falls First Nation;
 - Neskantaga First Nation;
 - Nibinamik First Nation; and
 - Weenusk First Nation.
- **Regional Study Area (RSA)** – The area where potential, largely indirect and/or cumulative effects of the Project may occur in a broader, regional context. The RSA includes the LSA and encompasses the communities organized within the Kenora, Thunder Bay and Cochrane districts, as follows:
 - Kenora District:
 - Kashechewan First Nation;
 - Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation;
 - Kingfisher Lake First Nation;
 - Mishkeegogamang First Nation;
 - North Caribou Lake First Nation;
 - Wapekeka First Nation;
 - Wawakapewin First Nation;
 - Wunnumin Lake First Nation;
 - Township of Pickle Lake; and
 - Municipality of Sioux Lookout.
 - Thunder Bay District:
 - Aroland First Nation;
 - Ginoogaming First Nation;
 - Long Lake #58 First Nation;
 - Métis Nation of Ontario Region 2;
 - City of Thunder Bay; and
 - Municipality of Greenstone.



- Cochrane District:
 - Constance Lake First Nation;
 - Fort Albany First Nation; and
 - City of Timmins.

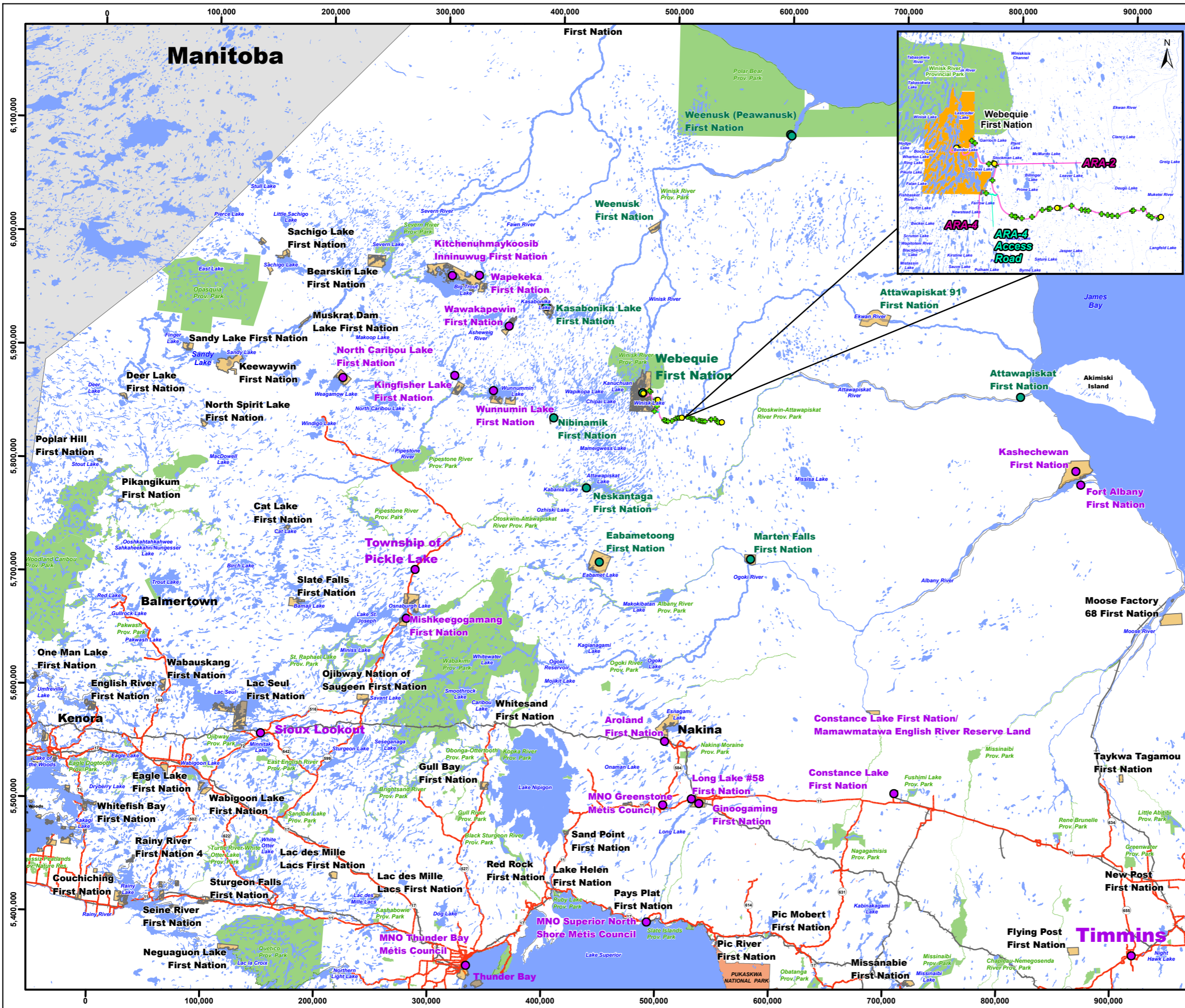
14.1.5.2 Temporal Boundaries

Temporal boundaries for the assessment address the potential effects of the Project over relevant timescales. The temporal boundaries for the Project consist of two main phases:

- **Construction Phase:** All activities associated with the initial development and construction of the road and supportive infrastructure from the start of the construction to the start of the operation and maintenance of the Project and is anticipated to be approximately 5 to 6 years in duration.
- **Operations Phase:** All activities associated with operation and maintenance of the road and permanent supportive infrastructure (e.g., operation and maintenance yard, aggregate extraction and processing areas) that will start after the construction activities are complete, including site restoration and decommissioning of temporary infrastructure (e.g., access roads, construction camps, etc.). The Operations Phase of the Project is anticipated to be 75 years based on the expected timeline when major refurbishment of road components (e.g., bridges) is deemed necessary.

The Project is proposed to be operated for an indeterminate period; therefore, future suspension, decommissioning and eventual abandonment was not evaluated in the EAR/IS (refer to Section 4.4 (Project Description)).





Legend

- Preliminary Recommended Preferred Route
- Social Environment Local Study Area
- Social Environment Regional Study Area
- First Nation Reserve
- Waterbody
- Federal National Park
- Provincial Park
- All-Season Road
- Rail
- Recommended Construction Camps
*Camp 2-A is proposed to include permanent Maintenance and Storage Facility (MSF) for operations of the WSR.
- + Waterbody Crossing
- ARA-4 Access Road
- Recommended Aggregate/Rock Source Areas

Webequie Supply Road (WSR)

Social Environment Study Areas

Figure Number:	14.1	REV	PA						
Client:	Webequie First Nation	Project Number:	661910						
		Date:	1/22/2026						
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DRN	CHK	APP							
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NOTES

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 Ontario MNR Lambert.
2. Cadastral boundaries are for informational purposes only and should not be considered suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes.
3. Topographic/landcover features obtained from CanVec v12.0 dataset, Natural Resources Canada Earth and Sciences Sector Centre for Topographic Information; and, Land Information Ontario (LIO) Warehouse Open Data (<https://geohub.io.gov.on.ca/>), Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) Download Date : 2021-02-04

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14.1.6 Identification of Project Interactions with Social Environment

The identification of interactions between Project activities and social components provides a basis for the subsequent identification of the potential effects of the Project.

Provided below in **Table 14-5** is the list of project activities, Social Environment VCs and their potential interactions. Potential adverse interactions between Project activities and the Social Environment VCs are identified in the below table with a check mark (ü). Predicted positive interactions between the Project and the VCs are identified with a “P”. Where no interaction is anticipated, a dash (-) is shown in the table.

Project-VC interactions were strategically identified to reduce the need for duplicative discussion. The identified Project-VC interactions took into consideration that several activities are interconnected and/or overlap leading to similar effects. In this regard, interactions for employment and expenditures were presented as a separate activity, as nearly every activity would create a potential interaction. The presentation of Project-VC interactions in **Table 14-5** is aimed to streamline measurable parameters to one primary pathway, as appropriate.



Table 14-5: Project Interactions with Social Environment VCs and Potential Effects

Project Activities	Potential Effects						
	Change to Population and Demographics	Change to Housing and Temporary Accommodations	Change to Community Services	Change to Education, Training and Traditional Learning	Change to Emergency and Protective Services	Change to Community Infrastructure	Change to Community Well-Being and Safety
Construction							
Mobilization of Equipment and Supplies: Transport of equipment, materials and supplies to the Project site area using the winter road network and airport in Webequie First Nation Reserve.	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
Surveying: Ground surveys are conducted to stake (physically delineate) the road right-of-way (ROW) and supportive infrastructure components of the Project (i.e., construction camps, access roads, laydown/storage areas, and aggregate extraction and processing areas).	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
Vegetation Clearing and Grubbing: Clearing and grubbing of vegetation (forest & wetland), including removal, disposal and/or chipping.	-	-	-	✓	-	-	✓
Construction and Use of Supportive Infrastructure: This includes temporary construction camps, access roads and watercourse crossings, laydown/storage areas, and aggregate extraction (pits & quarries) and processing areas (screening, crushing), including blasting.	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓
Construction of Road: removal and stockpiling of organics, subgrade excavation, placement of fill and gravel, grading and drainage work (e.g., road ditches, erosion protection, etc.).	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-



Project Activities	Potential Effects						
	Change to Population and Demographics	Change to Housing and Temporary Accommodations	Change to Community Services	Change to Education, Training and Traditional Learning	Change to Emergency and Protective Services	Change to Community Infrastructure	Change to Community Well-Being and Safety
Construction of Structures at Waterbody Crossings: Culverts and bridges – foundations (e.g., pile driving and concrete works), bridge girders, bridge decks, install of culverts.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Decommissioning / Closure of Temporary Aggregate Extraction and Processing Areas (pits and quarries): Demobilization of extracting and processing equipment, grading and site reclamation/revegetation. This also includes formalizing/re-purposing select pits and quarries proposed as permanent Project components during operations.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Decommissioning of Temporary Construction Camps, Access Roads and Laydown / Storage Areas: Grading and site reclamation/revegetation. This also includes formalizing / re-purposing select access roads to permanent pits and quarries and a construction camp to an operations and maintenance facility as Project components for use during operations.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Potential for Accidents and Malfunctions: Spills, vehicle collisions, flooding, forest fire and vandalism.	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓
Emissions, Discharges and Wastes ¹ : Noise, air emissions / GHGs, water discharge, and hazardous and non-hazardous wastes.	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓



Project Activities	Potential Effects						
	Change to Population and Demographics	Change to Housing and Temporary Accommodations	Change to Community Services	Change to Education, Training and Traditional Learning	Change to Emergency and Protective Services	Change to Community Infrastructure	Change to Community Well-Being and Safety
Completion of Project-Wide Clean-up, Site Restoration / Reclamation and Demobilization: Clean-up of excess materials, site revegetation and demobilization of equipment and materials.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Potential for Accidents and Malfunctions ² : Spills, vehicle collisions, flooding, forest fire and vandalism.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Employment and Expenditures ³	P	✓	✓	P / ✓	P / ✓	✓	✓
Operations							
Road Use: Light and heavy vehicles and maintenance equipment with average annual daily traffic volume of less than 500 vehicles.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Operation, Maintenance and Repair of Road: Includes: vegetation management control within road ROW; repairs/resurfacing of road granular surface and shoulders; dust control; winter/seasonal maintenance (i.e., snow clearing); road drainage system cleanout/repairs to culverts, ditches and drainage outfalls; rehabilitation and repairs to structural culverts and bridges; and road patrols for inspection.	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
Operation of Pits, Quarries, and Maintenance Yard / Facility: Includes periodic extraction and blasting and processing operations (i.e., crushing, screening) and stockpiling of rock and	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓



Project Activities	Potential Effects						
	Change to Population and Demographics	Change to Housing and Temporary Accommodations	Change to Community Services	Change to Education, Training and Traditional Learning	Change to Emergency and Protective Services	Change to Community Infrastructure	Change to Community Well-Being and Safety
aggregate materials. Also includes operation and repairs of Maintenance Yard / Facility and components within (office buildings, parking, storage of equipment and materials).							
Potential for Accidents and Malfunctions: Spills, vehicle collisions, flooding, forest fire and vandalism ²	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓
Emissions, Discharges and Wastes ¹ : Noise, air emissions / GHGs, water discharge, and hazardous and non-hazardous wastes.	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓
Employment and Expenditures ³	P	✓	✓	P/ ✓	P	✓	✓

Notes:

✓ = Potential interaction

- = No interaction

P = Anticipated positive interactions between Project activities and the VC effects

¹ Emissions, Discharges, and Wastes (e.g., air, noise, light, solid wastes, and liquid effluents) can be generated by many project activities. Rather than acknowledging this by placing a checkmark against each of these activities, "Wastes and Emissions" is an additional component under each project phase.

² Accidents and Malfunctions including spills, vehicle collisions, flooding, forest fire and vandalism may occur at any time during construction and operations of the Project. Rather than acknowledging this by placing a checkmark against each of these activities, "Potential for Accidents and Malfunctions" is an additional component under each project phase. The potential effects of accidental spills are assessed in Section 23 – Accidents and Malfunctions.

³ Project employment and expenditures are related to most project activities and components and are the main drivers of many socio-economic effects. Rather than acknowledging this by placing a checkmark against each of these activities, "Employment and Expenditures" is an additional component under each project phase.



14.2 Existing Conditions

This section summarizes existing social conditions based on socio-economic data collection, engagement and consultation conducted for the Project, and the integration of Indigenous Knowledge. A detailed description of the existing conditions, study methods and results are provided in Appendix L (Socio-Economic Existing Conditions Report).

14.2.1 Methods

To characterize the social existing conditions within the spatial and temporal boundaries defined for the Project, a mix of data collection methods approaches were applied, in conjunction with analytical frameworks that integrate information using various lenses or perspectives to deepen the understanding of social conditions.

Data collection methods included secondary and primary data source research, combined with analytical framework considerations such as: Indigenous Knowledge, community knowledge, meaningful engagement and consultation, and Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+).

Community profiles related to the social environment were developed through the data collection process. The profiles are intended to present data metrics that define the indicators used to assess changes to each VC based on the summary presented in **Section 14.1.4**. The following sections describe the mixed methods approach of using quantitative and qualitative data collection, with inputs from secondary and primary sources.

14.2.1.1 Engagement and Consultation

Overall engagement and consultation activities were conducted with Indigenous communities and groups, the public, government agencies, and stakeholders related to the Project and/or effects predicted in the LSA and RSA. The assessment for the social environment focuses on engagement and consultation with Indigenous communities. A full discussion of Project engagement and consultation is provided in EAR/IS Section 02 (Engagement and Consultation).

In addition to seeking input from Indigenous communities, government regulators, and other stakeholders on valued components, indicators and spatial boundaries, Indigenous communities and groups were also invited to participate in the Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program.

The following communities outlined in **Table 14-6** represents the invitees who participated in engagement activities engaged as part of Project planning, and these communities were identified by Ontario as per direction provided in the letter from MECP to the Webequie First Nation on December 19, 2018, as potentially having their rights and/or interests affected by the Project, and also by the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada *Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan* provided as guidance to the proponent.

Table 14-6: Indigenous Communities Engaged/Consulted

Tribal Council or Affiliation	Community
Matawa First Nations Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Webequie First Nation ▪ Aroland First Nation ▪ Constance Lake First Nation ▪ Eabametoong First Nation ▪ Ginoogaming First Nation ▪ Long Lake #58 First Nation ▪ Marten Falls First Nation ▪ Neskantaga First Nation ▪ Nibinamik First Nation
Mushkegowuk Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attawapiskat First Nation ▪ Fort Albany First Nation ▪ Kashechewan First Nation
Shibogama Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kasabonika Lake First Nation ▪ Kingfisher Lake First Nation ▪ Wapekeka First Nation ▪ Wawakapewin First Nation ▪ Wunnumin Lake First Nation
Windigo First Nations Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ North Caribou Lake First Nation
Independent First Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation
Métis Nation of Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Métis Nation of Ontario – Lakehead/Nipigon/Michipicoten Traditional Territories Protocol Area (“Region 2”)
Not Applicable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mishkeegogamang First Nation ▪ Weenusk (Peawanuck) First Nation

14.2.1.1.1 Indigenous Knowledge and Land and Resource Use and Data Validation

The IKLRU program was launched to gain insights into the social environment, foster engagement and collaboration with Indigenous communities, and take into account social information specific to each community’s experience. The IKLRU program was undertaken by the Indigenous communities and organizations / groups (and their selected advisors / consultants / contractors) with capacity support provided through the EAR/IS process.

Details of the engagement and consultation on IKLRU is presented in **Section 14.2.1.4.**

14.2.1.2 Collection and Analysis of Baseline Information

Collection of baseline information for the Social Environment VCs involved a mixed methods approach. Mixed methods refer to a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods and associated data collection tools. By combining these methods, a better understanding of issues and complex phenomena can be developed than by either method alone (Creswell and Clark, 2007).

Quantitative and qualitative data methods serve different study purposes and are designed to address different types of research questions and information needs. The quantitative approach allows the Project team to collect information at a broader scale, on a wide range and across a number of indicators. The qualitative approach complements the quantitative approach as its purpose is to understand topics more

in-depth from the perspective of lived experience, and the meanings attached to that experience (Winchester and Rofe, 2010). The Project team and community facilitators engaged interested communities where possible, to develop primary data using surveys, interviews, and focus groups.

The steps undertaken to collect and analyze data for social existing conditions, including the collection of secondary information, primary information and how GBA+ was incorporated, are described in detail in Appendix L (Socio-Economic Existing Conditions Report).

14.2.1.2.1 Secondary Data Collection

Secondary data research and analysis included collecting and analyzing information from a range of quantitative and qualitative information sources to present a narrative of the existing social conditions of communities in the LSA and RSA.

Census Data

Census data for Kenora District, Thunder Bay District, and Cochrane District was used to characterize existing conditions of the social environment. Within these divisions there are 114 census sub-divisions that include 72 Indigenous communities (Statistics Canada, 2022a). The census districts are inclusive of the geographic area of the LSA and RSA. Desktop research involved compiling and reviewing quantitative information such as the Census of Population and other sources. Some, though not all, data was disaggregated by gender and other attributes.

Other Sources of Information

Desktop research also involved collecting and reviewing, where available and permissible, community websites, and recent community documents such as Comprehensive Community Plans, land use plans, and development plans.

14.2.1.2.2 Primary Data Collection

Specific data collection related to the social condition of the LSA and RSA required data collection from Indigenous communities. A Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program was developed to gather Indigenous Knowledge and community knowledge to support the assessment of the Social Environment VCs. Information relevant to the social environment was isolated from data that specifically related to economic and other conditions. The methods to gather primary data related to the social environment included:

- **Community surveys:** The survey format (i.e., online, in-person surveyors, and community sessions) and the survey content (i.e., questions posed to community members) tailored to the needs of the community as needed. Indigenous communities in the LSA and RSA were invited to participate in surveys through the Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program. Indigenous communities were able to choose to complete some or all of the surveys themselves and were provided with support via survey administrators or Project Team. All 22 Indigenous communities in the LSA and RSA were invited to participate in the Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program, with the aim to discuss and collect socio-economic information or verify information gathered. A plain language Socio-Economic survey guide was developed to accompany the survey electronically transmitted to each participating First Nation. Survey statistics were analyzed using Survey Monkey and NVivo, a qualitative software package that allows for systematic thematic analysis of large amounts of text-based information. The following communities participated in the community surveys: Webequie First Nation with 213 respondents, Weenusk First Nation with 11 respondents and Marten Falls First Nation with 13 respondents.



- **Focus groups:** Diverse subsections of the community participating in small group discussions related to the existing conditions in the community. Indigenous communities in the LSA and RSA were invited to participate in Socio-Economic focus group sessions, through the Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program. Focus groups allow for in-depth understanding of quantitative data, due to qualitative information that relates to individual experiences and issues for a particular topic or question. In May 2022 and February 2023, focus groups were undertaken with distinct subgroups in the community relevant to indicator metrics, including youth, women, Elders, land users, knowledge keepers and/or off-reserve members. Focus groups were comprised of 3 to 6 participants each and lasted approximately 2 to 3 hours. Participants were recruited by community coordinators and were carried out either virtually via teleconference or in-person, depending on provincial and community COVID-19 restrictions in place at the time and participant preferences and comfort levels. Although all 22 Indigenous communities were invited to participate in the focus group discussions, only Webequie First Nation engaged in these discussions.
- **Knowledge holder interviews:** A range of community representatives providing key first-hand knowledge and insights about community through interviews. Indigenous communities in the LSA and RSA were invited to participate in Socio-Economic knowledge holder interviews, through the Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program, however only Webequie First Nation participated in Key Informant Interviews. Knowledge holder interviews were conducted with knowledge holders and individuals possessing special knowledge or information. Although all 22 Indigenous communities were invited to participate in the Key Informant Interviews, only Webequie First Nation engaged in these discussions (See **Section 2.3.1 Indigenous Communities and Groups** and **Section 2.4.5 Summary of Issues and Concerns Raised by Indigenous Communities and Groups and Status of Resolution** for more information).

14.2.1.3 Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+)

Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) is a required analytical approach for any project operating under Section 22 of the *IA Act* and is considered part of this EA/IA process. GBA+ is not a method unto itself, but an approach that is associated with a variety of standard quantitative and qualitative data collection tools.

GBA+ recognizes that historical and current power structures (e.g., laws, policies, governments, and other institutions) have shaped society and created inequalities. This is especially important with respect to legacies of colonialism and the impacts on Indigenous Peoples, and in particular, Indigenous women and Two-Spirited people.

In the context of the EA/IA, GBA+ is intended as means to understand and assess how potential Project effects could disproportionately impact more vulnerable groups including women, youth, two-spirited and gender diverse persons, disabled persons, and Elders, with respect to the Project. It is particularly important to consider how the impacts, benefits, and risks of the Project could be unequally distributed across diverse groups within a community, and to develop targeted plans and mechanisms that can be put in place to avoid and mitigate impacts, and/or compensate these groups.

Quantitative secondary data collection and analysis for GBA+ focuses on disaggregating population and demographics data from Census of Population and other sources, in order to understand the characteristics of the community, represented by diverse groups.

Qualitative primary data collection and analysis for GBA+ focuses on seeking input from diverse groups about their experiences and characteristics of the community, as well as conditions and services available to diverse groups.



14.2.1.3.1 GBA+ Data Validation Session

Validation of GBA+ information included in the Social-Economic Baseline took place on May 13 and 14, 2024 in Webequie First Nation with Webequie First Nation community members. Representatives of the Webequie Supply Road (WSR) Project Team visited Webequie First Nation to provide an update about the Project and to talk to community members and request feedback and validation on the socio-economic and health conditions as well as GBA+ information of the community that have been assembled into draft baseline study reports and circulated to the community leadership. The Project Team also heard from community members about concerns and issues related to potential effects of the WSR Project on the community.

14.2.1.4 Indigenous Knowledge and Land and Resource Use (IKLRU)

The IKLRU program was initiated to engage and collaborate with Indigenous communities and groups on the collection and consideration of IKLRU information throughout the EAR/IS. It is important to note that the IKLRU program was undertaken by the Indigenous communities and organizations / groups (and their selected advisors / consultants / contractors) with capacity support provided through the EAR/IS process.

Indigenous Knowledge information collection was developed with multiple steps with respect to gathering, documenting and permission of use, as well as validating Indigenous Knowledge for the EAR/IS. Community validation is a process for the community and its knowledge holders to verify the accuracy, completeness and sensitivity of the Indigenous Knowledge that is collected for a project.

During Indigenous Knowledge data collection, the community’s practitioners and/or contractors may meet with community members, especially Indigenous Knowledge holders that participated in the study, to review Indigenous Knowledge collected, to discuss, question, add to the information and verify that the community is comfortable and confident with the accuracy and completeness of the information presented. The process is consistent with the TISG prepared by the Agency and adheres to the following guiding principles: respect to Indigenous Knowledge holders, building relationships, carrying on an ongoing dialogue with community members, community involvement in ensuring the context and the meaning of the Indigenous Knowledge provided is understood and maintained, transparency of the process, gaining permissions from communities for usage, and Ownership, Control, Access and Possession.

Table 14-7 specifies the dates that the Project team completed community visits.

Table 14-7: Dates of Project Team Visits to First Nation Communities

First Nation	Dates of Community Visits
Webequie First Nation	2021: October 13, October 27, November 10. 2022: March 30, June 20, July 19. 2023: May 3, May 12, June 7, August 29, September 26. 2024: January 12, May 13-14, August 20-22, September 12, December 18. 2025: March 17, March 25, May 21-23, October 24, November 6, November 19, November 20.
Weenusk First Nation	2022: July 19, August 26. 2023: August 17-18. 2024: August 29.
Constance Lake First Nation	2023: June 22, June 29. 2024: September 12. 2025: January 28.



First Nation	Dates of Community Visits
Nibinamik First Nation	2024: January 16, August 6.
Marten Falls First Nation	2023: August 24. 2025: July 21.
Kashechewan First Nation	2023: September 6.

A data validation meeting was held with Webequie First Nation from August 20 to 22, 2024, where information collected via the primary data collection methods were discussed and refined. This community visit validated primary and secondary information regarding Indigenous Knowledge, cultural heritage and GBA+.

A second data validation session was held on September 12, 2024 with Elders of Webequie First Nation in Thunder Bay, where Elders knowledge on existing conditions and their concerns was identified and discussed.

Webequie First Nation completed a document 'Webequie First Nation Indigenous Knowledge Study for the Webequie Supply Road', dated October 4, 2024. This draft document was made available to the Project Team on October 7, 2024 as confidential information, and as guidance for development of the EAR/IS (Stantec, 2024).

Weenusk First Nation completed a draft version of Weenusk First Nation Existing Conditions Report for the Project. This draft was made available to the Project Team on July 26, 2023 with the understanding that it was confidential, pending community verification/confirmation (MNP, 2023). In November 2023, the community completed a verification of the reports, and on January 24, 2024, the final report for the Weenusk First Nation Existing Conditions Report for the Project was made available to the Project Team (MNP, 2024).

Marten Falls First Nation completed a draft version of the Marten Falls First Nation Indigenous Knowledge, Land Use and Occupancy Study for the Northern Access Roads, dated March 20, 2024. The draft report was made available to the Project Team on May 17, 2024, and it was indicated that the report was subject to change (Suslop, 2024).

Kashechewan First Nation completed a draft version of the Kashechewan First Nation Existing Conditions Report specific to the proposed Webequie Supply Road. The draft report was made available to the Project Team in March 2025 (MNP LLP, 2024b).

Fort Albany First Nation completed a draft version of the Fort Albany First Nation Indigenous Knowledge and Use Study Specific to the proposed Webequie Supply Road. The draft report was made available to the Project Team in November 2025, and it was indicated that the report was subject to change (Fort Albany First Nation and Firelight Research Inc., 2024).

14.2.1.5 Summary of Data Sources

Table 14-8 identifies the method data sources that were used to define the existing social conditions.

Table 14-8: Summary of Methods Data Sources for Social Environment VCs

Domain	VC	Data Sources
Demographics	Population and Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistics Canada Census Profile 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2019a) and Census Profile 2021 (Statistics Canada, 2023a).
Community Services and Infrastructure	Housing and Temporary Accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistics Canada 2021 Census of Population (Statistics Canada, 2023a); Municipal Planning/Economic Development Documents; Primary data (Indigenous community engagement, knowledge holder interviews, surveys, engagement, local businesses); and Academic research.
	Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous service and local service providers; Online service portals, such as 211 Ontario North; Community and municipal websites; and Primary data (Indigenous, knowledge holder, surveys, engagement, local business).
	Education, Training and Traditional Learning Programming and Facility Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local service providers; Online service portals, such as 211 Ontario North; Community and municipal websites; Primary data (Indigenous community engagement, knowledge holder interviews, surveys, engagement, local businesses); and Local Anishinabek and Inninwuk Elders and Knowledge Keepers.
	Emergency and Protective Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local service providers; Online service portals, such as 211 Ontario North; Community municipal websites; and Primary data (Indigenous community engagement, knowledge holder interviews, surveys, engagement, local businesses).
	Community Infrastructure (e.g., community roads, electrical power system, water, wastewater, solid waste and telecommunications)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local service providers; Online service portals, such as 211 Ontario North; Community and municipal websites; and Primary data (Indigenous community engagement, knowledge holder interviews, surveys, engagement, local businesses).
Community Well-Being and Safety	Community Well-Being and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social surveys; Focus groups; Knowledge holder interviews; Police reports; Social service reports; Non-Government Organization and Interest group reports; Municipal, provincial and Indigenous government websites, plans and reports; EAR/IS air and noise studies; and Academic research.

Notes: * Lightcast products provide detailed information about occupations, skills in demand, and career pathways, providing labor market insight to employers, educational institutions, and government agencies.



14.2.2 Results

The existing social conditions are described in relation to the indicators as presented in **Section 14.1.4**. Detailed descriptions of the baseline results, including results of the primary data collection and interpretations, are provided in Appendix L (Socio-Economic Existing Conditions Report).

14.2.2.1 Population and Demographics



First Nations shared Indigenous Knowledge on population and demographics and this is incorporated in Section 14.2.2.1.

Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Population Overview, including gender and age

According to the Census of Population, the Webequie First Nation on-reserve population (Statistics Canada, “Webequie Indian reserve” census subdivision) has generally remained stable with a minor decrease between 2016 and 2021 from 778 to 723, which could be attributed to nuances in data gathering or shifts in-migration. The reductions between this period of time influences the population forecast because the Compound Annual Growth Rate assumes a continuing declining population. Based off the current growth trend, the population of Webequie First Nation is forecasted to decline by 254 between 2016 and 2043, a decrease of approximately 32.6%. While the projection forecasts a decrease over the Project lifecycle, further analysis and data verification is needed to confirm existing population dynamics.

It is noted that the negative population trend of Webequie First Nation in the absence of the Project (2016 to 2021) is a reversal from the previous Census that saw a growth trend. The population from the 2006 Census of Population was found to be 623, representing a growth of nearly 27% over the 10-year period to 2016. The population data for Webequie First Nation from the 2011 Census of Population was unavailable.

As of September 2024, the total registered population of the Webequie First Nation was 993. Of the registered population, 163 are reported to be living off-reserve, on other Crown Land, or other reserves (Government of Canada, 2024a). It is worth noting that the registered population of members reported to live on Webequie First Nation land (includes those reported as living on own reserve and on own crown land) is 830, which differs from the 723 members recorded for the Webequie census subdivision in the Census of Population (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

The overall trend in the registered population of Webequie First Nation (including on-reserve and off-reserve community members) indicates an increasing population. As shown in **Table 14-9**, the CCP completed in 2023 (Webequie First Nation, 2023), used a growth rate of 2.6% to project a total on-reserve population of 977-1167 persons by 2027 and 1,158-1,614 persons by 2037.

Table 14-9: Registered Population Projection, Webequie First Nation Comprehensive Community Plan, 2023

	2006	2017	2027 Forecast	2037 Forecast
Total registered membership	690	913	1,150 to 1,370	1,380 to 1,920
% Members living on-reserve	87%	86%	85% (assumed)	84% (assumed)
On-reserve members	603	786	977 – 1,167	1,158 – 1,614
Off-reserve	87	127	172 – 206	221 – 307

Source: Webequie First Nation, 2023



Although the registered population of Webequie First Nation shows an increasing population of the community, the Compound Annual Growth Rate used for the effects assessment assumes a continuing declining population, based on the 2016-2021 Census of Population trends. This approach to variability in population values provided a means for comparison across communities using the Census of Population. However, the assessment of effects (**Section 14.3** and **Section 14.5**) also has taken into account the potential variation in population trends.

The 2021 Census illustrated that Webequie First Nation has a small declining population with limited in-migration to the Webequie community, with 95.8% of residents being “non-movers” (Statistics Canada, 2022a). Moreover, the declining population of Webequie First Nation could potentially be influenced further by the Project, either positively (by creating local employment and revenue opportunities) or negatively (if people choose to leave due to environmental and social disruptions).

The 2021 Census allowed individuals to report their gender, including cisgender¹, transgender², and non-binary³ individuals, as it included a question on self-identified gender for the first-time, adding the term “at birth” when asking about a person’s sex (Statistics Canada, 2023b). This change to the Census reflects increasing recognition of gender and sexual diversity of two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex and asexual (2SLGBTQQIA) individuals (Statistics Canada, 2023b) and aids the ability to perform GBA+ and to better recognize and address the needs of 2SLGBTQQIA individuals. However, data on 2SLGBTQQIA members of Webequie First Nation is limited due to the small population.

Based on the 2021 census, the population distribution by self-identified gender⁴ shows that the population of women in Webequie First Nation is greater than men with the women⁵ population recorded to be 52.6% or 380 women and men⁶ population recorded to be 47% or 340 men. However, based on population forecasts from 2016 to 2043, this difference appears to be decreasing (Statistics Canada, 2022a; AtkinsRéalis, 2023a as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

The population distribution of Webequie First Nation can be broadly categorized into three main groups by age: 0-14 years, 15-64 years, and 65 years and over. Community members that are aged 15-64 are considered the potential labour force. Further age group breakdowns by gender are displayed in **Figure 14.2**.

¹ Cisgender refers to persons whose reported gender corresponds to their reported sex at birth. It includes cisgender (cis) men and women (Statistics Canada, 2021a).

² Transgender refers to persons whose reported gender does not correspond to their reported sex at birth. It includes transgender (trans) men and women. Non-binary persons are excluded (Statistics Canada, 2021a).

³ Non-binary refers to persons whose reported gender is not exclusively male or female. It includes persons whose reported gender is, for example, agender, pangender, genderqueer, genderfluid, or gender nonconforming. It also includes persons whose reported gender is Two-Spirit, a term specific to some Indigenous Peoples of North America. It includes persons whose reported gender is both male and female, neither male nor female, or either male or female in addition to another gender. It may also include those who reported or were reported by proxy as questioning or in the process of deciding (Statistics Canada, 2021a).

⁴ Given that the non-binary population is small, data aggregation to a two-category gender variable is sometimes necessary to protect the confidentiality of responses provided. In these cases, individuals in the category “non-binary persons” are distributed into the other two gender categories and are denoted by the “+” symbol (Statistics Canada, 2022).

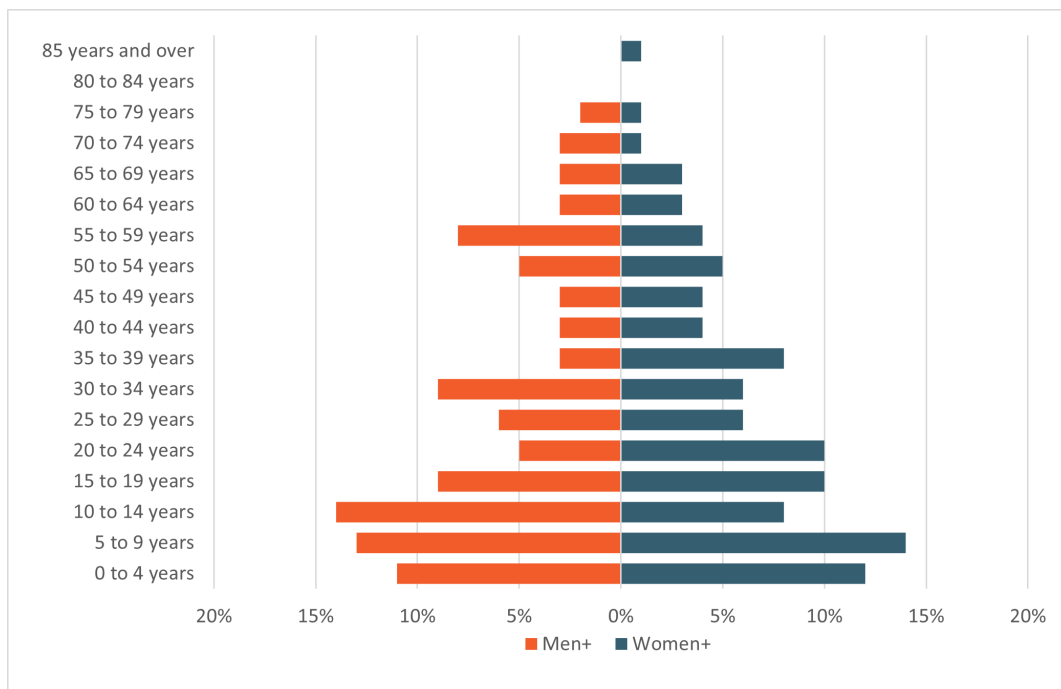
⁵ “Women+” includes women (and/or girls), as well as some non-binary persons (Statistics Canada, 2022).

⁶ “Men+” includes men (and/or boys), as well as some non-binary persons (Statistics Canada, 2022).

Majority of Webequie First Nation (approximately 35%) are the young population aged 0-14 years. The youth (those aged 15 to 24) (Statistics Canada 2020a) account for approximately 16% of the population out of which 66.7% (80) are women and 37.5% (45) are men (Statistics Canada, 2022a). Seniors (65-years and over) represent a small proportion (6.9%) of Webequie First Nation population (Statistics Canada, 2022a), and this may be due to elderly residents needing to relocate south to larger municipalities, such as Thunder Bay, as they age in order to access more advanced health services that are not available in their home community (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

Based on population forecasts over a projected period from 2016 to 2043, both the 0-14 and 15-64 age groups are decreasing by 40.4% and 31.1% respectively (AtkinsRéalais, 2023a as cited in InterGroup, 2024). This forecasted decrease in population over the projected period may be attributed to the out-migration of Webequie First Nation community members who must leave to pursue education, training, and employment opportunities that are not readily available within or near their First Nation.

Figure 14.2: Population Age and Gender for Webequie First Nation, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada 2022a

Indigenous Identity

All (100%) Webequie First Nation community members identified as First Nations regarding Indigenous identity (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

Languages

In 2021, 100% of the Webequie census subdivision identified as First Nations out of which approximately 60% of the households speak English in their homes (Statistics Canada, 2022a). Approximately 28% of households speak Oji-Cree in their homes, while the remaining 12% speak Ojibway in their home (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

Mobility and Migration

Mobility status refers to the status of a person regarding their place of residence on Census Day in relation to their place of residence on the same date one- or five- years earlier (Statistics Canada, 2022a). Residents are categorized as “non-movers” or “movers”. Persons who lived in the same residence as they did on the same date one-year or five-years earlier are referred to as “non-movers”, and persons who did not live in the same residence as they did one-year, or five-years earlier are referred to as “movers”. “Movers” include non migrants, migrants, internal migrants, and external migrants.

Mobility status of Webequie First Nation community members in 2020 showed that 95.8% of the residents were in the “non-movers” category, and 4.2% of residents were in the “movers” category. Of this, 97% of males and 96% of females were in “non-movers” category.

Other Local Study Area Communities

Population Overview, including gender and age

Seven First Nation communities that make up the remainder of the LSA have small populations ranging from 243 to 1,586 members as of 2021, refer **Table 14-10**. These other First Nation communities include:

- Marten Falls First Nation;
- Nibinamik First Nation (Summer Beaver Settlement);
- Eabametoong First Nation (Fort Hope 64);
- Neskantaga First Nation;
- Kasabonika Lake First Nation;
- Attawapiskat First Nation; and
- Weenusk First Nation (Peawanuck First Nation).

Table 14-10: Population for Other Local Study Area Indigenous Communities (2021)

Year	Community	Count	Distribution
2021	Marten Falls First Nation	243	5.2%
	Nibinamik First Nation (Summer Beaver Settlement)	355	7.5%
	Neskantaga First Nation	244	5.2%
	Kasabonika Lake First Nation	1,060	22.5%
	Eabametoong First Nation (Fort Hope 64)	977	20.7%
	Attawapiskat First Nation	1,586	33.7%
	Weenusk First Nation (Peawanuck First Nation)	247	5.2%
	Total		4,712

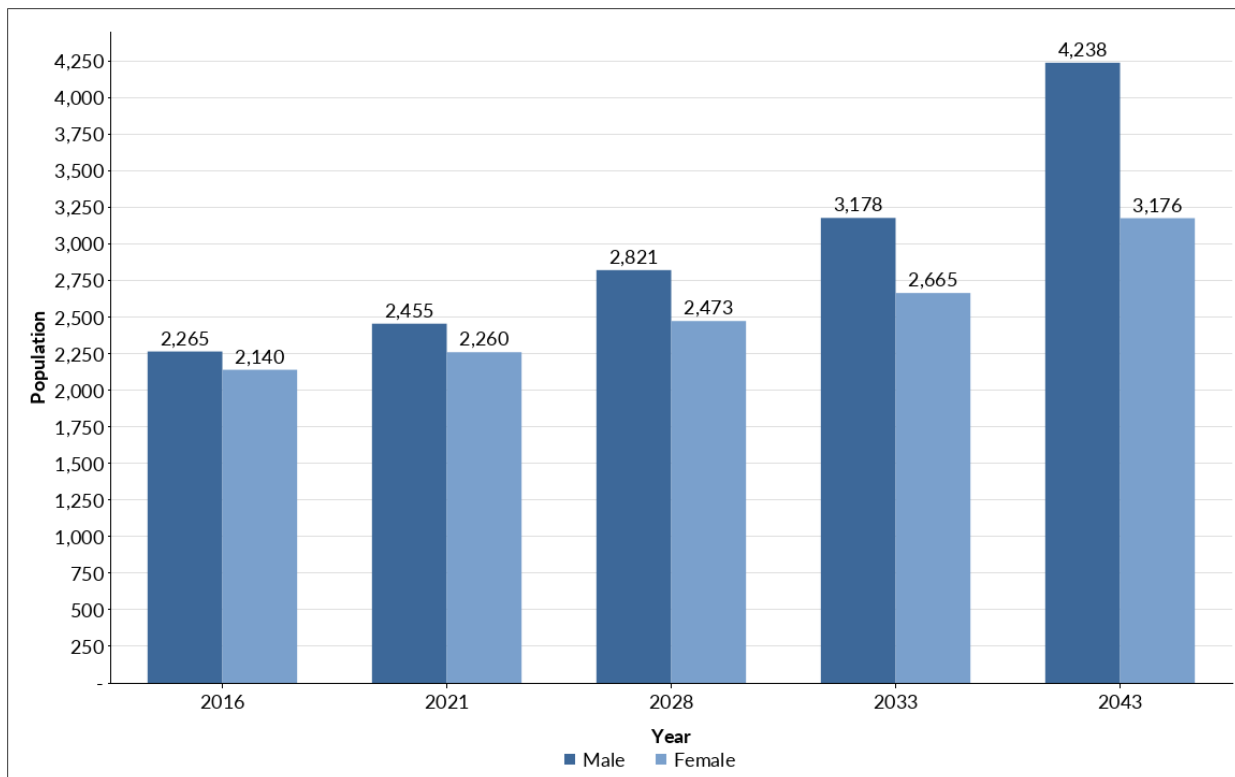
Source: Statistics Canada, 2022a

Note: All counts in census tabulations undergo random rounding, a process that transforms all raw counts into randomly rounded counts. This reduces the possibility of identifying individuals in the tabulations. This results in breakdown values not always adding up to the total count.



The aggregate population of these LSA Indigenous communities are projected to have a 60.4% increase in population over the projection period, **Figure 14.3**, increasing from 4,712 in 2021 to 7,106 in 2043. Marten Falls First Nation, Nibinamik First Nation, and Eabametoong First Nation are all forecasted to decrease over the projection period while Neskantaga First Nation, Kasabonika Lake First Nation, Attawapiskat First Nation, and Weenusk First Nation are all forecasted to increase over the projection period. Indigenous languages are spoken in approximately a quarter of households.

Figure 14.3: Population Forecast by Self-Identified Gender for Other Local Study Area Indigenous Communities (2016, 2021, 2028, 2033, 2043)



Source: Statistics Canada, 2017a; 2022a.

Note: All counts in census tabulations undergo random rounding, a process that transforms all raw counts into randomly rounded counts. This reduces the possibility of identifying individuals in the tabulations. This results in breakdown values not always adding up to the total count. This figure displays the sum of data for Marten Falls First Nation, Nibinamik First Nation, Neskantaga First Nation, Kasabonika Lake First Nation, Eabametoong First Nation, Attawapiskat First Nation, and Weenusk First Nation.

There is a small minority of non-Indigenous residents and very little in-migration to the communities.

The LSA exhibits high levels of population stability, with majority of residents choosing to stay in the same residence over the years. The population of the combined LSA is expected to see a substantial increase over the forecast period. There will be an increase in the percentage of older people in the population, representing a growing aging population trend. However, it should be noted that the overall portion of the population that is 65 years old and above remains relatively low (6%).

Indigenous Identity

The cultural composition of the LSA remains largely unchanged, with majority of the population identifying as First Nations (98.1%). The representation of other groups such as the Métis and non-Indigenous remain minimal (0.2% and 1.7% respectively).

Languages

English is the primary language spoken in 74% of households in the Indigenous First Nations and groups within the LSA, excluding Webequie First Nation. A considerable proportion of the population (26%) still speak Indigenous languages, encompassing 39 different languages. Other non-official languages such as French are spoken by a very small minority. French is spoken in the remaining 0.3% of households.

Mobility and Migration

“Non-movers” accounted for 95% of members in the LSA communities with an almost equal split between males and females. “Movers” accounted for 5% of members in the LSA communities also showing a nearly equal distribution between males and females (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

Regional Study Area

Population Overview, including gender and age

The RSA is comprised of three census divisions: Kenora District, Thunder Bay District, and Cochrane District. Within these divisions there are 114 census sub-divisions which include 72 Indigenous communities. The districts encompass the 22 Indigenous communities with the majority located within the Kenora District.

The Kenora District has a substantial population projected to have slight growth over the projection period, increasing from 66,000 in 2021 to 68,095 by 2043 (see **Table 14-11**). Nearly half of the Kenora District population identifies as either First Nation, Métis, or Inuk. English is spoken in nearly all homes and there is a small percentage of in-migration to the District.

Table 14-11: Regional Study Area Population Forecast (2016, 2021, 2028, 2033, 2043)

Year	Regional Study Area		Kenora		Thunder Bay		Cochrane	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
2016	291,263	100%	65,533	22%	146,048	50%	79,682	27%
2021	290,825	100%	66,000	23%	146,862	50%	77,963	27%
2028	290,287	100%	66,659	23%	148,009	51%	75,619	26%
2033	289,956	100%	67,134	23%	148,834	51%	73,987	26%
2043	289,422	100%	68,095	24%	150,498	52%	70,829	24%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2017a; 2022a.

The Thunder Bay District has the largest population of the RSA communities and is projected to see growth over the projection period from 146,862 in 2021 to 150,498 by 2043.

The Cochrane District population is projected to decrease over the projection period from 77,963 in 2021 to 70,829 by 2043.

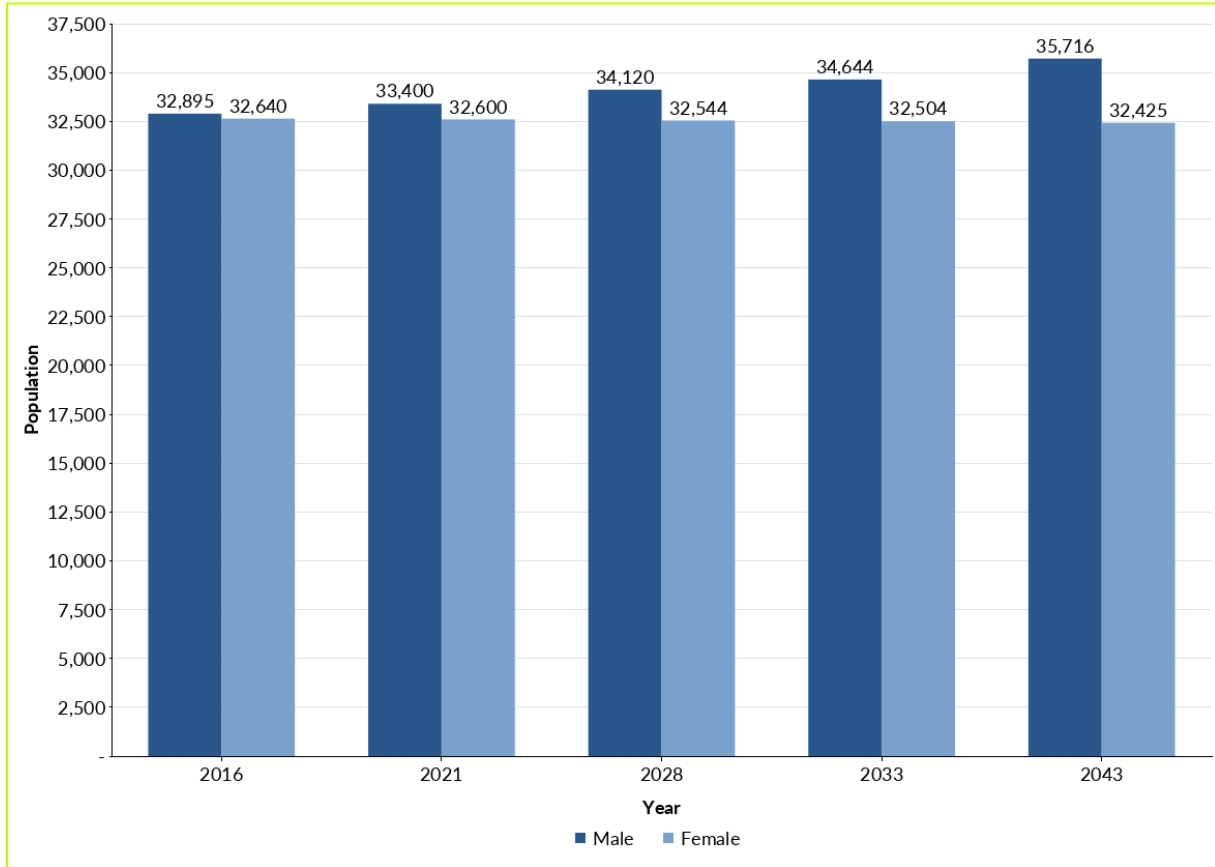
Overall, the population within the RSA is expected to slightly decrease over the years from 2016 to 2043. This gradual decline suggests a trend of depopulation within the RSA.

The age composition in the RSA is expected to shift toward an older demographic. There is a predicted decrease in the proportion of the population aged 0 to 14 years, while the segment of the population aged 65 and over is expected to grow, denoting an aging trend in the population.



Figure 14.4 present the forecasted population in the Kenora District over the projection period (2021 to 2043) broken down by self-identified gender.

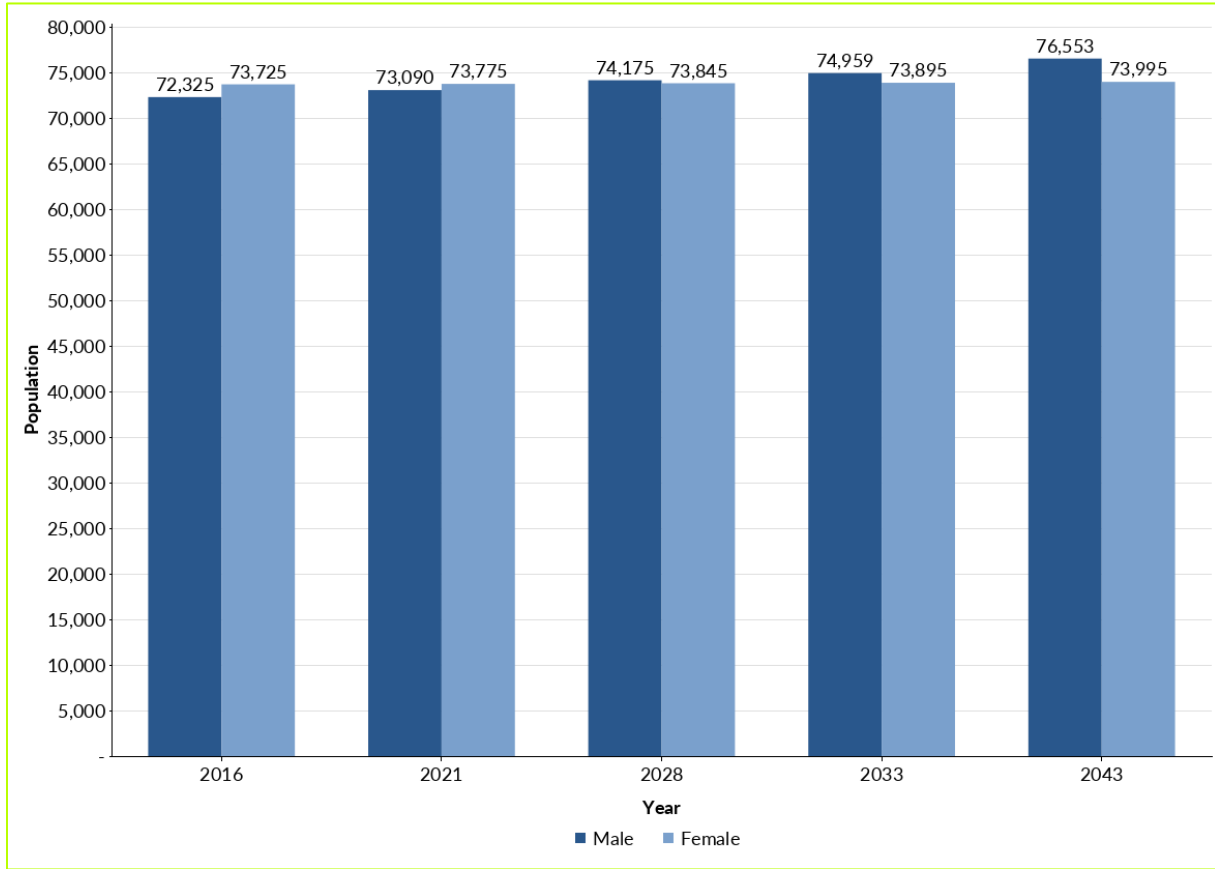
Figure 14.4: Kenora District – Population Forecast by Self-Identified Gender (2016, 2021, 2028, 2033, 2043)



Source: Statistics Canada, 2017a; 2022a.

Figure 14.5 present the forecasted population of the Thunder Bay District over the projection period broken down by self-identified gender.

