

Factors to be considered as outlined in Minnesota Rules, 7849.5910 & 7849.7030 and Minnesota Statute 216E.03, Subd. 5 as well as the Office of Energy Security Draft Scoping Document prepared on May 29, 2009.

Land-Based Economies

- Commercial Development in the project area has been significant. Between 1999 and 2008, the annual percent estimated market value change for properties within one half mile of Xcel's preferred route was almost always positive (one property declined in value), most often above 20% and frequently above 36%. (City of Minneapolis Assessor's Office, April 2009)
- Between 1999 and 2008, the area within one half mile of Xcel's preferred route has experienced some of the greatest increases in estimated market value for commercial properties in Minneapolis.
- An unsightly large transmission line placed in a thriving commercial area will likely hinder commercial development and reduce property values.

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Residential Development (Human Settlements)

- Residential home values have increased dramatically in the project area. Between 2003 and 2008, the estimated market value change for residences within one half mile of Xcel's preferred route was almost always positive, most often above 16% and frequently above 33%.
- Between 2003 and 2008, the area within one half mile of Xcel's preferred route has experienced some of the greatest increases in estimated market value for residential properties in Minneapolis
- An unsightly large transmission line placed in a thriving residential area will likely substantially reduce property values and quality of life.

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Aesthetics

- Hennepin County, City of Minneapolis, Minnesota Department of Transportation and the federal government have spent over 15 million dollars to construct the 5.7 mile Midtown Greenway in a successful effort to make a beautiful urban bike trail. As noted below, the trail goes underneath 16 bridges which were built in 1915 and 1916. Hennepin County and the federal government paid an additional 5 million dollars to construct the Martin Olav Sabo Bridge, the first cable suspension bridge in Minnesota, which spans Hiawatha Avenue. The construction of 1.4 miles of high voltage lines along the Midtown Greenway between Hiawatha Avenue and Oakland Avenue South would significantly detract from the splendor of the Greenway and undo much of beautification efforts by Hennepin County, Minneapolis and other groups.

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Recreation

- The Midtown Greenway is a path used by cyclists, inline skaters, runners and pedestrians. The Greenway was built in three phases between August 2000 and September 2007. The Martin Olav Sabo Bridge was opened by Hennepin County in the fall of 2007.
- In 2007, automatic counters at three locations measured over 1 million bikers along the Midtown Greenway. In the first 6 months of 2008, there were over 657,000 bikers passing those three locations. (*Bicycle Counts for the Midtown Greenway, 2008*).
- Bicycle use is increasing along the corridor at a substantial rate. For the period of March through June, bicycle traffic increased by 25% from 2007 to 2008 (from 449,996 trips in 2007 to 563,688 in 2008, or 113,692 additional trips). For the months of May and June 2008, cycling increased 37% over 2007 levels (from 318,061 in 2007 to 435,430 trips, a difference of 117,369 new trips). (*Bicycle Counts for the Midtown Greenway, 2008*)
- Of the bike paths studied by the City of Minneapolis, the Midtown Greenway bike path has the greatest number of users. The numbers were third overall, only surpassed by two bike lanes of two or three blocks distance on two busy streets near the University of Minnesota. (*Bicycle Counts for the Midtown Greenway, 2008*)
- Bike usage on the Midtown Greenway is greater than the vehicular traffic flow on many Minneapolis streets. (*Bicycle Counts for the Midtown Greenway, 2008*)
- The aesthetic impact of overhead transmission lines would certainly diminish the popularity of this wonderful recreational resource.

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Transportation

- The Greenway is under consideration by the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) for either future streetcar or light rail transportation.
- Construction of a high voltage line along the Greenway conflicts with the HCRRA prior public purpose which, if implemented, may necessitate the removal or relocation of transmission poles.
- In addition to recreational use, the Midtown Greenway currently provides transportation opportunities to anyone interested in commuting East and West and provides bikers with a beautiful, traffic free route to a street with a bike lane for those commuters going from South Minneapolis to Downtown Minneapolis.
- Construction of a high voltage line along the Greenway is inconsistent with the policy of promoting the Greenway an attractive alternative to motor vehicle transportation.

