MariBell Transmission Project

Project Purpose and Need

About the Project

Dairyland Power Cooperative and **GridLiance Heartland** are planning an approximately 140-mile, double-circuit transmission line between Marion, Minn., and Bell Center, Wis. The proposed project includes both a new 765 kilovolt (kV) transmission line and a rebuilt 161 kV line located within the existing transmission corridor. The new transmission line would:

- Enhance the reliability of the electric grid
- Help meet surging energy demand
- Rebuild existing line infrastructure due for replacement
- Unlock access to more energy resources
- Support the region's growing economy

Estimated Project Schedule

Project schedule is subject to change.

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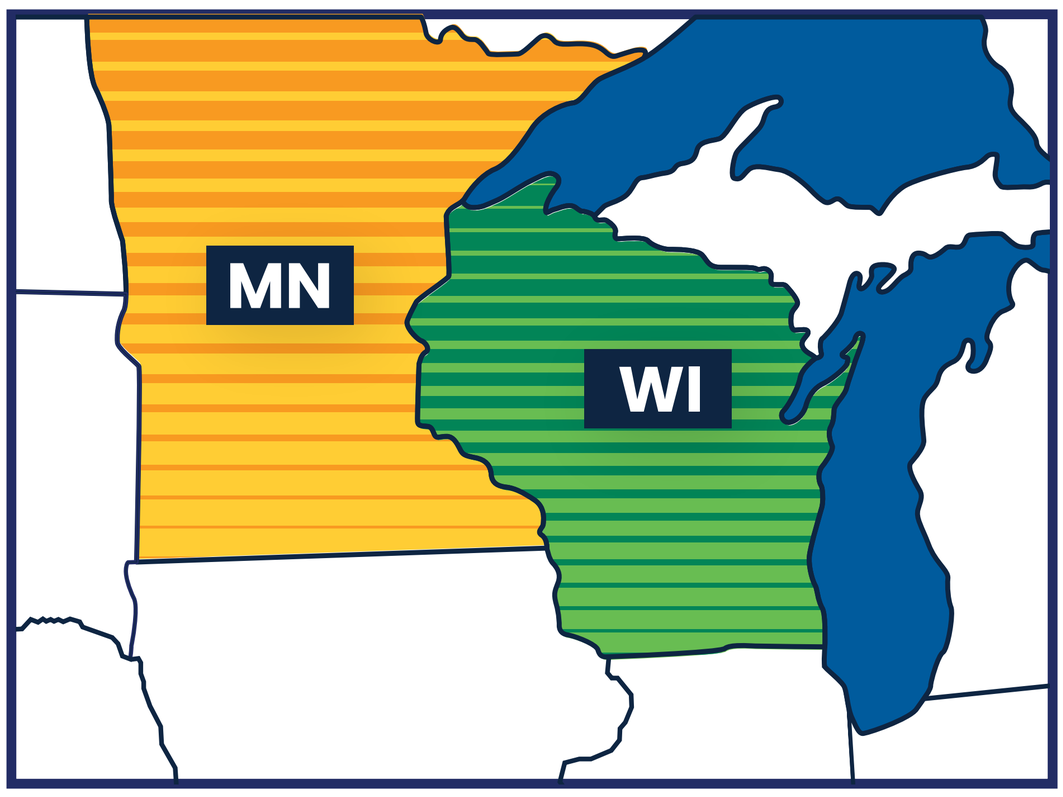
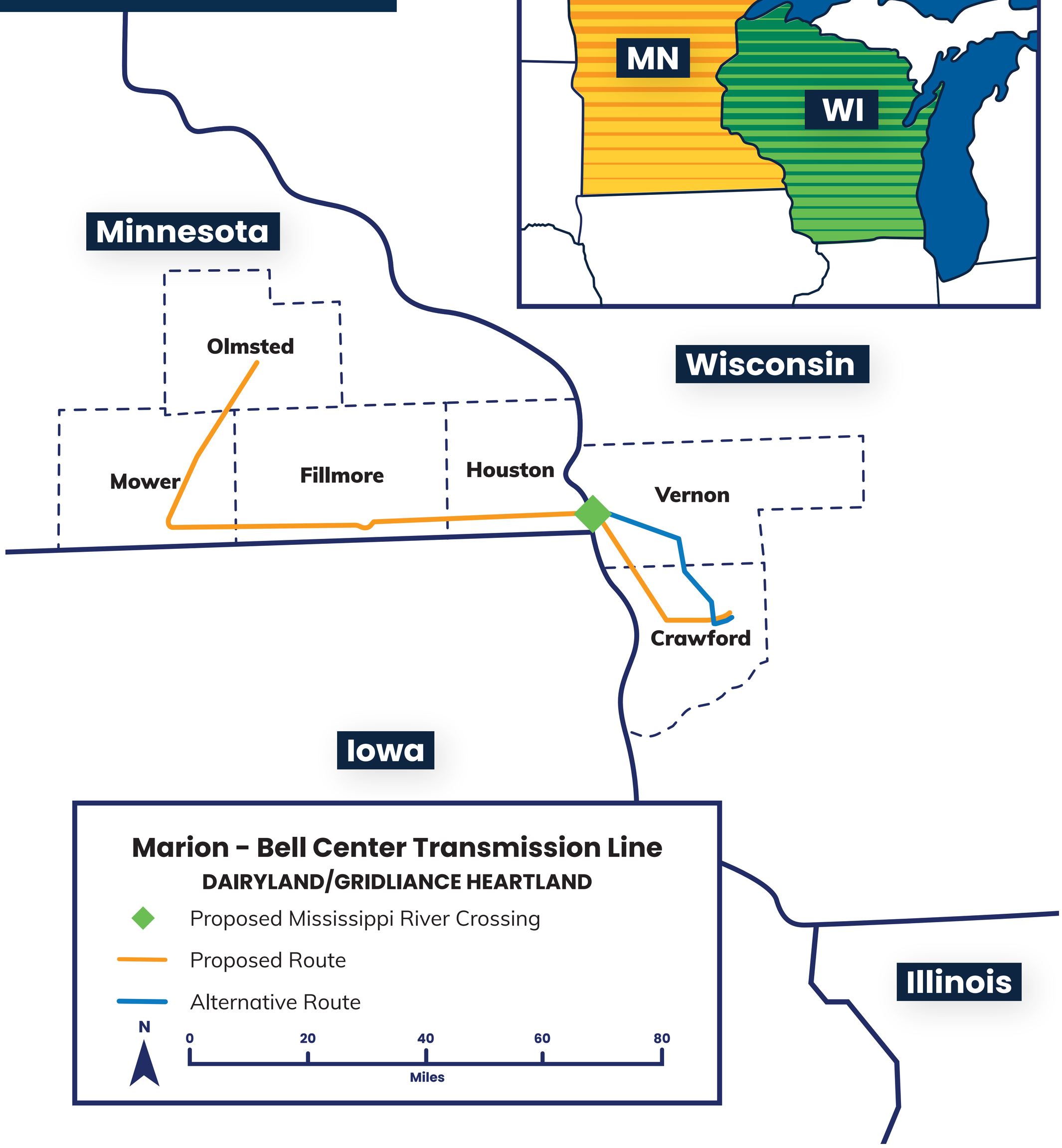
Project Area