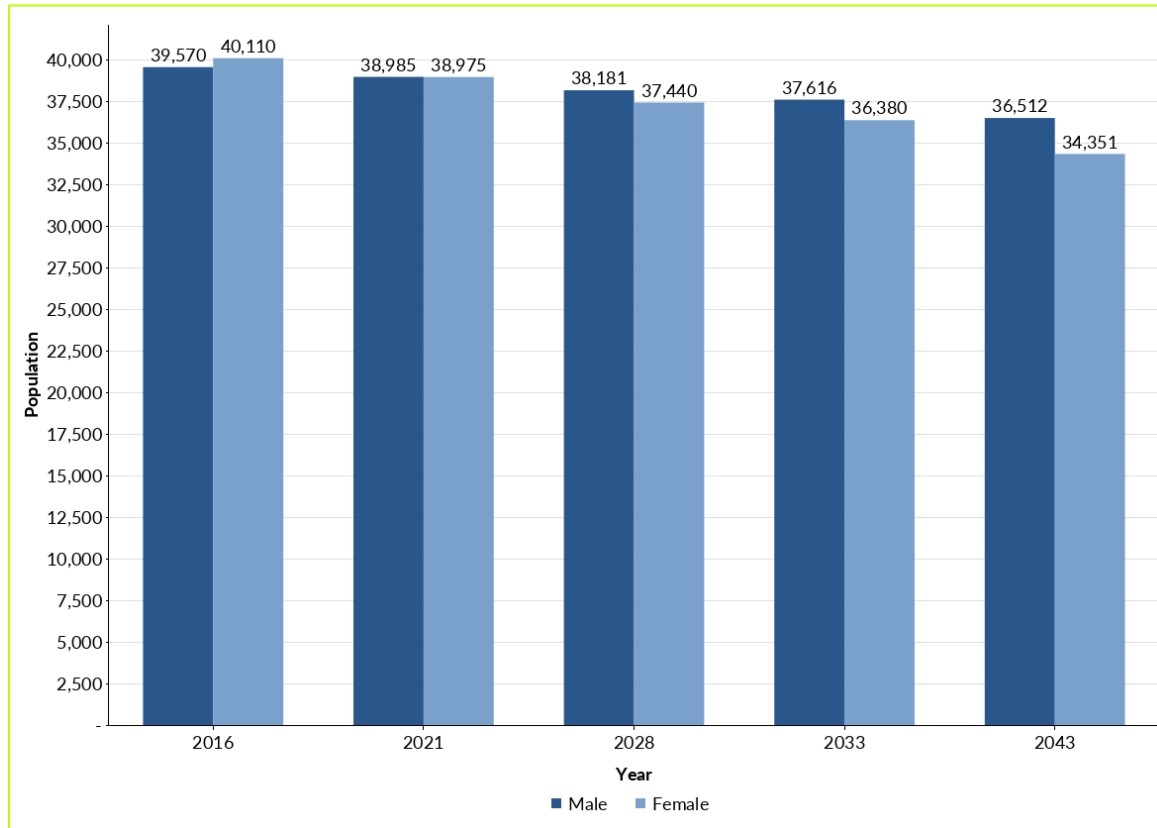
Figure 14.5: Thunder Bay District – Population Forecast by Self-Identified Gender (2016, 2021, 2028, 2033, 2043)



Source: Statistics Canada, 2017a; 2022a.

Figure 14.6 present the forecasted population of the Cochrane District over the projection period broken down by self-identified gender.

Figure 14.6: Cochrane District – Population Forecast by Self-Identified Gender (2016, 2021, 2028, 2033, 2043)



Source: Statistics Canada, 2017a; 2022a.

Indigenous Identity

According to Statistic Canada (2022a), the Indigenous population is a minority within the RSA, whereas the LSA has a majority population identifying as Indigenous. Below summarizes the population demographic by RSA district:

- Thunder Bay District population identifies primarily as non-Indigenous with 16% of the population identifying as Indigenous (Statistics Canada, 2022a).
- Cochrane District population identifies mainly as non-Indigenous with 20% identifying with one of the Indigenous groups.
- Kenora District comprises of 50.6% non-Indigenous population. The remainder of the population identifies as First Nations (43.1%), followed by Métis (6.3%) and Inuk (0.1%).

Languages

Most households in the Thunder Bay District speak English in their homes at approximately 96%, followed by 0.3% Indigenous language speakers. French and other non-official languages make up the remaining 3.8% of homes at 2.9% and 0.9% (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

Households in the Cochrane District are mainly English and French speaking with less than 1% speaking Indigenous languages within the household (Statistics Canada, 2022a). Cochrane District has lowest level of immigrant residents at 3%.

Most homes in the Kenora District speak English at approximately 94%, followed by Indigenous languages spoken second most at 5.5%; and French and other non-official languages being spoken for the remainder of households at 1.1% (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

When considering languages spoken at home, English holds a dominant position, followed by French in the RSA. This trend is expected to continue through the forecast period (Year 2016 to Year 2043), highlighting the significant linguistic homogeneity in the RSA.

Mobility and Migration

Thunder Bay District has the highest percentage of immigrant residents in the RSA at 8%. “Non-movers” comprised of 89.2% of residents in the district; 49.8% (63,510) of which were male and 50.2% (64,125) female. “Movers” accounted for 10.8% of the population, 50.1% (7,775) of which were male and 49.9% (7,750) female.

In Kenora District, 90.6% of residents were in the “non-movers” category, 50.6% (29,440) of which were male and 49.4% (28,705) female. “Movers” accounted for 9.4% of the population, 48.9% (2,950) of which were male and 51.2 % (3,090) female (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

In Cochrane District, 88.1% of residents were in the “non-movers” category, 50.2% (33,555) of which were male and 49.8% (33,285) female. Those in the “movers” category accounted for 11.9% of the population, 49.3% (4,470) of which were male and 50.7% (4,595) female.

The RSA demonstrates strong population stability, with over 88% of people in all districts categorized as “non-movers”. Similarly, the population is overwhelmingly non-immigrant, reflecting a long-term resident majority and a low influx of immigrants.

14.2.2.2 Housing and Temporary Accommodations



Webequie First Nation, Marten Falls First Nation, and Weenusk First Nation shared Indigenous Knowledge on settlement types, housing shortage and housing and temporary accommodation in general and this information is incorporated in Section 14.2.2.2.

Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Housing Availability

Webequie First Nation community members have expressed that every community member is affected by the lack of housing and overcrowding (Webequie First Nation, 2014; AtkinsRéalisis, 2022b). The lack of available housing also extends to service providers such as teachers, professional therapists, health care practitioners, that need accommodations for short or long-term placements in Webequie First Nation. Moreover, several knowledge holders have indicated that most off-reserve members, many of whom live in Thunder Bay, want to return home but are unable to do so due to a lack of available housing (AtkinsRéalisis, 2022b; InterGroup, 2024).

Webequie First Nation currently has 142 housing units (detached homes, duplexes and fourplexes), and trailers converted to housing (Webequie First Nation, 2023). The 49-person trailer camp unit that was installed is part of the planning associated with a potential airport redevelopment project to provide accommodations near the airport. Its current use is for contractors that work out of Webequie First Nation; however, the trailer camp units could potentially address some of the housing related needs for the Project or if other facilities are required beyond the proposed construction camps.

As of 2021, Webequie First Nation had 171 private dwellings, 166 of which were occupied by usual residents⁷ and five which are not occupied. Government or band housing made up 95% of dwellings. Nearly half of the occupied dwellings were shared by five or more persons and over half had five or less rooms making overcrowding an ongoing issue within the community.

On January 10, 2019, upon completion of the Government of Canada's Community Well-being Pilot Project (launched in 2016), 14 modular homes, two four-plexes, five single family homes, and renovations for 14 existing homes were carried out, and this provided for improved housing conditions to 29 families (ISC, 2019a).

The result of the precarious condition of the housing stock is unhoused "couch surfing" being frequent in the community. Fires are one reason that leave families in desperate need for housing, with little to no vacant homes available. Temporary accommodations such as the motel or the temporary contractor trailer might be used in such instances. During the Covid-19 pandemic isolation units had to be taken up by persons that did not have anywhere else to live (AtkinsRéal, 2022b).

Housing Affordability and Condition

Housing is a significant issue and focus for the community. Most homes in the community were built over 20 years ago with approximately 40% being classified as unsuitable for the size of the household. Nearly half of the households in Webequie First Nation require major repairs (see **Table 14-10**). The Webequie First Nation CCP has estimated that 148 new housing units are needed by 2037 (Webequie First Nation, 2023).

Provision of new housing is a priority for the community that has been highlighted by community members and in community planning documents (AtkinsRéal, 2022b). Approximately 100 homes need repairs out of which 50 require major repairs, including repairs for defective plumbing, electrical wiring, and structural problems (AtkinsRéal, 2022b). Mould is an issue in 80% of homes (AtkinsRéal, 2022a; InterGroup, 2024). A lack of fire alarms and high costs of fuel to heat their homes have also been identified as issues experienced by residents (Webequie First Nation, 2023; InterGroup, 2024).

The poor state of housing in the Webequie First Nation has impacts on physical and mental well-being of residents, particularly youth, lacking privacy, a place for activities, while sharing rooms with multiple generations. A knowledge holder shared that this situation can be challenging for adolescents, especially those around the age of 12, who start to desire their own space and privacy but are unable to achieve it, leading to significant hardship. Members expressed that overcrowding often triggers substance use and other negative behaviours, such as vandalism, as youth seek to escape the difficulties of their overcrowded living conditions (AtkinsRéal, 2022b; InterGroup, 2024). Knowledge holders stated that over half of the homes in the community need repairs for plumbing, electrical wiring, and structural matters (see **Table 14-13**). There are also vulnerable community members who have no housing provisions (AtkinsRéal, 2022b).

⁷ Usual residents refer a person or a group of persons permanently residing in a private dwelling.



The general state of disrepair can be linked to funding processes, lack of trades persons working in the community, and logistics and high cost of transporting materials and homes on the winter roads (AtkinsRéalisis, 2022b; Webequie First Nation, 2023).

The following tables summarize the current availability and quality of housing within Webequie First Nation.

Table 14-12: Housing Availability, Webequie First Nation, 2020

Total Private Dwellings	Private Dwellings Occupied by Usual Residents	Private Dwellings Not Occupied
171	166	5

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021

Table 14-13: Private Dwelling Conditions, Webequie First Nation, 2020

Only regular maintenance and minor repairs needed	Major repairs needed
90	80

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021

Other Local Study Area Communities

Housing Availability

According to the 2021 Census of Population, the seven First Nations communities that make up the remainder of the LSA have a total of 1,389 private dwellings, of which 86% of dwellings are categorized as government or band housing (Statistics Canada, 2022a), please refer to **Table 14-14**. Based on the 2021 Census, 1,166 (84%) of homes are occupied by usual residents, which indicates a person or a group of persons permanently residing in the home (Statistics Canada, 2019b).

Table 14-14: Total Private Dwellings and Occupied Private Dwellings in Other Local Study Area Indigenous Communities (2021)

Dwelling	Community	Count	Distribution
Total private dwellings	Marten Falls First Nation	85	6.1%
	Nibinamik First Nation (Summer Beaver Settlement)	113	8.1%
	Neskantaga First Nation	89	6.4%
	Kasabonika Lake First Nation	252	18.1%
	Eabametoong First Nation (Fort Hope 64)	349	25.1%
	Attawapiskat First Nation	404	29.1%
	Weenusk First Nation (Peawanuck First Nation)	97	7.0%
	Total		1,389
Private dwellings occupied by usual residents	Marten Falls First Nation	69	5.9%
	Nibinamik First Nation (Summer Beaver Settlement)	87	7.5%
	Neskantaga First Nation	75	6.4%
	Kasabonika Lake First Nation	228	19.6%
	Eabametoong First Nation (Fort Hope 64)	258	22.1%

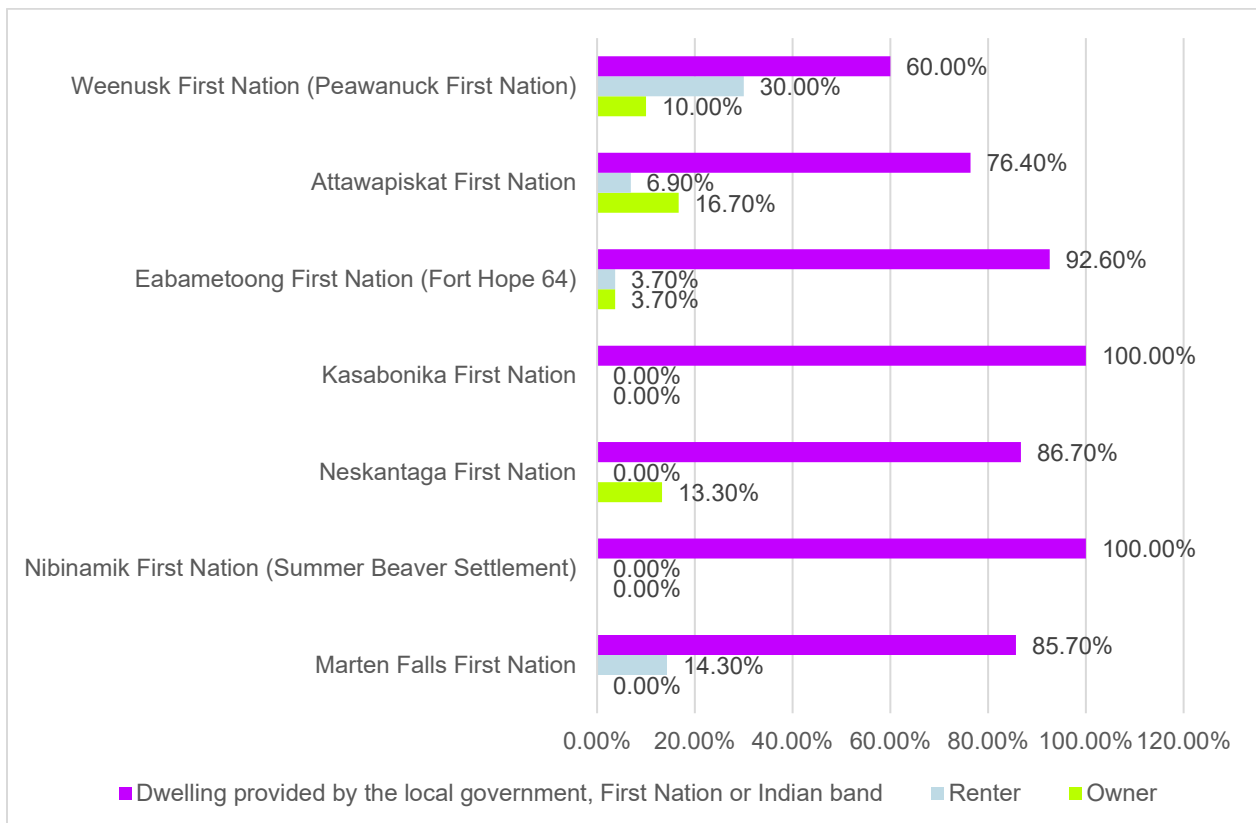
Dwelling	Community	Count	Distribution
	Attawapiskat First Nation	359	30.8%
	Weenusk First Nation (Peawanuck First Nation)	90	7.7%
	Total	1,166	100%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2022a.

Note: All counts in census tabulations undergo random rounding, a process that transforms all raw counts into randomly rounded counts. This reduces the possibility of identifying individuals in the tabulations. This results in breakdown values not always adding up to the total count.

Most dwellings (82.2%) in the other LSA communities are classified as single-detached (Statistics Canada, 2022a), **Figure 14.7**. Attawapiskat First Nation has the highest concentration of owner-occupied dwellings with 16.7%. Kasabonika Lake First Nation and Nibinamik First Nation both have 100% government/band owned dwellings (Statistics Canada, 2022a). Renting is least common, although Weenusk First Nation has 30% rentals, and Marten Falls First Nation has 14.7% rentals according to the census (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

Figure 14.7: Private Occupied Private Dwellings by Tenure in Other Local Study Area Indigenous Communities (2021)



Source: Statistics Canada, 2022a.

Note: All counts in census tabulations undergo random rounding, a process that transforms all raw counts into randomly rounded counts. This reduces the possibility of identifying individuals in the tabulations. This results in breakdown values not always adding up to the total count.

In the other LSA communities, the majority of households are occupied by five or more persons (38.7%), and the least number of households are occupied by a single person at 16.1%. The majority of private households consist of 1 to 4 rooms at 35.4% followed by 5 rooms at 28.4%, the least number of private households comprises of 8 or more rooms at 5.2%, making overcrowding an ongoing concern (Statistics Canada, 2022a). Neskantaga First Nation has the highest concentration of households with 8 or more rooms at 13.3%, and Weenusk First Nation has the highest concentration of households with 1 to 4 rooms at 63.2%.

In the other LSA communities, dwellings constructed from 1991 to 2000 is the largest group with 34.2% of total private dwellings built during this period. Dwellings constructed from 2011 to 2015 is the smallest group with 6.1% of total private dwellings built during this period. Marten Falls First Nation has the highest concentration of dwellings built between 2016 to 2021, and over the last two decades with 405 dwellings constructed which comprises 35% of the occupied housing stock (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

Dwellings are categorized as either “suitable” or “unsuitable”. Housing suitability assesses the required number of bedrooms for a household based on the age, sex, and relationships among household members (Statistics Canada, 2021). In 2021, 35.9% of the occupied private dwellings in the LSA Indigenous communities were categorized as unsuitable. Nibinamik First Nation has the highest concentration of occupied private dwellings categorized as unsuitable at 44.4%; and Weenusk First Nation has the smallest concentration of occupied private dwellings categorized as unsuitable at 22.2% (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

In 2021, 45.1% of occupied private dwellings in the other LSA communities were categorized as requiring major repairs. Neskantaga First Nation has the highest concentration of occupied private dwellings categorized as requiring major repairs at 78.6%. Kasabonika Lake First Nation has the lowest concentration of occupied private dwellings categorized as requiring major repairs at 31.1% (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

A breakdown of housing characteristics, household characteristics and housing condition by LSA and RSA communities is provided in the Socio-Economic Existing Conditions Report (Appendix L).

Housing Affordability and Condition

Housing affordability in other LSA communities is a critical issue. Many of these communities face severe housing shortages, substandard living conditions, and a lack of essential services. For instance, the Ontario First Nations Technical Services Corporation (OFNTSC) highlights that long-term housing shortages, overcrowding, and homes in need of major repairs are prevalent (OFNTSC, 2018). Additionally, the Chiefs of Ontario report that the high costs associated with transporting building materials to remote areas exacerbate these challenges (FNIGC, 2021). Efforts to address these issues include community-led housing projects and increased federal investment, but significant gaps remain.

In other LSA communities, most of the dwellings are outdated, and communities’ struggle with challenges due to breakdown of utilities, mould, leaks and cracks, etc. IKLRU report provided by Marten Falls First Nation highlights the current obstacles with regard to housing shortages and outworn status of majority of current housing stocks (Suslop, 2024).



Regional Study Area

Housing Availability

The Kenora District has 32,914 dwellings, 75% of which are occupied by usual residents. Kenora District has the highest number of dwellings occupied by non-usual residents (persons not permanently residing) in the RSA. This is likely due to the high number of cottagers within the region. Most of the dwellings in the district are owned, however Kenora District has the largest percentage of government or band housing with just over 20% of occupied dwellings falling within this category. Over 60% of dwellings are occupied by one to two persons. Most of the dwellings in the Kenora District were constructed over 20 years ago, 50% of which were built prior to 1980. Most occupied dwellings are considered suitable for the household size and less than 20% require major repairs.

Thunder Bay District has 72,510 dwellings, 89% of which are occupied by usual residents. About three-quarters of the homes are owned, while the rest are rented. Under 2% of dwellings are considered government or band housing. Over 60% of the dwellings are occupied by 1 to 2 persons and 30% have 8 or more rooms. Less than 10% of dwellings have been constructed over the past two decades. Nearly all dwellings are considered suitable based on household size and less than 10% need major repairs.

The Cochrane District has 37,667 dwellings, 90% of which are occupied by usual residents. Most dwellings are owned at nearly 70% with just under 2% falling within government or band housing. Nearly 70% of dwellings are occupied by 1 to 2 persons. Less than 10% of the housing stock was constructed over the past 20 years however nearly all are considered suitable and less than 10% require major repairs.

Majority of dwellings in the RSA are occupied by the usual residents, with Kenora District having the highest number of dwellings occupied by non-usual residents. Over 60% of dwellings in each district within the RSA are occupied by 1 to 2 people, indicating a trend towards smaller household sizes. A sizable proportion of the dwellings across the RSA were built over 20 years ago. There is a limited number of dwellings constructed in the past two decades. Majority of dwellings across the RSA are considered suitable for the size of the households, and less than 20% require major repairs. Most dwellings are owned within the RSA, with the rate of government or band housing being relatively low.

A breakdown of housing characteristics, household characteristics and housing condition by LSA and RSA communities is provided in the Socio-Economic Existing Conditions Report (Appendix L).

Housing Affordability

Housing affordability in the RSA region is a significant concern, with various programs and initiatives in place to address it.

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) manages community housing and homelessness prevention systems, offering affordable housing and rent supports (TBDSSAB, 2023a). The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) has also invested in affordable housing in Thunder Bay. For example, a joint funding initiative between the federal and provincial governments provided \$750,000 through the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative to develop new affordable rental housing units (CMHC, 2021). The TBDSSAB received \$2.96 million from the CMHC Affordable Housing Fund for capital repairs to improve the quality and safety of existing housing units (TBDSSAB, 2024).



The Kenora District Services Board (KDSB) plays a crucial role in managing community housing and homelessness prevention programs. KDSB offers a range of housing options, including supportive housing, affordable housing units, market rental housing, and Rent-Geared-to-Income programs (KDSB, 2024). The 2018 State of Housing Report for Kenora highlights that the region faces unique challenges due to its remote location, which increases the cost of utilities and transporting building materials (City of Kenora, 2018). Additionally, the downloading of social housing stock without accompanying financial reserves has placed a significant burden on local communities. Efforts to improve housing affordability include the KDSB's Ten Year Housing and Homelessness Plan, which aims to create an integrated approach to supporting affordable housing needs within the district.

The Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board (CDSSAB) manages various housing programs, including Rent-Geared-to-Income housing and affordable rental units (CDSB, 2019). The 2019 Community Profile and Housing Needs Assessment highlights that a significant portion of households in the district spend more than 30% of their income on shelter, indicating a high level of housing unaffordability. Additionally, the report notes that the district faces a shortage of affordable housing units, with long waitlists for social housing. Efforts to improve housing affordability include the CDSSAB's Ten Year Housing Plan, which aims to increase the supply of affordable housing and improve the condition of existing units.

Housing Condition

In the RSA, majority of private dwellings were built during 1961 to 1980 with 33.3% of dwellings, followed by dwellings built during 1960 or before at 32.2% (Statistics Canada, 2022a). Considering the period of the buildings, most are in need of major or minor repairs, and the living conditions of the dwellings creating challenges for the residents. 95.6% of the dwellings are considered 'suitable' with 4.4% considered as 'not suitable'. However, 89.3% of these total dwellings require regular maintenance and minor repairs, with 10.7% of dwellings requiring major repairs (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

14.2.2.3 Community Services



Webequie First Nation, Marten Falls First Nation, and Weenusk First Nation raised concerns about community infrastructure and services. Such concerns have been incorporated in Section 14.2.2.3. To address these concerns, the Project proposes establishing a full-time, dedicated childcare and drop-in centre to support families needing childcare to engage in employment and business opportunities. Additional measures are outlined in Section 14.4.3.

Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Demand for Community Services

AtkinsRéalis carried out an online survey which collected data from individuals residing on-reserve. The survey revealed that 68% of respondents (83 out of 122 respondents) reported a lack of access to childcare. Among the requested services, childcare ranked as the most desired by the community, with 110 out of 146 responses indicating the need for childcare services (AtkinsRéalis, 2022b). Youth services also faced challenges, with a significant portion of respondents stating either a lack of access (36.1% of respondents) or access without utilization (33.6% of respondents). Additionally, 31.2% of respondents reported no access to Jordan's Principle, while 47.2% had access but did not use it. Among those with access to Jordan's Principle, the majority (8.8% of respondents) utilized it on a monthly basis



(AtkinsRéalais, 2022b). Access to education programs for students with special needs, including individual education plans, also raised concerns. The survey indicated that 40.5% of respondents (49 out of 121 respondents) did not have access to these programs, while 37.2% had access but did not utilize them. Among those who did utilize these programs, the majority used them on a daily (7.4% of respondents) or yearly basis (6.6% of respondents) (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b).

Health Services in the community is already strained, with members lacking access to a regular, full-time physician and instead rely on a rotating team of nurses to meet healthcare needs. The remote location of the community adds to the challenge of providing timely healthcare, as transportation delays can result not only in delayed service, but also a potential loss of life. The community require adequate healthcare and overnight health care accommodation. The lack of adequate healthcare in the community has led to a loss of trust in the system amongst Webequie First Nation community members (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

The limited health care services for Elders prevent Webequie First Nation community members from aging in place, often leaving families with no option but to send their parents to long-term care facilities in larger urban centres like Thunder Bay, where costs may exceed their financial capacity (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b as cited in InterGroup, 2024). This also makes the senior population of Webequie First Nation more vulnerable to shifts in population, as any growth can further place greater stress on the existing health care system (CRIAW, 2014).

Supply and Capacity of Community Services

Family Services

Tikinagan, a social services organization, provides child and family services for Webequie First Nation. It is Ontario's largest residential services provider, covering approximately one-third of the province and serving 30 Indigenous communities (Tikinagan Child and Family Services, 2023a). In January 2020, the Ministry of Community and Social Services (now Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services) with the Band Council designated Tikinagan to provide child protection services to families in Thunder Bay District (Tikinagan Child and Family Services, 2023b). In February 2023, Tikinagan launched a new service, "Neegan Inabin" for young adults and youth aged 17 to 26 years old. The service offers support via eight pillars – education, financial, spirituality and culture, housing, relationships, health and well-being, advocacy and transitions. Post-majority care support services funding is provided by the Indigenous Services Canada (Tikinagan Child and Family Services, 2023c).

Child Care and Youth Programs

The Healthy Babies Healthy Children program provides parenting support for fostering healthy child development. It specifically caters to children under 6 years old in the Webequie First Nation community. This program offers a range of supports and resources, including group information and educational sessions that cover essential topics such as healthy pregnancy, childbirth, and caring for babies at home (211 Ontario North, Webequie First Nation, 2022).

Webequie First Nation's only preschool program is the Aboriginal Head Start Program, catering to children aged 4 and under. Consequently, once children complete this program, they have no further options for formal childcare within the community (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b). Notably, there is currently no childcare program available in Webequie First Nation.



The Choose Life Program is specifically designed for youth aged 7 to 17 years. It focuses on-land-related activities such as fish netting, moose hunting, and canoeing. Elders play an active role in the program, sharing their knowledge and teachings while engaging with the youth on the land (AtkinsRéalis, 2022c).

Elder Care

Indigenous Services Canada, through the First Nations and Inuit Home and Community Care program, provides funding and guidance for Elder care. This program aims to establish home and community care services for Indigenous individuals residing in First Nations and Inuit communities (ISC, 2023). It encompasses First Nations individuals living on reserves who have been assessed as requiring one or more services.

There is also no long-term Elder care facility in the community and this is a primary concern for Webequie First Nation community members (AtkinsRéalis, 2022b; 2022c). Community staff are responsible for visiting Elder's homes and assisting them with household tasks, personal care, and transportation (AtkinsRéalis, 2022b as cited in InterGroup, 2024). In the Webequie First Nation Socio-Economic Survey, 66.7% of the respondents reported a lack of access to Elder care, and Elder care ranked as the second most requested service in the community after childcare (AtkinsRéalis, 2022c as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

Health Services

Health Services in the community are delivered by a rotating team of three Community Health Nurses/ Nurse Practitioners and a community health representative. A Physician from Sioux Lookout visits Webequie First Nation to offer physician consultations twice a month. Health Services conducted include health awareness and counselling sessions, educational workshops, and preventive programs on various topics such as diabetes, alcohol/drug abuse, sexual health, and communicable diseases. Clinics and workshops related to diabetes management, immunization, sexual health, and communicable diseases are also coordinated by the health representatives (211 Ontario North, Webequie First Nation, 2023a). There are no emergency medical services (e.g., ambulance) in the community.

Health Services in Webequie First Nation also includes:

- Crisis intervention program: provides immediate support to individuals affected by family violence and suicide within the Webequie First Nation;
- Health Services programs: to promote the physical and mental well-being of community members;
- Mental Health Services: provides counselling program;
- Home and Community Care program: provides in-home rehabilitative care to individuals who require assistance in maintaining or regaining their independence; and
- National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program: plays a crucial role in providing support to individuals and families grappling with addiction issues through initiatives such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meetings.

The following infrastructure are currently present in Webequie First Nation (Webequie First Nation, 2023);

- Nursing Station;
- Suboxone aftercare trailer, which was used for COVID-19 response; and
- Detox house, which was also used for COVID-19 isolation.



The assessment of potential effects of the Project on human health is presented in Section 17 of the EAR/IS.

Cultural Services

Culture and language knowledge transfer is an important focus for the Webequie community. This focus is supported by the newly established Cultural Enrichment Department (2020) and health and wellness programs (Webequie First Nation, 2023).

It is acknowledged in the Webequie First Nation that healing from trauma, and understanding the peoples' history, learning about language and culture, and spending more time on the land are ways in which we can improve our mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health (Webequie First Nation, 2023). Webequie First Nation is working to expand its ability to take youth and families out on the land to learn traditional skills, cultural teachings, and the language.

The Webequie Education Authority has worked to develop more community-focused curriculum based on its language and culture. Spending more time learning on the land and bringing Elders into the school can be helpful in addressing some of the health and wellness issues in the community, which could help improve student success.

Recreational and Tourism Services

Recreational services in Webequie First Nation are limited, and there is an identified need for a multi-purpose cultural and recreational programming and event facility that includes a fitness centre and an ice arena. (Webequie First Nation, 2023). The building construction was initiated but additional funding is required to complete the project.

Tourism in the region revolves primarily around outdoor activities, specifically hunting and fishing, which are central to the local tourism experience. The area has two hunting and fishing lodges that offer guided outdoor recreation packages, allowing visitors to enjoy the natural beauty of the region. Cultural tourism is also emphasized on the Webequie website, providing visitors with an opportunity to learn about the community's traditional way of life (Webequie First Nation, 2023a).

The following infrastructure are currently present in Webequie First Nation with regard to recreation (Webequie First Nation, 2023):

- Outdoor hockey rink; and
- Three sweat lodges.

Communication Services

Webequie First Nation has three major communication services, as follows:

- Canada Post operates in Webequie five days a week, providing postal services to the community;
- Bell Canada offers digital telephone services, allowing residents to make and receive calls;
- For news, Webequie First Nation community members can access Wawatay newspaper, which is published monthly, or Sioux Bulletin, which is published weekly;
- In terms of radio, Webequie First Nation community members can tune in to the local station, C.S.P.N. radio, or Wawatay radio, which is available via satellite;
- Webequie telecommunications offers internet services through a cable network which is now connected by fibre-optic cable (Webequie First Nation, 2023b);



- Starlink has become a popular alternative to wired internet, whereby Webequie First Nation community members and band administration can pay a subscription for satellite connected high-speed internet access;
- Webequie First Nation KO telehealth has been fully operational since June 2005, providing improved health services to the isolated community of 700 people through the use of internet broadband technology;
- Radio station (Webequie First Nation, 2023); and
- Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN), offers specialized medical care through videoconferencing and other tele-diagnostic equipment, enabling specialists to remotely examine and prescribe treatments to patients in their home communities.

Other Services

Webequie First Nation also has the following services available currently (Webequie First Nation, 2023):

- Two Churches;
- Cemetery north of the community;
- Business centre (with Northern Store, Laundromat, Bank, Post Office, offices and the Webequie Hotel);
- Two community garages and sheds;
- Police station;
- Coffee shop;
- Education office and teacherages (12 units);
- Fire hall (currently not in operation);
- Two small unheated that need upgrades and washroom facilities to use as programming space; and
- Partially completed permanent land-base camp.

Other Local Study Area Communities

Since the other LSA communities are currently accessible via fly-in and winter road access, the in-community services are generally limited and similar to those described above for the Webequie community. The community services reflect the need for basic services in communities. Community input indicates a general need expressed for many services to address socio-economic challenges experienced within the communities.

Attawapiskat First Nation

Demand for Community Services

Attawapiskat First Nation has faced long-standing challenges related to housing, water quality, and health services. For instance, Attawapiskat declared a state of emergency in 2011 and 2013 due to inadequate housing and contaminated water (CBC News, 2023a). The lack of appropriate housing has contributed to other issues, including homelessness, mental health crises, and opioid addiction. Efforts to address these challenges have included calls for more land to build adequate housing and improve infrastructure. The federal government has committed funding for housing solutions, including construction, renovation, and capacity development. However, progress has been slow, and the community's growth has outpaced the rate of development.



Supply and Capacity of Community Services

The following **Table 14-15** summarizes community services available for Attawapiskat First Nation.

Table 14-15: Community Services Availability, Attawapiskat First Nation

Community Service	Key Information
Family Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Well-Being Program: Nishnawbe Aski Nation initiative that aims to support each Indigenous community in designing and delivering their own comprehensive and culturally appropriate services and programs to promote community health and family well-being (211 Ontario North, Attawapiskat First Nation, 2023a).
Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child and Family Services department: Responsible for delivering childcare and protection services as well as family support services (211 Ontario North, Attawapiskat First Nation, 2023b).
Elder Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home Care and Community Health: Offers healthcare services for ill, injured, or Elders members in the comfort of their own homes (211 Ontario North, Attawapiskat First Nation, 2025a).
Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Neepeeshowan Midwives offer a range of prenatal, postnatal and labour and delivery services to all pregnant women in the Attawapiskat First Nation community. The Health Clinic offers services that focus on promoting physical and mental health for members of the Attawapiskat First Nation community. The National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program aims to provide assistance and support to individuals and families in Attawapiskat First Nation struggling with addiction issues. The Diabetes Program provides education, prevention, management and treatment services for Attawapiskat First Nation individuals living with diabetes or at risk of developing diabetes. The Extended Health Benefits program provides a range of health benefits to individuals and families who have high health costs (211 Ontario North, Attawapiskat First Nation, 2025b).
Recreational Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreation Services department: Responsible for planning and executing social, recreational, and special events for community members of all ages. The Maytawaywin Authority oversees recreational services at the community centre and Reg Louttit Sportsplex, including an arena and ice surface, gymnasium, and fields for football, baseball, and soccer (211 Ontario North, Attawapiskat First Nation, 2023c).

Eabametoong First Nation

Demand for Community Services

The demand for community services in Eabametoong First Nation is influenced by needs in housing, health services, mental health support and social services. The community has a high demand for health services due to various factors including limited access to healthcare facilities. The prolonged boil water advisory, which is still in effect since 2001, and other environmental health challenges exacerbate the need for comprehensive health services in the community to address physical and mental health concerns.



Supply and Capacity of Community Services

The following **Table 14-16** summarizes community services available for Eabametoong First Nation.

Table 14-16: Community Services Availability, Eabametoong First Nation

Community Service	Key Information
Family Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tikinagan is a social services organization that provides child and family services for Eabametoong First Nation (Tikinagan Child and Family Services, 2023b).
Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Babies Healthy Children program: Aims to support parenting and promote healthy child development with children under 6 years old, as well as Indigenous children at risk (211 Ontario North, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023a). The Early Childhood Development program: Designed to enhance school readiness for preschool children and six years of age and younger (211 Ontario North, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023b).
Elder Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home and Community Care: Offers healthcare services for ill and/or injured community members, or Elders in the comfort of their own homes (211 Ontario North, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023c). Falls Prevention and Community Elder Exercise Program: Offers classes to older adults and individuals with mobility issues or chronic conditions to prevent falls and injuries (211 Ontario North, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023d).
Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home and Community Care program: Provides in-home rehabilitative care and assistance in preserving or regaining independence (211 Ontario North, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023e). Crisis Intervention program: Offers immediate assistance to individuals affected by family violence and suicide (211 Ontario North, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023f). Health Services: Dedicated to promoting the physical and mental well-being of the community (211 Ontario North, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023g). National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program: Aims to aid and support to individuals and families in struggling with addiction issues (211 Ontario North, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023h). Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative: Provides education, screening, and case management for the prevention, management, and treatment of diabetes (211 Ontario North, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023i). Extended Health Benefits program: Provides a range of health benefits to individuals and families who have high health costs (211 Ontario North, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023j). Nursing Station: Provides essential medical and health care services. The station offers primary health care services, including treatment and emergency services, to individuals in need (211 Ontario North, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023k). Immunization Clinic: Offers inoculations or other preventive measures to help individuals avoid specific controllable diseases (211 Ontario North, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023l). Suboxone Treatment Centre: Operates as a detoxification facility for community members who are struggling with Oxycontin use (211 Ontario North, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023m). Medical Transportation Program: Provides crucial transportation services to members who require assistance in making medical appointments. This program offers transportation to medical appointments within the community and to the airport for health-related flights disability (211 Ontario North, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023). Mental Health Program: Aims to promote the development of good mental health by providing various services to community members (Northwest Healthline, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023a).

Community Service	Key Information
Cultural Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Well-Being Program: Nishnawbe Aski Nation initiative that aims to support Indigenous communities in designing and delivering their own comprehensive and culturally appropriate services and programs to promote community health and family well-being (211 Ontario North, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023o).
Recreational Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreational Services: Recreation Department is responsible for planning and implementing social, recreational, and special events for community members. The department provides a variety of activities including arts and crafts, baking nights, movie nights and outdoor sports events (211 Ontario North, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023p).
Communications Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KO Telehealth: The OTN, the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care (MOHLTC), and First Nations and Inuit Health (FNIH) partnered to provide high-quality and cost-effective telehealth/telemedicine service that meets the health and wellness priorities of Ontario's most isolated communities, with a focus on First Nations requirements and community leadership (KO Telemedicine, 2023). OTN: Offers specialized medical care through videoconferencing and other tele-diagnostic equipment, enabling specialists to remotely examine and prescribe treatments to patients in their home communities. Internet support through Rapid Lynx broadband project under Matawa First Nations Management (Rapid Lynx Telecommunications, 2022a).

Kasabonika Lake First Nation

Demand for Community Services

Kasabonika Lake First Nation has faced significant challenges related to housing, social services and health services. The community has a high demand for health services due to limited access to healthcare facilities and requires ongoing support to fully address primary care, mental health and substance use services. Kasabonika Lake First Nation requires a range of social services to support its residents including family support, youth programs, etc. These services are essential for addressing the challenges faced by the community and improving overall quality of life.

Supply and Capacity of Community Services

The following **Table 14-17** summarizes community services available for Kasabonika Lake First Nation.

Table 14-17: Community Services Availability, Kasabonika Lake First Nation

Community Service	Key Information
Family Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tikinagan is a social services organization that provides child and family services (Tikinagan Child and Family Services, 2023b).
Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Healthy Babies Healthy Children program provides parenting support programming and promotes healthy child development. The program is available for Kasabonika Lake children under 6 years old (211 Ontario North, Kasabonika Lake First Nation, 2023a). The Early Childhood Development program is designed to enhance the health and social development of preschool children under the age of 6 and their families. Its primary objective is to meet the child's emotional, social, health, nutritional, and psychological requirements (211 Ontario North, Kasabonika Lake First Nation 2023b).

Community Service	Key Information
Elder Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Home Care Program aids Elders and families with members having disabilities to manage routine household activities such as light housekeeping, laundry, shopping, meal preparation, and personal care (211 Ontario North, Kasabonika Lake First Nation, 2023c).
Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crisis Intervention provides immediate assistance to individuals affected by family violence and suicide. Their services are available on-site or through a telephone call, and if necessary, they dispatch the police (211 Ontario North, Kasabonika Lake First Nation, 2023d). The Health Department offers a range of services to promote the physical and mental well-being of community members (211 Ontario North, Kasabonika Lake First Nation, 2023e). The Withdrawal Management program operates a detoxification centre for community members struggling with Oxycontin addiction (211 Ontario North, Kasabonika Lake First Nation, 2023f). The Nursing Station provides basic medical and health care services that aim to promote physical and mental health for community members. The station coordinates health care services through a health team consisting of Community Health Nurses, Visiting Physicians, and Home Care workers (211 Ontario North, Kasabonika Lake First Nation, 2023g). The Maternal Child Health Program is designed to support pregnant women and families with infants and young children in the community (211 Ontario North, Kasabonika Lake First Nation, 2023h). The Extended Health Benefits program provides a range of health benefits to individuals and families who have high health costs (211 Ontario North, Kasabonika Lake First Nation, 2023i). The National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program aims to aid and support to individuals and families in Kasabonika Lake First Nation struggling with addiction issues. This program offers AA and NA meetings and provides transportation to all meetings and workshops upon request (211 Ontario North, Kasabonika Lake First Nation, 2023j). The Medical Transportation Program delivers transportation services to community members who require assistance with medical appointments due to illness, injury, or age (211 Ontario North, Kasabonika Lake First Nation, 2023k). The Mental Health Program aims to support the development of sound mental health and provide services to individuals experiencing mental health issues (211 Ontario North, 2023l). The Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Program provides education and information on the harmful consequences of alcohol consumption during pregnancy (211 Ontario North, 2023m).
Cultural Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Well-Being Program: Nishnawbe Aski Nation initiative that aims to support Indigenous communities in designing and delivering their own comprehensive and culturally appropriate services and programs to promote community health and family well-being (211 Ontario North, Kasabonika Lake First Nation, 2023n).
Recreational Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreation Centre located in Kasabonika Lake First Nation serves as a favoured hub for a range of activities such as ice hockey, skating, dances, and bingo nights, drawing many participants.
Communication Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The KO Telehealth partnered with member First Nations, the OTN, the MOHLTC, and FNHI to provide high-quality and cost-effective telehealth/telemedicine service that meets the health and wellness priorities of Ontario's most isolated communities, with a focus on First Nations requirements and community leadership (KO Telehealth, 2023). The OTN offers access to specialized medical care through videoconferencing and tele-diagnostic equipment. KNet upgrade to increase bandwidth on Northwestern Ontario Broadband Expansion Initiative (NWOBEI) Fibre Loop (KuhKenah Network, 2023).



Marten Falls First Nation

Demand for Community Services

Marten Falls First Nation demand for community services is related to housing, health services and social services needs. Due to limited access to healthcare facilities and the need for specialized health programs, there is a high demand for health and social services in the community. Marten Falls First Nation requires a range of social services to support its residents including family support, youth programs, etc. These services are essential for addressing the challenges faced by the community and improving overall quality of life (Suslop, 2024).

Supply and Capacity of Community Services

The following **Table 14-18** summarizes community services available for Marten Falls First Nation.

Table 14-18: Community Services Availability, Marten Falls First Nation

Community Service	Key Information
Family Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tikinagan is a social services organization that provides child and family services (Tikinagan Child and Family Services, 2023b).
Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Babies Healthy Children program provides parenting support and encourages healthy child development for community members with children under the age of six, including Indigenous children at risk (211 Ontario North, Marten Falls First Nation, 2023a).
Elder Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home and Community Care offer healthcare services for ill, injured, or Elders members of the community in the comfort of their own homes. This service is provided by a Case Manager/Nurse, Personal Support Workers, and Homemakers (211 Ontario North, Marten Falls First Nation, 2023b).
Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crisis Intervention provides immediate assistance to individuals of Marten Falls First Nation affected by family violence and suicide (211 Ontario North, Marten Falls First Nation, 2023c). The Health Centre provides a range of services that aim to promote physical and mental health for members of the community (211 Ontario North, Marten Falls First Nation, 2023d). The National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program aims to provide assistance and support to individuals and families in Marten Falls First Nation struggling with addiction issues (211 Ontario North, Marten Falls First Nation, 2023e). The Extended Health Benefits program provides a range of health benefits to individuals and families who have high health costs (211 Ontario North, Marten Falls First Nation, 2023f). The Immunization Clinic offers inoculations or other preventive measures to help individuals avoid specific controllable diseases (211 Ontario North, Marten Falls First Nation, 2023g). The Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative aims to provide education and services for the prevention, management, and treatment of diabetes among members of Marten Falls First Nation (211 Ontario North, Marten Falls First Nation, 2023h). The Suboxone Treatment Program provides a detoxification program for members of Marten Falls First Nation who are struggling with prescription drug abuse and addiction (211 Ontario North, Marten Falls First Nation, 2023i). The 2022 socio-economic survey (AtkinsRéal, 2022b) highlighted the community's need for culturally appropriate healthcare, better integration of traditional healing methods, full-time community doctors and nurses, palliative care, assisted living care, amongst other health care services.

Community Service	Key Information
Cultural Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Well-Being Program is a Nishnawbe Aski Nation initiative that aims to support each Indigenous community in designing and delivering their own comprehensive and culturally appropriate services and programs to promote community health and family well-being (211 Ontario North, Marten Falls First Nation, 2023j).
Recreational Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Marten Falls First Nation community has access to an arena for hockey and skating, as well as a boat launch for pleasure boating and angling (Teach for Canada, Marten Falls, 2017).
Communications Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The OTN offers specialized medical care through videoconferencing and other tele-diagnostic equipment, enabling specialists to remotely examine and prescribe treatments to patients in their home communities. Marten Falls First Nation obtains internet support through Rapid Lynx broadband project under Matawa First Nations Management (Rapid Lynx Telecommunications, 2022a).

Neskantaga First Nation

Demand for Community Services

The demand for community services in Neskantaga First Nation is influenced by critical needs in drinking water, health services, housing and social services. Neskantaga First Nation has been under a boil water advisory since 1995, making it the longest running drinking water advisory in Canada. This situation has impacted the community’s health and well-being, necessitating significant improvements in water infrastructure and health services (Government of Canada, 2024b). The federal government and Neskantaga First Nation are working on a 12-point action plan to address the community’s immediate and long-term needs, including the construction of a new water treatment plant services (Government of Canada, 2024b).

The prolonged lack of access to clean, safe drinking water has had a long-lasting impact on the health and well-being of community members. There is increased demand for mental health services and support programs in the community to help residents cope with this ongoing challenge in addition to other challenges community members face (Government of Canada, 2024b).

Neskantaga First Nation requires a range of social services to support its residents including family support, crises intervention, youth programs, etc. These services are essential for addressing the challenges faced by the community and improving overall quality of life.

Supply and Capacity of Community Services

The following **Table 14-19** summarizes community services available for Neskantaga First Nation.

Table 14-19: Community Services Availability, Neskantaga First Nation

Community Service	Key Information
Family Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tikinagan is a social services organization that provides child and family services (Tikinagan Child and Family Services, 2023b).
Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Healthy Babies Healthy Children program provides parenting support programming and promotes healthy child development (211 Ontario North, Neskantaga First Nation, 2023a).

Community Service	Key Information
Elder Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home and Community Care offers healthcare services for ill, injured, or Elders members of the community in the comfort of their own homes. This service is provided by a Case Manager/Nurse, Personal Support Workers, and Homemakers (211 Ontario North, Neskantaga First Nation, 2023b).
Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home and Community Care program provides in-home rehabilitative care to individuals of Neskantaga First Nation who need assistance in preserving or regaining their independence (211 Ontario North, Neskantaga First Nation, 2023c). Crisis Intervention provides immediate assistance to individuals of Neskantaga First Nation affected by family violence and suicide (211 Ontario North, Neskantaga First Nation, 2023d). The Health and Social Services program provides a range of services that promote physical and mental health for Neskantaga community members (211 Ontario North, Neskantaga First Nation, 2023e). The National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program aims to aid and support to individuals and families in Neskantaga First Nation struggling with addiction issues (211 Ontario North, Neskantaga First Nation, 2023f). The Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative provides education, screening, and case management for the prevention, management, and treatment of diabetes (211 Ontario North, Neskantaga First Nation, 2023g). The Extended Health Benefits program provides a range of health benefits to individuals and families who have high health costs (211 Ontario North, Neskantaga First Nation, 2023h). The Immunization Clinic offers inoculations or other preventive measures to help individuals avoid specific controllable diseases (211 Ontario North, Neskantaga First Nation, 2023i). The Medical Transportation Program provides medical transportation services and assistance in making medical appointment arrangements to members of Neskantaga First Nation who require medical transportation assistance due to age or disability (211 Ontario North, Neskantaga First Nation, 2023j). The Mental Health Program aims to support the development of sound mental health and provide services to individuals of Neskantaga First Nation experiencing mental health issues (211 Ontario North, Neskantaga First Nation, 2023k).
Cultural Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Family Well-Being Program is a Nishnawbe Aski Nation initiative that aims to support each Indigenous community in designing and delivering their own comprehensive and culturally appropriate services and programs to promote community health and family well-being (211 Ontario North, Neskantaga First Nation, 2023l). Brighter Futures is an organization that provides a variety of programs and activities to promote healthy living among members between the ages of 2 to 35 years. The organization operates a youth drop-in centre and offers educational sessions on various healthy living topics (211 Ontario North, Neskantaga First Nation, 2023m).
Recreational Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Youth Program is responsible for planning, developing, and implementing social, recreational, and special events for the children and youth of the Neskantaga First Nation community. The program provides a range of activities, such as arts and crafts, baking nights, movie nights, and outdoor sports events (211 Ontario North, Neskantaga First Nation, 2023n).
Communications Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the Youth Program, an Internet Café is available to provide a drop-in facility for youth to receive assistance with resume writing and filling out job applications (211 Ontario North, Neskantaga First Nation, 2023n). The KO Telehealth partnered with member First Nations, the OTN, the MOHLTC, and FNIH to provide high-quality and cost-effective telehealth/telemedicine service that meets the health and wellness priorities of Ontario's most isolated communities, with a focus on First Nations requirements and community leadership (KO Telemedicine, 2023).



Community Service	Key Information
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The OTN offers specialized medical care through videoconferencing and other tele-diagnostic equipment, enabling specialists to remotely examine and prescribe treatments to patients in their home communities. Neskantaga First Nation obtains internet support through Rapid Lynx broadband project under Matawa First Nations Management (Rapid Lynx Telecommunications, 2022a).

Nibinamik First Nation

Demand for Community Services

The demand for community services in Nibinamik First Nation is influenced by housing, health services and social services. The demand for health services in Nibinamik First Nation is high and the community offers various health programs such as the Family Well-being Program (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023k), Mental Health Program (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023j), Diabetes Program (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023g), National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program amongst others (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023f). However, there remains a significant need for enhance health services to improve overall community health and well-being.

With regards to social services, Nibinamik First Nation offers a range of social services including family support, youth activity programs, parenting education and child protection services. The Band Office also offers additional support services such as transportation for Medical Transportation Program (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023i), extended health benefits (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023h) which are important for supporting the community’s social well-being.

Supply and Capacity of Community Services

The following **Table 14-20** summarizes community services available for Nibinamik First Nation.

Table 14-20: Community Services Availability, Nibinamik First Nation

Community Service	Key Information
Family Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tikinagan is a social services organization that provides child and family services (Tikinagan Child and Family Services, 2023b).
Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Healthy Babies Healthy Children program provides parenting support and encourages healthy child development for community members with children under the age of 6, including Indigenous children at risk (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023a). The licensed daycare program is dedicated to promoting the comprehensive development of children. It provides structured activities such as art, baking, circle time, music, story time, field trips, and special events that are appropriate for each age group (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023b). Home and Community Care offer healthcare services for ill, injured, or Elders members of the community in the comfort of their own homes (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023c).
Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crisis Intervention provides immediate assistance to individuals of Nibinamik First Nation affected by family violence and suicide (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023d). Health Services provides a range of services aimed at promoting physical and mental health for community members (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023e).

Community Service	Key Information
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program aims to aid and support to individuals and families in Nibinamik First Nation struggling with addiction issues (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023f). ▪ The Diabetes Program provides education and services to prevent, manage, and treat diabetes. They offer case management and screening services to increase early detection and reduce avoidable complications (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023g). ▪ The Extended Health Benefits program provides a range of health benefits to individuals and families who have high health costs (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023h). ▪ The Medical Transportation Program provides assistance and transportation services for individuals who need help in making medical appointments (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023i). ▪ The Mental Health Program aims to support the development of sound mental health and provide services to individuals of Nibinamik First Nation experiencing mental health issues (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023j).
Cultural Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Family Well-Being Program is a Nishnawbe Aski Nation initiative that aims to support each Indigenous community in designing and delivering their own comprehensive and culturally appropriate services and programs to promote community health and family well-being (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023k). ▪ The Youth Program is responsible for organizing and implementing social, recreational, and special events for children and youth in the community. They provide a variety of activities such as arts and crafts, movie nights, and outdoor sports events. Additionally, they supervise outdoor activities for youth during the summer, including baseball, football, soccer, dodgeball, and frisbee (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023l).
Recreational Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recreation Department at the Nibinamik First Nation Band Office coordinates a variety of programs including: broomball tournaments, game nights, group fitness classes, hockey tournaments, volleyball nights, and youth workshops. Outdoor recreational activities, such as hunting, fishing, and camping are also popular (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2025a).
Communications Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In Nibinamik First Nation, community members, particularly youth and young adults, have expressed the need for better internet access and more hotspots. ▪ The KO Telehealth partnered with member First Nations, the OTN, the MOHLTC, and FNIH to provide high-quality and cost-effective telehealth/telemedicine service that meets the health and wellness priorities of Ontario's most isolated communities, with a focus on First Nations requirements and community leadership (KO Telemedicine, 2023). ▪ The OTN offers specialized medical care through videoconferencing and other tele-diagnostic equipment, enabling specialists to remotely examine and prescribe treatments to patients in their home communities. Nibinamik First Nation obtains internet support through Rapid Lynx broadband project under Matawa First Nations Management (Rapid Lynx Telecommunications, 2022a).

Weenusk First Nation

Demand for Community Services

Weenusk First Nation has experienced social challenges related to food security, health and well-being that affects the overall quality of life of community members. Change in environment due to climate crises has significantly resulted in a decline in traditional food sources such as caribou and geese making it hard for members of Weenusk First Nation community to sustain themselves through hunting and fishing. This



exacerbates food insecurity and increases the demand for community services that can provide alternative food sources while supporting healthy diet (HRW, 2020).

The changing environment also impacts the health and well-being of the community. There is a growing need for health services to address diet-related health issues such as diabetes which have been reported to be prevalent in the community and exacerbated due to the lack of access to traditionally harvested foods (MNP LLP, 2023).

Supply and Capacity of Community Services

The following **Table 14-21** summarizes community services available for Weenusk First Nation.

Table 14-21: Community Services Availability, Weenusk First Nation

Community Service	Key Information
Family Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Well-Being Program is a Nishnawbe Aski Nation initiative that aims to support each Indigenous community in designing and delivering their own comprehensive and culturally appropriate services and programs to promote community health and family well-being (211 Ontario North, Weenusk First Nation, 2023a).
Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child and Family Services department is responsible for delivering childcare and protection services as well as family support services to members of the Weenusk First Nation. Payukotayno Child and Family Services is mandated as a Native Child Welfare Agency (Payukotayno James and Hudson Bay Family Services, N.D-a). The Children's Mental Health program at Payukotayno provides culturally appropriate mental health services to children, youth, and families in the James and Hudson Bay area. Their services include individual and family counseling, crisis intervention, and community-based programs to support mental wellness Payukotayno James and Hudson Bay Family Services, N.D-b).
Elder Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Weeneebayko Area Health Authority (WAHA) serving Weenusk helps provide holistic health services for aging at home, reflecting the distinct needs of all community members (WAHA, 2016).
Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Health Services aim to promote physical and mental health for Weenusk First Nation community members (211 Ontario North, Weenusk First Nation, 2023b). The National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program aims to aid and support to individuals and families in Weenusk First Nation struggling with addiction issues (211 Ontario North, Weenusk First Nation, 2023c). The Youth Prevention Services program coordinates various programs and services designed for the benefit of youth who are 12 years of age and older (211 Ontario North, Weenusk First Nation, 2023d).
Communication Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under the 'Improving Connectivity for Ontario/Universal Broadband Fund' program initiated in 2021, KNet has undertaken provision of internet connections to the community (Ministry of Infrastructure, 2023; Canadian Impact Assessment Registry, 2023b). Fort Severn and Peawanuck/Weenusk First Nation are working with KNET to replace the existing satellite connection with a marine fibre line (Canadian Impact Assessment Registry, 2023a; KuhKenah Network, N.D.).
Recreational Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operating out of Weenusk First Nation, Wild Wind Tours offers tourists outdoor excursion including: canoe tripping, eco-adventures, fishing trips, and guiding services (Wild Wind Tours, 2015). The Weenusk First Nation Band Office maintains recreation facilities including two ballparks, a playground, an outdoor skating rink, a multi-purpose room and a drop-in centre (211 Ontario North, Weenusk First Nation, 2023e).

