

Feedback Form

Regional Electricity Planning in the GTA East Region – September 14, 2026

Feedback Provided by:

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To promote transparency, feedback submitted will be posted on the GTA East [engagement webpage](#) unless otherwise requested by the sender.

Following the GTA East regional planning webinar held on September 14, 2026, the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) is seeking feedback on the detailed options analysis and draft recommendations to meet the needs. A copy of the presentation as well as recording of the session can be accessed from the [engagement web page](#).

Please submit feedback to engagement@ieso.ca by October 5, 2026.

Topic	Feedback
What feedback do you have on the draft recommendations?	See General Comments/Feedback

Topic	Feedback
What information needs to be considered regarding the draft recommendations?	See General Comments/Feedback
How can the IESO continue to engage with communities and stakeholders as the recommendations are implemented, or to help prepare for the next planning cycle.	See General Comments/Feedback

General Comments/Feedback

The feedback in this section is responsive to the above three specific topics and questions. These issues are interrelated and broadly relevant, and are therefore presented together.

As elaborated below, the PWU continues to be very concerned that the IESO Planning Processes (including Regional Electricity Planning in the GTA East Region and the GTA West Region, as well as related Bulk Planning for South and Central Ontario) are not based on sufficiently high-growth demand scenarios, and therefore may not result in the level of planning and infrastructure needed to ensure reliability under higher-demand scenarios.

The Presentation¹ explains that Regional Electricity Planning in the GTA East Region is based on Bulk Planning for South and Central Ontario, which has now been completed. The final Report: South and Central Bulk Plan² was released on August 20, 2026.

The PWU has previously provided extensive feedback on GTA East Regional Planning (and related Bulk Planning for South and Central Ontario), which is resubmitted in the footnote below for reference.³

As preamble for more specific feedback set out below, we will first repeat and summarize some key aspects of the feedback previously provided.

Current IESO demand forecasts significantly underestimate the scale and urgency of Ontario's electrification required to avert an electricity crisis and support economic growth. This systematic

¹ GTA East Regional Electricity Planning, Engagement Webinar: Options Analysis and Draft Recommendations, September 14, 2026, especially p. 7. <https://www.ieso.ca/-/media/Files/IESO/Document-Library/regional-planning/GTA-East/GTA-East-20260914-presentation.pdf>

² South and Central Bulk Plan, August 20, 2026. <https://www.ieso.ca/-/media/Files/IESO/Document-Library/engage/bulk-planning/scbp-20260820-south-and-central-bulk-plan-report.pdf>

³ Regional Electricity Planning in the GTA East Region – April 20, 2026 (Engagement Webinar: Electricity Needs and Options Screening), Feedback of the Power Workers Union, May 5, 2026. <https://www.ieso.ca/-/media/Files/IESO/Document-Library/regional-planning/GTA-East/GTA-East-20260511-feedback-form-PWU.pdf>
Bulk Planning Update Webinar (South and Central Ontario Bulk Plan) – April 30, 2026, Feedback of the Power Workers Union, June 3, 2026. <https://www.ieso.ca/-/media/Files/IESO/Document-Library/engage/bulk-planning/scbp-20260521-feedback-form-PWU.pdf>
Bulk Planning Update Webinar (South and Central Ontario Bulk Plan) – December 12, 2025, Feedback of the Power Workers Union, January 23, 2026. <https://www.ieso.ca/-/media/Files/IESO/Document-Library/engage/bulk-planning/scbp-20251212-feedback-form-Power-Workers-Union.pdf>

underestimation of Ontario's electricity demand has material implications for system planning, resulting in a grid that is less robust and less prepared for emerging demand pressures.

In Ontario's current high demand growth environment, the costs/risks of underbuilding electricity infrastructure are much higher than the costs/risks of right-sizing (or upsizing) infrastructure. Planning should therefore prioritize sufficient and timely capacity to accommodate high-growth scenarios, rather than optimizing narrowly around central forecasts.

IESO summarized the PWU's most recent previous feedback on GTA East Regional Planning and responded as follows:⁴

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.

IESO Response

[...]

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.
- 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.

[...]

