Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can you tell me more about the Potter-Crossroads-Phantom 765-kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line Project?

A: Southwestern Public Service Company (SPS), a subsidiary of Xcel Energy Inc., is proposing to construct and operate the Potter–Crossroads–Phantom 765-kV project (Project) to enhance electric reliability across Texas and New Mexico. The proposed Potter–Crossroads–Phantom 765-kV transmission line will extend from Amarillo, Texas, to south of Portales, New Mexico, and continue to the southern part of Lea County in southeastern New Mexico. SPS also plans to construct six additional 345-kV transmission lines and two new substations – one in southeastern New Mexico and the other in western Texas.

Q: Why is this Project needed?

A: The Project is needed to support new load growth in the SPS region. SPS' Texas and New Mexico service territory is seeing unprecedented demand due to new manufacturing, oil and gas growth, and the increasing needs of existing customers and communities. The Project will not only make the electric grid more reliable but also support the growing economy in the SPS service territory. The Project ensures that SPS can meet customers' energy needs and contribute to the economic development of the region.

Q: What are the regulatory requirements for this Project?

A: The Project will require approvals from both the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT) and the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (NMPRC). It will cross privately owned land as well as land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the New Mexico State Land Office (NMSL). Because portions of the Project will cross federally administered land, SPS will submit a right-of-way (ROW) application to the BLM for authorization to construct and operate the Project on these lands. In response, the BLM will initiate environmental reviews and prepare documentation in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Q: When will the lines be built?

A: Transmission line construction is expected to occur in the first quarter of 2029. The Certificate of Convenience and Necessity (CCN) application for the Texas portion of the Project will be filed with the PUCT in the first quarter of 2026. The Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) application for the New Mexico portion of the Project will be filed with the NMPRC in the first quarter of 2028. Schedules can change, so please continue to check the website at: https://www.xcelenergytransmission.com/projects/potter-crossroads-phantom/ and read your local newspaper for continued information.

Q: Who will benefit from the transmission improvements?

A: All electricity customers in the Project area and the surrounding regions in New Mexico and Texas will benefit from a more robust and reliable electric transmission system. The Potter-Crossroads-Phantom Project will not only make the electric grid more reliable but also support the growing economy in the SPS service territory. The Project ensures that SPS can meet customers' energy needs and contribute to the economic development of the region.

Q: How will landowners be affected?

A: SPS representatives will contact all potentially affected landowners by letter as part of the public open house process. Potentially affected landowners whose property is within one half mile of one of the proposed alternative links will be advised of the possibility that the transmission line route may cross or be near their property. This will give them an opportunity to participate in the review and routing process. Once the final route has been selected, affected landowners will again be contacted. Property boundary surveys and surveys for protected environmental resources as well as engineering elements will be completed as part of the routing process. SPS representatives will ask permission from affected landowners prior to entry on their land.

Q: Will my electric service be interrupted?

A: We do not expect interruptions to your normal electric service. We will communicate with you directly if planned interruptions are needed.

Q: How can I get involved?

A: Open houses are designed to communicate with the public and solicit important input for routing decisions. All comments, information, and suggestions are valued and taken into consideration during development of the proposed Project. Additionally, feedback can be provided to SPS representatives at the Project information phone number 512-500-0948, or the website at: https://www.xcelenergytransmission.com/projects/potter-crossroads-phantom/. In addition, landowners are free to communicate directly to the NMPRC and PUCT.

Q: How will SPS choose a route for the transmission lines?