Regional Study Area

Demand for Community Services

The demand for community services in the RSA is influenced by several factors including housing, healthcare, mental health and addictions, and social services. **Section 14.2.2.2** provides information on housing availability and affordability in the RSA.

Community services in the Kenora District are influenced by the region's demographic changes such as aging population and the out-migration of youth (Northern Policy Institute, 2019). The KDSB provide a range of integrated social services including community housing, early years services, and financial support services. Mental health and addictions are growing challenges in the region and the remoteness, and insufficient services to meet the needs drives demand for emergency medical services (KDSB, 2022).

There is high demand for mental health and addiction services in Thunder Bay District, and the District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) supports various programs to address these needs (TBIFC, 2019). The TBDSSAB manages childcare and early years programs which are essential for supporting families and enabling parents to participate in the workforce. Increased homelessness and poverty in Thunder Bay District have driven demand for emergency shelters, food programs and supportive housing. Social service providers in the region are experiencing high demand for family support and mental health resources (TBDSSAB, 2023b).

Factors such as limited-service availability, fewer healthcare providers and long travel times to reach general and specialized care all increase the need for more accessible healthcare services in the RSA. The limited social services in the RSA can be attributed to the remoteness and low population density of these districts.

Supply and Capacity of Community Services

Communities described in the RSA include both Indigenous communities that are fly-in and also those connected to the provincial highway system, as well as municipalities that provide services to Indigenous communities in northern Ontario due to their relative proximity. The fly-in Indigenous communities in the RSA, experience community services similar to the fly-in communities of the LSA, while other communities described in the RSA have a differing set of community services, with less concern over transportation access to regional service centres.

A comprehensive description of community services available in the RSA for Indigenous, Métis and non-Indigenous communities and municipalities is found in Section 5.3.2 of the Socio-Economic Conditions Report (Appendix L).

14.2.2.4 Education, Training and Traditional Learning



First Nations shared information on how principles, traditional protocols, culture and customary land-based knowledge of Indigenous Peoples are revived and brought forward through education and practice and this is incorporated in Section 14.2.2.4. In addition, concerns were raised regarding limited education in the communities, the need for specialized programs and investment in education. To address this, the Project proposes providing training opportunities and programs that assist community members gain necessary skills, establishing new educational facilities. Additional measures are outlined in Section 14.4.4.

Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Demand for Community Education and Training Services

Education and training opportunities are limited in fly-in First Nations communities across Northern Ontario and Canada. Schools often face challenges such as inadequate facilities, high teacher turnover, and a lack of special education services (Finlay et al., 2010; CRIAW, 2014). These educational disparities for First Nations People stem from the colonial legacy imposed on Indigenous Peoples in Canada (Blanchet Garneau et al., 2021). Webequie First Nation is not exempt from these challenges.

One of the goals of the Webequie First Nation ORLUP is to strengthen the educational opportunities in the community and this includes expanding the existing school and youth camps (Webequie First Nation, 2019).

Special education in the community poses significant challenges, leading to educational inequities for individuals with intellectual disabilities⁸. Affordability is another issue that prevents members from attaining the training necessary for construction projects. Special education and services, such as Jordan's Principle and special counselling, are expensive for schools in the community (AtkinsRéalais, 2022e). Moreover, some of these special services are difficult for members of the community to access as flying out is expensive and time consuming. The school faces significant expenses in bringing counsellors to the community, and the shortage of housing in Webequie First Nation further complicates the provision of in-community counselling services. Although virtual counselling is an option, not all Webequie First Nation community members have access to internet. Speech language therapy, a vital service for the community, has been available virtually since the COVID-19 pandemic. Knowledge holders highlighted the challenges of delivering in-community services to children with disabilities, and how the lack of access to these services contribute to caregivers burn-out (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

Due to its remote location, Webequie First Nation lacks the ability to provide training locally (AtkinsRéalais 2022b as cited in InterGroup, 2024). As such, at present, any Webequie First Nation community member seeking education and training beyond high school is required to leave the reserve, often travelling much further south to do so. Timmins and Thunder Bay serve as post-secondary hubs offering a variety of colleges and universities with both in-person and virtual training learning options. Additionally, Pickle Lake, Sioux Lookout, and Greenstone provide other post-secondary opportunities, including Confederation College's regional campuses.

Lack of funding which creates issues in accessing education and training programs for youths in the community, as well as motivation to keep going are some of the main concerns in the community (AtkinsRéalais, 2022d).

Supply and Capacity of Community Education and Training Services

Current Conditions and Programs

Webequie First Nation has a kindergarten to Grade 10 band operated school on-reserve – Simon Jacob Memorial Education Centre (SJMEC). Simon Jacob is run by Webequie First Nation Education Authority under the direction of the Chief and Council (SJMEC, 2023). There were 165 total number of students enrolled, with 50 students enrolled in high school (AtkinsRéalais, 2022c). Simon Jacob Memorial Education

⁸ Intellectual disability refers to a person's ability to learn at an expected level and function in daily life. Levels of intellectual disability vary greatly (CDC, 2022).



Centre was built in 1993 and includes three portable classrooms, a school warehouse, education building and living spaces for the teachers. There are 12 teacherages that provide living spaces for teachers and six storage buildings associated with teacherages (Webequie First Nation, 2019).

The school offers culturally relevant content that features the traditions, language, and way of life of Webequie First Nation and Anishinaabe People and allows students to participate in spring and fall hunts. To earn their high school diploma, students collaborate with teachers at the school who provide support for their online education in partnership with Keewaytinook Internet High School. The school experiences a high turnover rate among staff, which adds to its challenges. In addition, the physical size of the school is also an issue; as limited classroom space has led to the loss of essential areas such as the library, computer room, staff room, and a functional kitchen to accommodate additional classrooms (AtkinsRéalis, 2022b as cited in InterGroup, 2024). The Alternative Secondary School Program supports individuals who did not complete high school by helping them obtain their high school equivalent (AtkinsRéalis, 2022b as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

The level of education offered at schools on-reserve range from preschool (known as Aboriginal Headstart) and kindergarten to grade 12 (AtkinsRéalis, 2022d). Distance education programs are also available, such as Washa in Sioux Lookout and Keewaytinook Internet High School (KIHS) (an online high school that offers courses through Kuhkenah Network (KNET)).

Education and Training Trends

The Canadian Census records data for education and training trends is arranged in accordance with government-recognized credentialing systems. Based on 2021 Census data, educational attainment data for Webequie First Nation indicates that 64.7% do not have high school diploma or equivalency education, while 7.8% have post-secondary education, with males outnumbering females. Architecture, engineering, and related trades are popular fields of study in Webequie First Nation.

Table 14-22: Highest Certificate, Diploma or Degree for the Population Aged 15 Years and Over in Private Households in Webequie First Nation (2021)

Highest Level of Education	Total		Male		Female	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
No certificate, diploma or degree	290	61.7%	130	59.1%	160	62.7%
High (secondary) school diploma or equivalency certificate	120	25.5%	45	20.5%	75	29.4%
Post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree	60	12.8%	45	20.5%	20	7.8%
Total	470	100%	220	100%	255	100%

[1]Source: Statistics Canada, 2022a.

Note: All counts in census tabulations undergo random rounding, a process that transforms all raw counts into randomly rounded counts. This reduces the possibility of identifying individuals in the tabulations. This results in breakdown values not always adding up to the total count.

The outcome of the Webequie First Nation Socio-Economic Survey (AtkinsRéalis, 2022c as cited in InterGroup, 2024) showed that 35.8% of on-reserve respondents indicated 'some high school' as their highest level of education, which translates to attending high school but not completing high school. Approximately, 25% of off-reserve respondents indicated obtaining high school diploma as their highest level of education, and 25% indicated that graduating from college or similar courses was their highest level of education. This suggests that the educational outcomes of Webequie First Nation community



members living off-reserve are higher than those living on-reserve. Few on-reserve and off-reserve respondents indicated that they had completed post-secondary education (i.e., university or college), apprenticeships, or trade certifications. Approximately 40% on-reserve respondents who pursued post-secondary education and training studied education, while 38.5% off-reserve respondents who pursued post-secondary studied business administration.

Approximately 7% of the respondents between the ages of 19 and 30, mentioned that elementary school was their highest level of education, 23.2% indicated they had completed 'some high school', and 44.2% indicated they had graduated high school. None of the respondents in this age group indicated they had graduated from university. However, 18.6% mentioned they had completed some college or similar courses while 4.7% indicated they had graduated from college or similar courses. Majority of those who had completed post-secondary education studied arts, including education, business administration, and social services. The significant proportion of individuals aged 19 to 30 who have completed some college or similar courses suggests that community concerns about youth experiencing culture shock and financial challenges when leaving home for post-secondary education may be affecting the youth's ability to complete their studies.

There are initiatives to provide vocational and technical training, which help individuals gain skills relevant to local employment opportunities and support economic development within the community. Matawa First Nations Management, funded by the Employment and Social Development Canada provides employment training programs, and approximately 42 certified workers completed the program (AtkinsRéalais, 2021).

"A couple of years ago we did a big training program and I think we had about 42 certified workers that came out of it. From millwrights to heavy equipment operators, remote camp cooks, and underground miners. Now, there are no kinds of jobs available for them in the area, so they are not using their training at the moment. By the time the mine goes up, maybe these people will be in their 40s or 50s if it is going to be another 10-20 years." (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a).

Training opportunities for Webequie First Nation include an employment training program offered through Matawa First Nations Management, funded by the Employment and Social Development Canada (AtkinsRéalais, 2021), and training and certification courses offered through Kiiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment and Training Services (KKETS). Approximately 42 certified workers were certified through the Employment and Social Development Canada funded program in its recent history, which included millwrights, heavy equipment operators, remote camp cooks, and underground miners (AtkinsRéalais, 2021). KKETS is currently focused on the Alternative Secondary School Program to assist individuals who have obtained their high school equivalent in entering skilled trades (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b as cited in InterGroup, 2024). Due to the lack of available job opportunities in Webequie, the employment training program offered through Matawa First Nations Management is currently underutilized. Not only are the skills of community members who were certified through the program in the past (such as millwrights, heavy equipment operators, and remote camp cooks) being underutilized, but there are also concerns that they are aging out of the workforce (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

Courses offered at KKETS previously included drilling, line cutting, and heavy equipment mechanic; however, KKETS has recently shifted its focus to the Aboriginal Skills and Training program which helps members to complete their high school education before pursuing training in a skilled trade. Training and certification provided through KKETS often occur outside of Webequie, in locations like Thunder Bay and Ottawa.



Challenges and limitations

In general, First Nation youth suffer from a lack of in-community opportunities and partnerships. Youth must rely on virtual opportunities if they are unable or unwilling to travel away from home to pursue further education and training after high school. Webequie First Nation community members have expressed how difficult it can be for youth who must leave their home to access these training options due to the culture shock and financial challenges they face down south (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a). Further, community members shared concerns that youth do not feel motivated to pursue education and training opportunities (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a; 2022b).

Webequie First Nation community members pointed to family violence and addictions as some reasons for this lack of motivation amongst youth. One knowledge holder pointed to the intergenerational trauma of residential schools as a reason for members' poor relationship with school and education. Lack of motivation may also be attributed, in part, to the fact that many positions in the Webequie First Nation community do not require post-secondary education (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a).

More broadly, one interviewed community member noted:

"I think once those [issues] have been alleviated or addressed first, like primary issues and concerns in the community, then you can look at the secondary needs, issues or whatnot. You need to have a healthy environment in the community and then you'll get proper input from them. And that's when they'll focus. Right now what they're focused on is, do I have enough food for tomorrow or next week? It is food security, the price of goods are like three times as expensive because of flying and whatnot. So, I think that's what's always been the issue for me in terms of training is like, people want to train, want to get their education, but the concern that they have is home. They want to make sure that their family is going to be looked after or the house they live in is in proper condition. We have basic daily needs" (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a).

There was a lack of jobs available to Webequie First Nation, and a lack of interest within the community developed and caused the KKETS program to stop being funded resulting in it no longer being available. Those that took the courses offered at KKETS are now in their 40s and 50s and may no longer be physically able to work on the Project. The significance of this is that education and training courses should not only be made available to communities but should also target a younger demographic to ensure that workers can perform physically demanding tasks for the project (e.g., labourer). Webequie aims to train more members under the age of 35, with a specific focus on youth aged 18 to 20, as heavy equipment operators and mechanics. This initiative is intended to enable more members benefit from future industrial opportunities in the area (AtkinsRéalais, 2021 as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

Generally, Webequie First Nation youth often lack awareness of in-community opportunities and partnerships. If they are unable or unwilling to travel away from home for further education and training after high school, they must rely on virtual options. Webequie First Nation community members have highlighted for the challenges youth face when leaving home, including culture shock and financial difficulties experienced down south (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b as cited in InterGroup, 2024). In addition, there are concerns that youth may lack motivation to pursue education and training opportunities (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b; 2022c as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

Webequie First Nation community members identified family violence and addictions as factors contributing to the lack of motivation among youth. One knowledge holder attributed this issue to the intergenerational trauma resulting from residential schools which has negatively affected members' relationship with school and education. Additionally, the lack of motivation may also stem from the fact



that many positions in the community do not require post-secondary education (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

According to the results of the 2021 census, **Table 14-23**, 61.7% of residents in Webequie First Nation had no certificate, diploma, or degree, 25.5% had their high school diploma or equivalent, and 12.8% had a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree (Statistics Canada 2022a). The percentage of individuals with no certificate, diploma, or degree in Webequie First Nation is greater than the percentage of Individuals with no certificate, diploma or degree in the Province (15.3%). However, the percentage of individuals with high school diploma (or equivalent) and those with post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree is lower than the percentage of individuals in the Province with equivalent certificate, diploma or degree (i.e., 27.2% and 57.5%, respectively). Based on the outcome of the census, females in are more likely to lack a degree (62.7%) than males (59.1%) and are also less likely to hold a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree (7.8%) than males (20.5%).

Table 14-23: Highest Certificate, Diploma or Degree for the Population Aged 15 Years and Over in Private Households in Webequie First Nation (2021)

Highest Level of Education	Total		Male		Female	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
No certificate, diploma or degree	290	61.7%	130	59.1%	160	62.7%
High (secondary) school diploma or equivalency certificate	120	25.5%	45	20.5%	75	29.4%
Post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree	60	12.8%	45	20.5%	20	7.8%
Total	470	100%	220	100%	255	100%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2022a.

Note: All counts in census tabulations undergo random rounding, a process that transforms all raw counts into randomly rounded counts. This reduces the possibility of identifying individuals in the tabulations. This results in breakdown values not always adding up to the total count.

There is also a discrepancy between Webequie First Nation community members on-reserve and off-reserve and their levels of education. An online census survey conducted by AtkinsRéalais in 2022 on the individuals living on the reserve and individuals living off the reserve revealed that the highest level of education they received as high school, with 28% of participants living on the reserve having a high school diploma, and 36% of participants living on the reserve only having attended high school but never graduated (AtkinsRéalais, 2022f). The survey also found that less than 2% of the respondents living on the reserve have completed or has taken apprenticeships or trades programs. These results contrast the participants who were living off-reserve as a higher percentage individuals indicated in the survey that their highest level of education was a college degree (approximately 25%). Key informant interviews with Webequie First Nation community members identified that there are plans to minimize the knowledge gap between education received in the community and education received outside the community (InterGroup, 2024).

Generally, it is noted that Indigenous women face additional barriers to education and training, and this includes pressures to fulfill the role of caregiver in their homes, which can be related to the impact of colonization and introduction of patriarchal attitudes on Indigenous women in society (CRIAW, 2014; Bond and Quinlan, 2018, InterGroup, 2024). Female members of Webequie First Nation experience educational inequalities due to familial responsibilities and the absence of childcare services in the community (InterGroup, 2024). During the Webequie First Nation Socio-Economic Survey (AtkinsRéalais, 2022c as cited in InterGroup, 2024), majority (80.5%) of Webequie female respondents identified



themselves as the primary caregiver (i.e., childcare, Elder care) at home. A knowledge holder indicated that if childcare issues were addressed within the community, more women would pursue education and training (AtkinsRéal, 2022b). Currently, there is no dedicated childcare program or early childhood drop-in centre available in the Webequie First Nation community. Refer to **Section 14.3.4** for further discussion on Community Services, including childcare.

It is also important to note that members of Webequie First Nation possess skills and knowledge that are not readily reported in education and training statistics.

Learning of Traditional Knowledge

Indigenous education and training pedagogy includes techniques such as observation practice, oral teaching, land-based learning or ceremonial participation, where learners receive knowledge related to navigational skills, knowledge of the land and its changes, geometry, the complexities of language, ethics, natural law, governance, etc. (Baskatawang, 2023; Luby, 2014). Traditional knowledge learning and sharing is an important aspect of Webequie First Nation community. Webequie First Nation's seven goals based on the seven directions identified includes 'cultural vibrancy/traditional life' as one aspect, where the community will work towards keeping the cultural and traditional way of life strong and continual and honor of past and future generations (Webequie First Nation, 2023). The Protected Traditional Area ('Tashiikawiiin/Tashiiwiitoo') is around 40-50km from the community in all directions and used for traditional harvesting and Anishinabek cultural livelihood activities. This area is considered an essential aspect of the cultural identity of the Webequie First Nation community. The community members partake in fishing, hunting (moose and caribou), and harvesting (medicinal herbs and consumable foods) (Webequie First Nation, 2023), and the school allows a culturally sensitive schedule which allows students to engage in spring and fall hunts, take leave with families for camping, hunting and family enrichment (Stantec, 2024).

"We do some of the activities, especially during the summer and sometimes during the winter. But it is like we do it maybe for a week or two, a week or two here and there, which is not very consistent. And we need to have a service that is operating at least six to 12 months a year, out on the land. We have to be able to offer that... We can take them out on the land, sightseeing, and special sites that are significant places where something happened. They will be more prepared to live out there. We do not trust them to survive out there now. Once I remember they went out for 11 days to Winisk and they loved that." (AtkinsRéal, 2022a).

Webequie First Nation is an Oji-Cree speaking community. Retaining the language is an important part of cultural identity and is a part of oral community education. Webequie First Nation also practices traditional education related to hunting, harvesting and other traditional activities such as world view, ceremonies, story telling and the production of goods.

Schools on-reserve focus on the land, so there are cultural programs for children (AtkinsRéal, 2022d). Learning also extends beyond social sciences, as the schools integrate seasonality into their program (e.g., camping in the spring). Members that return to school to pursue post-secondary education are generally female, which may be a result of fewer employment opportunities for women (AtkinsRéal, 2022d).

Webequie First Nation participates in hunting, trapping and fishing in family groups, usually with the large extended family, with the trips lasting a couple of weeks and twice a year in general. The trips generally occur during Spring and Fall of each year, with families staying at cabins and camping sites. Shorter trips occur throughout the year for community members, and youth also engages in these ventures which



allows them to learn from their families. Traditions, customs, rules and beliefs are transferred as knowledge during these outings through generations (Stantec, 2024).

Local Study Area: Other LSA Communities

As with Webequie First Nation, other LSA communities are remote fly-in communities and have limited education and training opportunities as a result. Student and educators are challenged with inadequate facilities, high teacher turnover, and a lack special education services (Finlay et al., 2010; CRIAW, 2014). These educational disparities for First Nations People stem from the colonial legacy imposed on Indigenous Peoples in Canada (Blanchet Garneau et al., 2021).

In-community schools cover primary school, and with online support often required to complete high school. The following **Table 14-24** provides a summary of educational and training facilities available in the other LSA communities.

Table 14-24: Education and Training Facilities Availability, Local Study Area

First Nation	Education and Training Facilities
Attawapiskat First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two schools on-reserve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Kattawapiskat Elementary school (Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8). ▫ Vezina Secondary School (Grade 9-12). ▪ Online and distance education courses through Community Learning Office at the Attawapiskat Development Corporation. ▪ METS training services providing employment and training funds. ▪ Camp Chikepak – two-week youth camp held at Camp Bickell on Chapman Lake through Nishnawbe Aski Nation program. ▪ Omushkego Education Student Success – Land-Based Camp Activities (Spring Goose Camp Activities, Summer Celebrations, Fall or Winter Moose Camp Activities and Winter Fishing Camp).
Eabametoong First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On-reserve John C. Yesno Education Centre (Junior Kindergarten to Grade 10) (recently burned down due to arson). ▪ Wahsa Distance Education (secondary and post-secondary programs). ▪ KKETS training and certification courses. ▪ MECC financial aid, support and advisory services and housing services and facilities for secondary and higher education; along with Outdoor Education Program and Matawa Education and Care Centre’s Elders Program.
Kasabonika Lake First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On-reserve Chief Simeon McKay Education Centre (Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12). ▪ Resource centre for early childhood development.
Marten Falls First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On-reserve Henry Coaster Memorial School (Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8). ▪ Marten Falls Education Authority – financial assistance to attend Grade 9 to 12 in Geraldton or Thunder Bay. ▪ Culture Week at the school every spring – teaches traditional skills such as trapping, skinning a beaver, setting up rabbit snares and traditional art. ▪ MECC financial aid, support and advisory services and housing services and facilities for secondary and higher education; along with Outdoor Education Program and Matawa Education and Care Centre’s Elders Program.

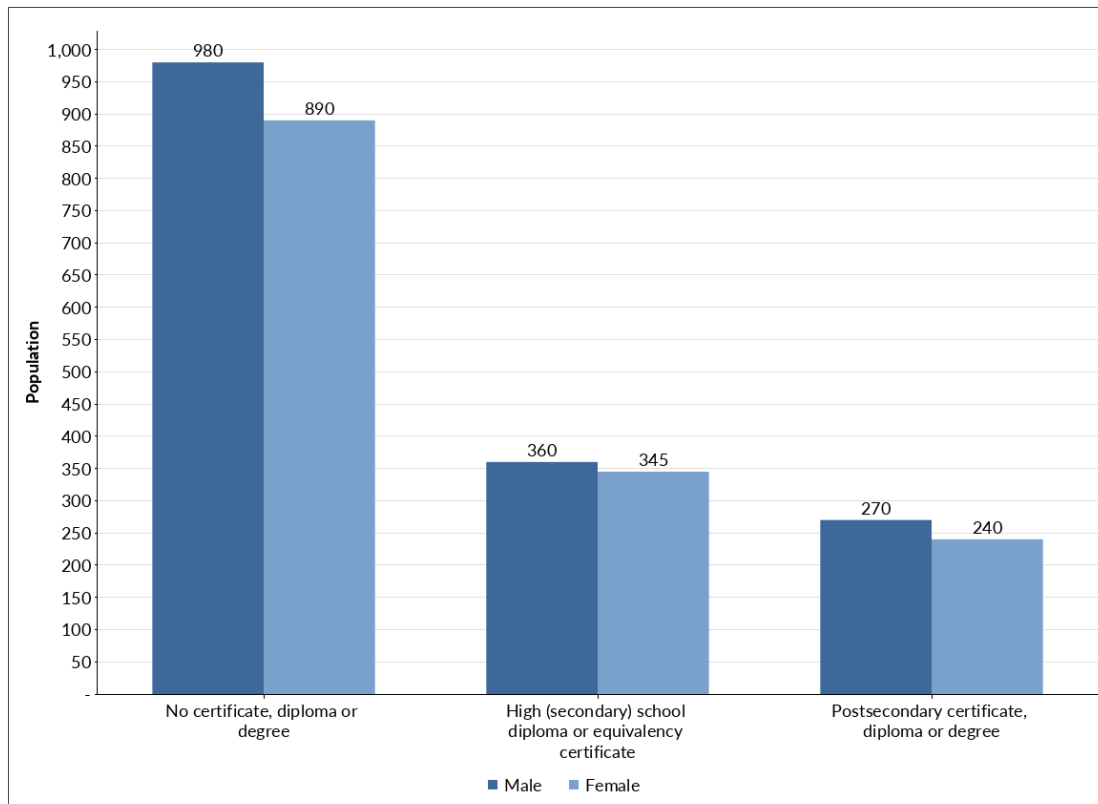


First Nation	Education and Training Facilities
Neskantaga First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On-reserve Neskantaga First Nation School (Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8). ▪ Neskantaga Training Centre in partnership with Aecon and KKETS. ▪ MECC financial aid, support and advisory services and housing services and facilities for secondary and higher education; along with Outdoor Education Program and Matawa Education and Care Centre's Elders Program.
Nibinamik First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On-reserve Nibinamik Education Centre (Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8). ▪ KIHS online high school program. ▪ KKETS training and certification courses. ▪ MECC financial aid, support and advisory services and housing services and facilities for secondary and higher education; along with Outdoor Education Program and Matawa Education and Care Centre's Elders Program.
Weenusk First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On-reserve Ma-Tah-Ha-Mao School (Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8). ▪ Omushkego Education Student Success- Land-Based Camp Activities (Spring Goose Camp Activities, Summer Celebrations, Fall or Winter Moose Camp Activities and Winter Fishing Camp).

Source: AtkinsRéalis, 2023

Based on Canadian Census data of the other LSA communities, **Figure 14-8**, the educational attainment trends follow that of Webequie First Nation. In the LSA, 60.3% do not have education, but 16.9% have post-secondary education with an even gender distribution. Of the communities in the LSA, Nibinamik First Nation has the lowest educational attainment rate of 70%, while Weenusk First Nation has the highest percentage of post-secondary education attainment at 32.5%, with more male graduates.

Figure 14-8: Highest Certificate, Diploma or Degree for the Population Aged 15 Years and Over in Private Households, Other LSA Indigenous Communities (2021)



[1]Source: Statistics Canada, 2022a.

Note: All counts in census tabulations undergo random rounding, a process that transforms all raw counts into randomly rounded counts. This reduces the possibility of identifying individuals in the tabulations. This results in breakdown values not always adding up to the total count. This figure displays the sum of data for Marten Falls First Nation, Nibinamik First Nation, Neskantaga First Nation, Kasabonika Lake First Nation, Eabametoong First Nation, Attawapiskat First Nation, and Weenusk First Nation.

The most pursued educational field in the LSA communities is Education and is significantly represented by female graduates (74%). Field such as Physical and Life Sciences, Technology, Mathematics, Computer and Information Sciences, Agriculture, and Visual and Performing Arts, have low representation, particularly among females. Architecture, Engineering, and related trades are popular among males (26%). Understanding these educational trends is crucial for tailored community support and development programs (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

Communities in the LSA follow similar patterns in terms of education and training services. All the LSA communities have one or more schools within the reserve, usually from kindergarten to Grade 8 or 12; the exception of this is Eabametoong First Nation which saw its only school burned down due to arson (CBC News, 2024a).

Other training and educational facilities and services are provided by councils, such as; Mushkegowuk Council Employment and Training Service which is a training service offered for members of the Mushkegowuk Nations, KKETS which provides training and certification courses, Matawa Education and Care Centre and educational and training programs (which also includes an outdoor education program).

Also some communities develop their own programs with organizations, such as Contact North’s partnership with Attawapiskat First Nation where over 18,000 online and distance education courses are provided at the centre through e-learning and distance courses (Bell, 2015), Attawapiskat First Nation’s Northern College access centre to support Northern College students in the area (211 Ontario North, Northern College, 2023), online secondary school education through Wahsa Distance Education enabling students to complete high school within their own communities, training centre developed by Neskantaga First Nation in partnership with Aecon and Matawa First Nations Management KKETS providing e-learning tools and programs, and similar initiatives.

Most schools in the LSA implement curriculums which allow students to participate in spring and fall hunts, camping and other cultural and traditional activities. This ensures that the traditional knowledge is passed on to the future generations.

Matawa’s Education and Care Centre’s outdoor education Program and Matawa Education and Care Centre’s Elders Program (Matawa Education, 2019a) provide students from eligible communities with traditional knowledge sharing and learning as well. The outdoor education program is made up of six Land-based and Outdoor Learning credits and allows students to connect with the land and water via activities and programs such as trapping, outdoor skills, camping, canoeing, and fishing (Matawa Education, 2019a). The Elder’s program supports Elder’s going into the community to provide support to students with traditional activities such as smudging, big drum making, hand drum making, drumming, feasts beading, traditional teachings, storytelling, workshops, traditional medicines, hide tanning, hunting, and trapping (Matawa Education, 2019b).

Mushkegowuk Council also provides initiatives for youth to engage in traditional knowledge and skill learning through Omushkego Education Student Success, which is a program aimed at engaging youth in traditional education, values, language, and strategies (Mushkegowuk Council, n.d.). Omushkego Land-Based Camp Activities Teacher’s and Principal’s Toolkit were developed during these camps, which contains information for youth to experience milo or mino pimaatisiwin (the good life) through the seasonal camps offered such as Spring Goose Hunting, Blooming of the Earth or Summer Fishing, Summer Celebration, Fall Goose Hunting, Fall or Winter Moose Hunting, Freezing-Up or Winter Trapping and Snaring, and Winter Fishing (Mushkegowuk Council, 2021).

Within the LSA, there are a number of individuals who have pursued education within fields that may align with Project needs should they be available to work on the Project. Approximately 80 individuals pursued education within architecture, engineering, and related trades which will be integral during the construction phase. **Table 14-25** summarizes the number of post-secondary degrees achieved by LSA residents within key Project fields.

Table 14-25: Educational Attainment within Project-Related Fields, Local Study Area

Community	Field	Total	Male	Female
Marten Falls	Architecture, engineering, and related trades	0	0	0
	Health and related fields	0	0	0
	Personal, protective and transportation services	10	10	0
	Mathematics, computer, and information sciences	0	0	0
	Agriculture, natural resources, and conservation	0	0	0
Nibinamik	Architecture, engineering, and related trades	10	0	0
	Health and related fields	10	10	10

Community	Field	Total	Male	Female
	Personal, protective and transportation services	0	0	0
	Mathematics, computer, and information sciences	0	0	0
	Agriculture, natural resources, and conservation	0	0	0
Neskantaga	Architecture, engineering, and related trades	15	15	0
	Health and related fields	0	0	0
	Personal, protective and transportation services	10	10	0
	Mathematics, computer, and information sciences	0	0	0
	Agriculture, natural resources, and conservation	0	0	0
Kasabonika Lake	Architecture, engineering, and related trades	20	20	0
	Health and related fields	10	0	0
	Personal, protective and transportation services	15	10	0
	Mathematics, computer, and information sciences	10	0	0
	Agriculture, natural resources, and conservation	0	0	0
Eabametoong	Architecture, engineering, and related trades	10	10	0
	Health and related fields	10	0	10
	Personal, protective and transportation services	10	0	0
	Mathematics, computer, and information sciences	0	0	0
	Agriculture, natural resources, and conservation	0	0	0
Attawapiskat	Architecture, engineering, and related trades	25	20	0
	Health and related fields	35	10	25
	Personal, protective and transportation services	25	15	10
	Mathematics, computer, and information sciences	0	0	0
	Agriculture, natural resources, and conservation	10	10	0
Weenusk	Architecture, engineering, and related trades	0	0	0
	Health and related fields	10	0	10
	Personal, protective and transportation services	10	10	0
	Mathematics, computer, and information sciences	0	0	0
	Agriculture, natural resources, and conservation	0	0	0
Total	Architecture, engineering, and related trades	80	65	0
	Health and related fields	75	20	55
	Personal, protective and transportation services	80	55	10
	Mathematics, computer, and information sciences	10	0	0
	Agriculture, natural resources, and conservation	10	10	0

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021



Attawapiskat First Nation

Demand for Community Education and Training Services

Attawapiskat First Nation, similar to other remote First Nations, face challenges with regard to providing adequate training and education to the community's youth. Despite the construction of a new school in 2012, there are ongoing challenges. The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) reported that many Indigenous communities, including Attawapiskat, still face inadequate educational facilities (AMMSA, 2012). The high school graduation rate in Attawapiskat First Nation is lower than the national average. This is partly due to the lack of resources and support for students, which affects their ability to complete their education (AMMSA, 2012).

There is a strong demand for post-secondary education and vocational training. Many young people in Attawapiskat seek opportunities to further their education and gain skills that will help them secure employment (Neuerburg-Denzer, U., 2019).

There is a need for culturally relevant education that respects and incorporates Indigenous Knowledge and traditions. This is crucial for engaging students and ensuring that their education is meaningful and supportive of their identity (AMMSA, 2012).

Supply and Capacity of Community Education and Training Services

Attawapiskat First Nation has two schools within the reserve, which are managed by the Attawapiskat First Nation Education Authority (AFNEA) (AFNEA, 2023). Kattawapiskak Elementary school (Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8) has been in use since 2014 and includes a computer lab, cafeteria, music room, tech shop and classrooms (AFNEA, 2023). AFNEA provides additional community support with the Community Learning Office at the Attawapiskat Development Corporation. Contact North has a partnership with Attawapiskat First Nation, and they provide over 18,000 online and distance education courses at the centre through e-learning and distance courses (Bell, 2015). The centre is operated by Contact North, Ontario's Distance Education and Training Network, and is equipped with learning technologies, internet access, computer workstations.

Attawapiskat First Nation has a Northern College access centre to support Northern College students in the area (211 Ontario North, Northern College, 2023).

The Mushkegowuk Council Employment and Training Service (METS) is a training service offered for members of the Mushkegowuk Nations, which includes Attawapiskat First Nation (Mushkegowuk Council, 2023). METS offers workplace-based training to assist employers (including self-employed individuals) through negotiated contributions to training to meet their current or future skill needs, as well as to retrain individuals whose skills have been made redundant through technology, or by market, legislative or regulatory change.

Learning of Traditional Knowledge

In 2019, Omushkego Education Student Success hosted a Cree Language and Culture Teachers Gathering to create culturally relevant curriculum that utilized land-based Omushkego culture (Mushkegowuk Council, 2021). Omushkego Education Student Success supports Attawapiskat First Nation.

Attawapiskat First Nation hosts Camp Chikepak, which is a two-week youth camp held at Camp Bickell on Chapman Lake open to youths aged 9-14 years old across the Mushkegowuk territory; the camp provides land-based cultural and traditional activities and knowledge. The costs for this annual camp are provided by Choose Life Program implemented through a Nishnawbe Aski Nation program (Grech, 2022).



Eabametoong First Nation

Demand for Community Education and Training Services

The community faced a major setback when the John C. Yesno Education Centre was destroyed by fire in January 2024. This incident displaced about 300 students from kindergarten to Grade 9. The Ontario government has since allocated \$540,000 to support the community's recovery and the establishment of a temporary school (CBC News, 2024b). The federal government announced over \$13 million to help the community rebuild, including the construction of modular buildings to serve as temporary educational facilities. This funding is crucial for ensuring that students have access to uninterrupted learning and necessary resources during this challenging time (CBC News, 2024b).

Students from Eabametoong First Nation typically move to Thunder Bay to complete their high school education starting in Grade 10. The fire has forced some Grade 9 students to relocate earlier than planned. There is a strong emphasis on providing mental health and well-being support for students affected by the loss of their school. This includes land-based programming and health and safety initiatives (CBC News, 2024b).

Supply and Capacity of Community Education and Training Services

John C. Yesno Education Centre is within the Eabametoong First Nation Reserve and is managed by Eabametoong First Nation Education Authority. The school currently provides education for Junior Kindergarten to Grade 10 students with a school population of 340 students in 2017 (Teach for Canada, 2023). On January 25, 2024, the John C. Yesno Education Centre was lost to an arson fire (CBC News, 2024a), and currently the Eabametoong First Nation does not have any education facilities on community.

Wahsa Distance Education enables students to complete high school within their own communities. If Eabametoong First Nation community members want to attend secondary and post-secondary schools in-person, further education is available in Thunder Bay, Sioux Lookout and Sault Ste. Marie for students to receive their Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

Eabametoong First Nation community members can also take part in training and certification courses offered by KKETS (KKETS, 2023).

Eabametoong First Nation students have the opportunity to take part in Matawa First Nations Management Education and Care Centre's Outdoor Education Program and Matawa Education and Care Centre's Elders Program (Matawa Education, 2019a).

Learning of Traditional Knowledge

Eabametoong First Nation provided a biweekly outdoor education program for students to engage in outdoor activities such as hunting, canoeing, camping and ice fishing (Teach for Canada, 2017a).

Kasabonika Lake First Nation

Demand for Community Education and Training Services

Kasabonika Lake First Nation has faced challenges with infrastructure, including housing and educational facilities, due to unreliable energy sources. The recent connection to the provincial power grid through the Wataynikaneyap Power project has enabled the community to undertake significant projects, such as building a new high school. This connection is expected to enhance educational opportunities by providing reliable power for new and existing facilities (Wataynikaneyap Power, 2023).



In 2019, the federal government pledged up to \$41 million to improve education in Kasabonika Lake First Nation. This funding is allocated for renovating the existing elementary school (K4-6) and constructing a new high school (Grades 7-12). These improvements aim to provide a better learning environment and help students reach their full potential (CBC News, 2019).

Supply and Capacity of Community Education and Training Services

Chief Simeon McKay Education Centre offers school for students in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 within Kasabonika Lake First Nation. The school is administered by Sineonokway Education Authority (211 Ontario North, Kasabonika Lake First Nation, 2024).

Kasabonika Lake First Nation also includes a resource centre for early childhood development. This centre focuses on improving the health and social development of preschool children and their families (Northwest Healthline, Kasabonika Resource Centre, 2023a).

Learning of Traditional Knowledge

Traditional knowledge in Kasabonika Lake First Nation is passed down through generations via storytelling, cultural practices, and community engagement. Elders play a crucial role in teaching the youth about their heritage, including traditional hunting, fishing, and medicinal practices (Kehoe, 2014). These activities are not only vital for cultural preservation but also for fostering a sense of identity and community among the younger generation.

Kasabonika Lake First Nation's school curriculum integrates traditional knowledge through various programs and activities. The Chief Simeon McKay Education Centre, which serves the community, offers a curriculum approved by the Ontario Ministry of Education. This curriculum includes the Anishiniimowin Immersion program, which promotes academic learning in Oji-Cree during the early years and gradually transitions to English by Grade 8. The school also emphasizes cultural and traditional outings, such as fishing and trapping, to ensure students learn about their heritage and traditional practices. These activities are designed to foster a strong sense of identity and community among the students (211 Ontario North, Kasabonika Lake First Nation, 2024).

Marten Falls First Nation

Demand for Community Education and Training Services

The Community Labour Market Report for Marten Falls First Nation highlights the need for tailored education and training programs to address high unemployment rates and low labour force participation. The report emphasizes the importance of developing skills that align with local employment opportunities (Northern Policy Institute, 2017).

According to the Existing Conditions Fact Sheet on Economics for Marten Falls First Nation, education and training are critical for economic development. The fact sheet underscores the necessity of programs that enhance local skills and create job opportunities in sectors such as education, health care, and community services (Teach for Canada, 2017b).

Marten Falls First Nation has been actively working to improve education and training through partnerships with organizations like Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment and Training Services (KKETS). These initiatives aim to provide community members with the skills needed for employment and economic self-sufficiency (Teach for Canada, 2024).



Supply and Capacity of Community Education and Training Services

Henry Coaster Memorial School offers school for students in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8 within Marten Falls First Nation Reserve. The school is administered by Marten Falls Education Authority (211 Ontario North, Marten Falls First Nation, 2023k).

Marten Falls First Nation community members can also take part in training and certification courses offered by KKETS (KKETS, 2023). Marten Falls First Nation students have the opportunity to take part in Matawa's Education and Care Centre's Outdoor Education Program and Matawa Education and Care Centre's Elders Program (Matawa Education, 2019a).

Learning of Traditional Knowledge

Henry Coaster Memorial School (K-8 school) in Marten Falls First Nation incorporates traditional knowledge into its curriculum. The school emphasizes cultural education, including traditional practices such as hunting, fishing, and gathering, which are essential for maintaining the community's cultural identity (211 Ontario North, Marten Falls First Nation, 2023k).

As part of the Community Access Road Project, Marten Falls First Nation has implemented an Indigenous Knowledge Program. This program involves the collection and integration of traditional knowledge, ensuring that cultural practices and environmental stewardship are taught to the younger generation. The Indigenous Knowledge Program encourages collaboration with community members, including youth, to ensure that traditional knowledge is respected and incorporated into educational and environmental planning. This approach helps to protect and promote the cultural heritage of Marten Falls First Nation (Marten Falls First Nation Community Access Road, 2022).

Trapping has been a large part of the way of life of Marten Falls First Nation, as it was known as a "community of trappers" (Suslop Inc., 2024). Some families spent 3 months on the land trapping, which were also teaching opportunities for families to pass on their knowledge to their children or younger generations. Marten Falls First Nation people navigated by foot, canoe, and/or dog sled (Suslop Inc., 2024). Trapping, hunting, fishing, foraging and gathering were activities which involved teaching children the community's traditional ecological knowledge, values, cultural and spiritual traditions. Other traditional knowledge to pass on to younger and other members of the community included skills for making crafts, tools, means of transportation and crafts, which were also accompanied with storytelling, and spiritual and traditional ceremonies (Suslop Inc., 2024).

Neskantaga First Nation

Demand for Community Education and Training Services

The Neskantaga Education Centre provides educational services to elementary and secondary school students living on-reserve and the Neskantaga First Nation Education Department offers a Post-Secondary Student Support Program. The school offers programs from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8 and uses the Keewatinook Internet High School to deliver accredited secondary school courses from Grade 9 to 12 (211 Ontario North, Neskantaga First Nation, 2025a). However, due to limited facilities available for education on-reserve, many students pursue education off-reserve, sometimes even early as Grade 9 (Midlandtoday, 2023).

Many students from Neskantaga First Nation face significant challenges when pursuing education away from home. These include homesickness, cultural disconnection, and limited support systems. There is a need for more robust support services to help students navigate these challenges and succeed academically (Midlandtoday, 2023).



Supply and Capacity of Community Education and Training Services

Neskantaga Education Centre offers school for students in junior Kindergarten – Grade 8 within Neskantaga First Nation (211 Ontario North, Neskantaga First Nation, 2025b).

In August 2014, Neskantaga Training Centre was opened. This centre was provided through a partnership with Aecon and Matawa First Nations Management KKETS. The training centre will provide local access to community based education, trades and apprenticeship training for Indigenous Peoples in northern and remote areas (Aecon, 2023).

Neskantaga First Nation students have the opportunity to take part in Matawa's Education and Care Centre's Outdoor Education Program and Matawa Education and Care Centre's Elders Program (Matawa Education, 2019a).

Neskantaga First Nation is currently working on construction of an 8-plex teachers' residence as well, with assessment decision statement published on February 09, 2023 (Canadian Impact Assessment Registry, 2023b).

Learning of Traditional Knowledge

The Neskantaga Education Centre incorporates traditional practices such as hunting, fishing, and gathering into its curriculum. These activities are essential for maintaining the community's cultural identity and are taught to students to ensure the preservation of these practices. The school works closely with Neskantaga First Nation community members, including Elders, to integrate traditional knowledge into educational programs. This collaboration ensures that cultural teachings are passed down to the younger generation. The school emphasizes the importance of environmental stewardship, teaching students about the sustainable use of natural resources, which is a key aspect of traditional knowledge (211 Ontario North, Neskantaga First Nation, 2025b).

Nibinamik First Nation

Demand for Community Education and Training Services

Nibinamik First Nation has a school that offers education from Grade 1 to 8, with high school courses available online (Nibinamik First Nation, 2024a). This setup aims to provide continuous learning opportunities within the community. The community faces several obstacles, including remote location, high transportation costs, and limited access to resources (Nibinamik First Nation, 2024b). These factors impact the quality and accessibility of education.

The education department, led by Mary Oskineegish, is actively working to enhance educational services and support for students (Nibinamik First Nation, 2024a). This includes managing the local school and facilitating online high school education. Broader socio-economic issues such as poor housing conditions, health problems, and lower employment rates also affect educational attainment (Nibinamik First Nation, 2024b). These challenges highlight the need for comprehensive support to improve educational outcomes.

Supply and Capacity of Community Education and Training Services

Nibinamik Education Centre offers school for students in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8 within Nibinamik First Nation. In 2010, KIHS program started being utilized in the community as funding for the high school was cut due to lack of attendance. Students that want to attend high school either must attend KIHS online or leave the community (Nibinamik First Nation, 2014).



Nibinamik Education Centre also provides traditional teachings such as arts and crafts and cooking and preparing of traditional foods. Elders come to the school on Fridays allowing students to learn from community members and to preserve traditional knowledge (Nibinamik First Nation, 2014).

Nibinamik First Nation members can also take part in training and certification courses offered by KKETS (KKETS, 2023).

Nibinamik First Nation students have the opportunity to take part in Matawa's Education and Care Centre's Outdoor Education Program and Matawa Education and Care Centre's Elders Program (Matawa Education, 2019a).

Learning of Traditional Knowledge

Nibinamik Education Centre, in addition to providing the fundamental education courses, provides traditional teachings of arts and crafts, and cooking and preparing traditional food items. Nibinamik Health Centre also has a youth program, which promotes leadership and cultural knowledge shared by local Elders' and experienced instructors and offers teachings of skills and practical knowledge such as medicine walks, fish netting, boat and motor safety, first-aid/water training, moose hunting skills and preparation of traditional food (Anishinabek Education System, 2024). Nibinamik First Nation also offers annual youth retreats at the Breathing Grounds ('O-ma-day-na-moh-win-nik') to teach and share traditional knowledge and encourage youth to engage in traditional activities (Nibinamik News, 2019).

Weenusk First Nation

Demand for Community Education and Training Services

The demand for community education and training services in Weenusk First Nation is influenced by several factors including socio-economic factors (HRW, 2020). Education and training services are part of the services Weenusk First Nation community members desire for the improvement of the quality of life (MNP, 2024). According to the Weenusk First Nation Existing Conditions Report, community education and training opportunities are integral components of economic development to ensure self-sufficiency of Weenusk First Nation (MNP, 2023).

Supply and Capacity of Community Education and Training Services

Weenusk First Nation has one school on reserve – Ma-Tah-Ha-Mao School which offers schooling from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8 (211 Ontario North, Weenusk First Nation, 2025).

Weenusk First Nation is one of the First Nation communities that comprises the Mushkegowuk Council, so members are eligible for the METS program (Mushkegowuk Council, 2023).

Learning of Traditional Knowledge

Ma-Tah-Ha-Mao School offers cultural education to learn traditional skills and teachings and teaches Native Cree as a subject course (211 Ontario North, Weenusk First Nation, 2025).

In 2019, Omushkego Education Student Success hosted a Cree Language and Culture Teachers Gathering to create culturally relevant curriculum that utilized land-based Omushkego culture (Mushkegowuk Council, 2021). Land-based camp activities for children are Spring Goose Camp Activities, Summer Celebrations, Fall or Winter Moose Camp Activities and Winter Fishing Camp outline specific activities that can be undertaken during each camp (Mushkegowuk Council, 2021).



Weenusk First Nation also transmits traditional knowledge through teachings. The community members emphasize stewardship of the land and is a main aspect of the Weenuski Inninowuk identity and well-being, along with sustainable usage of culturally significant resources and ensuring continuity for future generations. Weenusk First Nation considers passing of cultural knowledge and teachings to the younger and future generations as a part of stewardship responsibilities. As the teachings are focused on protection and sustainable use, along with ensuring continuity of land and its resources, the repercussions of mining is held in a negative regard due to past experiences and the aftermath of mines (MNP LLP, 2024).

“We are inherent stewards of this land, wherever an Indigenous population is, you know, inherently it’s (...) in us. That’s where identity comes from. That’s that feeling inside of who you are. And (...) stewardship is one of the (...) components of that, to be able to not only teach the world, but to teach our young people about harvesting, over harvesting, and how to sustain (...) our wild food like our caribou our fish, whatever we’re harvesting, so that they’ll come back again and again.”

“[Passing knowledge] is the way I practice stewardship (...) our 13-year-old (...) has been taught since we learned, because we didn’t always know that, to teach our young people because socially (...) we lived in trauma as a people, so we weren’t there yet. But now we’re there (...) a lot of us that are there (...) understanding what the Elders were talking about. And we’re lucky enough to catch our youngest and teach her from birth (...)”

“Everybody teaches their children (...) and grandchildren how to hunt, how to survive on the land – survival skills and all that, how to survive a storm, get lost in a blizzard [and] not get panicked.”

Regional Study Area

Demand for Community Education and Training Services

The Kenora District population has the lowest percentage of population with a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree in the RSA at 40% (Statistics Canada, 2022a). Over half of the population who pursued post-secondary education studied either architecture, engineering, and related trades, health and related field, or business, management, and public administration (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

The Thunder Bay District has the highest percentage of the population with a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree in the RSA at 54% (Statistics Canada, 2022a). Of the population who pursued post-secondary education, 60% studied either architecture, engineering, and related trades, health and related field, or business, management, and public administration (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

Nearly 50% of the population aged 15 years and over in the Cochrane District have a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree, 28% of which pursued studies relating to architecture, engineering, and related studies (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

Supply and Capacity of Community Education and Training Services

In the fly-in remote northern First Nations in Ontario, educational opportunities are generally limited to one or two local schools, with elementary and middle schools available in most communities except Wawakapewin and Ginoogaming First Nations. Ginoogaming First Nation students are required to go off-reserve to obtain education, with elementary school students attending facilities in municipality of Greenstone, and secondary and high school students attending schools in municipality of Greenstone or Migizi Miigwanan Secondary School (Ginoogaming First Nation, N.D.). Wawakapewin First Nation students are assisted by the Education Department for education obtainment (Shibogama First Nations



Council, 2023a). High school education is more restricted, often requiring students to either travel outside their community or complete their studies online with local support. Regional service centres like Greenstone, Sioux Lookout, Thunder Bay, and Timmins offer high school education.

The Métis Nation of Ontario provides education and training programming at both central events and local community council levels. Métis Nation of Ontario provides an employment program in training in specific areas and with summer career placements in the private, public and non-profit sector, with aspects such as career counselling, wage subsidies, employment training, and youth initiatives (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2023a, Métis Nation of Ontario, 2023b).

In contrast, municipalities and towns within the RSA have comprehensive schooling options, including elementary, middle, and high schools. Timmins and Thunder Bay serve as post-secondary hubs with multiple colleges and universities, while Pickle Lake, Sioux Lookout, and Greenstone offer smaller post-secondary options, including regional campuses of Confederation College.

The Matawa Education Program provides information about post-secondary education support for students from Matawa First Nations Management member communities. Matawa Education offers financial assistance, support services including academic advising, career counselling, and assistance with applications and transitions, focuses on incorporating Indigenous culture and traditions into the educational experience, collaborates with educational institutions and other organizations to provide access to a range of post-secondary programs, and supports career development through workshops, internships, and job placement assistance (Matawa Education, 2019c).

Training and certification courses are also offered for RSA communities that are eligible (KKETS, 2023).

Distance learning courses are also available through Contact North and Academic and Career Entrance Program through Northern College (Contact North, n.d.).

Learning of Traditional Knowledge

The schools in First Nation communities incorporate Indigenous-focused training with cultural elements. Some communities also offer youth camps emphasizing traditional cultural and land-based activities. Employment training is available online across all communities, with some having in-person training facilities.

Matawa's Education and Care Centre's outdoor education Program and Matawa's Education and Care Centre's Elders Program are also available for youth in RSA communities that are eligible (Matawa Education, 2019a). The outdoor education program consists of six Land-based and Outdoor Learning credits, offering students the opportunity to engage with nature through activities like trapping, camping, canoeing, and fishing (Matawa Education, 2019a). Additionally, the Elder's program facilitates Elders visiting the community to assist students with traditional practices, including smudging, making big and hand drums, drumming, organizing feasts, beading, imparting traditional teachings, storytelling, conducting workshops, using traditional medicines, hide tanning, hunting, and trapping (Matawa Education, 2019b).

The Mushkegowuk Council supports youth engagement in traditional knowledge and skills through the Omushkego Education Student Success program (Mushkegowuk Council, n.d.). This initiative focuses on immersing youth in traditional education, values, language, and practices. As part of this effort, the Omushkego Land-Based Camp Activities Teacher's and Principal's Toolkit was created, offering resources for seasonal camps that enable youth to experience the milo or mino pimaatisiwin (the good life). These camps include activities such as Spring Goose Hunting, Blooming of the Earth,



Summer Fishing, Summer Celebration, Fall Goose Hunting, Fall or Winter Moose Hunting, Freezing-Up or Winter Trapping and Snaring, and Winter Fishing (Mushkegowuk Council, 2021).

Kashechewan First Nation developed six healing camps in 2021, which is utilized as a youth gathering site, a spiritual camp, a youth cultural and recreational camp, Young Eagles Trail and a detox treatment and healing camp (Baiguzhiyeva, 2020).

In Long Lake #58 First Nation, school programs also include cultural programs for children and youth providing outdoor education, land-based activities and seasonal camps (Long Lake #58, n.d.), utilizing the teaching lodge developed in the school ground.

Mishkeegogamang First Nation curriculum is developed so that the school can close every fall to provide a break for students to engage in traditional activities during hunting season (Mishkeegogamang Ojibway Nation, 2010), and the school also provides teachings of cultural and traditional activities and knowledge as a component of its curriculum.

North Caribou Lake First Nation curriculum is also developed with participation in cultural and traditional activities of its students considered, with the school providing knowledge and information on cultural activities and traditional Oji-Cree language as part of the school curriculum (211 Ontario North, North Caribou Lake First Nation, 2023).

Métis Nation of Ontario provides a multiple seasonal, educational and cultural camps and retreats for participants to learn more about Métis history and culture (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2023c). The Métis Languages Initiatives focuses on incorporation of Michif language within Ontario and provides language resources to learn and develop knowledge of the Michif language (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2023d).

A comprehensive description of educational and training facilities, as well as services provided in the RSA (Indigenous, Métis and non-Indigenous communities) is found in Section 5.4.2 of the Socio-Economic Existing Conditions Report (Appendix L).

14.2.2.5 Emergency and Protective Services

Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Webequie First Nation Protective and emergency services include Nishnawbe Aski Police Service, Family Resource Centre, Peacekeepers and Crisis Intervention.

Nishnawbe Aski Police Service has a detachment in the Webequie community, with a police station on-reserve and two local Webequie First Nation community members serving as constables (NorthWest Healthline, Nishnawbe Aski Police Service, 2023). The Family Resource Centre provides support to women and children affected by violence (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b, as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

Peacekeepers assist in managing issues related to drugs and alcohol in the community (Webequie First Nation, 2023). A knowledge holder mentioned that police intervention is sometimes not well-received, and it can be more effective for non-police community members to step-in in a situation. This is because some officers come from outside the community and lack local knowledge (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b, as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

Crisis Intervention provides support to community members regarding crises situations such as family violence and those at risk of suicide. Crisis Intervention helps support community members affected by family violence, suicide, and other crisis situations, either on-site or over the phone and can dispatch police if necessary. Support provided includes facilitating family therapy sessions to explore potential



solutions for the crises, coordinate crises plan for suicide and domestic violence intervention and providing resources and referrals (211 Ontario North, Webequie First Nation, 2023b). Such support is provided either on-site or over the phone and if necessary, police will be dispatched.

