



GREAT RIVER
ENERGY®

A Xcel Energy Cooperative

12300 Elm Creek Boulevard • Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718 • 763-445-5000 • 763-445-5050

January 24, 2012

Dr. Burl W. Haar
Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: Northport Substation and Transmission Line Construction

Dear Dr. Haar:

In accordance with the Power Plant Siting Act, Minn. Stat. § 216E.05, subd. 3, this letter, filed via eFiling, serves as the required notice to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) that Great River Energy has elected to seek local approval for construction of a 115 kilovolt (kV) substation and approximately 1.1 miles of 115 kV line in Nicollet County, Minnesota.

Electrical load growth in the North Mankato area is greater than recent projections anticipated and with several additional loads in the planning stages, is estimated to continue to grow in the near future.

The proposed single circuit 115 kV transmission line will be located in the City of North Mankato and Belgrade Township, along Sections 2 and 3, T108N, R27W in Nicollet County. A project description/site map is enclosed for your information.

Nicollet County is the permitting authority for Belgrade Township. On December 13, 2011, the Nicollet County Board of Commissioners adopted "the resolution relinquishing Nicollet County's permitting authority to North Mankato for the GRE Transmission Line Project." Great River Energy intends to permit the entire project through the City of North Mankato.

A Conditional Use Permit application for the project was submitted to the City of North Mankato on January 23, 2012. The city has been informed that it has 60 days to refer the permitting process to the Commission.

Dr. Burl W. Haar
January 24, 2012
Page 2

Questions regarding this project should be directed to Mike Fischer, City Planner, City of North Mankato at (507) 625-4141; or Peter Schaub of Great River Energy at (763) 445-5976; or me at (763) 445-5215. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

GREAT RIVER ENERGY



Marsha Parlow
Transmission Permitting Analyst

Enclosure

cc: Affidavit of service on: General List of Interested Persons
Mike Fischer, City Planner, City of North Mankato
Deborah Pile, Department of Commerce

s:\member services\environmental\transmission\projects\74831 Northport\RFPUCNOTLTR.doc

Northport Substation and 115 kV transmission line



GREAT RIVER ENERGY
12300 Elm Creek Boulevard
Maple Grove, MN 55369-4718
1-888-521-0130
www.greatriverenergy.com



BENCO ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
20946 – 549 Avenue, PO Box 8
Mankato, MN 56002-0008
1-888-792-3626
www.benco.coop

Project Need:

Electrical Load growth in the North Mankato area is greater than recent projections anticipated and, with several additional loads in the planning stages, is estimated to continue to grow in the near future. To reliably serve these loads, an electrical distribution substation is needed in the area of North Mankato and Belgrade Township.

Project Goal/Description:

Construct a 115 kV distribution substation (“Northport Substation,” see Figure 1) and approximately 1.1 miles of 115 kV double circuit transmission line (see Figure 2) to support that substation. The location of proposed Northport Substation is approximately 1/3 of a mile north of the existing end of Ringhofer Drive (see Project Map on back). This will result in improved electrical reliability, provide contingency support for the Johnson and Penelope substations and supply a strong second-source to serve, and back-up, electrical demands in the North Mankato area.

The new 115 kV transmission line will consist of six energized conductors attached to horizontal post insulators on galvanized steel poles. Grounded shield wire will be attached at the top of each pole for lightning protection. It is estimated that typical pole heights will range from 70 to 90 feet above the ground, and the distance between poles will range from 350 to 450 feet depending on terrain and physical features. All energized substation equipment is located inside a chain link fence providing safety and security.

Schedule:

Local/State Permitting: -----1st Quarter 2012
Footings/Foundations: -----Spring 2012
Transmission Line Construction-----Late Summer / Fall 2012
Project Completion -----November 2012



