

# Massachusetts Grid Modernization Advisory Council

Strategic Planning Survey Responses

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July 2025



# 2026-2019 GMAC Planning Survey



In June 2025, the GMAC Consultant fielded a survey to GMAC members to solicit ideas for the goals of the GMAC and potential activities to achieve those goals.

The survey marked the first step in the start of the development of a GMAC strategic plan for 2026.

**Fifteen** GMAC members, including **three** EDC representatives, completed the survey.

The following slides summarize key themes and provide more detailed results.

Note that the detailed results slides do not include every open-ended response provided.

# Summary of Survey Results

# GMAC Role (1 of 2): Areas of Alignment

The majority of GMAC members see the GMAC as a venue to bring siloed topics and processes under one umbrella but acknowledge the challenge of trying to do too much and the need to prioritize and use resources effectively.

- *One idea is to synthesize all ongoing activities related to grid modernization with a view to potentially bringing some or all of the disparate efforts under "one roof".*
- *"The GMAC is a good forum to help to understand how the various [distribution system planning and grid modernization] processes interact and ensure interested stakeholders are able to understand and stay informed of the big picture."*

Transparency and education of stakeholders and the public is important to GMAC members and is something the GMAC as well suited for.

- *GMAC should continue to be a location for public education on grid planning topics.*
- *Continuing to provide public education and ensuring transparency in the ESMP process*

GMAC members are supportive of monitoring and staying aware of other dockets/proceeding but are not very interested in engaging in other dockets.

- *"I think we should continue to track these processes. If there is a major decision point or opportunity for feedback in these other processes, I believe the GMAC should have a conversation at a meeting about this topic and provide feedback into those processes if appropriate (formally or informally)."*
- *"It should be aware of [related dockets], but we cannot necessarily participate in every one"*

## GMAC Role (2 of 2): For Further Discussion

**GMAC members are unsure to what extent GMAC should focus on education of the general public.**

- *“Not sure how much value there is in attempting to educate the actual “general public” - such education would have to start at such a 101 level that it likely would not be helpful to either the public or the GMAC. Education for specific groups/subsets of the public with preexisting interest is a better idea.”*
- *“GMAC should continue to be a location for public education on grid planning topics.”*

**While some GMAC members feel the GMAC should serve as a body to educate its members (9 of 15), many GMAC members feel that they are already experts in their field.**

- *I'm torn on how much GMAC members need to know to be able to speak to/convey the needs of their sectors. It may not be that GMAC members need more education, rather the way we are asking questions and asking GMAC members to engage may need rethinking. How can GMAC members be better leveraged to share their sector-specific knowledge and applicability to the grid questions at hand?*
- *Some background/contextual materials could be helpful, but GMAC members should ideally already be experts in their field and should be able to contribute based on that existing expertise.*

# Potential GMAC Objective Focus Areas

## 1. Effective and Proactive Planning

- Planning for future growth in electrical loads and distributed generation
- Load forecasting

## 2. Least-cost Investments

- How to make necessary grid investments for the least cost. Understanding EDC approach and providing recommendations.

## 3. ESMP Implementation and Investment Reprioritization

- First year of ESMP implementation, including investments made and investment reprioritization

## 4. Equity and Community Impacts

- Emissions impacts, siting and permitting

## 5. Affordability

- Cost containment, ensuring achieving GHG goals is affordable for ratepayers

## 6. DER Interconnection and Planning

- Ensuring grid is proactively upgraded to handle increased DER adoption
- Co-optimizing of planning for new load connection and DER interconnection

# GMAC Activity Ideas (1 of 2)



## Review and Discuss ESMP implementation

- Review and discuss biannual reports and year 1 of ESMP implementation
- Provide feedback to EDCs on ESMP implementation and other grid planning processes going on in MA

## Create sub-committees

- On building codes - connect GMAC members with those who influence buildings and their design (e.g., DOER Stretch code or MassSave teams)
- On IEP - dive into the work of the IEP working group and provide recommendations on IEP planning included in the ESMPs

## Collaborate with EDCs on next ESMPs

- Develop a GMAC engagement plan and timeline leading up to next ESMPs
- Do forecasting deep dives by end use (e.g., buildings, transportation, batteries)
- Collaborate on forecasting and how it relates to least-cost investments

## Produce Work Products

- Produce a GMAC resolution on forecasting recommendations
- Create GMAC internal memos and/or summary briefs of dockets and public comments by topic

## Develop a larger scale education and engagement campaign

## Organize additional tours of energy infrastructure sites

- Such as solar/storage project sites, complex C&I decarb building projects, etc.

## Convene a forum of representatives from various states working on proactive system planning to share information.

- States to consider: Colorado, Illinois, Minnesota, New York

# GMAC Activity Ideas: Work Products (2 of 2)



**GMAC members are generally supportive of producing work products that stay within the GMAC's scope, but there are differing understandings as to the purpose of the work products (Q10)**

- *Maybe [a work product] for those involved in building code, energy code and building incentive programs, so that they understand what things THEY could do to help and benefit grid mod.*
- *If it is possible for the diverse GMAC councilmembers to develop resolutions and/or comments that could be submitted to the DPU or other administrative agencies and the legislation, the Council could send a strong message. In practice that could be difficult given the diverse voices.*
- *I very much believe so as we've used the Equity Working Group in this manner. The GMAC is privy and familiar with a lot of information which would be useful to the public and other parties.*
- *I think it is fine for GMAC to produce informational work product. If parties then decide to use/leverage those materials to advocate outside of GMAC, that's fine. I don't see an issue with GMAC advocating for some sort of outcome/initiative, as long as it is not in clear opposition to an EDC position.*
- *Internal memos and/or summary briefs of dockets and public comments by topic would be helpful*