Emergency services in Webequie First Nation are currently limited. The community lacks essential emergency equipment such as an ambulance or fire truck (AtkinsRéal, 2022c). There is no full-time equipped fire department or fire fighting service in Webequie First Nation (Webequie First Nation, 2019). Fire services in Webequie First Nation are limited to pumps at the water treatment plant (Webequie First Nation, 2019). There are existing hydrants installed but were noted to not be functioning in 2019 (Webequie First Nation, 2019). The Webequie First Nation CCP outlines that there is a fire hall within the reserve, but it is currently not in use (AtkinsRéal, 2021). There is a volunteer fire department within the reserve that focuses on fire prevention and administration of the Ontario Fire Code. The volunteer fire department also issues applicable burn permits and provides education, emergency planning, fire investigation, fire suppression and home safety information (211 Ontario North, Webequie First Nation, 2025a).

Webequie First Nation currently has no Emergency Medical Services (EMS) on-reserve. In cases of medical emergency, community members are forced to rely on medical transportation programs to assist with transporting members on-reserve to medical facilities in larger towns/cities to receive medical treatment. This includes the dispatch of air ambulance to Webequie First Nation. Patients are usually transported to a hospital in Sioux Lookout, Thunder Bay, or Winnipeg (211 Ontario North, Webequie First Nation, 2025b).

Other LSA Communities

Emergency and protective services in the other LSA communities are limited in availability. A description of existing services is provided below.

Eabametoong First Nation

EMS: Eabametoong First Nation currently has no EMS on-reserve. Kevin S C Sagutcheway Nursing Station is in the community and provides emergency services (Northwest Healthline, Eabametoong First Nation, 2025). If medical transportation is required, the Medical Transportation Program will assist with arranging air transportation (NorthWest Healthline, Medical Transportation Program – Eabametoong, 2023).

Police: Eabametoong First Nation opened a new police detachment service building in 2015 which is serviced by Nishnawbe Aski Police Service – Central Region. It is designed as a five-person detachment and includes holding cells, interview rooms and meeting rooms (Murray, 2015).

Fire: Eabametoong First Nation has an on-reserve fire department with a fire hall (211 Ontario North, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023q). There is a volunteer fire department within the reserve that focuses on fire prevention and administration of the Ontario Fire Code. The volunteer fire department also issues applicable burn permits and provides education, emergency planning, fire investigation, fire suppression and home safety information (211 Ontario North, Eabametoong First Nation, 2023q).



Kasabonika Lake First Nation

EMS: Kasabonika Lake First Nation currently has no EMS on-reserve. Emily Anderson Nursing Station provides health care to Kasabonika Lake First Nation community members. If medical transportation is required, the Medical Transportation Program will assist with arranging air transportation (NorthWest Healthline, Medical Transportation Program – Kasabonika, 2023).

Police: Kasabonika Lake First Nation is serviced by the Nishnawbe Aski Police Service – Central Region. Kasabonika Lake First Nation has a Nishnawbe Aski Police Service detachment on-reserve (Northwest Healthline, 2023a).

Fire: Fire services for Kasabonika Lake First Nation are unknown.

Marten Falls First Nation

EMS: Marten Falls First Nation currently has no EMS on-reserve. Muskeg Thunder Clinic provides health care to Marten Falls First Nation community members. If medical transportation is required, the Medical Transportation Program will assist with arranging air transportation (211 Ontario North, Marten Falls First Nation, 2025a).

Based on the outcome of the Marten Falls First Nation Socio-Economic Survey (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b), the three most concerning safety concerns in the community are drug abuse, alcohol abuse, and dropping out of school.

Police: Marten Falls First Nation is serviced by the Nishnawbe Aski Police Service – Central Region. Marten Falls First Nation has a Nishnawbe Aski Police Service detachment on-reserve (211 Ontario North, Nishnawbe Aski Police Service, 2023a).

Fire: Marten Falls First Nation has a volunteer fire department (211 Ontario North, Marten Falls First Nation, 2022). The volunteer fire department also issues applicable burn permits and provides education, emergency planning, fire investigation, fire suppression and home safety information (211 Ontario North, Marten Falls First Nation, 2022).

Neskantaga First Nation

EMS: Neskantaga First Nation currently has no EMS on-reserve. Rachael Bessie Sakanee Memorial Health Centre – Health and Social Services provides health care to Neskantaga First Nation community members (NorthWest Healthline, Medical Transportation Program – Neskantaga, 2025).

Police: Neskantaga First Nation is serviced by the Nishnawbe Aski Police Service – Central Region. Neskantaga First Nation has a Nishnawbe Aski Police Service detachment on-reserve (Northwest Healthline, Nishnawbe Aski Police Service, 2025).

Fire: Neskantaga First Nation has a volunteer fire department (Northwest Healthline, Neskantaga First Nation – Volunteer Fire Department, 2023). The volunteer fire department also issues applicable burn permits and provides education, emergency planning, fire investigation, fire suppression and home safety information (NorthWest Healthline, Neskantaga First Nation – Volunteer Fire Department, 2023).



Nibinamik First Nation

EMS: Nibinamik First Nation currently has no EMS on-reserve. Nibinamik First Nation has a health centre/nursing station with two full-time nurses (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023e). If medical transportation is required, the Medical Transportation Program will assist with arranging air transportation to Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay (211 Ontario North, 2023i).

Police: Nibinamik First Nation is serviced by the Nishnawbe Aski Police Service – Central Region. Nibinamik First Nation has a Nishnawbe Aski Police Service detachment on-reserve (Nishnawbe Aski Police Service Detachments, 2023).

Fire: Nibinamik First Nation has a volunteer fire department (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023c). The volunteer fire department also issues applicable burn permits and provides education, emergency planning, fire investigation, fire suppression and home safety information (211 Ontario North, Nibinamik First Nation, 2023c).

Weenusk First Nation

EMS: Weenusk First Nation currently has no EMS on-reserve. Peawanuck Nursing Station provides community and public health support to members. If medical transportation is required, ambulance services is provided by WAHA Paramedic Service (WAHA, 2023).

Based on the outcome of the Weenusk First Nation Socio-Economic Survey (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b), the three most concerning safety concerns in the community are alcohol abuse (100%), drug abuse (73%) and overweight issues (45%).

Police: Weenusk First Nation is serviced by the Nishnawbe Aski Police Service – Northeast Region. Weenusk First Nation has a Nishnawbe Aski Police Service detachment on-reserve (211 Ontario North, Nishnawbe Aski Police Service, 2023b).

Fire: Weenusk First Nation has a volunteer fire department (211 Ontario North, Weenusk First Nation, 2020). The volunteer fire department also issues applicable burn permits and provides education, emergency planning, fire investigation, fire suppression and home safety information (211 Ontario North, Weenusk First Nation, 2020). The community is planning on building a fire hall and the community recently received a fire truck (Gemmill, 2023).

Regional Study Area

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) is the provincial policing service for Ontario, employing 5,800 uniformed officers, 2,600 civilian employees and 600 auxiliary officers, making it one of the largest police forces in North America (OPP, 2024). The OPP patrols all Ontario highways and waterways and provides policing services to any rural communities in Ontario that do not have their own police service, while providing investigative, administrative, and other supports to those communities that do have their own police service (OPP, 2024).

The Indigenous communities in the RSA are served by the Nishnawbe Aski Police Service, Anishinabek Police Service or OPP for policing services. Fly-in communities in the RSA have similar emergency and protective services as those described above for the other LSA communities. First Nation communities with all-season road connection to the provincial highway network also have access to 9-1-1 first responders.



Table 14-26 summarizes information on Emergency and Protective Services in regional municipalities within the RSA.

Table 14-26: Emergency and Protective Services in the Regional Study Area Municipalities, Cities and Towns

Municipality	Emergency and Protective Services
Pickle Lake	<p>Police: OPP provides police service to Pickle Lake with a satellite office of the Sioux Lookout detachment (Pickle Lake, n.d.).</p> <p>Fire: Pickle Lake has a fire department with a fire hall and training area which includes two fire trucks and an emergency vehicle (Pickle Lake Fire Department, 2023).</p> <p>EMS: Northwest EMS provides emergency medical services for Pickle Lake. There is an ambulance base in Pickle Lake with two ambulances (Kenora District – Emergency Medical Services, 2023).</p>
Sioux Lookout	<p>Police: The Sioux Lookout OPP detachment provides police service to Sioux Lookout (Sioux Lookout, 2022c).</p> <p>Fire: The Sioux Lookout Fire Department is responsible for 24 hours-a-day coverage of an area of 536 square kilometres, which encompasses Alcona to the east, just beyond Ojibway Provincial Park to the south, Hudson to the west and 10 kilometres to the north (Sioux Lookout, n.d.).</p> <p>EMS: Northwest EMS provides emergency medical services for Sioux Lookout. There are nine EMS stations throughout Kenora District with 120 paramedics (Kenora District – Emergency Medical Services, 2023).</p>
Thunder Bay	<p>Police: Thunder Bay Police Service provides police service to Thunder Bay municipality (Thunder Bay Police Service, 2023).</p> <p>Fire: Thunder Bay Fire Rescue provides fire emergency services from various fire stations throughout the city (Thunder Bay, 2023).</p> <p>EMS: Superior North EMS provides emergency medical services for the District of Thunder Bay. There are 19 EMS stations throughout the district with 230 people employed (Superior North EMS, 2023).</p>
Greenstone	<p>Police: OPP provides police service to Greenstone municipality (NorthWest Healthline – Greenstone Detachment, 2022).</p> <p>Fire: The Greenstone Fire Department provides prevention and protection services from four fire stations, and responds to fire alarms, fires and auto extrication/rescues. The department utilizes Volunteer District Chiefs and has a compliment of approximately 70 Volunteer Officers and Firefighters (Greenstone Fire Department, 2023).</p> <p>EMS: Superior North EMS provides emergency medical services for the District of Thunder Bay, which includes Greenstone. There are 19 EMS stations throughout the district with 230 people employed (Superior North EMS, 2023).</p>
Timmins	<p>Police: Timmins Police Service provides services to City of Timmins (Timmins Police Service, 2023).</p> <p>Fire: Timmins Fire Department services the City of Timmins and surrounding areas. The fire department is staffed by both career and volunteer fire fighters. There is one primary fire station and six volunteer stations throughout the community (City of Timmins, 2023).</p> <p>EMS: Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board (CDSSAB) contracts out their EMS in Timmins. Timmins has three ambulances, 20 full-time and 30 part time staff (CDSSAB, EMS, 2023).</p>



14.2.2.6 Community Infrastructure

Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Demand for Community Services and/or Infrastructure

Community infrastructures which are already in short supply and barely covers the requirements of a community, restricts the growth of a community as well.

Community buildings provide office, programming and recreational spaces for Webequie First Nation, which are an essential part of maintaining the community's health and social, cultural and economic well-being. These spaces are very important to the community, and as is common with fly-in First Nation communities, office, programming and recreational spaces also tend to be very limited in availability and are often in need of repairs and maintenance. The limited availability of community spaces can limit the effectiveness of administrative processes, community services, education and training programming, health and wellness, recreation, culture and other programming.

In terms of office, programming and recreational spaces, it was reported by Webequie First Nation:

“Without addressing the gaps in office and programming space, as well as housing and associated infrastructure, the potential for coordination and effective operation of programs to help the community become physically and mentally well is seriously diminished. This could mean that the benefits from future resource development could be lost if the community cannot put forth a healthy workforce and community” (Webequie First Nation, 2023c).

Further:

“Webequie First Nation is in dire need of buildings to accommodate almost every sector in the community. Within the health and wellness sector over thirty offices are required for staff, along with space for outside clinicians and counsellors when they visit the community. All the sectors that run programs in the community are trying to share the band hall and the school gym for group programming. Other buildings are needed for storage and maintenance of equipment. The permanent detox and a land-based healing camp needs to be completed to help move the community forward on its healing journey. The community needs a multi-plex that includes a fitness centre and an arena. We do not have an Elder's home where we can care for the elderly. Lack of infrastructure is impeding the community's ability to advance its goals and deliver its programming” (Webequie First Nation, 2023c).

Interviews with Webequie First Nation community members further identified that infrastructure is lacking in the community (AtkinsRéalis, 2022c) and the whole infrastructure system needs an upgrade. It was noted that it is essential that construction of WSR happens with proper plans and taking into consideration the requirements of the community (AtkinsRéalis, 2022g).

The Extended Asset Condition Reporting System for Webequie First Nation (2023-2024) developed for ISC provides a high-level assessment of ISC funded assets in the community, for the purposes of identifying funding needs and providing basic maintenance advice (Radloff and Saulteaux, 2023). This reporting indicates that community buildings in Webequie First Nation are deteriorated with issues such as broken tiles, peeling and fading paint work, inadequate drainage systems, damaged downspouts and equipment, damaged foundations, mould and wood rot, electrical and wiring damage, lack of fire extinguishers, ineffective weatherstripping, etc. (Radloff and Saulteaux, 2023). There is a high health and safety risk to community members currently as regular maintenance and repairs is lacking. Additionally, some buildings have decommissioned fuel tanks which create environmental and health risks (Radloff and Saulteaux, 2023).



Although, the construction camps will ease pressure on community buildings, any added pressure on capacity from non-resident workers and resident Webequie First Nation community members could exacerbate underlying capacity constraints and adversely affect the community.

The drinking water supply system in the community is also in need of repairs and maintenance as majority of the existing system was built in 1992; the current primary treatment system is labour and energy intensive and a lower cost and easier concept must be assessed. In the treatment plant transmissivity meters require recalibration, piping to clarifiers require upgrading, rust and corrosion damage requires repairs, valve system damage requires repairs, drainage issues require regrading and similar issues are persistent. There are hydrants missing or broken in the water main, electrical controls and vales requiring restoration, repairing of the boiler in water recirculation system, repairing of gaskets, as well. The water supply is provided from Winisk River through a storage reservoir, which also required cleaning, and pumps of the lift station require repairs. The treatment plants capacity is severely diminished due to accumulation of repairs and maintenance needs and does not function properly.

Construction camps for the Project will be established with drinking water systems and use groundwater as a water source. The Project will not use the Webequie First Nation drinking water system.

The sewage treatment system requires major repairs and parts replacements, and the community is serviced by a blend of trucked and piped collection. There are other issues with the sewage collection and treatment system such as required flushing of manholes, reinstallation of manhole frames and covers, flushing of the sanitary mains, repairs to sludge storage and fuel tank storage and similar. There are two landfills, of which only one is currently active and requires maintenance and repairs as well; the current landfill requires waste segregation, signage, and fencing. The sewage truck of the community is out of service. Internet connection and communication systems are limited and very slow.

Supply and Capacity of Community Services and/or Infrastructure

Webequie First Nation prepared a draft ORLUP in 2019, through First Nations Land Management federal program (ISC, 2022), which included a participatory community engagement process to gather input from community members on needs, issues, values, and aspirations for on-reserve land use.

Table 14-27 provides a description of the Webequie First Nation infrastructure and available information on performance gaps, condition, capacity and upgrade projects, based on the ORLUP, with updates since the planning process was completed.

Table 14-27: Description of Community Infrastructure in Webequie First Nation

Community Infrastructure	Description of Current System	Performance and Upgrades Planned
Community Buildings		
Electrical Power System	Webequie has a 1-megawatt diesel generating station. The generating station has 3 generators that range from 400 to 1,000 kilowatts (kW). According to Hydro One Remote Communities, the number of electricity customers in 2016 was 187 (Hydro One Remote Communities, 2017).	Up to 2022, Hydro One projected Webequie's number of electricity customers to increase slightly to 211 customers (Hydro One Remote Communities, 2017). With funding from the Investing in Canada Plan, the diesel generating station capacity is being increased to 1.5 megawatts (ISC, 2023a).



Community Infrastructure	Description of Current System	Performance and Upgrades Planned
Drinking Water Management System	Webequie's water treatment plant consists of a low-level lift station, two full treatment package units, high lift pumps, a reservoir and the water treatment building (Webequie First Nation, 2019).	Periods of water advisories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jun 03, 2003 – Jun 27, 2007; ▪ Apr 02, 2009 – Oct 07, 2010; and ▪ Apr 08, 2016 – Apr 24, 2018. (Drinking Water Advisories, 2021)
Wastewater Management System	<p>The sewage treatment system consists of two Rotating Biological Contactor units, a secondary clarifier, ultra-violet disinfection, and a digester. It is fed by a gravity sewage collection system (Webequie First Nation, 2019).</p> <p>The community also has a sewage truck (2005) and a sewage truck garage (Webequie First Nation, 2019).</p>	<p>In general, the sewage treatment system is in fair condition, though requires large maintenance and capital project investments to service current and future community needs (Webequie First Nation, 2019).</p> <p>The Rotating Biological Contactors need to be upgraded or replaced approximately by 2031, and two boilers require replacement. The lift stations are in fair condition, with an estimated useful life to approximately 2027 (Webequie First Nation, 2019).</p> <p>The step system requires maintenance to controls and pumps and has an estimated life remaining to 2039.</p> <p>Sanitary mains are in good condition as of 2019.</p> <p>The sewage truck requires some work to the transmission but is maintained and in fair condition. The garage is in good condition (Webequie First Nation, 2019).</p> <p>The waste management area present in Webequie First Nation was recently upgraded for fire prevention (Webequie First Nation, 2023).</p>
Solid Waste Management System	Webequie has two landfill sites; one full, and one recently constructed. The sites offer solid waste disposal and liquid waste disposal (Webequie First Nation, 2019).	<p>The current landfill site is full and has no open trenches. It is in fair condition, but requires a substantial amount of maintenance, including signage and segregation (Webequie First Nation, 2019b).</p> <p>The new site has been constructed but is not yet in use (Webequie First Nation, 2019).</p>
Telecommunications System	<p>Internet services are provided via cable network by Webequie Telecommunications.</p> <p>Webequie has two radio stations: C.S.P.N Radio (local station) and Wawatay Radio (via satellite) (Webequie First Nation, 2023b).</p>	<p>Internet service is available but slow (Webequie First Nation, 2019b).</p> <p>The Rapid Lynx long-haul fibre-optic network project will bring high-speed internet to Webequie. The project is funding by the province. The second phase of the project was planned to be underway by early 2023 and 57% of the line complete to-date (Daily Commercial News, 2022).</p>



Other LSA Communities

Demand for Community Services and/or Infrastructure

A comprehensive assessment by the OFNTSC estimated that by 2029, approximately \$8.7 billion will be needed to address community infrastructure needs, with \$2.2 billion specifically for housing. This highlights the substantial investment required to meet basic living standards (OFNTSC, 2018). Many remote communities rely on diesel for electricity and heating, which is costly and environmentally unsustainable. Projects like the Wataynikaneyap Transmission Project aim to connect 17 remote First Nations to the provincial power grid, reducing reliance on diesel and providing more reliable and clean energy (Canada Energy Regulator, 2023).

Eabametoong First Nation has been experiencing a boil water advisory since 2001, and work is being carried out to upgrade the community's water treatment plant (ISC, 2021); however, there are concerns regarding the outdated wastewater treatment plant and the potential for the new plant to create sewage overflow (Bensadoun, 2019).

While Attawapiskat First Nation is not currently facing a boil water advisory, the community has notoriously been plagued with water concerns. In 2019, the community faced potentially harmful levels of chemicals in the water, rendering it unusable (Barrera, 2019).

An article by CBC in February 2021, reiterated the Federal government's commitment to lifting all long-term boil water advisories by March 2021; this deadline was, of course, not met. The article specified that the government allocated over 3 billion dollars to resolve this issue, but implied that more funding is necessary and working with the Indigenous communities and groups is key (Stefanovich et al., 2021).

Supply and Capacity of Community Services and/or Infrastructure

Table 14-28 summarizes elements of community infrastructure in the other Indigenous communities in the LSA, based on available information.

Table 14-28: Description of Community Infrastructure in Other LSA Indigenous Communities

Community	Drinking Water	Wastewater	Electricity Supply	Solid Waste Management
Webequie First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 Water treatment plant. Water Quality: fails health and aesthetic guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 Wastewater treatment plant. Constructed in 2001. Rotating biological con factor. Effluent Quality does not meet federal guidelines. 	Diesel generation plant. Served by Hydro One Remotes.	Landfill site south of community.
Marten Falls First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 Water treatment facility upgraded in 2019. Water Quality: fails health and aesthetic guidelines. Boil water advisory in place since July 2005. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 Wastewater treatment plant, Constructed in 1997. Facultative Lagoon. Effluent Quality Unknown. 	Diesel generation plant. Served by Hydro One Remotes.	Landfill in the reserve area.

Community	Drinking Water	Wastewater	Electricity Supply	Solid Waste Management
Neskantaga First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 Water treatment facility. New plant was commissioned in Dec 2020. Water Quality: Unknown. Boil water advisory in place since Feb 1995. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 Wastewater treatment plant. Constructed in 2003. Facultative Lagoon. Effluent Quality: meets federal guidelines. 	Diesel generation plant. Served by Hydro One Remotes.	Nearby landfill site.
Nibinamik First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 water treatment facility. Upgrades to facility in the works. Water Quality: fails health and aesthetic guidelines. Boil water advisory in place since Feb 2013. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 Wastewater treatment plant. Constructed in 1997. Facultative Lagoon. Effluent Quality Unknown. 	Band Operated Electrical System.	Nearby landfill site.
Attawapiskat First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 3 Water Treatment Facility. Water Quality: fails health guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 Wastewater System. Constructed in 2001. Facultative Lagoon. Effluent Quality: meets federal guidelines. 	Connected to grid via Five Nations Energy Corp.	Landfill on/near site.
Weenusk First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 Water Treatment Facility originally constructed in 1988. Upgraded in 2018, lifting 12-year advisory. Water Quality: fails health and aesthetic guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 Peawanuck Wastewater System. Constructed in 1988. Facultative lagoon. Effluent Quality Unknown. 	Band Operated Electrical System.	Landfill on/near site.
Kasabonika Lake First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 water treatment plant. Water Quality: fails health and aesthetic guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 wastewater treatment plant. Constructed in 1993. Rotating biological contactor. Effluent Quality does not meet federal guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diesel. Served by Hydro One Remotes. Connection to the provincial power grid on September 2023 (Wataynikaneyap Power, 2023). 	Landfill on/near site.

Sources: Water and Wastewater Information, 2011; Drinking Water Advisories, 2021; Government of Canada, 2019; Hydro One, 2021; Hydro One 2018; Five Nations Energy Ince., 2021; Wataynikaneyap Power, 2021; Government of Ontario, 2021; 211 Ontario North, 2023e, Infrastructure Canada, 2010.



Regional Study Area

Demand for Community Services and/or Infrastructure

Existing community infrastructure is limited within the RSA Indigenous communities and generally requires minor to significant upgrades to meet health standards. Four Indigenous communities within the RSA have long-term drinking water advisories.

Where information is available, community input indicates an urgent need for upgraded community infrastructure to address Socio-Economic challenges experienced within the communities including boil water advisories and wastewater facilities that meet federal guidelines.

The larger regional cities and towns do not have the same Community Infrastructure issues that the RSA Indigenous communities face.

Supply and Capacity of Community Services and/or Infrastructure

Community Infrastructure in the Indigenous communities within the RSA is described in **Table 14-29**. Drinking water, wastewater treatment, electrical power, and solid waste management systems are described.

Table 14-29: Description of Community Infrastructure in the RSA

Community	Drinking Water	Wastewater	Electrical Power	Solid Waste
Aroland First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 1 Water treatment plant built in 1993. ▪ Water Quality: fails health and aesthetic guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 1 wastewater system Constructed in 1995. ▪ Facultative Lagoon. ▪ Effluent Quality: meets federal guidelines. 	Hydro One Zone 7 – Nakina Distribution Station (DS).	MNR dump site.
Constance Lake First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 2 Water treatment facility built in 1986. Updated in 2016 (community website). ▪ Water Quality: fails health and aesthetic guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 1 wastewater system. ▪ Constructed in 1997. ▪ Facultative Lagoon. ▪ Effluent Quality Unknown. 	Hydro One Zone 6 – Calstock DS.	Dumpsite 2.5 miles outside of community (community website).
Fort Albany First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 2 Water Treatment System built in 1998. ▪ Water Quality: fails health guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 1 Wastewater system. ▪ Constructed in 1997. ▪ Facultative Lagoon. ▪ Effluent Quality Unknown. 	Connected via transmission line to Moosonee.	Sinclair Island (Southeast Portion) Remediation Site.
Kashechewan First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 3 Water Treatment System built in 1997. • Water Quality: fails health guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 1 Wastewater System. ▪ Constructed in 1997. ▪ Facultative Lagoon. ▪ Effluent Quality Unknown. 	Connected via transmission line to Moosonee. Backup diesel generator.	Landfill site on-reserve.

Community	Drinking Water	Wastewater	Electrical Power	Solid Waste
Kingfisher Lake First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 Water Treatment System built in 2008. Water Quality: meets health and aesthetic guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 Wastewater System. Constructed in 1996. Facultative Lagoon. Effluent Quality Unknown. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diesel. Served by Hydro One Remotes. Part of Watay Power Project 	Landfill site close to the airport.
Wapekeka First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 Water Treatment System built in 2000. Water Quality: fails health and aesthetic guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 Wastewater System. Constructed in 1990. Facultative Lagoon. Effluent Quality Unknown. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diesel. Served by Hydro One Remotes. Part of Watay Power Project. 	No formal garbage collection; waste disposal at local dump site.
Wawakapewin First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small System Water Treatment System built in 1998. Construction of new wells and water plant underway. Water Quality: meets health and aesthetic guidelines. Boil water advisory in place since March 2004. 	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Band operated electrical system. Part of Watay Power Project. 	Wawakapewin in First Nation refuse site.
Wunnumin Lake First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 Water Treatment System built in 2005. Water Quality: meets health and aesthetic guidelines. 	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Band operated electrical system. Part of Watay Power Project. 	Landfill: community disposes of own garbage in landfill.
Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 Water Treatment System. Water Quality: meets health and aesthetic guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 Wastewater System. Constructed in 2002. Facultative Lagoon. Effluent Quality Unknown. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diesel. Served by Hydro One Remotes. Part of Watay Power Project. 	Community garbage dump approximately three miles from the community. (community website).
North Caribou Lake First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 3 Water Treatment System. Water Quality: fails health and aesthetic guidelines. Boil water advisory in place since March 2020. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 Wastewater System. Constructed in 1997. Facultative Lagoon. Effluent Quality does not meet federal guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diesel. Served by Hydro One Remotes. Part of Watay Power Project. 	Landfill site on-reserve.



Community	Drinking Water	Wastewater	Electrical Power	Solid Waste
Mishkeegogamang First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 Water Treatment System. Water Quality: fails aesthetic guidelines. Boil water advisory in place since June 2019. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small Septic system, for teacherage and nursing facility. Effluent Quality meets federal guidelines. 	Part of Watay Power Project.	Landfill site on-reserve.
Eabametoong First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 Water Treatment System built in 1992 – upgraded recently but insufficient design means a water advisory that started in 2001 is still in effect. Water Quality: fails health and aesthetic guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 Wastewater System. Constructed in 1995. Facultative Lagoon. Effluent Quality: meets federal guidelines. 	Band operated electrical system.	Dump site located approximately 8.5 kilometres from the community.
Ginoogaming First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town of Long Lac Water Treatment System – Small System. Water Quality: fails health and aesthetic guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town of Long Lac. Municipal Type Agreement. 	Connected to Hydro One Zone 7 – Longlac East DS.	Waste disposed in Longlac landfill.
Long Lake #58 First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town of Long Lac Water Treatment System. Water Quality: meets health and aesthetic guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town of Long Lac. Municipal Type Agreement. 	Connected to Hydro One Zone 7 – Longlac East DS.	Waste disposed of in Longlac landfill.

Sources: Water and Wastewater Information, 2011; Drinking Water Advisories, 2021; Government of Canada, 2019; Hydro One, 2021; Hydro One 2018; Five Nations Energy Ince., 2021; Wataynikaneyap Power, 2021; Government of Ontario, 2021; 211 Ontario North, 2021.

14.2.2.7 Community Well-Being and Safety



First Nations raised concerns about increased drug and alcohol use due to higher disposable incomes, increased exposure to outsiders and external influences from the Project during construction and operations. Such concerns have been incorporated in Section 14.2.2.7. To address these concerns, the Project proposes establishing procedures and plans regarding drugs and alcohol usage. Additional measures are outlined in Section 14.4.7.

One comparative measure of community well-being is the Community Well-Being (CWB) Index. The CWB uses four key Socio-Economic factors (education, income, labour and housing) to measure well-being of different communities across Canada and throughout time. For each community, a score is calculated for each of the four Socio-Economic factors, as well as an overall well-being score based on a combination of all these factors, which is used to compare well-being among Indigenous communities, and between Indigenous communities and non-Indigenous communities.



The data come from the Census of Population and the data presented in this section are based on the 2016 data (most recent dataset) (Statistics Canada, 2017a). It is important to note that “well-being” means different things to different people and the scores from the CWB are only aspect in scoring the well-being of a community. The four factors used to score the CWB are used as they are important topics that are part of people’s overall “well-being.”

The four socio-economic factors used in the scoring of the CWB:

- Education – based on how many community members have at least a high school education and how many have acquired a university degree;
- Labour Force Activity – measures how many community members participate in the labour force and how many labour force participants have jobs;
- Income – calculated based on a community's total income per capita; and
- Housing – based on the number of community members whose homes are in an adequate state of repair and are not overcrowded.

From an Inninuwuk perspective, community well-being is also considered within the context of Mino Bimaadziwin, which translates to the ‘Good Life’. There are many ways to achieve Mino Bimaadziwin including social, economic, cultural vibrancy and physical well-being which looks far into the future, while considering the past, on both individual and collective levels which includes the environment.

Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Community Well-Being

Webequie First Nation Community Well-Being Study was completed in June 2014, with community members were invited to participate in multi-day discussions and data collection events in the community, with meals provided. A total of 96 household surveys were completed in April 2014, which represented 66% of the 145 on-reserve private dwellings in Webequie (Statistics Canada, 2021). A summary of the seven well-being indicators assessed in the study includes the following:

- Community health;
- Environmental quality and relationships with the land;
- Cultural vibrancy and traditional practices;
- Family and social conditions;
- Economic development;
- Housing and infrastructure; and
- Community leadership governance.

Those items are measured through a variety of ways, including graduation rates; housing inventory, waiting list and overcrowding in homes, diversity of homes; local healthcare and social statistics, addictions program numbers, participation in On-Land Healing Initiatives; Employment, self-employment and Ontario Works rates; updated Band policies, frequency of Band communications.

Webequie First Nation is described by community members as a friendly and good place to live. However, there is a general interest among residents for more consistent community events and programs and participation of community members in such activities, particularly for youth (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b 2022c, as cited in InterGroup, 2024). Throughout the year, Webequie First Nation organizes



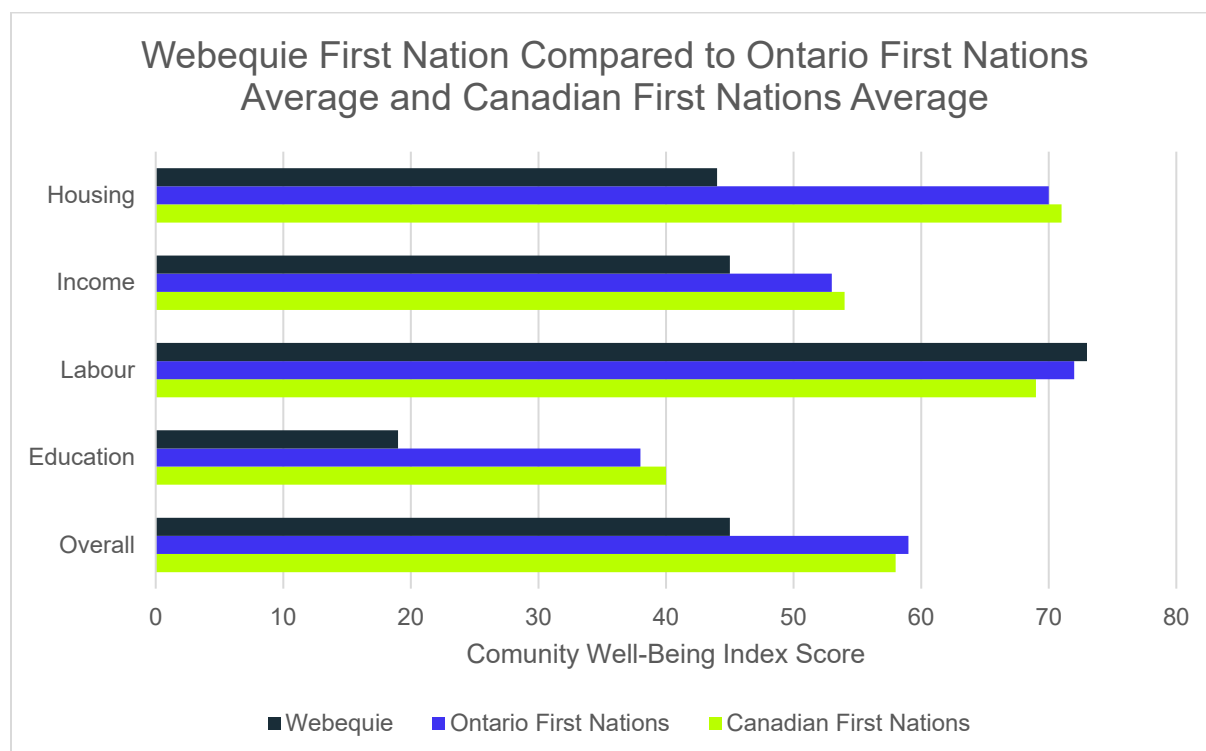
community events such as summer and winter festivals, sporting tournaments (e.g., floor hockey, broomball), talent shows, drum groups, ribbon-making, games, youth weeks, and wild game and fish cooking (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b, as cited in InterGroup, 2024). Summer powwows, which bring people from surrounding communities are also organized (Webequie First Nation, 2023). Currently, the community has accepted LGBTQ2S+ and two-spirited people currently reside in the community, although same sex relationships are still considered taboo (Stantec., 2024). The community has raised concerns regarding the well-being of two-spirited people, expressing that they need to be safe, and how the community will revisit the traditional teachings regarding two-spirit people so the community can accommodate their needs better. Two-spirited people in the community are not perceived to occupy roles that are different to men and women (Stantec, 2024).

Figure 14.9 provides a summary of CWB index score for Webequie First Nation, as compared to other Indigenous communities in Ontario and in Canada. Three out of the four socio-economic factors are lower for Webequie First Nation than the average CWB scores for both the First Nations in Ontario and in Canada. Labour is the only socio-economic factor where Webequie First Nations score (73) is higher than both the First Nations in Ontario average (72) and the Canadian First Nations average (69). Some of the more significant issues include (AtkinsRéalais, 2022h):

- Challenges faced by youth in the community;
- Substance and alcohol addictions;
- Depression and mental well-being;
- Intergenerational trauma;
- Isolation due to remoteness;
- Inadequate facilities for treatment for chronic illnesses; and
- The prevalent issue of and lack of assistance programs and funding for facilities.

Detailed information on the survey findings is provided in Appendix L (Socio-economic Existing Conditions Report).

Figure 14.9: CWB Index Score for Webequie First Nation Compared to the First Nations in Ontario Average and First Nations Average in Canada



Source: ISC, 2019b.

Based on the results of the Webequie First Nation Community Well-Being Study (2014), 75% of households mentioned that at least one member of their household participates in community sports, community events, and fundraising. Of the three community activities, community events were the most popular with over 90% of households indicating that they attend community events. This was confirmed during the 2022 Webequie First Nation Socio-Economic Survey (AtkinsRéal, 2022b, as cited in InterGroup, 2024) where residents indicated they remain involved in community events. When community members were asked if they participate in organized social and/or cultural activities/events always, sometimes, or never, majority of respondents (76.5%) indicated they sometimes participate. Majority of respondents aged 15-30 (81.1%) and the majority of respondents aged 66+ (66.7%) also indicated they sometimes participate in organized social and/or cultural activities/events (InterGroup, 2024).

When community members were asked to rate the number of their social connections in Webequie on a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high), 38.3% indicated '4' as the number of their social connections in the Webequie First Nation community, suggesting they felt connected to a relatively high number of community members. Approximately 33.3% of female respondents indicated '3' as the number of their social connections in the Webequie First Nation community suggesting they felt they had a moderate number of social connections. Regarding the quality of their social connections, on a scale from 1 (weak) to 5 (strong), 37.6% of respondents mentioned that the quality of their social connections in the Webequie First Nation community was average. This was also the result obtained for the majority (41.2%) (InterGroup, 2024).

Safety

The Webequie First Nation Well-Being Survey (Webequie First Nation, 2014) suggests a sense of trust among community members as 71% of households with children under 12 years old indicated they often or sometimes allow their children to play outside unsupervised. However, the community members reported that this feeling of safety in the community may be changing due to drug and alcohol issues. Knowledge holders expressed concern about sending their child out. This concern stem not only from a decline in traditional teachings and preparedness of younger generations, but also risks associated with drugs, alcohol, and transportation means in the community (AtkinsRéalais, 2022ba, as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

Webequie Knowledge holders note that community safety issues mainly relate to vandalism and lateral violence, including family violence, which can largely be linked to intergenerational trauma and related mental health and addictions challenges (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a, as cited in InterGroup, 2024). Vandalism is known to be carried out by youth, due to the boredom, isolation, and overcrowding they experience and may use vandalism and substance abuse as a way of coping with their reality (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a as cited in InterGroup, 2024). Based on the Webequie First Nation Community Well-Being Baseline Study, 73% of households that participated in the study indicated that they had not experienced house vandalization within the past year; the 27% that reported having experienced vandalism indicated that it was a one-time occurrence and that multiple incidents of vandalism were experienced by a small minority of the community. According to the community coordinator, lateral violence is also present in the community, especially in a workplace setting (AtkinsRéalais, 2022f).

Lateral violence is a long-lasting effect of the colonization and oppression which Indigenous People experienced, and this is a cycle of abuse that affects Indigenous People by carrying out violence and abuse on other Indigenous People as it was inflicted on them (NWAC, 2011). Elders, women and children are more vulnerable to lateral violence (NWAC, 2011) and Knowledge holders indicated that lateral violence is also experienced in the workplace (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

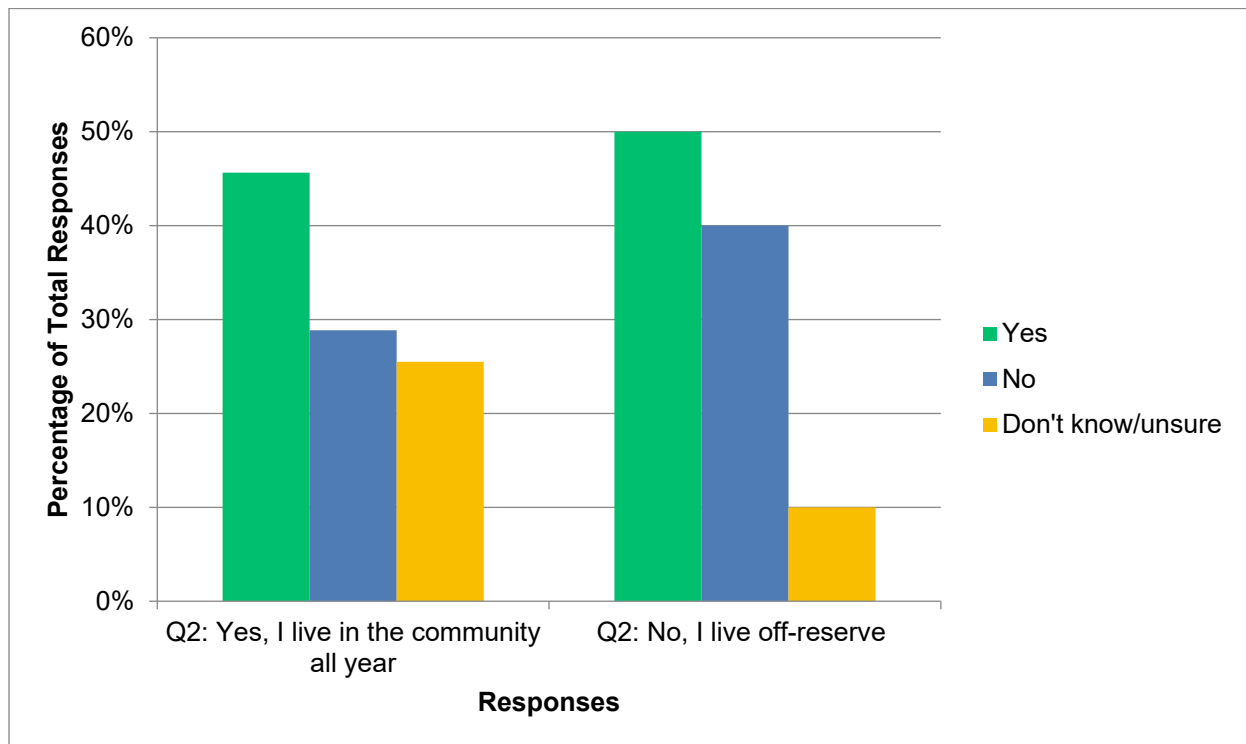
According to the Webequie First Nation's Health Director, there are services available for members of the community to seek family services/aide, including the Family Resource Centre, which is located on the Webequie First Nation reserve for mothers or children dealing with violence in the community and the Tikinagan Child and Family Services (AtkinsRéalais, 2022c).

AtkinsRéalais conducted an online survey in 2022 with participating communities on their opinion on the Project and safety concerns associated with the Project. Data was collected from individuals living on-reserve and individuals living off the reserve. To-date, Webequie First Nation has provided a total of 213 responses. Of those, 176 of the responses identified that they live on-reserve and the remaining 37 of the responses indicated that they live off the reserve.

When asked whether individuals had safety concerns with the Project and potential future mining development in the area, 45.6% of responses from those living on-reserve and 50% of responses from those living off the reserve indicated that they had safety concerns, as shown on **Figure 14.10**.



Figure 14.10: Survey Results from Respondents When Asked If They Have Safety Concerns About the Project – WSR Socio-Economic Survey

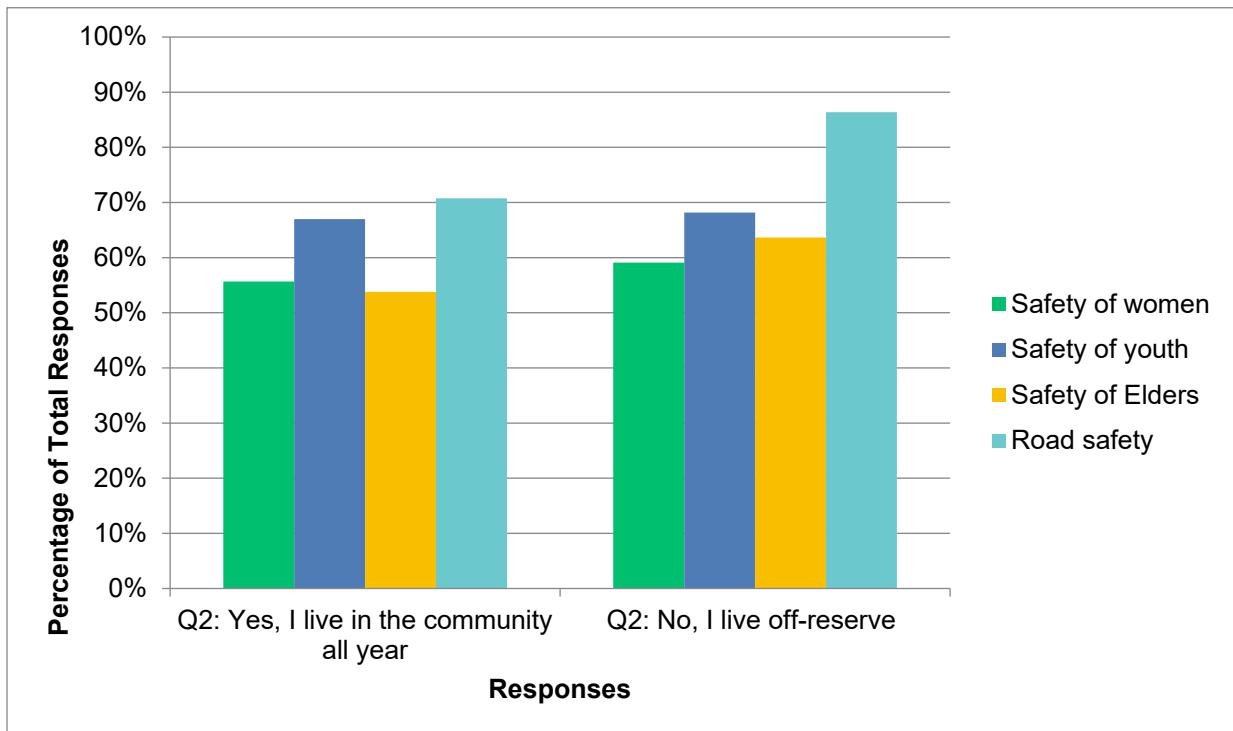


Source: AtkinsRéalis, 2022b

As a follow-up question, individuals were asked what these safety concerns were. Respondents identified four main safety concerns: safety of women, safety of youth, safety of Elders, and road safety, as shown on **Figure 14.11**. Respondents were allowed to identify more than one safety concern. A total of 128 responses were collected for this question (106 responses from individuals that live on-reserve and 22 responses from individuals that live off the reserve).

Out of the 128 responses collected, 94 of the responses (73.4%) included road safety as a concern making it the most frequent safety concern among responses, with 75 of the responses from individuals that live on-reserve and 19 responses from individuals that live off the reserve. Safety of youth was the second most identified safety concern by respondents, with 86 responses having included safety of youth as a safety concern (71 from those that live on-reserve and 15 responses from those that live off the reserve).

Figure 14.11: Safety Concerns Identified by the Community



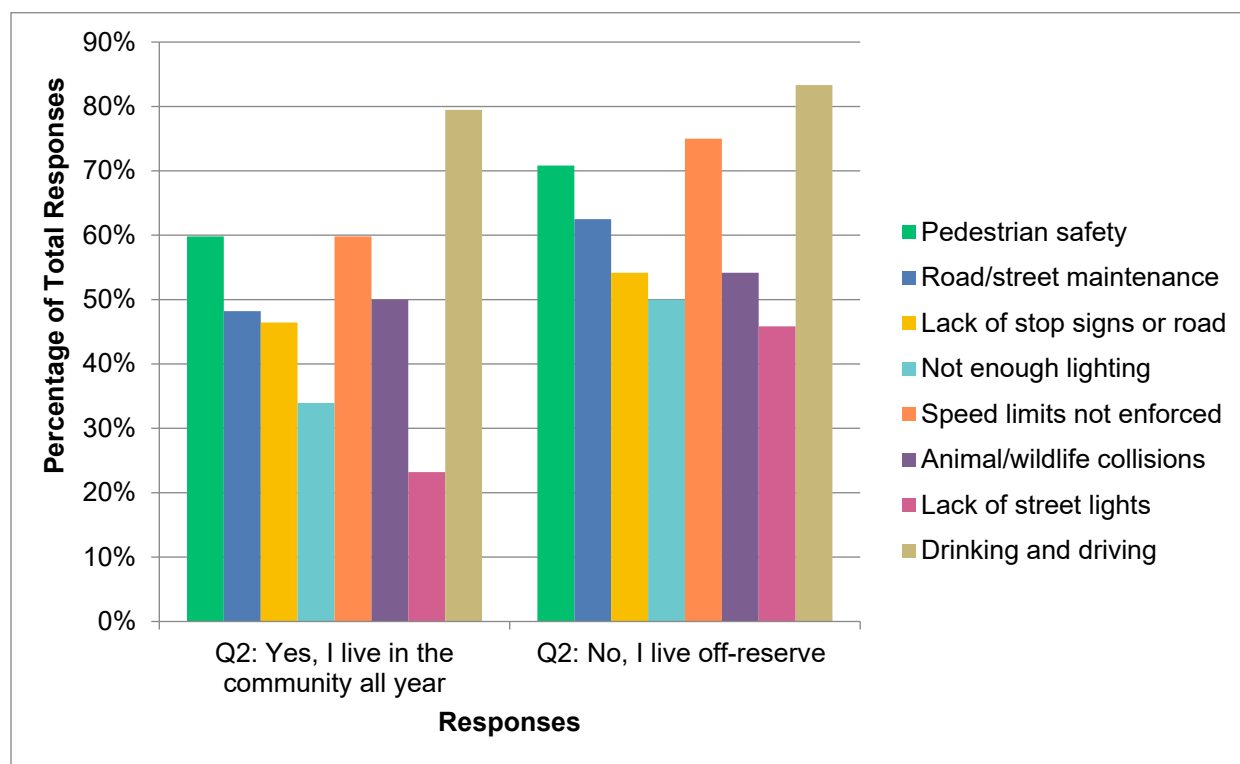
Source: AtkinsRéalis, 2022b

To further understand why road safety was considered by most as a safety concern, a follow-up question asked respondents to state specific road safety concerns. The responses included: pedestrian safety, road/street maintenance, lack of stop signs or roads, not enough lighting, speed limits not enforced, animal/wildlife collisions, lack of streetlights, and drinking and driving, as shown on **Figure 14.12**.

A total of 112 responses were collected from individuals living on-reserve and 24 responses from individuals living off the reserve. The most identified road safety concern was drinking and driving; 79.5% of responses from individuals that live on-reserve included drinking and driving (89 responses) and 83.3% of responses from individuals that live off the reserve included drinking and driving (20 responses).

Based on data collected from the women’s focus group, similar concerns were mentioned including the need for check points and approval from the chief or council for road use, checking drivers’ license when leaving the community, road awareness signs, streetlights, signs for hunting areas, and more workshops on missing and murdered Indigenous women (Webequie First Nation, 2023c).

Figure 14.12: Road Safety Concerns Identified by the Community



Source: AtkinsRéalis, 2022b

Other LSA Communities

Community Well-Being

The Socio-Economic Baseline includes a review of the CWB scores for the LSA communities.

Table 14-30 presents a summary of the overall CWB scores and individual scores for each of the four socio-economic factors for all First Nation communities within the LSA, as well as the average overall score for First Nations in Ontario and Canada. The scores range from 1 to 100, with higher scores indicating better well-being. The overall CWB score for all First Nations in Canada is 58, while the First Nations in Ontario value is 59. The First Nations communities in the LSA range between 36 (Mishkeegogamang First Nation) and 61 (Weenusk First Nation). In comparison, the municipalities in the RSA have CWB scores ranging between 75 and 80. Since the CWB approach is based on community-level data, well-being scores are not calculated for the Métis population (ISC, 2019c). In general, according to previous census data, socio-economic indicators such as school attendance, post-secondary completion, employment, and income levels for the Métis population lag behind non-Indigenous populations.

Overall CWB scores as well as the individual criteria scores for the First Nation communities within the LSA are generally lower than the overall score for First Nations in Canada and Ontario with the exception of Weenusk First Nation.

The CWB scores reflect the significant socio-economic barriers that the LSA communities face. Where information is available, community input indicates further solutions are required to address community-specific needs associated with the indicators listed above.

The data indicate that First Nations communities face unique challenges when it comes to all CWB criteria. Community based solutions with support from all levels of government would be required to address these challenges. To improve income and labour outcomes for First Nations communities, more opportunities need to be created for economic development.

Table 14-30: CWB Index Scores for Indigenous Communities in the LSA

Community	Overall	Education	Labour	Income	Housing
First Nations in Canada	58	40	69	54	71
First Nations in Ontario	59	38	72	53	70
Webequie First Nation	45	19	73	45	44
Attawapiskat First Nation	48	24	64	52	52
Eabametoong First Nation	44	15	69	42	52
Kasabonika Lake First Nation	46	17	64	47	57
Marten Falls First Nation	50	22	70	47	59
Nibinamik First Nation	46	14	75	47	48
Weenusk First Nation	61	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: ISC, 2019b.

Safety

Based on data from the Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, there were 182 police services or detachments in Canada dedicated to serving Indigenous communities, where the majority of residents are Indigenous (Allen, 2020). These police services experienced some of the highest crime rates among the 1,200 police detachments across the country, with crime rates in Indigenous communities being six times higher than those in non-Indigenous populations. Notably, Ontario and British Columbia reported some of the lowest crime rates in Indigenous communities.

Table 14-31 provides a summary of the crime rates based on available information and as reported by the noted police services in the RSA. The data are reported as rates of 100,000 people. Some First Nations communities are serviced by the OPP. The Nishnawbe Aski Police Service reported the highest rates of crime across categories.

Table 14-31: Crime Statistics in Indigenous Communities and Municipalities for 2021, as Reported by the Police Service Responsible for that Area

Municipalities	Total Crime, Rate, 2021*	Total Violent Crime, Rate, 2021*	Total Sexual Assault, Rate, 2021*	Total Drug Violations, Rate, 2021*
Nishnawbe Aski Nation, municipal	26,412	9,421	553	649
Anishinabek, municipal	14,567	4,646	193	435
Kenora District, OPP, municipal	12,018	2,838	264	301
Thunder Bay District, OPP, rural	4,358	1,395	155	224

Source: Statistics Canada, 2022b.

Note: *Data are reported as rates of 100,000 people.



Regional Study Area

Community Well-Being

The Socio-Economic Baseline includes a review of the Community Well Being scores for the RSA communities.

Table 14-32 summarizes the CWB scores for other Indigenous communities, municipalities, cities, and townships within the RSA. Wawakapewin First Nation is absent from this table as there is no CWB score for this Indigenous community from the 2016 Census of Population data. The 2016 CWB data provides the overall score for Ginoogaming First Nation but does not provide scores for each Socio-Economic factor. The Ontario non-Indigenous averages for all Socio-Economic factors are generally slightly higher or the same as the Canadian non-Indigenous averages.

Overall CWB scores as well as the individual criteria scores for the Indigenous communities within the RSA are lower than the municipalities within the RSA. A stark difference in scores can be seen especially when it comes to education, income, and housing. This trend holds true in all three districts in this RSA. The highest difference in scores between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities can be seen when it comes to education as Indigenous communities had lower scores. This indicates that there is a lot of scope for improvement in this area and that further assistance from provincial and federal governments would be required to improve the situation.

As seen in **Table 14-32**, housing scores amongst the Indigenous communities in the RSA are not similar. Constance Lake, Aroland and Long Lake #58 First Nations have higher scores than the rest. These are also the communities that are either closer to urban centres or connected by all season roads.

These trends indicate that Indigenous communities face unique challenges when it comes to all CWB criteria. Special attention of the provincial and federal governments would be required to address these challenges. To improve income and labour outcomes for Indigenous communities, more opportunities need to be created for economic development.

Table 14-32: CWB Index Scores for Communities within the Regional Study Area

Community	Overall	Education	Labour	Income	Housing
Kenora District					
Kashechewan First Nation	39	27	57	36	36
Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug	43	13	66	42	52
Kingfisher Lake First Nation	55	18	81	53	68
Mishkeegogamang First Nation	36	13	64	40	26
North Caribou Lake First Nation	54	26	76	53	61
Wapekeka First Nation	46	13	73	46	53
Wunnumin Lake First Nation	50	22	71	44	61
Township of Pickle Lake	77	59	85	79	84
Municipality of Sioux Lookout	80	59	89	79	92
Thunder Bay District					
Aroland First Nation	56	34	69	48	75
Ginoogaming First Nation	54	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Long Lake #58 First Nation	49	24	52	40	79



Community	Overall	Education	Labour	Income	Housing
City of Thunder Bay	80	63	85	79	95
Municipality of Greenstone	75	51	80	77	93
Cochrane District					
Constance Lake First Nation	57	30	63	53	84
Fort Albany First Nation	55	33	74	56	58
City of Timmins	79	57	85	80	95
Ontario Non-Indigenous	79	59	85	77	95
Canadian Non-Indigenous	77	56	84	76	95

Source: ISC, 2019b.