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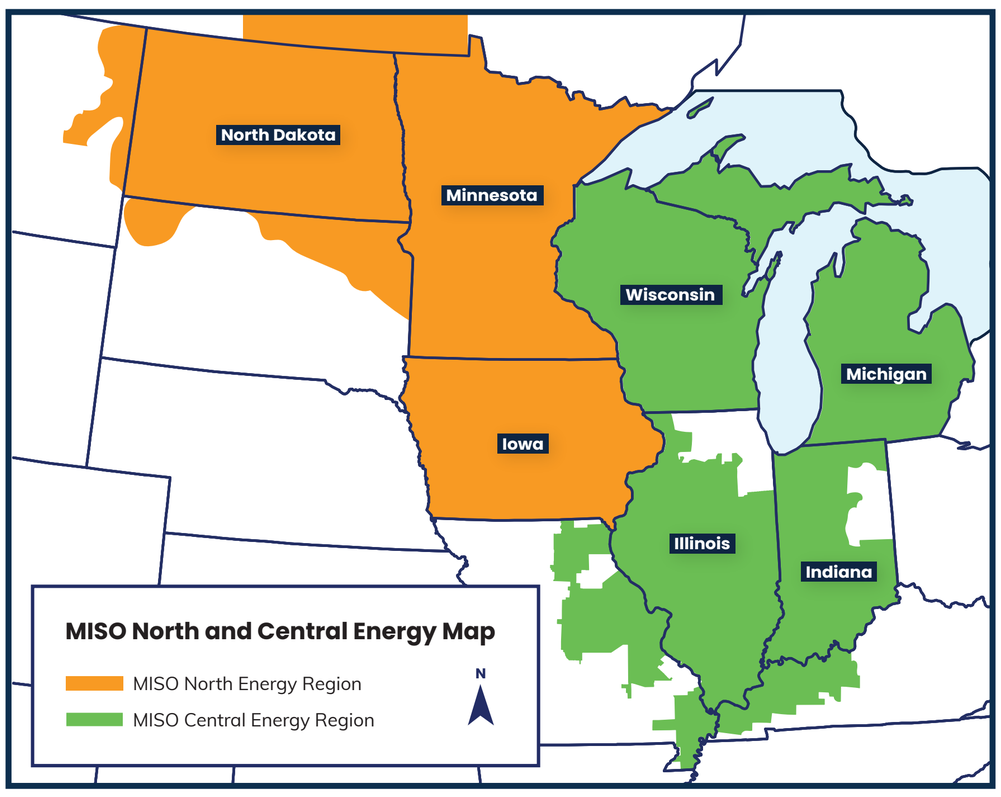
MISO Overview

