

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES

# Grid Modernization Advisory Council

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July 13, 2023

# Agenda

Item	Time
Welcome, Agenda, Roll call	12:30–12:35
Public Comment	12:35 – 1:05
Meeting minutes review and voting	1:05 – 1:10
Information Request and Executive Committee update	1:10 – 1:15
Continuation of ESMP outline discussion	1:15 – 1:50
Topic 1: Stakeholder engagement	1:50 – 2:50
<i>10-minute Break</i>	<i>2:50 – 3:00</i>
Topic 2: Equity	3:00 – 3:57
Close	3:57 – 4:00

## Public Comment

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- 30-minute period for public comment
- Time limit of 3 minutes per comment

## Meeting Minutes

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- Calling for vote to finalize:
  - May GMAC minutes
  - June GMAC minutes
  - May GMAC Executive Committee minutes
  - June GMAC Executive Committee minutes
- Commissioner: *Is there a motion to approve the May and June council minutes [as distributed/as corrected]?*
- Council member #1: *I make a motion to approve the minutes.*
- Council member #2: *Seconded.*
- Commissioner leads a roll call vote.

## Update on Information Request #2

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- One information request was made during the last GMAC meeting
- A councilmember requested more information about the Asset Climate Vulnerability Assessment the EDCs referenced in their draft ESMP outline (Subsection 10.3 in the June 1<sup>st</sup> ESMP outline). The EDCs were requested to send across any preliminary findings or study summaries on this climate work.

National Grid, Eversource, and Unitil provided summaries of their climate change studies, which are posted on the [GMAC website](#) under Information Request #2: Updates on Distribution Companies Climate Change Studies

# Executive Committee Meeting Updates

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- Consultant updates
  - [Request for Proposals for the GMAC Consultant posted](#) on June 30, 2023
  - Responses due to DOER July 21, 2023
  - Consultant kick-off meeting targeted for mid-August
- Discussed meeting agenda topics for June and July GMAC meetings.
  - August GMAC meeting to cover topics of (1) DER Integration and (2) Cost Allocation
- For the GMAC's awareness, plan to adjust the public comment time for the August 10<sup>th</sup> meeting
  - Maintain one hour total for public comment
  - 30 minutes at start of meeting, 12:00-12:30
  - 30 minutes at end of meeting, 3:30-4:00

## Continue discussion of draft ESMP Outline

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- Received, and posted on the GMAC website, written comments from:
  - Barr Foundation
  - Acadia Center
  - Nexamp
  - CCSA
  - Green Energy Consumers Alliance
  - DOER
  - New Leaf Energy
  - SEBANE
  - AGO
- Written comments on the updated outline requested by July 18<sup>th</sup> to [MA-GMAC@mass.gov](mailto:MA-GMAC@mass.gov).
- This second round of comments will be for the EDCs' consideration as they finalize their ESMP drafts.

## Topic 1: Stakeholder Engagement

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- Current plans and activities of the Distribution Companies (10 minutes)
- Jollette Westbrook, Environmental Defense Fund (10 minutes)
- Sofia Owen, Alternatives for Community & Environment (10 minutes)
- Discussion



# Electric Sector Modernization Plan Stakeholder Engagement

July 13, 2023





2022 Climate Bill requires each Electric Distribution Company develop an **Electric-sector Modernization Plan (ESMP)** to proactively upgrade the distribution and, where applicable, transmission systems to meet the Commonwealth's climate goals



The ESMP should be prepared using three planning horizons:

- 5-year forecast
- 10-year forecast
- Demand assessment through 2050



Solicit input from the **Grid Modernization Advisory Council (GMAC)**:

- Respond to information and document requests from the GMAC
- Conduct technical conferences and a minimum of 2 stakeholder meetings to inform the public, appropriate state and federal agencies, and companies engaged in the development and installation of distributed generation, energy storage, vehicle electrification systems and building electrification systems

## Our Plans Must:

- i. improve grid reliability, communications and resiliency;
- ii. enable increased, timely adoption of renewable energy and distributed energy resources;
- iii. promote energy storage and electrification technologies necessary to decarbonize the environment and economy;
- iv. prepare for future climate-driven impacts on the transmission and distribution systems;
- v. accommodate increased transportation electrification, increased building electrification and other potential future demands on distribution and, where applicable, transmission systems; and
- vi. minimize or mitigate impacts on the ratepayers of the commonwealth.