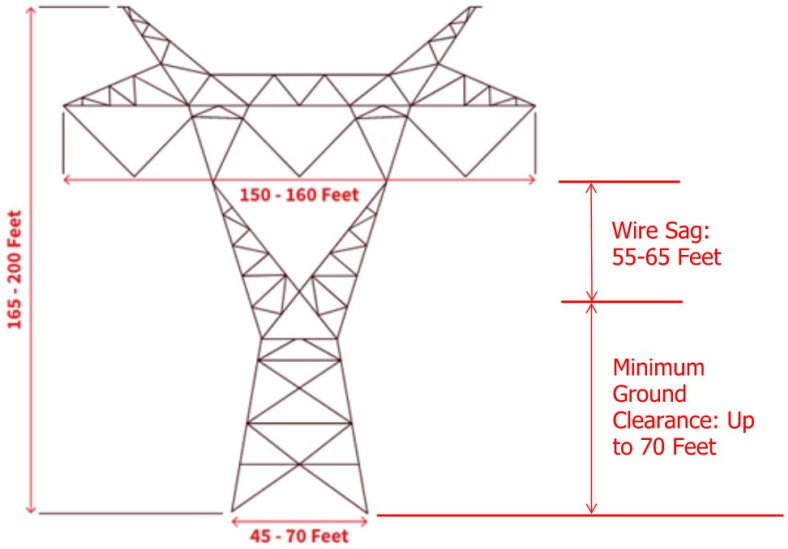
A: Alternative routes are determined by routing studies conducted by SPS and its contractors. Engineers and scientists identify potential alternative links using aerial photography, field review, and helicopter flyover. Residents, public officials, government agencies, and other concerned parties are invited to attend open house meetings. These meetings are to inform the public of the proposed alternative links and to gather important input for routing decisions. A virtual open house meeting will also be held for those who cannot attend in-person.

Information regarding the proposed Project is also made available for viewing in public locations and on the Project website at: https://www.xcelenergytransmission.com/projects/potter-crossroads-phantom/.

SPS relies on information from the residents, landowners, and all concerned parties to make informed decisions when evaluating and selecting the alternative routes to be submitted to the NMPRC and PUCT as part of the application. The NMPRC and the PUCT must grant approval prior to construction.

Q: What do 765-kV transmission line structures look like?

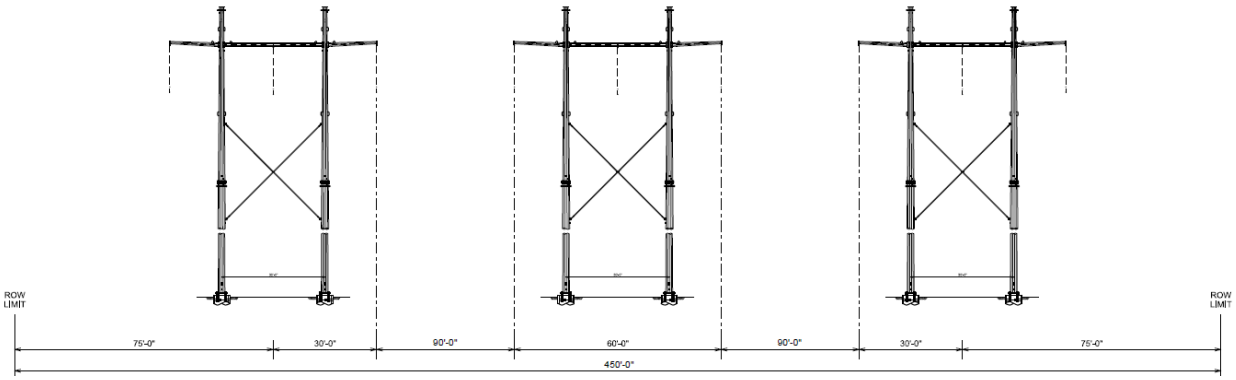
A: SPS plans to use lattice steel structures for the 765-kV portion of the Project. They will be embedded in the ground on a concrete foundation and vary in height from 150 to 200 feet. Typical spans between structures range from 1,100 to 1,300 feet. The wires will sag between 55 to 65 feet for most spans; the minimum ground clearance varies based on obstructions and land use, though ground clearances will be up to 70 feet in most spans. These transmission lines require a 250-foot-wide ROW.



Q: What do 345-kV transmission line structures look like?

A: SPS plans to use steel monopole and steel H-frames for the 345-kV portion of the Project. These structures vary in height from 90 to 110 feet. Typical spans between structures range from 900 to 1,000 feet. The wires will sag between 25 to 30 feet for most spans; the minimum

ground clearance varies based on obstructions and land use, though ground clearances will be up 30 feet at a minimum. Three adjacent 345-kV transmission lines require a 450-foot-wide ROW.



Q: How will land be acquired?

A: A Land Agent will negotiate with property owners based on the fair market value of the easement area. Easement rights and specifics of a project may include:

- The length and width of the ROW.
- ROW clearing and construction practices.
- Post-construction maintenance and ROW access.
- Vegetation management.

In addition to compensation for the easement, the landowner is compensated for crop damage and/or physical damage to property resulting from the construction and/or maintenance of the transmission line.