# What should GMAC *start, stop and continue* doing in 2026?



## **GMAC members generally like the current meeting frequency and structure**

- But want to make sure the meetings are focused and want to set specific priorities
- Also want to identify specific action items

## **GMAC members want to continue to focus on dialogue between members and collaboration with EDCs**

- Are also interested in hearing from external experts

## **GMAC members want to continue monitoring ongoing ESMP and related activities**

- But are wary of expanding the scope of the GMAC and of requiring additional time commitment from members

## **GMAC members want to continue to focus on stakeholder education and transparency**

- Members are supportive of continuing stakeholder sessions

## **GMAC members want to review current ESMP implementation and prepare for the next ESMP cycle by:**

- Paying close attention to biannual reports and lessons learned
- Providing feedback on ESMP process to EDCs and collaborating with EDCs to create a GMAC engagement plan
- Focusing on key topic areas that will be in the next ESMPs (e.g., forecasting, investment prioritization)

# Detailed Results

# GMAC Activities – Ideas from GMAC members

- I think at the end of 2025 and early 2026, GMAC should pay close attention to the biannual reports. The GMAC should be a forum to explain what is going on and discuss improvements/lessons learned from the process so far. These will be the first touch points on the implementation of the ESMPs and we should take extra time to review and consider these in the first round.
- Forecasting deep dives. The GMAC collaborates with the EDCs on forecasting scenarios for sectors including Buildings, Heating, Demand response, Transportation, and Battery Storage.
- Develop a larger scale education and engagement campaign
- Providing GMAC feedback on ESMP implementation and other grid planning processes going on in MA
- Internal memos and/or summary briefs of dockets and public comments by topic would be helpful
- Discussions or a sub committee with DOER's Stretch Code team could help. Also with other building code / energy code folks, as well as incentive programs (ie. Mass Save).
- A committee that connects grid mod folks, with those who influence buildings and their design and what kind of heat pumps will be going in them.
- Similar to how EDCs offered substation tours, would be interested in touring solar/storage project sites, complex C&I decarb building projects, etc. to see how they are designed and connected to the grid.
- Several other states including Minnesota and Colorado are pursuing proactive system planning. It would be valuable to convene a forum or share information across states to benefit from each states experiences.
- NY's future grid process is something I have been wanting to learn more about. I have also heard a lot about work in Illinois that might be helpful to learn from. Could we have Q&A sessions with reps from other jurisdictions? Could be two-sided (them learning from us at the same time).
- I recommend the GMAC request the EDCs provide a timeline leading up to the next ESMP filing to include recommendations of quarterly presentations to the GMAC and GMAC stakeholder engagement in alignment with the DPU's directives. Following the EDCs timeline and recommendations, the GMAC should discuss and provide feedback, resulting in an agreed upon plan for engagement over the next year.

## Q3 and Q5 - key issues GMAC members and/or the parties they represent are interested in regarding grid modernization and electricity distribution system planning (I)



### Proactive Planning

- Proper planning and projections of future building electrical loads based on heat pump adoption and technology evolution.
- Pro-actively modernizing the distribution system so that distributed generation can interconnect rapidly at costs that will not bankrupt the projects.
- Proactive planning for load-driven infrastructure investments
- How would "proactive" planning differ from current planning?
- Identifying ways to make sure the Companies are comprehensively planning their system

### Interconnection of DERs and New Load

- The folks I represent are interested in signals from the grid planning process for when and where projects are going to provide value to the system and pathways for delivering solutions to grid planners.
- Making sure our grid is ready to bring renewables online
- The process for how grid planning is treating interconnection of distributed generation compared to large load customers that are needing to electrify. There's silo'd efforts that don't seem to be getting the same attention or process, and there's potential for co-optimization that is being missed.
- Proactive identification and construction of infrastructure upgrades that enable hosting capacity for distributed generation and an associated multi-beneficiary pays cost sharing mechanism.

## Q3 and Q5 - key issues GMAC members and/or the parties they represent are interested in regarding grid modernization and electricity distribution system planning (II)



### Stakeholder Engagement and Transparency

- More fulsome understanding of how the EDCs will upgrade their systems to accommodate large scale distributed battery energy storage.
- interested in bringing together the numerous DSP activities into one ESMP/GMAC space to support greater transparency around utility activities.
- support stakeholder engagement in DSP and providing better structure and direction on where stakeholders can engage
- supporting a space where the EDCs can provide more detail and education on their forecasts and scenarios by sector and investment reprioritization.

### Bringing together siloed activities to help prioritize topics and make progress

- bringing together the numerous DSP activities into one ESMP/GMAC space to support greater transparency around utility activities
- The process for how grid planning is treating interconnection of distributed generation compared to large load customers that are needing to electrify. There's silo'd efforts that don't seem to be getting the same attention or process, and there's potential for co-optimization that is being missed.
- we would like to see some priority given to different topics so we can assign the proper resources to make progress in areas that matter the most.
- We have a lot of similar and overlapping efforts ongoing. It is becoming overwhelming to keep all of the efforts straight. I would like to see some concerted effort placed on prioritizing efforts so we can make significant progress in the most important issues instead of marginal progress in a lot of separate but related issues.
- most interested in improving transparency and efficiency of long-term system planning methodologies with articulated cost structures, objectives, decision making processes (optimization model), cost benefit analysis.

