



CAFES Ottawa

Community Associations for
Environmental Sustainability

Presentation

**Planning and Housing Committee
City of Ottawa
2025 02 05**

**Agenda Item 4.4 Official Plan and Zoning By-law
Amendments for Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)**

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About CAFES

- Community Associations for Environmental Sustainability (CAFES) was founded in 2010 and is a network of local and neighbourhood environmental leaders and community builders
- Our members include representatives from urban, sub-urban and rural communities
- The network includes over 250 individual and organizational representatives from across all wards and over 50 neighbourhoods



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Overview of Presentation

1. Context

2. Main Issues

- 2.1 BESS Technology
- 2.2 Climate Change and Energy Transition
- 2.3 Economic Development & Energy
- 2.4 Energy Planning vs. Land-use Planning
- 2.5 Safety and Environmental Safeguards

3. Highlights of CAFES Technical Submission

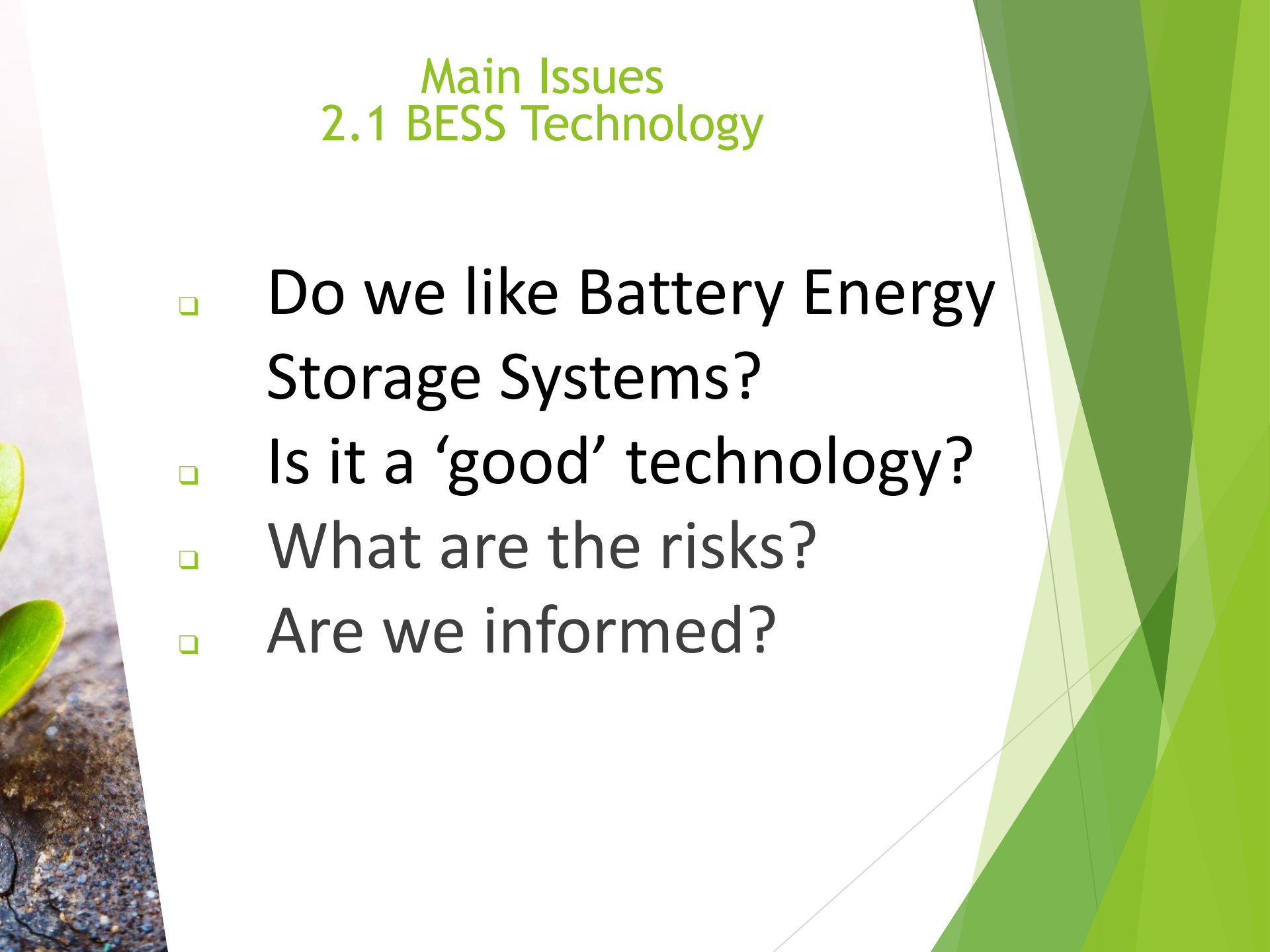
4. Recommendation



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1. Context

- ❑ CAFES is here to advocate for an enabling and functional local regulatory environment (not any one project)
- ❑ CAFES advocates for environment and climate issues in the long term public interest with due regard for public safety, health, economic benefits, equity etc.
- ❑ We understand the natural tension between
 - protecting the status quo character of our neighbourhood and change
 - public benefits and private rights
 - an extractive and exploitative economic system and our local ecological base that we depend on
- ❑ We try to think and frame in terms of outcomes



