



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

D.P.U. 21-81

July 29, 2021

Petition of Massachusetts Electric Company and Nantucket Electric Company each d/b/a National Grid for approval of its Grid Modernization Plan for calendar years 2022 to 2025.

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On July 1, 2021, Massachusetts Electric Company and Nantucket Electric Company, each d/b/a National Grid (together, “Company” or “National Grid”) filed with the Department of Public Utilities (“Department”) a petition for approval of its 2022-2025 Grid Modernization Plan. The Company filed its 2022-2025 Grid Modernization Plan pursuant to Grid Modernization – Phase II, D.P.U. 20-69-A (2021). The Department docketed this matter as D.P.U. 21-81.

In D.P.U. 20-69-A at 38-39, the Department established the form and content of the 2022-2025 Grid Modernization Plan filings and directed the Company to file: (1) separate four-year short-term investment plans for grid-facing and customer-facing investments; (2) a composite business case in support of both short-term investment plans; and (3) a five-year strategic plan that includes proposals for full deployment of advanced metering functionality. The Department will review the Company’s 2022-2025 Grid Modernization Plan in order to determine, among other things, whether the proposed grid-facing and customer-facing investments are eligible for preauthorization. Grid Modernization, D.P.U. 15-120/ D.P.U. 15-121/D.P.U. 15-122, at 115 (2018).

As part of its 2022-2025 Grid Modernization Plan, National Grid proposes an estimated \$316.3 million in grid-facing investments in the following categories: (1) advanced distribution automation (\$42.6 million); (2) advanced distribution management system (\$60.4 million); (3) communications (\$85.0 million); (4) two demonstration projects to study new distributed generation and interconnection schemes (\$6.4 million); (5) distributed energy resource management system (\$7.9 million); (6) investments associated with FERC Order No. 2222 (\$12.7 million); (7) information/operational technology (\$16.3 million); (8) measurement, verification, and support (\$4.4 million); (9) monitoring and control (\$4.1 million); and (10) Volt/Volt-ampere reactive optimization (\$76.4 million). The Company’s filing includes a business case analysis in support of its proposed 2022-2025 Grid Modernization Plan investments.

Further, the Company proposes certain revisions to its approved grid modernization factor cost recovery tariff (i.e., M.D.P.U. No. 1469 (proposed)) for effect January 1, 2022. In addition, the Company proposes changes to its existing grid modernization performance metrics including the addition of two statewide performance metrics and two company-specific performance metrics for new investments.

As part of its five-year strategic plan, National Grid proposes to achieve advanced metering functionality through a full-scale deployment of advanced metering infrastructure (“AMI”) from 2023 to 2027. The Company’s proposed AMI implementation plan has an associated preliminary cost estimate of \$487 million for the following investment categories: (1) AMI meters and communications (\$284 million); (2) service company information technology (\$53 million); (3) other capital (\$59 million); (4) program operating costs (\$72 million); and (5) 2023-2027 run-the-business costs (e.g., software maintenance and cellular service fees) (\$20 million). The Company’s filing includes: (1) a business case analysis to support its proposed AMI implementation plan; (2) a customer engagement plan; and (3) a data governance/cybersecurity plan.

Further, National Grid proposes a model tariff to establish an annual reconciling mechanism to recover costs associated with its AMI implementation plan. Finally, the Company proposes a model AMI opt-out tariff.

The Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (“Attorney General”) filed a notice to intervene in this matter pursuant to G.L. c. 12, § 11E(a). Further, pursuant to G.L. c. 12, § 11E(b), the Attorney General filed a notice of intent to retain experts and consultants to assist her investigation of the Company’s filing and has requested Department approval to spend up to \$150,000 in this regard. Pursuant to G.L. c. 12, § 11E(b), the costs incurred by the Attorney General relative to her retention of experts and consultants may be recovered in the Company’s rates. Any person who desires to comment on the Attorney General’s notice of intent to retain experts and consultants may submit written comments to the Department not later than the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on **Friday, August 20, 2021**.