Meeting Our Region's Energy Needs

The Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) conducted a 2-year, regional planning process, with extensive input from utilities and stakeholders, to identify a portfolio of 24 transmission projects to enhance the reliability of the electric grid, improve access to remote energy resources and deliver reliable power to homes, farms, and businesses throughout the Midwest region. MariBell was identified as one of the projects in MISO's proposed Long Range Transmission Plan (LRTP).

MISO is the electric grid operator and regional transmission planner for the central United States. MISO is a non-profit organization that works to keep electricity reliable across 15 states and the Canadian province of Manitoba.



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Project Partners

The partnership between Dairyland and GridLiance Heartland brings together Dairyland's local experience and community connections with GridLiance's expertise in building and managing large energy projects to strengthen the region's power reliability.

Dairyland Power Cooperative

Headquartered in La Crosse, Wis., Dairyland provides wholesale electrical requirements to 24 distribution cooperatives and 27 municipal utilities. These cooperatives and municipals, in turn, supply the energy needs of approximately 750,000 people in four states (Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois).

GridLiance Heartland, LLC

GridLiance Heartland, LLC is a subsidiary of NextEra Energy Transmission, a leading competitive transmission company that develops, finances, constructs, operates and maintains transmission assets across North America. The company's subsidiaries have approximately 3,100 circuit miles of high-voltage transmission assets in operation and development in 18 states and Canada. GridLiance Heartland collaborates with rural electric cooperatives and municipal utilities in America's heartland to invest in electric infrastructure and improve the reliability of regional grids.

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Economic Benefits

The MariBell Project will provide economic benefits to local communities.

Wisconsin

- Approximately $314 million in capital investment
- Approximately $30 million in state revenue over the life of the project
- Approximately $70 million in economic impact from construction and operations
- Approximately 600 construction jobs across the project area

**Economic Analysis of the MariBell Transmission Project by Strategic Economic Research, LLC*

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Regulatory Process

We are at the beginning of a multi-year process that requires routing studies and approval by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin.

Wisconsin

A **Certificate or Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN)** must be obtained from the **Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSCW)** before a high-voltage transmission line can be built.

- In the CPCN proceeding, the PSCW determines whether the proposed facilities are necessary and appropriately routed.

The PSCW will hold public meetings during which the public can comment on the proposed facilities.

During the PSCW permitting process, the public can submit comments by attending and speaking at public hearings, submitting written comments via email or postal mail or by using the PSCW's Electronic Regulatory Filing (ERF) system.

