# NextGen Highways Accomplishments

## NEXTGEN HIGHWAYS FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (PUBLISHED APRIL 2022)

- The NextGen Highways Team worked with an internal working group at the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to investigate the opportunities and barriers associated with locating buried high-voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission and fiber within the highway right-of-way (ROW).
- The Study reviewed applicable policy, regulation, and projects; analyzed MnDOT-specific concerns; examined HVDC transmission line requirements; assessed buried HVDC cost and benefits; and broadly evaluated typical highway ROW design for suitability of HVDC transmission line siting.
- Key findings from the Study include:
    - buried HVDC transmission is cost-effective and can be feasibly sited in interstate and highway ROW after making appropriate consideration for existing and future transportation system needs. While the team identified challenges over the course of this study, none of those challenges appear to pose barriers that cannot be overcome.
    - the state of Wisconsin has developed a playbook that can be used by others to successfully site transmission in interstate and highway ROWs.

## MINNESOTA DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION AND FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION PEER EXCHANGE (JULY 2022)

- NextGen Highways presented its concept to 15 state DOTs at the Peer Exchange
    - All DOTs indicated an interest in further discussions and exploration of the co-location concept

## MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION AND DEPT. OF COMMERCE MEETING ON NEXTGEN HIGHWAYS (AUGUST 2022)

- MN PUC and DOC hosted an open meeting with MN DOT and NextGen Highways to discuss the NGH concept
- The three Commissioners attending expressed support for MN DOT further examining the value of co-locating energy infrastructure

## MINNESOTA DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION SEMINARS ON TRANSMISSION SITING IN WISCONSIN (NOVEMBER 2022)

- MN DOT is hosting a series of presentations for a 'Deep Dive' into Wisconsin's experience siting and building electric transmission in highway ROW
- Attendees primarily staff of the DOT and Public Utilities Commission

## MINNESOTA DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION AND DEPT. OF COMMERCE LISTENING SESSIONS ON NEXTGEN HIGHWAYS (FIRST QUARTER 2023)

- DOT and DOC are planning to host listening sessions with Minnesota utilities, transmission developers and independent power producers
- Discussion about experience with siting in or along highway ROW and challenges and opportunities of doing so

## STATE OF MINNESOTA'S CLIMATE ACTION FRAMEWORK (2022)

- In the 'What's Next' section of the Framework, under 'Advancing Critical Policy and Programs,' the report notes that Minnesota Dept. of Transportation will explore the opportunities and challenges of co-locating transmission in highway ROW
- The reference is a direct result of the work MN DOT has done with NextGen Highways

## THE STATE OF WASHINGTON'S ENERGY FACILITY SITE EVALUATION COUNCIL (EFSEC), TRANSMISSION CORRIDORS WORK GROUP (TCWG) FINAL REPORT (AUGUST 2022)

- Report delivered to the Office of Governor Inslee, the Washington State Legislature, and the public at large.
- The report summarizes the work of the TCWG, whose purpose was to review the need for upgraded and new electricity transmission and distribution facilities, find

areas where transmission and distribution facilities may need to be enhanced or constructed, identify environmental review options that may be required to complete these corridors, and recommend ways to expedite the review of transmission projects without compromising required environmental and cultural protection. (Emphasis added.)

- The Report's, Principals for Transmission System Planning, notes:

  *10. Explore opportunities to use transportation rights-of-way for co-locating new transmission lines. It is important to consider the interplay of uses, transportation sustainability goals, and construction policies like "dig once" when co-locating transmission lines in transportation rights-of-way.*

NextGen Highways is an initiative promoting the use of highways as infrastructure corridors where electric and communications infrastructure are strategically and safely co-located in existing highway right-of-way (ROW).