## Q3 and Q5 - key issues GMAC members and/or the parties they represent are interested in regarding grid modernization and electricity distribution system planning (III)



### Community Impacts/Engagement and Equity

- Community engagement and community education regarding distribution system projects
- Reduction of harmful emissions and environmental pollution in their community
- Understanding and recognition of the cumulative impacts of hosting disproportionate amounts energy and distribution system infrastructure
- Metrics and accountability to surface benefits and burdens created by the energy transition and grid modernization transparently
- I am very interested in community/consumer impact from perspectives of access and affordability and community disruption and zoning/siting.
- Affordability, access to tech, levels of impact on vulnerable communities

### Cost/Affordability

- How do we protect ratepayers against the risk of premature or stranded investments?
- How should the costs related to these investments be recovered?
- understanding the utilities longer term plans for their systems to meet Commonwealth decarbonization goals, while managing costs.
- Cost - who is subsidizing the cost to pay for infrastructure upgrades? Large load customers are concerned that they're being asked to foot the bill, not dissimilarly to DG prior to the CIP process, such that there's free-riders to follow.
- Affordability is a key issue. Minimizing and mitigating impacts on ratepayers.
- Cost containment and affordability
- Are we really planning for deep GHG reductions in the most cost-effective ways?
- Another concern we have is customer affordability and how do we best accomplish what stakeholders want to see without increasing costs to our customers.

## Q6 and Q11 – Role, Goals, and Purpose of GMAC in 2026

### ESMP Implementation

- Ensure ESMPs are properly being implemented
- Receiving and discussing reports that relate to the 2025 ESMP and could relate to the 2030 ESMP.
- Closely monitoring and asking questions about the first year of ESMP implementation

### Next ESMPs

- Figure out ways in which we can improve next ESMP process. Potentially develop a resolution which outlines those changes that are necessary and send to legislature.
- Use GMAC representatives' knowledge and experience to identify distribution system planning challenges that need to be solved. Once we identify specific problems, we can attempt to scope the ESMPs to solve these specific proactive planning problems.
- Ensuring non-wires alternative and grid compensation fund is on track for the next ESMP
- Centralized location for grid planning
- GMAC should continue to be a centralized location for updates on the implementation of the various parts of the ESMPs and grid planning in MA.
- synthesize all ongoing activities related to grid modernization with a view to potentially bringing some or all of the disparate efforts under "one roof".

### Public education on grid planning topics

- GMAC should continue to be a location for public education on grid planning topics.
- Continuing to provide public education and ensuring transparency in the ESMP process
- acting as a more iterative and public forum for questions as [the first year of ESMP implementation] rolls out.
- Educate the public on the value of electric infrastructure
- I do think that the GMAC needs to initiate a more concerted effort to educate the public and municipal leaders on many of these issues that will impact communities

### Stakeholder Engagement

- Providing a forum for ESMP related stakeholder engagement.
- engaging and education [of] critical stakeholders from the start on the benefits and impact of grid mod.

### Other

- I would like to see more action and influence with outside of the utilities and their planning. How / who can influence building codes, energy programs, incentive programs to ensure buildings are being built in a way that promotes a better grid transition.
- Improving process for grid modernization, grid performance

## Q7 Are there any particular goals or types of activities that you think the GMAC is especially well suited to pursue and champion in the next year?



### ESMP Implementation Review

- I think at the end of 2025 and early 2026, GMAC should pay close attention to the biannual reports. The GMAC should be a forum to explain what is going on and discuss improvements/lessons learned from the process so far. These will be the first touch points on the implementation of the ESMPs and we should take extra time to review and consider these in the first round.

### Next ESMPs

- use representatives' knowledge, experience, and networks to source information regarding distribution system problems. We can then use GMAC as a forum to guide the scope of the next ESMPs. The next ESMPs to hopefully serve to solve these problems instead of serving as an opportunity for the EDCs to propose EDC-focused investment priorities.
- Work with EDCs to develop a stakeholder engagement process to provide feedback on inputs for the ESMP demand assessment. Ensure transparency into the EDCs ESMP analysis process. Work with interested stakeholders and SMEs to identify ways to improve and inform the ESMP process in advance of 2030.

### Public Education and Stakeholder Engagement

- I think there is a role for us, in partnership with EEA and other parties, to discuss and educate the public on the implications of the 2026 siting and permitting reforms on future distribution system projects.
- Maybe there is a special role, that hasn't been explored yet, for the GMAC to be a space to help find the right language/way to communicate about the future grid and grid planning across different stakeholder types.
- Seeking more stakeholder feedback from all the various groups that will be impacted or have already been impacted.
- Improving process for grid modernization, grid performance and engaging and education critical stakeholders from the start on the benefits and impact of grid mod.

### Other

- Bringing technology sector leaders as well as leaders in the decarbonization space - and facilitating constructive collaboration with the EDCs - with the ultimate objective to move the Commonwealth toward its decarbonization goals.
- Influencing building codes, energy codes (ie. stretch codes) and incentive programs. Add a grid mod lens to those, and ensure we are promoting the right type of heat pumps and building designs.
- GMAC members cannot be expected to spend significant time outside of GMAC meetings to support efforts. GMAC members also should not be expected to become experts in all things DSP, but we need to figure out a balance of work that appropriately engages GMAC member expertise and makes them feel able to contribute



## Q12. Please select which statement you most agree with regarding the scope of the 2026 GMAC Strategic Plan.



	The 2026 GMAC Strategic Plan should only cover 2026. (1 respondent)
	The 2026 GMAC Strategic Plan should cover the three years (2026-2028) leading up to GMAC review of the next draft ESMPs in February 2029. (4 respondents)
	The 2026 GMAC Strategic Plan should cover a reasonable mix of 2026 and subsequent years leading up to GMAC review of the next draft ESMPs in February 2029. (10 Respondents)