Q: How much will SPS pay for an easement?

A: SPS will provide fair compensation in the form of a one-time easement payment to property owners who host power lines. Property owners retain ownership of the land and may continue to use the land around transmission structures. For more information on transmission line easements, please visit the Project website at: https://www.xcelenergytransmission.com/projects/potter-crossroads-phantom/.

Q: Can anything be planted in the ROW area?

A: For your benefit, DO NOT plant any trees or shrubs in the ROW area before talking to the utility first. As a landowner, even with an easement granted, most property rights do not remain with the landowner; utilities must remove tall growth trees that grow in the ROW area.

Activities in the easement area that do not interfere with the safe construction, operation, and maintenance of the power line, such as most agriculture, are permitted.

Q: Can buildings or other structures be constructed beneath a transmission line?

A: No. We generally do not approve any structures in the easement without written approval from the electric utility. Buildings and other structures generally are not permitted on ROWs. It is important that you discuss projects with the utility to avoid creating situations that could become unsafe to the landowner and/or utility workers.

Q: Are transmission lines safe?

A: Every effort is made to ensure safety in construction, operation, and maintenance of transmission lines. Lines and line infrastructure are designed to withstand extreme weather conditions. Protective devices at line terminals stop the electricity flow under any abnormal operating circumstances. Utility practices meet or exceed standards set by National Electric Safety Codes as well as those adopted by local governments.

Q: Why can't the transmission lines be placed underground?

A: SPS is proposing overhead lines because of reliability and cost. While it is common for lower voltage transmission lines to be buried (lines less than 69-kV), it is rare to build high-voltage transmission lines underground. Underground high-voltage transmission lines generally cost to 10 to 20 times more than overhead high-voltage lines. The technology to build lines underground for long distances is also extremely difficult to manage. With overhead lines, air cools the lines and keeps them at a safe operating temperature. Underground lines require cooling mechanisms, which increases cost and decreases reliability. Locating and repairing underground line failures also takes longer, leading to longer outages. Installing underground high-voltage transmission lines requires lengthy, disruptive construction techniques. Design concerns such as capacity and heat dissipation are frequent limitations. Underground systems are justified primarily in heavily populated downtown urban centers, where ROW is severely limited for overhead lines.

Q: How will my electric rates be affected by the construction of these transmission lines?

A: Retail electric rates are regulated by the NMPRC and the PUCT. Integrated electric utility companies like SPS must file a petition with the NMPRC and the PUCT, called a rate case, justifying the cost of the transmission component of their retail electric rate.

Q: What is EMF?

A: Electric and magnetic fields, commonly known as EMF, exist wherever electricity is produced or used, including around any electric appliance or wire that conducts electricity. Whenever

you turn on a lamp, use a microwave, or use your computer, these frequencies are around. The electric power we use in America is a 60 Hertz (Hz) alternating current, meaning the electric charges move back and forth 60 times per second, creating an 'extremely low frequency' field. These are different from the much higher frequency fields associated with radio and TV waves and cell phone signals. The World Health Organization (WHO) and research organizations have studied the potential for EMF to affect human health and have not found a correlation between exposure to EMF and negative health issues. For more information and studies on EMF, visit:

- WHO's *Electromagnetic Fields and Public Health*. WHO fact sheet:
  - https://www.who.int/health-topics/electromagnetic-fields#tab=tab_1
- WHO's *Environmental Health Criteria 238, Extremely Low Frequency Fields*:
  - https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241572385
- American Cancer Society's *Power Lines, Electrical Devices and Extremely Low Frequency Radiation*:
  - www.cancer.org/cancer/cancer-causes/radiation-exposure/extremely-low-frequency-radiation.html
- U.S. National Cancer Institute's *Electromagnetic Fields and Cancer*:
  - https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/radiation/electromagnetic-fields-fact-sheet
- Health Canada's *Electric and Magnetic Fields from Power Lines and Electrical Appliances*:
  - https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/431220/publication.html

Q: How can I ask questions or provide feedback?

A: Please contact us at our website, email, or information line with questions:

- **Phone line** (for comments): 512-500-0948
- **Email**: potter-crossroads-phantom@xcelenergy.com
- **Website**: https://xcelenergytransmission.com/projects/potter-crossroads-phantom/