# Our Stakeholder Outreach Approach



We are conducting comprehensive outreach to raise awareness of the ESMP, engage a broad cross-section of customers and communities, including EJ, low and moderate income, municipalities and small and medium business, among others



## Build Understanding

Establish a foundation of understanding regarding the electric grid, the need for electric sector modernization plans and the Commonwealth's net zero goals

## Develop Collaboration

Building on shared understanding, engage stakeholders by illustrating the insights and initiatives required to deliver the next generation grid and clean energy transition, making it relevant to them

## Tailor Outreach

Tailor stakeholder engagement plans to support local ESMP projects to elicit feedback and identify community concerns and needs, and educate communities about the need for the upgrades being made to the grid and the outcomes they will deliver

## PURPOSE

- EJ/LI populations should receive fair and equitable access to the benefits of this clean energy transition.
- Those potentially impacted by this transition deserve to play a role in energy discussions that affect their lives.
- Engaging stakeholders early and often is necessary to maximum participation and meaningful collaboration.

## PARTICIPANTS

- Members of the GMAC
- Community and equity-focused groups, business organizations, academic institutions, municipalities
- Companies engaged in the development and installation of:
  - DG, energy storage, EV systems, and building electrification system

Summer

9/1

Fall

Winter

1/30/24

- Incorporate public comment and feedback from the July/Aug GMAC meetings into draft ESMP
- Hire a Stakeholder Facilitator for Fall Workshops

File draft ESMPs with the GMAC

- Solicit feedback on draft EMPs
- Kick off Stakeholder Workshops
- Develop feedback loop to track all recommendations

- Utilize stakeholder and GMAC feedback while updating the final ESMP
- Respond to any recommendations not incorporated in final ESMP

EDCs file final ESMP to DPU

# Proposed Outreach & Transparency

- **Participants:** Identify (with input from the GMAC) key community groups and organizations to be included in the stakeholder outreach.
- **Survey:** Circulate a survey to identified groups after 9/1 draft ESMP is filed to establish baseline feedback on the plans

Workshops	Webpage	Additional Outreach
<p>Conduct two stakeholder workshop/listening sessions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professionally facilitated</li> <li>• Notice the workshops well in-advance and in high traffic gathering places in communities</li> <li>• Hosted at times recommended by community groups, at easily accessible locations, with language translation services</li> <li>• Use as an opportunity to educate stakeholders and gain feedback from the voices of the community</li> <li>• Track all recommendations and develop a formalized feedback loop for increased transparency</li> </ul>	<p>Develop ESMP webpages on each EDC website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include overview of ESMP</li> <li>• Publish draft and final ESMPs on webpage</li> <li>• Post stakeholder workshop information and meeting materials</li> <li>• Link to state’s GMAC webpage.</li> </ul>	<p>Outreach and engagement events beyond statutorily-defined stakeholder sessions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webinars</li> <li>• Regional in-person events</li> <li>• Media briefings</li> <li>• One-on-one meetings with municipalities/communities that have identified infrastructure investment plans in the first five-years</li> </ul>

# Questions?

## Invited Speaker Remarks

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- Jollette Westbrook, Environmental Defense Fund
- Sofia Owen, Alternatives for Community & Environment
- Discussion

## Break

*Please be ready to start again in ~10 minutes*

*After the break...*

- *Topic 2: Equity*
- *Close and Next Steps*



## Topic 2: Equity

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- Mary Wambui, Planning Office for Urban Affairs
- Discussion