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Green Space Land Use

- The Greenway provides significant green space on the borders of the bike path.
- As noted by the Office of Energy Security (OES), the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board has 15 properties (including Powderhorn Park and Stewart Park) within .5 miles of the project.
- As noted by OES, there are three community gardens (Prairie Oaks Community Garden at 2600 Oakland Avenue South, 12th and 13th Avenue Block Club Garden, Shalom Garden and Walker Church Community Garden at 3104 16th Avenue South) within the project area.
- Xcel's preferred and alternate overhead routes pass through or near the bike path, parks, gardens and lovely residential homes.
- Overhead transmission lines will diminish the charm and beauty of the Greenway, parks and residential neighborhoods and substantially harm property values.

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Archaeological and Historic Features

- The Greenway is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a Historic District. The two primary historical structures in the Greenway are the earthen trench, which extends from Humboldt Avenue South to within 200 yards of Hiawatha Avenue South, and the bridges. The trench is approximately 22 feet deep and has a steeply sloped wall, on both the north and south boundary, along much of the Greenway. 28 of the 37 original reinforced concrete street bridges spanning the depressed railroad corridor are contributing structures to the Historic District. 16 of those 28 bridges are located along Xcel's preferred route between Hiawatha Avenue and Oakland Avenue South. These Historic Bridges were built between 1915 and 1916 and include: Oakland Avenue Bridge, Park Avenue Bridge, Columbus Avenue Bridge, Chicago Avenue Bridge, Elliot Avenue Bridge, Tenth Avenue Bridge, Eleventh Avenue Bridge, Twelfth Avenue Bridge, Thirteenth Avenue Bridge, Fourteenth Avenue Bridge, Fifteenth Avenue Bridge, Bloomington Avenue Bridge, Sixteenth Avenue Bridge, Seventeenth Avenue Bridge, Eighteenth Avenue Bridge and Cedar Avenue Bridge.
- The impact of the transmission line would detract greatly from the beauty of the Greenway and diminish its historical value.

Hiawatha Advisory Task Force

Specific Route Issues and Impacts (Homework)

Amanda Dlouhy, Phillips West Neighborhood
June 24, 2009

Issue #1: Future transit development

Impact: Exact location of future transit (light rail and streetcar) and transit stations have yet to be determined, and transmission lines (overhead or buried) might prove to be physical obstacles to these developments.

Impact: If transit is obstructed in the area, planned commercial and residential development will slow. The Lake Street/Greenway corridor will no longer be a transit-oriented growth corridor, as identified in existing land use plans, and the Chicago Avenue life sciences corridor may not reach its full potential.

Impact: Transit with fewer or less accessible transit stations would mean less access for neighborhood residents.

Impact: Without transit or access to transit, more residents of South Minneapolis will continue to rely on automobile transportation, with the resulting social and environmental impacts, not limited to: burning of fossil fuels, urban sprawl, and disparity between those who have cars and those who do not.

Where located: Impacts would affect the entire project area and the larger city of Minneapolis, but the issue specifically centers on the Midtown Greenway and on Chicago Avenue.

Issue #2: Impact on historical resources, including landmarks listed on the National Register (Midtown Greenway, Midtown Exchange, American Swedish Institute), and our locally valued historic housing stock.

Impact: Overhead lines would have a negative visual impact on historic properties. The project area was built up between 1900 and 1920, and most blocks retain their historic character.

Impact: Structural preservation of housing and historic properties requires investment by individual citizens, as well as larger companies. Overhead lines would limit investment along the lines, and buried lines would limit investment on specific properties. Disinvestment spreads quickly through residential neighborhoods. The monetary and emotional cost of losing historic properties and building new architecture is high.

Where located: Throughout the project area. Architectural resources are particularly strong along Park, Portland, and Chicago Avenues. Investment in the area is already tenuous, due to high foreclosure rates, a history of arsenic pollution, and other factors.

Issue #3: Health for families, including small children and elderly residents, and notably people of color.

Impact: Substations and overhead transmission lines take up prime urban space and could potentially block neighborhood access to walking, biking, outdoor recreation/exercise opportunities, and healthy food, including specifically the Midtown Greenway, the Hiawatha trail, marked bike lanes on Park and Portland Avenues, planned greenspace on substation sites, the Midtown Farmers Market, and numerous community gardens. This project could limit walking access, biking access, and psychological access to these health amenities, if spaces do not feel open, welcoming, and safe.