Safety

Communities in the RSA experience safety issues that relates to socio-economic challenges such as substance abuse, property crime, violent crime, road safety concerns and public safety concerns. Kenora district has reported higher rates of substance abuse and associated crime, especially in urban areas like Kenora. According to the OPP, property crime and violent crime have fluctuated with recent efforts directed towards improving mental health crises response (OPP, 2024).

Thunder Bay has also seen higher rates of violent crime compared to provincial averages. The Thunder Bay Police Service reports that the district has frequently reported some of the highest per capita rates of homicide and assault in Canada (Thunder Bay Police Service, 2023). Community safety initiatives by local law enforcement include partnerships with social services to address root causes, such as homelessness and substance abuse (Statistics Canada, 2023).

Cochrane has a lower crime rate but still experiences safety issues related to substance abuse and property crime, especially in urbanized areas like Timmins. Due to the vast geography and remote populations, emergency response times can be prolonged. The district's paramedics face challenges such as long distances, challenging terrain and weather conditions, which can delay the time between an emergency incident and the patient's arrival at the hospital (CDSSAB EMS, 2023). Recent initiatives aim to improve accessibility to primary and emergency services (Northern Policy Institute, 2024).

14.3 Identification of Potential Effects, Pathways and Indicators

This section provides a description of potential effects of the Project on the Social Environment VCs in consideration of the existing social conditions (**Section 14.2**), their indicators of change (**Section 14.1.4**), the interactions with Project activities (**Section 14.1.6**) and the pathway of effects (**Section 14.3**).

Table 14-33 summarizes the potential effect pathways and effect indicators for the Social Environment VCs. The descriptions of effect pathways are grouped by their potential effect to avoid repetition since many of the same effect pathways may occur during different phases of the Project. The potential effects of accidental spills on the social environment are assessed in Section 23 (Accidents and Malfunctions).

Following the description of each potential effect, a conclusion on the likelihood of occurrence of the potential effect is provided. A summary is provided in **Section 14.3.8**.



Table 14-33: Summary of Potential Effects, Mitigation and Enhancement Measures and Predicted Net Effects for Social Environment VCs

Potential Effect	Project Phase	Effect Pathway	Effect Indicators	Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect)	Linked VCs
Change to population and demographics	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project employment opportunities and expenditures will result in the in-migration of non-local workers to meet direct on-site labour requirements during the construction phase. This will create a temporary increase in the population within the Project site area, and specifically the Webequie First Nation community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-migration of temporary workers. Increased temporary population. 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)
Change to population and demographics	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project employment opportunities and expenditures, as well as more education and training opportunities, has the potential to result in the in-migration of off-reserve community members, and the reduction in out-migration of on-reserve community members. This could contribute to a young workforce ready to contribute and build community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-migration of off-reserve community members. Out-migration of on-reserve community members. 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)
Change to population and demographics	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the availability of labour within the Webequie First Nation community, it is likely that labour will need to come from the other LSA communities and potentially the RSA to meet direct labour demand. It is likely that the non-local workers would not stay in the Webequie community permanently but may stay temporarily depending on Project specific requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-migration of non-local workers. Increased population. 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)



Potential Effect	Project Phase	Effect Pathway	Effect Indicators	Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect)	Linked VCs
Change to population and demographics	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project employment opportunities and expenditures, as well as more education and training opportunities, has the potential to result in the in-migration of off-reserve community members, and reduced out-migration of on-reserve community members. This could contribute to a younger workforce on-reserve ready to contribute and build community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-migration of off-reserve community members. Out-migration of on-reserve community members. 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)
Change to housing and accommodations	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction and use of supportive infrastructure will result in the installation of temporary construction camps and other forms of temporary housing for non-local workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in temporary accommodations supply. 	Direct	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)
Change to housing and accommodations	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment and expenditures could provide employment and business opportunities for Webequie First Nation community members. This could result in a decrease in out-migration of community members and an increase in in-migration of community members seeking opportunities related to the Project. This potential increase in net in-migration could cause an increase in demand for housing and a decrease in housing availability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand and supply of housing Housing availability. 	Indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)
Change to housing and accommodations	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction and use of supportive infrastructure will result in the installation of temporary construction camps and other forms of temporary housing for non-local workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in temporary accommodations supply. 	Direct	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p>



Potential Effect	Project Phase	Effect Pathway	Effect Indicators	Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect)	Linked VCs
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)
Change to housing and accommodations	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment and expenditures could provide employment and business opportunities for Webequie First Nation community members. This could result in a decrease in out-migration of community members and an increase in in-migration of community members seeking opportunities related to the Project. This potential increase in net in-migration could cause an increase in demand for housing and a decrease in housing availability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand and supply of housing. Housing availability. 	Indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)
Change to Community Services	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment and expenditures could provide employment and business opportunities for Webequie First Nation community members. This will result in in-migration of non-local workers and could result in net in-migration of community members seeking opportunities related to the Project. This increase in in-migration could alter the service requirements for the Webequie community and potentially affect availability of community services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in level of service use or availability. 	Indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)
Change to Community Services	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment and expenditures could provide employment and business opportunities for Webequie First Nation community members. This will result in in-migration of non-local workers and could result in net in-migration of community members seeking opportunities related to the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in level of service use or availability. 	Indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)



Potential Effect	Project Phase	Effect Pathway	Effect Indicators	Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect)	Linked VCs
		Project. This increase in in-migration could alter the service requirements for the Webequie community and potentially affect availability of community services.			
Change to Education, Training, and Traditional Learning	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment and expenditures will generate an increased interest in education, training and skills development opportunities that will result in increased education and training attainment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of education attainment. Level of training attainment. 	Direct	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)
Change to Education, Training, and Traditional Learning	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment and expenditures will generate an increased interest in education, training and skills development opportunities that will result in increased education and training attainment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of education attainment. Level of training attainment 	Direct	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)
Change to Education, Training, and Traditional Learning	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction phase will result in an increased attainment and also demand of education and training of community members in order to meet the Project employment standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand for education and training services. Supply and capacity of programming and facility space. 	Direct	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)
Change to Education, Training, and Traditional Learning Programming and Facility Space	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operation phase will lead to a small increase in education and training attainment and demand by community members to be involved in the Project employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand for education and training services. Supply and capacity of programming and facility space. 	Direct	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p>



Potential Effect	Project Phase	Effect Pathway	Effect Indicators	Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect)	Linked VCs
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)
Change to Education, Training, and Traditional Learning	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During construction phase there will be an increased demand for educational and training programs resulting in decreased interest in learning traditional land-based skills and reduced capacity for the Webequie First Nation to offer traditional learning programming. The increased involvement in Project-related skills could also reduce time spent in the Webequie community to attend courses only offered off-reserve. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of traditional learning programming. 	Indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lands and Resources Used for Traditional Activities (Section 19) Culturally Continuity (Section 19)
Change to Education, Training, and Traditional Learning	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During operation phase there will be a small increase in demand for educational and training programs resulting in decreased interest in learning traditional land-based skills and reduced capacity for the Webequie community to offer traditional learning programming. The continuous involvement in Project and attainment of skills could reduce time spent in the Webequie First Nation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of traditional learning programming. 	Indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sites and Areas Used for Traditional Activities (Section 19) Culturally Continuity (Section 19)
Change to Emergency and Protective Services	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction phase will result in an increase in population of non-resident workers at construction camps, and construction activities that have health and safety risk, leading to an increase in demand for emergency and protective services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand for community emergency and protective services. Supply and capacity of community emergency and protective services. 	Direct	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accidents and Malfunctions (Section 23)



Potential Effect	Project Phase	Effect Pathway	Effect Indicators	Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect)	Linked VCs
Change to Emergency and Protective Services	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the operations phase, there will be an increase in volume and severity of vehicle-related accidents requiring emergency services such as medical facilities and ambulance for traffic incidents and/or fire response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand for community emergency and protective services. Supply and capacity of community emergency and protective services. 	Direct	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accidents and Malfunctions (Section 23)
Change to Community Infrastructure	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase in population, and services needed for the Project, could result in increased demand for community infrastructure services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand for community infrastructure. Supply of community infrastructure. 	Indirect and Direct	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)
Change to Community Infrastructure	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase in population, and services needed for the Project, could result in increased demand for community infrastructure services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand for community infrastructure. Supply of community infrastructure. 	Indirect and Direct	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)
Change to Community Well-Being and Safety	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction phase could result in an in-migration of non-local temporary workers which may lead to reduced community cohesion and increased conflicts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Cohesion and Culture. Quantity of social connections. Quality of social connections. 	Direct	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)



Potential Effect	Project Phase	Effect Pathway	Effect Indicators	Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect)	Linked VCs
Change to Community Well-Being and Safety	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During construction phase there might be a reduced involvement in social cultural and traditional practices due to involvement of Project activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in social and/or cultural events. Participation rate (by event): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of new (first-time) attendees to regularly held (e.g., annual) events; and Total number of social and/or cultural events held. 	Indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)
Change to Community Well-Being and Safety	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project could affect community safety and perceptions of community safety through a potential increase in gender-based violence, family violence, and transportation-related safety issues (e.g., drunk driving, hitchhiking). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceptions of safety; Traffic safety; Domestic violence rate; Sexual assault rate; and Physical assault rate. 	Direct	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)
Change to Community Well-Being and Safety	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The construction phase may result in increased release of GHGs, particulate matter, VOCs, PAHs, and diesel particulate matters, and will create noise nuisance and adverse impact on visual character and sensitivity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nuisance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air quality (e.g., dust); and Noise levels. 	Direct	<p>The assessment of this VC is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual Environment (Section 19) Atmospheric Environment (Section 9)



Potential Effect	Project Phase	Effect Pathway	Effect Indicators	Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect)	Linked VCs
Change to Community Well-Being and Safety	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction phase could result in an in-migration of non-local workers and families for maintenance work which may create social conflicts and reduce cohesion within the Webequie community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Cohesion and Culture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantity of social connections; and Quality of social connections. 	Direct	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)
Change to Community Well-Being and Safety	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations phase may result in lesser participation in cultural and traditional activities by community members due to the presence of the road and involvement in maintenance activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in social and/or cultural events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation rate (by event;) Number of new (first-time) attendees to regularly held (e.g., annual) events; and Total number of social and/or cultural events held. 	Indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)
Change to Community Well-Being and Safety	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During operations phase there will be increased risks of vehicular accidents and transport safety issues such as hitchhiking and impaired driving; additionally increased income in community may create increased domestic violence and drug use and alcohol related violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceptions of safety; Traffic safety; Domestic violence rate; Sexual assault rate; and Physical assault rate. 	Direct	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)



Potential Effect	Project Phase	Effect Pathway	Effect Indicators	Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect)	Linked VCs
Change to Community Well-Being and Safety	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ During operations phase there might be low in magnitude and irregular in frequency impacts related to dust generation, GHGs, and noise due to operation of the road. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nuisance effects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Air quality (e.g., dust); ▫ Noise levels; and ▫ Visual effects. 	Indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visual Environment (Section 19) ▪ Atmospheric Environment (Section 9)



14.3.1 Change to Population and Demographics

This section discusses the potential Project effects on the Population and Demographics VC utilizing the indicators described below. These indicators provide insights into the human environment where the Project is being considered.

- **Change in Population, including gender and age:** Knowing the size, gender, and age distribution of the population in the LSA and RSA helps to understand the social context of the areas. The size of the population gives a sense of the scale of potential effects. Different age groups may be affected differently by environmental changes (e.g., people of working age). Gender data can help assess whether the project may have disproportionate effects on men or women.

Demographic data can help to understand the potential social and cultural impacts of the Project. It is used to inform decision-making, ensuring that any developments or interventions take into consideration the needs, livelihoods, rights, and cultural practices of the local populations. Understanding these demographic trends helps to ensure that the proposed development respects the rights and interests of these communities. It is essential to consider this data because the Project could bring both benefits (improved access to services and opportunities) and costs (disruption of traditional ways of life). For example, if the Project brings an influx of non-Indigenous people, this could potentially affect the social and cultural dynamics in these communities.

- **Loss of Indigenous identity:** Identifying Indigenous persons in the LSA and RSA is critical for respecting Indigenous rights and for considering Traditional Knowledge in EAs. It is essential to engage with Indigenous communities in the planning process, to understand and minimize potential effects on their land, rights, and traditional practices.
- **Loss of Language(s):** Information about languages spoken in the LSA and RSA can help in effective communication and engagement with local communities during the EAR/IS process. It's important to provide information and collect feedback in the languages that people speak. Language information can also indicate cultural diversity and help in understanding the social fabric of the community.

Additionally, if the languages spoken are primarily Indigenous, it is crucial to ensure communication about the Project is available in those languages to ensure informed consent and meaningful participation in decision-making processes.

- **Change in Mobility and migration:** Knowing the existing patterns of movement and migration can help understand how the Project might affect these patterns with regards to community stability, workforce considerations, and can inform approach to engagement and consultation. This information can help in mitigating potential negative effects.
- **Increased Immigration:** Information on immigration can provide insights into the diversity and dynamics of the population. Immigrants might have different cultural practices, vulnerabilities, or needs that should be considered. For instance, they might be more affected by changes in employment opportunities or require additional language support.

It is essential to consider the population and demographic data because the Project could bring both benefits (improved access to services and opportunities) and costs (disruption of traditional ways of life). For example, if the Project brings an influx of non-Indigenous people, this could potentially impact the social and cultural dynamics in these communities. Moreover, understanding these population and demographic trends helps to develop appropriate mitigation strategies and ensures that the proposed development respects the rights and interests of these communities.



14.3.1.1 Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increase in in-migration of temporary workers → Increase in temporary population

Project employment opportunities and expenditures will result in employment opportunities and the in-migration of workers to meet direct on-site labour requirements during construction. This will create a temporary increase in the population within the LSA, and specifically the Webequie First Nation.

During construction, there will be a large temporary increase in population within Webequie First Nation in relation to the current population (**Table 14-34**). The nature of the population increase will be with temporary workers residing within Project construction camps. The temporary population increase will occur within a five-to-six-year period. The volume of workers will be dependent on the Project construction schedule and will vary by year and season.

During construction, the Project will require a variety of direct on-site employment positions such as construction and service/maintenance workers. It is anticipated that a large portion of the workforce will come from outside of Webequie First Nation as its workforce alone would be unable to fully meet the labour demands of the Project.

Due to the remoteness of the Project and the LSA First Nation communities, commuting daily to the Project site would not be feasible. It is anticipated that labourers coming from the LSA communities will commute to the Project site on the same fly-in/fly-out schedule as those coming from the RSA. Project-related employees will stay in temporary construction camps within the LSA. Non-local workers may also by other means of travel depending on conditions (i.e., winter access roads, waterways). Any fly-in/fly-out labour will be limited to 14 days in and seven days out.

Certain subpopulations such as those typically engaged in construction work (i.e., young adults, males, and abled persons) will be attracted to Webequie First Nation for employment opportunities. This is a barrier for existing Webequie First Nation community members, as the local skillset does not readily match these requirements due to lack of education, training, and similar employment opportunities in the community (**Section 14.2.2.4**). The in-migration of these subpopulations is anticipated to shift the demographics and service needs in the community. In addition, community interactions with in-migrants could lead to both positive (e.g., increased business for community stores and services) and negative (e.g., interactions with vulnerable community members such as women and girls) (InterGroup, 2024). The effects of changes in population are described further in this section, and in Section 15 (Economic Environment).

The projected change on the Webequie First Nation population from 2028 to 2032 is displayed in **Table 14-34** and **Figure 14.13** below.

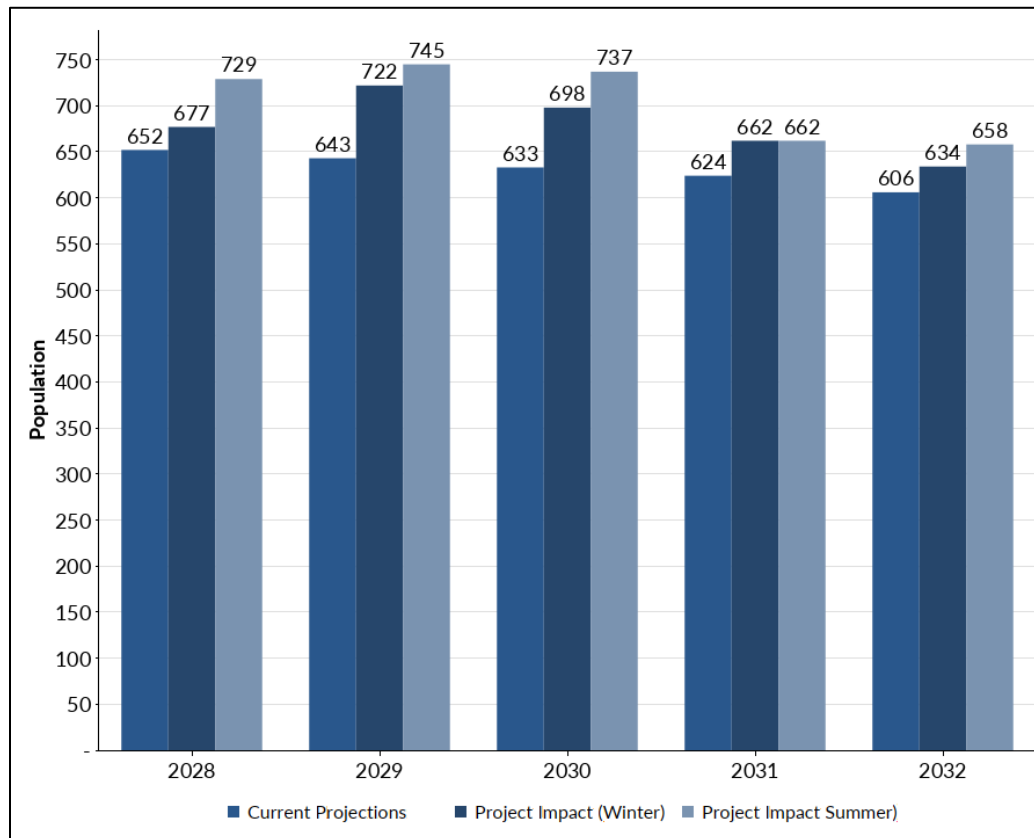
Table 14-34: Project-Related Population Impact on Webequie First Nation, Construction Phase

Year	Season	Current Population Projection	Project Labour Requirement	Population Projection with Project Impact
2028	Winter	652	35	677
	Summer		87	729
2029	Winter	643	89	722
	Summer		112	745

Year	Season	Current Population Projection	Project Labour Requirement	Population Projection with Project Impact
2030	Winter	633	75	698
	Summer		114	737
2031	Winter	624	48	662
	Summer		48	662
2032	Winter	606	38	634
	Summer		62	658

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024; Statistics Canada, 2016; Statistics Canada, 2021; AtkinsRéalis, 2023

Figure 14.13: Project-Related Population Impact on Webequie First Nation, Construction Phase



Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024; Statistics Canada, 2016; Statistics Canada, 2021; AtkinsRéalis, 2023.

Over the assumed five-year construction period, the population could rise by an average of 47 individuals during the winter season and 75 individuals in the summer season. Population increases are likely to peak during the summer season as construction activities increase. The largest increases in population are projected to occur during the second and third years of construction and will peak during the summer months.



An estimated 102 and 104 workers will reside in the community during the summer of 2029 and 2030, respectively. During the final years of construction, the number of non-local workers in the community is estimated to be between 28 and 52 workers. Based on industry norms it is likely that most of these workers will be non-local males aged 15 to 35.

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members / Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in population

The Project also has the potential to increase the population of the Webequie First Nation community members through:

- Increased in-migration of off-reserve Webequie First Nation community members; and
- Decreased out-migration of on-reserve community members associated with direct and indirect employment opportunities of the Project.

With construction and operation phase hiring strategies in place to prioritize the hiring of community members, local residents and First Nation members, there is the potential for an influx of Webequie First Nation community members currently living off-reserve to the community to fill employment needs for the Project.

Based on results from the WSR socio-economic survey, 80% of Webequie respondents living off-reserve at the time would want to live in Webequie year-round because of either the Project and/or future mining development in the region (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b). Decreased out-migration may also occur from an increase in employment and training opportunities and interest around the Project.

Since the construction phase will take place over five to six years and given the nature of the employment positions and limited number of jobs available matching the skills of the population, it is not anticipated that large numbers of former residents will return to the Webequie First Nation to take on Project-related employment. Overall, the effects of the Project on Webequie First Nation population and demographics are not likely to be adverse and is anticipated to be low in magnitude.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increase in migration of temporary workers → Increase in temporary population

Due to the availability of labour within the Webequie First Nation, it is likely that direct labour for operation and maintenance will come from within the community and potentially from other LSA communities and the RSA to meet direct labour demand. It is likely that workers from other LSA communities and the RSA would not stay in Webequie First Nation permanently but may stay temporarily depending on Project specific requirements. These workers will likely use temporary accommodations set up for the purpose.

The employment positions during operations include maintenance and repair activities, such as routine scheduled grading and resurfacing of the road, management of vegetation and rehabilitation/repair of bridges and culverts. These positions are limited in number. The estimated employment requirements are 25 employees. As such, it is anticipated that the direct workforce demands will be predominantly met by workers from communities within the LSA though a small percentage of positions may be met by regional or out-of-province workers.

The potential Project effects resulting from the in-migration of temporary workers may apply during operations; however, the magnitude of the change in population would be a low to negligible level and is unlikely to have a material change on the Webequie First Nation population.



Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in population

The population of Webequie First Nation could be affected through both increased in-migration of off-reserve Webequie First Nation community members and decreased out-migration of on-reserve community members associated with direct and indirect employment opportunities of the Project.

However, during operations phase, it is estimated that approximately 88% of the labour requirements will be filled by workers outside of Webequie First Nation, with approximately 22 workers coming from other LSA First Nations communities or the RSA to fill employment requirements. Overall, the effects of the Project on Webequie First Nation population and demographics are unlikely to be adverse and is anticipated to be low in magnitude.

Conclusion

Overall, there is a **low potential** for an increase in population and change in demographics within the Webequie First Nation as a result of the Project. This effect is carried forward to **Section 14.4** for further assessment.

14.3.1.2 Local Study Area: Other Communities

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increase in in-migration of temporary workers → Increase in temporary population

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in population

Project employment requirements for direct on-site labour will result in the in-migration of temporary workers to the LSA. This will result in an increase in the local population. Direct on-site positions will be met by the other LSA communities as well as the RSA.

Direct on-site workers coming from the other LSA communities will need to commute to the Project site on the same schedule as those coming from the RSA. Direct on-site workers will be staying in temporary accommodations provided for the Project and be limited to 14 days in and seven days out.

Table 14-35 presents the estimated number of Project workers coming from the other LSA communities during each year of construction who will be contributing to the temporary increase in the Webequie First Nation population.

Table 14-35: Increase in Webequie First Nation Population Attributed to the Temporary In-Migration of Workers from the Other Local Study Area Communities, Construction Phase

Year	Winter	Summer
2028	24	26
2029	25	26
2030	26	26
2031	23	23
2032	24	24

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024



The majority of the LSA population is concentrated in Kasabonika Lake First Nation, Eabametoong First Nation, and Attawapiskat First Nation. Combined, the three communities made up approximately 76% of the LSA community population in 2021. Additionally, the three communities have 80% of those aged 15 years and over who are currently not in the labour force and 50% of the unemployed population within the LSA.

LSA community members may choose to temporarily leave their home communities to secure employment but would likely be returning to their communities on a schedule. The Project effect on population and demographics of the other LSA communities is therefore expected to be minimal and temporary during the construction phase.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increase in in-migration of temporary workers → Increase in temporary population

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in population

Due to the limited availability of labour within Webequie First Nation, it is likely that labour will need to be recruited from the other LSA communities and the RSA to meet direct labour demand during the operations phase. It is unlikely that the non-local workers would permanently move to the local communities but may stay temporarily depending on Project specific requirements.

Other LSA community workers are likely to contribute significantly to the direct labour demand, to offset potential surplus employment opportunities within the Webequie First Nation population. It is likely that these workers would choose to commute; however, it is possible they may seek to relocate to Webequie First Nation or the surrounding areas to be closer to WSR. The employment demand attributed to direct labour during operations is limited and therefore the population increase and decrease to Webequie First Nation and the LSA communities, respectively, would be low to negligible.

During operations, it is estimated that the other LSA communities will be able to meet approximately 88% of the direct labour requirements which equates to approximately 22 Full-Time Employment (FTE) positions. There is a high likelihood that 22 workers within the LSA communities will commute rather than permanently relocate to Webequie First Nation to secure employment opportunities directly associated with WSR.

Conclusion

Overall, there is a **negligible to low potential** for an increase in population and change in demographics within the other communities in the LSA as a result of the Project. There may be a small change within the local communities which is dependent on labour demand. This effect is carried forward to **Section 14.4** for further assessment.



14.3.1.3 Regional Study Area

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increase in in-migration of temporary workers → Increase in temporary population

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in population

During construction, the on-site workers coming from the RSA will temporarily reside in Project construction camps and will come into the community on a fly-in/fly-out schedule. Any fly-in/fly-out labour will be limited to 14 days in and seven days out to prevent fatigue and encourage retention. As a result, there is no potential project effect on the population or demographics within the RSA.

Table 14-36 presents the estimated number of direct on-site Project workers coming from the RSA during each year of construction who will be contributing to the temporary increase in the Webequie First Nation population.

Table 14-36: Temporary Population Increase in Webequie First Nation Attributed to the Regional Study Area, Construction Phase

Year	Winter	Summer
2028	1	51
2029	54	76
2030	39	78
2031	15	15
2032	4	28

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increase in in-migration of temporary workers → Increase in temporary population

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in population

Direct workers coming from the RSA would likely only stay on the Project site temporarily and it is unlikely they would permanently relocate to Webequie First Nation or the surrounding areas.

Conclusion

Overall, there will be **negligible Project effect** on the population within the RSA. This effect is not carried forward for further assessment.



14.3.2 Change to Housing and Temporary Accommodations

This section provides an analysis of Project effects on the Housing and Temporary Accommodations VC. Housing and temporary accommodations are an important concern among First Nations People living on reserves. In 2021, it was recorded that 224,280 First Nations People reported that they consider the household they live in as being crowded (Statistics Canada, 2022a). This problem is primarily due to houses not having enough rooms for families and multiple generation of families living in the same household. Furthermore, many houses on First Nation reserves are in poor condition and require major repairs.

As Project requirements for worker accommodation during construction may result in temporary in-migration and increased demand for housing, it is anticipated that this could cause greater pressure on supply of housing. Assessing the potential changes to the Housing and Temporary Accommodations VC in consideration of the following indicators also facilitates the identification and development of strategies to mitigate, avoid or compensate for potential negative effects or enhance potential positive effects:

1. **Changes in Housing Availability:** Changes induced by the Project, such as an influx of workers or an increase in local employment and income, could affect housing demand and affordability. This can also indicate the community's capacity to accommodate changes or influxes of people due to project activities.
 - a. Government or band housing – The high percentage of dwellings (95%) categorized as government or band housing could indicate a lack of private sector involvement in housing, possibly related to the communities' remote locations or socio-economic conditions. This could impact the communities' capacity to quickly respond to changes in housing demand associated with the Project.
2. **Change in Housing Affordability:** Alterations brought about by the Project, such as increase in local population and temporary workers or an increase in local employment and income, could affect existing housing affordability. This can also reflect the community's ability to adapt to changes or an influx of people resulting from Project activities.
 - a. Housing availability – The data indicates that there is a substantial amount of overcrowding in the communities, with many households needing major repairs. If the Project brings an influx of workers, this could potentially exacerbate the housing issues unless new accommodations are created.
 - b. Household Characteristics – These may involve the size and composition of households, income levels, employment status, etc. This data can help identify households that might be more vulnerable to changes induced by the Project (e.g., lower-income households that could be impacted by rising housing prices). This can also provide a basis for understanding the potential effects on community cohesion and social structures.
3. **Change in Housing condition:** This refers to the physical condition of housing in the community (e.g., needs for repair, suitability for occupancy). If the community already has a significant proportion of homes in poor condition, project-induced changes could exacerbate these issues or could provide opportunities to improve housing conditions if planned properly.
 - a. Overcrowding – Overcrowding is an ongoing issue in the communities, as shown by the high percentages of dwellings with 5 or more persons and 5 or fewer rooms. This could contribute to social issues and health concerns, which could be further stressed by the Project.



- b. Aging infrastructure – Majority of homes were built over 20 years ago suggesting an aging infrastructure that may already be struggling to meet the communities' needs. This could be further strained by an influx of workers associated with the Project.
- c. Suitability of housing – With a significant percentage of dwellings considered unsuitable for the size of the household, this raises concern about the living conditions within these communities. The Project may exacerbate these issues unless appropriately addressed.

Understanding the baseline condition of housing and temporary accommodations in the LSA and RSA will be critical in planning the Project to align with these community aspirations regarding housing. Moreover, if the Project is expected to bring an influx of workers into the community (either temporarily or permanently), these indicators will be critical in planning for and managing potential changes in local housing demand.

14.3.2.1 Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increase in non-local workers → Construction and use of supportive infrastructure → Construction of temporary construction camps → Increase in temporary accommodations

The Project is anticipated to result in an increase in temporary accommodations within the Webequie community.

Project-related activities will bring non-local workers into the Webequie First Nation who require short-term accommodations, which are already limited, in the Webequie First Nation. Temporary accommodations are currently used by Webequie First Nation community members themselves due to overcrowding (InterGroup, 2024). Some Webequie First Nation community members rely on the local motel for housing. There is also a contractor trailer that is used for temporary accommodations. An increase in needs for temporary accommodations could cause further issues for those Webequie First Nation community members who are unhoused or are precariously housed.

During construction, four construction camps are proposed to be installed in and around the Webequie First Nation to accommodate construction workers. The construction camps will be geographically separate from the current residential areas of the Webequie First Nation. The addition of construction camps to accommodate project-related workers will alleviate the demand on the existing housing supply (permanent and temporary).

Table 14-37 and **Figure 14.14** display the estimated temporary accommodations requirements by year and season to house the direct non-local workers for the Project. Temporary accommodations requirements will fluctuate between 25 to 104 beds. Temporary accommodations requirements will peak during the summer months and will be highest during year 2 and 3 of the construction phase.

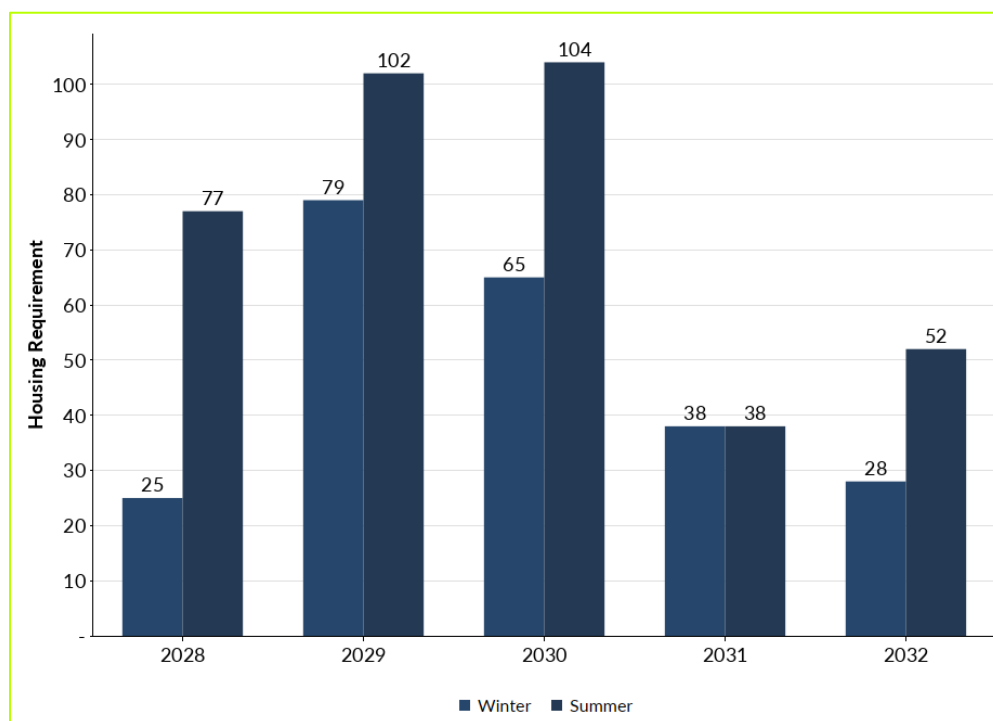
Table 14-37: Project-Related Temporary Accommodations Requirements, Construction Phase

Year	Winter	Summer
2028	25	77
2029	79	102
2030	65	104
2031	38	38
2032	28	52

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024



Figure 14.14: Project-Related Temporary Accommodations Requirements, Construction Phase



Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in demand for housing → Decrease in housing availability

The Project is anticipated to result in reduced housing availability within the Webequie First Nation from a possible influx of off-reserve community members and a reduced out-migration of on-reserve community members seeking employment related to the Project.

An increase in demand for housing to accommodate community members returning to the community for employment opportunities and lower out-migration of on-reserve community members seeking the same opportunities is anticipated to reduce housing availability within the Webequie First Nations.

Webequie First Nation already faces ongoing challenges of overcrowding and aging housing in disrepair. Overcrowding and lack of housing availability is a challenge that affects most in Webequie First Nation, and it can disproportionately impact subpopulations more vulnerable to changes in housing, including individuals who are unhoused or precariously housed and youth (InterGroup, 2024). Knowledge holders expressed concerns for families who are or become homeless (e.g., their house burned down) in the community, sharing that some residents live in the local hotel and others began living in the COVID-19 isolation units provided to the community during the pandemic (AtkinsRéal, 2023). Lack of availability of housing and accommodations in Webequie First Nation also affects the ability for important services to be provided in the community, such as teachers and health care providers, and the ability of off-reserve members to return home (AtkinsRéal, 2023).

Webequie First Nation wishes to benefit from increased employment and business opportunities from the Project; however, the lack of available housing in the community creates a barrier to off-reserve Webequie First Nation community members returning home for employment opportunities, as well as the lack of suitable housing for on-reserve Webequie First Nation community members that wish to stay in the community for the same opportunities.

The degree to which the potential demand for housing in Webequie First Nation due to net in-migration of community members is dependent on any potential increase in the population. The Project could provide a catalyst for increased investment in housing supply to enhance readiness of the community through additional suitable housing.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increase in non-local workers → Use of temporary accommodations

During operations, there may be a demand on existing temporary accommodations in the community from non-local Project employees and contractors.

There will be continued Project employment and expenditures requiring a limited number of employment positions for road operations and maintenance activities. The Project will be operated for an indeterminate period and will require a direct workforce of approximately 25 workers. It is anticipated that the workforce demands will be met by local, regional, or out-of-province workers, with an estimated 88% of the workforce coming from the other LSA communities or the RSA to fill employment requirements. There will be a demand for 22 beds during the operations phase in order to accommodate these workers.

Temporary accommodations are required at the Project site and/or Webequie First Nation to house non-local workers. Most construction camps will be decommissioned except for Construction Camp 2A, which will be used as a maintenance and storage facility and could be retained with temporary accommodations. As a result, the added temporary accommodations would not change the demand on the limited housing supply in the community. In the absence of temporary accommodations during operation, a temporary contractor trailer accommodation would be required nearer to the Webequie First Nation.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in demand for housing → Decrease in housing availability

During operations, there may be decreased housing availability from off-reserve Webequie First Nation community members permanently returning to the community for employment opportunities with the Project or adjacent sectors (e.g., hospitality, service industry, resources, health care, education etc.).

There may be competing needs for housing in the community with an influx of Project-related staff required during the operation phase. The lack of available housing in the community could create a barrier to off-reserve Webequie First Nation community members who may be interested in returning home for employment opportunities.

An increase in off-reserve Webequie First Nation community members returning to the community could further exacerbate the overcrowding issues the community already faces (InterGroup, 2024). For example, there is an immediate need for Elders' housing and youth housing for those no longer able to live with their immediate families (AtkinsRéalis, 2022b). Currently, the community has a motel with six rooms in the Webequie Business Centre, as well as contractor trailers for other temporary contractors.



During operation, Construction Camp 2A is proposed to be converted to a permanent maintenance and storage facility, with the potential for staff housing; whereas the remainder of construction camps (3) will be decommissioned once construction is completed. There may be an opportunity to consider after-uses for temporary housing for these demographics once they are no longer needed for the Project.

Conclusion

Overall, there is a **moderate potential** for an increased demand on housing / reduced availability of existing housing within the Webequie First Nation community as a result of the Project. This effect is carried forward to **Section 14.4** for further assessment.

14.3.2.2 Local Study Area: Other Communities

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Construction and use of supportive infrastructure → Construction of temporary construction camps → Increase in temporary accommodations

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in demand for housing → Decrease in housing availability

The Project may result in a change to housing availability in the other LSA communities from either returning off-reserve members or non-locals relocating to the communities for job opportunities.

New housing demands could increase in the other communities within the LSA to accommodate a potential influx of non-local or off-reserve individuals and families employed by the Project; however, these communities are situated between 85 km and 330 km from Webequie First Nation and the Project site (**Table 14-38**), which is an impractical daily commuting distance to the Project. The Project anticipates the need for fly-in staff on a rotational basis. These staff would originate either from other communities in the LSA or the RSA and be housed at construction camps for the Project.

Table 14-38: Local Study Area Community Locations in Relation to Webequie First Nation

Community	Location
Marten Falls First Nation	Approximately 165 km south of Webequie First Nation
Nibinamik First Nation	85 km west of Webequie First Nation
Neskantaga First Nation	Less than 100 km south of Webequie First Nation
Kasabonika Lake First Nation	Approximately 105 km northwest of Webequie First Nation
Eabametoong First Nation	Approximately 165 km south of Webequie First Nation
Attawapiskat First Nation	Approximately 330 km east of Webequie First Nation
Weenusk First Nation	Approximately 260 km north of Webequie First Nation

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in demand for housing → Decrease in housing availability

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increase in non-local workers → Use of temporary accommodations

Due to the distance from the WSR and Webequie First Nation, there are no anticipated Project-related effects on housing availability or demand on the housing supply in the other LSA communities.

Conclusion

Overall, there is predicted to be a **negligible Project effect** on the housing demand/housing availability within the other communities in the LSA. This effect is not carried forward for further assessment.

14.3.2.3 Regional Study Area

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Construction and use of supportive infrastructure → Construction of temporary construction camps → Increase in temporary accommodations

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in demand for housing → Decrease in housing availability

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in demand for housing → Decrease in housing availability

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increase in non-local workers → Use of temporary accommodations

Due to the distance of the RSA communities from the Project location, the effects of the Project are concentrated within the LSA, including the Webequie First Nation during construction and operations. There are no anticipated adverse effects to Housing and Temporary Accommodations in the RSA communities as a result of the Project.

Conclusion

Overall, there is predicted to be **no Project effect** on the housing demand/housing availability in the RSA. This effect is not carried forward for further assessment.

14.3.3 Change to Community Services

This section describes the potential effects of the Project on the Community Services VC in consideration of the following indicators:

- Increased demand for community services; and
- Change in supply and capacity of community services.



The assessment of potential effects on Community Services VC includes the following services:

- Family Services;
- Child Care and Youth Programs;
- Elder Care;
- Health Services;
- Cultural Services;
- Recreational Services; and
- Communication Services.

14.3.3.1 Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → In-migration of non-local workers and net in-migration of community members → Change in use of and needs for community services → Effect on availability of community services

During the construction phase, it is anticipated that there will be an influx of non-local workers and returning members of the Webequie First Nation, along with increased retention of community members, which could create higher demand for community services.

In particular, healthcare services may see an increase in demand due to injuries from construction accidents and adverse social behaviours. The introduction of the Project workforce to the community may interfere with community use of healthcare services. Healthcare services are limited in availability in the community and more people requiring these services may result in increased competition for access. Competition for healthcare services also places more financial, emotional, and other burden on families, especially vulnerable groups such as Elders (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b; 2022c).

The limited availability of childcare space is also a challenge in Webequie First Nation. The community has a preschool, the Aboriginal Head Start Program, which is geared to children aged four and younger. However, there is no daycare program (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b). The lack of childcare options particularly affects women, who are often responsible for caring for children in the home. This is reflective of how Indigenous women face barriers to education and training, including pressures to fulfill the role of caregiver in their homes, that can be linked back to the impact of colonization and introduction of patriarchal attitudes on Indigenous women in society (CRIAW, 2014; Bond and Quinlan, 2018). A knowledge holder in Webequie shared that if childcare could be dealt with in the community, more women would seek education and training opportunities (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b), and it is anticipated this would be the case for WSR-related opportunities. Similarly, this is the case also with Elder care, where no Elder care facility exists in Webequie First Nation, and with this lack of options, Elders often must leave the community to obtain needed care, if the home care is no longer an option. Knowledge holders further expressed concern for women's ability and willingness to seek services in the community due to social stigmas and feeling judged. The participant shared that this mindset is a result of intergenerational trauma from residential schools, as these institutions taught children to feel ashamed, and further stressed the importance of educating the community and spreading awareness that it is healthy and acceptable to ask for help and seek out services (AtkinsRéalais, 2023).

A potential increase in the population of Webequie First Nation and presence of a temporary population nearby the community could affect community service needs, such as healthcare, which may be experienced differently by vulnerable populations in the community. Changes in the demand for community services is primarily associated with the construction phase (approximately 4 to 6 years)



where the presence of a non-local workforce may place additional demand on local services. Competition for healthcare services in the community may create a barrier for timely healthcare and cause individuals to refrain from seeking care for what they may consider to be minor health needs. The lack of dedicated services and care for Webequie Elders make them a particularly vulnerable population relative to service demand (AtkinsRéal, 2023; 2022a) as they already face challenges in meeting their overall healthcare needs. Greater competition for health care services may also place more financial, emotional, and other burdens on younger families, primarily women and girls, who care for their elderly parents.

Employees of temporary construction camps are often transient, young males. In-migration of young males employed by the WSR Project can lead to regular interactions between the non-local workforce and local population, which can have major effects on sexual health in the community and may subsequently increase the demand on health care services in Webequie First Nation (Goldenberg, 2008; Shandro et al., 2011). Women and girls between the ages of 15 to 44 residing in Webequie First Nation make up approximately 25% of the local population and are vulnerable to this change in demographics (Statistics Canada, 2022a; Gibson et al., 2017). Women and girls in the community with low income, low education, and those living with addictions are particularly at risk and can cause an increased demand for services including police, sexual health, and gender-based violence services (e.g., shelters).

Existing community services have been operating at full capacity and are unable to provide adequate services for the construction labour force. Without addressing the limitations of these services, increased demand from the Project will negatively impact the accessibility of these community services in the existing population. The Project presents an opportunity to invest in services that could provide services for temporary workers and community members during the construction phase. The proposed construction camps are expected to accommodate the Project's additional demand on community services by offering on-site amenities for the workforce.

However, the community, especially Elders, are hopeful that the WSR will provide benefits with regard to access to improved medical care and improved affordability to utilize these services. As the current situation requires extensive or long-term care to be provided only through a city such as Thunder Bay. Additionally, the improved access will provide social interactions and engagement, which will provide youth and Elders with mental stimulation and emotional well-being (Stantec, 2024). The community has also raised concerns regarding the misuse and negative influences that WSR may bring, such as increased drug trafficking and increased unsafe situations for youth and children.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → In-migration of non-local workers and net in-migration of community members → Change in use of and needs for community services → Effect on availability of community services

Most of the limitations of community services that exist during the construction phase are expected to continue during the operations phase. However, compared to the construction phase, the operations phase will require substantially fewer workers, with a direct workforce comprised of 25 FTE. While there are no plans to provide services for non-local workers on the Project during the operations phase, the presence of non-local workers within the community is anticipated to be intermittent in nature rather than continuous. As the Project will consider providing underrepresented groups (e.g., youth and women) within the community with employment opportunities during the operations phase, it is anticipated that the reliance and demand for community services from non-local Project workers will be minimal and occasional in nature.



During operation, the Project is expected to provide employment opportunities to a limited a degree with 25 FTE positions available. It is not anticipated that there will be an increased demand for community services due to the limited job availability via the Project.

Conclusion

Overall, there is a **low potential** that a Project-related increase in population within the Webequie First Nation community could result in an increased demand/reduced accessibility of community services. This effect is carried forward to **Section 14.4** for further assessment.

14.3.3.2 Local Study Area: Other Communities

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → In-migration of non-local workers and net in-migration of community members → Change in use of and needs for community services → Effect on availability of community services

The Project estimates that the majority of the labour requirements will be met from labour residents outside of Webequie First Nation; however, it is anticipated that there will be no commuting from other LSA communities due to their relative distance from the Project location.

Considering the current restrictions and limitations of community services available in the Webequie First Nation, there is a potential for a spillover in the demand for the community services into other LSA communities; however, the planned construction camps are anticipated to address the incremental Project demand on community services by providing in-camp services for the labour pool. As such, there is no anticipated Project effect on the availability of community services in the other LSA communities.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → In-migration of non-local workers and net in-migration of community members → Change in use of and needs for community services → Effect on availability of community services

There is no anticipated Project effect on the availability of community services in other communities within the LSA during the operations phase. While it is anticipated that the majority of the estimated labour force (n=25) will be from other LSA communities, there is not expected to be a net in-migration of labour to these communities.

Conclusion

Overall, the Project is **not anticipated** to create an increased demand or reduced accessibility of community services in other LSA communities. This effect is not carried forward for further assessment.

14.3.3.3 Regional Study Area

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → In-migration of non-local workers and net in-migration of community members → Change in use of and needs for community services → Effect on availability of community services

Community services in the RSA may experience an increase in demand for use during Project construction. Healthcare institutions in larger urban centres within the RSA may be accessed for the treatment of illness or workplace injuries requiring a higher level of medical care than is available at on-site or in the LSA communities.



Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → In-migration of non-local workers and net in-migration of community members → Change in use of and needs for community services → Effect on availability of community services

During the operations phase, it is not anticipated there will be a change in availability of Community Services in the RSA communities as a result of the Project.

Conclusion

Overall, there is a **no Project effect** for an increased demand/reduced accessibility of community services in the RSA. This effect is not carried forward to **Section 14.4** for further assessment.

14.3.4 Change to Education, Training, and Traditional Learning

This section describes the potential effects of the Project on Education, Training, and Traditional Learning VC in consideration of the following indicators:

- Improved education and training attainment:
 - Highest certificate, diploma, or degree;
 - Field of study;
 - Occupations.
- Improved training opportunities;
- Increased demand for community education and training services;
- Change in supply and capacity of community education and training services; and
- Greater opportunity for learning of traditional knowledge, as equal of importance to western education and training. Traditional knowledge is sought by community members, whether it be through programs or at a grassroots level.

14.3.4.1 Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased interest in education, training and skills development opportunities → Increased education and training attainment

The Project will create skilled employment opportunities to support the construction phase. As it is anticipated that these future jobs will create employment opportunities for Webequie First Nation, there is the potential to create/increase education and training opportunities for Webequie First Nation community members' so they are prepared with the skillset to satisfy the employment criteria for these positions.

Community members expressed concerns that Webequie youth are not currently positioned to benefit from the Project's employment opportunities because of barriers such as low educational attainment and lack of experience in related employment (AtkinsRéalis, 2022b; 2022c). This may indicate that currently the skills present in the community amongst young people are not well aligned with the Project's requirements, which include occupational categories such as trades, equipment operators, health, and natural and applied sciences in addition to business administration. Respondents to the Socio-Economic Survey, between the ages of 19 and 30, who completed post-secondary education or training, primarily studied topics in the arts (e.g., education). Approximately 20 members within the community have pursued education within fields that may align with Project construction needs – architecture, engineering,



and related trades. The numbers of qualified individuals within the community are not sufficient to meet the anticipated employment demands of the Project during construction. To address the demand, the Project would need to create in-community education/training opportunities and/or fill the positions with individuals from other communities in the LSA and RSA.

During the construction phase, there will be an increase in educational and training skills in Webequie First Nation community members. The geographic extents of the effects will be in the community. The timeframe and duration for construction is estimated to be approximately five to six years. The level of magnitude of these effects on the communities are estimated to be low to medium. The frequency of effects will be on a frequent basis. The likelihood and predictive confidence of these effects are deemed to be probable.

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased interest in education and training attainment → Increased demand for education and training → Decreased availability of education and training programming and facility space

Both prior to and during the construction phase, it is anticipated that the Project will result in an increased interest in and demand for education and training programs from Webequie First Nation community members who are interested in becoming employment-ready for jobs related to the Project. However, in general, Webequie First Nation community members, especially youth, suffer from a lack of in-community opportunities and partnerships that promote the requisite education and skills development, limitations mainly due to lack of required facilities and infrastructure in the community.

Moreover, there are concerns from the community that without proper planning, community members will not be able to take advantage of employment opportunities related to the Project due to the current levels of educational attainment, training and skills within the local workforce, as well as limited availability of educational infrastructure (training programs and facilities). Webequie First Nation community members hope that the Project will enhance Webequie First Nation's capacity to benefit by increasing education and training opportunities and emphasizing the on-reserve training provisions. Specifically, members have expressed a desire to train young people in the trades and heavy machinery (AtkinsRéalis, 2022a; 2022b as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased education and training attainment related to Project opportunities → Decreased interest and capacity for traditional learning programming

During the construction phase, there could be a decrease in capacity and interest in traditional learning activities in the Webequie First Nation due to the competing interests in other employment, and education and training, opportunities. The increased demand for educational and training programming could result in decreased interest in learning traditional land-based skills and reduced capacity for Webequie First Nation to offer traditional learning programming. The increased focus on Project-related skills could also require individuals to be away from the Webequie First Nation more often to attend courses only offered off-reserve. Learning of traditional skills is beneficial to community members in several ways. In particular, for youth, there is the understanding that spending time on the land is an important part of health and wellness, as well as teaching life skills traditionally passed down by Elders. The assessment of potential effects on cultural continuity is described in Section 19.



Construction Activities → Road use → Increased access to land → Increased access to land-based traditional learning

Traditional learning is a priority for Webequie First Nation community members to pass on traditional knowledge to the next generations, which is part of maintaining and augmenting its Indigenous Knowledge. Traditional learning reflects the traditional ways Webequie First Nation community members have lived on their lands since time immemorial and embodies the practice of good relationships with the land following Anishnaabe laws and *Kii'manitu'meano-goonan*, Creator-given responsibilities.

During construction phase, access to areas that were previously restricted or inaccessible is expected to increase within the Project Footprint mainly with limited access in immediately surrounding area for temporary and permanent supporting infrastructure (refer to Section 4.3.3). It is not anticipated that increased access will be extended beyond the Project Footprint as vegetation clearing and other Project related works is anticipated to be within this zone (Section 11.3).

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increased interest in education, training and skills development opportunities → Increased education and training attainment

During the operations phase, there is the potential for the Project to create or improve education and training attainment opportunities for Webequie First Nation community members. Many employment opportunities related to the Project require education, training and/or experience, and the Project has the potential to be a source of employment growth. Further, one of the goals of the Project is to hire the local workforce and provide community members with the education and training required for specific jobs such as foremen, safety/environmental monitors, camp staff, service staff, clerk/administrators, etc. The challenge will be to align the skills attainment of Webequie First Nation community members with the required education and training for the operations phase jobs. Certain subpopulations of Webequie First Nation face additional barriers to taking advantage of such opportunities, including youth and women. These barriers are described in **Sections 14.2.2.3 and 14.2.2.4**.

Webequie First Nation community members who worked on the Project during the construction phase would have received required education and training, which could be beneficial to the operations phase employment opportunities. For example, members who were employed in health-related positions during the construction phase could have the qualifications to fill health-related positions in the operations phase. However, there will be some jobs that are new to the Project during the operations phase. This may require members to seek training and education for these roles.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increased interest in education and training attainment → Increased demand for education and training → Decreased availability of education and training programming and facility space

There is the potential for increased demand for education and training programming and facility space in Webequie First Nation to address operations phase direct and indirect employment opportunities arising from the Project. Qualified individuals from the Webequie First Nation, other LSA communities and the RSA could benefit from direct employment during the operations phase. It is estimated that there will be qualified 25 FTE required. Indirect employment opportunities may be in the sectors such as in healthcare, hospitality, transportation or mining. To meet the potential demand, more training and educational programs could be needed, thus reducing the availability of programming and facility space.



Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increased education and training attainment related to Project opportunities → Decreased interest and capacity for traditional learning programming

Traditional learning is a priority for Webequie First Nation community members, in particular for cultural continuity as well as health and wellness. The continuity of the traditions and culture is an essential value for Webequie First Nation.

During operation phase there may be a small increase in demand for Project-related educational and training programs resulting in decreased interest in learning traditional land-based skills and reduced capacity for Webequie First Nation to offer traditional learning programming. The continuous involvement in Project and attainment of skills could reduce time spent in Webequie First Nation. As a result of the Project, there may be a decrease in interest in traditional learning programming during the operations phase, due to the focus on opportunities related to the Project by some Webequie First Nation community members.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Road use → Increased access to land → Increased access to land-based traditional learning

Once construction is completed and the road is ready for vehicle traffic use, Webequie First Nation will have increased year-round access into parts of its traditional territory. The WSR extends into the western portion of Webequie First Nation traditional territory and this increased year-round access enables additional opportunities for traditional learning and experiences on the land through activities hunting, fishing, trapping, plant gathering or identification, ceremonies and use of traditional language. Increased opportunities for traditional land-based learning may also have benefits for younger generations to improve skills required for jobs in industry and support the transmission of cultural knowledge and cultural continuity.

Conclusion

As a result of the Project, with respect to Education Training and Traditional Learning Programming, and Facility Space in Webequie First Nation there is a **moderate to high potential** for:

- An increased attainment of education and training among the Webequie First Nation population to meet the employment needs of the Project, as well as adjacent employment sectors;
- An increased demand for relevant education and training and reduced capacity in these programs, as well as facility space;
- Lower interest in traditional skills training, resulting in reduced availability of traditional programs in favour of education and training relevant to the Project or other adjacent sectors; and
- An enhanced participation in land-based traditional learning due to improved land accessibility.

This effect is carried forward to **Section 14.4** for further assessment.



14.3.4.2 Local Study Area: Other Communities

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased interest in education, training and skills development opportunities → Increased education and training attainment

During construction, the Project may have positive effects on education and training attainment, through opportunities for new employment, training, and business contracting opportunities from use of goods and services, including:

- Opportunities for capacity building and business training;
- Opportunities for youth-employment and training; and
- Possible higher overall educational levels and capacity.

With increased education and training attainment in the other LSA communities, there may be an increase in skilled workers.