# WHOSE GRID IS IT?

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Wambui Ekop (POUA) July 2023  
[mary@poua.org](mailto:mary@poua.org)  
[ciiruwambui@gmail.com](mailto:ciiruwambui@gmail.com)



# What has the Existing Grid Ecosystem Given Us?

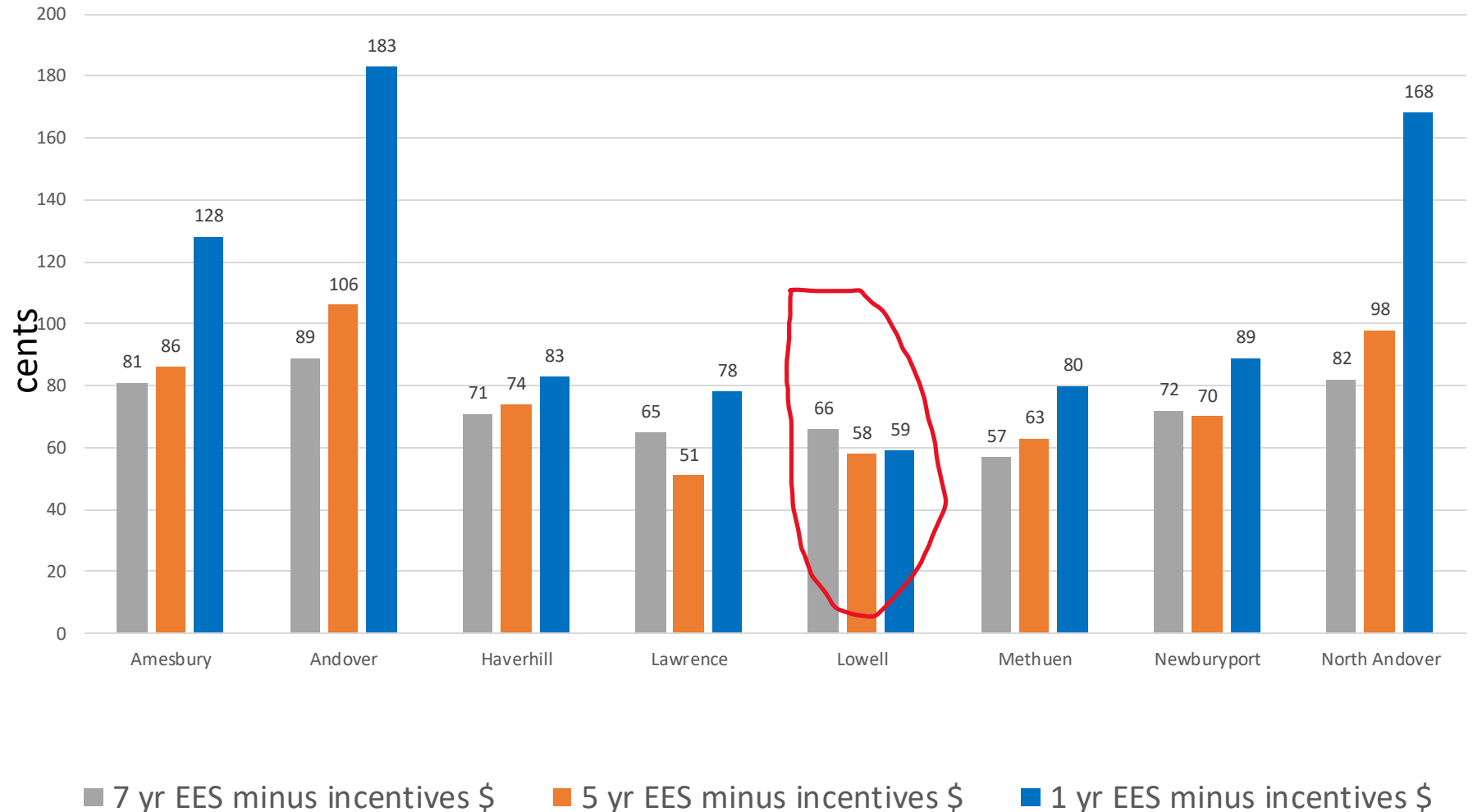
- A two-power system for the have's and the have not's –it has been said often that our nation's grid is outdated, inefficient and unreliable affecting communities of color and LI residents disproportionately (<https://www.americanprogress.org/article/advancing-equity-grid-modernization/>)
  - Access , Affordability and Ownership are issues that need to be resolved early on if we are to have a “just transition”. Existing grid has been extractive and unjust in these three areas.
  - Previous energy conversations especially at the DPU have professionalized what should be a very simple process that should center people! Closed ears and closed doors especially for those not skilled in energy jargon.
  - Opaque Utility Regulations and Decisions that has favored Goliath and completely crushed David (Did you know that utility shut off rates are higher by race than income?)
  - Grid costs that are typically recovered from all customers but benefits not experienced by all.
  - Grid benefits that do not include equity!
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Massachusetts History (Rate Payer Funds –Implementation of State Energy Efficiency Programs) highlights the need for intentionality about Equity at the Onset of Grid Modernization

