

GTA East Regional Electricity Planning Webinar – April 20, 2026

Response to feedback received

The IESO hosted a public webinar for the [GTA East](#) Integrated Regional Resource Plan (IRRP) on April 20, 2026. During the webinar, the IESO shared the region's electricity needs and initial screening of potential options for input. The presentation materials, including webinar recording, are available on the [Engagement Webpage](#).

The IESO appreciates the feedback received, which will be considered by the Technical Working Group developing the IRRP, consisting of the IESO as the lead, the local transmitter (Hydro One Networks Inc.) and the Local Distribution Companies (Elexicon Energy Inc., Hydro One Distribution and Oshawa Power Utilities Corp.). Feedback was received from the following parties, whose submissions in full can be viewed on the [Engagement Webpage](#):

- [City of Oshawa](#)
- [Climate Justice Durham](#)
- [Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation](#)
- [Municipality of Clarington](#)
- [Power Workers' Union](#)
- [Regional Municipality of Durham](#)
- [Town of Ajax](#)
- [Town of Whitby](#)

The sections below summarize feedback received related to key developments, energy priorities and community considerations that should be considered in the GTA East IRRP.

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Electricity Demand Forecast Considerations

Feedback / Common Themes	IESO Response
Municipal participants stressed the importance of aligning regional electricity planning with municipal growth, and shared key considerations including: • City of Oshawa shared they have undertaken an Official Plan Review, which includes significant long-term population growth at ~1.2% annually to 298,500 by 2051 (which aligns with Envision Durham forecasts) and 314,400 by 2056. More information is available on their webpage. • Town of Whitby highlighted significant population growth, particularly in Brooklin, where existing electrical capacity constraints are already limiting development. • Town of Whitby emphasized aligning electricity planning with its net-zero 2045 goals. • Town of Whitby shared a key priority is the development of a new hospital near Highway 407 and 412. • Town of Whitby shared there is significant growth potential through active Development Applications underway. The Town urged faster advancement of planned transformer station upgrades to support near-term development needs.	Thank you for sharing details regarding growth, electrification and policies in the Region of Durham. The forecast scenarios for the IRRP consider and include known drivers from municipal plans such as Official Plans, growth plans and community energy plans, including Envision Durham and the City of Oshawa's Official Plan. Additionally, specific municipal planning inputs including the North Brooklin development and new Whitby hospital have been included in the existing forecasts. The Technical Working Group acknowledges there is station-level work that the Local Distribution Companies (LDCs) are leading in parallel to this plan. The recommendations from this IRRP will support those projects to meet the region's electricity needs and support economic development and growth. The Technical Working Group appreciates municipalities, Indigenous communities and customers keeping their LDCs up to date on any new local developments to ensure electricity planning is aligned.
Participants inquired about the inclusion and planning for large loads and electricity needs, including: • Climate Justice Durham asked if there will be transparency and public engagement around adding large industrial loads (e.g., data centres) to the forecast and whether clear, publicly available process exists for	Thank you for this feedback. As a first step, the Technical Working Group developed three electricity demand forecast scenarios for the region: • Reference Scenario — based on confirmed or highly likely drivers such as large industrial loads with connection requests, community growth plans, and municipal energy and electrification plans.

Feedback / Common Themes	IESO Response
assessing service feasibility and community acceptance. Power Worker's Union recommended prioritizing timely and sufficient capacity by planning for high-growth scenarios, given the greater risks of underbuilding compared to upsizing infrastructure.	A high- and a low-demand scenario — reflects a reasonable increase and decrease from the reference case, with adjustments made to account for changes in key drivers such as economic growth, electrification trends, and policy impacts. While plan recommendations will be primarily driven by the reference forecast, the low and high forecast scenarios will be considered to test the robustness of the plan, identify signposts to monitor forecast changes, and contemplate additional actions required if lower or higher demand growth materializes. A significant portion of the forecast is driven by the LDCs as they compile their service territory's known growth inputs informed by municipal plans, decarbonization and climate policies, growth and land-use plans, community energy plans and large industrial loads. Details on what each LDC included as part of their forecasting methodology are included in the data tables and methodology, available on the engagement webpage. For large, proposed loads that are at a very early stage of development, there may be insufficient information to support inclusion in the regional demand forecast. To better understand the potential future demand from these projects, the IESO recently launched the Major Projects Identification Committee (MPIC) process, providing a forum for all interested parties to share information on major proposed developments and site-based opportunities before they reach the stage of a formal connection request. Service feasibility for proposed large loads is assessed at a later stage through the applicable transmission and distribution connection assessment process which are publicly posted. Learn more about these processes here.