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

⁴ IESO Response to Feedback for Public Engagement Webinar: Electricity Needs and Options Screening – Revised, September 8, 2026, pp. 2-3, 6-7, emphasis added. <https://www.ieso.ca/-/media/Files/IESO/Document-Library/regional-planning/GTA-East/GTA-East-20260420-ieso-response-to-feedback-revised.pdf>

connection assessment process which are publicly posted. Learn more about these processes here.⁵

The PWU is very supportive that Regional Planning for GTA East has begun to incorporate a high forecast scenario. This positive evolution in electricity planning for GTA East is long overdue and further highlights the PWU's ongoing concerns that IESO Planning Processes continue to be largely (and sometimes solely) based on a Reference Scenario. The PWU is especially concerned that IESO load forecasts and system planning continue to have limited, if any, consideration of potential large-scale customers, such as data centres; the exclusion of these less certain – but increasingly likely – large loads (particularly transmission-connected loads) risks systematically understating future demand requirements.⁶

Bulk Planning for South and Central Ontario⁷ helps to vividly demonstrate the feedback that the PWU has been repeatedly providing:

- **the costs/risks of underbuilding electricity infrastructure are much higher than the costs/risks of right-sizing (or upsizing) infrastructure**
- **Ontario electricity infrastructure must be expanded rapidly and at scale to meet accelerating demand.**

The IESO developed and compared three distinct portfolios of bulk transmission options for South and Central Ontario. The recommended portfolio is Portfolio B, which had the highest Upfront Capital Cost (most extensive expansion of transmission infrastructure). Portfolio B provided consistently better performance, across a wide variety of criteria including:

- most improvements in electricity supply and regional coordination
- most improved operability through key system interfaces
- lowest impact of total corridor and station loss in major events
- highest system benefits under different generation scenarios
- no expressed concerns in feedback
- lower implementation risk, with less susceptibility to supply chain and labour resources shortages.

⁵ For information regarding IESO Connection Assessment Process and Major Projects Identification Committee (MPIC) process, see also the GTA East Presentation, September 14, 2026, p. 48.

⁶ See extensive discussion in the GTA East April 20 Webinar <https://youtu.be/6MoC3rbeOw0> (especially 50:00 to 102:00), and Regional Electricity Planning in the GTA West Region – April 2, 2026, Feedback of the Power Workers' Union, April 23, 2026, p. 3. <https://www.ieso.ca/-/media/Files/IESO/Document-Library/regional-planning/GTA-West/qta-west-20260402-feedback-form-PWU.pdf>

⁷ For documentation and elaboration, see:

- South and Central Bulk Plan, August 20, 2026, especially pp. 82-99. <https://www.ieso.ca/-/media/Files/IESO/Document-Library/engage/bulk-planning/scbp-20260820-south-and-central-bulk-plan-report.pdf>
- South and Central Bulk Planning Update Webinar– April 30, 2026, Feedback of the Power Workers Union, June 3, 2026, especially pp. 3-4. <https://www.ieso.ca/-/media/Files/IESO/Document-Library/engage/bulk-planning/scbp-20260521-feedback-form-PWU.pdf>

Reginal Planning for GTA East, as summarized in the September 14, 2026 Options Analysis and Draft Recommendations,⁸ also helps to once again demonstrate the feedback that the PWU has been repeatedly providing:

- **the costs/risks of underbuilding electricity infrastructure are much higher than the costs/risks of right-sizing (or upsizing) infrastructure**
- **Ontario electricity infrastructure must be expanded rapidly and at scale to meet accelerating demand.**

The IESO assessed if the existing transmission lines and stations can meet the forecasted growth within reliability requirements. GTA East is characterized by station capacity needs and growing supply limitations driven by concentrated load growth, with several areas expected to fully utilize the capacity of recently established or planned stations, over the planning horizon. The IESO evaluated both Wire and Non-Wires Alternatives (NWA) options to meet the electricity needs of GTA East.

To meet near-term needs, the IESO concluded and recommended⁹ that:

- addition of new transmission stations was required
- given the magnitude of the needs, NWA could not fully meet the needs.

To meet medium to long term needs, the IESO concluded and recommended¹⁰ that:

- beyond 2033, further capacity enhancements could be required
- these capacity enhancements could include major new transmission lines and stations, notably in the Oshawa-Clarington Area.

The IESO needs analysis for GTA East is based on Reference Scenario demand growth. With a higher growth demand scenario, more infrastructure would be needed sooner.

Based on all of the above, it is very clear that:

- GTA East benefits from its extensive and expanding electricity infrastructure, including
 - Pickering Nuclear Generating Station (NGS)
 - Darlington NGS
 - 500 kV and 230 kV transmission lines and stations.
- Electricity infrastructure serving the GTA East region must be expanded rapidly and at scale to meet accelerating demand.
- This region (and all of Ontario) is already in a catch-up position, reflecting earlier planning that systematically underestimated rapidly growing electricity demand.

⁸ Presentation, especially pp. 13-30, 41-46.

⁹ Presentation, especially pp. 17-20, 22, 25, 29-30, 43.

¹⁰ Presentation, especially pp. 17-24, 26-30, 43-44.