RESOLUTION 2026- October

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE PROPOSED SOUTH DAKOTA BORDER-LAKEFIELD JUNCTION 765 kV PROJECT

WHEREAS, Great River Energy, ITC Midwest, and Xcel Energy (collectively, "Applicants") have partnered to construct, own, and maintain the proposed South Dakota border-Lakefield Junction 765 kV Project in southwestern Minnesota ("Lakefield Junction Project");

WHEREAS, on February 3, 2026, Applicants filed a Joint Application with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission ("MPUC") for a Certificate of Need (MPUC Docket No. E002, ET2, ET6675/CN-25-117) for the Lakefield Junction Project;

WHEREAS, the Lakefield Junction Project includes construction of a new, 92-mile long 765 kV transmission line from the existing Brookings County Substation in Brookings County, South Dakota to near the existing Lakefield Junction Substation in Jackson County, Minnesota;

WHEREAS, the Lakefield Junction Project will include construction of 765 kV structures that will be approximately 150 to 175 feet tall, placed 1,100 to 1,300 feet apart, on average, and require a 250-foot-wide right-of-way;

WHEREAS, the costs of the Lakefield Junction Project are estimated to be $5.7 million per mile;

WHEREAS, the Applicants anticipate beginning construction of the Lakefield Junction Project as early as 2029 and anticipate target energization for the project in 2034;

WHEREAS, the Lakefield Junction Project was approved as part of the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, Inc. ("MISO") Long-Range Transmission Planning ("LRTP") Tranche 2.1 Portfolio;

WHEREAS, MISO is a federally registered regional planning authority and regional transmission organization responsible for planning and operating the transmission system and energy market in parts of 15 states, including Minnesota and the Canadian province of Manitoba;

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes 216B.243 and Minnesota Rules Chapter 7849 require that a Certificate of Need may only be granted if, by a preponderance of the evidence, the proposed facility will provide benefits to society in a manner compatible with protecting the natural and socioeconomic environments, including human health, and that the project will comply with relevant local policies and regulations;

WHEREAS, the City of Iona recognizes the importance of the cultural and economic importance of agriculture, the preservation of natural resources and landscapes, the protection of environmentally sensitive areas, and the priority of natural protection over large-scale infrastructure expansion;

WHEREAS, the City of Iona lies within southwestern Minnesota characterized by agricultural production lands, watersheds, low noise and light pollution, and significant wildlife;

WHEREAS, the Lakefield Junction Project would introduce the largest alternating current transmission voltage currently operating in the United States (765 kV) near and around the City of Iona, including a double-circuit configuration with a 161 kV line behind the 765 kV circuit;

WHEREAS, the Applicants acknowledge the potential impacts including electric and magnetic fields (EMF), noise, corona discharge, agricultural disruption, and environmental impacts, but the long-term localized effects on the City of Iona's agricultural economy, property values, landscapes, and wildlife remain disputed and unresolved;

WHEREAS, the City of Iona residents, landowners, and agricultural producers have expressed significant concerns including, but not limited to:

1. Potential human health impacts.
2. EMF exposure.
3. Audible noise and corona effects.
4. Stray voltage.
5. Agricultural land fragmentation and loss of productivity.
6. Potential loss of homes and farms.
7. Property value depreciation and reduction in real estate tax revenue.
8. Visual and aesthetic impacts to the landscape.
9. Environmental impacts.
10. Wildlife and livestock impacts.
11. Eminent domain concerns.
12. Road damage and construction impacts.
13. Adequacy of public engagement and transparency.
14. Whether the Lakefield Junction Project delivers demonstrable, direct benefit to residents of the City of Iona.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOVLED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF IONA:

1. The City Council of the City of Iona formally opposes the routing of the proposed South Dakota border-Lakefield Junction 765 kV Project near the City of Iona, within Murray County, unless and until it is conclusively demonstrated through the MPUC process that:

    a. The Lakefield Junction Project is the least-impactful alternative.
    b. No reasonable lower-voltage or non-wires alternatives exist.
    c. The Lakefield Junction Project fully complies with Murray County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan.
    d. Local environmental, agricultural, and socioeconomic impacts are minimized to the maximum extent practicable.

2. The City Council of the City of Iona formally requests:

    a. A full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that includes Murray County and the City of Iona-specific agricultural, wildlife, scenic, and property value analyses.
    b. Detailed modeling of EMF, audible noise, and corona discharge at residential setbacks.
    c. Independent agricultural impact assessment specific to watershed districts.
    d. Full disclosure of anticipated right-of-way acquisition impacts within Murray County and the City of Iona.
    e. Early sharing of the Route Permit Application prior to forma filing.

3. The City Council of the City of Iona requests that the Applicants provide, in written and publicly accessible form:

    a. A breakdown of cost allocation by state and rate class.
    b. Documentation of Minnesota residential rate impacts.
    c. A list of specific quantified economic benefits projected for Murray County and the City of Iona.
    d. Detailed alternative route analysis considered for Murray County and the City of Iona and surrounding area.
    e. Documentation of distributed energy resource assumptions used in load forecasts (Years 1, 10, and 20).
    f. A list of prior combined 765 kV/161 kV double-circuit installations constructed by the Applicants.
    g. Detailed site criteria and footprint for the proposed Murray County switching station.
    h. Road use agreements and infrastructure protection commitments.
    i. A clear explanation of eminent domain authority and compensation standards.

4. The City Council of the City of Iona assets its right to:

    a. Participate as a party in MPUC proceedings.
    b. Submit formal comments and expert testimony.
    c. Advocate for agricultural land and watershed district preservation.
    d. Protect the City of Iona and surrounding area landscape and economy.
    e. Protect residents' property rights.

5. The City Clerk is directed to transmit this Resolution to:

    a. Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
    b. Minnesota Department of Commerce
    c. Xcel Energy
    d. Dairyland Power Cooperative
    e. MISO

f. The Governor of Minnesota

Adopted by the City Council of the City of Iona, Minnesota, this 6th day of October 2026.

Attest:

Joseph D Carlson
Mayor

Debra Thram
City Clerk