

March 27, 2025



Dear Department of Public Utilities,

The Grid Modernization Advisory Council (GMAC) was established by An Act Driving Clean Energy and Offshore Wind (the Climate Act) and is charged with reviewing and providing recommendations to the Massachusetts investor-owned electric distribution companies (EDCs) regarding their electric-sector modernization plans (ESMPs). As Massachusetts continues its leadership in reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions with the commitment to achieve Net Zero emissions in 2050 and its reliance on an expanded role for the electric power system,¹ the GMAC is an integral part of improving transparency and stakeholder engagement in the electric distribution system planning process in the Commonwealth.

On August 29, 2024, the Department issued its Order in the ESMP proceedings (D.P.U. 24-10, D.P.U. 24-11, and D.P.U. 24-12), finding that the EDCs are required to include a proactive, long-term system planning process (LTSP) as part of their ESMP filings and directing the EDCs to coordinate an LTSP stakeholder working group ("LTSP WG") to develop an LTSP proposal and submit the proposal and associated report to the Department on April 4, 2025.

The GMAC understands that the LTSP WG has been meeting regularly and has a draft LTSP framework. Within the draft LTSP framework, specific stakeholder engagement is contemplated to inform the EDCs' LTSP analysis. We also understand that the LTSP WG recommends establishment of a stakeholder engagement group to inform the LTSP analysis as a subgroup of the GMAC.

The GMAC does not at this time comment on whether an LTSP stakeholder engagement group should be established nor the membership and operating procedures of such a group. Nonetheless, the GMAC informs the Department that if it sees fit to recommend establishment of an LTSP stakeholder engagement group and finds it appropriate to recommend that the engagement group be established as a subgroup of the GMAC, the GMAC will support the Department's recommendation and assist in facilitating such a group.² We find that providing the GMAC as a forum for an LTSP subgroup is in alignment with the Council's mandate of improving transparency and stakeholder engagement in the electric distribution system planning process in the Commonwealth.

Thank you,

Joanna Troy
Chair of the Grid Modernization Advisory Council
Deputy Commissioner of DOER

¹ Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2050 states that Massachusetts' path to economy-wide decarbonization relies on an expanded role for the electric power system.

² The GMAC will establish any LTSP stakeholder engagement group pursuant to Section 4.2(B) of its bylaws and will take into consideration any recommendation from the Department.