**Due to certain ongoing safety measures and precautions relating to in-person events as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department will conduct a virtual public hearing to receive comments on the Company’s filing.** The Department will conduct the hearing and procedural conference using Zoom videoconferencing on **Thursday, September 9, 2021**, beginning at 2:00 p.m. Attendees can join by entering the link, <https://zoom.us/j/96502001483>, from a computer, smartphone, or tablet. No prior software download is required. For audio-only access to the hearings, attendees can dial in at **(646) 558-8656 (not toll free)** and then enter the **Meeting ID# 965 0200 1483**. If you anticipate providing comments via Zoom during the public hearing, please send an email by **Tuesday, September 7, 2021**, to [sarah.spruce@mass.gov](mailto:sarah.spruce@mass.gov) with your name, email address, and mailing address. If you anticipate commenting by telephone, please leave a voicemail

message by **Tuesday, September 7, 2021**, at (617) 305-3632 with your name, telephone number, and mailing address.

Any person interested in commenting on the Company's filing may also submit written comments to the Department no later than the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on **Thursday, September 9, 2021**. At this time, all filings will be submitted only in electronic format consistent with the Commission's June 15, 2021 directive related to modified filing requirements. Ordinarily, all parties would follow Sections B.1 and B.4 of the Department's Standard Ground Rules (D.P.U. 15-184-A, App. 1 (March 4, 2020)); however, until further notice, parties must retain the original paper version and the Department will later determine when the paper version must be filed with the Department Secretary.

Any person who desires to participate otherwise in the evidentiary phase of this proceeding shall file a petition for leave to intervene no later than 5:00 p.m. on **Thursday, August 12, 2021**. A petition for leave to intervene must satisfy the timing and substantive requirements of 220 CMR 1.03. Receipt by the Department, not mailing, constitutes filing and determines whether a petition has been timely filed. A petition filed late may be disallowed as untimely, unless good cause is shown for waiver under 220 CMR 1.01(4). To be allowed, a petition under 220 CMR 1.03(1) must satisfy the standing requirements of G.L. c. 30A, § 10. All responses to petitions to intervene must be filed no later than five (5) business days after the petition to intervene was filed.

All documents must be submitted to the Department in **.pdf format** by e-mail attachment to [dpu.efiling@mass.gov](mailto:dpu.efiling@mass.gov) and [sarah.spruce@mass.gov](mailto:sarah.spruce@mass.gov). The text of the e-mail must specify: (1) the docket number of the proceeding (D.P.U. 21-81); (2) the name of the person or company submitting the filing; and (3) a brief descriptive title of the document. The electronic file name should identify the document but should not exceed 50 characters in length. Importantly, all large files submitted must be broken down into electronic files that do not exceed 20 MB. All documents submitted in electronic format will be posted on the Department's website through our online File Room as soon as practicable (enter "21-81") at: <https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/DPU/Flerom/dockets/bynumber>. In addition, one copy of all written comments and petitions to intervene should be emailed to the Company's attorneys, Melissa G. Liazos, Esq. at [melissa.liazos@nationalgrid.com](mailto:melissa.liazos@nationalgrid.com), and Alexandra E. Blackmore, Esq. at [alexandra.blackmore@nationalgrid.com](mailto:alexandra.blackmore@nationalgrid.com).

At this time, a paper copy of the filing will not be available for public viewing at the Company's offices or the Department due to certain ongoing safety measures and precautions relating to in-person events as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The filing and all subsequent related documents, pleadings and/or filings submitted to the Department and/or issued by the Department will be available on the Department's website as referenced above as soon as is practicable. To the extent a person or entity wishes to submit comments or intervene in accordance with this Notice, electronic submission, as detailed above, is sufficient. To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (Braille,

large print, electronic files, audio format), contact the Department's ADA coordinator at [DPUADACoordinator@mass.gov](mailto:DPUADACoordinator@mass.gov).

For further information regarding the Company's filing, please contact the Company's attorneys, identified above. For further information regarding this Notice, please contact Department of Public Utilities Hearing Officer Sarah Spruce ([sarah.spruce@mass.gov](mailto:sarah.spruce@mass.gov)).