We anticipate filing the CPCN application with the PSCW in 2026, with a final decision from the PSCW approximately 12 months after the filing of the application.

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Working with Landowners

Energy companies build transmission lines to serve customers, connect new generation sources and help ensure the reliable delivery of electricity to customers. The area around a transmission line is called a right-of-way (ROW) and is governed by an easement, a legal document indicating property rights that is recorded with the property.

What are ROWs?

- Rights-of-way are the actual land areas acquired for a specific purpose such as a transmission line, roadway or other infrastructure.
- We anticipate an easement of up to 250 feet wide (125 feet on each side of the centerline) will be necessary for the new transmission line. ROW is typically secured through negotiation and purchase of a transmission line easment.

Can I still use the area in the right-of-way?

- Land within the ROW may be used for any purpose that does not interfere with the construction, operation or maintenance of the transmission line. In agricultural areas, the land may be used for crop production and pasture.

What is a transmission line easement?

- A transmission line easement is a property right that allows our team to construct, operate and maintain transmission structures and lines on your property while you maintain ownership and use of your land.

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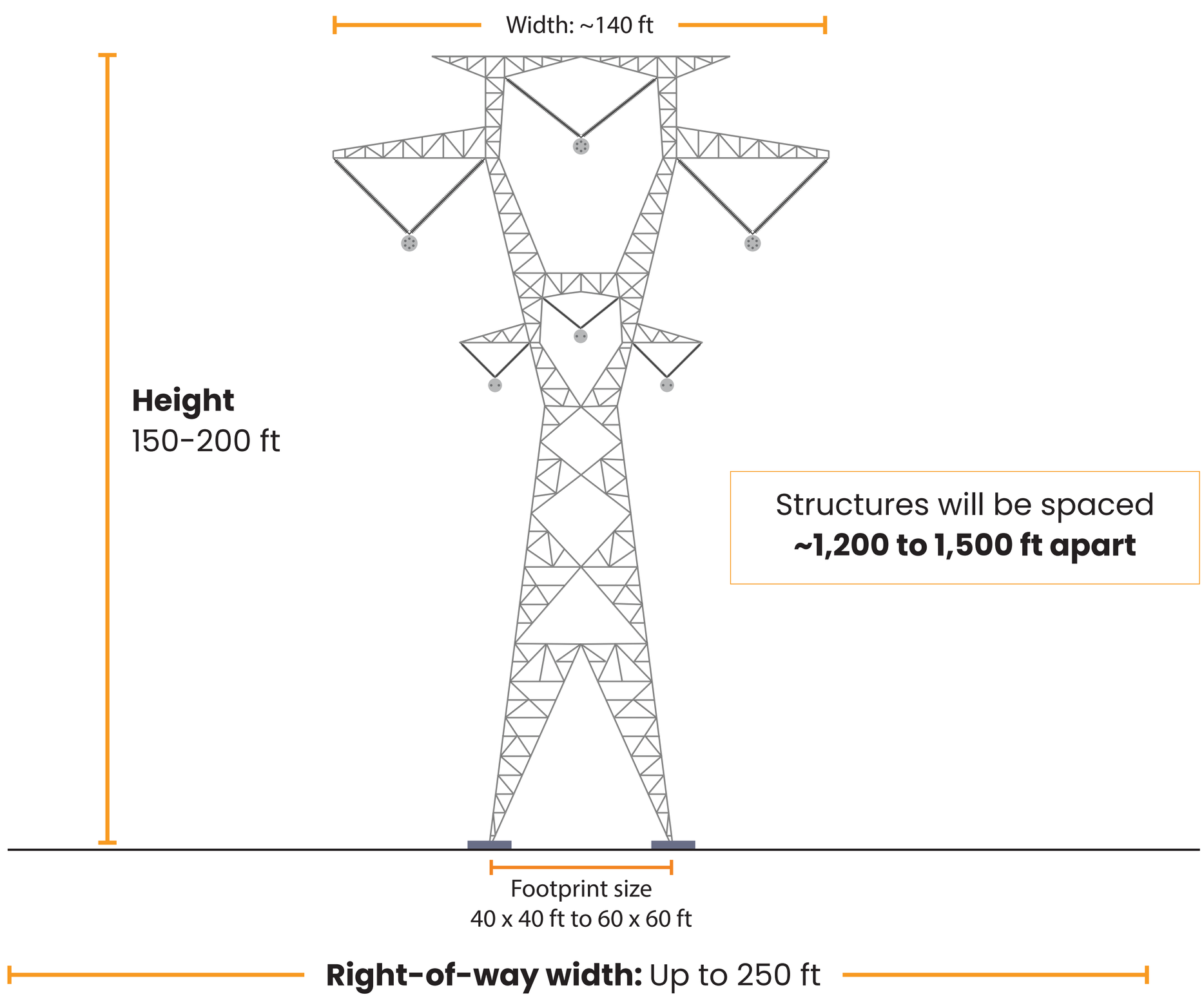
Transmission Line Design

