

STATE OF NEW YORK
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

CASE 24-E-0364 - In the Matter of Proactive Planning for
Upgraded Electric Grid Infrastructure.

ORDER ADOPTING MODIFIED PROACTIVE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Issued and Effective: September 18, 2025

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STATE OF NEW YORK
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

At a session of the Public Service
Commission held in the City of
Albany on September 18, 2025

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Rory M. Christian, Chair
James S. Alesi
David J. Valesky
John B. Maggiore
Uchenna S. Bright
Denise M. Sheehan
Radina R. Valova

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(Issued and Effective September 18, 2025)

BY THE COMMISSION:

INTRODUCTION

On August 15, 2024, the Public Service Commission (Commission) issued the Order Establishing Proactive Planning Proceeding.¹ The Initiating Order was the catalyst for two sets of filings to be developed by the Joint Utilities, independently and collectively.² With respect to the first set of filings, the Commission directed the Joint Utilities to propose urgent projects that require deployment prior to the completion of the

¹ Case 24-E-0364, Order Establishing Proactive Planning Proceeding (issued August 15, 2024) (Initiating Order).

² The Joint Utilities include Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation (Central Hudson), Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. (Con Edison), Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation d/b/a National Grid (National Grid), New York State Electric & Gas Corporation (NYSEG), Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation (RG&E), and Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc. (O&R).

overall planning process (Urgent Upgrade filings).³ This first set of filings was the subject of the Urgent Upgrades Order.⁴ Regarding the second set of filings, the Commission directed the Joint Utilities to propose a long-term coordinated planning process to study and identify necessary upgrades to support building electrification (BE) and transportation electrification (TE).

To address the second set of filings, the Joint Utilities filed a proposed long-term Proactive Planning Framework (Framework) on December 13, 2024 (the Framework Filing), which is the subject of this Order. The Framework Filing describes a four-stage proactive planning process, which comprise the Proactive Planning process cycle (Cycle). The Joint Utilities propose to repeat the Cycle on an annual basis. Complementary to the Cycle, the Framework Filing describes stakeholder and community engagement that would incorporate lessons learned and best practices and would keep stakeholders well-informed and engaged.

By this Order, the Commission adopts various components of the Framework Filing, with modifications, hereafter referred to as the Modified Proactive Planning Framework (Modified Framework) and directs the Joint Utilities to complete the analysis and stakeholder engagement discussed below. However, we note that some of the requirements from the Initiating Order are not fully incorporated within the Framework Filing. To address these missing requirements, the Commission adopts the

³ The Initiating Order determined that an upgrade is identified as "urgent" when it must begin construction before the completion of the proposed planning process developed in this proceeding. Initiating Order, p. 12.

⁴ Case 24-E-0364, Order Addressing Urgent Upgrade Filings (issued June 12, 2025) (Urgent Upgrades Order).

recommendations proposed by stakeholders in comments, as discussed in the relevant sections below.

BACKGROUND

The Proactive Planning Proceeding emanated from the Medium- and Heavy-Duty Electric Vehicle (EV) Proceeding.⁵ Comments received from stakeholders in that proceeding suggested that New York needs a significant ramp-up in infrastructure upgrades to support increasing electrification in not just the transportation sector, but the building sector as well. To ameliorate stakeholders' concerns and avoid inefficient or redundant investments and significant delays to New York's effort to electrify the transportation and building sectors, the Commission commenced this proceeding. The ultimate purpose of the Proactive Planning Proceeding is to establish a statewide, collaborative framework for proactive planning. Creating a single, unified process across the Joint Utilities ensures that the State's electric grid can accommodate the increased load associated with the State's policy targets related to transportation and building electrification.

Utilizing lessons learned from the Coordinated Grid Planning Process (CGPP), the Initiating Order directed the Joint Utilities to file a proposal for a long-term coordinated planning process to study and identify necessary upgrades to support electrification.⁶ While the CGPP and the Proactive Planning Process are similar, they are meant to be complementary, and the

⁵ Case 23-E-0070, Barriers to Medium- and Heavy-Duty Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (Medium- and Heavy-Duty EV Proceeding).

⁶ Initiating Order, p. 6; Case 20-E-0197, Transmission Planning Pursuant to the Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act, Order Approving a Coordinated Grid Planning Process (issued August 17, 2023) (CGPP Order).

Commission's goal is that the two processes will eventually merge. As explained in the Initiating Order, the current CGPP uses a top-down approach and is suited for the higher voltage infrastructure investments,⁷ whereas the Proactive Planning Proceeding was initiated to conduct a bottom-up modeling suited to forecasting granular upgrades for distribution and local network system level infrastructure updates.

To begin this bottom-up approach, the Initiating Order directed the Joint Utilities to develop a process to study and identify necessary upgrades to support transportation and building electrification. The Initiating Order included specific directives regarding the contents of the Framework Filing. Additionally, given the synergy between the CGPP and the Proactive Planning Process, the Initiating Order directed the Joint Utilities to include a recommendation for whether the process should be integrated with the CGPP, and to consider the alignment of the Proactive Planning Process with the CGPP cycle.

Importantly, the Initiating Order recognized that future upgrade needs may arise on timelines not supported by the planning process.⁸ The first method to address this timing misalignment was the Urgent Upgrade filing window; the projects proposed by the Joint Utilities during this filing window were considered by the Commission in the Urgent Upgrades Order. Second, the Initiating Order directed the utilities to propose a procedure for submitting and evaluating currently-unknown projects.

⁷ Initiating Order, p. 6.

⁸ Initiating Order, p. 11.

THE FRAMEWORK FILING

To address the directives in the Initiating Order, the Joint Utilities submitted the Framework Filing on December 13, 2024. The Framework Filing outlines five principles that guide the proposal. First, the planning process should support customer needs in a timely manner without adverse impacts. Second, the planning process should support achievement of objectives in policies, laws, and regulations. Third, the planning process should be cost efficient. Fourth, the planning process should be flexible. Fifth, the planning process should complement other regulatory processes.

Regarding the scope of the Framework Filing, the Joint Utilities indicate that the projects in this proceeding are defined by three main elements, namely: (1) electrification, (2) policy, and (3) planning. The electrification scope includes transportation, building, and "other" electrification.⁹ For the policy scope, the Joint Utilities indicate that the Framework would identify grid infrastructure investments necessary to achieve relevant State laws and policies related to customer electrification and would consider compliance with any near-, mid-, or long-term regulations and goals. The Joint Utilities describe the planning scope for the Framework as identifying needs with greater granularity than processes in other proceedings.

