
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENT

XCEL ENERGY

HIAWATHA TRANSMISSION PROJECT

PUC DOCKET #E002/TL-09-38

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Prepared by the Energy Facility Permitting Staff of the



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

On April 24, 2009, Xcel Energy submitted a high voltage transmission line (HVTL) Route Permit application to the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) for the proposed Hiawatha Transmission (Hiawatha) Project.

Minnesota Statutes Section 216E.03, subd. 2 provide that no person may construct a high voltage transmission line without a route permit from the Commission. An HVTL is defined as a transmission line of 100 kV or more and greater than 1,500 feet in length in Minnesota Statutes Section 216E.01, subd. 4. The two 115 kV transmission lines proposed here are HVTLs and therefore a route permit is required prior to construction.

The application was submitted pursuant to the provisions of the Full Permitting Process outlined in Minnesota Rules 7849.5200 to 7849.5340. Minnesota Statute Section 216B.243, subd. 2 states that no large energy facility shall be sited or constructed in Minnesota without the issuance of a Certificate of Need by the Commission.

A large energy facility is defined to include transmission lines between 100 kV and 200 kV if they are more than 10 miles long (Minnesota Statutes Section 216B.2421, subd. 2(2) and (3)). The 115 kV transmission lines proposed for the Hiawatha project do not qualify as a large energy facility because they are less than 10 miles in length. Therefore, a Certificate of Need is not required for the proposed project.

The review process begins with the determination by the Commission that the application is complete. The Commission has one year to reach a final decision on the route permit application from the date the application is determined to be complete. The Commission may extend this limit for up to three months for just cause or upon agreement of the applicant (Minn. R. 7849.5340).

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Xcel Energy proposes to construct two new distribution substations and two 115 kilovolt (“kV”) transmission lines in south Minneapolis, in an area known as the Midtown District. Xcel Energy has included four separate alternative routes and five design options for consideration its application. Xcel Energy also identifies two locations for the Hiawatha Substation and two locations for the Midtown Substation. The proposed routes and substations are described below:

- **Hiawatha Substation:** The Hiawatha Substation will be approximately 2.25 acres in size. The preferred site for the substation (HiawathaWest) is located on the east side of Hiawatha Avenue (Minnesota State Highway 55) slightly south of the intersection of Hiawatha Avenue and East 28th Street. Currently this site is an open area owned by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT), no business relocation would be needed. The estimated cost for construction on the preferred Hiawatha West substation site is \$14.3 million. The alternative location (Hiawatha East) is located on adjacent land to the northeast, currently the site is a warehouse occupied by a warehouse that would need to be relocated.

- **Midtown Substation:** The Midtown Substation will be approximately 1 acre in size. The preferred site for the substation (Midtown North) is located on the northwest corner of Oakland Avenue South and 29th Street. Construction costs for the substation at the preferred site are estimated to be \$11.1 million. At this time, the site is occupied by the old Xcel Energy Oakland Substation, a condemned triplex and an open lot. The alternative location (Midtown South) is located on the southwest corner of Oakland Avenue South and 29th Street and contains the Brown Campbell warehouses that would need to be relocated.
- **Route A:** Route A, the preferred route, is a 1.4-mile route that can be constructed overhead or underground. The transmission lines would connect at the Hiawatha West substation site and parallel the 29th Street/Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority (HCRRA) corridor for approximately 1.4 miles to the Midtown North substation site. If constructed overhead, it would be built with galvanized steel single pole, double circuit structures. The estimated transmission line cost for construction of the two transmission lines along this route using an overhead configuration is \$3.0 million. The estimated transmission line cost for constructing the transmission lines using underground construction along this route is \$15.6 million.
- **Route B:** Route B is proposed as an overhead street route that would require construction of two single circuit lines because there is insufficient clearance for double circuit structures. Galvanized steel single circuit single pole structures would be used. One of the transmission lines would follow 26th Street between the Hiawatha West and Midtown North substation sites. The second line would follow East 28th Street. On both streets, the arms of the poles would be cantilevered over the street. The estimated route lengths of the two lines are 1.8 and 1.4 miles. The cost for construction of the transmission facilities along this route is estimated to be \$5.0 million.
- **Route C:** Route C is also proposed as an overhead street route that would require construction of two single circuit lines because there is insufficient clearance for double circuit structures. Galvanized steel single circuit single pole structures would be used. One of the transmission lines would follow East 28th Street between the Hiawatha West and Midtown North substation sites. The second line would parallel 31st Street. Both would use a cantilever pole configuration. The estimated route lengths of the two lines are 1.5 and 2.3 miles. The estimated cost for construction of the transmission facilities along this route is \$5.8 million.
- **Route D:** Route D is proposed as a 1.5-mile underground route along East 28th Street. This route is designed for a double circuit 115 kV transmission line between the Hiawatha West and Midtown North substation sites. The estimated transmission line costs for construction of the underground transmission facilities along this route is \$16.4 million.