MariBell Segment

This is an example of a double-circuit 765/161 kV steel lattice structure, similar to what could be used on the project.

Typical lattice tower structure



Structures will be spaced
~1,200 to 1,500 ft apart

NOTE: Preliminary design, not to be used for construction.

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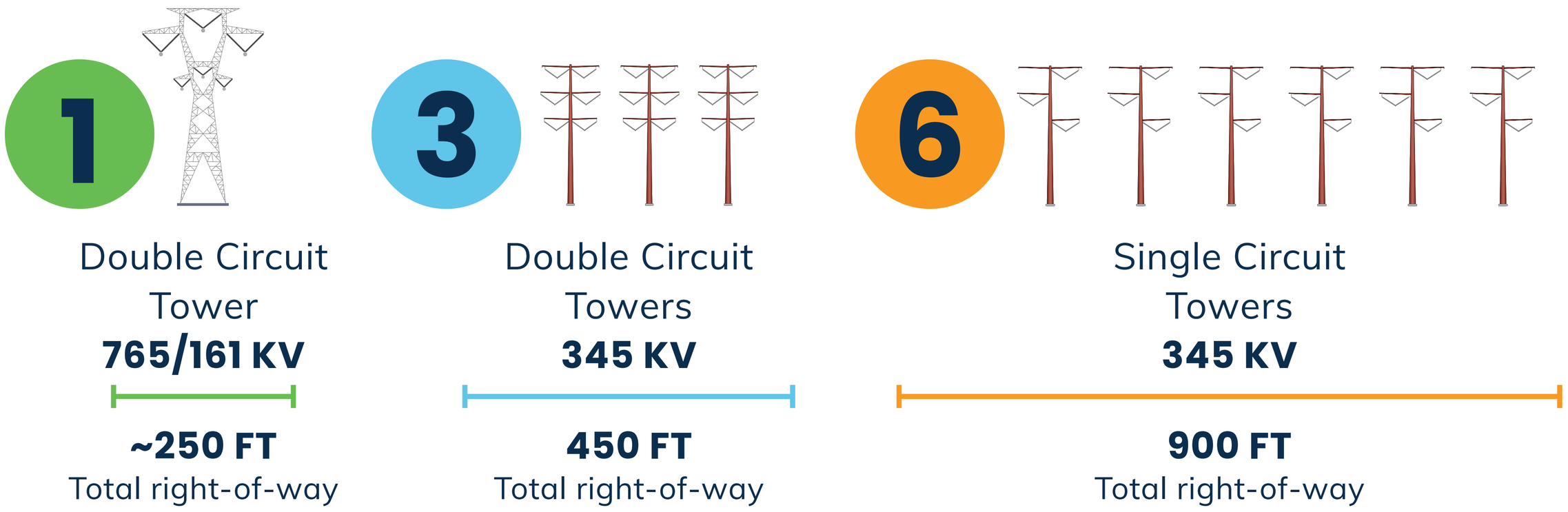
765 Kilovolt (kV) Technology

765 kilovolt (kV) technology was identified in the MISO planning process as the preferred solution for the region, presenting several advantages:

- Efficiently carries large amounts of power while reducing overall project costs and reliably delivering electricity to customers throughout the region.
- Needs fewer transmission lines to carry the same amount of power.
- Requires fewer structures, reducing impact on land, communities and the environment.
- Provides additional capacity to power new manufacturing, homes, businesses and farms.

