

Feedback Received and IESO Response

Regional Electricity Planning in the Niagara Area: Draft Scoping Assessment - September 15, 2026

The IESO shared the draft Scoping Assessment Outcome Report and a narrated video presentation summarizing the planning approach to address the electricity needs of the Niagara electrical region. The scoping assessment recommended developing an Integrated Regional Resource Plan (IRRP) for the Niagara Region. The presentation introduced the regional electricity planning process, the Niagara electrical region, and explained the need for an IRRP to address emerging electricity demand and infrastructure needs. The materials are available on the Regional Electricity Planning in the Niagara Area [engagement webpage](#).

The IESO appreciates the feedback received, which will be considered by the Technical Working Group ¹ to develop the IRRP. Feedback was received from the following parties, and the full submission can be viewed on the Niagara [engagement webpage](#):

[Averon Energy Group Inc](#)

[Bowen Enterprise Inc](#)

[City of Thorold](#)

[Niagara Region](#)

¹ The Technical Working Group is lead by the IESO, and consists of the LDCs in the region and the local transmitter Alectra Utilities, Canadian Niagara Power Inc., Grimsby Power Inc., Hydro One Networks Inc., Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc., Niagara-on-the-Lake Hydro Inc., and Welland Hydro-Electric System Corporation).

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Regional Planning Considerations

Participants highlighted the need for the demand forecast and future electricity planning to reflect significant growth, electrification, and major development opportunities across Niagara. They also emphasized coordinated planning, stakeholder engagement, and consideration of both infrastructure investments and non-wires solutions to meet future electricity needs.

Feedback / Common Themes	IESO Response
Participants shared key inputs for consideration into the development of the demand forecast, including: • Avera Energy Group requested consideration of industrial electrification, commercial and tourism growth, fleet electrification, public EV charging infrastructure, and customer resilience needs when assessing future load growth and resource options. • Bowen Enterprise Inc. highlighted the importance of considering impacts of behavioural shifts on usage patterns such as remote/hybrid work that may influence electricity demand within the region. • City of Thorold highlighted anticipated residential and employment growth, including infill and greenfield development, and noted that water, wastewater, and stormwater servicing capacity will influence the pace and location of future growth, and offered to share an updated growth strategy. • Niagara Region emphasized significant population, employment, and economic growth, including strategic employment lands, specific signature development sites, data centres, and other major industrial and economic investments that could drive future electricity demand, and shared a map and population and employment growth to 2051.	Thank you for this feedback. The Technical Working Group recognizes the importance of ensuring that the demand forecast reflects anticipated growth, development, electrification, and emerging electricity demand drivers across the Niagara region. As outlined in the draft Scoping Assessment, the Technical Working Group will develop a regional electricity demand forecast that reflects the best available information regarding future growth and electricity consumption across the region. This includes consideration of population and employment growth, municipal growth plans, strategic employment lands, major development projects, industrial and commercial expansion, transportation electrification, and other emerging sources of electricity demand. The Technical Working Group appreciates inputs from municipalities regarding growth forecasts and development information. Details and insights regarding proposed residential developments, economic development opportunities, municipal servicing plans, data centres, industrial electrification projects, and other large electricity-intensive customers will be reviewed and incorporated into the forecasting process where appropriate. The Technical Working Group will engage directly with municipalities and other key regional stakeholders to collect information and understand growth and development plans and energy priorities.

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Niagara Region inquired about avenues to share information about significant projects to ensure alignment with planning processes.	The Technical Working Group recognizes that the Niagara region is experiencing significant growth and economic development opportunities, with increasing interest in industrial development, electrification, and major investment projects. As part of the Integrated Regional Resource Plan (IRRP), stakeholders, municipalities, Indigenous communities, economic development organizations, customers, and electricity sector participants will be invited to provide updated information on growth forecasts, development initiatives, and anticipated electricity needs to help inform the demand forecast and subsequent technical studies. The IESO appreciates stakeholders continuing to share updated information regarding major developments, growth forecasts, servicing plans, and electrification initiatives as planning progresses. The draft demand forecast and supporting assumptions will be presented at future engagement milestones, and interested parties are encouraged to participate and provide input throughout the development of the IRRP. Understanding when and where major new demand for electricity may materialize is essential for effective long-term forecasting and planning. In addition to the IESO's existing planning processes and to strengthen line of sight, the IESO has introduced the Major Projects Identification Committees (MPIC) process. This voluntary process captures early-stage project and site information, improving visibility into where new demand may emerge, informing electricity system plans and forecasts, and helping developers prepare for a formal grid connection application. By connecting insights from economic growth opportunities, land use planning, and electricity system needs, the MPIC process helps ensure