The Joint Utilities' Framework Filing includes proposed timelines and interim benchmarks for completing the planning process, in compliance with the Commission's Initiating Order. The Joint Utilities detail an annual cycle process that would

⁹ The Joint Utilities describe "other" electrification as non-transportation electrification and non-building electrification, such as industrial or economic development projects.

include four stages, including: (1) Load Assessment; (2) Planning & Solution Design; (3) Eligibility & Prioritization; and (4) Proposal, Comment, and Commission Decision. During each annual planning cycle, the Joint Utilities propose to carry out all four stages of the Proactive Planning Framework to enable the process to be responsive to changing needs, market demands, and lessons learned from planning implementation. The planning stage framework would enable the Joint Utilities to detail specific benchmarks and targets for an implementation timeline. A graphic detailing the proposed Proactive Planning Framework is provided as Figure 1 below.¹⁰

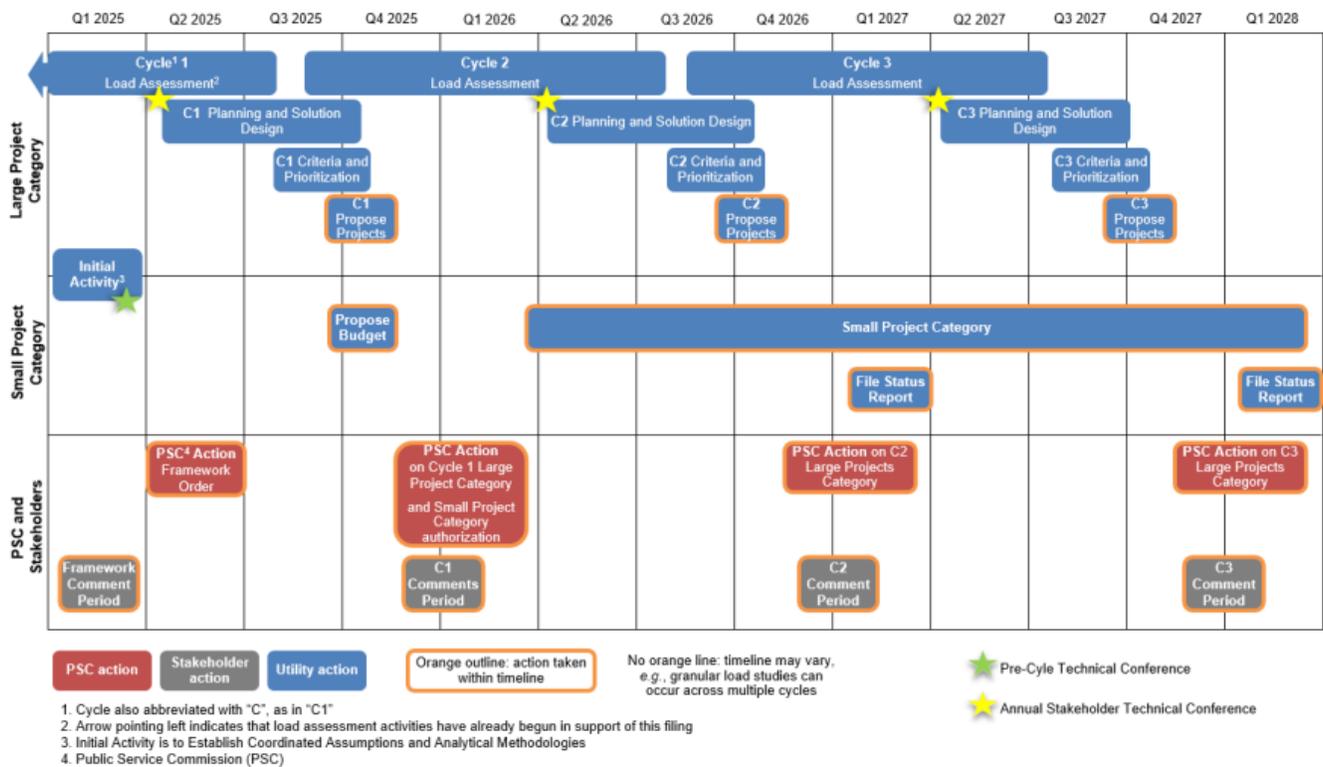


Figure 1: Joint Utilities' Planning Framework Graphic

¹⁰ Framework Filing, p. 7.

Planning Cycle - Key Dates

Based on the filing in December 2024, the Joint Utilities propose the following proactive planning timeline:

- Q1 2025 - Technical conference on data assumptions (Cycle 0). The Joint Utilities propose to hold this Cycle 0 conference only for the initial project cycle; it would not recur in subsequent cycles.
- Q2-Q3 2025 - Load studies (Stage 1), stakeholder technical conference, design work (Stage 2), and eligibility screening and prioritization (Stage 3);
- Q4 2025 - Filings (Stage 4): first Large-Project proposals and Small-Project budgets; and
- 120-day target - Commission action on the Large-Project filing.

Proactive Planning Process

The Framework Filing states that the four-stage cycle, described below, would repeat annually, although the specific quarters for each stage could shift as needs evolve.

1. Stage 1 - Load Assessment

The Initiating Order directed the Joint Utilities to develop a methodology for load forecasting and identify load assumptions to inform State electrification needs. The Framework Filing states that the Joint Utilities compared options for forecast development, assessed how to best use the options, and propose a comprehensive and iterative process for coordinating needs identification.

Regarding sources, the Joint Utilities indicate that they would use one, or a combination of sources of information that is most appropriate for evaluating the impacts of load on their electric systems based on facts, such as data availability and forecast certainty. The sources could include load forecasts

developed in other proceedings,¹¹ utility-developed bottom-up projections of granular electric demands,¹² and customer information and other sources.¹³

The Joint Utilities state that there are benefits and drawbacks of the various forecasts and data sources. The Framework Filing indicates that different sources provide different levels of information that can be primary drivers of identifying infrastructure needs or be used to cross-check other sources.

The Framework Filing indicates that the utilities would combine system-wide forecasts with granular studies and customer data. Methodologies for forecasts differ between the utilities today; for example, Central Hudson layers EV registrations onto historical trends, while Con Edison is updating its 2024 EV load study and planning a similar study for BE. According to the Joint Utilities, the companies would continue to maintain utility-specific methodologies while aligning where appropriate. The Framework Filing would also commit the Joint Utilities to developing shared assumptions for discussion at the Cycle0 conference and accounting for vehicles' cross-jurisdictional, mobile usage.

The Joint Utilities propose a process for coordinating load assessments for proactive planning projects. The Framework Filing indicates that in 2025, utilities would conduct an initial

¹¹ Forecasts developed in other proceedings include utility electric load forecasts, NYISO-level forecasts, and work produced by the CGPP.

¹² Utility developed forecasts include granular load studies, and utility electric load forecasts.

¹³ Customer information and other sources include customer requests or electrification plans, state agency and municipal data and plans, other granular load studies.

activity to align assumptions and methodologies. In future cycles, the Joint Utilities would conduct a three-step process: 1) individual utility load assessment review, 2) coordinated review, culminating in an Annual Stakeholder technical Conference, and 3) finalize utility load assessments.

The Framework describes an initial activity, during which the Joint Utilities would establish coordinated assumptions and analytical methodologies. The Framework Filing explains that prior to the planning and solution design activities of Cycle 1, the Joint Utilities would conduct a coordinated effort to determine which assumptions can be aligned and the analytical methodologies the utilities expect to employ to identify loads. The Joint Utilities state that this effort would evolve and build on approaches used for the Urgent Upgrade Filings. Regarding timing of this initial activity, the Framework Filing indicates this would be done in Q1 2025, depending on the timing of an order addressing the Framework Filing. The milestone for this activity would be a Pre-Cycle Technical Conference presented by the utilities.

Regarding the timeline for load assessments, the Framework Filing describes an annual three-step process as part of Stage 1. In step 1, each utility would undertake a current load assessment review. In step 2, the utilities would convene a coordinated review of their load assessments culminating in an annual stakeholder conference. In step 3, the utilities would finalize their load assessments, including incorporating learnings from the annual technical conference.