*One 765 kV transmission line can carry as much power as six 345 kV single circuit lines—**minimizing the landed needed** by as much as 70-80%.*



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Route Development Process

The route development process is a multi-step analysis that considers constraints, opportunities and alternatives that aim to minimize impacts to humans and the environment.

Route Development Process

1. Initial landowner and stakeholder conversations
2. Define Preliminary Route Options
   Areas where possible routes could be located
3. Refine Route Options **WE ARE HERE!**
   A further narrowed area within the Preliminary Route Options
4. Proposed Route
   Develop Proposed Route(s) to be submitted to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC) and Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSCW)
5. MPUC and PSCW issue a decision on a final route

Feedback from the community is a critical component of the route development process. We will be incorporating comments from the public as well as specific stakeholders, including:

- Landowners
- Local government
- Environmental agencies
- Tribal Nations
- Federal and state agencies

ADDITIONAL FACTORS CONSIDERED IN ROUTE DEVELOPMENT

- Existing transmission and utility corridors
- Alternative locations and routes
- Roads, highways and railways
- Property, field and section lines
- Location of existing homes and businesses
- Agricultural impacts
- Airports
- Reliability
- Cemeteries, religious facilities and cultural and historic resources
- Rivers, lakes, streams and wetlands
- Impacts on sensitive animal and plant species
- Economics
- Safety

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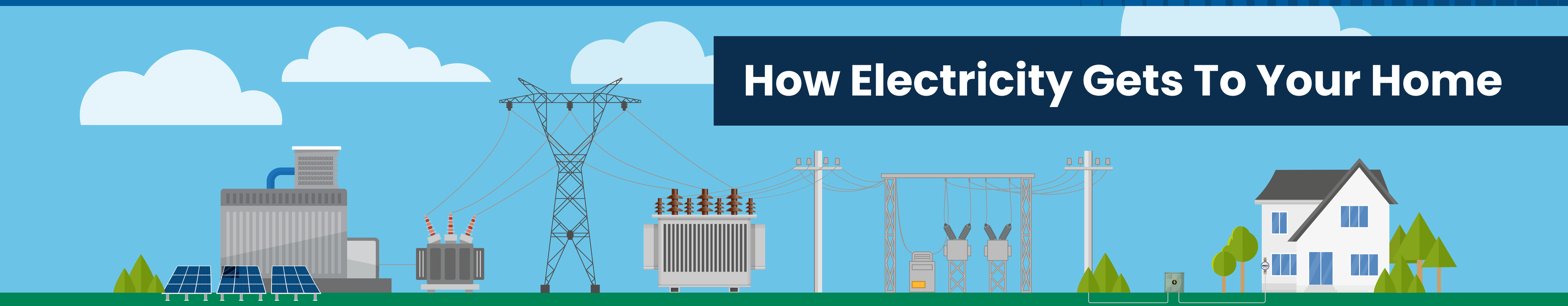
How Electricity Gets To Your Home



1

Generation

Electricity is generated from fossil fuel-fired (e.g., coal, natural gas, oil), nuclear, wind, solar, hydro and storage generators

2

Step-up transformer

Voltage is increased to push the power over long distances

3

Transmission line

High voltage electricity is moved over long distances through transmission lines

4

Transmission substations

High voltage electricity is lowered for use on the local distribution system

5

Distribution substation

Substations lower the voltage further for local use

6

Distribution lines

Low voltage electricity is carried to homes and businesses

7

Pad- or pole-mounted transformer

Voltage is reduced to the level that people use in their homes for electronics, appliances and lighting

8

Home, farm & business

Electricity flows to a meter, to a service panel, and then to an outlet inside your home, farm or business

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Construction Process

Our typical transmission line construction process includes the following steps:

1. Soil surveys and property staking
2. Construction access and vegetation clearing
3. Mobilizing equipment and delivering material
4. Foundation construction
5. Installing structures and stringing conductor
6. Land restoration

We currently expect construction to start in 2031 with the project in-service in 2034.

MariBell Transmission Project

Connect with us

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Scan here to visit the official project website

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