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased interest in education and training attainment → Increased demand for education and training → Decreased availability of education and training programming and facility space

There may be an increase in demand for education and training for occupations required for Project construction, such as skilled trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations. Indirect skilled employment could also arise in other sectors such as health, business, finance and administration. This demand may not be met by existing facilities or programs within the communities or could result in overbooked programs.

As the other LSA communities are remote fly-in communities, it is assumed most of the prospective employees from these communities would need to obtain the necessary training and qualifications outside of the LSA in the absence of training programs or facilities within their own communities.

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased education and training attainment related to Project opportunities → Decreased interest and capacity for traditional learning programming

The other LSA communities all have some degree of traditional learning / outdoor education programming available to youth. These programs are seen as important for community cultural continuity and health and well-being. There could be a reduction in the interest and use of traditional learning activities during the construction phase due to the increased focus of community members and community programming on Project-related training and education and job opportunities.

Construction Activities → Road use → Increased access to land → Increased access to land-based traditional learning

Access resulting from the WSR is expected to remain confined within the Project Footprint and is not anticipated to extend into the LSA during construction stage. Consequently, no effects on LSA communities are expected as a result of increased land access.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increased interest in education, training and skills development opportunities → Increased education and training attainment



During operations, individuals from the other LSA communities may have the opportunity to obtain qualifications required for Project-related positions. However, based on the availability of labour within the other LSA communities, it is probable that a portion of the labour requirements will be met from labour coming from the LSA.

The Project is anticipated to have positive effects through opportunities for new employment, training, and business contracting opportunities during operations, including:

- Opportunities for capacity building and business training;
- Opportunities for youth-employment and training; and
- Possible higher overall educational levels and capacity.

These opportunities would result in an increase of education level and a skilled workforce in the other LSA communities.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increased interest in education and training attainment → Increased demand for education and training → Decreased availability of education and training programming and facility space

During the operations phase, the Project will require approximately 25 FTE positions which could be filled within the LSA. The requirements for these positions will be slightly different to the construction phase; however, will still require standard credentials for employment. As such, there will likely be a low demand during operations for educational and training facilities in the LSA. Education and training requirements will most likely require travel to educational institutions and training facilities in the RSA.

During operation, there is a low potential for educational institutions and training facilities in the other LSA communities to experience a demand for programs beyond current capacity or new curricula.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increased education and training attainment related to Project opportunities → Decreased interest and capacity for traditional learning programming

During operations phase it is assumed that the work for the Project will be available as per standard work hours, and thus there will be a work-life balance for operations phase workers. As such there is an estimated low to no impact on time spent on traditional activities during operations phase.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Road use → Increased access to land → Increased access to land-based traditional learning

Increased land access during operation stage will be limited to the Right-of-Way of the WSR. As such there are negligible potential for anticipated effects to occur with regard to increased land access within LSA communities during operation stage.

Conclusion

As a result of the Project, with respect to Education Training and Traditional Learning Programming, and Facility Space in other LSA communities there is a **low to moderate potential** for:

- An increased attainment of education and training among the population in the other LSA to meet the employment needs of the Project, as well as adjacent employment sectors;
- An increased demand for relevant education and training and reduced capacity in these programs, as well as facility space in the other LSA communities; and



- Lower interest in traditional skills training among the population in the other LSA communities, resulting in reduced availability of traditional programs in favour of education and training relevant to the Project or other adjacent sectors.

With respect to increased land access for traditional learning, there is **no anticipated effect** to other LSA communities.

This effect is carried forward to **Section 14.4** for further assessment.

14.3.4.3 Regional Study Area

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased interest in education, training and skills development opportunities → Increased education and training attainment

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increased interest in education, training and skills development opportunities → Increased education and training attainment

The Project will create skilled employment opportunities to support the construction phase and operations phase. These employment opportunities may create/increase education and training opportunities for individuals in the RSA, so they are prepared with the skillset to satisfy the employment criteria for these positions.

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased interest in education and training attainment → Increased demand for education and training → Decreased availability of education and training programming and facility space

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increased interest in education and training attainment → Increased demand for education and training → Decreased availability of education and training programming and facility space

In anticipation of Project, education and training programs as well as training facilities in the RSA may experience increased student enrollment and a decreased infrastructure capacity. There is a potential for increased enrollment at these educational institutions from individuals in the LSA communities who are seeking additional training to qualify for positions directly or in-directly related to the Project construction and operation. The potential influx of students from the LSA could create capacity constraints at educational institutions especially in Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout, the closest RSA communities to the Project.

During the operations phase, there will likely be limited, but specialized FTE positions available for LSA and RSA communities. It is estimated that there will be LSA community members who will pursue the training and education in the RSA for Project-related or sector-adjacent employment.

Due to the employment opportunities available in the Project and potentially in sectors adjacent to the Project (hospitality, healthcare, recreation, mining, transportation etc.), there may be a higher demand for the educational and training programming facility in the RSA region by LSA community members.

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased education and training attainment related to Project opportunities → Decreased interest and capacity for traditional learning programming



Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increased education and training attainment related to Project opportunities → Decreased interest and capacity for traditional learning programming

The Project is not anticipated to have a potential effect on the interest and capacity for traditional learning programs in the RSA due to general population demographics and the distance of the Project from communities in the RSA.

Construction Activities → Road use → Increased access to land → Increased access to land-based traditional learning

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Road use → Increased access to land → Increased access to land-based traditional learning

Access associated with the WSR is expected to remain limited to the Project Footprint during the construction phase and within the Right-of-Way during operation phase and is not projected to extend into RSA. Accordingly, no effects on RSA communities are anticipated as a result of increased land accessibility.

Conclusion

As a result of the Project, with respect to Education Training and Traditional Learning Programming, and Facility Space in the RSA there is predicted to be:

- A **negligible potential** for increased attainment of education and training among the RSA population to meet the employment needs of the Project, as well as adjacent employment sectors;
- A **low to moderate potential** for increased demand of relevant education and training and reduced capacity in these programs, as well as facility space as a result of student demand in the LSA and RSA;
- **No effect** on in traditional skills training among the RSA; and
- **No effect** on traditional learning due to increased land access among the RSA communities.

This effect is carried forward to **Section 14.4** for further assessment.

14.3.5 Change to Emergency and Protective Services

This section describes the potential effects of the Project on the Emergency and Protective Services VC in consideration of the following indicators:

- Increased demand for emergency and protective services; and
- Change in supply and capacity of emergency and protective services.



14.3.5.1 Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased demand for emergency and protective services → Decreased availability of emergency and protective services

The construction phase involves an increase in population of non-resident workers at construction camps located near Webequie First Nation, and the execution of construction activities that have health and safety risk. These are anticipated to increase demand on existing emergency and protective services.

Workplace injuries and illness experienced by construction workers while on-site could require emergency services that are not readily available in the community. Emergency services in Webequie First Nation are currently limited, and the potential demand on these services during construction could overburden the current system.

In a fire-related incident, such as one resulting from the improper use or placement of flammable materials during construction, trained responders and advanced preparation will be required, as well as the availability of proper equipment. At present, Webequie First Nation does not have the equipment, capacity or the mandate to provide increased emergency and protective services for the Project.

The introduction of non-resident workers to the community could introduce new challenges for existing protective services such as Crisis Intervention, Nishnawbe Aski Police Service, Family Resource Centre, and Peacekeepers. These in-community services take into consideration local knowledge when providing protective services and in approaching dispute resolution. The nuanced approach involves the use of non-police community members to intervene in certain situations. Knowledge holders have noted that this approach is better received by and can be more helpful to community members because there can be a lack of local community knowledge with non-Webequie police officers (AtkinsRéal, 2022a).

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increased demand for emergency and protective services → Decreased availability of emergency and protective services

During the operations phase, it is expected there will be an increase, as well as the potential severity, of vehicle-related accidents requiring emergency services. Traffic accidents may be more severe due to the potential for faster driving speeds along the all-season road. For additional information on the risk of traffic accidents, refer to Section 23 (Accidents and Malfunctions) of the EAR/IS.

While community-level data about current accident rates is not available, community members have concerns about road safety. As noted in **Section 14.2.2.7**, most respondents (70 – 85%) identified road safety as being the greatest safety concern on the Project and most respondents identifying impaired driving being the greatest road safety concern. The survey also found that 60% of Webequie First Nation community members respondents between the ages of 15 and 30 years old do not possess a driver's license and when asked whether members have access to a vehicle, 53% of respondents noted that they do not have regular access to a vehicle (AtkinsRéal, 2022b). These factors may contribute to an increased risk of traffic accidents.

Once the road is operational, members of Webequie First Nation will be able to drive to locations that they were previously unable to or had difficulty getting to. As more members utilize the road, there will be an increased risk of traffic accidents, and potential for increased need for EMS to respond to traffic accidents. The increased demand for emergency services would also result in a need for more sophisticated infrastructure to support emergency services, such as medical facilities and ambulance for traffic incidents and/or fire response.



During the operations phase, the use of emergency and protective services may increase as a result of traffic-related incidents, and thus have a potential adverse effect on the availability of emergency and protective services. Traffic regulations and road management plans also reduce the likelihood of traffic injuries and subsequently the use of emergency and protective services, which will be described further as part of mitigation measures.

Conclusion

Overall, there is a **low to moderate potential** for an increase in the demand for emergency and protective services during the construction and operations phase. This would result in a decreased availability of emergency and protective services within the Webequie First Nation. This effect is carried forward to **Section 14.4** for further assessment.

14.3.5.2 Local Study Area: Other Communities

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased demand for emergency and protective services → Decreased availability of emergency and protective services

Emergency and protective services in the other LSA communities are limited in availability. However, due to the distance of these communities from the Project and the absence of an influx of Project-related construction workers to these LSA communities, there is expected to be a negligible effect on the demand for emergency and protective services during the construction phase.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increased demand for emergency and protective services → Decreased availability of emergency and protective services

Due to the long distance of these communities from the Project, there is unlikely to be a Project-related demand for emergency and protective services during the operations phase.

Conclusion

Overall, there is predicted to be a **negligible effect** on emergency and protective services in other communities within the other LSA communities during the construction and operations phase. No increased demand or reduction in the availability of these services is anticipated. This effect is not carried forward for further assessment.

14.3.5.3 Regional Study Area

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased demand for emergency and protective services → Decreased availability of emergency and protective services

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increased demand for emergency and protective services → Decreased availability of emergency and protective services

Due to the long distance of the RSA communities from the Project, there is unlikely to be a Project-related demand for emergency and protective services during the construction or operations phases.



Conclusion

Overall, there is predicted to be a **negligible effect** on emergency and protective services within the RSA during the construction and operations phase. No increased demand or reduction in the availability of these services is anticipated. This effect is not carried forward for further assessment.

14.3.6 Change to Community Infrastructure

This section describes the potential effects of the Project on the Community Infrastructure VC in consideration of the following indicators:

- Increased demand for community services and/or infrastructure
- Change in supply and capacity of community services and/or infrastructure.

14.3.6.1 Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increase in population → Increased demand for community infrastructure services (e.g., community buildings, water treatment, wastewater treatment, solid waste, electricity) → Decrease in availability of community infrastructures services

Construction Activities → Emissions, Discharges and Wastes → Increased demand for infrastructure services for the Project → Decrease in availability of community infrastructures services

Webequie First Nation faces ongoing challenges related to Community Infrastructure. The CCP (Webequie First Nation, 2023) identifies and addresses the need for upgrades to community infrastructure capacity in Webequie First Nation, and **Table 14-40** provides a description of the current performance of community infrastructure systems. Upgrades to community infrastructure was noted as the biggest priority for the CCP. Without upgrades to the community infrastructure or the addition of new infrastructure services, the Project would place additional demand on community services, potentially beyond the existing capacity. Community infrastructure that would likely be affected by the Project include:

- Community buildings;
- Electrical power systems;
- Drinking water systems;
- Wastewater treatment systems;
- Solid waste management systems; and
- Telecommunications services.

In the absence of mitigation and enhancement measures to the existing infrastructure, there is a low to moderate potential for an increased demand for community services and reduced availability of community infrastructure as a result of Project construction.

In addition, from the WSR socio-economic survey, it was indicated from Webequie First Nation respondents living off-reserve at the time, that 80% would want to live in the community year-round because of either the WSR and/or future mining development in the area (AtkinsRéalès, 2022b). Project-related employment and expenditures have the potential to bring a small influx of Webequie First Nation community members currently living off-reserve back to the community in order to seek



employment with the Project. A slowing of the rate of out-migration of on-reserve Webequie First Nation community members combined with a small influx of off-reserve members back to the community could increase the demand for community infrastructure. The increased demand could place added pressure on the limited capacity of the infrastructure currently in place. However, an increase in population of the on-reserve Webequie First Nation from employment is likely to be small, therefore, a relatively small change in demand for Community Infrastructure is anticipated.

Operation, Maintenance and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increase in population → Increased demand for community infrastructure services (e.g., community buildings, water treatment, wastewater treatment, solid waste, electricity) → Decrease in availability of community infrastructures services

Operation, Maintenance and repair of road → Emissions, Discharges and Wastes → Increased demand for infrastructure services for the Project → Decrease in availability of community infrastructures services

During the operations phase of the Project, there will be a workforce related to the maintenance and repair of the all-season road and related infrastructure. It is assumed that non-local workers employed for the Project will stay in temporary accommodations and could require the use of community infrastructure services while staying in Webequie First Nation, resulting in a small increase in demand for community infrastructure. Since this population increase is likely to be small, the existing community infrastructure is assumed to be able to accommodate the increased demand.

In addition, as discussed in **Section 14.3.1**, the Project may result in a small net in-migration of Webequie First Nation community members that wish to reside in the community to take up opportunities associated with the Project. Since this population increase is likely to be small, the existing community infrastructure is assumed to be able to accommodate the increased demand.

Conclusion

Webequie First Nation already faces ongoing challenges related to Community Infrastructure. Overall, within the community, there is anticipated to be a **low to moderate potential** for an increased demand for infrastructure services as a result of Project construction and operation. This would result in a decreased availability of community infrastructure services in the absence of mitigation and enhancement measures. This effect is carried forward to **Section 14.4** for further assessment.

14.3.6.2 Local Study Area: Other Communities

Construction → Employment and expenditures → Increase in population → Increased demand for community infrastructure services (e.g., community buildings, water treatment, wastewater treatment, solid waste, electricity) → Decrease in availability of community infrastructures services

Construction → Emissions, Discharges and Wastes → Increased demand for infrastructure services for the Project → Decrease in availability of community infrastructures services

As noted in **Section 14.3.1.2**, during the construction phase, changes in population in the other LSA communities are expected to be negligible. It is assumed that it will not be feasible to commute from the other LSA communities, where workers from these communities will have to travel to the Project site and stay at the temporary construction camps. Therefore, the Project is not anticipated to cause a change in demand for Community Infrastructure in the other LSA communities.



There are no plans for the Project to use any of the Community Infrastructure services from other LSA communities (e.g., landfill disposal of wastes), therefore, there are no expected effects on Community Infrastructure in the other LSA communities during the construction phase.

Operation → Employment and expenditures → Increase in population → Increased demand for community infrastructure services (e.g., community buildings, water treatment, wastewater treatment, solid waste, electricity) → Decrease in availability of community infrastructures services

Operation → Emissions, Discharges and Wastes → Increased demand for infrastructure services for the Project → Decrease in availability of community infrastructures services

During the operations phase of the Project, changes in population in the other LSA communities are expected to be negligible. It is assumed that it will not be feasible to commute from the other LSA communities, where workers from these communities will have to travel to the Webequie First Nation and stay at temporary accommodations. Therefore, the Project is not anticipated to cause a change in demand for Community Infrastructure in the other LSA communities.

The Project does not intend to utilize Community Infrastructure services from other LSA communities (e.g., landfill waste disposal); therefore, no effects on those communities are anticipated during the operations phase.

Conclusion

Overall, there is predicted to be a **negligible effect** on community services in other communities within the LSA during the construction and operations phase. No increased demand or reduction in the availability of these services is anticipated. This effect is not carried forward for further assessment.

14.3.6.3 Regional Study Area

Construction → Employment and expenditures → Increase in population → Increased demand for community infrastructure services (e.g., community buildings, water treatment, wastewater treatment, solid waste, electricity) → Decrease in availability of community infrastructures services

Construction → Emissions, Discharges and Wastes → Increased demand for infrastructure services for the Project → Decrease in availability of community infrastructures services

Operation → Employment and expenditures → Increase in population → Increased demand for community infrastructure services (e.g., community buildings, water treatment, wastewater treatment, solid waste, electricity) → Decrease in availability of community infrastructures services

Operation → Emissions, Discharges and Wastes → Increased demand for infrastructure services for the Project → Decrease in availability of community infrastructures services

During the construction and operations phases of the Project, changes in population in the RSA communities are expected to be negligible. It is assumed that it will not be feasible to commute from the RSA communities, where workers from these communities will have to travel to the Webequie First Nation and stay at temporary accommodations. Therefore, the Project is not anticipated to cause a change in demand for community infrastructure in the RSA.

There are no plans to use any community infrastructure services from RSA communities, therefore, there are no expected effects on the RSA as a result of the Project.



Conclusion

Overall, there is predicted to be **no effect** on community services in the RSA during the construction and operations phase. No increased demand or reduction in the availability of these services is anticipated. This effect is not carried forward for further assessment.

14.3.7 Change to Community Well-Being and Safety

This section describes the potential effects of the Project on the Community Well-Being and Safety VC in consideration of the following indicators:

- Change in social cohesion and culture:
 - Quantity of social connections; and
 - Quality of social connections.
- Change in participation in social and/or cultural events:
 - Participation rate (by event);
 - Number of new (first-time) attendees to regularly held (e.g., annual) events; and
 - Total number of social and/or cultural events held.
- Change in safety:
 - Perceptions of safety;
 - Traffic safety;
 - Domestic violence rate;
 - Sexual assault rate; and
 - Physical assault rate.
- Change in nuisance effects:
 - Air quality (e.g., dust);
 - Noise levels; and
 - Visual effects.

14.3.7.1 Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → In-migration of temporary workers → Increased non-local population → Reduced community cohesion

During the construction phase, there could be an adverse effect on the community as a result of reduced community cohesion from the influx of non-local workers.

Increased non-local population affecting community cohesion

A socially cohesive community provides citizens with a shared feeling of belonging and inclusion, and where citizens participate actively in public affairs, tolerate existing differences, and enjoy relative equality in access to public goods and services and distribution of income and wealth (FAO, n.d.). The construction phase could result in an in-migration of temporary workers that are not members of Webequie First Nation. There is a potential for interaction with the temporary construction workforce to result in disruption in community cohesion. When it pertains to the environment, land use and community development, non-locals associated with the Project, who may originate from southern, urban centres, often have different values than rural communities.



Understanding Webequie First Nation culture and community cohesion helps to understand who may be more vulnerable to potential project-related changes to Webequie First Nation's culture and community cohesion, such as youth, women and girls, Elders and land users. Community cohesion includes understanding the types of social and cultural events in the Webequie First Nation and level of participation by community members, and social connections within the community (Section 19 of the EAR/IS).

It is assumed that there will be interactions between the construction workforce and the Webequie First Nation and depending on the nature and extent of the interactions, this may lead to reduced community cohesion, a reduced sense of community and loss of a family feel of the community. The potential difference in attitudes and values between Webequie First Nation and the non-local workforce, e.g., differences in ways of living (Smith and Krannich, 2000) between locals and non-locals could result in tension and social conflict. Such tension and social conflict have the potential to disrupt the cohesion and social stability of Webequie First Nation, which may affect youth/younger generation that are already affected by loss of traditional values and culture (Stein and Stein, 2015; AtkinsRéalais, 2022b).

The WSR Gender-Based Analysis Report (InterGroup, 2024) discusses that the presence of a transient workforce in the Webequie First Nation can affect its social capital, by disrupting the maintenance of healthy social connections that foster the flow of information, cooperation, trust, productivity, and reciprocity (Ratelle and Packette, 2019 as cited in InterGroup, 2024). Small communities like Webequie First Nation typically possess strong social capital, as demonstrated by acts such as neighbours sharing their harvest (e.g., meat, fish) with those who are unable to harvest for themselves (e.g., Elders) or are facing food insecurity, a practice commonly observed among Webequie First Nation community members (see Section 17 of the EAR/IS). Sharing amongst community members can increase a community's resilience (Ratelle and Packette, 2019 as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

One of the project expectations some focus group participants had, including land users and women is that the Project would improve social connection and community involvement (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b, as cited by InterGroup, 2024).

Loss of cultural continuity and cultural engagement

In connection with cultural continuity, 75.2% of respondents indicated they are concerned about the loss of traditional culture Webequie First Nation (AtkinsRéalais, 2022c, as cited in InterGroup, 2024). Approximately 92% of those concerned for loss of their traditional culture, indicated they were concerned for traditional land use loss while 90.2% mentioned they were concerned for loss of traditional values. Community members have expressed concerns for loss of traditions specifically amongst youth, who experience social isolation and lack of interest in Webequie First Nation including substantial expenses associated with getting out on the land, and the need for more participation of Elders in youth events (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b; 2022c)" (InterGroup, 2024).

Seniors/Elders may be more susceptible to social changes such as changes to or loss of family and social groups, as they are often vulnerable to loneliness and isolation, which can be associated to negative health outcomes. Elders are important in the transfer of traditional knowledge, values, and culture to younger generations (Viscogliosi et al., 2020), and Webequie First Nation community members have expressed interest in improving Elder participation in social events, particularly with youth, and in providing more community services (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b; 2022c, as cited in InterGroup, 2024). Engagement in meaningful social activities is an important factor in minimizing the risk of loneliness and isolation for Elders (Tonkin et al., 2018).



In addition, a potential decline in the cultural engagement of youth due to increased employment, long shifts (i.e., rotations), interactions with non-locals, and non-Indigenous employees could place youth more at risk of negative behaviours, such as substance use (InterGroup, 2024).

Disproportionate adverse effects on vulnerable populations, including women, girls, and youth

Potential changes to traditional culture and connections to the land due to industrial projects can affect substance abuse, as well as familial and social structures within Webequie First Nation (Deonandan et al., 2016), these changes may disproportionately impact women and girls, increasing their vulnerability to gender-based and domestic violence (Gibson et al., 2017)” (InterGroup, 2024). Gender-based violence is violence against an individual because of their gender, gender expression, gender identity, or perceived gender (Government of Canada, 2023c). Domestic or family violence is any form of abuse, mistreatment, or neglect that a child or adult experiences from a family member, or from someone with whom they have an intimate relationship (Government of Canada, 2017).

Community cohesion can serve as a protective factor against the most overt forms of abuse targeting women and girls (Poix et al., 2022) (InterGroup, 2024). Indigenous women and girls will also be disproportionately affected by changes to community cohesion; however, such impact cannot be assessed without the recognition of colonial impacts which have caused long-lasting inequalities in Indigenous women and girls social position and treatment (Mckinley et al., 2021). Violence-related deaths among Indigenous women are five times higher than the national average for Canadian women (Kuokkanen, 2011 cited in Bond and Quinlan 2018). Indigenous women are also more likely to experience spousal abuse (Louis, 2016 cited in Bond and Quinlan 2018), including various forms of financial abuse such as being denied knowledge of or access to family income (Brennan, 2011 cited in Bond and Quinlan 2018). Compared to non-Indigenous mothers, Indigenous mothers have a higher frequency of self-reported abuse, which is most commonly perpetrated by a partner, husband, or boyfriend (Daoud et al., 2012). The study also showed high proportions of abuse among lone mothers (35%).

The severity of these issues is often exacerbated by the presence of industrial projects near Indigenous communities (Bond and Quinlan 2018). The risk of sexual violence, substance abuse and sexually transmitted infections due to rape and sex trafficking is particularly high for Indigenous women and girls in proximity to industrial camps (Firelight Group, 2017). Indigenous women enter the sex trade because of experiences with violence, sexual abuse and addiction through intergenerational trauma or through mobile workers (Arrigada, 2016 cited in Bond and Quinlan 2018), such as those at industrial camps set up for resource development projects near remote Indigenous communities. A ‘rigger culture’ characterized by hyper-masculine, sexist, homophobic and apathetic attitudes and behaviours that dehumanizes Indigenous women (Bond and Quinlan, 2018) often develops and pervades these camps (Gibson et al., 2017). A mobile, mostly male workforce is also not normally invested in, nor does it have a relationship with the local Indigenous communities, resulting in behaviours that individuals would not exhibit in their home communities (Gibson et al., 2017).

In addition to rates of violence against Indigenous women and girls that is a concern with industrial camps and development projects, there are also problems with employment opportunities and economic benefits. Indigenous women are less likely to benefit from employment opportunities associated with resource development projects (Kuokkanen, 2018). In general, lack of education and training mean that many Indigenous employees get relegated to entry level positions in the extractive industries, and this is particularly true for women (Bond and Quinlan, 2018). It is also more difficult for Indigenous women to maintain and advance in their careers due to high levels of harassment, violence and bullying at work sites (MiHR N.D. cited in Bond and Quinlan 2018 p.38). Given this, the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) makes a direct call to justice in assessment and regulatory processes (MMIWG, 2019).



A report on the victimization of First Nations People, Métis and Inuit in Canada (Perrault, 2022), highlights how colonization and systemic racism impacts Indigenous Peoples and their social and economic circumstances. Four in 10 Indigenous Peoples that were 15 years of age or older experienced sexual or physical violence by an adult during their childhood. Moreover, 11% of Indigenous Peoples that were 15-years of age or older have been under the legal responsibility of the government, which is 10 times higher than non-Indigenous people, and one-third of these Indigenous Peoples experienced violence under the responsibility of the government.

Webequie First Nation currently lacks the capacity to provide services for gender-based violence and this could force victims to travel outside the community to seek help. Travelling outside the community for an extended period coupled with the trauma experienced from gender-based violence could be retraumatizing for women and girls and this could lead to an increase in mental health and addictions challenges (InterGroup, 2024).

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Construction jobs → In-migration of temporary workers → Increased non-local population → Increased risk of negative interactions → Reduced feeling of personal safety

In order to recognize the types of harms the Webequie First Nation experiences, identify influences of crime and violences and identify victimized groups, it is important to understand the current community safety conditions in the community. Based on the outcome of the Webequie First Nation Socio-Economic Survey (AtkinsRéal, 2022b, as cited in InterGroup, 2024) the largest safety concerns in the community are high rates of substance abuse (72.4%), bullying or cyber-bullying (64.8%), high rates of domestic (family) violence (43.5%) and child negligence (40%).

Development of the WSR Project would result in presence of “man camps”/temporary construction camps, an increase in incomes and driving on the all-season road (InterGroup, 2024). These changes could affect community safety and perception of safety due to the potential for gender-based violence, family violence and transportation-related safety issues.

Increased non-local population adversely affecting feeling of personal safety

Studies have shown that construction camps can have negative impacts on host communities as well as the non-local labour force. This can be as a result of being isolated from friends and family, stressful work environments, and a lack of connection with the host community. These factors can lead to increased sexual violence, substance abuse, and STIs (Aalhus et al., 2018; Bond and Quinlan, 2018). Industrial projects and “man camps” developed in remote communities have disproportionate effects on the rate of gender-based violence on Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA people. Health care concerns may also arise in construction camps, such as chronic conditions, injuries, and illnesses, which can impact communities (Northern Health, 2015).

The presence of non-resident workers could increase the demand for protective services due to the increased numbers of people in Webequie First Nation, a possible influx of alcohol and drugs, as well as adverse social behaviours amongst construction workers, and with community members. This is a concern that has been shared by Webequie First Nation community members. An online survey conducted by AtkinsRéal in 2021 found that among the 176 participants who live on the Webequie First Nation reserve, 46% of these participants have safety concerns with the Project, such as the safety of children/youths, women, and Elders.



The demographic for construction camps is commonly non-local, young males who are disconnected from the local community. An increase in young males to the local population can result in regular interactions between non-local workers and the local population. This demographic may become involved in behaviours they would not normally be involved in at home (e.g., substance abuse, sexual violence) (Gibson et al., 2017; Eckford and Wagg, 2014), which can impact sexual health in the community and subsequently increase demand for health care services (Goldenberg, 2008; Shandro et al., 2011).

The first camp for the WSR Project will be located close to the Webequie First Nation (see Section 4.4.2.3.1 of the EAR/IS) and community members have expressed concerns for the safety of women and girls. Those who may be particularly vulnerable to gender-based violence and sexual exploitation include Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people with low income, low educational attainment, and those women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people living with addictions (Daoud et al., 2012; CRIAW, 2014) (InterGroup, 2024). Approximately 25% of the local population in Webequie First Nation consists of women and girls between the ages of 15 to 44 and is one of the most vulnerable groups in the community that would be affected by this change in population demographics.

In addition to women living on the reserve, non-local women working on the Project are also vulnerable to a high population of young males, which can place further demand for community healthcare services. This can be due to the shift in gender demographics and result in male-female interactions that leads increase demand for family services, sexual health services (i.e., increased rates of sexually transmitted infections/STIs) and maternal health services (i.e., increased rates of pregnancies) (Goldberg, 2008; Shandro et al., 2011).

Increased rates of mental health challenges, substance abuse and family violence

Community members expressed concerns that the availability of high disposable income from the Project could increase drug and alcohol use leading to increased family violence in Webequie First Nation. Employment with the WSR Project would lead to increased income which could increase alcohol and substance use, serving as a catalyst for family violence (Dalseg et al., 2018).

Indigenous men employed on development projects can face racism and discrimination from non-Indigenous coworkers that can negatively affect their mental health and lead to family violence when they return home (Gibson et al., 2017).

Furthermore, women, youth, and Elders without financial independence are at a higher risk of abuse and family violence, as they lack the resources needed to escape abusive relationships (Shandro et al., 2011).

Webequie Knowledge holders shared that community safety issues mainly relate to vandalism and lateral violence, including family violence, which can largely be linked to intergenerational trauma and related mental health and addictions challenges (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b, as cited in InterGroup, 2024). Vandalism is known to be carried out by youth, due to the boredom, isolation, and overcrowding they experience and may use vandalism and substance abuse as a way of coping with their reality (AtkinsRéalais, 2022ba as cited in InterGroup, 2024) Webequie First Nation Well-Being Survey reported 27% of households had their house vandalized in the past year (Webequie First Nation, 2014).

Lateral violence is a long-lasting effect of the colonization and oppression which Indigenous Peoples experienced, and this is a cycle of abuse that affects Indigenous Peoples by carrying out violence and abuse on other Indigenous Peoples as it was inflicted on them (NWAC, 2011). Elders, women and children are more vulnerable to lateral violence (NWAC, 2011) and Knowledge holders indicated that lateral violence is also experienced in the workplace (AtkinsRéalais, 2022ba as cited in InterGroup, 2024).



Construction activities → Increased traffic in community → Increased risk of traffic accidents

There may be an increased risk of traffic accidents during the construction phase of the Project. Traffic safety has been a common concern raised by Webequie First Nation community members about the Project (AtkinsRéalis, 2022b). Specific concerns that have been raised include the risk of impaired driving, hitchhiking, and people driving without a license, with several members noting the need for checkpoints along the road to monitor traffic safety (AtkinsRéalis, 2022a; 2022b). It is noted that many community members do not currently hold a driver's licence or have access to a vehicle (InterGroup, 2024). Webequie First Nation Socio-Economic Survey reported that Webequie member respondents between the ages of 15 to 30, 60% reported not having a driver's license and 53.3% reported not having regular access to a vehicle (AtkinsRéalis, 2022b). In addition, youth vulnerable to risks from their social isolation and boredom in the Webequie community, could create increased hazards from exploring the WSR outside of the Webequie First Nation, of which many of whom do not hold a driver's license or have regular access to a vehicle (InterGroup, 2024).

Construction activities → Increase in nuisance effects → Reduced well-being and quality of life

Air Quality

The construction phase of the Project may result in increased release of greenhouse gases (GHG), including carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, as well as contaminants from emissions such as particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}, dust), carbon monoxide, sulphur oxides, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and diesel particulate matter. These emissions can adversely affect air quality and cause nuisance effects.

Section 9 of the EAR/IS (Atmospheric Environment) presents the assessment of effects of the Project on air quality, including details on sources and levels of emissions and mitigation measures. The assessment indicates that air contaminant emissions from the construction of the Project will be localized, moderate to high in magnitude, short-term to medium-term in duration and infrequent. Greenhouse gas emissions will be low in magnitude, short-term to medium-term in duration and continuous. The other contaminants from emissions will be reversible while GHG emissions will be irreversible. Net effects of the Project on air quality and GHG emissions are predicted to be not significant.

Dust generation is a concern raised by Webequie First Nation community members that it could cause breathing issues. Dust has also been a concern raised about potential effects on wildlife and fish habitat. Dust particles will be generated along the preferred road route, through handling of materials, use of heavy equipment, erosion of stockpiles and vehicle traffic.

Community members in Webequie First Nation may experience poorer air quality during the construction phase, which could be experienced as a nuisance, causing an interference with contributors to well-being such as social and cultural activities, and result in community members experiencing perceived diminished physical and mental well-being.

Noise

The construction phase of the Project will generate noise from construction activities, such as the use of construction related equipment, generators and vehicle use. Noise levels and duration may be variable depending on the construction activity, as well as the location of active construction relative to the community or sensitive noise receptors (e.g., schools, residences, hospitals, community centres, etc.).

It is noted that residential areas are located approximately 2 km from the nearest construction camp and water crossing at Eastwood Island and the mainland. Construction related noise will be limited to work hours, approximately 12 hours daily. The nuisance effects from noise may result in lower perceived



physical and mental well-being and cause interference with social and cultural activities on the land and in Webequie First Nation.

The assessment of effects of the Project-related to noise is presented in Section 9 (Atmospheric Environment) of the EAR/IS. During the construction phase, noise levels have been determined to have adverse net effects of low to moderate magnitude, infrequent and reversible. Noise emissions will be limited and net effects are predicted to be not significant.

Visual

As mentioned in Section 18 (Visual Environment), the WSR from its western terminus to approximately 65 km eastward will not be visible from communities due to the dense forest around the Project footprint (visibility is only in the immediate vicinity of the Project footprint). However, from this point onwards where the route is in the lowlands, the WSR may potentially be visible. As the WSR is currently not planned to be illuminated, it will not be visible at night.

The three proposed water crossings have potential impacts on visual environment due to removal of trees and installation of concrete and structural elements which is anticipated to be covered after restoration activities are taken place and the vegetation cover is reestablished.

Identified net effects of the visual environment related to long-term and continuous changes to the visual landscape due to the presence of waterbody crossings and clearing of vegetation, and the net effects are considered to be low to moderate in magnitude, however direct effects of the three crossings will be limited to the Project footprint. The summary of visual impacts to the three waterbody crossings are:

- Winisk Lake Crossing: will be barely visually perceivable from north and south limits of viewshed;
- Winiskisis Channel Crossing: will be visible but not is not considered visibly dominant when viewed from both the east and west limits of the viewshed; and
- Muketei River Crossing: will be visually dominant when viewed from both the north and south limits of the viewshed.

With regard to potential cultural/recreational sensitivity receptors, there are potential receptors in the vicinity of the Winisk Lake and Winiskisis Channel Crossings but none in the viewshed of the proposed Muketei River Crossing. Only the viewsheds which are associated with the proposed three crossings will be subject to a change in the visual landscape quality.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Operations jobs → In-migration of temporary workers → Increased non-local population → Reduced community cohesion

During the operations phase, there will be employment and expenditures related to the operation, maintenance and repair of the all-season road. Job opportunities will be taken up partially by Webequie First Nation community members, while a portion of the jobs will be filled by non-local workers. Non-local workers will stay in or near the Webequie First Nation at temporary accommodations provided to support the Project. Similar to the construction phase, the change in population and demographics may alter the family feel of the community and affect community cohesion. Additionally, it is possible that once the all-season road is operational, connecting the Webequie First Nation with the Ring of Fire region, there could be increased visitors that are connected with mineral development activities that will come to the Webequie First Nation to use community services and infrastructure.



The operations phase will also have a potential for interaction with the non-local workforce, which could result in disruption in community cohesion. Generally, non-local workers involved with WSR, with origins from southern, urban areas, usually have viewpoints and perspectives differing from the local community members, when it comes to aspects such as environment, land use and community development. The interaction between non-local individuals and locals highlights differences in attitudes, values, and lifestyles (Smith and Krannich, 2000) which could result in tension and social conflict. These tensions and social conflicts can undermine Webequie First Nation's cohesion and social stability, potentially impacting youth/younger generation who are already experiencing a decline in traditional values and culture (Stein and Stein, 2015; AtkinsRéal, 2022b).

In addition, a potential decline in the cultural engagement of youth due to increased employment, long shifts (i.e., rotations), interactions with non-locals, and non-Indigenous employees could place youth more at risk of negative behaviours, such as substance use (InterGroup, 2024).

In addition to youth, Indigenous women and girls will face disproportionate effects from changes to community cohesion. However, these impacts cannot be fully understood without acknowledging the colonial history that has led to enduring inequalities in their social status and treatment (Mckinley et al., 2021). Industrial projects that alter traditional culture and land connections can impact substance abuse and disrupt familial and social structures within Webequie First Nation (Deonandan et al., 2016), these changes can disproportionately affect women and girls, heightening their vulnerability to gender-based and domestic violence (Gibson et al., 2017; InterGroup, 2024).

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Operations jobs → In-migration of temporary workers → Increased non-local population → Increased risk of negative interactions → Reduced feeling of personal safety

During the operations phase, there is a high likelihood of the non-local workforce interacting with Webequie First Nation community members when using community services (e.g. arriving at the airport or visiting the store). Similar to the construction phase, women and girls of Webequie First Nation could be at a slightly higher risk of experiencing gender-based violence through interactions with non-local workers that are predicted to stay in or near the community in temporary accommodations while working on operations, maintenance and repair. This will be limited as there is a low number of FTE jobs available during operations phase, some of which can be fulfilled by Webequie First Nation community members. Similar to the construction phase, young males in construction camps are often disconnected from the host community, have high disposable income, and may involve themselves in unsafe behaviours that they would normally not do at home (e.g. substance abuse, sexual violence) (Gibson et al., 2017; Eckford and Wagg, 2014). The community also does not have the capacity to provide services for gender-based violence (i.e. not enough readily available protective services), so victims of gender-based violence would be required to travel outside of the Webequie First Nation to seek help (InterGroup, 2024). Victims of gender-based violence can develop post-traumatic stress disorder which would negatively affect their mental health and may lead to addiction challenges.

In addition, Webequie First Nation community members are concerned that the Project could increase rates of family violence due to drug and alcohol use acquired through disposable income from working on the Project (AtkinsRéal, 2022c). Indigenous men working on development projects may experience racism and discrimination from non-Indigenous coworkers, which can harm their mental health and potentially lead to family violence upon returning home. (Gibson et al., 2017). Additionally, women, youth, and Elders who do not have financial independence are more at risk of becoming victims of abuse and family violence because they lack the resources to leave abusive relationships (Shandro et al., 2011).



Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Road use → Increased risk of traffic accidents (risk of impaired driving, increased speed limits, hitchhiking, and people driving without a license)

Traffic safety has been a common concern raised by Webequie First Nation community members about the proposed Project (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b). As noted in Section 4.2.1 (Project Description) of the EAR/IS, the proposed road usage of the WSR is a projected average annual daily traffic volume of less than 500 vehicles. Increased speed limits on the WSR will create risks of accidents and injury. During the operations phase, it is expected that traffic will comprise primarily of light to medium personal and commercial vehicles, with some heavier truck traffic carrying industrial/mining supplies and equipment. The WSR traffic does not include mineral ore or mine product transportation estimates.

Specific concerns that have been raised include the risk of impaired driving, hitchhiking, and people driving without a license, with several members noting the need for checkpoints along the road to monitor traffic safety (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a; 2022b).

Other issues raised in focus groups noted the increased dangers if no streetlights are provided along the route (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a).

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Road use → Increase in nuisance effects → Reduced well-being and quality of life

Air Quality

The air quality assessment concluded that the net effects on air quality during operations were not significant. The net effects were characterized as adverse, frequent in occurrence, of moderate to high magnitude but reversible.

The nuisance effects of greenhouse gases and air contaminant emissions (including dust) are not anticipated affect the perceptions of physical and mental well-being and interfere with the ability of community members to participate in social and cultural activities on the land and in Webequie First Nation. For the west half (Upland Area) of the route, the surface layer of the road will be a chip seal treatment, which is similar to asphalt pavement. This is anticipated to reduce the level of dust from traffic.

Noise

The noise assessment concluded that net effects from noise during the operation of the WSR are for the duration of operations (medium-term), with frequency but low in magnitude and reversible. Therefore, noise levels associated with the operations phase of the Project are not anticipated to exceed noise thresholds and are thus not anticipated to have a nuisance effect on community members of Webequie First Nation.

Visual Environment

The visual assessment concluded that the net effects on the visual landscape are insignificant. The net effects on visual environment were characterized as low to moderate in magnitude, of continuous frequency and reversible in nature. However, visual nuisance effects may occur within the Webequie First Nation. The scale and character of the changes to the existing visual environment will reach the full extent of effects during the operations phase of the Project.

The effects on well-being with respect to changes in visual landscape would most likely occur at the Winisk Lake water crossing, which provides furthest viewing distance of the WSR road along the route. From the water on Winisk Lake, the viewing distance of the bridge was estimated to be 1.88 km from the



north and 1.83 km from the south. The visual effects of the operations phase of the Project may lead to lower perceived physical and mental well-being, and interference with social and cultural activities on the land.

Visual effects during operation are not expected to occur within Webequie First Nation. It was determined by the visual assessment that potential receptors do not exist within the settlement, and the road will not be visible from Webequie First Nation. The WSR road is proposed to terminate at the Webequie Airport, approximately 1.2 km from the homes and buildings at the south end of Webequie First Nation. Furthermore, the WSR is proposed to not be illuminated, therefore, it will not be visible from any receptor during the night.

Conclusion

Overall, within Webequie First Nation, there is anticipated to be a **moderate to high potential** for a change to community well-being and safety as a result of Project construction and operation. This would result in lowered community well-being (social cohesion, quality of life) and reduced personal safety (community safety, traffic safety) in the absence of mitigation and enhancement measures. This effect is carried forward to **Section 14.4** for further assessment.

14.3.7.2 Local Study Area: Other Communities

Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Construction jobs → In-migration of temporary workers → Increased non-local population → Reduced Community Well-Being and Safety

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Operations and maintenance jobs → In-migration of temporary workers → Increased non-local population → Reduced Community Well-Being and Safety

The Project will not have a direct impact on the community well-being and safety within the other LSA communities. Potential Project effects on community well-being and safety are anticipated to be concentrated in the Webequie First Nation.

Conclusion

Overall, there is predicted to be a **negligible effect** on community well-being and safety in the other communities in the LSA during the construction and operations phase. There is no expected reduction in community well-being or personal safety as a result of the Project. This effect is not carried forward for further assessment.

14.3.7.3 Regional Study Area

Construction, Operation, Maintenance and Repair of Road → Employment and expenditures → Employment → In-migration of temporary workers → Increased non-local population → Reduced Community Well-Being and Safety

During construction and operation, the Project is unlikely to have any effect on Community Well-being and Safety within the RSA.



Conclusion

Overall, there is predicted to have **no effect** on community well-being and safety in the RSA during the construction and operations phase. There is no expected reduction in community well-being or personal safety as a result of the Project. This effect is not carried forward for further assessment.

14.3.8 Summary

Below is a summary of conclusions made for each of the identified potential effects by VC. Potential effects that were assessed as having a low to high potential to occur were carried forward to **Section 14.4** for further assessment. Potential effects that were assessed as negligible or with no potential to occur were not carried forward in the assessment. The conclusions are based on the following qualitative ranking categories:

- **No effect:** there is **no potential** for the effect to occur. Further assessment is not considered.
- **Negligible:** the potential effect is **unlikely to occur**. Changes to the VC are **not detectable**. No mitigation or enhancement measures are necessary. Further assessment is not considered.
- **Low:** the potential effect is **likely to occur** and changes to the VC **may be detectable** in the absence of mitigation or enhancement measures. The effect is carried forward in the assessment.
- **Moderate:** the potential effect is **likely to occur** and changes to the VC **will be evident** in the absence of mitigation or enhancement measures. The effect is carried forward in the assessment.
- **High:** the potential effect is certain to occur and changes to the VC will be evident. In the absence of mitigation or enhancement measures. The effect is carried forward in the assessment.

Table 14-39 Summary and Conclusion of Potential Effects for the Social Environment VCs

Potential Effect	Study Area	Potential for Occurrence	Carry forward in Assessment?
Change to Population and Demographics	LSA: Webequie	Low	Yes
	LSA: other communities	Negligible to low	Yes
	RSA	Negligible	No
Change to Housing and Accommodations	LSA: Webequie	Moderate	Yes
	LSA: other communities	Negligible	No
	RSA	No effect	No
Change to Community Services	LSA: Webequie	Low	Yes
	LSA: other communities	No effect	No
	RSA	No effect	No
Change to Education, Training, and Traditional Learning Programming and Facility Space	LSA: Webequie	Moderate to high	Yes
	LSA: other communities	Low to moderate	Yes
	RSA	Negligible to moderate	Yes



Potential Effect	Study Area	Potential for Occurrence	Carry forward in Assessment?
Change to Emergency and Protective Services	LSA: Webequie	Low to moderate	Yes
	LSA: other communities	Negligible	No
	RSA	Negligible	No
Change to Community Infrastructure	LSA: Webequie	Low to moderate	Yes
	LSA: other communities	Negligible	No
	RSA	No effect	No
Change to Community Well-Being and Safety	LSA: Webequie	Moderate to high	Yes
	LSA: other communities	Negligible	No
	RSA	No effect	No

14.4 Mitigation and Enhancement Measures

This section describes the proposed measures to mitigate the potential adverse effects of the Project as well as proposed enhancements on the Social Environment VCs.

The proposed enhancements are high level and require further engagement with the proponent and stakeholders to be finalized. A Webequie Community Readiness Plan (CRP) has been developed for the Project (Appendix N). The CRP is a high level, dynamic plan that will require further engagement with the proponent and stakeholders to be finalized. Mitigation measures described in the CRP are in consideration of the community strategies developed by Webequie First Nation and reflect the values and principles of the community.

Further related measures will be provided in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and the Operation Environmental Management Plan (OEMP) that will be developed for the Project. Refer to **Section 14.6** for details of the proposed framework for the development of the CEMP and the OEMP.

Key mitigation and enhancement measures from the CRP are outlined in this subsection.

14.4.1 Change to Population and Demographics

Construction of temporary accommodations for Project workforce

As discussed in **Section 14.3.1**, the Project will mitigate the effects on population and demographics by construction of temporary accommodations to house non-local workers at the Project site rather than within Webequie First Nation. The construction of temporary accommodations is aimed at avoiding and minimizing stresses associated with a change to the local population and demographics leading up to and during Project construction.



Development and implementation of the Community Readiness Plan

In addition to the construction of temporary accommodations, the Proponent will establish a CRWG that will oversee the CRP (Appendix N). The CRP will outline the overall approach for the mitigation of any adverse effects and the enhancement of any positive effects of the Project. The approach is intended to be holistic and inclusive of the views shared by subgroups of the population of Webequie First Nation and the other LSA communities.

The CRP will consider the interconnections of effects of the Project on social, economic, non-traditional land use, and Indigenous Peoples and impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

Through the CRP, Webequie First Nation wishes to encourage its community members to be attracted to stay in the community, assuming adequate community services and infrastructure will allow them to do so. The Project may encourage more Webequie First Nation community members to move to Webequie First Nation if they are currently living off-reserve, or to remain in the community to take advantage of opportunities as a result of the Project.

It is proposed that the Community Readiness Working Group (CRWG) will support the development and will oversee the implementation of the CRP. It is anticipated that the CRWG will be chosen by Webequie First Nation and made up of representatives of the Webequie First Nation Chief and Council and Band Administration, Webequie Elders, representatives from LSA and RSA Indigenous communities, provincial/federal government representatives and technical advisors. The CRWG will be supported by sub-working groups, as needed, to develop and implement focused plans that include specific enhancement commitments and mitigation measures, as well as follow-up monitoring of community well-being and adaptive management of Webequie First Nation and other LSA communities. The CRWG will build on, and align with, existing programs and services in communities.

Measures to Improve Employment and Business Opportunities

Measures to enhance the level of in-migration and reduce out-migration of Webequie First Nation community members may be achieved through measures to improve employment and business opportunities. For instance, measures to enhance Education, Training and Traditional Learning (see **Section 14.4.4**) could reduce the level of out-migration and increase in-migration of Webequie First Nation community members. These measures may include:

- Develop education, skills and training approach for community members to align with Project opportunities;
- Incorporate traditional learning and cultural teachings into training; and
- Alignment with existing programs and services.

14.4.2 Change to Housing and Temporary Accommodations

Construction of temporary accommodations for Project workforce

During the construction phase, four construction camps will be installed at the Project site, with one camp being retained during the operations phase. The construction camps will include temporary accommodations and will therefore avoid an increase in demand on the housing supply in Webequie First Nation during the construction phase.



Measures to enable new or improved housing within Webequie First Nation

The Project could result in new or improved of housing for Webequie First Nation community members through lower costs associated with transporting housing materials to the community. Many Webequie First Nation community members have expressed hopefulness toward the ability of the Project to improve the state of housing in their community (AtkinsRéal, 2022a; 2022b). As Webequie First Nation identified in its CCP, 2023, “there is an immediate need to build new homes, replace some existing homes, and renovate almost all other units” (Webequie First Nation, 2023), and this is one of the core goals of the CCP.

As part of the CRP (see Appendix N), a process for enhancements to housing and infrastructure is outlined for further development. This includes the provision of housing needs identified in the CPP of 148 new housing units through 2037. A recent housing pilot project provided a successful and instructive example of Webequie First Nation working with government organizations to address housing challenges, which saw the Webequie First Nation bring in 14 new modular units as well as two 4-unit multiplex housing facilities and five single family homes. It also brought the renovation of 14 existing homes (Webequie First Nation, 2023). Additional projects like these will be needed to help create readiness for Webequie First Nation to benefit from the Project.

14.4.3 Change to Community Services

Provision of on-site services for the Project workforce

Multiple construction camps will be established throughout various stages of the construction phase, which will provide services for temporary workers. These include housing/temporary accommodations, food, first-aid, water, and waste treatment systems. Construction workers will have access to on-site health support, where they will be able to treat common injuries and illnesses. Should construction workers sustain more serious injury, they will be transported to an appropriate medical facility, likely outside of the community and LSA.

Development and implementation of a Community Well-Being Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan as part of the CRP

The CRP will include a Community Well-being Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan to monitor various parameters including pressure on Community Services. The approach will include reviews of existing uses and demands on services and identify any needs that are associated with the Project, which may require addressing through the expansion of existing community services.

In terms of the use of health and social services that do not have extra capacity, and limited availability could be exacerbated by adverse effects of the Project, such as substance use and adverse social behaviours, additional health awareness and promotion efforts may be required.

Establishment of a dedicated childcare and drop-in centre

As previously described, childcare service for early years of childhood is not currently run in the Webequie community. The Project proposes that a full-time dedicated childcare and drop-in centre be established to provide relief for families that require childcare to participate in the employment and business opportunities.



14.4.4 Change to Education, Training, and Traditional Learning Programming and Facility Space

Provision of on-reserve training opportunities

One of the goals of the Project is to provide employment and training opportunities to Webequie First Nation, and other LSA and RSA Indigenous communities, to enable community members to gain valuable work experience that can also be applied to future development projects.

Infrastructure may limit the number of individuals who can take courses, if facilities are unavailable or inadequate. Education and training opportunities are also limited in Webequie First Nation, and other LSA and RSA Indigenous communities (see **Section 14.2.2.4**). The need to leave remote communities in order to pursue further education and training after high school presents particular barriers for women and youth, who often face familial responsibilities which prevent them from pursuing opportunities away from home, unmanageable costs associated with living away from home while studying/training, and/or culture shock moving to southern, urban centres (see **Section 14.2.2.4**).

On-reserve training will help increase the participation rate of community members and may encourage new entrants to the workforce. All training may not need to be directly Project-related, and indirect training (not directly training for skills for the Project), may enable Webequie First Nation and other LSA and RSA Indigenous community members to remove barriers to workforce participation. This can increase the size of the workforce and create more Project-related employment opportunities as well. Increasing the number of workers in the workforce with the skills necessary to participate in the Project, and to participate in future projects, will create more jobs being filled by Webequie First Nation, and other LSA and RSA Indigenous community members.

Programming and facility space improvements; Providing support to facilitate furthering education and training goals through the CRP

Where proponents often focus more narrowly on providing opportunities to meet the project-related demand for labour, the Project proponent, Webequie First Nation, is proposing a broader approach to support future opportunities. Supporting underrepresented groups like women and youth to pursue education and training is essential for Webequie and other LSA and RSA communities to take advantage of Project-related employment opportunities and benefit socio-economically from the Project. Providing this type of support will provide locals knowledge and skills to pursue employment opportunities beyond the Project thereby ensuring sustainability of employment for community members. An example of a sector where such knowledge and skills provided to Indigenous Peoples can be applied is the resources sector which is trending away from a demand for low-skill labour (i.e., jobs requiring little to no advanced education/training) and toward Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics skill sets (CCAB, 2019; Government of Canada, 2023). There is a need to engage Indigenous women and girls in STEM to meet emerging labour market demand (CCAB, 2019). As such, post-secondary education and training of Webequie First Nation, and other LSA and RSA Indigenous community members in scientific and technical fields can be of benefit both for the Project and future employment of Webequie First Nation, and other LSA and RSA Indigenous community members. Likewise, providing educational and training support for careers in the public and para-public sectors (AtkinsRéalis, 2022a; Abele and Delic, 2014), may result in more readily transferable skills than those available during construction and operation of the WSR Project (AtkinsRéalis, 2022a; Abele and Delic, 2014).



