

## RESPONSE TO IESO ENERGY PLANNING CONSULTATION

To: Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO)

From: Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury

Date: July 29, 2025

Re: South/Central Bulk System Planning - Urgent Need for BWG Energy Infrastructure  
Solutions

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury (BWG) respectfully submits this response to emphasize the critical and immediate need for IESO to prioritize energy infrastructure solutions in our municipality. As a designated high-growth employment area experiencing severe hydro capacity constraints, BWG requires expedited action to unlock significant economic development opportunities that align with provincial growth objectives and major infrastructure investments.

### URGENT NEED FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

#### *Critical Employment Area Under Constraint*

BWG represents one of Ontario's most significant employment growth areas, with projections to double our population and add 31,000 jobs by 2051. Our extensive provincially designated employment lands and substantial industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) designations are currently constrained by inadequate energy infrastructure, preventing us from realizing our full economic potential and supporting provincial growth targets.

The energy constraints in BWG are not just a local issue – they represent a significant impediment to provincial economic development and job creation goals.

#### *Immediate Economic Impacts*

Current energy limitations have already resulted in:

- Multiple multinational companies withdrawing investment plans due to prohibitive hydro connection costs

- Stalled development of over 200,000 square feet of industrial space on our Highway 400 Prestige Business Park
- Hundreds of high-value local jobs that cannot be created due to energy constraints
- Reduced municipal tax revenue impacting essential services and infrastructure

#### CRITICAL BWG INITIATIVES DEPENDENT ON ENERGY SOLUTIONS

BWG has several time-sensitive strategic initiatives that cannot proceed effectively without resolution of our energy infrastructure challenges:

##### **1. Growth Management Study and Housing Pledge**

Our comprehensive growth management study requires certainty around energy infrastructure capacity to properly plan for projected population and employment growth through 2051. Meeting our provincial housing pledge of 6,500 housing units by 2031 requires coordinated infrastructure planning, with energy capacity as a fundamental requirement.

##### **2. Industrial Land Strategy**

Development of our industrial land strategy is directly dependent on understanding energy capacity and upgrade timelines for our designated employment areas.

##### **3. Community Improvement Plans**

Implementation of Community Improvement Plans to incentivize industrial development cannot proceed without confidence in energy infrastructure capacity and reliability.

#### ALIGNMENT WITH MAJOR PROVINCIAL INVESTMENTS

BWG's energy infrastructure needs are directly connected to major provincial transportation investments that require immediate coordination:

##### ***Bradford Bypass Project***

The Bradford Bypass, a significant provincial infrastructure investment, will dramatically increase BWG's accessibility and attractiveness for industrial and commercial development. This project is currently underway with completion of significant portions by 2029. Energy infrastructure upgrades must be coordinated with this timeline to maximize the economic benefits of this provincial investment.

### *Metrolinx Projects*

Ongoing Metrolinx projects in our south-Simcoe region and northern York Region will further enhance connectivity and development potential. Energy infrastructure planning must align with these transportation investments to ensure coordinated regional development.

These major provincial investments will be significantly underutilized if energy infrastructure constraints are not addressed concurrently.

### SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

#### 1. Expedited IESO Planning and Assessment

- Prioritize BWG within the Integrated Energy Resource Plan as a critical employment growth area
- Accelerate study timelines to align with BWG's growth pressures and provincial infrastructure investments
- Provide interim solutions to bridge gaps while larger infrastructure upgrades are implemented

#### 2. Transmission Infrastructure Solutions

Based on IESO's June 2025 presentation identifying transmission as the best option for our area:

- Fast-track planning for new transmission corridor between King and Vaughan
- Coordinate Markham transmission station timeline with BWG development needs
- Prioritize northern route upgrades support BWG and broader northern York Region growth

#### 3. York Energy Centre Transition Planning

With the York Energy Centre contract expiring in 2035 and the identified 400 MW shortfall:

- Develop immediate contingency plans for energy supply to BWG
- Integrate Small Modular Reactor (SMR) planning at Darlington with northern distribution needs

- Ensure BWG energy needs are addressed before 2035 rather than after YEC closure

#### 4. Collaborative Implementation Framework

- Establish regular BWG-IESO-Hydro One coordination meetings to align infrastructure planning with municipal growth strategies
- Create integrated planning protocols that coordinate energy infrastructure with transportation and housing development
- Develop cost-sharing frameworks to accelerate critical infrastructure investments

#### ECONOMIC AND STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE

BWG's energy infrastructure challenges represent a significant missed opportunity for Ontario:

- 31,000 projected new jobs cannot be realized without adequate energy infrastructure
- Major industrial developments are already being delayed or lost to other jurisdictions
- Provincial transportation investments (Bradford Bypass, Metrolinx projects) will not achieve their full economic potential
- Housing and growth targets cannot be met without coordinated infrastructure planning

#### CONCLUSION AND CALL TO ACTION

The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury respectfully requests that IESO treat our energy infrastructure needs as an urgent provincial priority. The convergence of major provincial transportation investments, significant employment growth potential, and current energy constraints creates a unique window of opportunity that requires immediate action.

We cannot afford to wait until 2035 or beyond for solutions. BWG's strategic initiatives – Growth Management Study, Industrial Land Strategy, Community Improvement Plans, Housing Pledge commitment, and provincial Growth Target achievement – all depend on certainty and progress on energy infrastructure improvements.

We request immediate engagement with IESO to:

1. Expedite BWG's inclusion current bulk system planning processes
2. Establish firm timelines for transmission infrastructure improvements
3. Develop interim solutions to address immediate capacity constraints
4. Coordinate planning with Bradford Bypass and Metrolinx project timelines

BWG stands ready to be a committed partner in implementing solutions and looks forward to immediate next steps to address these critical infrastructure needs.

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Contact Information:

Mahesh Ramdeo, Deputy CAO

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Jennifer Best, Director of Growth Services

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Michael Disano, Manager of Economic Development

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]