3.0 EIS SCOPING PROCESS

The purpose of the scoping process is to provide the public with an opportunity to participate in the development of the scope of the EIS by holding a public meeting and soliciting public comment.

On Thursday, June 18, 2009, the Office of Energy Security (OES) Energy Facility Permitting staff (EFP) will hold a public information meeting at the Midtown Global Market. The meeting will start at 6:00 pm. The purpose of the meeting is to provide information to the public about the proposed project, to answer questions, and to allow the public an opportunity to suggest alternatives and impacts that should be considered during preparation of the environmental review document. Written comments may also be submitted; written comments must be submitted no later than Friday, July 10, 2009.

Written comments should be mailed to Bill Storm (bill.storm@state.mn.us), Minnesota Department of Commerce, Office of Energy Security, 85 7th Place, Suite 500, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2198.

A scoping decision will be made by the Director of the OES. That decision will be made shortly after the close of the comment period. Persons who want to be advised of the OES's scoping decision can register their names with the OES EFP staff at the public meeting, on the Public Utilities Commission's website or contact Bill Storm at (651) 296-9535. The final scoping decision will also be posted on the Public Utilities Commission's website.

4.0 DRAFT SCOPING OUTLINE

The Environmental Impact Statement on the Hiawatha Transmission Project will address and provide information on the following matters:

A. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

1. Purpose of the Purposed Transmission Line.
2. Regulatory Framework
3. Project Location and Setting
4. Project Description/Engineering and Operation Design
 - Transmission Line and Structures
 - Transmission Capacity
 - Construction Procedures
 - ROW Requirements
5. Description of Alternative Routes
 - Route A - Underground
 - Route B
 - Route C
 - Route D
 - Midtown Substation - East
 - Hiawatha Substation - South
6. Description of Alternatives to the Proposed Project
 - Transmission/Distribution Alternatives
 - Generation Alternatives
 - Load Management/Conservation Alternatives

B. IMPACTS AND MITIGATIVE MEASURES

1. Human Settlements
2. Noise
3. Aesthetics
4. Recreation
5. Transportation
6. Land Use
7. Prime Farmland
8. Soils and Geology
9. Flora
10. Fauna
11. Archaeological and Historic Features
12. Air Quality
13. Surface Water
14. Wetlands
15. Human Health and Safety
 - Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF)
 - Stray Voltage
16. Potential for radio, television and cell phone interference from transmission lines

5.0 ALTERNATIVES TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE EIS

At this time the OES EFP staff is not recommending that any additional routes, other than those presented in Xcel Energy's HVTL Route Permit Application, be evaluated in the EIS.

6.0 SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETION OF EIS

The Environmental Impact Statement on the HVTL will be completed by October 30, 2009.

Upon completion of the draft EIS, the OES EFP staff will notify those persons who have asked to be notified of the completion. In addition, the DOC EFP staff will publish notice of the availability of the draft EIS in the EQB Monitor (the bi-weekly newsletter of the EQB). The draft EIS will be made available for review and will be posted on the Public Utilities Commission's webpage. The DOC EFP staff will hold a public meeting in the project area to provide an opportunity for the public to ask questions and to comment on the draft EIS. The public will also have a period of time (at least 10 days) after the hearing to submit written comments.

Comments on the draft EIS shall become part of the record in the proceeding for this docket.

Applications for high voltage transmission line route permits under the full permitting process require a contested-case hearing upon completion of the draft EIS pursuant to Minn. R. 7849.5330. The hearing must be conducted by an administrative law judge from the Office of Administrative Hearings pursuant to the contested case procedures of Minnesota Statutes, chapter 14. Notice of the hearing must be given in

accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 216E.03, subdivision 6. A portion of the hearing will be held in the area where the proposed project would be located.

7.0 IDENTIFICATION OF PERMITS

The Environmental Impact Statement will include a list of permits that will be required for the project proposers to construct this project. The following permits have been identified as potential:

Permit	Jurisdiction	Route Alternative
Water Appropriation Permit	MnDNR	Routes A & D depending on construction type
NPDES/SDS Construction Stormwater Permit	MPCA	Routes A, B, C, and D
Road Crossing/Obstruction Permits	Mn/DOT, County, Township, City	Routes A, B, C, and D
Lands Permits	County, Township, City	Routes A, B, C, and D
Over-width Loads Permits	County, Township, City	Routes A, B, C, and D
Driveway/Access Permits	County, Township, City	Routes A, B, C, and D
Erosion Control Permit	City of Minneapolis	Routes A, B, C, and D
Permit to Discharge to Storm Drain	City of Minneapolis	Routes A, B, C, and D
After Hours Work Permit	City of Minneapolis	Routes A, B, C, and D
Erosion Control Permit	MCWD	Routes A, B, C, and D