As Webequie First Nation and other LSA and RSA First Nation Indigenous communities are not anticipated to have the spare capacity to train community members, the CRP will include measures to enhance the education and training of community members especially underrepresented groups (youth, women, Elders) as well as their employability on the Project. Proposed mitigation and enhancement measures may include:

- **Partnering with training programs** like KKETS, Oshki-Wenjack and Matawa First Nations Management (see **Section 14.2.2.4**) to help Webequie First Nation, and other LSA and RSA Indigenous community members that did not complete high school obtain their high school equivalent and pursue skilled training for Project-related employment. Types of training available through these partnerships may include line cutting, heavy equipment mechanic, drilling, millwrights, remote camp cooks and heavy equipment operators (AtkinsRéal, 2022a). When possible, facilitating in-community training would help limit barriers to participation often experienced by Indigenous women and youth. The feasibility of providing in-community training should be evaluated, along with strategies to reduce barriers to education and training. This includes identifying of type of support needed for students receiving training outside the remote First Nation communities in the LSA and RSA.
- Planning beyond the immediate needs of the project and **aiming to develop scholarships and partnerships** with colleges and universities, such as Lakehead University, could be beneficial for Webequie First Nation, and other LSA and RSA Indigenous community members, including youth and women, to take on more specialized roles in the Project that can only be obtained through post-secondary education, such as natural and applied sciences, business, and finance. Education on reserves can be insufficient in preparing First Nation youth for post-secondary education, leaving them at an academic disadvantage (ICT, 2023). Therefore, consideration of additional supports to prepare and support youth for continuing education should be addressed.
- **Opportunities for different groups, such as women and youth, to be employed in high-skilled jobs through provision of on-reserve and on-the-job training** (e.g., trades apprenticeships, surveyors, heavy equipment operators and road safety auditors). During the Aboriginal Youth-Employment and Training Survey, the majority (70%) of youth participants, aged 18 to 30 agreed that employment training programs would be beneficial in entering the workforce, however over 50% indicated it was difficult to know what programs were available and 55% mentioned there were not sufficient employment training programs available to them (NWAC, 2015a).
- **Pre-employment training** to equip underrepresented Webequie First Nation, and other LSA and RSA Indigenous community members (i.e., youth, women) for Project employment opportunities, particularly individuals who have not been previously employed or worked in a formal position (NWAC, 2015b). This might include supporting the completion of basic workplace certifications, such as First-Aid training and Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) training, learning time management skills and tools, understanding employment standards and rights, and other support for developing job-hunting skills.
- **Providing programming that assists youth and other underrepresented groups in gaining the necessary skills** to gain employment may help in reducing barriers to their Project-related employment. In terms of facilities for education, for example Webequie First Nation reports in its CCP (Webequie First Nation, 2023) that the following upgrades are required for Webequie First Nation's education and training facilities:
 - Upgrade/expansion of existing primary school or new primary school;
 - Space for mental health including counselling and programming;
 - A training centre and a high school, or a combination of both together;



- Completing the land-base camp as a healing and teaching space;
- A community kitchen for teaching and for helping with food security; and
- A stand-alone day care/early years centre, or as part of an expansion on the primary school (Headstart is already operating at the school).

The CRP (Appendix N) includes the above programming and facility space improvements, proposed as part of the Project’s enhancements for Webequie First Nation.

Discussions to identify other enhancement measures for Education, Training and Traditional Learning Programing and Facility Space

At this time, the educational attainment and skill set of Webequie First Nation labour force is currently not well-positioned to take advantage of Project-related employment opportunities, particularly professional, scientific, and technical positions. Additional discussions are required with other LSA and RSA Indigenous communities as needed to identify opportunities for enhancement measures related to Education, Training and Traditional Learning Programming and Facility Space. These could include:

- Employment opportunities for the Project during the construction phase include both direct employment (i.e., trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations) and indirect employment (i.e., supporting information technology, document control, communication services, health and safety, manufacturing and distribution of supplies).
- The Project will also offer opportunities for youths through youth-employment and training.
- Some roles will require job-specific training, such as operating heavy equipment or mobile equipment.
- To ensure that workers are qualified to conduct work on the Project, training programs will be required. Training courses specific to the project, such as safety courses, will be provided by the Project to all personnel. Some education and training courses required for the Project may not be available online, so community members may be required to fly-out to take these programs; some programs may be provided by the Project by bringing education and training programs into the Webequie community or flying members out to complete training programs that are only offered outside of the Webequie community.
- All workers on the Project are expected to complete required safety courses (e.g., safe work programs) and/or have any related certification required for their role (e.g., first-aid certification). Records of training provided to all workers on the project will be maintained which can be used by workers as a reference for future jobs.
- An environmental training program will also be developed for the Project and provided to all workers so that all individuals involved in the construction of the Project are informed of, and understand, the project specific environmental requirements and sensitivities, and their responsibilities regarding meeting those requirements.

14.4.5 Change to Emergency and Protective Services

The Project will have mitigation measures to prevent or reduce the demand for emergency services during construction and operation within Webequie First Nation.



Construction phase mitigation measures

During construction, these mitigation measures may include the following:

- Health and Safety Plans will be developed for the Project (during construction phase, environmental monitoring, and during camp maintenance work).
- As part of the CEMP, the Project will have Safety Management Plans and workers will be required to adhere to these protocols for safe work. This reduces the potential for work-related incidents, such as injuries or fires.
- Workers will also be safety-trained prior to commencing work to ensure they are capable of performing their duties safely.
- Workers will be expected to remain within the camp at all times and will rarely enter Webequie First Nation, reducing the potential for harmful/disruptive actions to occur within the community and reducing the need to use of emergency and protective services within Webequie First Nation.
- The construction camps will have security staff to patrol the camp for hazards/threats (e.g. wildlife) and protect workers.
- As EMS is absent on the Webequie First Nation reserve, the Project will have health and safety staff who are qualified to provide immediate medical care for the construction phase.
- Construction camps will have first-aid stations, helicopter-pad locations complete with lighting and windsocks for response to emergency events and occupational health and safety staff to address incidents on-site. Although more serious incidents will require transporting workers to the nearest hospital, the Project anticipates these incidents to be rare occurrences due to multiple safety measures.
- For scenarios where a higher level of medical care is required, helicopters used for Project construction work will be readily available to transport individuals to larger health facilities for medical treatment elsewhere in the LSA or RSA.
- All safety incidents related to the Project will be reported within 24 hours and records of these incidents will be archived. Safety incidents can include any incidents or near misses that occur at work sites, in camps, and in communities and can also include any incidents or near misses that occur outside of work hours.
- Additionally, all workers are expected to complete daily safety checklists and hazard assessments before commencing work. Project managers and site supervisors will review hazard and incident reports and update Safety Management Plans to prevent the incident from re-occurring or reduce the likelihood reoccurrence (e.g., updating personal protective equipment requirements).
- Health and safety facilities at the construction camps are also expected to keep records of incidents.
- A construction Traffic Management Plan will be developed as a part of the CEMP to manage traffic and mitigate impacts created by construction traffic.
- A Road Safety Plan will be developed as part of the CRP, to reduce potential of traffic incidents such as:
 - Enhanced road signs and communications along the roadway;
 - Raising public awareness about road safety, such as through awareness campaigns;
 - Identifying which demographic groups (e.g. youth, elderly, new drivers) within communities are most at risk and providing education and awareness on road safety to these groups; and
 - Enforcing traffic safety by implementation of standard patrols and checks.



Operations phase mitigation measures

During the operations phase, safety incidents relating to the Project will be recorded and monitored as part of the Community Well-Being Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan. This may include recording and monitoring traffic collisions, emergency transport calls, and damages/faults to the road that can result in injury or death. These records will enable operations managers to identify hazards and find solutions to prevent or mitigate them (e.g., placing more road signs, reducing speed limits, increasing safety patrols along roads, adding barriers to deter wildlife from crossing or using the road). Traffic data (number of vehicles on the road, number of traffic incidents, number of vehicle-wildlife interactions, locations of traffic incidents, etc.) can be collected to determine the efficacy of mitigation measures after being implemented.

No camps are anticipated for the operations phase of the Project, so the existing Emergency and Protective Services infrastructure is expected to be used for providing health care for Project-related staff. As noted by Webeque First Nation community members in interviews, health care service in the Webeque community require improvements to provide better health care services, which the Project may address by providing more emergency response equipment and protocols during the operations phase.

During the operations phase, road patrols and inspection of the road will occur, and their frequency may require adjustment to address specific situations, such as during spring break-up, during and after heavy wind or rain events, and emergencies (e.g., accidents, fires, stranded motorists, wildlife mortality from collision with vehicles).

As part of the OEMP, a Spill Prevention and Emergency Response Management Plan will be developed and utilized by operations and maintenance staff, and where applicable subcontractors. The plan will cover various emergency response situations that are most likely to occur such as personal injury, fire, explosions and hazardous material spills. Further details are provided Section 4.4.3.1.11 of the EAR/IS.

14.4.6 Change to Community Infrastructure

At this time, Webeque First Nation either does not have the community assets to best participate in the Project economically and best capture its benefits, or their assets are not in a condition that would allow Webeque First Nation to participate fully (Radloff and Saulteaux, 2023). Webeque First Nation already faces ongoing challenges related to community infrastructure. Enhancement measures are proposed to address the ongoing challenges with Webeque First Nation's Community Infrastructure in order to increase community readiness for the Project and to benefit from WSR and other future projects.

Enhancement Of Webeque Community Assets

Action items from CCP (Webeque First Nation, 2023) include projects aimed at the development, repair and enhancement of community assets that will in turn enhance community capital and enable the community to:

- Increase the size of the workforce and have higher workforce participation rates;
- Decrease barriers for community members to achieve higher educational attainment;
- Create space from Project-related on-reserve training and train and develop skills that will allow the community to fill more employment roles;
- Increase opportunities and lower barriers for community members to participate in cultural activities;
- Sustain worker participation in the traditional economy; and



- Have more business and administration capacity to develop entrepreneurship, partnership and supply relationships to benefit from the Project.

The Webequie First Nation CCP identifies needs for improvements and upgrades of Community Infrastructure services, such as sewer and potable water, training of operators for these facilities, expanding and upgrading roads, upgrading power supply via hydropower, and identifying additional sources of potable water (such as springs) (Webequie First Nation, 2023). The requirements to ensure continuity of the facility operations and maintenance by training community members can be fulfilled as per the strategy proposed in **Section 14.4.4**.

These new and upgraded community assets will not only enable Webequie First Nation to better participate in the benefits of the WSR, but they will also allow Webequie First Nation to participate in future regional economic opportunities positively affecting the community's financial position.

Development and Implementation of the Community Well-being Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan as Part of the CRP

In addition to the implementation of the CCP, to monitor the potential effects of the Project on Community Infrastructure, the Proponent is proposing to implement the Community Well-being Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan, which is part of the CRP described in Appendix N. The Plan will include monitoring community infrastructure demand and conditions to ensure that Webequie First Nation will not be adversely affected by the Project.

Construction of Community-related Infrastructure as Part of Temporary Accommodations

To avoid adversely affecting the availability of community infrastructure services in Webequie First Nation during the construction phase, the implementation of construction camps will allow the Project to temporarily expand the workforce and utilize the labour necessary for the Project activities.

The construction camp structures will be designed to ensure all required services are available to the workers at the camp itself, and neutral to minimal disturbance/impact to the existing community infrastructure of Webequie First Nation. The camps will be equipped with all the necessary facilities for the construction workers (inclusive of accommodations (bunkhouse) for workers; construction office(s); kitchen and dining hall; first-aid station, and helicopter-pad location complete with lighting and windsocks for response to emergency events; communications system; wastewater treatment holding tank and/or treatment system; groundwater water supply well; solid waste (hazardous and non-hazardous) handling and storage facility, including a designated waste recycling area; electricity supply from diesel generators; above ground fuel storage tanks and refueling area; and laydown/storage area for equipment and materials.

Along with the construction camps, there will be temporary and permanent access roads developed for construction and operations phases of the Project, which will be constructed within the ROW of the WSR to allow for vegetation clearing, construction of culverts and bridges at select locations, and earth movement/haulage requirements.

During operations, the existing community infrastructure will be accessed as needed, for Project-related staff. It is assumed that enhancements to community infrastructure implemented during the construction phase will be able to accommodate occasional use by the Project.



Waste Management Plan

The construction phase will produce conventional (non-hazardous) wastes requiring disposal. It is proposed that non-hazardous wastes are placed in Webequie First Nation's on-reserve solid waste management site if capacity allows. However, should the existing infrastructure be unable to accommodate the non-hazardous wastes, it is assumed that the wastes will be stored on-site at construction camps and transported off-site to a licensed facility accepting wastes. It is assumed that hazardous wastes will be stored at the Project site and transported off-site to a licenced facility. The capacity of community infrastructure services to accommodate emissions, discharges and wastes are therefore determined not to be adversely affected by the Project.

During operations, it is assumed that Webequie First Nation will have capacity to accept wastes. If the existing system is at capacity, non-hazardous waste materials will be stored at the Project site and subsequently transported to an off-site licensed facility.

14.4.7 Change to Community Well-Being and Safety

14.4.7.1 Community Cohesion

Community cohesion and participation in Webequie First Nation and other LSA communities are challenged by several factors including past and present harms of colonialism, influences of technology and urban popular culture on youth, and inconsistent community events and programs (AtkinsRéal, 2022b, InterGroup, 2024). To protect community cohesion against potential negative influences from the Project, and in particular consideration vulnerable groups, the Proponent proposes to include the following mitigation measures throughout the Project phases. These mitigation measures are in addition to the mitigations and enhancements already discussed within this section (**Sections 14.4.1 to 14.4.6**).

Community Well-Being Monitoring

Webequie First Nation developed and implemented an initiative to identify the baseline conditions of its community members, under the 'Webequie First Nation Community Well-Being Baseline Study' which was completed in 2014. The well-being indicators identified during this study can be used for continued monitoring of Project effects during construction and operation phase. The CRP is structured to coincide with Webequie First Nation's CPP and the above noted Community Well-Being Baseline Study.

Community Events

Coordination of community events that bring together the community and the Project employees to promote a sense of place (Gibson, et al, 2017; InterGroup, 2024). Non-local temporary workers residing in construction camps can often lack connection to the host community, and this can create negative issues and interactions in communities. Hosting events such as barbecues and family days can facilitate connections between Project employees and community members of Webequie First Nation, providing non-local employees with a sense of place and accountability which may deter them from participating in negative behaviours (InterGroup, 2024).



Environmental and Cultural Awareness and Education

The proponent will ensure that all personnel whose work might affect the VCs identified during the EAR/IS, receive suitable training on environmental and cultural awareness, as per the Environmental and Cultural Awareness and Education Plan that will be included as part of the CEMP. Further details on this training are provided in Appendix E (Mitigation Measures) and Appendix N (Community Readiness Plan).

Culturally Relevant Training and Counselling

Providing culturally relevant training and counselling supports for Indigenous employees while working on a rotational basis and the associated extended periods away from home, on how to foster and maintain healthy families and relationships (Gibson et al., 2017; Eckford and Wagg, 2014; InterGroup, 2024).

Knowledge holders have noted that there is also a social stigma for women in the community to seek health services as they fear being judged by others. Victims expressed that this is in part due to intergenerational trauma from residential schools, which taught them to feel shame in seeking help. This can be combated by spreading awareness of the health benefits conferred by seeking healthcare services and educating the community to erase the social stigma of seeking help.

Intentional Siting of Temporary Accommodations / Construction Camps

One potential issue raised about the Project is safety related to construction camps, and how these may affect vulnerable populations including women and youth. Prior to industrial camps being placed near or adjacent to the LSA communities, there is an opportunity to develop Emergency Response Preparedness Plans within the LSA communities prior to the industrial camps operation. These plans can try to decrease the impacts felt on the more vulnerable populations, including women and youth. The plans can include the physical siting of the camps and set up (if they are further away from the LSA communities, it is less accessible to workers and they would have less interaction with vulnerable populations), increase in resources for drug, alcohol and mental health support, policies regarding drugs and alcohol within the camps and how any grievances are responded to (Firelight Group, 2017a).

14.4.7.2 Community Safety

The potential effects of the Project, such as a decrease in safety due to an influx of non-local residents during both the construction and the operations phases, will be addressed by implementing various measures outlined in the CRP (Appendix N). These include the following proposed mitigation and enhancement measures:

- **Continual engagement** with Webequie First Nation community members and Chief and Council will be integral in evaluating the safety effects of the Project on Webequie First Nation. Regular evaluation will allow the Project proponent to identify areas of concern or success in a timely manner and pivot mitigation measures if necessary.
- **Ongoing engagement** with community members will also help to determine socio-economic effects on vulnerable populations and how mitigation and enhancement measures can better address these concerns.
- **Monitoring of community well-being in Webequie First Nation** (Appendix N) provides details regarding monitoring for enhancement of Project benefits and continuous monitoring to support Webequie First Nation's future objectives.



- There is an opportunity to address the safety issues that were outlined in the survey that Webequie First Nation community members have with this project: safety of women, safety of youth, safety of Elders, and road safety. This can be through:
 - targeted educational awareness,
 - discussions with the community throughout the Project and
 - the preparation of an Emergency Response Preparedness Plan.
- During construction, the **establishment of Community Liaison Officers** composed of community members as part, to close the gap between the community's needs and Project's requirements. Creating roles for Webequie First Nation community members as Community Liaison Officers can serve various functions, such as:
 - disseminating up-to-date information about Project activities and opportunities (e.g., employment, timelines, potential disruptions).
 - act as the initial point of contact for any sensitive issues that arise between the Project and Webequie First Nation community members employed by the Project, or between Webequie First Nation community members and the broader community.
 - handling grievance follow-ups and settlements.
 - helping to deescalate conflicts between local and non-local Project employees before further interventions are necessary.
- **Developing a grievance mechanism** for community concerns and issues, inclusive of issues regarding racism, sexism, gender-based violence, and other issues (Gibson et al., 2017 as cited in InterGroup, 2024).
- **Creating and implementing training programs** focused on the safety of Indigenous women and girls (covering issues like sexual harassment and sex trafficking) for all Project employees, both during construction and operation phases. These policies and training can be clearly communicated and strictly enforced at all levels of employment. Policies and educational opportunities to address hyper-masculine culture, such as teaching employees about privilege based on gender, ethnicity, and class, could help to counteract the values and attitudes that lead to violence against women (Gibson et al., 2017 as cited in InterGroup, 2024).
- **Establishing procedures and plans regarding drug and alcohol usage** during Project work. These plans could include elements such as dry camps or regulated and monitored consumption of alcohol, supports for seeking substance use treatment, and encouragement for seeking substance use treatment such as ensuring employees who are successful in their treatment and recovery have a job to return to (Gibson et al., 2017 as cited in InterGroup, 2024).
- **Installation of construction camps** with all required ancillary facilities to ensure minimum workforce interactions with community members (**Section 14.3.7**). The non-local construction workforce will work on a fly-in/fly-out rotational shift basis and the first camp will be located nearby Webequie First Nation.

14.4.7.3 Traffic Safety

Mitigation measures related to traffic safety during project construction and operations are proposed to include:

- **Establishing partnerships with KKETs** to provide driver's education and licensing for interested community members. The current barrier of lack of driver's license presents barriers in terms of safety issues, employment and career progression, business growth and expansion, and other issues in the communities. In the past, KKETS has partnered with local employment planning councils in Ontario to



offer in-community driver's testing for remote communities such as Webequie First Nation (NSWPB, 2017 as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

- A **Construction Traffic Management Plan** will be developed to provide guidance on how Project-related traffic is managed in and around the Project site, including use of the winter road during construction of the Project. Elements such as driving routes and procedures for the site, driving routes and procedures for material and equipment transport via the winter road will be included in this plan.
- A **construction phase Health and Safety Management Plan** specific to the Project's needs will be created, implemented and updated regularly. The plan will include details on specific procedures and protocols for working around construction sites in compliance with Ontario *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, such as contact details of all on-site personnel, site details including location of work, check-in systems, accommodation, identification of potential hazards and associated risks, training requirements; incident and reporting requirements and frequency; incident and emergency management plans (e.g., flood, fire or medical events).
- An **operations phase Health and Safety Management Plan** specific to the Project's needs will be created, implemented and updated regularly. The plan will include details on specific procedures and protocols for working around roads in compliance with Ontario *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, such as contact details of on-site personnel, site details including location of work, check-in systems, accommodation, identification of potential hazards and associated risks, training requirements; incident and reporting requirements and frequency; incident and emergency management plans (e.g., flood, fire or medical events).

14.4.7.4 Community Well-Being and Quality of Life

With regard to community concerns on nuisance effects from dust, noise and air pollution and other impacts stemming from Project activities during construction, the following mitigations are proposed:

- **Dust control:** An **Air Quality and Dust Control Management Plan** will be developed for mitigation measures and best practices with regard to control of air emissions and dust during construction activities from operation of construction equipment and vehicles, blasting, rock quarrying and crushing, concrete batching, excavating, placing fill and grading. Measures such as water sprays from trucks to increase moisture levels in active areas, usage of appropriate catalytic converters, mufflers and exhaust systems on equipment, and limiting vehicle and heavy equipment movement to designated access routes to minimize dust generation will be considered in this plan.
- **Noise and vibration:** A **Noise and Vibration Management Plan** catering to the needs of the WSR will be developed, addressing information such as description of construction activities that are expected to generate noise and vibration, description of local receptors, noise and vibration management (i.e., equipment and machinery controls, schedule of expected noisy activities such as blasting), and procedures for addressing noise complaints.
- **Light management:** A **Light Management Plan** will be developed for Project activities requiring illumination for equipment and workers. The plan will provide information on procedures and best management practices to control light emissions from construction activities.
- **Construction Waste Management:** the Contractor (the Proponent's designated Contractor) will be responsible for managing wastes and ensuring appropriate reuse, recycling and disposal. A Construction Waste Management Plan will be developed, providing information on management of waste products and how they are collected, stored, transported and disposed of in accordance with provincial and federal legislation and guidelines, procedures for management of hazardous wastes



including contaminated soil, roles and responsibilities to be undertaken by the various site contractors and project personnel, and guidelines for storing and processing the wastes.

- Operations: An **Operations Environmental Management Plan** will be developed to address specific concerns on nuisance effects from dust and air pollution, noise and vibration during the operation of the WSR.

14.4.8 Summary

Table 14-40 identifies key mitigation measures to eliminate, reduce potential adverse effects, or enhance positive effects of the Project as identified in **Section 14.3**. Further measures will be provided in the CRP (Appendix N), as well as the CEMP and OEMP component plans.



Table 14-40: Summary of Potential Effects, Mitigation and Enhancement Measures and Predicted Net Effects for Social Environment VCs

VC	Indicators	Project Phase (C, O)*	Project Component or Activity	Potential Effect	Mitigation and Enhancement Measures	Predicted Net Effect
Population and Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Change in population, including gender and age; ▪ Loss of Indigenous identity; ▪ Loss of languages; and ▪ Change in mobility and increased migration. 	C, O	Construction and use of supportive infrastructure. Employment and expenditures.	Change in population and demographics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In-migration of temporary workers; ▪ Increased temporary population; ▪ In-migration of off-reserve community members; and ▪ Out-migration of on-reserve community members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation of CRP; ▪ Installation of four construction camps to accommodate temporary workers, with smaller scale temporary accommodations during the operation phase; ▪ Develop education, skills and training approach for community members to align with Project opportunities; ▪ Incorporate traditional learning and cultural teachings into training; and ▪ Alignment with existing programs and services. 	Yes (net positive effect)
Housing and Temporary Accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduced housing availability; ▪ Total occupied private dwellings; ▪ People per household; ▪ Rental housing; ▪ New housing growth; ▪ Plans for land development; ▪ Reduced housing affordability; ▪ Housing sales; ▪ Average cost of house; ▪ Average rent; ▪ Households 'spending 30% or more of income on shelter costs' or 'not 	C, O	Construction and use of supportive infrastructure. Employment and expenditures.	Change to housing and temporary accommodations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduced supply in existing temporary accommodations ; and ▪ Increased demand on existing supply of housing; reduced availability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The CRP will include plans for enhancing housing stock to address housing capacity issues; and ▪ Installation of four construction camps to accommodate temporary workers, with smaller scale temporary accommodations during the operation phase. 	Yes (net positive effect)



VC	Indicators	Project Phase (C, O)*	Project Component or Activity	Potential Effect	Mitigation and Enhancement Measures	Predicted Net Effect
	suitable' or 'major repairs needed'; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Change in housing condition; ▪ Private dwellings by period of construction; and ▪ Private households by housing suitability including overcrowding and need of repairs. 					
Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased demand for community services; and ▪ Change in supply and capacity of community services. 	C, O	Employment and expenditures	Change in level of service use or availability of community services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adverse effect arising from increased demand and pressure on availability of the services needed for Webequie First Nation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Project will provide services for temporary workers to minimize or avoid strain on existing community services; ▪ Implement a Community Well-being Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan to monitor various parameters including pressure on Community Services; ▪ Potential expansion of existing community services; ▪ Potential implementation of additional health awareness and promotion efforts; and ▪ Implementation of a dedicated childcare and early childhood drop-in centre to enable families to participate in business and employment opportunities from the Project. 	Yes (net adverse effect)



VC	Indicators	Project Phase (C, O)*	Project Component or Activity	Potential Effect	Mitigation and Enhancement Measures	Predicted Net Effect
Education, Training, and Traditional Learning Programming and Facility Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved education and training attainment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ highest certificate, diploma, or degree; ▫ field of study; ▫ occupations; and ▪ Improved training opportunities; ▪ Increased demand for community education and training services; ▪ Change in supply and capacity of community education and training services; and ▪ Greater opportunity for learning of traditional knowledge, as equal of importance to western education and training. Traditional knowledge is sought by community members, whether it be through programs or at a grassroots level. 	C, O	Employment and expenditures	<p>Change to Education, Training, and Traditional Learning Programming and Facility Space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Higher level of education attainment; ▪ Higher level of training attainment; ▪ Increased demand for education and training services; ▪ Reduced supply and capacity of programming and facility space; ▪ Reduced interest in of traditional learning programming; and ▪ Greater access to land for land-based traditional learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation of CRP enhancement measures to identify and plan for education and training needs, especially underrepresented groups (youth, women, Elders); ▪ Integrating ongoing skills inventory studies in Webequie and other LSA and RSA communities; ▪ Facilitating in-community training; ▪ Develop scholarships and partnerships with colleges and universities; ▪ Provision of on-reserve and on-the-job training (e.g., trades apprenticeships, surveyors, heavy equipment operators and road safety auditors); ▪ Pre-employment training to equip underrepresented Webequie First Nation community members (i.e., youth, women) for the Project employment opportunities; ▪ Convene a sub-working group on education, training and traditional learning that will monitor communities that require adequate capacity to deliver programming for community members; 	Yes (net positive effect on education and training attainment; net negative effect on availability of education and training programming, and; net negative effect on facility space net negative effect on traditional learning programming)



VC	Indicators	Project Phase (C, O)*	Project Component or Activity	Potential Effect	Mitigation and Enhancement Measures	Predicted Net Effect
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing programming that assists youth and other underrepresented groups in gaining the necessary skills to gain employment; ▪ Upgrade/expansion of existing primary school or new primary school; ▪ Space for mental health including counselling and programming; A training centre and a high school, or a combination of both together; ▪ Completing the land-base camp as a healing and teaching space; ▪ A community kitchen for teaching and for helping with food security; and ▪ A stand-alone day care/early years centre, or as part of an expansion on the primary school (Headstart is already operating at the school). 	
Emergency and Protective Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased demand for community emergency and protective services; and ▪ Change in supply and capacity of community emergency and protective services 	C, O	Employment and expenditures; and Potential for Accidents and Malfunctions.	Change to Emergency and Protective Services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased demand for community emergency and protective services; and ▪ Reduced supply and capacity of community 	Construction camps will have first-aid stations to address minor incidents on-site. Helicopters will also be available at camps to provide emergency evacuation to the nearest medical facility. A Community Well-being Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan will monitor of road safety and emergency and protective services capacity.	Yes (net adverse effect)



VC	Indicators	Project Phase (C, O)*	Project Component or Activity	Potential Effect	Mitigation and Enhancement Measures	Predicted Net Effect
				emergency and protective services.	Develop a Road Safety Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Security staff to patrol the construction camp for hazards/threats (e.g. wildlife) and protect workers; ▪ Develop Safety Management Plans; ▪ Workers will also be safety-trained prior to commencing work to ensure they are capable of performing their duties safely; ▪ Develop Health and Safety Plans; ▪ All safety incidents related to the Project will be reported within 24-hours and records of these incidents will be archived; and ▪ The Project will have health and safety staff who are qualified to provide immediate medical care for the construction phase. 	
Community Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased demand for community services and/or infrastructure; and ▪ Change in supply and capacity of community services and/or infrastructure. 	C, O	Employment and expenditures; Potential for Accidents and Malfunctions; and Emissions, Discharges and Wastes.	Change to Community Infrastructure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased demand on community infrastructure; and ▪ Reduced supply and availability of community infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation of temporary construction camps that provide infrastructure services for the Project; ▪ Proposed infrastructure enhancements in the Webeque community as part of a Housing and Infrastructure Enhancement Plan; ▪ An updated Webeque First Nation Capital Planning Study is required for a full 	Yes (net positive effect)



VC	Indicators	Project Phase (C, O)*	Project Component or Activity	Potential Effect	Mitigation and Enhancement Measures	Predicted Net Effect
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and up-to-date needs assessment to confirm upgrades needed for housing and infrastructure; and ▪ Housing and infrastructure enhancements are also outlined as part of the CRP in Appendix N. 	
Community Well-Being and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Change in social cohesion and culture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ quantity of social connections; and ▫ quality of social connections ▪ Change in participation in social and/or cultural events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ participation rate (by event); ▫ number of new (first-time) attendees to regularly held (e.g., annual) events; and ▫ total number of social and/or cultural events held. ▪ Change in safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ perceptions of safety; ▫ traffic safety; ▫ domestic violence rate; ▫ sexual assault rate; and 	C, O	<p>Employment and expenditures; Potential for Accidents and Malfunctions; Operation of Pits, Quarries, and Maintenance Yard/Facility; and Emissions, Discharges and Wastes.</p>	<p>Change to Community Well-Being and Safety; Reduced social Cohesion and Culture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fewer social connections; ▪ Reduced quality of social connections; ▪ Lower participation in social and/or cultural events, and ▪ Fewer number of social and/or cultural events held. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordination of community events that bring together the community and the Project employees; and ▪ Providing culturally relevant training and counselling supports for Indigenous employees. <p>CRP implementation, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishment of a group made of community members to function as Community Liaison Officers; ▪ Developing a grievance mechanism for community concerns and issues; ▪ Creating and implementing training programs focused on the safety of women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people; ▪ Establishing partnerships with KKETs to provide driver's education and licensing; and ▪ Establishing procedures and plans regarding drug and alcohol usage during Project work. 	Yes (net adverse effects for community cohesion, community safety, road safety, community well-being and quality of life)



VC	Indicators	Project Phase (C, O)*	Project Component or Activity	Potential Effect	Mitigation and Enhancement Measures	Predicted Net Effect
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ physical assault rate. ▪ Change in nuisance effects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ air quality (e.g., dust); ▫ noise levels; and ▫ visual effects. 				Develop management plans to address nuisance effects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Air Quality and Dust Control Management Plan; ▪ Noise and Vibration Management Plan; ▪ Light Control Management Plan; and ▪ Construction Waste Management Plan. 	

*C = Construction Phase; O = Operations Phase



14.5 Characterization of Net Effects

This section characterizes the predicted net effects on Social Environment VCs.

The effects assessment follows the general process described in Section 05 (Environmental Assessment / Impact Assessment Approach). The focus of the effects assessment is on predicted net effects, which are the effects that remain after application of the proposed mitigation measures (Section 14.4.8).

Table 14-41 presents definitions for net effects criteria, developed with specific reference to the eight VCs of the Social Environment. These criteria are considered together in the assessment, along with context derived from existing conditions (Section 14.2), description of effects (Section 14.3) and proposed mitigation measures (Section 14.4), to characterize predicted net effects from the Project on the Social Environment VCs (Section 14.5.2).

Table 14-41: Criteria for Characterization of Predicted Net Effects on Social Environment VCs

Characterization Criteria	Description	Quantitative Measure or Definition of Qualitative Categories
Direction	Relates to the value of the effect in relation to the existing conditions	<p>Positive – Net gain or benefit; effect is desirable.</p> <p>Neutral – No change compared with baseline conditions and trends.</p> <p>Negative – Net loss or adverse effect; effect is undesirable.</p>
Magnitude	The amount of change in measurable parameters or the VC relative to existing conditions	<p>Negligible – No measurable change.</p> <p>Low – The net effect may be measurable but represents a small change relative to existing conditions.</p> <p>Moderate – The net effect will be measurable but represents a moderate change relative to existing conditions.</p> <p>High – The net effect will be measurable to a high degree relative to existing conditions.</p>
Geographic Extent	Refers to the spatial area over which a net effect is expected to occur or can be detected within the Project Footprint, Local Study Area and Regional Study Area	<p>Project Footprint – The net effect is confined to the Project Footprint or Project Development Area.</p> <p>Local Study Area – The net effect is confined to the Local Study Area.</p> <p>Regional Study Area – The net effect extends beyond the Local Study Area boundary but is confined within the Regional Study Area.</p>
Timing	Indicates the importance of timing (e.g., dates or seasons) of the net effect	<p>Not time sensitive – The net effect is not sensitive to the timing of a Project phase and/or specific Project activity.</p> <p>Time sensitive – The net effect is sensitive to the timing of a Project phase and/or specific Project activity.</p>

Characterization Criteria	Description	Quantitative Measure or Definition of Qualitative Categories
Duration	The period of time required until the measurable indicators or the VC returns to its existing (baseline) condition, or the net effect can no longer be measured or otherwise perceived	<p>Short-term – The net effect is restricted to no more than the duration of the construction phase (approximately 5 years).</p> <p>Medium-term – The net effect extends through the operations phase of the Project (75-year life cycle).</p> <p>Long-term – The net effect extends beyond the operations phase (greater than 75 years).</p> <p>Permanent – Recovery to baseline conditions unlikely.</p>
Frequency	Refers to the rate of occurrence of an effect over the duration of the Project or in a specific phase	<p>Infrequent – The net effect is expected to occur rarely.</p> <p>Intermittent – The net effect is expected to occur intermittently.</p> <p>Continuous – The net effect is expected to occur continually.</p>
Context	Considers sensitivity and resilience of the VC to project-related change	<p>High resilience – The VC has high resilience or ability to adapt to changes in the measurement indicator and low sensitivity to changes caused by the Project.</p> <p>Moderate resilience – The VC has a moderate resilience or ability to adapt to changes in the measurement indicator and has moderate sensitivity to potential changes caused by the Project.</p> <p>Low resilience – The VC has low resilience or ability to adapt to changes in the measurement indicator and is sensitivity to potential changes caused by the Project.</p>
Input from Indigenous Peoples	Views of the Indigenous communities and groups in assigning the criteria to be used and in characterizing the effects	<p>Inputs Received: Inputs received during engagement and consultation, and participation in the EAR/IS process, in assigning the criteria to be used and in characterizing the effects.</p> <p>Inputs not Received: No inputs were received during EAR/IS development; or no engagement and consultation occurred during EA/IA development.</p>
Reversibility	Describes whether a measurable indicator or the VC can return to its existing condition after the project activity ceases	<p>Reversible – The net effect is likely to be reversed after activity completion and rehabilitation.</p> <p>Irreversible – The net effect is unlikely to be reversed.</p>
Likelihood of Occurrence	Measure of the likelihood that an activity will result in an effect	<p>Unlikely – The net effect is not likely to occur.</p> <p>Possible – The net effect may occur but is not likely.</p> <p>Probable – The net effect is likely to occur.</p> <p>Certain – The net effect will occur.</p>

14.5.1 Potential Effect Pathways Not Carried Through for Further Assessment

Potential effect pathways with negligible or no Project effect (**Section 14.3.8**), or those which are expected to be eliminated through the implementation of mitigation measures (**Section 14.4.8**), are provided below. Potential effects that remain following the implementation of mitigation measures are carried forward for further assessment in **Section 14.5.2**.



14.5.1.1 Change to Population and Demographics

- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increase in-migration of temporary workers → Increase in temporary population.
- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in population.
- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increase in in-migration of temporary workers → Increase in temporary population.
- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in population.

14.5.1.2 Change to Housing and Temporary Accommodations

- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Construction and use of supportive infrastructure → Construction of temporary construction camps → Increase in temporary accommodations.
- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in demand for housing → Decrease in housing availability.
- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in demand for housing → Decrease in housing availability.
- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increase in non-local workers → Use of temporary accommodations.

14.5.1.3 Change to Community Services

- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → In-migration of non-local workers and net in-migration of community members → Change in use of and needs for community services → Effect on availability of community services.
- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → In-migration of non-local workers and net in-migration of community members → Change in use of and needs for community services → Effect on availability of community services.

14.5.1.4 Change to Education, Training and Traditional Learning

- RSA: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased education and training attainment related to Project opportunities → Decreased interest and capacity for traditional learning programming.
- RSA: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased interest in education, training and skills development opportunities → Increased education and training attainment
- RSA: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased interest in education and training attainment → Increased demand for education and training → Decreased availability of education and training programming and facility space



- RSA: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increased education and training attainment related to Project opportunities → Decreased interest and capacity for traditional learning programming.
- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Construction Activities → Road use → Increased access to land → Increased access to land-based traditional learning
- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Road use → Increased access to land → Increased access to land-based traditional learning

14.5.1.5 Change to Emergency and Protective Services

- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased demand for emergency and protective services → Decreased availability of emergency and protective services.
- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increased demand for emergency and protective services → Decreased availability of emergency and protective services.

14.5.1.6 Change to Community Infrastructure

- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increase in population → Increased demand for community infrastructure services (e.g., community buildings, water treatment, wastewater treatment, solid waste, electricity) → Decrease in availability of community infrastructures services.
- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Construction Activities → Emissions, Discharges and Wastes → Increased demand for infrastructure services for the Project → Decrease in availability of community infrastructures services.
- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Operation, maintenance and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increase in population → Increased demand for community infrastructure services (e.g., community buildings, water treatment, wastewater treatment, solid waste, electricity) → Decrease in availability of community infrastructures services.
- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Operation, maintenance and repair of road → Emissions, Discharges and Wastes → Increased demand for infrastructure services for the Project → Decrease in availability of community infrastructures services.

14.5.1.7 Change to Community Well-Being and Safety

- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Construction jobs → In-migration of temporary workers → Increased non-local population → Reduced Community Well-Being and Safety.
- Other LSA Communities and RSA: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Operations and maintenance jobs → In-migration of temporary workers → Increased non-local population → Reduced Community Well-Being and Safety.



14.5.2 Predicted Net Effects

Following the implementation of mitigation measures and enhancement measures, a net effect on the Social Environment VCs may remain. The predicted net effects are characterized in the following subsections.

14.5.2.1 Change to Population and Demographics

Webequie LSA: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in population

Webequie LSA: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in population

With the implementation of the CRP, the Proponent anticipates a positive increase in the community member population within the Webequie First Nation. The approach of the CRP is intended to be holistic and inclusive of the views shared by subgroups of the population of Webequie First Nation and the other LSA communities. The CRP will consider the interconnections of effects of the Project on social, economic, non-traditional land use, and Indigenous Peoples and impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. The CRP will outline the overall approach for the mitigation of any adverse effects and the enhancement of any positive effects of the Project, including address the gaps in existing community services and infrastructure and increasing employment opportunities associated with Project. These opportunities may attract more off-reserve First Nation members to move to Webequie First Nation, or to remain in the Webequie First Nation.

For the Project, the material increase to the population and changing demographics are limited to Webequie First Nation. These changes will predominantly occur during the construction phase. The effects on the other LSA communities and RSA are relatively immaterial as it is assumed workers from these communities will commute to the Project site rather than permanently migrate.

Following the implementation of proposed mitigation measures described in **Section 14.4.1**, there is anticipated to be a **net positive effect** for the change in population and demographics, predominantly within the Webequie First Nation. The **net positive effect** is characterized below.

- **Direction:** A **positive effect** on population and demographics is anticipated from a net in-migration of Webequie First Nation members during the construction and operations phases.
- **Magnitude:** The magnitude of population increase is likely to be **low**, given current population trends, and current number of qualified Webequie candidates available. Given the limited number of jobs available matching the skills of the current population, there is likely to be a low number of former residents returning return to the Webequie First Nation to take on Project-related employment. The effect of the Project on Webequie First Nation population and demographics is anticipated to be low in magnitude.
- **Geographic Extent: LSA: Webequie First Nation;** The population increase will be contained to Webequie First Nation, with negligible effects in other LSA communities and the RSA.
- **Timing:** The population increase will be **time sensitive** to the schedule of work activities. Construction will take place over five to six years.



- **Duration:** The population increase is expected to be **medium-term**, with the change in population being realized during the construction phase and operations phase.
- **Frequency:** The population changes will likely occur **intermittently** throughout construction and operation with the in-migration/out-migration of Webequie First Nation members. The population will likely change depending on the needs of the Project.
- **Context: Low resilience;** Small changes are noticeable within the Webequie First Nation. The current population is small; therefore, the ability of the community to adapt to population changes is contingent on supportive infrastructure and community services.
- **Input From Indigenous Peoples: Input received and ongoing;** Ongoing engagement and consultation with primarily Indigenous First Nations within the LSA, including Webequie First Nation has been ongoing throughout project development. The outcome of consultation to-date has formed the basis of the Social Environment VCs.
- **Reversibility:** The change in population is **reversible** depending on the sustainability of employment opportunities.
- **Likelihood of Occurrence:** Based on Project employment needs, the likelihood of population increase within the Webequie First Nation community is **probable**.

The net effects characterization of the Population and Demographics VC is summarized in **Section 14.5.3**.

14.5.2.2 Change to Housing and Temporary Accommodations

Webequie LSA: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Construction and use of supportive infrastructure → Construction of temporary construction camps → Increase in temporary accommodations

Webequie LSA: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in population → Increase in demand for housing → Decrease in housing availability

Webequie LSA: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increase in non-local workers → Increase in temporary accommodations

Webequie LSA: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members → Increase in population → Increase in demand for housing → Decrease in housing availability

As Project requirements for worker accommodation during construction may result in temporary in-migration and increased demand for housing, it is anticipated that this could cause greater pressure on supply of housing within the Webequie First Nation. There are no anticipated effects on the housing supply in RSA or other communities within the LSA.

The Project has the potential to increase units of on-reserve housing which could allow off-reserve Webequie First Nation community members to return or relocate to the Webequie community. In turn, returning members would increase the size of the workforce. With a potentially larger workforce, more Project-related employment opportunities could be filled by Webequie First Nation and other LSA communities.



The Project may contribute to improving the quality of the housing within the Webequie First Nation through major repairs. An improved suitability of on-reserve housing (e.g., adequately sized for the household residents) would allow more community members to enter and participate in the workforce, as better home conditions allow potential workers to be suitably housed and able to seek job opportunities related to the Project.

The Project will include the construction of four separate accommodations for the non-local, fly-in workforce to offset demands on the local housing supply. Any new housing built as a result of the Project would be to the benefit of those members already living on-reserve or returning members from off-reserve.

Following the implementation of proposed mitigation measures described in **Section 14.4.2**, there is anticipated to be a **net positive effect** for the availability of Housing and Temporary Accommodations, primarily within the Webequie First Nation. The **net positive effect** is characterized below.

- **Direction:** A **net positive effect** on housing and temporary accommodations is anticipated due to increased demand for housing with limited housing availability.
- **Magnitude:** The magnitude is likely be **low** during construction phase and operations phase following enhancement measures that include increased housing stock over time.
- **Geographic Extent: LSA: Webequie First Nation;** The extent of effects will be confined to the Project site and Webequie First Nation.
- **Timing: Time sensitive;** The demand on the existing housing supply may fluctuate depending on seasonality and the nature of the Project activity.
- **Duration:** The duration of the effect on housing and temporary accommodations is **medium-term**, extending through the operations phase.
- **Frequency:** The demand on housing and temporary accommodations is anticipated to **occur intermittently** for the construction phase and operations phase, depending on the season and nature of the Project activity.
- **Context:** Small changes are noticeable within the Webequie First Nation. The current population is small; therefore, there is likely a **high sensitivity** to an increased demand on the housing supply. The ability of the community to adapt to population changes is contingent on new housing infrastructure and community services.
- **Input From Indigenous Peoples: Input received and ongoing;** Ongoing engagement and consultation with primarily Indigenous communities within the LSA, including Webequie First Nation has been ongoing throughout project development. The outcome of consultation to-date has formed the basis of the Social Environment VCs.
- **Reversibility: Irreversible,** as the housing stock is a long-term will be expanded with enhancement measures to meet demand and needs for Webequie community readiness.
- **Likelihood of Occurrence:** The demand for housing is **probable** based on the employment and labour demands of the Project.

The net effects characterization of the Housing and Temporary Accommodations VC is summarized in **Section 14.5.3**.



14.5.2.3 Change to Community Services

Webequie LSA: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → In-migration of non-local workers and net in-migration of community members → Change in use of and needs for community services → Effect on availability of community services

Webequie LSA: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → In-migration of non-local workers and net in-migration of community members → Change in use of and needs for community services → Effect on availability of community services

An increase in demand for community services is likely to occur in the absence of the Project providing supplementary in-community services to address the demand on the existing services, or in the absence of similar services for non-local and temporary workforce. These community services include healthcare, cultural, recreation, family services, childcare, youth programs, Elder care and communications (Section 14.2).

The demand on community services is predicted to be of low magnitude, as mitigative attributes as part of the Project include the installation construction camps to accommodate direct on-site workers and services to adjust for the higher population and alleviate strain on the existing community services in Webequie. Monitoring associated with the CRP will assess changes in demand/pressure on Community Services. Results of community services monitoring could identify the need for expanding existing community services including those associated with substance use and adverse social behaviours.

Changes in the demand for cultural and recreational facilities is likely to be limited, since non-local workers will be housed at construction camps, and the net in-migration of community members is not likely to affect these facilities appreciably.

Following the implementation of proposed mitigation measures described in Section 14.4.3, there is anticipated to be a **net adverse effect** for the availability of Community Services. The **net adverse effect** is characterized below.

- **Direction:** An **adverse effect** on existing community services is anticipated resulting from an increased demand from Project workforce. An increased demand on existing community services would affect the availability of these services.
- **Magnitude:** The demand on and reduced availability of community services is likely to be of **low magnitude**, representing a small change to existing services after the implementation of mitigation measures. Construction camps will provide services for the Project workforce and the workforce during the operations phase will be relatively lower in number.
- **Geographic Extent: LSA: Webequie First Nation;** The demand on community services is predicted to be restricted to the Webequie First Nation.
- **Timing: Time sensitive;** The demand for community services may fluctuate depending on the size and presence of the workforce within the community. For example, during peak employment the demand for community services will be higher than other periods when the labour requirements are lower.
- **Duration: Medium-term;** The demand for community services will remain through the operations phase, with less anticipated demand through operations.
- **Frequency:** The demand on community services will occur on an **intermittent** basis depending on specific demand and supply circumstances.



- **Context:** There is a **high sensitivity/low resilience** to changes in community services due to limited capacity within the Webequie First Nation.
- **Input From Indigenous Peoples: Input received and ongoing;** Ongoing engagement and consultation with primarily Indigenous communities within the LSA, including Webequie First Nation has been ongoing throughout project development. The outcome of consultation to-date has formed the basis of the Social Environment VCs.
- **Reversibility:** The demand on community services is **reversible** as it would dissipate following Project construction. The demand for community services would be as needed during operation.
- **Likelihood of Occurrence:** The likelihood of an increased demand on community services during construction and operation is **probable**.

The net effects characterization of the Community Services VC is summarized in **Section 14.5.3**.

14.5.2.4 Change to Education, Training and Traditional Learning

14.5.2.4.1 Education and Training Attainment

Webequie LSA, other LSA Communities and RSA: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased interest in education, training and skills development opportunities → Increased education and training attainment

Webequie LSA, Other LSA Communities and RSA: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increased interest in education, training and skills development opportunities → Increased education and attainment

During the construction phase, the direct labour requirements for the Project will likely result in an increased interest and demand for training and development within Webequie First Nation and in the other LSA communities. The labour requirement during construction is estimated to be between 35 and 144 (**Table 14-34**), not including indirect employment opportunities in other sectors in association with the Project, such as hospitality, healthcare, education mining, transportation, housing development and others (**Section 14.2**). The skills and education necessary to fill these direct and indirect positions will require a level of education and training only offered through educational institutions or training centres within Webequie, other LSA communities and in the RSA.

A potential increase in education and training attainment by residents in Webequie and other LSA communities is predicted to be measurable, representing a small to moderate change relative to existing conditions. There is predicted to be a negligible to low effect on levels of education and training attainment among the population in the RSA.

Given that the Project will have specific employment requirements, the likelihood of improving education and training amongst these individuals is likely to occur if barriers to education and training are mitigated through Project support. Following the implementation of proposed mitigation measures described in **Section 14.4.4**, there is anticipated to be a **net positive effect** on education and training attainment. The **net positive effect** is characterized below.

- **Direction: Net positive effect;** A positive trend in education and training attainment among the Webequie First Nation population and other LSA communities is anticipated, resulting from a potential increase in capacity for Education, Training and traditional Learning Programming and Facility Space to address the labour requirements of the Project.
- **Magnitude:** The effect is predicted to have a **moderate** change from the baseline conditions.



- **Geographic Extent: LSA and RSA:** The effect is anticipated to be concentrated in Webequie First Nation and other LSA communities. RSA may experience a positive effect on the level of education and attainment among the population.
- **Timing:** Education and training attainment is **sensitive to timing**. While education and training can occur throughout the year, attaining the necessary credentials and certifications to become employable by the Project or adjacent sectors will likely require forward planning by prospective students to benefit from Project opportunities.
- **Duration:** Education and training attainment is predicted to be **medium-term**, lasting through the construction phase and operations phase.
- **Frequency:** The increased attainment of education and training is likely to be **intermittent** throughout construction and operations.
- **Context:** There is a **moderate resilience** to the level of education particularly in the LSA communities due to the limited level of education and attainment under existing conditions. The ability of community members to attain higher education and training is predicted to be **moderate** with mitigations in place.
- **Input From Indigenous Peoples: Input received and ongoing;** Ongoing engagement and consultation with primarily Indigenous communities within the LSA, including Webequie First Nation has been ongoing throughout project development. The outcome of consultation to-date has formed the basis of the Social Environment VCs.
- **Reversibility:** The effect is **irreversible**, as the increased skilled workforce will be equipped to apply skills beyond the Project requirements.
- **Likelihood of Occurrence:** An increase in attainment of education and training is **probable**.

14.5.2.4.2 Availability of Education and Training Programming and Facility Space

Webequie LSA, Other LSA Communities: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased interest in education and training attainment → Increased demand for education and training → Decreased availability of education and training programming and facility space

Webequie LSA Other LSA Communities: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increased interest in education and training attainment → Increased demand for education and training → Decreased availability of education and training programming and facility space

The availability of education and training programming and facility space could be affected by an increase in demand and limited capacity to deliver education and training programming within Webequie First Nation and other communities in the LSA. With the implementation of mitigation measures described in **Section 14.4.4**, there is anticipated to be a **net adverse effect** on the availability of education and training programming. The **net adverse effect** is characterized below.

- **Direction:** An **adverse effect** on Education, Training and traditional Learning Programming and Facility Space could occur. The increased demand on higher education and training by prospective students seeking employment opportunities with the Project or adjacent sectors could result in reduced availability of education and training programming and facility space.
- **Magnitude:** The effect is anticipated to be **low** in magnitude as it will represent a small change after mitigation measures are applied, including ongoing monitoring and adaptive management.
- **Geographic Extent: LSA;** The effect is anticipated to be concentrated in the Webequie First Nation especially, but also may occur in other LSA communities.



- **Timing:** There is **sensitivity to timing**. While the education and training can occur throughout the year, facility space and program capacity are limited and many programs have set intakes throughout the year. The ability for these institutions to accommodate students in time for Project needs may require partnership and planning with institutions and educational program centres.
- **Duration:** The demand in education and training programming, and facility space is likely to be **medium-term**, lasting through the construction phase and operations phase.
- **Frequency:** The demand in education and training programming, and facility space is likely to be **intermittent** in nature for the duration of construction and operations.
- **Context:** There is a **moderate resiliency** of existing programs and facility spaces to adapt to the Project-related demands for education and training, particularly in Webequie and the LSA communities. There is limited capacity of education and training programming under existing conditions.
- **Input From Indigenous Peoples: Input received and ongoing;** Ongoing engagement and consultation with primarily Indigenous communities within the LSA, including Webequie First Nation has been ongoing throughout project development. The outcome of consultation to-date has formed the basis of the Social Environment VCs.
- **Reversibility:** The potential constraint on the availability of education and programming, and facility space is a **reversible** effect, as the highest demand would be associated with the construction phase. On completion of construction, the availability of programming is anticipated to return to baseline conditions.
- **Likelihood of Occurrence:** The occurrence of the effect is **probable**.

14.5.2.4.3 Traditional Learning Programming

Webequie LSA and Other LSA Communities: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased education and training attainment related to Project opportunities → Decreased interest and capacity for traditional learning programming

Webequie LSA and Other LSA Communities: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increased education and training attainment related to Project opportunities → Decreased interest and capacity for traditional learning programming

The potential increased demand for educational and training programming related to the Project could result in decreased interest in learning traditional land-based skills and reduced capacity for the Webequie community and other LSA communities to offer traditional learning programming. The focus on Project-related skills could also require individuals to be away from their home community more often to attend courses only offered off-reserve.

Following the implementation of proposed mitigation measures described in **Section 14.4.4**, there is anticipated to be a **net adverse effect** on traditional learning programming (demand for and availability of). The **net adverse effect** is characterized below.

- **Direction:** An **adverse effect** on traditional learning programming. There could be a reduced interest by community members in traditional-based skills and programs in favour of skills training and education aimed at Project job opportunities. A reduced availability or offering of traditional programs could occur due to a lack of interest.
- **Magnitude:** A reduced interest in traditional learning and a reduced offering of traditional learning is anticipated to be **low** in magnitude as it will represent a small change after mitigation measures are applied, including ongoing monitoring and adaptive management through the CRP.



- **Geographic Extent: LSA;** The effect is anticipated to occur predominantly within Webequie First Nation, but a reduced interest in traditional learning could also occur in other LSA communities.
- **Timing:** There is **no** sensitivity to timing, as the traditional learning may occur throughout the year.
- **Duration:** The effect is likely to be **medium-term**, lasting through the construction phase and operations phase.
- **Frequency:** The effect is likely to be **intermittent** depending on specific demand and supply circumstances.
- **Context:** There is a **high sensitivity/low resilience** to changes particularly in the LSA communities due to ongoing challenges of limited capacity for traditional learning programming and pressures on traditional way of life under existing conditions.
- **Input From Indigenous Peoples: Input received and ongoing;** Ongoing engagement and consultation with primarily Indigenous communities within the LSA, including Webequie First Nation has been ongoing throughout project development. The outcome of consultation to-date has formed the basis of the Social Environment VCs.
- **Reversibility:** The effect is **reversible**, although as traditional way of life requires ongoing practice and knowledge transfer to youth, mitigation measures are required to monitor and adapt to adverse conditions where traditional programming is affected by Project-focused priorities in the communities.
- **Likelihood of Occurrence:** The occurrence of the effect is **probable**.

The net effects characterization of the Education, Training and Traditional Learning and Facility Space VC is summarized in **Section 14.5.3**.

14.5.2.4.4 Increased access to land-based traditional learning

Webequie LSA: Construction Activities → Road use → Increased access to land → Increased access to land-based traditional learning

Webequie LSA: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Road use → Increased access to land → Increased access to land-based traditional learning

The potential increase in access to previously inaccessible land could result in increased potential for traditional activities and skill enhancements. Although this access will be limited to the Right-of-Way of the WSR, it is anticipated it will increase opportunities for expanding on traditional land-based skills and knowledge transfers.

- **Magnitude:** The effects due to increased access to land based traditional learning is expected be **low** in magnitude as it will represent a small change considering the limitations in access.
- **Geographic Extent: Webequie;** The effect is anticipated to occur predominantly within the Project Footprint.
- **Timing:** There is sensitivity to timing, as the effect is expected to be utilized from operations phase.
- **Duration:** The effect is likely to be **long-term**, lasting through the operations phase mainly.
- **Frequency:** The effect is likely to be **intermittent** depending on opportunities available.
- **Context:** There is a **low resilience** to changes particularly in the Project Footprint due to the access being limited to the WSR Right-of-Way.



