



Manufacturing energy storage ottawa

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Ontario is making its first big foray into storing electricity as a way to bolster the power grid, with a battery project on Lake Ontario near Napanee among the first seven to get the go-ahead.

That 250-megawatt system would hold enough power to run about 250,000 homes for four hours, said Ontario Power Generation subsidiary Atura Power, which submitted that proposal.

It was one of seven successful bidders announced Tuesday by the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) in a first procurement round. The contracts would see battery storage systems built and attached to the grid and required to be up and running no later than the spring of 2026.

The closure of the Pickering Nuclear Generating Station looms in 2026. At the same time, the population is growing and transportation is quickly going electric -- which means vehicles need charging.

It's been 20 years since the great blackout of 2003, and the electricity network has come a long way since then, said David Devereaux, the IESO's director of resource planning.

"Batteries have come a long way in recent years," he explained. They can store energy generated at off-peak times and sometimes wasted -- for instance, when water flows through a dam overnight -- and be returned to the system when demand is high, he said.

It was only last October that Energy Minister Todd Smith directed the IESO to make energy storage a big part of its latest procurement, representing a minimum of 1,500 megawatts.

Suddenly, councils from Windsor to Ottawa and many rural places in between began to see formal requests for resolutions supporting "battery energy storage systems" leading up to the IESO's bid deadline in February.

Like many of his municipal counterparts, Ottawa city councillor Clarke Kelly had never heard of the technology when a company called Abundant Solar Energy Inc. approached him in January about a project in his rural ward of West Carleton-March.

"The reason I decided to support that one is because it was so small," he said. "There have been farmers approached in my ward where it's like a couple hundred acres' worth of these batteries ... which is not something I would ever, ever support."

That rural Ottawa project was not ultimately on the list of seven contracts announced by the IESO on May 16, but further projects are likely to be approved next month, and more after that.



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Atura Power was selected to build a 250-megawatt installation beside its natural gas plant near Bath, between Kingston and Napanee. That's the same size as a Hamilton-area project announced in February and touted as the largest in the country.

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