Scope and Planning Approach

Feedback / Common Themes	IESO Response
Consider non-wire alternatives to reduce electricity demand, address identified	Thank you for this feedback. During the July 2025 engagement webinar, the IESO provided a high-level

Feedback / Common Themes	IESO Response
capacity constraints, and support decarbonization initiatives, specifically: • Climate Justice Durham, Municipality of Clarington, Regional Municipality of Durham, Town of Ajax and Town of Whitby emphasized prioritizing energy efficiency, demand-side management, distributed generation, storage and other non-wire solutions before expanding system capacity. • Regional Municipality of Durham and Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation highlighted the role of non-wire solutions in deferring, downsizing or phasing traditional infrastructure and Municipality of Clarington noted their importance in maintaining flexibility as growth unfolds. • Town of Ajax and Town of Whitby underscored the importance of renewable distributed energy resources, including local generation and storage, as key components of a non-wire approach.	overview of the load forecasting methodology and supporting data tables, including the contributions of existing electricity demand-side management programs and planned distributed generation. As part of this work, understanding the impacts of existing programs and committed or anticipated distributed energy resources is a first key step in identifying system needs. The IRRP's recommendations will be informed by an evaluation of both wires and non-wires options to meet those needs, considering reliability, cost, technical feasibility, and opportunities to maximize the use of the existing electricity system (where economic), as well as feedback from communities and other interested parties. Wires and non-wires options such as additional electricity Demand Side Management (eDSM) and resources including Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS), solar or wind generation, or any combination, are being explored to meet or reduce the region's electricity needs. As a next step, a detailed options analysis of all feasible wire and non-wire options is currently underway. Once completed, this information will be shared in a public engagement webinar. All interested parties will have an opportunity to provide feedback on these findings prior to completion of the IRRP.
Enhance the planning approach by considering additional non-wire options, specifically: • Climate Justice Durham and Regional Municipality of Durham highlighted renewable sources, geothermal systems and waste heat recovery. • Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation emphasized that planning should integrate distributed energy resources (DERs) and distributed battery storage, renewable energy and renewable natural gas (RNG).	The IESO acknowledges the importance of community input during the options development and appreciates these insights. This feedback will be considered as the detailed options analysis is being completed. The options analysis of all feasible wire and non wire options including additional electricity Demand Side Management (eDSM) and resources including Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS), increased energy efficiency, renewable and low carbon options such as solar, wind, district energy systems, waste heat recovery, distributed energy resources and geothermal systems or any combination, are being explored as

Feedback / Common Themes	IESO Response
• Municipality of Clarington and Regional Municipality of Durham recommended assessing district energy, noting ongoing work on a District Heat Master Plan and exploration of a system in the Courtice Transit-Oriented Community. • Climate Justice Durham recommended testing behind-the-meter generation. • Regional Municipality of Durham and Town of Whitby emphasized broader distributed energy resources and local generation. • Town of Ajax suggested exploring innovative solar applications including balcony/backyard solar PV and parking lot solar with storage and net metering. • Town of Ajax emphasized electricity demand-side management and non-wire programs delivered collaboratively by the IESO and LDCs.	options to meet or reduce the region's electricity needs. Feedback including community input, reports and insights for all options, including the District Heat Master Plan, are welcome. The IESO oversees the regional planning process, which focuses on delivering electricity within a region via the high-voltage transmission system. Front-of-the-meter wind and solar generation, and storage will be evaluated as part of the regional planning process as they are directly connected to the high-voltage transmission system, enabling them to be grid level solutions that can defer infrastructure upgrades. Recommendations with respect to connecting DERs and clean energy solutions are best directed to the respective local distribution company (LDC). For more details regarding the analysis of alternatives, the IESO has developed a guide to the current general approach for evaluating non wires alternatives (NWAs) during IRRPs. To capture the opportunities and grow the savings from energy efficiency, the IESO is continuing to lead the way in energy-efficiency programming in North America through a \$10.9 billion, 12-year funding commitment from the Ontario government that will provide ongoing and expanded opportunities for residential and business electricity consumers across the province to manage their electricity use and electricity costs. New funding is now available for LDCs to support their customers' participation in the province wide Save on Energy programs. The Save on Energy Retrofit program offers eligible Ontario businesses behind-the-meter solar photovoltaic (PV) systems for load displacement. More details about current and planned programs and budgets and targets can be found here. Use the newly launched Funding Finder to easily identify which Save on Energy programs can best suit your needs. To ensure that the IRRP reflects the needs of the municipalities, Indigenous communities, community members and interested stakeholders, all interested parties will have an opportunity to provide feedback

