

About the Planning and Approval Process

IDENTIFYING A NEED FOR INCREASED CAPACITY AND RELIABILITY

In 2016, as part of ongoing evaluation of our system, we found increased demand and the potential for system overloads during peak use periods in parts of Pueblo and Fremont Counties. This is due to continued economic development and population growth, creating an increase in demand projected to outpace our ability to deliver reliable electricity.

ADDRESSING NEED THROUGH UPGRADED INFRASTRUCTURE

Electric utilities look to infrastructure to deliver service and, in this case, we found a need for an additional transmission line and substations. Transmission lines are specialized conductors that carry electricity to customers across Southern Colorado and substations are facilities where electricity voltage is increased or decreased for transmission and distribution. By reinforcing existing transmission with another line and adding new substations, we'll improve overall system reliability and empower future growth through added capacity.

EVALUATING POSSIBLE ROUTES AND SUBSTATION LOCATIONS

Selecting a route is a complex process and we had to balance constraints like cost, impact to neighboring residential areas and environmental considerations. We partnered with an engineering firm to analyze a variety of potential routes and substation locations and evaluated customer input, like interest in undergrounding the transmission line.

SECURED PUC APPROVAL

In 2017 the Public Utilities Commission recognized, through approval of our annual transmission facilities report, the need for an additional transmission line and substations to serve the customers in this region.

SECURING APPROVAL FROM PUEBLO AND FREMONT COUNTIES

In late 2018, we applied for a 1041 Application permit in Pueblo County for portions of the transmission line and the substation in Pueblo West. County Commissioners did not approve the application and encouraged us to re-evaluate alternative routes and further engage with residents in these communities.

SEEKING ALTERNATIVES BASED ON STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Where possible, we made every effort to minimize the number of disturbances, engaging with several customers to adjust our route based on their feedback. This collaboration with customers led us to revise the route in two spots: 1) following the utility corridor in Pueblo West; and 2) moving north of Penrose, through Fort Carson.

REAPPLYING FOR COUNTY PERMITS

With additional input from customers and local leaders, we hope to secure a 1041 Application permit in Pueblo County and Special Review Use and Conditional Use permits in Fremont County later this year.



RELIABILITY UPGRADE
For Southern Colorado