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	that all relevant parties are involved in the planning process at the earliest stages and that their feedback is captured in a collaborative manner. In parallel with the IRRP, a broader provincial-scale electricity study is underway for Niagara region. The Niagara Bulk Plan is being undertaken to assess the capability of the provincial bulk transmission system to support continued economic development and forecast growth across the region. The bulk planning process will examine transmission system capability under a range of future growth scenarios and help identify longer-term transmission infrastructure requirements needed to accommodate regional growth and investment opportunities. Findings from the regional and bulk planning processes will help inform a coordinated assessment of Niagara's future electricity needs.
Participants shared feedback regarding potential solutions to meet the region's future needs: • Averon Energy Group highlighted the potential role of distributed energy resources, demand response, and other non-wires alternatives in addressing future electricity system needs, and emphasized the importance of coordination among the IESO, Hydro One, and local distribution companies to improve planning transparency, support project screening, and identify future infrastructure and resource opportunities. • Bowen Enterprise Inc. and Niagara Region highlighted the importance of	Thank you for this feedback. As the IRRP progresses, the Technical Working Group will assess the timing, location, and magnitude of electricity system needs arising across the Niagara region and evaluate a range of technically feasible options to address those needs. This assessment may include both wires and non-wires solutions, such as transmission and distribution infrastructure investments, electricity demand-side management, distributed energy resources, demand response, and energy storage, where appropriate. Engagement will continue to be undertaken throughout the IRRP process to share updates, present information, and offer opportunities for input.

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ensuring electricity infrastructure planning and future system capacity can support anticipated growth, economic development opportunities, major investments, and emerging electricity-intensive customers. Feedback also emphasized the value of coordinated planning, stakeholder engagement, and timely infrastructure	

General Feedback

Participants requested greater transparency on transmission and distribution constraints, the potential role of battery energy storage systems, and how system limitations may influence future planning decisions. The Technical Working Group noted that regional and bulk planning processes will continue to assess system needs and constraints, with findings and potential solutions shared through future engagement activities.

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Averon Energy Group requested additional planning-level information regarding transmission and distribution system constraints and the suitability of locations for battery energy storage systems (BESS), and examination of the Queenston Flow West (QFW) interface as it relates to storage in the region.	The Technical Working Group recognizes the importance of providing transparency regarding future electricity system needs, infrastructure requirements, and potential solution pathways as regional planning progresses. The Technical Working Group acknowledges the interest in planning-level information related to system constraints, future infrastructure requirements, and the role of emerging technologies such as BESS. Regional planning activities provide a high-level assessment of system needs and potential solutions from a planning perspective; however, project-specific connection capability and feasibility assessments remain the responsibility of the applicable transmitter or local distribution company through established connection assessment processes. To support provincial competitive resource procurements, the IESO posts documents to

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	provide preliminary connection guidance that identify the most constraining area limitations for new resources to connect in given areas. These documents can be found on the Second Long-Term (LT2) Request For Proposals webpage. To receive updates including the release of new documents, subscribe on the IESO website. The Niagara IRRP and the ongoing Niagara Bulk Plan are being undertaken in parallel to support a coordinated assessment of regional and bulk system needs. The Niagara Bulk Plan is examining the capability of the bulk transmission system to accommodate forecast growth, economic development opportunities, and changing electricity demand patterns across the region. Information regarding identified system needs, constraints, and the screening of potential solutions will be shared through future engagement milestones as both planning processes advance. The Technical Working Group appreciates the continued participation of stakeholders and encourages interested parties to remain engaged throughout the planning process as future forecasts, needs assessments, and potential solutions are developed and presented for feedback.