Impact: Adverse effects of EMF could impact health in this densely populated area. Just as important, even the rumor of adverse effects could lead to disinvestment in the area.

Where located: The project area, especially the Lake Street corridor, contains one of the largest concentrations of people of color in the state of Minnesota. A high percentage of these families, especially within the Latino and Somali communities, have young children. The Ebenezer housing units for elderly residents on Park Avenue and the hospitals along Chicago contain high concentrations of people with health issues.

Issue #4: Loss of jobs if companies such as Brown-Campbell move out of the neighborhood, or if potential employers refuse to move into the neighborhood.

Impact: There would be fewer local jobs and less diversity in the neighborhood. Loss of both employers and employees would mean less support for neighborhood businesses and nonprofit organizations.

Where located: Throughout the project area, specifically Brown-Campbell and Crew 2.



Hiawatha 115 kilovolt (kV)
Transmission Line Project
Advisory Task Force

Hiawatha Advisory Task Force

Specific Route Issues and Impacts (Homework)

- 1) With the knowledge that you currently have about the proposed routes for the Hiawatha transmission line in your community, what specific land use planning route and/or sub-station issues and impacts need to be evaluated in the environmental impact statement for this project? If the issues are specific to a particular portion of one of the proposed routes, please identify the location.
- 2) To help organize your thoughts and our process, please identify your top four issues below and bring this document to the first meeting of the Advisory Task Force (use an additional sheet if necessary). We will use and collect the information at that meeting.
- 3) Your name: (optional) Eric Hart - Longfellow Community Council

What are the Issues (i.e., land use planning, Health & Safety, etc.)?

What is the Impact? (Why is there an issue?)

Where, specifically, is it located? (What part of your community or neighborhood? What part of a proposed route?)

Example A:

Issue: Wetlands

Impact: Destruction of wetlands during construction and future maintenance.

Where located: Section 16 & 15, T145N, R32W (Farden Twp.)

Example B:

Waterfowl flyways. Birds hitting lines or avoiding areas on Route 1: Locations are the north end of Moss Lake to just south of Pike Bay in section 3 of Wilkinson Twp. and between Twin Lake and Camp Lake in section 2 of Wilkinson Twp.

Example C:

Issue: Line is too close to houses in our area

Impact: Aesthetics - we don't want to look at transmission lines

Impact: Health - we are concerned about EMF

Where located: Segment 4, TH 371 to Birch Lake Substation.

Examples

What is the land use planning issue?

What is the impact? (Why is there an issue?)

Where, specifically, is it located? (What part of your township, city, or county? What part of a proposed route?)

1. Hiawatha Substation West would destroy recently developed greenspace (trees, shrubs and grass). This area has been identified as a greenspace in land plans for the area for the past 10 years. The area needs additional parks and greenspace and the Park Board has identified this area as deficient of greenspace.

What is the land use planning issue?

What is the impact? (Why is there an issue?)

Where, specifically, is it located? (What part of your township, city, or county? What part of a proposed route?)

2. If the Hiawatha Substation East site is developed, the Greenway trails will be severed when the expansion parcel is developed. Xcel Energy must pay for relocating the trails in a manner which causes the least inconvenience to trail users.

What is the land use planning issue?

What is the impact? (Why is there an issue?)

Where, specifically, is it located? (What part of your township, city, or county? What part of a proposed route?)

3. Route A (underground or above ground) - along the Midtown Greenway and 29th Street - would discourage and make difficult transit oriented development along the south side of the Midtown Greenway. The Midtown Greenway Land Use and Development Plan identifies this corridor as a prime spot for redevelopment - especially at rail transit stops. Power lines would make it hard to redevelop parcels along the south side of the Greenway and integrate them seamlessly into rail transit stops.

What is the land use planning issue?

What is the impact? (Why is there an issue?)

Where, specifically, is it located? (What part of your township, city, or county? What part of a proposed route?)

4. Hiawatha Substation West would block easy access to Lake Street from the Midtown Greenway for a bike and pedestrian path. This bicycle connection has been sought for many years and is needed for access to local businesses and the Lake Street LRT station.
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