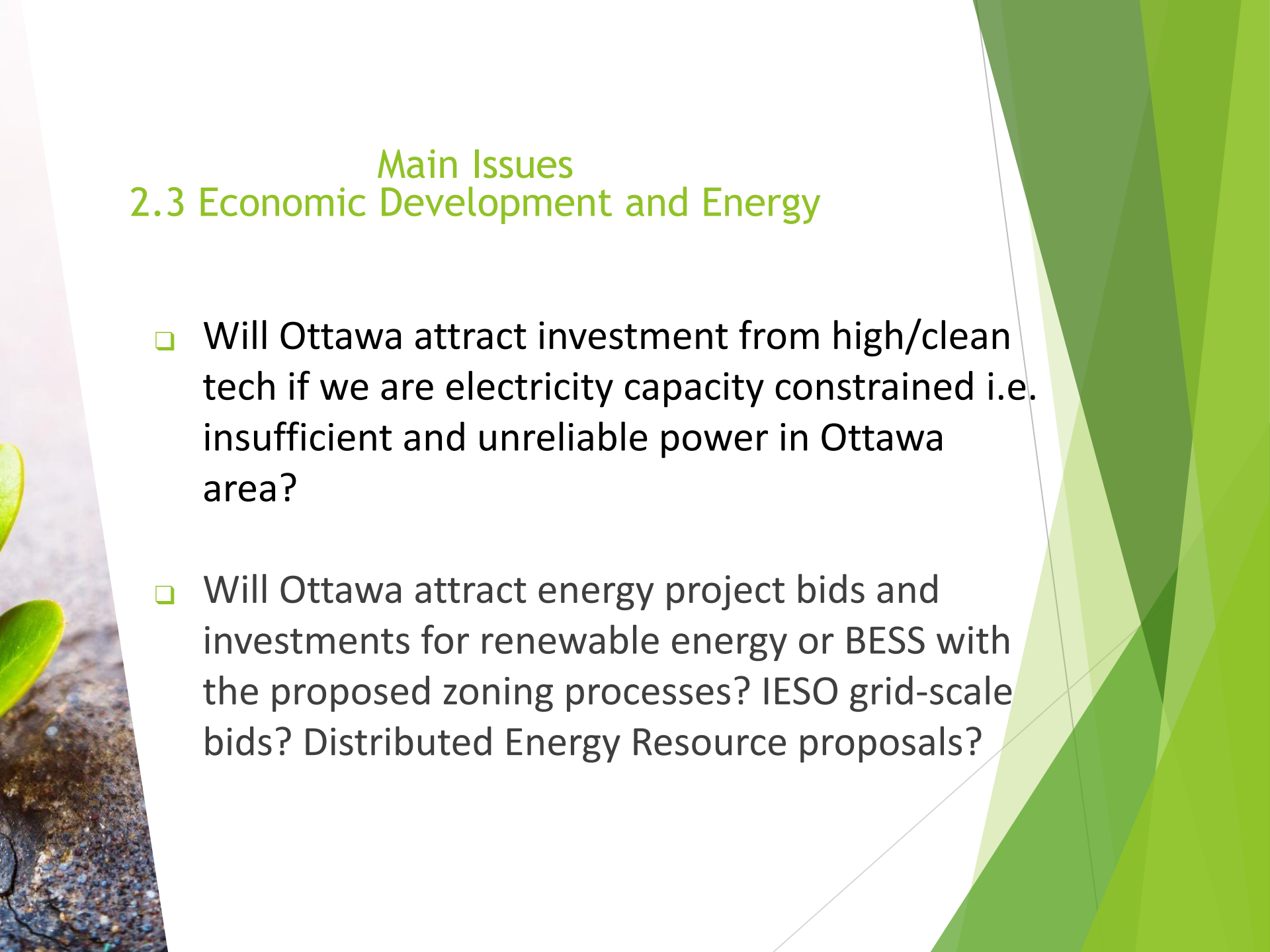
Main Issues

2.1 BESS Technology

- Do we like Battery Energy Storage Systems?
- Is it a 'good' technology?
- What are the risks?
- Are we informed?

Main Issues:
2.2 Climate Change and the Energy
Transition

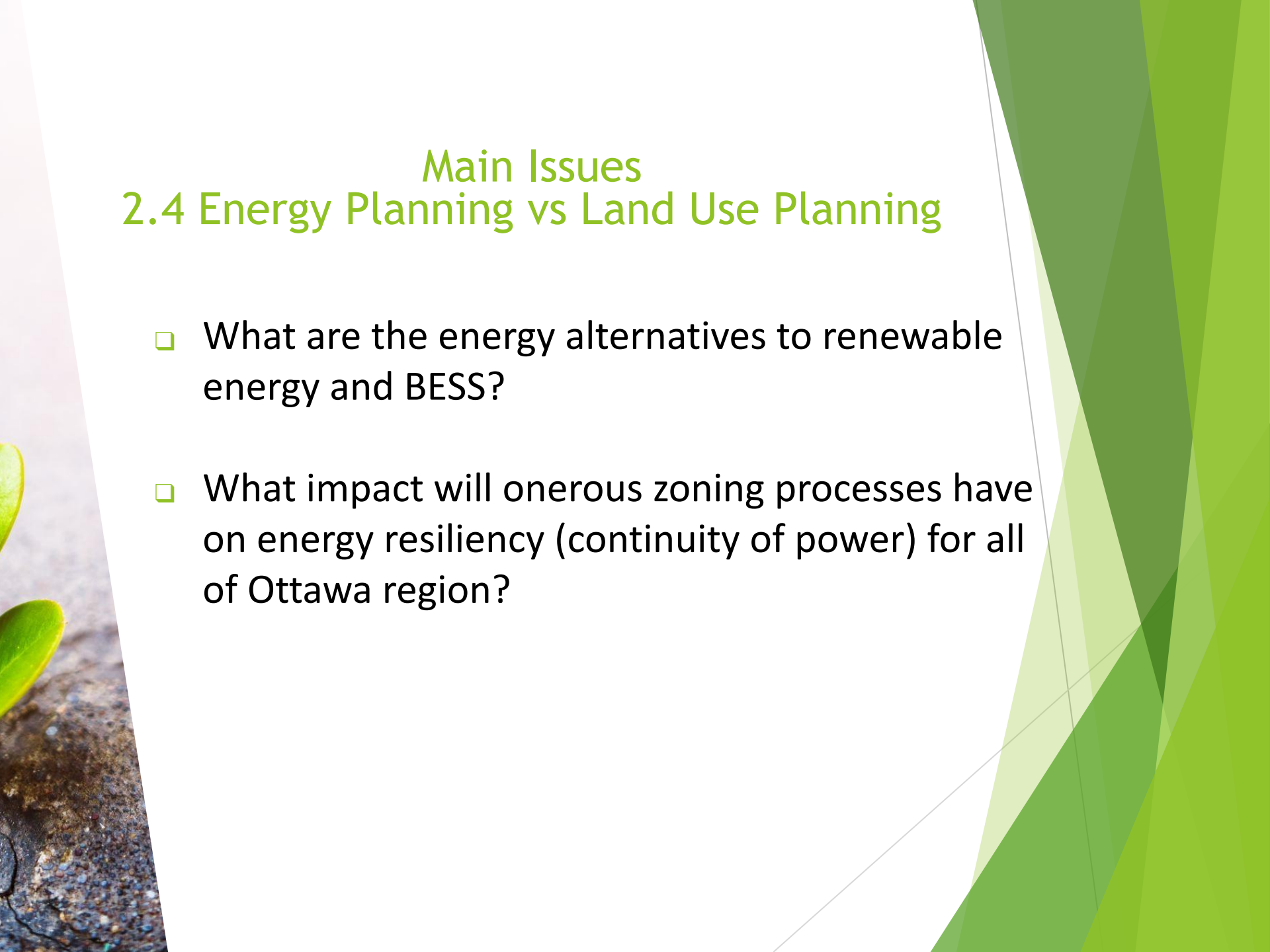
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- Is Climate Change still an issue?
 - Is the Energy Transition happening?