Massachusetts through the Green Communities Act introduced a rate payer funded energy efficiency program. IOU administer the fund and though they may not agree with this data our lived experiences are consistent with the findings in this graph. Lowell is my City- it is diverse with BIPOC, language isolated and low-income residents with very high energy burdens. The programs were not implemented in a just manner in a State that is fast going towards being fossil fuel free. LMI residents were left behind despite paying into the fund.


[https://ma-eeac.org/wp-content/uploads/MA19X06-B-RESNONPART\\_Report\\_FINAL\\_v20200228.pdf](https://ma-eeac.org/wp-content/uploads/MA19X06-B-RESNONPART_Report_FINAL_v20200228.pdf)

For each **dollar** Lowell ratepayers have prepaid for EE services, they have received only **59-66 cents** in return.



# Equity – EEAC EWG Background

“The Energy Efficiency Advisory Council has set specific priorities for 2020 that support aggressive energy efficiency and demand reduction goals while ensuring goals are met equitably, cost-effectively, and in accordance with both the Green Communities Act and An Act to Advance Clean Energy.” The EEAC recognizes that Mass Save must prioritize equitable access to benefits among all customers. As part of the 2019-2021 Energy Efficiency Plan Term Sheet, the EEAC and PAs agreed to undertake an evaluation study to assess participation of moderate-income customers, customers with limited English proficiency, and ***The Equity Working Group was established by the EEAC following completion of the Non-participant Study, which found that the energy efficiency programs do not serve every customer equitably.*** In convening a working group, the council agrees to identify new strategies for increasing equitable participation among underserved communities across the Commonwealth.



# Equity mission and scope , EEAC- EWG

- The Equity Working Group will strive to develop just and equitable solutions that center the communities which have been underserved by the program. ***The working group will prioritize developing recommendations that address the needs of moderate-income customers, customers with limited English proficiency (LEP), renters, and small businesses.*** In effort to develop just and equitable solutions, the working group will solicit meaningful participation and engagement from relevant organizations that represent underserved communities.

# Equity- Defined in Grid Modernization Context.


Energy equity recognizes that disadvantaged communities have been historically marginalized and overburdened by pollution, underinvestment in clean energy infrastructure, and lack of access to energy-efficient housing and transportation. An equitable energy system is one where the economic, health, and social benefits of participation extend to all levels of society, regardless of ability, race, or socioeconomic status. Achieving energy equity requires **intentionally** designing systems, technology, procedures, and policies that lead to the fair and just distribution of benefits in the energy system. (PNNL)



# Stakeholder Engagement

- Equity is the whole picture- it is not at specific segments of the process.
- Equity & history- groups that have been left out of the energy ecosystem must be sought out and brought to the table.
- Obsession for “buy in” is a big problem that ends up marginalizing stakeholders. An equitable process should not only be concerned with “buy in” it should be comfortable with change of plans if communities think the “grand” idea is not suitable.
- Include all types of people , entities that the “Grid” touches. It should be broad.