2. Stage 2 - Planning & Solution Design

During Stage 2, the Framework Filing indicates the Joint Utilities would evaluate potential impacts from load assessments and initiate planning activities to adjust existing plans or design solutions to address grid infrastructure needs

accordingly. The Joint Utilities recognize that their electric systems are similar but different in critical ways. Despite these differences, the Framework Filing states that the utilities would use their granular load studies and forecasting data to anticipate the likely location of charging needs and avoid duplicative efforts.

The Framework Filing also describes a set of best practices for long-term utility electrification that the utilities would employ. The Joint Utilities proposed that, while utilities would retain their own planning processes, they agreed that they would align on five design considerations in the future, including: (1) plan for long-term needs; (2) build in expandability and phasing for cost containment; (3) right-size assets to avoid repeated civil work; (4) consider non-wires and storage alternatives; and (5) seek solutions that are flexible for new needs and technology.

The Joint Utilities state that these best practices align with the guiding principles of the Framework by developing cost-efficient solutions that prioritize supporting customers today while working towards a long-term solution. Regarding the Commission's directive to consider alternatives in the solutions development process, the Framework Filing states that existing utility planning and solution development processes include consideration of alternative solutions. The Framework Filing states that the utilities would consider alternatives to traditional grid infrastructure that meet the utility's planning criteria (e.g., energy storage, non-wire alternatives, other advanced technologies) to mitigate the risk of inadequate infrastructure. Finally, the utilities would evaluate advanced technology opportunities prior to finalizing their solutions to address grid constraints.

As part of Stage 2, the Joint Utilities address the Commission's request to "provide input on the magnitude of the risk of potentially stranded or underutilized assets, as well as approaches to manage this risk."¹⁴ The Joint Utilities state that under-building is costlier than limited over-building because not meeting load can stall customer electrification and State policy goals. Over-building is also a market signal of grid abundance that could induce demand. To mitigate risks, the Framework Filing describes approaches the utilities would use. Specifically, the utilities would: direct customers to areas with capacity by using advisory services, preliminary site assessments, and hosting capacity maps; leverage robust granular load forecasts and early customer engagement; use load-sensitivity planning; phase projects with expandable designs; build to a long-term solution rather than piecemeal sequential investments when confidence in need is high; leverage mitigation solutions or provide near-term capacity; promote projects and/or locations that have multiple benefit streams; and conform to concrete State mandates, regulations or laws and regularly review relevant State policies that inform assumptions and requirements.

3. Stage 3 - Project Eligibility and Prioritization Criteria

The Framework Filing provides a summary of the project eligibility criteria that any project would be required to meet to be eligible for consideration in this proceeding. Project eligibility criteria include:

- consideration of whether upgrade is required to support electrification;
- consideration of whether construction-related activities would need to begin urgently;
- the degree of certainty of the project;

¹⁴ Initiating Order, p. 9.

- consideration of risks and benefits;
- alignment with state law and objectives;
- qualitative and/or quantitative benefits;
- costs;
- availability of alternatives;
- locations or site types; and,
- project timelines and financials.

4. Stage 4 - Proposal and Project Authorization

In the Framework Filing, the utilities propose a two-category approach to support timely execution and optimization of the approval process. These categories would be a "large project category" and a "small project category."

For the large project category, the Framework Filing describes a process that would follow an annual standard review, which would give utilities an opportunity, but not an obligation, to propose projects during a single annual filing window. The Framework Filing explains that the large project category would allow for Commission and stakeholder review of significant infrastructure investments.

For the small project category, the Framework Filing describes a program that would operate in the same way as a programmatic budget. The Framework Filing explains that the small project category budget proposals would include a description of the specific types of projects and programs that would qualify for authorization under this budget and demonstrate budget expenditures are not already authorized under another proceeding. Regulatory oversight of this category would be done in two ways. First, a utility using a small project category budget would file an annual program status report with the Commission. Second, if a utility identifies a need to use the small project category budget for projects or programs outside

the specific types proposed in the two-year budget filing, they would submit a filing letter to Department of Public Service (DPS) staff justifying the need - if DPS staff does not respond in 30 days, the utility would be able to proceed with the new project or program.

The Joint Utilities propose that cost allocation would be consistent with each utility's respective rate case cost recovery requirements and/or existing tariffs. If necessary, each utility would provide more specific details or updates as needed in its company-specific project filings.

In the Framework Filing, the Joint Utilities request that, no later than 120 days after a utility submits a project proposal through the large project category, the Commission authorize cost recovery for the development and construction of the proposed project(s). The Framework Filing proposes to recover the incremental revenue requirement associated with projects approved in this proceeding through a company-specific surcharge. For cash-flow flexibility, each project could recover Construction Work in Progress (CWIP) immediately or capitalize Allowance for Funds Used During Construction (AFUDC) until placed in-service, with revenue collected through a surcharge and rolled into base rates later.

The Framework Filing states that evaluation of project costs and potential customer impacts should consider the timing of cost recovery and positive contributions from incremental delivery revenues as customers electrify. The Joint Utilities propose that the incremental revenue requirement would be collected over the book life of the project assets(s).

For incremental delivery revenues, the Framework Filing proposes that they would be realized over a similar timeframe and help offset customer bill impacts. For large projects, the Joint Utilities propose the filings would include an analysis of

incremental revenue requirement and incremental revenue to provide a better understanding of customer bill impacts and likely offsets. For small projects, the Joint Utilities state the proposals would not include the level of specificity needed to estimate project revenue requirement or incremental delivery revenues.

Stakeholder and Community Engagement

The Joint Utilities state that the Framework would build on existing community engagement practices and establish an annual technical conference to share assumptions, present interim results, and receive feedback before filings are made. In addition to the annual technical conference, the utilities indicate they would have best practices for community engagement in project development during the development process.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE MAKING

Pursuant to the State Administrative Procedure Act (SAPA) §202(1) a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (Notice) for the Framework Filing was published in the State Register on January 29, 2025 [SAPA No. 24-E-0364SP5]. The time for submission of comments pursuant to the Notice expired on March 31, 2025.

The Commission received 14 sets of comments. A full summary of comments, organized by topic is included in the Appendix, while certain comments requiring discussion and action are addressed below.

COMMENTS

Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), Calstart, New York City (NYC), Sierra Club, Advanced Energy United (AEU) and Alliance for Clean Energy New York (ACENY), and Powering America's Commercial Transportation (PACT) submitted comments addressing the need for a standardized framework across the Joint

Utilities. These parties express the need for consistency in methodology, resources, and terminology across the Joint Utilities, resulting in a joint framework. The parties assert that consistent sources across load assessments will set a standard and address any coordination conflicts.

EDF, Calstart, World Resources Institutes (WRI), Sierra Club, AEU and ACENY, Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), and PACT submitted comments expressing that bottom-up forecasting should be required. These parties note that bottom-up forecasting would provide a necessary and more comprehensive granularity to supplement top-down assessments and enable more in-depth analysis. While EDF agrees, in its comments, it also emphasized that "data granularity is not a substitute for data quality," and notes that both top-down and bottom-up assessments are necessary.