- A three year plan would be interesting and helpful, with the understanding that the plan may need to be at a high level on some issues.
- Minimum viable product from this strategic planning exercise should be a solid 2026 plan that is agreed upon and voted upon. It is reasonable to slot other GMAC goals and objectives leading up to 2029, but we should revisit strategic planning annually. Things can and will change that will influence what the GMAC should prioritize.
- Mostly 2026 with some goals for 2027-2028. I wouldn't want to set too much in stone given the number of ongoing proceedings making some elements of our work a moving target.
- The world and this field is changing rapidly. If we look too far ahead, the EDCs are going to pick our pockets and we won't be holding ourselves accountable enough for what we say and do in 2025 and 2026.
- While the strategic plan should cover all three years, it should be fluid and evolving with at least an annual opportunity for update.
- The GMAC Strategic Plan should prioritize the most important issues to focus resources on the most impactful topics.
- Detailed for 2026, then sketched out with a draft plan for iterating in the years after, with a longer-term objective set for 2029 to guide the interim years.

## Q10. Do you think the GMAC should develop work products to enhance discussion within the GMAC? Should GMAC work products be used to advocate for positions in forums outside the GMAC?



	Yes, related to the scope of the GMAC (12 respondents)
	Yes, but with caveats or only in specific situations (3 respondents)

- Maybe something for those involved in building code, energy code and building incentive programs, so that they understand what things THEY could do to help and benefit grid mod.
- GMAC as a deliberative body generally should not be advocating for things outside of its own scope. I believe a mild exception is providing guidance to the legislature on ESMPs and the scope of GMAC, as that is providing them with info about the body itself
- If it is possible for the diverse GMAC councilmembers to develop resolutions and/or comments that could be submitted to the DPU or other administrative agencies and the legislation, the Council could send a strong message. In practice that could be difficult given the diverse voices.
- Yes, there is a lot of public education required.
- Yes, work products are good. GMAC should develop resolutions to put forward recommendations/opinions of the council. This could be for legislation that impacts ESMPs and the role of the GMAC. GMAC should also provide products to help monitor/track/inform stakeholders about grid modernization activities. GMAC comments to related working groups and councils seems unnecessary and reaching on scope. GMAC should not provide comments in active DPU dockets – though it can discuss ongoing dockets for awareness.
- Yes, I very much believe so as we've used the Equity Working Group in this manner. The GMAC is privvy and familiar with a lot of information which would be useful to the public and other parties.
- Yes, if they relate to grid modernization.
- There is a huge need for education. GMAC is well positioned to provide that information. I believe there is a lot of time spent summarizing what the EDCs are trying to say instead of asking the utilities to summarize for the group. Seems like a waste of time and resources that could be used elsewhere.
- That would be helpful - but first the overall objectives and sub workstreams clearly defined such that those memos roll up to a specific overall objective
- I think it is fine for GMAC to produce informational work product. If parties then decide to use/leverage those materials to advocate outside of GMAC, that's fine. I don't see an issue with GMAC advocating for some sort of outcome/initiative, as long as it is not in clear opposition to an EDC position. To the extent GMAC can be used as a body that finds common ground and brings consensus/near-consensus proposals to the DPU, I think that would be a productive use of the GMAC. I don't think the GMAC taking positions in opposition to the EDCs would further the open and productive venue that I believe GMAC to represent.
- Internal memos and/or summary briefs of dockets and public comments by topic would be helpful

**Q8. There are many other ongoing activities related to grid modernization and distribution system planning that are outside of the ESMP process and ESMP dockets. Should the scope of the 2026 Strategic Plan include these ongoing related activities?**



	Yes (3 respondents)
	Yes, but should mostly be monitoring or tracking processes (6 respondents)
	No (2 respondents)
	Unsure/ if yes, very limited (3 respondents)
	Response unclear (1 respondent)

- I think we should continue to track these processes. If there is a major decision point or opportunity for feedback in these other processes, I believe the GMAC should have a conversation at a meeting about this topic and provide feedback into those processes if appropriate (formally or informally).
- Yes, the GMAC is a good forum to help to understand how the various processes interact and ensure interested stakeholders are able to understand and stay informed of the big picture of distribution system planning and grid modernization.
- It should be aware of them, but we cannot necessarily participate in every one
- Yes. The scope could include a process to document and monitor other ongoing activities as a way to better understand the processes.
- The Strategic Plan should perhaps include updates/monitoring of the progress of these ongoing activities to ensure that the GMAC ESMP plan complements these other efforts and doesn't conflict with or duplicate them.
- If we can find a way to do so manageably. I do think there needs to be some connectivity between the IEP and NPA processes given our ongoing discussion about costs and NWAs.
- The ongoing dockets cover a wide range of issues. I am concerned that resources are stretched too thin to continue to appropriately address all of these issues in addition to new ideas. A prioritization effort would help to focus the group..

