

### 3 MPUC public hearings

After the Draft EIS is published, an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) will hold public hearings throughout the project area, with a public comment period, to receive comments on the routes under review, and how potential impacts of the project could be addressed. Advance notice of these public hearings will be provided via mail and newspaper advertisements. The ALJ then prepares a report summarizing the overall record and writes a report and recommendation to the MPUC, including recommendations about what route should be selected and conditions that should be included in the route permit.

### 4 Final EIS

The MPUC publishes the Final EIS.

### 5 MPUC Route Permit decision

After reviewing the report from the ALJ, all public comments and the complete environmental review and permitting record, the MPUC will consider the application at a scheduled MPUC meeting to make its final Route Permit decision. MPUC meetings and hearings are open to the public. At that time, the MPUC will decide on which route, or combination of routes, to approve the transmission line and any conditions the permit should include. A Route Permit can only be issued after a CON is granted, and it is the approval that determines the transmission line route. Once approved, the utilities will pursue any additional required permits, such as those required by other state and federal agencies depending on the designated route.

\*Wisconsin follows a separate regulatory process.



## Minnesota Regulatory Process

We're at the start of a multi-year regulatory process that includes evaluation of the project's need and routing by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC). The MPUC ultimately determines whether the project is needed and, if so, the project's final route. The MPUC will thoroughly review all project information provided by the applicants and input from stakeholders, landowners and the general public before making its decisions.

### Two key approvals must be obtained from the MPUC before the project can be built:

1 A **Certificate of Need (CON)** identifies the issues the proposed project is designed to solve (the need for the project) and reviews how the project benefits the state and region.

To learn how to subscribe to the Project's Certificate of Need docket and to receive email notifications when information is filed in that docket, please visit: [www.mn.gov/puc/edockets/howto](http://www.mn.gov/puc/edockets/howto)

To subscribe to this docket, follow those instructions and enter Docket Number 25-121.

### 1 CERTIFICATE OF NEED



Application filed: MPUC begins review process



Environmental Report scoping public meetings



Scoping decision



Environmental Report



MPUC Public hearings



MPUC CON decision

Input and engagement opportunities will be available throughout these processes.

Open this handout to learn more.

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# CON Application filing —February 2026

The regulatory review process begins when we submit our application to the MPUC, which they evaluate for completeness and invite public comment. Once deemed complete, the case is typically assigned to an independent Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) to oversee the review and develop a report and recommendations to the MPUC. The MPUC review of a CON generally takes 12 to 18 months.

## 1 Environmental Report scoping meetings

Next, the MPUC prepares an Environmental Report (ER) to evaluate potential human and environmental impacts of the overall project. Public meetings are held to explain the process and gather comments on issues and alternatives to include in the report. Written comments are also accepted.

## 2 Scoping decision

After reviewing all input, the MPUC issues a scoping decision that outlines the topics and alternatives the ER will address.

## 3 Environmental Report

The ER is then developed and made available for public review. The ER is part of the record the MPUC will review for the project.

## 4 Public hearings

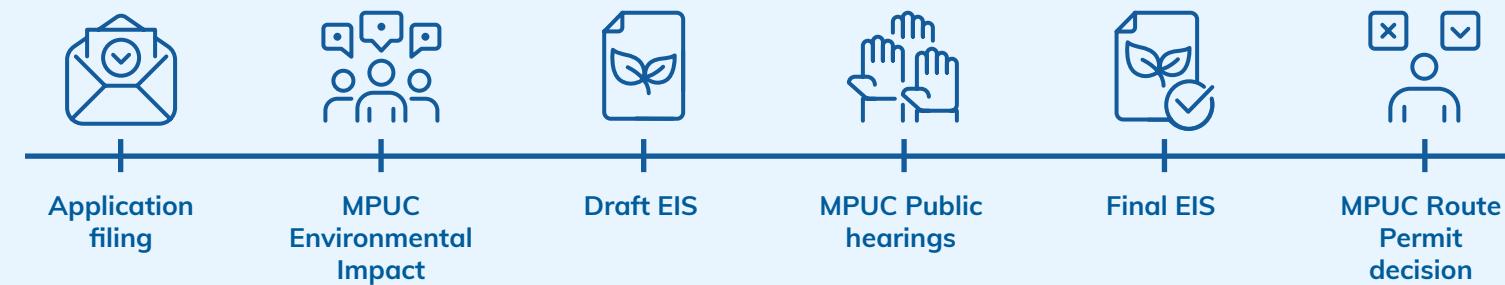
The MPUC holds public hearings overseen by an ALJ. Notices are published in local newspapers and mailed to landowners and local government officials ahead of the hearings. Anyone can attend to share comments or express opinions on the applicants' proposal. Written comments are also accepted. After the hearings, the ALJ prepares a report summarizing the record, including public input, and provides recommendations to the MPUC.

## 5 CON decision

The MPUC makes the final decision on whether to issue a CON. In reaching its decision, the MPUC reviews all information in the record and deliberates at a formal commission meeting.



## 2 ROUTE PERMIT



 Input and engagement opportunities will be available throughout these processes.

## Application filing and completeness review

After a utility files a route permit application and it is accepted as complete, the regulatory review process begins.

## 1 Public Information and Scoping meetings

Once the Route Permit application is deemed complete, the MPUC will hold public information and scoping meetings throughout the project area to begin developing the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). These meetings, along with the public comment period, allow landowners and community members to ask questions of MPUC staff and the applicants, provide input on what should be studied in the EIS, suggest alternative routes for consideration by the MPUC and address potential impacts and mitigation measures that should be studied in the EIS.

The EIS evaluates potential effects on land use, including agricultural operations and residences, water resources, natural habitats and other environmental factors. Suggested alternative routes must be specific, with defined start and end points, and can range from minor adjustments to entirely different paths. Following this process, the MPUC publishes a decision outlining the topics and route alternatives that will be included in the EIS.

## 2 Draft EIS

The Draft EIS will be published and made available for public review and comment.

 Process continues on the next page.

