



Planning Commission's Summary Report

Date: March 24, 2025
To: Arapahoe County Planning Commission
Through: Molly Orkild-Larson, Planning Division
From: Sue Liu, PE., Engineering Services Division
Case name: LE25-003 Power Pathways – LE
AS125-001 Power Pathways 1041 Permit Application

Purpose and Recommendation

The purpose of this report is to communicate the Engineering Services Staff findings, comments, and recommendations regarding the land use application(s) identified above.

Scope/Location:

Public Service Company of Colorado, a Colorado corporation conducting business as Xcel Energy (Xcel Energy), is seeking approval of a Location and Extent Permit with 1041 application to construct and operate a portion of Colorado's Power Pathway (Pathway) in unincorporated Arapahoe County.

Pathway is an investment proposed by Xcel Energy to improve the state's electric grid and enable future renewable energy development around the state. Pathway will increase electric reliability, boost the regional economy, and include the installation of approximately 550 miles of new 345-kilovolt (kV) double-circuit transmission line and four new and four expanded substations, which serve as endpoints for the transmission line segments. Pathway facilities proposed in unincorporated Arapahoe County include 17 miles of new 345-kV double-circuit electric transmission line and equipment additions within the existing fence line at Harvest Mile Substation. No new land acquisition is required for the substation equipment additions. Proposed activities in Arapahoe County will also include seeking approval of all temporary construction areas associated with construction of the Pathway facilities for the duration needed to complete Pathway construction, including a laydown yard.

Engineering Services Staff has reviewed the land use application(s) and has the following findings and comments:

1. Quincy Ave - The County's Transportation plan identifies Quincy Ave as 4-lanes from Harvest to Watkins Rd with a right-of-way section of 114'. The rest of Quincy Ave within the project boundary should be treated as 114' ROW as well. The Transportation Plan states a strategy to preserve section line roadway alignments for future widening. Based on this strategy, staff recommend that the proposed easements be located outside of the future rights-of-way as well as the pole locations. Or at least to place the pole outside of the future ROW. Please know that County does not plan to pursue the additional ROW at this time but may be a future desire by the County.
2. County Road 194 – County has 30' ROW north of the section line. The County's Transportation plan identifies County Road 194 as 4-lanes Rural Arterial (114'). staff recommend that the proposed easements be located outside of the future rights-of-way as well as the pole locations. Or at least to place the pole outside of the future ROW. Please know that County does not plan to pursue the additional ROW at this time but may be a future desire by the County.
3. Watkins Rd has 120' ROW at the intersection of Watkins/Quincy and the pole location should be outside of the ROW.
4. The pipeline crosses Murphy Creek, Black Shack Creek West Tributary, Black Shack Creek, Senac Creek, Tributary to Senac Creek, Coal Creek, Box Elder Creek, and Tributary to Kiowa Creek. Most of the tributaries are unmapped drainageway. The delineation of the 100-year floodplain for these unmapped tributaries has not been established. The County defines a floodplain as any drainageway with a tributary area of 130 acres or more. The tributaries that meet the County's definition of a floodplain should be identified.
5. A Floodplain Development Permit (FPDP) is required for all activities within the designated floodplain, regardless of impact. Even when it is apparent that there are no adverse impacts to the floodplain, a FPDP is required for administrative purposes to ensure that the County is aware of the activities within the floodplain and that they have been evaluated for compliance with the County's requirements. An Floodplain Certification of No Impact is also required for the FDP.
6. Construction activities that disturb one acre or more are required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to obtain a Construction Stormwater Permit.
7. County Line Rd in the project area is maintained by Elbert County. Elbert County's access permit is required if this roadway section is used as access for the project.
8. Please note that a Street Cut and Right-of-Way Use Permit (for access), Grading, Erosion and Sediment Control Permit, Floodplain Development Permit, and possible Oversize/Overweight Vehicle Permit will be necessary for this application.

Engineering Services Staff is recommending the land use application(s) favorably subject to the following conditions:

1. The applicant agrees to address the remaining redlines on the engineering & planning documents.
2. The applicant agrees to enter the Roadway Damage Agreement.
3. All pipeline easements for the project are required and must be in place prior to approval of the project. All executed easements must be submitted to the County for files.