## Q26. What assistance would help you feel more supported in your role on the GMAC?

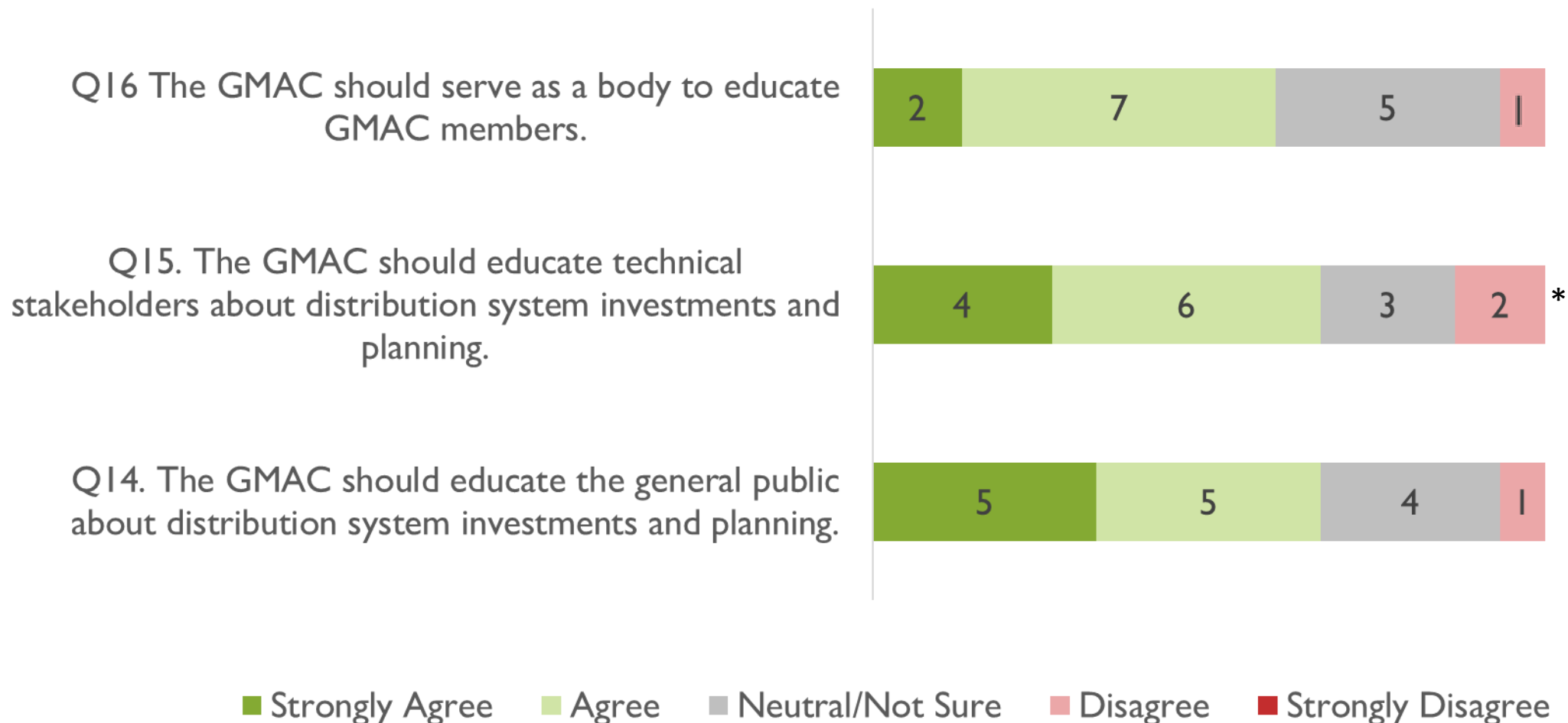
- Nothing/ N/A (9 respondents)
- Understanding what information or expertise is needed from me and my role. Specific questions or engagement on things that relate to my area of expertise.
- Clear identification of where our input is needed
- A workplan/strategic plan would help and also suggested readings from other relevant dockets/processes ahead of meetings so I can feel like I'm coming into the meeting informed for discussion.
- Opportunities to recommend topics for technical SME support and resource creation.
- If we could prioritize on fewer issues, that would help Utilil allocate resources to be more impactful.
- I am willing to assist with education strategies for consumers and municipal leaders

## Q27. What topic(s) would you like more background on or wish you knew more about?

- I am missing a LOT of the procedural aspects here
- Rate design and cost allocation
- Utility planning from someone who is no longer employed by a utility
- Residential electrification efforts (EVs and heat pumps).
- Cost recovery mechanisms and options for long-term cost recovery for ESMP investments.
- Distribution - transmission system connections
- Substations and infrastructure permitting timelines and process
- Flexible interconnection, DERMs, grid-enhancing technologies, demand assessment
- Customer Sided Solutions
- C&I side of the house and interaction between Dx and Tx system and regional energy markets
- DG



Please state to what extent you agree or disagree with role of the GMAC related to education of stakeholders.



Q15 disagree comments— EDC member said jumping to distribution planning is putting cart before the horse. Another GMAC member thinks technical stakeholders have all the resources they need.

**Q17. Below are several ways the GMAC could educate the public about distribution system investments and planning in 2026. For each option, indicate your level of interest.**



Hold periodic stakeholder technical sessions designed to reach the general public or some segments of the general public, e.g., municipalities, community groups.



Promote the GMAC website and hold periodic social media campaigns to reach the public.



Design and promote the GMAC website to provide a variety of educational material for the general public.



Disseminate introductory factsheets on key distribution system planning issues.



Repondents

■ Extremely interested ■ Very interested ■ Moderately interested ■ Slightly interested ■ Not interested at all

**Q18. Below are some ways the GMAC could educate its members. For each option, indicate your level of interest.**



Use the GMAC consulting budget to hire outside experts to conduct technical research and provide results to GMAC in the form of reports, memos, slide decks, or presentations.



Request outside experts to make presentations on issues of interest to GMAC.



Request the GMAC consultants to research and make presentations on issues of interest to GMAC.



Invite EDC members to make more presentations regarding issues of interest to GMAC.