Tesla, EarthJustice, and Sierra Club submitted comments expressing that load assessments should be broadened beyond EV loads to include all anticipated sources of new load. These parties argue that limiting the framework to electrification leaves out other drivers of demand and increases the chances of duplicative upgrades. EarthJustice urges the Joint Utilities to be "fiscally prudent" in the Joint Utilities' effort to avoid such duplicative projects.

EDF, NYC, AEU and ACENY, and NRDC submitted comments expressing that load assessments should be location-specific, granular, and involve forecasts specific to each utility's service territory. Additional recommendations include providing publicly available, real-time grid capacity maps and the identification of other territory-specific drivers.

Calstart, Alliance for Transportation Electrification (ATE), and NRDC submitted comments recommending that load assessments should use multiple sources of data, including non-

traditional sources. These parties also emphasize that there should be strategic use of all available tools for load management. ATE states that the Commission should "urge the utilities ... to use their best efforts to gather multiple sources of data" because the use of such analytical models "should significantly lessen the margins of uncertainty."

EDF, Multiple Intervenors (MI), NYC, and ATE submitted comments addressing the impact of the Framework Filing on the rate case process. Several parties express that there is limited need for the expedited review and approval of projects through the proactive planning proceeding when they can be evaluated in regular rate cases. The parties also expressed that the proactive planning proceeding may risk project-specific approvals or create administrative burden, therefore ordinary rate cases should be prioritized to ensure that there is limited approval of projects outside of them.

EDF, MI, Sierra Club, AEU and ACENY, and NRDC submitted comments suggesting that the utility project proposals should provide specific cost allocation details to ensure reasonable approvals and minimize cost impacts on ratepayers. These parties also express that utilities should be required to conduct thorough assessments of cost-effective alternatives to submitted proposals and demonstrate how projects fit into their investment strategies, including offset or avoided costs. MI submitted comments stating that the Commission should reject the proposal to use surcharges for recovery of costs associated with proactive planning projects.

EDF, Calstart, WRI, and SPAN.IO submitted comments expressing that the evaluation criteria should be more explicit and consider the role of load flexibility in informing system needs. These parties state that the evaluation criteria should include modeled load forecasts for expected hot spot

verification. Calstart described long-term design as a best practice for proactive planning during a time of rapid load growth, arguing that this highlights "the importance of holding all of the utilities to the same load assessment and modeling standards."

EDF, NYC, WRI, EarthJustice, Sierra Club, CALSTART, and NRDC submitted comments suggested that there should be more frequent reports than proposed by the Joint Utilities in the Framework Filing and that these reports should be filed to the most stringent, standardized, and detailed recordkeeping standards, including an annual technical conference. More specifically, such recordkeeping should include the need for "important safeguards and performance-based metrics" to check the utilities' "incentive to overbuild and overspend," as highlighted by EarthJustice.

LEGAL AUTHORITY

The Public Service Law (PSL) provides the Commission with broad authority to direct actions to ensure that energy supplies and transmission resources are adequate to meet demand in a manner that is protective of the environment. In particular, PSL §4(1) expressly imbues the Commission with "all powers necessary or proper to enable [the Commission] to carry out the purposes of [the PSL]" which include, without limitation, the provision of safe and adequate service at just and reasonable

rates,¹⁵ environmental stewardship, and the conservation of resources.¹⁶

Further, PSL §5(1) provides that the "jurisdiction, supervision, powers and duties" of the Commission extend to the "manufacture, conveying, transportation, sale or distribution of ... electricity." Under PSL §5(2), the Commission is required to "encourage all persons and corporations subject to its jurisdiction to formulate and carry out long-range programs, individually or cooperatively, for the performance of their public service responsibilities with economy, efficiency, and care for the public safety, the preservation of environmental values and the conservation of natural resources."

Section 65(1) of the PSL grants the Commission authority to ensure that "every electric corporation and every municipality shall furnish and provide such service, instrumentalities and facilities as shall be safe and adequate and, in all respects, just and reasonable." The Commission has further authority under PSL §66(5) to prescribe the "safe, efficient and adequate property, equipment and appliances thereafter to be used, maintained and operated for the security and accommodation of the public" whenever the Commission determines that the utility's existing equipment is "unsafe, inefficient or inadequate." Moreover, PSL §66(2) provides that the Commission shall "examine or investigate the methods employed by ... persons, corporations and municipalities in manufacturing,

¹⁵ See Int'l Ry. Co. v. Pub. Serv. Comm'n, 264 A.D. 506, 510 (1942).

¹⁶ PSL §5(2); see also Consolidated Edison Co. of N.Y., Inc. v. Pub. Serv. Comm'n, 47 N.Y.2d 94 (1979) (overturned on other grounds) (describing the broad delegation of authority to the Commission and the Legislature's unqualified recognition of the importance of environmental stewardship and resource conservation in amending the PSL to include §5).

distributing and supplying ... electricity ... and have power to order such reasonable improvements as will best promote the public interest, preserve the public health and protect those using such ... electricity." The actions taken in this Order fall within the scope of this authority.

DISCUSSION

Framework Filing

The Initiating Order directed the Joint Utilities to develop a single, unified and proactive planning process across all utilities. As noted above, the Joint Utilities' Framework Filing did not incorporate all aspects of the Planning Process envisioned by the Initiating Order. Deviations from the Initiating Order appear to be driven primarily by the difficulty of coordinating the various planning processes of the individual utilities, particularly related to the work of developing more granular studies. In this aspect, the utilities seem to be at different stages of developing better forecasting and planning methods for electrification and other load growth (e.g., economic development, etc.). The Commission acknowledges the current differences and directs the utilities to rapidly scale their efforts and align their methods so that by the end of the first Proactive Planning cycle, the utilities are unified in their study approach.

In multiple instances, the Framework Filing defers key decision making and critical details until future dates. For example, the Initiating Order directed the Joint Utilities to develop a methodology for load forecasting and identifying load assumptions to inform State electrification needs. However, in the Framework Filing, the Joint Utilities state that "[i]n 2025, utilities will conduct an initial activity to align assumptions and methodologies," and further that "[u]tilities will share

areas of interest for potential granular load studies and their proposed methodology."¹⁷ Alignment on the methodology and key assumptions is an important piece of a successful Proactive Planning Framework, and the Framework Filing lacks clarity on these topics.

Similarly, the Framework Filing lists several sources for development of load forecasting but does not detail how those sources will specifically be utilized to create a comprehensive load forecast. For instance, the Joint Utilities state that granular load studies would "incorporate customer site or location-specific load curves and expectations, using customer information, vehicle telematics, or other data sources that provide enhanced visibility of future customer demands in a specific geography."¹⁸ This description lacks required details on which specific customer information or other data sources will be used to identify future customer demands.

Another significant gap in the Framework Filing that applies across the proposed Framework is the lack of details on alignment and coordination across utilities. As stated above, the Commission directed the creation of a unified process across utilities. However, there are multiple examples in the Framework Filing that describe numerous methodological differences being maintained across utilities. For example, the Framework Filing states that each utility would have their own respective planning process to address identified constraints.¹⁹ In discussing cost allocation, the Framework Filing also states that each utility would provide specific details in its projects' filings.²⁰ These

¹⁷ Framework Filing, pp. 18-19.