*Figure 1
Typical 115 kV distribution
substation*



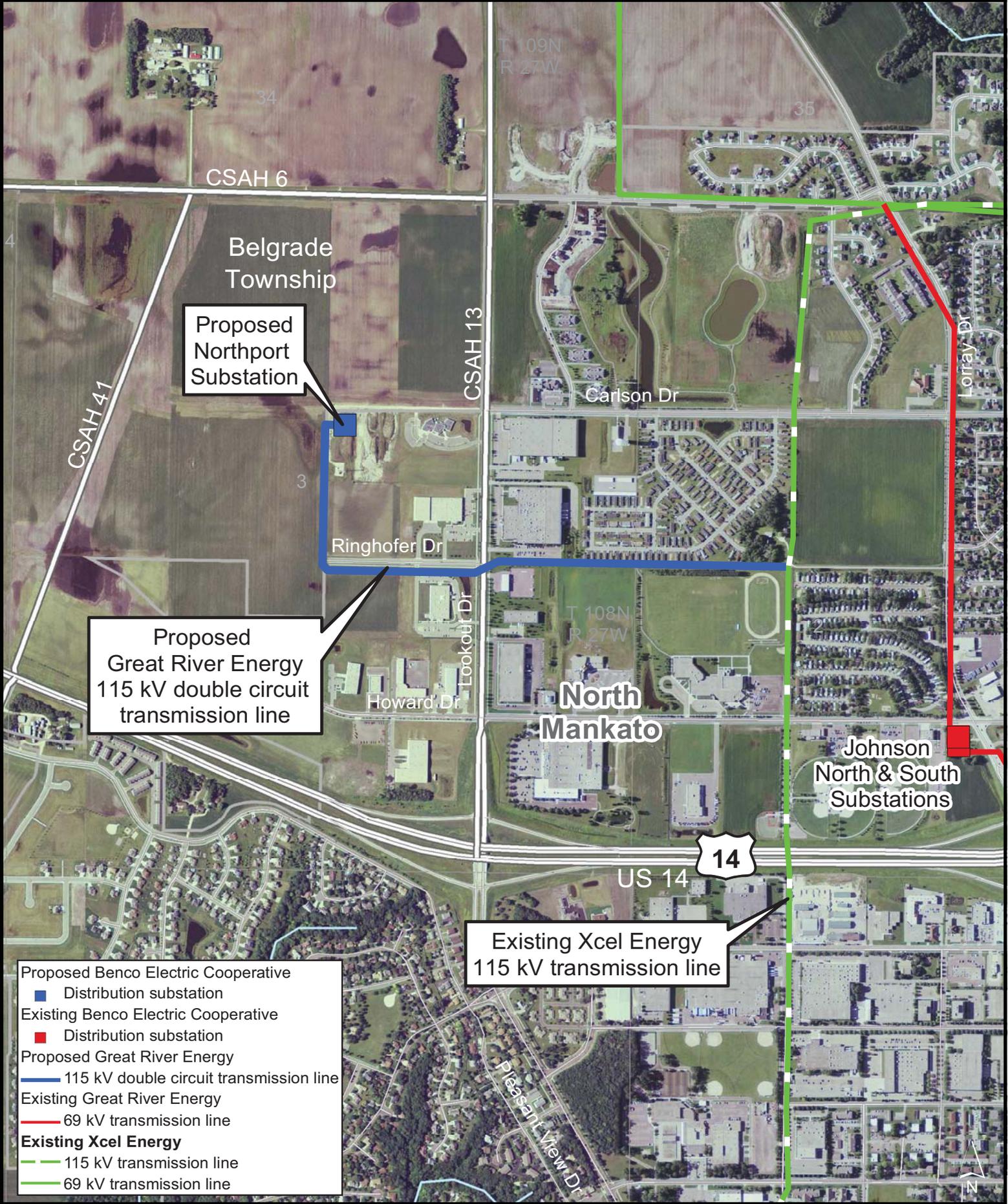
*Figure 2
Typical 115 kV structure*

For project updates and information, visit greatriverenergy.com/northport or contact:

Peter Schaub
Great River Energy
12300 Elm Creek Boulevard
Maple Grove, MN 55369-4718
763-445-5976
1-888-521-0130 ext. 5976
pschaub@GREnergy.com

Dick Hiniker
Benco Electric Cooperative
20946 549th Avenue, P.O. Box 8
Mankato, MN 56002-0008
507-387-7963
1-888-792-3626
dick.hiniker@benco.coop

Proposed project



Proposed Northport Substation

Proposed Great River Energy 115 kV double circuit transmission line

Existing Xcel Energy 115 kV transmission line

- Proposed Benco Electric Cooperative
 - Distribution substation
- Existing Benco Electric Cooperative
 - Distribution substation
- Proposed Great River Energy
 - 115 kV double circuit transmission line
- Existing Great River Energy
 - 69 kV transmission line
- Existing Xcel Energy**
 - 115 kV transmission line
 - 69 kV transmission line