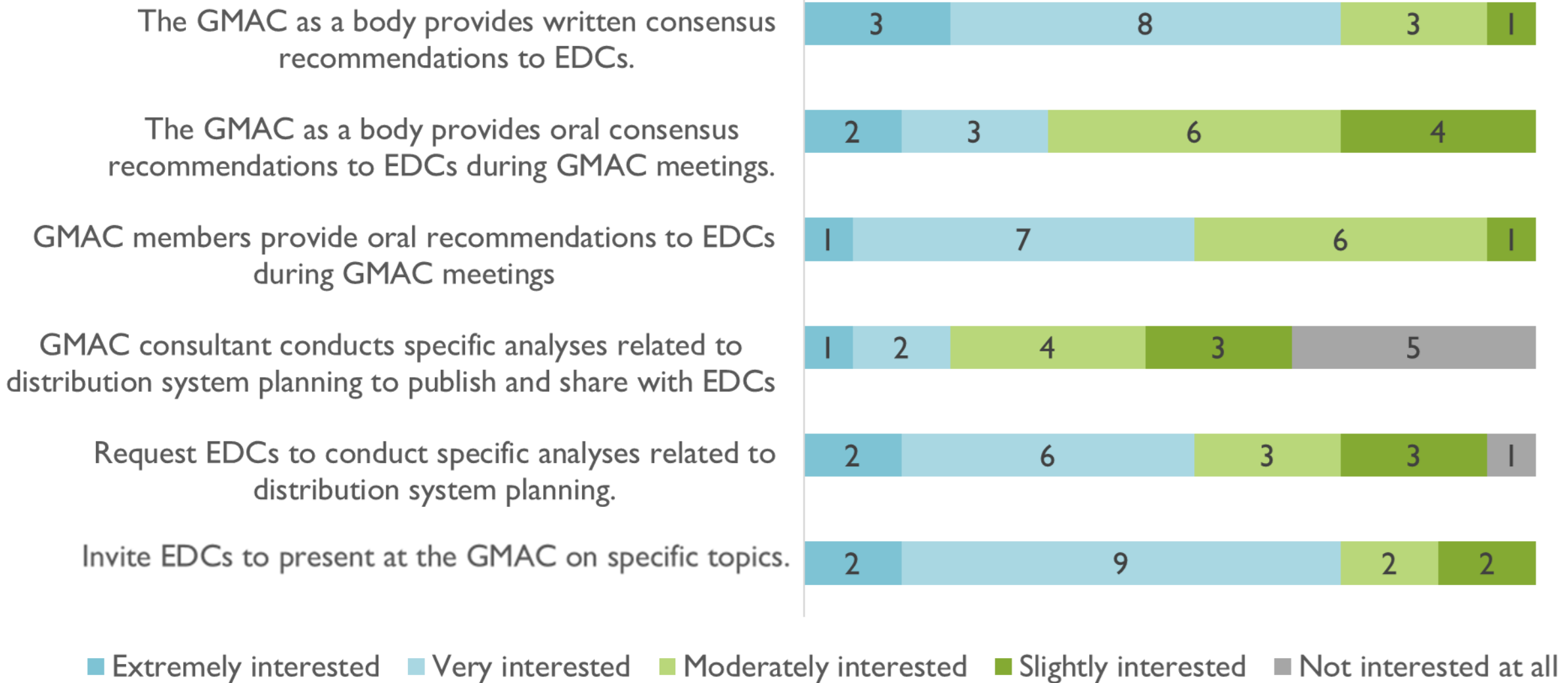


Invite GMAC members to make more presentations regarding issues of interest to them.



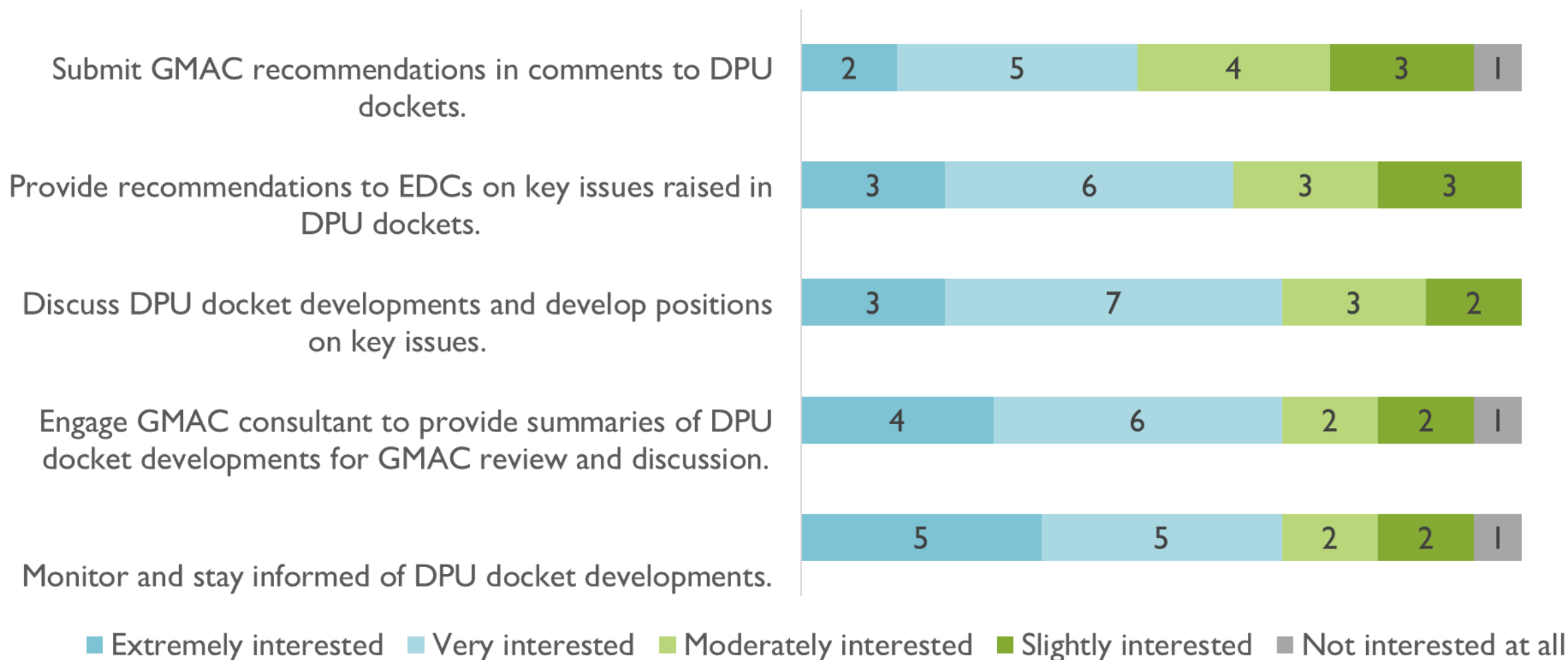
■ Extremely interested ■ Very interested ■ Moderately interested ■ Slightly interested ■ Not interested at all