¹⁸ Framework Filing, p. 14.

¹⁹ Framework Filing, p. 13.

²⁰ Framework Filing, p. 32.

examples point to a lack of coordination across utilities, which itself was a key driver in issuing the Initiating Order.

Modified Proactive Planning Framework

In reviewing the Joint Utilities' Framework Filing, the Commission has relied heavily on the detailed comments filed by stakeholders to develop a Modified Proactive Planning Framework, which satisfies the requirements set forth in the Initiating Order. We commend the level of participation and the clear effort that was put forward by stakeholders in participating in this proceeding. The comments and suggestions submitted by stakeholders have made it possible for the Commission to expand on the Framework proposed by the Joint Utilities and require the development of a Modified Framework, as described below, that will deliver rigorous and consistent planning that meets the needs of stakeholders, ratepayers, and entities pursuing electrification and load growth in New York.

The following sections explain the components of the Modified Framework, including the study process, data requirements, forecasting methodology, outreach to potential loads, planning assumptions, project proposal requirements, evaluation criteria, procedural approach for project review and potential authorization, cost allocation, and cost recovery. The Modified Framework also addresses a number of additional components raised by commenters related to process overlaps with the CGPP and gas planning, rate case integration, record keeping, and reporting.

The primary purpose of the Modified Framework is to improve the ability of the Joint Utilities to identify and address the rapidly-evolving grid needs associated with building, transportation, and other electrification. This generic proceeding has allowed a depth and breadth of analysis and stakeholder engagement on this important topic that would be more

difficult to achieve through individual utility rate case proceedings. Furthermore, this proceeding has allowed the integration of all the utilities in a single process of design and improvement. In the spirit of state-wide unification, the Commission directs all of the utilities to utilize the Modified Framework laid out below, following a common method and a common timeline, to provide a single source of information to the Commission and stakeholders regarding grid needs arising due to electrification.

1. Modified Framework Methodology

Given that the primary driver of transmission and distribution system needs due to electrification associated with building, transportation, and economic development is the size, timing, and specific location of the new loads, special attention must be given to forecasting such loads and collecting other pertinent data. Traditional methods of relying on simple ratios or estimates to downscale transmission system-wide forecasts to nodes are no longer sufficient. These methods most often miss granular needs, and underestimate or overestimate the actual need in each area.

Sierra Club, in its comment, states that "utilities should rely on multiple sources of information in identifying proactive planning needs," and "urges the Commission to establish strong and clear minimum standards to ensure that utilities are undertaking the necessary granular analysis and outreach to make these forecasts robust at the localized level needed to support effective Proactive Planning and mitigate risk."²¹ A majority of commenters included similar references to improved load

²¹ Case 24-E-0364, Sierra Club Comment (filed March 31, 2025), p. 4.

forecasting, including EDF, Calstart, WRI, AEU and ACENY, NRDC, PACT, ATE, NYC, Tesla, EarthJustice, and SPAN.IO.

Given the foregoing considerations, the Commission directs the Joint Utilities to develop a Proactive Planning Framework Methodology Document (Methodology Document), to be filed within 60 days of the issuance of this Order. The Joint Utilities are directed to prepare the Methodology Document in consultation with DPS staff in order to assess and ensure compliance with the requirements of the Order and consistency among the utilities' data sources and inputs. In the Methodology Document, the Joint Utilities shall provide a detailed outline of the data needs and related assumptions that will be utilized to develop granular load forecasts for the successive planning process, as well as the flow of the study process from inputs to needs identification. As stated by EDF, "[t]he Commission should require the utilities to develop a consistent set of assumptions, or at minimum, a joint framework to discuss and align assumptions," noting in particular that the "assumption coordination should have a well-defined scope beyond that articulated in [the Joint Utilities'] Framework."²² The Commission expects this document to be prepared and filed collectively; however, if the data sources and values vary by utility then the Methodology Document shall indicate and explain those variances. More specifically, given that consistency is a key goal in the proceeding, the utilities shall seek uniformity on data, methods, and assumptions wherever possible and provide explanations of deviations when uniformity is not possible.

²² Case 24-E-0364, EDF Comment (filed March 31, 2025), p. 19.

2. Proactive Planning Framework Methodology Document

The Proactive Planning Framework Methodology Document must, at a minimum, identify data sources for each of the following components:

1. an assessment of fleet and multi-unit dwelling charging needs;
2. a characterization of depots, including locations and vehicle types and counts;
3. *en-route* and opportunity charging needs;
4. estimated electrification rate by vehicle class;
5. charging power assigned to vehicles;
6. other assumptions related to vehicle electrification grid impacts (e.g., vehicle and charger efficiencies, managed charging assumptions and temperature adjustments);
7. adoption rate of building electrification technologies, including heat pumps used for space and water heating, as well as other appliances and loads;
8. weather-dependent energy and efficiency ratings of BE;
9. estimated deployment of distributed energy resources (DERs);
10. characterization of economic development load and expansions of existing commercial and industrial load; and
11. load forecasts used for benchmarking granular load assessments, and developing overall load estimates.

3. Data Sets and Methodologies

For each of the above items, each utility must identify and utilize data sets that provide sufficient detail to develop load forecasting inputs. The forecasts developed in this process shall incorporate forecasts of load out to at least 2035, with detail provided out to 2040 if possible, acknowledging that uncertainty increases exponentially over time. Each utility is directed to leverage data sets that are similar across their

service areas, minimizing deviations in methods, assumptions, and data inputs as much as practicable. Differences in data sets, methods, or assumptions should be reduced or eliminated each submission cycle to the greatest extent possible. Calstart in its comment emphasized that “[t]o ensure consistent and quality outputs across utilities, all six utilities should be held to the same standards for load assessment approaches used to justify proactive planning investments.”²³ Calstart also highlighted the importance of a unified approach, stating that “[v]ariations beyond differing customer data and geographic territories would create a needlessly complex process for both regulators and stakeholders to review and engage in.”²⁴

Many of the items above will involve outreach to stakeholders and other state entities. The Commission directs the utilities to work with NYSERDA and DPS staff to identify the best available data sets and best practices for this work, particularly related to load forecasts, where the State Energy Plan shall serve as a primary policy input to this process. During this process, the Joint Utilities are also directed to work directly with building and housing developers, fleet and depot operators, and engage with other relevant stakeholders. The Joint Utilities shall also consult with the New York Independent System Operator, Inc. (NYISO), Empire State Development, the Regional Economic Development Councils, municipalities, and DPS staff to develop forecasts of economic development, industrial, and commercial load growth in New York.

The development of a new, more granular forecast of load across the state is valuable beyond just the Proactive Planning Proceeding and is expected to be an important new source

²³ Case 18-E-0138, Calstart Comment (filed March 31, 2025), p. 11.