- **Input From Indigenous Peoples: Input received and ongoing;** Ongoing engagement and consultation with primarily Indigenous communities within the LSA, including Webequie First Nation has been ongoing throughout project development. The outcome of consultation to-date has formed the basis of the Social Environment VCs.
- **Reversibility:** The effect is **irreversible**, as increase access will continue with the continuation of WSR.
- **Likelihood of Occurrence:** The occurrence of the effect is **probable**.

The net effects characterization of the Education, Training and Traditional Learning and Facility Space VC is summarized in **Section 14.5.3**.

14.5.2.5 Change to Emergency and Protective Services

Webequie LSA: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increased demand for emergency and protective services → Decreased availability of emergency and protective services

Webequie LSA: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increased demand for emergency and protective services → Decreased availability of emergency and protective services

Emergency services in Webequie First Nation are currently limited, and the potential demand on these services during construction could overburden the current system even with the implementation of mitigation measures described in **Section 14.4.5**. At present, Webequie First Nation does not have the equipment, capacity or the mandate to provide increased emergency and protective services for the Project. Furthermore, the introduction of non-resident workers to the community could introduce new challenges for existing protective services such as Crisis Intervention, Nishnawbe Aski Police Service, Family Resource Centre, and Peacekeepers.

Following the implementation of proposed mitigation measures described in **Section 14.4.5**, there is anticipated to be a **net adverse effect** on the demand and availability of emergency and protective services within Webequie First Nation. The net adverse effect is characterized below.

- **Direction:** An **adverse effect** on emergency and protective services may occur due to increased pressure on demand for these services, which could strain existing capacity in the community.
- **Magnitude:** The effect will be **moderate** in magnitude as there is predicted to be a measurable change from existing conditions, after mitigation measures.
- **Geographic Extent: LSA: Webequie First Nation;** The effect is anticipated to be limited to Webequie First Nation.
- **Timing:** There is **no sensitivity to timing**, as the need for emergency and protective services may occur throughout the year.
- **Duration:** The duration of effect is likely to be **medium-term**, lasting for the construction phase and through the operations phase.
- **Frequency:** The effect is anticipated to be **infrequent** as the Project will provide emergency and protective services for the construction workforce. During operations, the effect is also anticipated to be **infrequent** based on the workforce requirements and well-established and low-risk road maintenance activities associated with the operation phase.



- **Context:** There is **low resiliency** of emergency and protective services due to the limited resources and availability within the community.
- **Input From Indigenous Peoples: Input received and ongoing;** Ongoing engagement and consultation with primarily Indigenous communities within the LSA, including Webequie First Nation has been ongoing throughout project development. The outcome of consultation to-date has formed the basis of the Social Environment VCs.
- **Reversibility:** The effect on Emergency and Protective Services is **reversible** with the implementation of on-site emergency and protective services during the construction phase.
- **Likelihood of Occurrence:** The occurrence of the effect is **probable**.

The net effects characterization of the Emergency and Protective Services VC is summarized in **Section 14.5.3**.

14.5.2.6 Change to Community Infrastructure

Webequie LSA: Construction Activities → Employment and expenditures → Increase in population → Increased demand for community infrastructure services (e.g., community buildings, water treatment, wastewater treatment, solid waste, electricity) → Decrease in availability of community infrastructure services

Webequie LSA: Emissions, Discharges and Wastes → Increased demand for infrastructure services for the Project → Decrease in availability of community infrastructure services

Webequie LSA: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Employment and expenditures → Increase in population → Increased demand for community infrastructure services (e.g., community buildings, water treatment, wastewater treatment, solid waste, electricity) → Decrease in availability of community infrastructure services

Webequie LSA: Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Emissions, Discharges and Wastes → Increased demand for infrastructure services for the Project → Decrease in availability of community infrastructure services

The Project is expected to have a net effect on existing community infrastructure within the LSA, specifically within Webequie First Nation. The Webequie community faces ongoing challenges related to Community Infrastructure. The CCP (Webequie First Nation, 2023) identifies the need for upgrades to community infrastructure capacity in the community. These include improvements and upgrades for sewer and potable water, training of operators for these facilities, expanding and upgrading roads, upgrading power supply via hydropower, and identifying additional sources of potable water (such as springs). The Proponent proposes to offset existing capacity through the construction of community-related infrastructure specific to the Project. Without upgrades to the community infrastructure or the addition of new infrastructure services, the Project would place additional demand on community services, potentially beyond the existing capacity.

Additionally, the Proponent proposes to increase community readiness as a way to benefit from WSR and other future projects. This includes the implementation of the community well-being monitoring and adaptive management to monitor infrastructure capacity and assess the need for further improvements.

The potential benefits of implementing these enhancements could result in:

- Increased workforce and higher workforce participation rates;



- Reduced barriers for community members to achieve higher education;
- New space from on-reserve training and train and develop skills that will allow the community to fill more employment roles specific to the Project;
- Increased opportunities and lowered barriers for community members to participate in cultural activities;
- Sustained worker participation in the traditional economy; and
- Improved business and administrative capacity to develop entrepreneurship, partnership and supply relationships to benefit from the Project.

Following the implementation of proposed mitigation and enhancement measures there is anticipated to be a **net positive effect** on community infrastructure within Webequie First Nation. The **net positive effect** is characterized below.

- **Direction:** A **positive effect** on Community Infrastructure is anticipated after enhancement measures and increased demand from the Project is taken into account.
- **Magnitude:** The effect will be **low** in magnitude as changes to Community Infrastructure may be small relative to existing conditions.
- **Geographic Extent: LSA: Webequie First Nation;** The effect will be limited to Webequie First Nation.
- **Timing:** The effect will be **time sensitive** to the schedule of work activities.
- **Duration:** The duration of effect will be **medium-term**, lasting through the operations phase.
- **Frequency:** The effect is anticipated to be **continuous**, as community infrastructure is required on a regular basis.
- **Context:** There is a **low resiliency** due to the limited capacity of existing community infrastructure in the Webequie community to absorb increased demand.
- **Input From Indigenous Peoples: Input received and ongoing;** Ongoing engagement and consultation with primarily Indigenous communities within the LSA, including Webequie First Nation has been ongoing throughout project development. The outcome of consultation to-date has formed the basis of the Social Environment VCs.
- **Reversibility:** The effect will be **irreversible** as the Community Infrastructure represents a long-term asset for the Webequie community.
- **Likelihood of Occurrence:** The effect is **possible**, as no agreement is in place for funding.

The net effects characterization of the Community Infrastructure VC is summarized in **Section 14.5.3**.

14.5.2.7 Change to Community Well-Being and Safety

14.5.2.7.1 Change in Community Cohesion

Webequie LSA: Employment and expenditures → In-migration of temporary workers → Reduced community cohesion

Webequie LSA: Employment and expenditures → Operations jobs → In-migration of temporary workers → Increased non-local population → Reduced community cohesion

Understanding Webequie First Nation culture and community cohesion helps to understand who may be more vulnerable to potential project-related changes to Webequie First Nation's culture and community cohesion, such as youth, women and girls, Elders and land users. Community cohesion includes



understanding the types of social and cultural events in Webequie First Nation and level of participation by community members, and social connections within the community (Section 19 of the EAR/IS).

It is assumed that there will be interactions between construction workforce and Webequie First Nation and depending on the nature and extent of the interactions, this may lead to reduced community cohesion, a reduced sense of community and loss of a family feel of the community. The potential difference in attitudes and values between Webequie First Nation and the non-local workforce, e.g., differences in ways of living (Smith and Krannich, 2000) between locals and non-locals could result in tension and social conflict. Such tension and social conflict have the potential to disrupt the cohesion and social stability of Webequie First Nation, which may affect youth/younger generation that are already affected by loss of traditional values and culture (Stein and Stein, 2015; AtkinsRéal, 2022b).

Seniors/Elders may be more susceptible to social changes such as changes to or loss of family and social groups, as they are often vulnerable to loneliness and isolation, which can be associated to negative health outcomes. Elders are important in the transfer of traditional knowledge, values, and culture to younger generations (Viscogliosi et al., 2020), and Webequie First Nation community members have expressed interest in improving Elder participation in social events, particularly with youth, and in providing more community services (AtkinsRéal, 2022b; 2022c, as cited in InterGroup, 2024). Engagement in meaningful social activities is an important factor in minimizing the risk of loneliness and isolation for Elders (Tonkin et al., 2018).

A potential decline in the cultural engagement of youth due to increased employment, long shifts (i.e., rotations), interactions with non-locals, and non-Indigenous employees could place youth more at risk of negative behaviours, such as substance use (InterGroup, 2024).

Indigenous women and girls will also be disproportionately affected by changes to community cohesion; however, such impact cannot be assessed without the recognition of colonial impacts which have caused long-lasting inequalities in Indigenous women and girls' social position and treatment (Mckinley et al., 2021). The severity of these issues is often exacerbated by the presence of industrial projects near Indigenous communities (Bond and Quinlan 2018). The risk of sexual violence, substance abuse and sexually transmitted infections due to rape and sex trafficking is particularly high for Indigenous women and girls in proximity to industrial camps (Firelight Group, 2017). Community cohesion can serve as a protective factor against the most overt forms of abuse targeting women and girls (Poix et al., 2022; InterGroup, 2024).

Following the implementation of proposed mitigation and enhancement measures described in **Section 14.4.7** there is anticipated to be a **net adverse effect** on community cohesion within Webequie First Nation. The net adverse effect is characterized below.

- **Direction:** A **negative effect** on community cohesion could occur due to increased pressures and interactions with non-local workers could reduce “family feel” and strain existing community cohesion in the community.
- **Magnitude:** The effects will be **moderate** in magnitude as there will be a moderate change relative to existing conditions following mitigation measures.
- **Geographic Extent:** **LSA: Webequie First Nation;** The effects will be limited to Webequie First Nation.
- **Timing:** The effect will be **time sensitive** to the schedule of work activities.
- **Duration:** The duration of effects will be **medium-term**, potentially lasting through the construction and operations phase.



- **Frequency:** The effect is anticipated to be **intermittent** as community and non-local temporary population interactions will occur for the duration of Project construction and intermittently through operations.
- **Context:** There is a **low resiliency** due to the limited capacity of the Webequie community to adjust to new pressures stemming from well-being and safety.
- **Input From Indigenous Peoples: Input received and ongoing;** Ongoing engagement and consultation with primarily Indigenous communities within the LSA, including Webequie First Nation has been ongoing throughout project development. The outcome of consultation to-date has formed the basis of the Social Environment VCs.
- **Reversibility:** The effect is **irreversible** as changes to community cohesion could be long-lasting.
- **Likelihood of Occurrence:** The occurrence of the effects is **probable**.

14.5.2.7.2 Change in Community Safety

Webequie LSA: Employment and expenditures → Construction jobs → In-migration of temporary workers → Increased non-local population → Increased risk of negative interactions → Reduced feeling of personal safety

Webequie LSA: Employment and expenditures → Operations jobs → In-migration of temporary workers → Increased non-local population → Increased risk of negative interactions → Reduced feeling of personal safety

In order to recognize the types of harms the Webequie First Nation experiences, identify influences of crime and violences and identify victimized groups, it is important to understand the current community safety conditions in the Webequie community. Based on the outcome of the Webequie First Nation Socio-Economic Survey (AtkinsRéal, 2022b, as cited in InterGroup, 2024) the largest safety concerns in the community are high rates of substance abuse (72.4%), bullying or cyber-bullying (64.8%), high rates of domestic (family) violence (43.5%) and child negligence (40%).

Development of the WSR Project would result in presence of “man camps”/temporary construction camps, an increase in incomes and driving on the all-season road (InterGroup, 2024). These changes could affect community safety and perception of safety due to the potential for gender-based violence, family violence and transportation-related safety issues.

Community members expressed concerns that the availability of high disposable income from the Project could increase drug and alcohol use leading to increased family violence in Webequie First Nation. Employment with the WSR Project would lead to increased income which could increase alcohol and substance use, serving as a catalyst for family violence (Dalseg et al., 2018).

Following the implementation of proposed mitigation and enhancement measures described in **Section 14.4.7** there is anticipated to be a **net adverse effect** on community safety within Webequie First Nation. The **net adverse effect** is characterized below.

- **Direction:** The **negative effect** on community safety could occur due to potential for negative interactions with non-local workers which could affect perceptions of safety in Webequie First Nation. Employment or workplace pressures in the community could exacerbate mental health or substance abuse challenges or result in increased rates of family violence.
- **Magnitude:** The effects will be **moderate** in magnitude as there will be a moderate change relative to existing conditions.



- **Geographic Extent: LSA: Webequie First Nation;** The effects will be limited to Webequie First Nation.
- **Timing:** The effects are **not sensitive** to time of year or seasonality.
- **Duration:** The duration of effects will be **medium-term**, potentially lasting through the operations phase.
- **Frequency:** The effects are anticipated to be **continuous**, as community and non-local temporary population interactions will be on a limited but constant basis.
- **Context:** There is a **low resiliency** due to the limited capacity of the community to adjust to new pressures stemming from the Project.
- **Input From Indigenous Peoples: Input received and ongoing;** Ongoing engagement and consultation with primarily Indigenous communities within the LSA, including Webequie First Nation has been ongoing throughout project development. The outcome of consultation to-date has formed the basis of the Social Environment VCs.
- **Reversibility:** The effects will be **reversible** as the construction phase completed, and non-local temporary population leaves the Project site.
- **Likelihood of Occurrence:** The occurrence of the effect is **probable**.

14.5.2.7.3 Change in Traffic Safety

Webequie LSA: Construction of road → Increased traffic in community → Increased risk of traffic accidents

Webequie LSA: Road use → Increased risk of traffic accidents (risk of impaired driving, hitchhiking, and people driving without a license)

There may be an increased risk of traffic accidents during the construction and operations phase of the Project. Traffic safety has been a common concern raised by Webequie First Nation community members about the Project (AtkinsRéalis, 2022b). Specific concerns that have been raised include the risk of impaired driving, hitchhiking, and people driving without a license, with several members noting the need for checkpoints along the road to monitor traffic safety (AtkinsRéalis, 2022a; 2022b).

The proposed road usage of the WSR is a projected average annual daily traffic volume of less than 500 vehicles. During the operations phase, it is expected that traffic will comprise primarily of light to medium personal and commercial vehicles, with some heavier truck traffic carrying industrial/mining supplies and equipment. The WSR traffic does not include mineral ore or mine product transportation estimates.

Following the implementation of proposed mitigation and enhancement measures described in **Section 14.4.7** there is anticipated to be a **net adverse effect** on traffic safety within Webequie First Nation. The **net adverse effect** is characterized below.

- **Direction:** The **negative effect** could occur due to increased risk of traffic accidents in Webequie First Nation.
- **Magnitude:** The effects will be **moderate** in magnitude as there will be a moderate change relative to existing conditions.
- **Geographic Extent: LSA: Webequie First Nation;** The effects will be limited to Webequie First Nation.
- **Timing:** The effects will **not be time sensitive**.



- **Duration:** The duration of effects will be **medium-term**, potentially lasting through the operations phase.
- **Frequency:** The effects are anticipated to be **intermittent**.
- **Context:** There is a **low resiliency** due to the potential high consequences of an accident.
- **Input From Indigenous Peoples: Input received and ongoing;** Ongoing engagement and consultation with primarily Indigenous communities within the LSA, including Webequie First Nation has been ongoing throughout project development. The outcome of consultation to-date has formed the basis of the Social Environment VCs.
- **Reversibility:** The effects will be **irreversible** potentially given the potential severity each accident event.
- **Likelihood of Occurrence:** The occurrence of the effect is **certain**.

14.5.2.7.4 Change in Community Well-Being and Quality of Life

Webequie LSA: Construction of road → Increase in nuisance effects (noise, air quality and visual effects) → Reduced well-being and quality of life

Webequie LSA: Road use → Increase in nuisance effects (noise, air quality and visual effects) → Reduced well-being and quality of life

Community members in Webequie First Nation may experience poorer air quality (from dust) during the construction phase, which could be experienced as a nuisance, causing an interference with contributors to well-being such as social and cultural activities, and result in community members experiencing perceived diminished physical and mental well-being. During operations, the air quality assessment concluded that the net effects on air quality were not significant. The net effects were characterized as adverse, frequent in occurrence, of moderate to high magnitude but reversible.

The nuisance effects from noise may result in lower perceived physical and mental well-being and cause interference with social and cultural activities on the land and in the community. However, it is noted that residential areas are located approximately 2 km from the nearest construction camp and water crossing at Eastwood Island and the mainland. For construction, the noise assessment determined noise effects to have adverse net effects of low to moderate magnitude, infrequent and reversible. Noise emissions will be localized, and temporary and net effects are predicted to be not significant. Noise levels associated with the operations phase of the Project are not anticipated to exceed noise thresholds and are thus not anticipated to have a nuisance effect on community members of Webequie First Nation.

The visual assessment concluded that the net effects on the visual landscape are insignificant. Visual effects during operation are not expected to occur within Webequie First Nation. It was determined by the visual assessment that potential receptors do not exist within the settlement, and the road will not be visible from Webequie First Nation.

The effects on well-being with respect to changes in visual landscape would most likely occur at the Winisk Lake water crossing, which provides furthest viewing distance of the WSR road along the route. From the water on Winisk Lake, the viewing distance of the bridge was estimated to be 1.88 km from the north and 1.83 km from the south. The visual effects of the operations phase of the Project may lead to lower perceived physical and mental well-being, and interference with social and cultural activities on the land.



Following the implementation of proposed mitigation and enhancement measures described in **Section 14.4.7** there is anticipated to be a **net adverse effect** on well-being and quality of life within the community. The net adverse effect is characterized below.

- **Direction:** A **negative effect** on community **well-being and quality of life** is anticipated due to increased nuisance effects in Webequie First Nation.
- **Magnitude:** The effects will be **low** in magnitude as there will be a small change relative to existing conditions.
- **Geographic Extent: LSA: Webequie First Nation;** The effects will be limited to Webequie First Nation.
- **Timing:** The effect will be **time sensitive** to the schedule of work activities.
- **Duration:** The duration of effects will be **medium-term**, potentially lasting through the operations phase.
- **Frequency:** The effects are anticipated to be **intermittent**, based on construction activity or operations activity.
- **Context:** There is a **moderate resiliency** due to the low nuisance effects in the baseline conditions.
- **Input From Indigenous Peoples: Input received and ongoing;** Ongoing engagement and consultation with primarily Indigenous communities within the LSA, including Webequie First Nation has been ongoing throughout. net effects characterization of the Community Well-Being and Safety VC is summarized in **Section 14.5.3**.
- **Reversibility:** Effects are **reversible** and can return to baseline once construction is completed.
- **Likelihood of Occurrence:** The occurrence of the event is **certain**

14.5.3 Summary

A summary of the characterization of predicted net effects for Social Environment VCs is provided in **Table 14-42**.



Table 14-42: Summary of Predicted Net Effects on Social Environment VCs

Predicted Net Effect	Net Effects Characterization									
	Project Phase	Direction	Magnitude	Geographic Extent	Timing	Duration	Frequency	Context	Reversibility	Likelihood of Occurrence
Change in Population and Demographics: retainment/in-migration of community members	Construction and Operations	Positive	Low	LSA: Webeque First Nation	Time sensitive to work activities	Medium-term	Intermittent	Low resilience	Reversible	Probable
Change in Housing and Temporary Accommodations: availability of housing	Construction and Operations	Positive	Low	LSA: Webeque First Nation	Time sensitive to work activities	Medium-term	Intermittent	Low resilience	Irreversible	Probable
Change in Community Services: availability of community services	Construction and Operations	Negative	Low	LSA: Webeque First Nation	Time sensitive to work activities	Medium-term	Intermittent	Low resilience	Reversible	Probable
Changes in Education, Training and Traditional Learning Programming: improved education and training attainment	Construction and Operations	Positive	Moderate	LSA: Webeque First Nation Other LSA Communities RSA	Time sensitive to work activities	Medium-term	Intermittent	Moderate resilience	Irreversible	Probable
Changes in Education, Training and Traditional Learning: Availability of education and training programming and facility space	Construction and Operations	Negative	Low	LSA: Webeque First Nation Other LSA Communities	Time sensitive to work activities	Medium-term	Intermittent	Moderate resilience	Reversible	Probable
Changes in Education, Training and Traditional Learning: Availability of traditional learning programming	Construction and Operations	Negative	Low	LSA: Webeque First Nation Other LSA Communities	Not time sensitive	Medium-term	Intermittent	Low resilience	Reversible	Probable
Changes in Education, Training and Traditional Learning: Increased access to land-based traditional learning	Construction and Operations	Positive	Low	LSA: Webeque First Nation	Time sensitive to work activities	Long-term	Intermittent	Low resilience	Irreversible	Probable
Change in Emergency and Protective Services: availability of emergency and protective services	Construction and Operations	Negative	Moderate	LSA: Webeque First Nation	Not time sensitive	Medium-term	Infrequent	Low resilience	Reversible	Probable
Change to Community Infrastructure: availability of community infrastructure services	Construction and Operations	Positive	Low	LSA: Webeque First Nation	Time sensitive to work activities	Medium-term	Continuous	Low resilience	Irreversible	Possible
Change to Community Well-Being and Safety: reduced community cohesion	Construction and Operations	Negative	Moderate	LSA: Webeque First Nation	Time sensitive	Medium-term	Intermittent	Low resilience	Irreversible	Probable
Change to Community Well-Being and Safety: reduced community safety	Construction and Operations	Negative	Moderate	LSA: Webeque First Nation	Not time sensitive	Medium-term	Continuous	Low resilience	Reversible	Probable

Predicted Net Effect	Net Effects Characterization									
	Project Phase	Direction	Magnitude	Geographic Extent	Timing	Duration	Frequency	Context	Reversibility	Likelihood of Occurrence
Change to Community Well-Being and Safety: reduced traffic safety	Construction and Operations	Negative	Moderate	LSA: Webequie First Nation	Time sensitive to work activities	Medium-term	Intermittent	Low resilience	Irreversible	Certain
Change to Community Well-Being and Safety: reduced community well-being and quality of life	Construction and Operations	Negative	Low	LSA: Webequie First Nation	Time sensitive to work activities	Medium-term	Intermittent	Moderate resilience	Reversible	Certain

Note: Refer to **Section 14.5.1** for definitions of categories for net effects characterization

14.6 Determination of Significance

Several methodologies can be used to determine whether an adverse environmental effect is significant or not significant, as outlined in the Interim Technical Guidance Determining Whether a Designated Project is Likely to Cause Significant Adverse Environmental Effects under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEA Agency, 2018) and relevant to the *Impact Assessment Act* (2019). As presented in Section 5.2.6 and Table 5-7, a qualitative aggregation method is used for the determination of significance based on the sequential interaction among the magnitude, geographic extent, and duration criteria for net effects. The net effects criteria are presented in **Table 14-41**. Consideration is also given to potential management concerns and concerns of Indigenous communities, groups, the public, government agencies, and stakeholders raised during engagement and consultation activities conducted for the Project (**Table 14-2** and **Table 14-3**).

The characterization of net effects is considered to be **significant** if the aggregated effect meets all the criteria described in Table 5-7 for the Social Environment VCs:

- Moderate to high in magnitude;
- Local or regional in extent;
- Medium to long-term in duration;
- Requires management and represents an impact on community well-being or safety (adverse net effects may be considered significant even with a low likelihood of occurrence); and
- Identified as a key concern or interest by Indigenous communities and groups.

Table 14-43 summarizes the results of the significance determination screening. Those net effects that were determined to have moderate to high significance were carried forward to the assessment of cumulative effects (Section 21) and summarized in the following subsections.

Table 14-43: Determination of Significance for the Social Environment VCs

Net Effects Characterization Criterion	Magnitude	Geographic Extent	Duration	Management Concern and Impacts Community Well-Being and Safety	Key Concern of Indigenous community and group	Significance
Population and Demographics	Low	LSA: Webequie	Medium	No	No	Not Significant
Housing and Temporary Accommodations	Low	LSA: Webequie	Medium	Yes	Yes	Not Significant
Community Services	Low	LSA: Webequie	Medium	Yes	Yes	Not Significant
Education, Training and Traditional Learning Programming: education and training attainment	Moderate	LSA	Medium	Yes	Yes	Not Significant
Education, Training and Traditional Learning: Programming and facility space	Low	LSA RSA	Medium	Yes	No	Not Significant
Education, Training and Traditional Learning: Traditional learning programming	Low	LSA	Medium	Yes	No	Not Significant
Emergency and Protective Services	Moderate	LSA: Webequie	Medium	No	No	Not Significant
Community Infrastructure	Low	LSA: Webequie	Medium	Yes	Yes	Not Significant
Community Well-Being and Safety: community cohesion	Moderate	LSA: Webequie	Medium	Yes	No	Significant
Community Well-Being and Safety: community safety	Moderate	LSA: Webequie	Medium	Yes	Yes	Significant
Community Well-Being and Safety: traffic safety	Moderate	LSA: Webequie	Medium	Yes	Yes	Significant
Community Well-Being and Safety: well-being and quality of life	Low	LSA: Webequie	Medium	No	Yes	Not Significant



14.6.1.1 Population and Demographics

- **Positive net effect** resulting from changes to population and demographics would include:
 - Decrease in out-migration of community members/Increase in in-migration of community members.

One of the benefits of the Project is that the increased employment opportunities created through the WSR will encourage off-reserve members to return to the community for work. Interviews and focus groups with community members indicated strong support for having more local employment options, as this would help reduce out-migration and promote the return of members currently living elsewhere. While most employment opportunities will be linked to construction activities, the broader goal of the WSR is to support long-term economic growth for Webequie First Nation in the Ring of Fire region. This growth is expected to generate additional opportunities in mining, aggregates, forestry, and related industries and businesses that will extend into the operations phase of the Project.

Following the implementation of proposed mitigation and enhancement measures described in **Section 14.4** and the characterization of net effects in **Section 14.5**, the **net positive effect** on the Population and Demographics VC were assessed as **not significant**.

14.6.1.2 Housing and Temporary Accommodations

- **Adverse net effect** resulting from a change to Housing and Temporary Accommodations would include:
 - Decrease in housing availability due to increased demand.

Employment opportunities during the Project's construction phase and operations phase are anticipated to generate a level of interest in Webequie First Nation community members requiring accommodation in the community. With limited available Housing and Temporary Accommodations, this could create a shortage of accommodation. However, the enhancement measures implemented through the CRP, will provide increased housing capacity designed to create sufficient housing stock to respond to increased demand from the Project.

Following the implementation of proposed mitigation and enhancement measures described in **Section 14.4** and the characterization of net effects in **Section 14.5**, the **net adverse effect** on the Housing and Temporary Accommodations VC were assessed as **not significant**.

14.6.1.3 Community Services

- **Adverse net effect** resulting from a change to Community Services would include:
 - Decreased availability of Community Services due to increased demand.

Based on interviews with Webequie First Nation, the services for the community are currently difficult to access, lacking or requires improvement, or unavailable, especially health services. The former Webequie First Nation health director indicated that health services are poor because the community is isolated and distant from health service facilities, resulting in long travel times (via airplane) to receive medical treatment (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b). The current health director also noted that the need for mental health and addiction services is high demand, as addictions are prevalent in the community (AtkinsRéalais, 2022c).



The isolated geographic location of the area poses challenges to the delivery of clinical services. Transportation delays, particularly during winter, can result in delayed service and, in severe cases, loss of life. To address these issues, there is a pressing need for an improved facility with enhanced equipment to provide adequate care for patients, including overnight accommodation (AtkinsRéalais, 2022c). Interviews with women in Webequie First Nation identified that professional health services are infrequently available to the community, such as nurses and dentists only visit the community once every three weeks, and that several services for women are not available, such as a women's support group and parenting skills drop-in centres for mothers (AtkinsRéalais, 2022f). Many (if not most) services are not located on the reserve, such as health facilities and Elder care facilities, and can only be accessed by flying off the reserve.

One interviewed knowledge holder indicated the following:

"[W]e need a proper retirement home and nursing station. We just have a nursing station. It's not a proper health centre or something like that. We don't even have a full-time doctor here. There are some people that get sick to the point where they're nearly dying to only be sent out. Like my mom if they caught her cancer early, she would have proper cancer treatment and she would have been with me or my family longer. She was sick to a point where she couldn't walk to be sent out and it was already too late. So, we've lost so many people because of that inadequate health treatment and that really frustrates the communities and the families. There is no proper confidence with health services or even the government. Like my aunt, she died because she needed an oxygen tank at the nurse's station. They didn't have one or even a defibrillator, portable defibrillator for heart attack. Even an ambulance or a fire truck, we don't even have those here. When houses burn down, the whole family is homeless. Families are left homeless and there's a lot of frustrations in the community. For you guys to know there's a lot of needs we have. We need to have a healthy community to be happy, I guess. Not struggle" (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b).

During the construction phase and operations phase, it is anticipated that there will be an increased demand for Community Services, which include family services, childcare and youth programs, Elder care, health services, cultural services, recreational services and communication services. Health services may experience increased demand in response injury and illness from workers on the Project that cannot be readily treated by construction camp medics. Family services, childcare and youth programs, Elder care, health services, cultural services, recreational services and communication services may experience increased demand for Community Services from workers from the Webequie First Nation community members, as well as from other LSA communities and RSA communities' workers.

Following the implementation of proposed mitigation and enhancement measures described in the CRP and **Section 14.4** and the characterization of net effects in **Section 14.5**, the **net adverse effect** on the Project on community services was assessed as **not significant**.

14.6.1.4 Education, Training and Traditional Learning

Education and Training Attainment

- **Positive net effects** resulting from changes to education, training and traditional learning programming and facility space would include:
 - Increased education and training attainment due to increased interest.
 - Increased access to land-based traditional learning



The Project is set to generate employment opportunities for members of both the LSA and RSA. This will, however, highlight the necessity for individuals to obtain the appropriate education and training to qualify for these jobs. The construction phase, anticipated to span five- to six- years, will offer community members in the Webequie community and other LSA communities the chance to earn an income while remaining close to home.

Currently, interviews and focus groups have revealed that many youths in the communities are disengaged and lack interest in pursuing education and training. This is largely due to the insufficient educational and training facilities in LSA communities and the scarcity of employment opportunities. This lack of prospects has fostered an unhealthy environment, leading youth to turn to drugs and alcohol.

The Project aims to create a more positive environment by providing meaningful employment opportunities. This will not only help address the immediate economic needs but also encourage youth to pursue education and training, thereby improving their long-term prospects and overall well-being. By offering these opportunities, the Project seeks to transform the current conditions and foster a healthier, more hopeful future for the community's youth.

Following the implementation of proposed mitigation and enhancement measures described in **Section 14.4** and the characterization of net effects in **Section 14.5**, the **net positive effect** on the Project on education and training attainment was assessed as **not significant**.

Programming and Facility Space

- **Adverse net effect** resulting from a change to education, training and traditional learning programming and facility space would include:
 - Decreased availability of education and training programming and facility space due to increased demand.

The Project may result in an **adverse net effect** on the availability of programming and facility space due to increased demand and limited capacity.

Both prior to and during the construction phase, it is anticipated that the Project will result in an increased interest in and demand for education and training programs from Webequie First Nation community members who are interested in becoming employment-ready for jobs related to the Project. However, in general, Webequie First Nation community members, especially youth, suffer from a lack of in-community opportunities and partnerships that promote the requisite education and skills development, limitations mainly due to lack of required facilities and infrastructure in the Webequie community.

Education and training programs as well as training facilities both in the LSA and RSA may experience increased student enrollment and a decreased infrastructure capacity in anticipation of Project construction and operation. There is a potential for increased enrollment at these educational institutions from individuals in the LSA communities who are seeking additional training to qualify for positions directly or in-directly related to the Project construction and operation. An influx of students originating from the LSA could lead to capacity limitations at educational facilities both within the LSA and in Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout, which are the closest RSA communities to the Project.

During the construction and operations phases, there will be a low magnitude effect on education and training spaces, and mitigation measures will be in place, including planning for additional in community programming, and facility space improvements.



Following the implementation of proposed mitigation and enhancement measures described in **Section 14.4** and the characterization of net effects in **Section 14.5**, the **net adverse effect** on the Project on programming and facility space were assessed as **not significant**.

Traditional Learning Programming

- **Adverse net effect** resulting from a change to education, training and traditional learning programming and facility space would include:
 - Decreased availability of traditional learning.

The increased demand for educational and training programming could result in decreased interest in learning traditional land-based skills and reduced capacity for Webequie First Nation and other communities in the LSA to offer traditional learning programming. The increased focus on Project-related skills could also require individuals to be away from these communities more often to attend courses only offered off-reserve.

Learning of traditional skills is beneficial to community members in several ways. In particular, for youth, there is the understanding that spending time on the land is an important part of health and wellness, as well as teaching life skills traditionally passed down by Elders. Further, the Project could cause a negative effect due to decreased interest in learning traditional land-based skills and reduced capacity for the Webequie community to offer traditional learning programming.

Following the implementation of proposed mitigation and enhancement measures described in **Section 14.4** and the characterization of net effects in **Section 14.5**, the **net adverse effect** on the Project on traditional learning and programming were assessed as **not significant**.

14.6.1.5 Emergency and Protective Services

- **Adverse net effect** resulting from a change to emergency and protective services would include:
 - Decreased availability of emergency and protective services due to increased demand.

The construction phase involves an increase in population of non-resident workers at construction camps located near Webequie First Nation, and the execution of construction activities that have health and safety risk. These are anticipated to increase demand on existing emergency and protective services.

Workplace injuries and illness experienced by construction workers while on-site could require emergency services that are not readily available in the community. Emergency services in Webequie First Nation are currently limited, and the potential demand on these services during construction could overburden the current system.

During the construction phase and operations phase, the Project is anticipated to have an **adverse effect** on the Emergency and Protective Services VC due to increased demand in the Project Footprint and Webequie First Nation for services related to Project activities, including health care for treating injury and illness, response to traffic accidents, as well as policing response to social pressures induced by increased access to drugs and alcohol.

The adverse effect is anticipated to be moderate in magnitude; however, mitigation measures including community well-being monitoring and capacity monitoring through the CRP are proposed. Following the implementation of proposed mitigation and enhancement measures described in the CRP and **Section 14.4** and the characterization of net effects in **Section 14.5**, the **net adverse effect** on the Project on emergency and protective services was assessed as **not significant**.



14.6.1.6 Community Infrastructure

- **Positive net effect** resulting from a change to community infrastructure would include:
 - Decreased availability Community Infrastructure services due to increased demand will be mitigated with upgrades to community infrastructure to improve community assets for community readiness.

As described in **Section 14.4.6**, currently, Webequie First Nation either does not have the community assets to best participate in the Project economically and best capture its benefits, or assets are not in a condition that would allow Webequie First Nation to participate fully (Radloff and Saulteaux, 2023). To allow Webequie First Nation to best participate in the Project and capture its benefits, enhancement of community assets are proposed. Action items from Webequie First Nation's 2023 CCP include the development, repair and enhancement of community assets that will in turn enhance community capital and enable the community to (Webequie First Nation, 2023).

During the construction phase and operations phase, in the absence of mitigation and enhancement measures the Project is anticipated to increase demand on Community Infrastructure services which could limit the availability of Community Infrastructure services. Increased demand on Community Infrastructure services, including community buildings, electrical power systems, drinking water systems, wastewater treatment systems, solid waste management systems and telecommunications services are expected to arise due to net in-migration of Webequie First Nation community members and intermittent use by temporary non-local workers. These changes will likely lead to an increased demand for Community Infrastructure services that are already limited in capacity to meet the needs of the current Webequie First Nation population. Without mitigation and enhancement measures, this heightened demand could exacerbate existing deficiencies, making it even more challenging to provide adequate services and maintain community well-being. The impact will be focused on Webequie First Nation, with the impact occurring mainly during construction phase and slowly subsiding during operations phase.

Following the implementation of proposed mitigation and enhancement measures through implementation of the CRP (Appendix N of the EAR/IS) and **Section 14.4** and the characterization of net effects in **Section 14.5**, the **net positive effect** of the Project on community infrastructure was assessed as **not significant**.

14.6.1.7 Community Well-Being and Safety

Community Cohesion

- **Adverse net effect** resulting from a change to community cohesion:
 - Decreased community cohesion due to increased pressures and interactions with non-local workers leading to reduced "family feel" in the Webequie community.

A socially cohesive community provides citizens with a shared feeling of belonging and inclusion, and where citizens participate actively in public affairs, tolerate existing differences, and enjoy relative equality in access to public goods and services and distribution of income and wealth (FAO, n.d.). The construction phase could result in an in-migration of temporary workers that are not members of Webequie First Nation. There is a potential for interaction with the temporary construction workforce to result in disruption in community cohesion. When it pertains to the environment, land use and community development, non-locals associated with the Project, who may originate from southern, urban centres, often have different values than rural communities.



It is assumed that there will be interactions between the construction workforce and the Webequie First Nation and depending on the nature and extent of the interactions, this may lead to reduced community cohesion, a reduced sense of community and loss of a family feel of the community. The potential difference in attitudes and values between Webequie First Nation and the non-local workforce, e.g., differences in ways of living (Smith and Krannich, 2000) between locals and non-locals could result in tension and social conflict. Such tension and social conflict have the potential to disrupt the cohesion and social stability of Webequie, which may affect youth/younger generation that are already affected by loss of traditional values and culture (Stein and Stein, 2015; AtkinsRéalais, 2022b).

Following the implementation of proposed mitigation and enhancement measures described in the CRP and **Section 14.4** and the characterization of net effects in **Section 14.5**, the **net adverse effect** of the Project on community cohesion was assessed as **significant**.

Community Safety

- **Adverse net effect** resulting from a change to community safety:
 - Increased pressures and interactions with non-local workers, which could affect perceptions of safety.

Development of the WSR Project would result in presence of “man camps”/temporary construction camps, an increase in incomes and driving on the all-season road (InterGroup, 2024). Studies have shown that construction camps can have negative impacts on host communities as well as the non-local labour force. This can be as a result of being isolated from friends and family, stressful work environments, and a lack of connection with the host community. These factors can lead to increased sexual violence, substance abuse, and STIs (Aalhus et al., 2018; Bond and Quinlan, 2018). Industrial projects and “man camps” developed in remote communities have disproportionate effects on the rate of gender-based violence on Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people. Health care concerns may also arise in construction camps, such as chronic conditions, injuries, and illnesses, which can impact communities (Northern Health, 2015).

The presence of non-resident workers could increase the demand for protective services due to the increased numbers of people in Webequie First Nation, a possible influx of alcohol and drugs, as well as adverse social behaviours amongst construction workers, and with community members.

The CRP will include consideration of recommendations of the MMIWG inquiry as part of the measures intended to mitigate risks to vulnerable groups. Given this and the proposed mitigation measures described in **Section 14.4**, and in consideration of the net effects characterization as moderate in magnitude, and moderate to high for vulnerable populations (**Section 14.5**), it is anticipated that the **net adverse effect** on community safety is **significant**.

Traffic Safety

- **Adverse net effect** resulting from a change to traffic safety:
 - Increased risk of traffic accidents due to Project-related activities.

Traffic safety has been a common concern raised by Webequie First Nation community members about the Project (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b). Specific concerns that have been raised include the risk of impaired driving, hitchhiking, and people driving without a license, with several members noting the need for checkpoints along the road to monitor traffic safety (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a; 2022b). It is noted that many community members do not currently hold a driver’s licence or have access to a vehicle (InterGroup, 2024).



During the construction phase and operations phase, there will be increase road traffic from vehicles associated with the Project activities, including use of the all-season road during operations, which is likely to result in increased rates of injury and risk of death due to traffic accidents. Some of the effects will be mitigated, but it will not be possible to mitigate all adverse effects from changes to traffic safety.

Following the implementation of proposed mitigation described **Section 14.4** and the characterization of net effects in **Section 14.5**, the **net adverse effect** of the Project on traffic safety was assessed as **significant**.

Community Well-Being and Quality of Life

- **Adverse net effect** resulting from a change to nuisance effects:
 - Increased nuisance effects including air quality, noise and visual effects.

Community members in Webequie First Nation may experience poorer air quality (from dust) during the construction phase, which could be experienced as a nuisance, causing an interference with contributors to well-being such as social and cultural activities, and result in community members experiencing perceived diminished physical and mental well-being. During operations, the air quality assessment concluded that the net effects on air quality were not significant.

The nuisance effects from noise may result in lower perceived physical and mental well-being and cause interference with social and cultural activities on the land and in Webequie First Nation. However, it is noted that residential areas are located approximately 2 km from the nearest construction camp and water crossing at Eastwood Island and the mainland. For both construction and operation, the nuisance effect of noise was determined as not significant.

Potential sensitive receptors on the visual landscape do not exist and the road will not be visible from Webequie First Nation. However, the effects on well-being with respect to changes in visual landscape would most likely occur at the Winisk Lake water crossing, which provides the furthest viewing distance (approximately 1.8 km) of the WSR road along the route. Given the distance of the WSR to sensitive receptors, net effects on the visual landscape were determined as not significant.

Following the implementation of proposed mitigation described **Section 14.4** and the characterization of net effects in **Section 14.5**, the **net adverse effect** of the Project on community well-being and quality of life was assessed as **not significant**.

14.6.2 Summary

Out of 12 predicted net effects for the Project, nine net effects have been predicted to be low significance; whereas three have been predicted to be of moderate significance.

The net effects for the Community Well-Being and Safety VC were assessed as having moderate significance. For this VC, the following effect pathways were carried forward for assessment of cumulative effects:

Community Cohesion

- Webequie LSA: Employment and expenditures → In-migration of temporary workers → Reduced community cohesion.
- Webequie LSA: Employment and expenditures → Operations jobs → In-migration of temporary workers → Increased non-local population → Reduced community cohesion.



Community Safety

- Webequie LSA: Employment and expenditures → Construction jobs → In-migration of temporary workers → Increased non-local population → Increased risk of negative interactions → Reduced feeling of personal safety.
- Webequie LSA: Employment and expenditures → Operations jobs → In-migration of temporary workers → Increased non-local population → Increased risk of negative interactions → Reduced feeling of personal safety.

Traffic Safety

- Webequie LSA: Construction of road → Increased traffic in community → Increased risk of traffic accidents.
- Webequie LSA: Road use → Increased risk of traffic accidents (risk of impaired driving, hitchhiking, and people driving without a license).

Only those net effects in **Table 14-43** that were determined to have moderate to high significance and moderate to high confidence in the effects assessment (**Section 14.8**) were carried forward to the assessment of cumulative effects (**Section 14.7**).

14.7 Cumulative Effects

For predicted net effects that were determined to be significant in nature, a cumulative effects assessment was conducted. The cumulative effects assessment is an evaluation of significant net effects from the Project that overlap temporally and spatially with effects from other past, present and reasonably foreseeable developments (RFDs) and activities (i.e., cumulative effects).

Where information is available, the cumulative effects assessment estimates or predicts the contribution of effects from the Project and other human activities on the criteria, in the context of changes to the natural, health, social or economic environments. For a valued component that has identified net effects where the magnitude was determined to be higher than negligible, it is necessary to determine if the effects from the Project interact both temporally and spatially with the effects from one or more past, present RFDs or activities, since the combined effects may differ in nature or extent from the effects of individual project activities.

For the assessment of the Social Environment VCs, the following predicted net effects characterized in **Section 14.6** are carried forward to the cumulative effects assessment (Section 5.2.7):

- Moderate to high in magnitude;
- Local or regional in extent;
- Medium to long-term in duration;
- Effect could require management and represents an impact on community well being or safety. Adverse net effects may be considered significant even with a low likelihood of occurrence; and
- Identified as a key concern or interest by Indigenous communities and groups.

The predicted net effects with this characterization are most likely to interact with other RFD and activities.



The cumulative effects assessment for the Social Environment VCs is primarily focused on the Webequie First Nation. It describes how the interacting effects of human activities and natural factors are predicted to affect social environment indicators for:

- Community Cohesion;
- Community Safety; and
- Traffic Safety.

The assessment is presented as a reasoned qualitative narrative describing the outcomes of cumulative effects for the Social Environment VCs. Results of the cumulative effects assessment with consideration of RFDs and activities are presented in Section 21.

14.8 Prediction Confidence in the Assessment

The level of confidence in net effect predictions in assessments depends on the degree of uncertainty associated with the basis for the determination of significance. Uncertainty is influenced by factors such as the adequacy of available data, the level of knowledge and understanding about the VC being assessed, the characteristics of the proposed Project, the effectiveness of mitigation strategies, enhancement measures and more.

A **low level** of confidence is defined as a Project-VC interaction that is poorly understood. Little to no data or research has been conducted on the subject matter. There are no or few established industry wide or best management practices associated with the potential effects. The assessment has a high degree of uncertainty in the outcome and level of effect.

A **moderate level** of confidence is defined as the Project-VC interaction is partially understood. A moderate level of uncertainty exists due to gaps in data or research exist. The assessment is conducted with conservative methods and there is a moderate level of uncertainty in the outcome and level of effect.

A **high level** of confidence is defined as a fully understood Project-VC interaction. Data and research on the subject matter are robust and well-tested. The effect is mitigated with well-established industry wide or best management practice. The assessment has a high level of certainty in the outcome and level of effect.

A conservative approach was used in assessing potential net effects where there was uncertainty with information. A number of key information gaps existed with respect to the social environment that contributed to the uncertainty in the level of confidence of the assessment. These included:

Statistics Canada Census of Population:

- For privacy reasons, the Census of Population does not always publish full data sets to protect the identities of respondents;
- Undercounting within Indigenous communities is a common complaint of the Census; and
- Other errors likely to occur within the Census of are coverage errors, non-response errors, response errors, processing errors, and sampling errors.



Skills and Qualification of Labour Force:

- Detailed data for occupation of employment, employment ratios, and other labour force related indicators were not available for all communities; and
- Due to the availability and level of detail of the data available, it is not possible to describe the current level of skills, training, and qualifications of the **labour** force.

Duration of Project Operation Phase:

- Due to the extended timeline of the Project, the certainty of the potential effects becomes difficult to measure;
- The long-term changes within the LSA and RSA are difficult to predict and could affect mitigation strategies; and
- Other future **projects** could have effects on the LSA and RSA and the evaluated VCs.

Based on the uncertainties of information outlined above, a number of assumptions were used in the social effects assessment including:

- **Workforce composition:** job positions for the WSR Project will first be filled using the available labour within Webequie First Nation, followed by the other LSA communities, and lastly the RSA;
- **Availability of Labour:** the unemployed labour market is proportionally equal to the employed labour market in terms of industry involvement;
- **Labour Skill Requirements:** WSR Project-related jobs within specific labour categories are unskilled labour positions and require limited **training** or qualifications;
- **Operations On-Site Labour:** during operations, the on-site labour demand will be met by Webequie First Nation with any additional available jobs' gaps being filled by **LSA** workers; and
- **Housing and Accommodations:** temporary work-camps will fully meet the housing requirements for the additional temporary worker population created through Project employment.

The confidence in the net effects assessment of the Social Environment VCs as it relates to population and housing is **moderate**. Socio-economic modelling often faces uncertainties due to the complexity of human behaviour and market dynamics. The model's certainty is determined based on the data availability and other aspects such as assumptions in place of data gaps, consumer preferences, accuracy of secondary data, and regional advancements and geopolitical events. Unexpected events, social changes, and changing environments all have the potential to lead to model inaccuracies.

As the assessment for the Social Environment VCs relied on the historical data and available modelling forecasts, there is the potential for unforeseen interactions. Although there are some uncertainties in the assessment, they have been minimized or reduced by making some conservative assumptions and using professional judgements based on past experiences in other economic assessments for other projects.



14.9 Predicted Future Condition of the Social Environment if the Project Does Not Proceed

Should the Project not proceed, the conditions within the proposed Project site area related to the Social Environment will likely continue on the current trajectory.

If the Project does not proceed, the future conditions of the social environment are likely to be unchanged from the existing conditions. While Webequie First Nation is described by community members as a friendly and good place to live, challenges are presented in the current social context.

Webequie First Nation is affected by the **lack of housing and overcrowding** (Webequie First Nation, 2014; AtkinsRéalis, 2022b). The lack of available housing also extends to service providers such as teachers, professional therapists, health care practitioners, that need accommodations for short or long-term placements in Webequie First Nation. Moreover, several knowledge holders have indicated that most off-reserve members, many of whom live in Thunder Bay, want to return home but are unable to do so due to a lack of available housing (AtkinsRéalis, 2022b; InterGroup, 2024).

Existing **community services** within Webequie First Nation have been operating at full capacity and are unable to provide adequate services with the addition of the Project. Health Services in the community is strained, with members lacking access to a regular, full-time physician and instead rely on a rotating team of nurses to meet healthcare needs. The remote location of the community adds to the challenge of providing timely healthcare, as transportation delays can result not only in delayed service, but also a potential loss of life. Furthermore, limited health care services for Elders prevent Webequie First Nation community members from aging in place, often leaving families with no option but to send their parents to long-term care facilities in larger urban centres like Thunder Bay, where costs may exceed their financial capacity (AtkinsRéalis, 2022b as cited by InterGroup, 2024).

Limited childcare space is also a challenge in Webequie. The community has a preschool geared to children aged four and younger; however, there is no daycare program (AtkinsRéalis, 2022b). The lack of childcare options particularly affects women and girls, who are often responsible for caring for children in the home. This is reflective of how Indigenous women face barriers to education and training, including pressures to fulfill the role of caregiver in their homes, that can be linked back to the impact of colonization and introduction of patriarchal attitudes on Indigenous women in society (CRIAW, 2014; Bond and Quinlan, 2018).

Education and training opportunities are limited in fly-in First Nations communities across Northern Ontario and Canada. Schools often face challenges such as inadequate facilities, high teacher turnover, and a lack special education services (Finlay et al., 2010; CRIAW, 2014). These educational disparities for First Nations People stem from the colonial legacy imposed on Indigenous Peoples in Canada (Blanchet Garneau et al., 2021). Webequie First Nation is not exempt from these challenges.

Emergency services in Webequie First Nation are currently limited. The community lacks essential emergency equipment such as an ambulance or fire truck (AtkinsRéalis, 2022c). There is no full-time equipped fire department or fire fighting service in Webequie First Nation (Webequie First Nation, 2019). Webequie also has no EMS on-reserve. In cases of medical emergency, community members are forced to rely on medical transportation programs, including the dispatch of air ambulance to Webequie First Nation. Patients are usually transported to a hospital in Sioux Lookout, Thunder Bay, or Winnipeg (211 Ontario North, Webequie First Nation, 2025b).



Webequie First Nation faces ongoing challenges related to **community infrastructure**. There is an ongoing need for upgrades to community infrastructure and capacity. Performance issues have been cited in the CCP (2023) with respect to community buildings; electrical power; drinking water; wastewater treatment, solid waste management and telecommunications. Upgrades to community infrastructure was noted as the biggest priority for the CCP.

Long-term adverse effects may occur regardless of whether the Project proceeds. While Webequie First Nation is described by community members as a friendly and good place to live, a reduced **community cohesion**, a reduced sense of community and loss of a family feel of the community may occur with the Project. Challenges currently experienced within the community include past and present harms of colonialism, influences of technology and urban popular culture on youth, and inconsistent community events and programs (AtkinsRéalis, 2022b, InterGroup, 2024).

Community members have expressed concerns for **loss of traditions** specifically amongst youth, who experience social isolation and lack of interest in Webequie First Nation including substantial expenses associated with getting out on the land, and the need for more participation of Elders in youth events (AtkinsRéalis, 2022b; 2022c)" (InterGroup, 2024).

Furthermore, Webequie First Nation and other northern communities are disproportionately vulnerable to the changing climate and have lower resilience in withstanding or recovering from extreme weather-related events (e.g., fire, drought, flood, heavy winds, snow and/or ice) due to geographical remoteness or lack of infrastructure (Section 24 – Effects of the Environment on the Project). The Project may be a catalyst to improve infrastructure and connect these communities to more comprehensive community services.

The Proponent's intention to implement the Community Readiness Plan for the Project, in addressing the gaps and needs identified in the Community Comprehensive Plan is forward-looking to improving the overall social environment within Webequie First Nation and region.

The addition of the Project to Webequie First Nation has the potential to generate **positive benefits** to the community, as well as the region, with access to employment and business opportunities from the Project and other adjacent sectors (forestry, mining, service and hospitality, health care), improved education and graduation rates, enhancements and improvements to existing community services and infrastructure, as well as emergency services.

14.10 Follow-Up and Monitoring Programs

A Socio-economic Monitoring Program will be initiated at each phase of the Project. This will include the follow-up and monitoring of cumulative effects and the effectiveness of mitigation measures to address cumulative effects. Follow-up and monitoring is also aimed at the identification and management of effects that were not expected or identified in the assessment. A precautionary approach will be taken with follow-up and monitoring and contribute to the understanding of changing and existing social conditions within the LSA.

The monitoring and follow-up of the eight VCs of the Social Environment will require constant and consistent monitoring to evaluate the effectiveness of the Project mitigation measures. This will include engagement with community members and those in surrounding areas to address community concerns. Regular evaluation will allow the Proponent to identify areas of concern or success in a timely manner and pivot mitigation measures if necessary.



The objectives of the Socio-economic Monitoring Program are to:

- Ensure the Project construction contributes to the economic empowerment of the local First Nation communities by creating job opportunities and supporting local businesses.
- Maintain transparency in the execution of the Project and ensure accountability in how the economic benefits are distributed among communities.
- Implement a dynamic monitoring approach that can adapt to feedback and changing circumstances, allowing for continuous improvement of the Project's economic impact on Webequie First Nation.
- Collect community input into how the Project is contributing to the economic growth and self-sufficiency within Webequie First Nation through skill development and capacity building initiatives associated with the Project.

The following components may be implemented as part of the program:

1. **Grievance monitoring:** Setup of a grievance mechanism for the Project, preferably with support from community members, to keep track of issues related to the Project, including racism, sexism, gender-based violence, and other issues.
2. **Involvement of Community Liaison Officers:** Establish a CRWG of community members to function as liaison officers employed under the Project, to provide updates and information on Project, collect feedback and suggestions, resolve any issues/problems related to community's needs, and act as a point of contact for Project' connection to the community.
3. **Reporting and Adjustment:** Regularly report findings to Webequie First Nation and other Project stakeholders and rightsholders. Use this data to make any necessary adjustments to the Project approach to enhance local benefits and address concerns.
4. **Community database of infrastructure:** Establishment of a comprehensive database of community infrastructure, including housing, based on the Webequie CCP (Webequie First Nation, 2023), to keep track of changes as result of the WSR and other projects, and carry out comprehensive projections for future needs and community.
5. **Post-Project Evaluation:** After the completion of the road construction, perform a final evaluation to measure the long-term impacts and goals set out at the Project's initiation.

The socio-economic monitoring program is designed to be dynamic, allowing adjustments based on ongoing findings and community feedback, ensuring that the Project aligns with community aspirations.



14.11 References

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14.11.7 Section 14.6 Determination of Significance

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14.11.8 Section 14.7 Cumulative Effects

None

14.11.9 Section 14.8 Prediction Confidence in the Assessment

None

14.11.10 Section 14.9 Predicted Future Conditions of the Social Environment if the Project Does Not Proceed

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