**Q19. Below are some ways that the GMAC could collaborate with EDCs. For each option, indicate your level of interest**

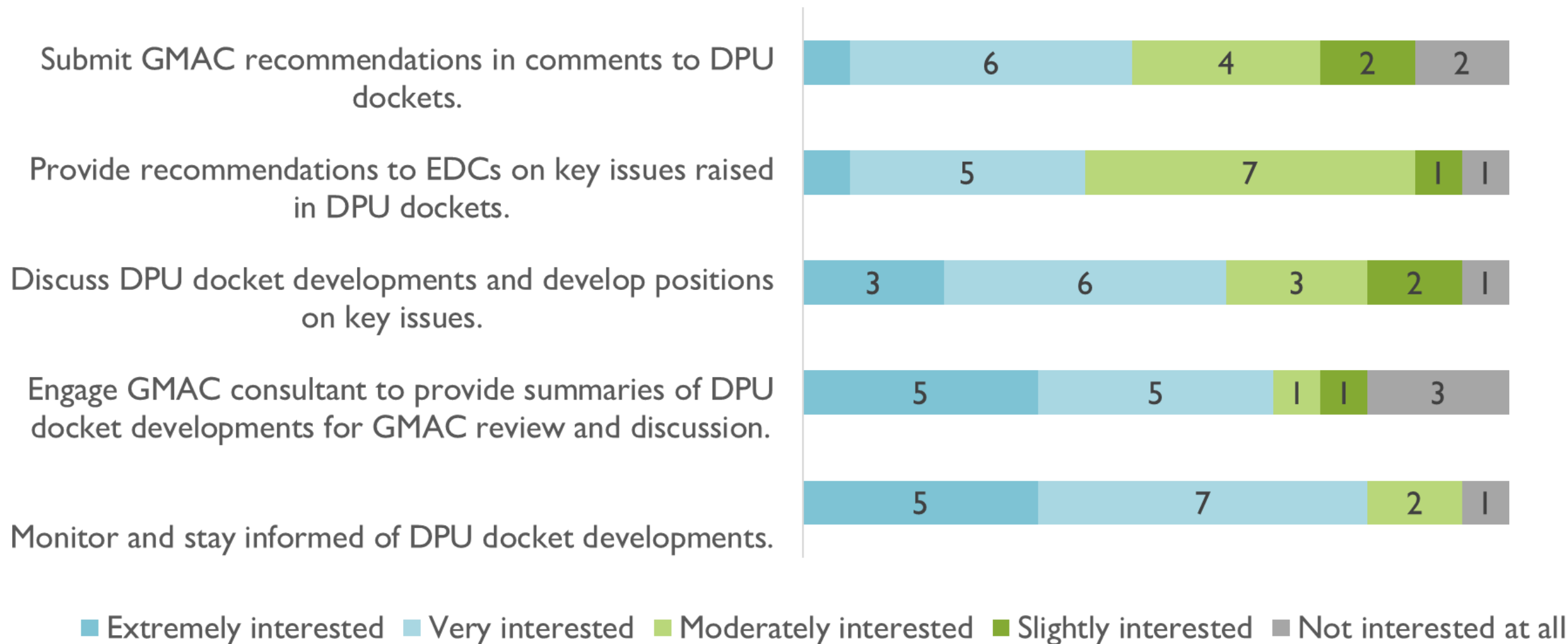




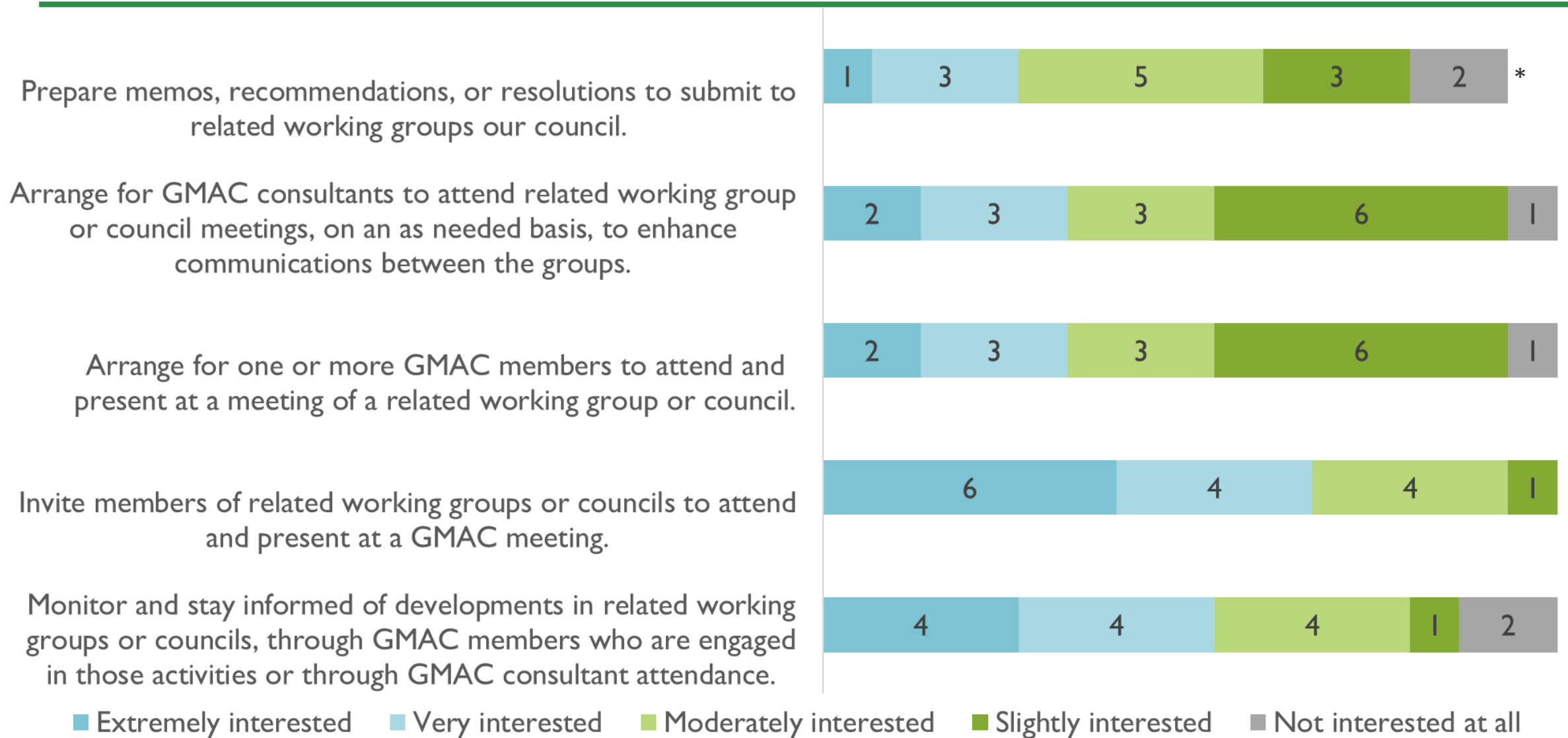
**Q20. Below are some ways the GMAC could engage with DPU ESMP Biannual Report dockets. For each option, indicate your level of interest.**



Q21. Below are some ways the GMAC could engage with DPU ESMP Cost Recovery dockets. For each option, indicate your level of interest.



**Q23. Below are some ways the GMAC could collaborate with related working groups and councils. For each option, indicate your level of interest.**



\* One respondent skipped this question

# Q25A What should GMAC *continue* doing in 2026?

## Meeting frequency and structure

- Meet regularly.
- Cadence of meetings feels right. I am excited to see how the July 17 meeting turns out.
- Focusing each meeting on a specific topic
- The GMAC should continue to invite external speakers to present to GMAC.

## Dialogue between members and collaboration

- I like the moderated discussions; I feel like we are having a dialogue.
- Engaging with EDCs, collaborating with other working groups, providing feedback on ESMP process

## Monitoring ongoing ESMP and related activities

- Monitoring related dockets/working groups through updates from participating GMAC members.
- Leverage consultants to educate GMAC Members of other ongoing working group and docket happenings
- Reporting on ESMP activities.
- The activity tracker is very helpful

## Stakeholder events and increasing transparency, education

- The GMAC should continue to hold stakeholder events and increase transparency of the grid planning process.
- We should plan to have additional stakeholder sessions.
- Educating the public and GMAC members, sharing information, Continue with open dialog and transparency efforts.

# Q25A What should GMAC *stop* doing in 2026?

## Additional time commitment from GMAC members

- Asking of GMAC Members to report out from other working groups, unless volunteered, requiring time above and beyond just participation in those groups
