

Massachusetts Grid Modernization Advisory Council

Executive Committee Meeting

June 5, 2025



Agenda & Roll Call



- Agenda & Roll Call
- Updates
- GMAC CY26 Budget Extension Request
- GMAC Strategic Planning
- Other Discussion Areas
- Close

Roll call alphabetically by voting and then non-voting members

- **GMAC Stakeholder Event**
 - DOER has set up brainstorming meetings with panelists to discuss panel talking points.
 - Please share the July 17th event interest form with your networks: [Interest Form](#)
- **Website Development**
 - The GMAC website has moved into the development stage.
 - The site is on track to be launched by July 2nd.
- **GMAC Building Electrification Seat Vacancy**
 - JS Rancourt will be stepping down from his GMAC role.
 - DOER interviewed potential candidates to fill this seat based on GMAC/DOER staff suggestions.
 - Per our bylaws, the vacancy shall be filled through an appointment by the Governor.
- **Energy Affordability, Independence, and Innovation Act (*see next slides*)**

Energy Affordability, Independence, and Innovation Act Overview



On May 13, 2025, Governor Healey filed the Energy Affordability, Independence & Innovation Act (EAIIA)

Key goals of the Act are to reduce energy costs for residents and businesses, increase accountability of the utilities, and drive innovation

The administration estimates the Act will save MA customers \$10 billion over 10 years

Additional information:

mass.gov/EAIIA

EAIIA includes many provisions affecting electric and gas utilities including, for example

- Requires comprehensive distribution system planning.
- Requires EDCs to provide flexible interconnection solutions.
- Authorizes the EDCs and LDCs to use rate reduction bonds to finance ESMPs, MassSave, gas transition costs, and more.
- Permits non-utility, non-profit entities to collaborate with utilities and co-invest in some utility infrastructure projects.
- Allows for inclusive utility investment programs that allow on-bill financing for customers with oil or propane heating.
- Provides flexibility in procuring basic service.
- Reduces the value of net metering compensation for large net metering customers.
- Requires DPU to review reforms to reconciling charges
- And more...

Comprehensive Distribution Planning – New Sec. 92D



By July 2028, the DPU shall establish a comprehensive distribution system planning and cost recovery framework

- Encompassing ESMPs, base distribution rates, reconciling charges, and other proceedings deemed relevant.
- The framework shall apply to any petition to amend electric rates filed after July 2028.

The framework shall seek to accomplish the following:

- Minimizing costs to ratepayers, including through use of NWAs and VPPs.
- Consolidating distribution system planning proceedings.
- Consolidating the number of proceedings and charges through which the EDCs may recover costs.
- Aligning distributions system plans, investments filed in rate cases, and ESMPs.
- Ensuring that rate applications present a complete picture of current and future capital and operating expenses.
- Prioritizing adjustments to base distribution rates over reconciling charges.
- Optimizing distribution investments to meet distribution system needs.
- Considering incentive mechanisms to align the interests of EDCs, customers, and developers.
- Maximizing transparency, accessibility, and meaningful participation for stakeholders.

Expansion of Planning Requirements in 92B

Requires ESMPs to include a Load Management Plan (LM Plan) including:

- Summary of a wide variety of resource options (VPP, DG, EE, grid mod, electrification, transport, DERs, AMI)
- Five- and ten-year targets for peak reduction, including targets for EE and decarbonization
- Quantitative and qualitative evaluation of benefits of avoiding T&D infrastructure
- Methods to ensure that programs are optimized to avoid infrastructure through current plans, ESMPs, or core capital planning processes
- Plans and processes to enable third-party developers to provide LM and VPP services

Requires ESMPs to include a Flexible Interconnection program (FI Program) including:

- Summary and timeline of the FI program and alternative connection solutions
- Quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the benefits of the FI program and alternatives including those through current plans, ESMPs, or core capital planning processes

Requires ESMPs to include a comprehensive description and summary of how the LM plan and FI program are integrated with other distributions system planning efforts to reduce costs and maximize benefits to ratepayers, advance energy affordability, and help meet GHG goals

Additional Planning, Investments, and Engagement



Supplemental ESMP

Requires EDCs to file a supplemental ESMP within one year after the Act is enacted.

- The supplemental ESMP should address the new ESMP requirements in the Act.
- The EDCs shall consult with GMAC no later than 120 days before filing with the DPU

More Frequent ESMP Investments

Requires that an ESMP shall propose distribution planning, GMAC and stakeholder engagement, and regulatory processes to ensure that the ESMP goals are met throughout the five-year ESMP period. Suggesting that the legislature wants EDCs and GMAC to be more active in achieving ESMP goals every year.

Expanded GMAC Role

Requires EDCs to solicit input from GMAC on topics such as planning scenarios and modeling and the **requirements of subsection (c) and respond to information and document requests from said council.**

GMAC CY26 Budget Extension Request

- DPU set August 15, 2025 as filing deadline for the CY2026 GMAC budget request. Information to be provided includes:
 - An accounting of budget spend in 2025 and detailed invoices
 - 2026 consultant work plan
 - 2026 proposed costs by cost category
- We propose to ask DPU to extend budget filing deadline to **November 7, 2025**.
- A later 2026 budget filing allows us to better understand and include tasks that come out of GMAC strategic planning efforts.
- **Note:** We requested an extension for the CY25 budget filing so that it occurred after the ESMP Order was released.

Date	Event
August 15, 2025	Current 2025 budget request filing date with DPU
September 18, 2025	GMAC meeting focused on strategic planning for 2026; follows member survey and small group discussions over the summer
October 9, 2025	ExCom meeting; touchpoint on strategic planning
October 10, 2025	EWG meeting; touchpoint on strategic planning
October 30, 2025	GMAC meeting; GMAC voting on 2026 strategic plan
November 7, 2025	Proposed budget request filing date with DPU

Does ExCom support this extension request?