²⁴ Id., p. 12.

of information for policy and infrastructure planning. Multiple Intervenors draws attention to this in its comment, stating that “[r]ate impacts associated with capital projects approved outside of rate proceedings pursuant to the proactive planning process would exacerbate the rate impacts that electric utility customers statewide are experiencing. The framework proposed by the Joint Utilities must be scrutinized carefully and modified to a limited scope of potential incremental capital investment so as to moderate the potential rate impacts to the extent practicable.”²⁵

The Commission therefore directs the Joint Utilities to integrate the granular forecasts developed pursuant to this Order into future CGPP cycles, sales forecasts, gas planning work, and future rate cases and to file annual reports, beginning 90 days after the filing of the initial Proactive Planning Study Report, describing how the granular Proactive Planning forecasts are utilized in the listed processes. In the CGPP, granular load forecasts will be helpful in nodal modeling, as the utilities identify locations for renewable and energy storage integration, the cost and benefits of which vary significantly based on the location of load on the system. For gas planning, as mentioned by a number of commenters, building and transportation electrification is expected to have a major impact on gas sales and infrastructure needs, with those impacts likely to be most pronounced in the very areas identified as electrification hotspots through the proactive planning work. The Joint Utilities are directed to incorporate learnings from the Proactive Planning Framework into their plans for the future of the gas system.

²⁵ Case 18-E-0138, Multiple Intervenors Comment (filed March 31, 2025), p. 3.

The Proactive Planning Framework Methodology Document, listing all data needs, potential data sources, data gaps, and any differences in data and methods between utility territories, shall be filed within 60 days of this Order. As supported by EDF, Calstart, NYC, Tesla, Sierra Club and PACT in their comments, the Joint Utilities are also directed to host a technical conference presenting the methodology and data inputs within 60 days of filing the document, which will give stakeholders time to review these elements prior to the technical conference.

4. Inclusion of Distributed Energy Resources (DERs)

The list of data needs above identifies DERs as a key component of the load forecasting process. Existing and new DERs, such as solar and energy storage, have the ability to serve load locally and cost effectively, which may reduce the impact of new loads on the system, mitigating the need for certain grid upgrades. The Commission therefore directs each utility to incorporate both existing and forecasted quantities of DER into the load forecasts utilized in the Modified Proactive Planning Framework. This is supported by EarthJustice in its comment, which suggested that the Proactive Planning Proceeding should have a mechanism to integrate inputs from other relevant proceedings such as the Grid of the Future proceeding to “identify infrastructure that minimizes total costs considering the need to meet New York policy for Distributed Energy Resources expansion.”²⁶

²⁶ Case 24-E-0364, EarthJustice Comment (filed March 31, 2025), p. 3. Case 24-E-0165, Proceeding on Motion of the Commission Regarding the Grid of the Future (Grid of the Future Proceeding). Case 24-E-0415, In the Matter of Timely Interconnection of Distributed Energy Resources.

The Commission recognizes that increased deployment of DERs may lead to the development of DER hotspots, where the integration of additional DERs may trigger the need for substantial system upgrades. The Department's well-established interconnection working groups address interconnection of DERs on a project-specific basis, with the Interconnection Policy Working Group even advancing efforts to increase system capacity through cost sharing.²⁷ However, the Commission recognizes the current queue-based approach may not result in the most efficient system enhancements at the least cost to both developers and ratepayers. Therefore, the Commission directs the utilities to identify opportunities for efficient and cost-effective system upgrades that reduce the total cost of interconnecting forecasted DERs. In this effort, the Commission notes that Minnesota has undertaken significant efforts to design a process for DER integration that may serve as a guide to the utilities in forecasting and planning investments to optimize the integration of DERs in New York.²⁸

While DERs can reduce load, deferring certain grid upgrades, they can also be a component of a solution to those upgrades that are identified in the Proactive Planning Study, as noted by numerous commenters. The bridge-to-wires project in National Grid's service territory authorized under the Urgent Upgrades Order serves as one example of this fact. The Commission therefore directs the utilities to develop and implement a process for considering DERs and other grid-enhancing

²⁷ See the [Interconnection Policy Working Group](#) and the [Interconnection Technical Working Group](#) webpages hosted on the DPS website.

²⁸ Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, Docket E002/CI-24-318, In the Matter of a Commission Inquiry into a Framework for Proactive Distribution Grid Upgrades and Cost Allocation for Xcel Energy.

technologies (GETs) as a potential solution to grid upgrade needs. In this effort, the Joint Utilities shall leverage work done by the Advanced Technology Working Group and the CGPP study teams that have developed screening criteria and other methods for evaluating the suitability of non-traditional solutions to serve various grid needs.

5. Disadvantaged Communities

To account for impacts on disadvantaged communities, the Joint Utilities shall follow the tracking methodology within the CGPP, which requires the utilities to identify the upgrades that may be sited in disadvantaged communities and evaluate opportunities for directing benefits to and reducing burdens on those locations.²⁹ The utilities shall also collect additional metrics related to building and transportation electrification, economic development, vehicle charging availability, and DER deployment occurring within Disadvantaged Communities, and file them in the Proactive Planning Study Report. These shall include the quantity, in MW, and type of electrification, total charger counts and power ratings, and the quantity, in MW, of DER deployed within Disadvantaged Communities. As articulated by EDF in its comment, "a clear explanation from the [Joint Utilities] regarding how they will engage with the [disadvantaged] communities and incorporate their feedback in project design and implementation is necessary for this to be any more than a box-checking exercise."³⁰

6. Small Projects

The Commission rejects the Joint Utilities' proposal for a small project category with pre-approved funding based on certain criteria. This proposal does not provide the Commission

²⁹ CGPP Order, p. 38.

³⁰ Case 24-E-0364, EDF Comment (filed March 31, 2025), p. 42.

or stakeholders with sufficient transparency regarding the investments and increases the difficulty of ensuring only the most essential proactive projects are funded through this process. The rejection of this proposal is supported by EDF in its comment, which indicated that the small project category "is not adequately defined" and that "the [Joint Utilities] Framework does not articulate any meaningful limitation on the types of projects that may qualify as 'Small.'"³¹

Process to Submit and Review of Project Proposals

The final product of the efforts in this Proceeding is the filing of a Proactive Planning Study Report, a document compiled by the Joint Utilities identifying the grid needs driven by electrification for which proactive investment would improve overall cost-effectiveness, minimize ratepayer impacts, and support policy outcomes. The process of identifying grid needs, and developing project proposals to resolve the needs, shall include leveraging the data and methods from the Modified Proactive Planning Framework Methodology Document to develop electric system planning models that identify, on a local basis, the upgrades required for the grid to integrate the granular forecasted load and DER. The Proactive Planning Study Report shall describe how each utility followed the methodology outlined in the Proactive Planning Framework Methodology Document, inclusive of any changes arising from stakeholder engagement. The Report will then include the set of project proposals that the utilities deem to meet the evaluation and prioritization criteria, considering input from stakeholders and consultation with DPS staff.

To facilitate the Commission's decision-making process in its authorization of projects, as part of the Proactive

³¹ Id., p. 38.