- Let's try not to expand our scope much further. We feel stretched thin and will be adding a WG and responding to the DPU's recommendations.

## EDC Responses

- I don't think Synapse brings much value.
- Recommend not having the consultant summarize what the EDCs are trying to say if the utilities are in the room.
- Allocating less time to ESMP activities.

## Comments about use of GMAC meeting time

- [Stop providing] Background/contextual education for GMAC members.
- Creating consensus comments and feedback is time consuming and does not always result in effective information sharing. While at times it may be necessary, this process should be limited.
- GMAC should provide more opportunities for GMAC member discussion.

## Other

- I continue to think the consulting team is not neutral enough when it comes to assessing EDC filings and docket materials.

# Q25C What should GMAC *start* doing in 2026?

## Prepare for next ESMPs

- Focusing on key issues/topic areas that will be included in the next ESMPs.
- Start working toward the next ESMP.

## Current EMSPs

- Providing GMAC feedback on ESMP implementation and other grid planning processes going on in MA
- Collaborating with EDCs to develop an engagement plan between ESMP iterations; bringing in technical experts to inform GMAC and EDCs on narrow scope topics to enhance the ESMP process; facilitating collaboration of working groups and grid planning processes

## Be focused and set priorities

- Having shorter meetings with more specific action items.
- Set priorities and remain focused on those priorities.

## Other

- Making resolutions, developing workplans that leverage studies or analysis by external experts.
- Advocate for holistic planning
- See notes re: forecasting and other processes earlier in the survey.
- Working with leading researchers and technology experts.
- Similar to how EDCs offered substation tours, would be interested in touring solar/storage project sites, complex C&I decarb building projects, etc. to see how they are designed and are connected to the grid.