Main Issues

2.3 Economic Development and Energy

- ❑ Will Ottawa attract investment from high/clean tech if we are electricity capacity constrained i.e. insufficient and unreliable power in Ottawa area?
- ❑ Will Ottawa attract energy project bids and investments for renewable energy or BESS with the proposed zoning processes? IESO grid-scale bids? Distributed Energy Resource proposals?



Main Issues

2.4 Energy Planning vs Land Use Planning

- ❑ What are the energy alternatives to renewable energy and BESS?
- ❑ What impact will onerous zoning processes have on energy resiliency (continuity of power) for all of Ottawa region?

Main Issues

Safety and Environmental Safeguards

- ❑ What is the safety regime proposed by these planning regulations for BESS? Is it robust? E.g.
 - noise
 - fire safety and emergency response planning
 - natural heritage and sensitive areas protection
 - water pollution risks and storm water management
 - set backs
- ❑ Is it a nimble regime to deal with rapidly evolving technology?

3. Highlights of CAFES Submission

- ❑ Adopt an enabling, rather than restrictive approach
- ❑ Create a new **Energy Task Force** that will evaluate ideas to increase capacity and energy resiliency for Ottawa region
- ❑ Principal BESS a generally permitted use in most designations in OP; a recognized appropriate use in ZBL; siting along transmission and distribution lines facilitated, safeguards at site plan approval
- ❑ Accessory BESS understood as Distributed Energy Resource with multiple benefits, something we want community and private sector to invest in
- ❑ At level of the zoning by-law – like utilities, all BESS should be a generally permitted use (i.e. no zoning by-law amendment hoops)
- ❑ BESS over a certain footprint should require a site plan approval and set-backs should be based on technical/engineering basis.

Recommendations

- ❑ Ask staff to review the details of the CAFES submission
- ❑ Consult with Hydro Ottawa and learn their perspectives on how much investment in the Ottawa-region transmission and distribution is needed and where it is coming from
- ❑ Strike an Energy Task Force with
 - Land Use Planner(s)
 - Energy Planners
 - Economic Development Planners



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Thank you for your attention and
consideration