Planning Study Report, each project proposal submitted for review by DPS staff shall follow a white paper approach containing components such as those requested for the filing of Urgent Upgrade projects. Project proposals shall include the following information filed in the order it is listed:

- Project Description
 - Location
 - Key drivers of need
 - Necessary physical components, including total anticipated load increase (MW) and highest anticipated system component voltage (kV)
 - Type of project (transmission, sub-transmission, or distribution)
 - Presence in a Disadvantaged Community
 - Scope of Work
- Project Justification
 - Project Duration, including dates for the estimated start of construction, estimated end of construction, and estimated in-service date
 - Load components driving necessity as well as current load
 - Spending rationale
 - Customer benefits
 - Alternatives, if any
 - Risks, including that of over- and under-building
 - Assessment of the potential opportunity for any DERs or other grid enhancing technologies
- Cost
 - Total spend, broken down by yearly estimates and by capital expenditure and operational expenditure
 - Proposal for project cost allocation and cost recovery

The Commission directs the Joint Utilities to file the first Proactive Planning Study Report within one year of the issuance of this Order, and earlier if possible, so that a full picture of current and future grid needs driven by electrification can be known. The Joint Utilities are directed to host a technical conference within 30 days of filing the Proactive Planning Study Report enhancing stakeholder review of the proposed projects. The Proactive Planning Study Report shall include investment grade analysis for each proposed project, consistent with the requirements of the Urgent Upgrade Filings, including, at a minimum, the components discussed above as well as the following:

- documentation of all feeders, peak summer load, their normal rating, and how many are expected to surpass the normal rating;
- specific dates for both the needs assessment and proposed project development and construction schedule, including procurement schedules for project components;
- utility customer electrification plans and existing load requests;
- historical unit costs for components of proposed projects;
- data to distinguish between existing load, combined load and electrification loads;
- capacity headroom projections for 2030, 2035, and 2040;
- forecasted load growth for 2030, 2035, and 2040;
- an explanation of the necessity for inclusion in the proactive planning process versus a regular rate case process; and
- revenue requirements.

Proactive Planning Study Report Evaluation Criteria and Reporting Requirements

The Commission finds that, with the exception of the specific urgency definition and date, the evaluation criteria identified in the Urgent Upgrades Order shall apply and therefore be included in the ultimate filing for each project proposal.³² For the projects proposed under this Modified Proactive Planning Framework, the urgency criteria shall be based on the specific circumstances of the project and the utility whose territory the project is within. To be eligible for authorization through this generic proceeding, the project shall be urgent enough to require early investment that would otherwise not be available under current rate proceeding schedules and shall demonstrate that the early investment makes a meaningful difference related to waiting for authorization in other forums. This is emphasized by MI in its comment, which warns that “[t]he Commission thus should be skeptical of claims that proposed proactive planning projects were unanticipated and unaccounted for in a capital plan, and it should require clear and compelling evidence demonstrating that the proposed projects (i) are necessary to meet unanticipated load growth driven by electrification, and (ii) were not part of the utility’s most recently-submitted capital expenditure plans.”³³

This Order does not make any determination with regards to cost allocation or cost recovery due to the wide range of possible projects when considering proactively planned grid upgrades. The Commission will consider cost allocation and cost recovery on a project-by-project basis based on the pertinent factors pertaining to each project including, but not limited to,

³² Urgent Upgrades Order, pp. 30-31.

³³ Case 24-E-0364, Multiple Intervenors Comment (filed March 31, 2025), p. 6.

the project-level details, expected beneficiaries, existing capital budgets, relevant provisions within the utility's current rate plan, and the timing of future rate filings.

Any projects authorized through this proceeding shall follow the same reporting requirements as those applied to the Urgent Upgrade projects within the Urgent Upgrades Order, as restated hereafter.³⁴ The Joint Utilities are required to file status reports every quarter, and more frequently if requested by DPS staff, as well as when the projects are completed. The reports shall include the following information, at a minimum, for each of the projects authorized in this Order:

1. budget changes or cost overruns that require management approval;
2. schedule changes, including estimated in-service dates, and the reason for the changes;
3. a comparison of the original projected budget and the actual capital expenditures, and the reason for any differences;
4. the estimated total quantity of work completed under the projects. In the event that the work cannot be quantified, major tasks completed shall be provided;
5. a comparison of the projected and actual in-service date; and
6. upon project completion, the Indicated Utilities will also include a brief report on each completed project with details on lessons learned, how any deviations on project timing, equipment procurement, costs, and risks were addressed, and how updated loads and load forecasts align with those found in the initial project proposal.

If, for any reason, development of any of the authorized projects is stopped or paused for more than 90 days,

³⁴ Urgent Upgrades Order, p. 30.

the developing utility shall file an updated report, including the requirements outlined above, and provide an update of the development being stopped, explaining why and whether development on the project will re-start at a later date.

Importantly, the investments in authorized upgrades resulting from the Modified Proactive Planning Framework are one component of the costs being borne by ratepayers, and the Commission is motivated to ensure rate impacts are minimized and new investments are cost-effective and efficient. The Commission therefore directs DPS staff to evaluate alternate funding structures for new investments to determine if forecasted project costs, and ratepayer impacts, could be materially improved through utilizing new project funding methods in future Commission activities.

Procedural Approach and Rate Case Integration

The Commission believes that significant progress in load forecasting will result from the Proactive Planning Framework. As noted by NRDC in its comment, “[l]ong-term forecasting helps ensure that proactive investments at the distribution level do not preclude or frustrate more efficient regional approaches that may emerge through CGPP.”³⁵ The utilities are directed to work with DPS staff to integrate, as appropriate, the enhanced analysis and modeling developed under this Modified Proactive Planning Framework in the CGPP, distribution load planning, sales forecasting, and future rate cases. The Commission’s expectation is that these separate efforts will ultimately merge into a single enhanced planning process that is consistent across all utilities and handled inside rate cases. The timing for this transition will be

³⁵ Case 24-E-0364, NRDC Comment (filed March 31, 2025), p. 15.

determined at a later date based on the progress made by the utilities in each cycle of the planning process.

Environmental Analysis

Consistent with §7(2) and §7(3) of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) (Chapter 106 of the Laws of 2019), the Commission finds that the actions taken herein will neither interfere with the attainment of the statewide greenhouse gas (GHG) emission limits established under the CLCPA nor disproportionately burden a Disadvantaged Community. The Modified Proactive Planning Framework approved herein will enable the electrification of buildings, the installation of electric vehicle charging stations, and the development of distributed energy resources, thereby assisting the State's efforts to reduce GHG emissions. While temporary and minimal local impacts might occur related to necessary construction activities, the electrification projects will not disproportionately burden Disadvantaged Communities and will have an overall positive benefit by offsetting the use of fossil fuels and GHG emissions within those communities. The Commission also notes that the action herein, as it relates to its policy to proactively identify upgrades to utility distribution facilities and affects the management of utility functions, constitutes a Type II action under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (See 6 NYCRR 617.5(c)(13) and (33); and 16 NYCRR §7.2(b)(2)).

CONCLUSION

The Commission instituted this proceeding to ensure that electric system infrastructure constraints would not hinder important electrification efforts undertaken in response to State policies. This Order continues the work of the Urgent Upgrade Order, which represented the first major effort in this proceeding to proactively address grid needs in areas already

experiencing constraints now and anticipated in the immediate future. Through the Proactive Planning Framework Methodology and Project Proposals, the Joint Utilities will continue to work towards achieving New York State's climate and decarbonization goals.

The Commission orders:

1. Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc., Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation d/b/a National Grid, New York State Electric & Gas Corporation, Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc., and Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation shall prepare a Modified Proactive Planning Framework Methodology document, as outlined and discussed in the body of this Order, no later than 60 days from the issuance of this Order.

2. Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc., Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation d/b/a National Grid, New York State Electric & Gas Corporation, Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc., and Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation shall integrate the granular forecasts developed in response to this Order, as outlined and discussed in the body of this Order.

3. Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc., Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation d/b/a National Grid, New York State Electric & Gas Corporation, Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc., and Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation shall work with Department of Public Service staff to host a technical conference regarding the Modified Proactive Planning Framework Methodology document, including the data and methodology contained therein, within 60 days of the filing of the document.

4. Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc., Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation d/b/a National Grid, New York State Electric & Gas Corporation, Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc., and Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation shall incorporate both existing and forecasted quantities of distributed energy resources into their load forecasts, as outlined and discussed in the body of this Order.

5. Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc., Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation d/b/a National Grid, New York State Electric & Gas Corporation, Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc., and Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation shall file the first Proactive Planning Study Report within one year of the issuance of this Order, consistent with the directives in the body of this Order.

6. Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc., Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation d/b/a National Grid, New York State Electric & Gas Corporation, Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc., and Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation shall file an annual report describing how the granular Proactive Planning forecasts are utilized in the processes and proceedings described in the body of this Order.

7. In the Secretary's sole discretion, the deadlines set forth in this Order may be extended. Any request for an extension must be in writing, must include a justification for the extension, and must be filed at least three days prior to the affected deadline.

8. This proceeding is continued.

By the Commission,

(SIGNED)

MICHELLE L. PHILLIPS
Secretary

APPENDIX: SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

This Appendix provides a detailed summary of the comments received on the Framework Filing. The comments are summarized by subject to enable a review of stakeholder positions on each topic.

Data Requirements and Forecasting Methodology

EDF, Calstart, NYC, Sierra Club, AEU and ACENY, and PACT submitted comments addressing the need for a standardized framework across the JU. These parties express the need for consistency in methodology, resources, and terminology across the Utilities, resulting in a joint framework. The parties assert that consistent sources across load assessments will set a standard and address any coordination conflicts.

EDF, Calstart, WRI, Sierra Club, AEU and ACENY, NRDC, and PACT submitted comments expressing that bottom-up forecasting should be required. These parties note that bottom-up forecasting would provide a necessary and more comprehensive granularity to supplement top-down assessments and enable more in-depth analysis.

EDF, NYC, AEU and ACENY, and NRDC submitted comments expressing that load assessments should be location-specific, granular, and involve forecasts specific to each utility's service territory. Additional recommendations include providing publicly available, real-time grid capacity maps and the identification of other territory-specific drivers.

Calstart, ATE, and NRDC submitted comments recommending that load assessments should use multiple sources of data, including non-traditional sources. These parties also emphasize that there should be strategic use of all available tools for load management.

Tesla, EarthJustice, and Sierra Club submitted comments expressing that load assessments should be broadened beyond EV loads to include all anticipated sources of new load. These parties argue that limiting the framework to electrification leaves out other drivers of demand and increases the chances of duplicative upgrades.

EDF, Calstart, Tesla, AEU and ACENY, and SPAN.IO submitted comments suggesting that there should be a comprehensive list of cost-effective alternative technologies for utilities to consider, inclusive of non-wires alternatives (NWA). The parties also state that there should be an exploration of programs that unlock other bridge solutions and enable the utilization of existing infrastructure.

EDF and NRDC submitted comments suggesting that load assessment should involve at least three scenarios. The parties recommend that probabilistic forecasting should involve routine scenario analysis that considers a range of outcomes by time and location.

Cost Recovery and Rate Cases

EDF, MI, and NRDC submitted comments that propose a more explicit approach for the Commission to consider T&D upgrade investments. Such an approach would include a range of feasible solutions as part of interim cost recovery proposals and guardrails to ensure the prudent use of funds.

EDF, MI, NYC, and NRDC submitted comments recommending to the Commission that it should uphold its practices that have been put in place to protect ratepayers and ensure they are charged a fair price. Because there is potential that additional projects could lead to exacerbated impacts on customers, these parties argue that utilities should be required to show how each

project fits within their investment strategy by proving why these projects take priority.

EDF, MI, NYC, and ATE submitted comments addressing the impact of the filing on the rate case process. Several parties express that there is limited need for the expedited review and approval of projects through the Proactive Planning Proceeding when they can be evaluated in regular rate cases. The parties also expressed that the Proactive Planning Proceeding may risk project-specific approvals or create administrative burden, therefore ordinary rate cases should be prioritized to ensure that there is limited approval of projects outside of them.

EDF, MI, Sierra Club, AEU and ACENY, and NRDC submitted comments suggesting that the utility project proposals should provide specific cost allocation details to ensure reasonable approvals and minimize cost impacts on ratepayers. These parties also express that utilities should be required to conduct thorough assessments of cost-effective alternatives to submitted proposals and demonstrate how projects fit into their investment strategies, including offset or avoided costs.

Large and Small Projects

EDF, NRDC, Calstart, ATE, and Tesla submitted comments addressing the differentiation and varying evaluation of the Small and Large project categories proposed by the JU. EDF and NRDC expresses that these categories and their budgeting process should be rejected because of the structure lacks definition and clarity. ATE and Tesla argue that it is sensible to allow for the automatic approval of smaller project without major review. Calstart acknowledges that the Small and Large project categories may require different timing of review cycles.

Evaluation Criteria

EDF, Calstart, WRI, and SPAN.IO submitted comments expressing that the evaluation criteria should be more express and consider the role of load flexibility in informing system needs. These parties state that this should include modeled load forecasts for expected hot spot verification.

Stakeholder Engagement, Recordkeeping, and Best Practices

EDF, NYC, ATE, Tesla, EarthJustice, Sierra Club, and PACT submitted comments suggesting that there should be an expansion of the framework section on stakeholder and community engagement. These parties emphasize the necessity of annual stakeholder technical conferences while encouraging broadened stakeholder participation wherever possible, including collaborating with municipalities and fleets for non-traditional sources of data. Sierra Club also suggests that the proposed stakeholder conference could additionally incorporate a program review.

EDF, NYC, WRI, EarthJustice, Sierra Club, and NRDC submitted comments suggested that there should be more frequent reports than proposed by the Joint Utilities in the framing and that these reports should be filed to the most stringent, standardized, and detailed recordkeeping standards.

EDF, ATE, Calstart, NYC, WRI, Tesla, AEU and ACENY, and NRDC submitted comments emphasizing that best practices from the utilities and other commissions should be shared, and that the principle of "dig once" should be upheld by the Joint Utilities as best as possible. These parties argue that sourcing and implementing best practices from across the utilities, other relevant proceedings, and the industry at large would allow the entire distribution grid to benefit from forward looking, analytically driven strategies.

Policy Compliance

EDF, NYC, ATE, EarthJustice, AEU and ACENY, and NRDC submitted comments emphasizing that all utility efforts must either enable or be compliant with the policy goals laid out in the CLCPA, and that all coordinated planning must complement other regulatory processes such as the CGPP and FERC Order 1920.

Process Redundancy

EDF, NYC, EarthJustice, and NRDC submitted comments suggesting that the process outlined in the JU's proposed Framework Filing may be redundant to the CGPP and other planning processes. These parties suggested that more modest changes to the JU's existing forecasting and planning methodologies would be more appropriate than an entirely new process, particularly because there are overlapping projects between this proceeding and those in rate cases.