

BPA's Agency Load Forecast: Application of the 70% Probability to Possible New and Growing Loads

In BPA's load forecasting process, specifically in its evaluation of the forecasts received from customers for possible new and growing loads, BPA applies an assessment of probability to the forecasted load in collaboration with the affected Customer.

If, in the load forecaster's estimation, the forecast of an individual possible new and growing load for a specific Customer has less than 70% probability of that load coming online in its defined year, that less probable load may not be included in the Agency Load Forecast. For example, if the forecast of an individual possible new and growing load has a 50% probability of coming online in 2028 in the load forecaster's estimation, then that load may not be included in the Agency Load Forecast for that Customer. Alternatively, if that same Customer had a separate possible new and growing load with an 80% probability of coming online in 2027, then that load would be included in the Agency Load Forecast for that Customer beginning in 2027. In some instances, possible new and growing loads are broken up into multiple phases and/or ramp into their full load over a number of years to better assess and target probabilities in much the same manner as some possible new and growing loads are broken into phases and/or ramped for financing and/or construction.

BPA and the Customer discuss a number of criteria to evaluate and assess the probability of each possible new and growing load proposed for inclusion in the Customer's Agency Load Forecast. While the determinations needed for all aspects of the Agency Load Forecast are BPA's to make, for purposes of transparency on assessing the probability of possible new and growing loads, BPA is sharing a list of the most commonly used criteria in this assessment:

- Does the possible new and growing load have clear ownership / financial backing? And what is the quality of the ownership / financial backing?
- Does the possible new and growing load have defined control of the site (ie. has property been optioned/leased/bought and/or are they vetting multiple locations in one or more jurisdictions)?
- Have permits such as building specifications or sewer hookups been submitted to the city or county and / or have they been approved?
- Is there necessary local area electrical infrastructure in place to handle the possible new and growing load, on both the local utility's system and on BPA's system?
 - If local area capacity is insufficient on the Utility Customers electrical system, is the developer/Utility Customer taking steps to create additional capacity?
 - If local area capacity on BPA's system is insufficient, has the Utility Customer submitted a line/load interconnection study? If so, what is the status of that study? If study findings are known, what was found?

- BPA's goal is to match each possible new and growing load with its applicable LLIR(s) so that there is a defined Plan of Service with specified Point of Delivery (POD) and electrical bus,
- Has the Customer identified a resource(s) to serve the loads for the forecast.
- Is the necessary non-electrical infrastructure in place to handle the possible new and growing load (i.e., sewer system, roads, etc.)?
- Is an environmental impact statement or other regulatory prerequisite required for the development of the possible new and growing load and what is the proposed timeline of the regulation process?
- What are the magnitude and timeline for the possible new and growing load to come online or operationally change? Are the magnitude and timeline reasonable in relation to other similar new or possible loads elsewhere on BPA's system? Does the Customer have a history of accurately forecasting the timeline and magnitude of prior possible new and growing loads on their system?
- In the event of operational changes to an existing load, what documentation exists to support the change (i.e., newspaper articles, media coverage, operational Forecasts, direct cause and effect, etc.)?
- What are the energy and peak amounts for the possible new and growing load or operational change?

While this is not an exhaustive list of the criteria that can be considered, assessing the forecasts of possible new and growing loads against such criteria helps BPA determine the probability of the load coming online and whether to include that load in the Agency Load Forecast used as an input to BPA's System Assessment transmission study.

Please direct any questions or clarifications to your Transmission Account Executive or via techforum@bpa.gov.