Feedback / Common Themes	IESO Response
	on these findings prior to completion of the IRRP. The IESO welcomes feedback on community input, reports and insights for all options.
Participants sought clarification on the planning approach, specifically: • Municipality of Clarington suggested considering a longer-term planning horizon of up to 30 years, aligned with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024. • Regional Municipality of Durham requested more geographically specific guidance identifying where non-wire solutions are feasible versus where traditional wire infrastructure is necessary.	The IESO appreciates this feedback. In Ontario, planning to meet the electrical supply and reliability needs of a local area or region is carried out through regional electricity planning, a process that was formalized by the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) in 2013. In accordance with this process, transmitters, distributors and the IESO are required to carry out regional planning activities for 21 electricity planning regions across Ontario, at least once every five years, providing recommendations to address the electricity needs over the next 20 years. In 2025, the Ministry of Energy and Mines released the province’s Integrated Energy Plan (Energy for Generations) which includes direction to the IESO to work with the OEB on reassessing the planning process. The IESO appreciates this feedback as this work is currently underway. As a next step in the GTA East IRRP, a detailed options analysis of all feasible wire and non-wire options, including geographic considerations, are currently underway. Once completed, this information will be shared in a public engagement webinar. All interested parties will have an opportunity to provide feedback on these findings prior to completion of the IRRP. The OEB has launched a Centralized Capacity Information Map (CCIM) designed to provide transparent, accessible data about the province’s electrical grid capacity for both load and Distributed Energy Resource connections.
Key aspects of the current planning approach are appreciated, specifically:	The IESO appreciates this feedback and the ongoing participation in this engagement initiative.

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• Power Workers' Union expressed strong support for including a High Growth Scenario in GTA East regional planning. • Regional Municipality of Durham appreciated the IESO's engagement. • Regional Municipality of Durham shared their support of the screening of both wire and non-wire options to meet the region's needs.	
Participants recommended additional variables should be considered in the options screening and evaluation, such as: • Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation expressed concerns that regional and bulk planning obligations, including the options screening approach, do not treat Indigenous rights, cumulative impacts, and jurisdiction as core evaluation criteria. • Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation shared incorporating First Nation rights-holder and First Nation energy system investor input can shape the options and reduces risks around pre-determining outcomes in favour of large transmission infrastructure, including those with significant Indigenous and environmental impacts. • Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation recommended a regional cumulative impact framework that spans IRRP, Bulk Plan and LDC infrastructure initiatives and incorporates Indigenous knowledge and monitoring into cumulative assessment design. • Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation requested First Nation equity participation models. • Regional Municipality of Durham and Town of Whitby emphasized prioritizing low- and	The IESO acknowledges the importance of community input during the options development and appreciates these insights. This feedback will be considered as the detailed options analysis is being completed. As part of this work, the Technical Working Group will consider reliability, cost, technical feasibility, maximizing the use of the existing electricity system (where economic), and community input including enhancing reliability and resilience. The detailed options analysis will be in shared in future public engagement webinars. The objective of an IRRP as mandated by the OEB is to identify the most cost-effective and efficient way to meet future regional electricity needs. At this early stage of system planning, the IESO is undertaking a high-level options screening to identify a range of technically feasible pathways capable of meeting the identified electricity system need. This work is limited to assessing potential solutions from a system planning perspective and is not an environmental assessment, project approval process, or detailed project evaluation. As a result, options are being considered at a conceptual level, without detailed route selection, facility design, or site-specific environmental and socio-economic studies. Matters such as potential environmental effects, impacts on Indigenous rights, lands, interests and communities, and project-specific mitigation measures are outside the scope of the IESO's planning assessment and will be addressed in subsequent stages of project

