MINNESOTA ENERGY CONNECTION

TRANSMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE TO SERVE CUSTOMERS IN THE UPPER MIDWEST

Xcel Energy will soon begin building a new 175-mile transmission line to deliver reliable energy to customers across the Upper Midwest region, after earning approval from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission. The Minnesota Energy Connection will carry power from a proposed new gas-fired power plant in Lyon County to the existing Sherco Generating Station in Becker. Once complete in 2028, the line will deliver enough energy to power more than 1 million homes.

The new double-circuit 345-kV transmission line and the new power plant are part of our plan to help ensure reliable service by adding more than 2,200 megawatts (MW) of always-available resources, such as natural gas plants, to supply power when solar and wind energy are not available and during peak demand on the hottest days and coldest nights.

Xcel Energy will work closely with landowners, local officials and other stakeholders as the project is developed. Construction is expected to take place from 2026–2031.

New line will carry clean, ‘always-available’ energy

Xcel Energy proposed the Minnesota Energy Connection project to efficiently link new energy resources to the Upper Midwest power grid. This project continues Xcel Energy’s investment in the Becker community and positions southwest Minnesota for significant new investments into the future. Up to 4,000 MW of new renewable energy, such as wind and solar, could connect to the new transmission line over the coming years.

Xcel Energy has also received state approval to propose a new natural gas-fired power plant near the line’s southern end point in Lyon County. The new plant and transmission line will deliver always-available energy to customers when the wind isn’t blowing and the sun isn’t shining.

The Upper Midwest needs new transmission capacity to power the economic growth of the future. This new transmission line will carry more local energy resources to our customers, to power their homes and expand their businesses.

The new projects will benefit local governments and landowners with millions of dollars in lease payments and local tax revenue, which will help build and maintain infrastructure like schools and roads.

Comprehensive review process led to best route proposals

In 2022, Xcel Energy began working with landowners, local governments, and state agencies to identify potential corridors for the new transmission project. After more than a year of public input, the company filed a Route Permit application in October 2023. During the public comment period, members of the public and local governments suggested more than 70 route options, and 68 of those were studied in the Environmental Impact Statement.

Example of double-circuit 345-kV structure.

Public participation was key to identifying the route option that was most cost-effective for Xcel Energy's customers and least disruptive to local communities, including agricultural operations, homes and environmental areas such as wetlands and wildlife habitat.

Construction is expected to begin in early 2026, and the line is scheduled to start carrying electricity in 2028. Additional substation construction will occur through 2031.

Upcoming 2025-2026 activities

We will begin working with landowners to purchase easements that allow us to build, operate and maintain the transmission line. We will also work with local governments to secure permits necessary to begin construction.

Construction will begin in the central portion of the project and progress towards Garvin in 2026-2027. We will coordinate closely with landowners and local officials as the project moves forward.

2025

- Work with landowners to negotiate easement purchases
- Design and engineering; pre-construction activities

2026-2028

- Construction activities; construction expected to begin in central and southwest Minnesota; construction schedules will be communicated to affected landowners and local governments

2029-2031

- Substation construction expected to be completed in 2029
- Additional localized substation construction activities to continue through 2030

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INFORMATION SHEET

MINNESOTA ENERGY CONNECTION

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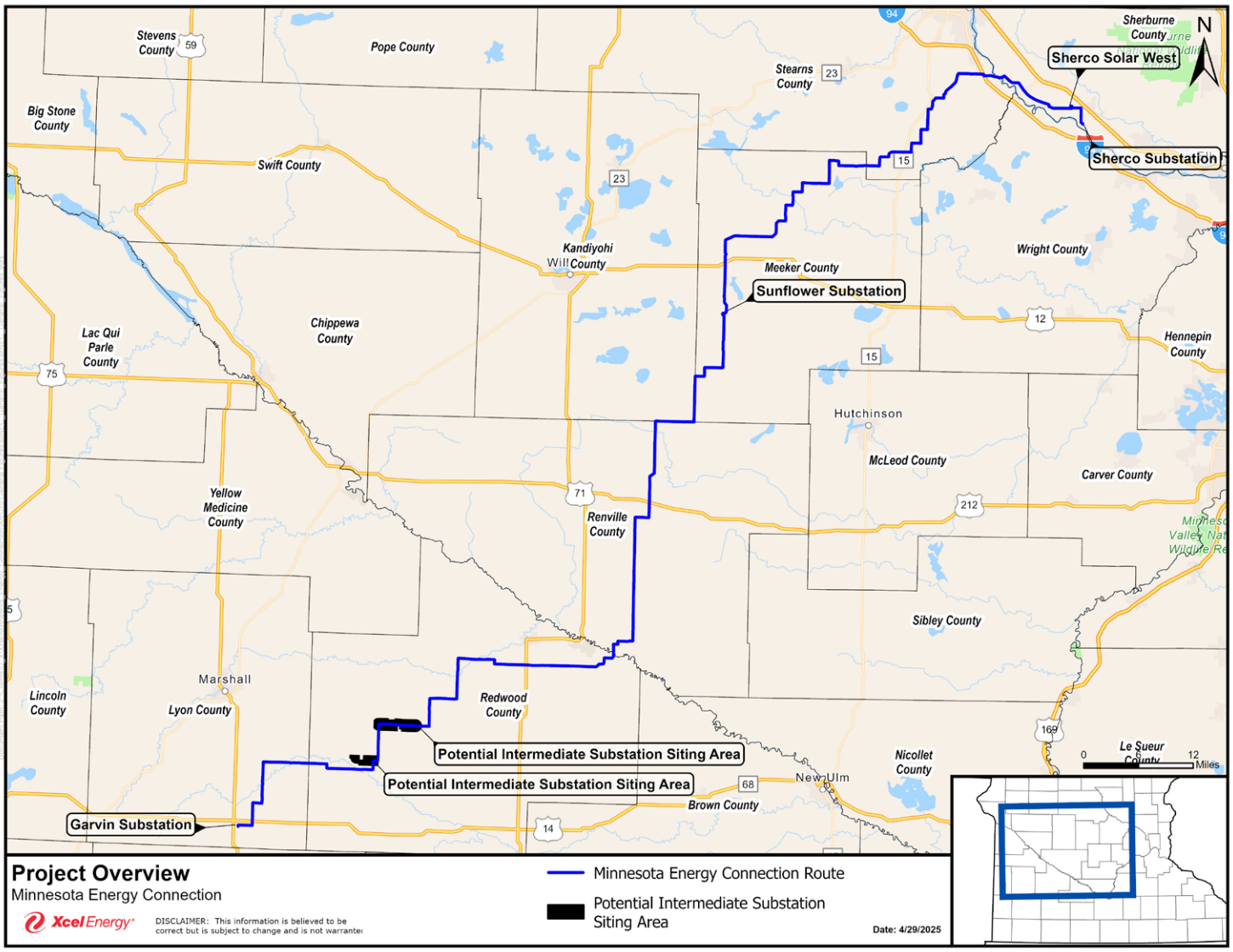
MINNESOTA

PROJECT TIMELINE

2025	2026	2027	2028	2029–2031	2031
2025 • Detailed engineering and design • Easement acquisition • Early construction activities	**2026** • Construction begins	**2027** • Continued construction activities	**2028** • Transmission line construction complete	**2029–2031** • Additional component installation and substation construction	**2031** • Project complete



The Notice Area includes the project end points and areas where under consideration for the new infrastructure

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