GMAC 2026 Strategic Planning

Survey to all GMAC members was released May 27. Responses are due by **June 6**.

Small group discussions will be held in July and August

- Build off the results of the survey
- Establish principles by which the GMAC will consider and respond to evolving issues
- Focus the issues and options to discuss at the September GMAC meeting
- Propose a small number of concrete goals and objectives
- Propose a small number of concrete activities and actions
- Identify areas of consensus, non-consensus, issues warranting further development
- DOER and GMAC consultants are still working out specifics, such as timing, number of members per discussion, which members to combine, whether and how to include EDC members.

September GMAC meeting will be used to guide the first draft of the GMAC 2026 Strategic Plan

Subsequent meetings will be used to finish the GMAC 2026 Strategic Plan

See [April ExCom slide deck](#) for more detail on the 2026 strategic plan proposal

Do ExCom members have initial thoughts from the survey to share?

Other Discussion Areas



- Are there other issues or items the Executive Committee would like to discuss?

Close and Next Steps

- The next GMAC meeting is June 26th from 1 – 3 PM.
- The next EWG meeting is July 11th from 10 – 11:30 AM.
- The GMAC Stakeholder Session is July 17th from 8 – 12:30 PM.

Appendix

Details on the Energy Affordability, Independence, and Innovation Act

New Requirements in Section 92B

New Subsections in 92B(c)

An electric-sector modernization plan developed pursuant to subsection (a) shall also include the following::

- i. A load management, VPP, DG plan (LM plan) that minimizes costs and maximizes benefits, including:
 - A. A detailed summary and timeline of all current, proposed, and under development state activities (EE, grid mod, electrification, transport, DERs, AMI).
 - B. Quantitative 5- and 10-year targets for peak load reduction, including targets for EE and decarbonization.
 - C. Quantitative and qualitative evaluation of benefits of such programs to avoid T&D infrastructure.
 - D. Detailed methodology for ensuring that such programs are optimized to reduce, defer or eliminate infrastructure investment needs identified through the company's current or prior electric-sector modernization plans or through the company's core capital planning process.
 - E. Detailed description and summary of plans and processes to enable third-party developers to provide LM and VPP services.
- ii. Information on the flexible interconnection (FI) program, including:
 - A. A detailed summary and timeline of the FI program and alternative interconnection solutions.
 - B. A qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the benefits of the FI program and alternative interconnection solutions to avoid T&D, including benefits identified through the company's current or prior electric-sector modernization plans or through the company's core capital planning process.
- iii. Comprehensive description and summary of how the LM plan and FI program are integrated with other distributions system planning efforts to reduce costs and maximize benefits to ratepayers, advance energy affordability, and help meet GHG goals

Source: EAIIA Section 29

New Requirements in Section 92B

New Section 92B(d)

In developing the ESMP, EDCs shall

iii Solicit input from GMAC on topics such as planning scenarios and modeling and the requirements of subsection (c) and respond to information and document requests from said council.

vii Prepare and file a climate vulnerability and resilience plan with the ESMP.

New Section 92B(f)

An ESMP developed by the EDCs shall propose distribution and, where applicable, transmission planning, GMAC and stakeholder engagement, and regulatory processes to ensure that the criteria in subsection (a) of 92B are met throughout the five-year ESMP period (emphasis added).

Source: EAllA Section 29

New Section 92D(a)



(a) By July 1, 2028, the department shall establish a comprehensive distribution system planning and cost recovery framework that encompasses the electric-sector modernization plans and the discrete investments identified therein, base distribution rates and associated applications, reconciliation charges and associated filings, and other department proceedings and electric company filings deemed relevant by the department. Such framework shall apply to any petition to amend electric rates filed after July 1, 2028.

(b) The framework required in subsection (a) shall seek to accomplish the following:

- i. Minimizing costs to ratepayers, including through use of NWAs and VPPs.
- ii. Consolidating distribution system planning proceedings.
- iii. Consolidating the number of proceedings and charges through which the EDCs may recover costs.
- iv. Aligning distributions system plans, investments filed in rate cases, and ESMPs.
- v. Ensuring that rate applications present a complete picture of current and future capital and operating expenses.
- vi. Prioritizing adjustments to base distribution rates over reconciling charges.
- vii. Optimizing distribution investments to meet distribution system needs.
- viii. Considering incentive mechanisms to align the interests of EDCs, customers, and developers.
- ix. Maximizing transparency, accessibility, and meaningful participation for stakeholders in the development and review of distribution system plans and associated investments.

Source: EAIIA Section 30

New Section 92D(b)



(b) The framework required in subsection (a) may include a process by which each electric company may submit an application for

preliminary review of discrete, specific, enumerated investments consistent with the electric-sector modernization plan most recently approved by the department to be recovered through base distribution rates,

and criteria under which the electric company may make investments to serve incremental electricity demand or incremental distributed generation before such demand or generation materializes.

Source: EAIIA Section 30

Additional Requirement – Supplemental ESMP



Each electric company shall submit a supplement to the electric-sector modernization plan approved by the department not later than one year after the effective date of this Act.

The supplement shall include the changes to subsections (c) and (d) of section 92B of chapter 164 of the General Laws made pursuant to section 29.

An electric company shall consult with the GMAC no later than 120 days before the electric company files the supplement with the department;

and provided further that the GMAC shall return the supplement to the company with recommendations not later than 70 days before the company files the plan with the department.

Source: EAIIA Section 56