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zero-carbon pathways, avoiding emissions-intensive infrastructure, and aligning solutions with municipal climate objectives. • Regional Municipality of Durham and Town of Whitby called for greater transparency in how greenhouse gas impacts and fossil fuel reliance are factored in decision making. • Regional Municipality of Durham highlighted the importance of considering affordability objectives, including how non-wire options can reduce costs through deferral or avoidance of traditional infrastructure. • Town of Ajax and Town of Whitby stressed evaluating options based on their ability to enhance system reliability and resilience, support distributed generation and storage, improve flexibility, and reduce peak demand. • Regional Municipality of Durham and Town of Ajax recommended strengthening the evaluation framework to fully capture lifecycle costs, avoided infrastructure investments, economic development considerations, implementation risks, delivery timelines, and community and environmental impacts.	development, if and when a transmission solution is advanced and a transmitter is selected. Should a transmission project proceed, the responsibility for undertaking project-specific environmental assessment, consultation, and regulatory approvals rests with the designated project proponent (for example, Hydro One or another eligible transmitter). For projects subject to Ontario's approved Class Environmental Assessment ("Class EA") for Transmission Facilities, the proponent must carry out the requirements of the Class EA process in accordance with the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act and the approved Class EA document. The Class EA for Transmission Facilities mandates consideration of cumulative effects. This process is separate from the IESO's system planning activities and includes detailed environmental studies, consultation and engagement with Indigenous nations and other potentially affected parties, evaluation of alternatives, assessment of potential impacts, and the development of appropriate avoidance, mitigation, monitoring, and documentation measures prior to project implementation. The IESO recognizes that Indigenous engagement and economic participation are critical to the success of electricity infrastructure projects in Ontario. The IESO is subject to policy direction from the Ministry of Energy and Mines with respect to the inclusion of requirements related to Indigenous economic participation in any IESO programs or procurements. The IESO will share MSIFN's feedback with the Ministry to inform the approach for any transmission projects arising from the GTA East IRRP. The IESO offers funding support through the Indigenous Energy Support Program (IESP). The IESP promotes broad equitable participation in Ontario's energy sector for Indigenous communities and organizations, including by offering funding to support assessment and development of opportunities for

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	partnerships and participation in new or existing energy infrastructure projects. The IESO Indigenous Engagement Team encourages Indigenous communities to reach out with any questions that they may have regarding the IESP at iesp@ieso.ca. The IESO does not prepare greenhouse gas emissions forecasts at a regional planning level, however, in the past the IESO has prepared emissions forecasts as part of its Annual Planning Outlook (APO). The IESO's Annual Planning Outlook identifies system needs and planned actions from 2027 to 2050 that are needed to ensure the reliability, affordability and sustainability of Ontario's electricity system.

Planned Engagement

Feedback / Common Themes	IESO Response
The Municipality of Clarington requested coordination with the municipality on any required wire solutions, particularly regarding the siting of new substations and transmission lines.	The IESO appreciates this feedback and will consider it as part of future engagement activities.
Participants shared the importance of early and direct engagement, specifically: • Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation encouraged early-stage engagement with MSIFN and other Michi Saagiig Nations prior to narrowing options. • Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation encouraged access to both plain-language and technical materials. • The Regional Municipality of Durham recommended engagement with municipalities to better align planning with local priorities, such as electrification, growth management and district energy.	The IESO remains committed to ongoing, meaningful dialogue with Indigenous and municipal communities to help shape long-term planning in regions across Ontario. The IESO recognizes the critical importance of early and meaningful engagement and deeply values the insights, perspectives and cultural knowledge shared by Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation and the Region of Durham. The IESO regularly communicates with communities, stakeholders and interested parties through emails, weekly bulletin and public webinars to stay up to date on the IESO's work and opportunities for participation. Input into draft recommendations for the GTA East IRRP can be provided to the IESO by continuing to provide written feedback in response to engagement sessions or posted documents, or by requesting

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The Regional Municipality of Durham recommended engagement with municipalities to ensure planned growth areas are accurately reflected in electricity demand forecasts and planning decisions.	dedicated one-on-one meetings with the Indigenous Engagement Team. The Technical Working Group strives to make information available throughout the development of the IRRP to enable meaningful feedback during the process and decisions to be made. Data and information made available during the IRRP's development is outlined in the IESO Regional Planning Information and Data Release Guideline. The Technical Working Group is open to sharing additional information and would appreciate further details on how it will be used, to ensure the most relevant and helpful data is provided. The IESO appreciates the engagement and participation of the Regional Municipality of Durham, and the lower-tier municipalities in earlier municipal meetings and will continue to host them during the IRRP development. A summary of this engagement will be provided in the final IRRP report. Municipalities are encouraged to attend these meetings and share perspectives, inputs and reports for consideration.
Regional Municipality of Durham recommended engagement with the federal government on the Pickering Lands to ensure potential impacts on long-term electricity demand is reflected in regional planning.	The IESO appreciates this feedback and welcomes insights, perspectives and reports as information becomes available.