# What is at Stake for Communities ?

**ENERGY BURDENS /AFFORDABILITY!** The % of income consumers use to pay for energy bills. In my neighborhood of Lowell – an Environmental Justice Community there are residents at 30% or below of AMI paying up to 16 % of their incomes towards energy bills. Grid Modernization Planning that does not address issues of **“rate reform”** will be grossly negligent. (More clean grid capacity directly cut’s bills- but it must be an intentional process that interrogates what a customer’s electricity bill consists of)

**INTERVENING PROCESS REFORM/MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION-** Not all voices are heard in the DPU process.

**DATA ACCESS/TRANSPARENCY** –A legal framework that secures privacy but also facilitates access to data that helps the State

**ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY** – Recognize that there is an existing social safety net systems that targets the most vulnerable and work within it for seamless, coherent delivery of energy services.

**SHARED OWNERSHIP/RESILIENCE** – Create room for community run energy infrastructure as State plans for Grid Modernization.

**MONITORING, EVALUATION & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT-** Establish Equity Targets. Massachusetts energy ecosystem should take time to learn from CT PURA's Equitable Modern Grid Initiative.

How does change look like? Perfect ?  
No but a good start!

# PI Mechanism and Components, 2022-2024 Plan Proposal vs. DPU Order

PI Mechanism (Electric) 2022-2024 Plan Proposal		PI Mechanism for 2022-2024 Per DPU Order	
18%	Equity Benefits* (EJ Communities & Mod. Income)	Equity Benefits (EJ Communities & Mod. Income)	X%
29%	Electrification Benefits	Electrification Benefits	Y%
53%	Standard Benefits	Standard Benefits	Z%
0%	<i>Discontinue</i> Value Component (Net Benefits)	<i>Continue</i> Value Component (Net Benefits)	≥30%
0%	<i>Discontinue</i> Active Demand Management Component	<i>Discontinue</i> Active Demand Management Component	0%

100%

≤7

This slide is showing the new structure in Massachusetts (2022-24) State Energy Efficiency Plan for awarding performance incentives to IOU's. Performance incentives are paid to utilities to align them with the public interest. In the past equity or electrification was not incentivized. Though our (EJ Advocates) proposal was not accepted fully a path has been created to target towns that have not benefited from the IOU programs in the past. This is an example of a successful negotiation between IOU's and advocates. In addition, you can find the accompanying equity targets here:

<https://ma-eeac.org/wp-content/uploads/Attachment-B-Equity-Targets-Framework-Final.pdf>

# Resources

- [https://neep.org/sites/default/files/media-files/full\\_report\\_equity\\_metrics.pdf](https://neep.org/sites/default/files/media-files/full_report_equity_metrics.pdf)
- <https://www.pnnl.gov/projects/energy-equity>
- <https://ma-eeac.org/wp-content/uploads/EWG-Recommendations-2.19.21.pdf>
- <https://ma-eeac.org/wp-content/uploads/Attachment-B-Equity-Targets-Framework-Final.pdf>
- <https://www.repowering.org.uk/>

## Close and Next Steps

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- Next Executive Committee Meeting: July 28, 2023, 2:00 – 3:30 PM
- Next GMAC Meeting: August 10, 2023, 12:00 – 4:00 PM
- Looking ahead to ESMP review
  - The GMAC will have 80 days to review the draft ESMPs from 9/1/23 – 11/20/23
  - Considering biweekly (meeting once every other week) GMAC meetings during this time frame to support coordination efforts
  - More details on the review plan to come during the August 10<sup>th</sup> GMAC meeting