General Feedback

Feedback / Common Themes	IESO Response
Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation shared that any HVDC or in-water transmission infrastructure under Lake Ontario triggers significant rights-based concerns and requested that Lake Ontario-specific rights analysis be integrated into the GTA East IRRP.	The IESO recognizes the diverse cultural histories, connections to the land and the Canadian constitutional rights of Indigenous people. The IESO also acknowledges the request for Lake Ontario specific rights analysis and recognizes the importance of these considerations as they related to the development of the Toronto Third Line. At this stage, the IESO was recently directed by the Ministry of

Feedback / Common Themes	IESO Response
	Energy and Mines to undertake a competitive procurement process for the Toronto Third Line. Right now, the IESO is engaging on procurement design. The IESO will continue to inform communities about Toronto Third Line project scoping and RFP development and seek feedback on key design elements of the RFP, including ensuring proponents have demonstrated experience working with Indigenous communities and undertaking rights-based consultation. As the Duty to Consult rests with the Crown, the Ministry of Energy and Mines had undertaken, in advance of issuing the directive, early rights-based consultation directly with Indigenous Communities whose rights or interests are potentially impacted by the Toronto Third Line regarding its proposed actions to initiate transmitter selection for the Toronto Third Line. Following the procurement, the selected transmitter will be required to obtain all permits and approvals necessary to build the project, and to carry out, to Ontario's satisfaction, Indigenous consultation requirements. Find out more by reading the directive. With respect to the GTA East IRRP, the IESO acknowledges the importance of considering Lake Ontario specific rights and interests in regional planning activities. At this stage, no options located within Lake Ontario are being contemplated as part of the GTA East IRRP. As such, a Lake Ontario specific rights analysis is not being undertaken within that process. The IESO will continue to gather input from Indigenous communities regarding potential impacts to rights and interests and will consider this input in its planning work.
To enhance the IRRP process, participants identified regulatory barriers and proposed potential solutions, including: Climate Justice Durham inquired why OPG is not planning substantial investments in wind and solar, as are other jurisdictions.	Thank you for your feedback. Policy advocacy and regulatory changes are beyond the scope of regional planning. Information on the development and enforcement of Building Codes is available here. The IESO has had several successes in deploying energy efficiency, distributed energy resources and storage at scale, including:

Feedback / Common Themes	IESO Response
- Climate Justice Durham suggested exploring specific non-wire and low-carbon solutions, including waste heat recovery from nuclear generation, offshore wind with storage and capturing excess heat. - Climate Justice Durham and the Regional Municipality of Durham emphasized the need to address policy barriers, particularly limitations on municipal authority, and recommended stronger collaboration with the province to enable effective implementation of demand-side management and non-wire solutions. - Climate Justice Durham stressed the importance of maintaining or strengthening green building standards through municipal authority or equivalent provincial measures. - Climate Justice Durham highlighted limitations in current conservation and demand management programs, noting they focus on existing users, and recommend exploring opportunities to improve future energy outcomes through enhanced building codes that optimize energy performance in new developments. - Regional Municipality of Durham requested Ontario relevant case studies on successful deployment of non-wire alternatives.	- Historical success delivering energy efficiency programming under the Save on Energy brand across Ontario for over 15 years such as the Lear Corporation in Ajax using the retrofit program to save on annual costs. Use the newly launched Funding Finder to easily identify other Save on Energy programs that can best suit your needs; - A new long-term mandate from the provincial government to continue and expand programming to 2035 with a \$10.9B budget, which includes exploring opportunities to better support energy efficiency in new construction; - The launch of Peak Perks, which has over 300,000 participants since the program began in 2023; - Executing Canada’s largest ever energy storage procurement; and, - The introduction of solar and storage incentives for residential customers across the province through the Home Renovations Savings Program. Additionally, the IESO is continuing to work to accelerate and expand deployment of innovative solutions through programs and initiatives such as: Grid Innovation Fund, which has funded projects such as the Microgrid community in Pickering and a deep energy retrofit in Toronto; Hydrogen Innovation Fund; Local Generation Program; ERP Storage and Co-located Hybrid Integrated Project; and, Long Lead Time.
Town of Ajax requested sharing cost information for energy generation options on a standardized per kWh basis as this approach would demonstrate that solar and wind are among the lowest-cost renewable generation option when compared to more expensive technologies, such as nuclear.	Planning decisions regarding nuclear are outside the scope of the regional planning process and are aligned with government policy. The IESO’s Levelized Cost of Energy estimates on a \$/MWh basis are published as part of the Annual Planning Outlook, and provide a standardized basis for comparison (equivalent to a per-kWh basis). These

Feedback / Common Themes	IESO Response
	estimates demonstrate that utility scale non-hydro renewables are the lowest-cost generation options: • 2025 Capacity Expansion Scenario, Costs, and Emissions Module • 2025 Capacity Expansion Scenario, Costs, and Emissions Module Data • 2024 Resource Costs and Trends