Right of Way Transmission Mapping Tool Working Group

Meeting #1 Feb 5, 2026

Attendees:
The Ray: Allie Kelly, Amron Lee, Jessie Hong-Dwyer
MnDOT: Jessica Oh, Joe Pignato, Julie Groetsch
MNIT: Alison Slaats, Michelle Klatt, Paul Weinberger
PUC: Logan Hicks, Sam Weaver, Ray Kirsch
Commerce: Jamie MacAlister
DNR: Samantha Bump

Next Meeting: Working Group #2 on Apr 2, 2026 (1:30-2:30PM CST)

Agenda:

- (5 minutes) **Introductions** - Jessica
- (15 minutes) **Tablesetting** - Jessica
  - 5 years in the making, review of recent legislative & regulatory actions (slide deck)
- (5 minutes) **Background on The Ray** - Allie
  - Why is The Ray the right partner to be doing this
- (5 minutes) **Poll Question (Menti)** - Jessica
  - Identifying the problem we are trying to solve (see poll questions below)
  - Participant feedback or questions (see Menti results)
- (30 minutes) **Demo of Transmission in Transportation Rights-of Way Tool** - Jessie
  - Case study: TH 14 (slide deck)
  - Working Group feedback on weighted criteria, data layers, and overall functionality of Tool:
    - Discuss data selection approach federal vs. state data
    - Missing private and nonpublic data sets
      - Alison: Is there a priority for missing datasets? Are some less important to the overall results than others? Would be helpful to prioritize so we can do our best to help with GIS datasets that are the most important first

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        - Jessica: state fiber, traffic control devices, buried + aerial issues
        - Alison: we don't have those you mentioned
        - Jessica: planning to work with Michelle to get these included in the Tool
    - What data sets are missing?
        - Ray: What about residences? Assume that would be a private dataset
            - Jessie: I use land cover dataset because I haven't found that dataset
            - Ray: makes sense because these are transportation datasets
            - Joe: This was just one corridor, but if it was multiple corridors that would be many different datasets
            - Alison: MnGEO does aggregate county parcel data quarterly that could get at ownership of adjacent parcels. We share that data with state agencies.
- (10 minutes) **Progress to date** - Jessica
- (5 minutes) **Preview working group topics to come** - Jessica
    - Use Case Brainstorm & Review of Planning and Early Coordination Processes across agencies (second meeting)
    - Criteria, Methodology & Approach: State and Federal data, criteria (third meeting)
    - MnDOT Office of Land Management: Utility Permitting Process and Early Coordination overview - Stacy Kotch Egstad
    - PUC (Environmental review and permitting unit) - Ray Kirsch
    - User Vision & Cloud-based collaboration
    - Agreement Structures
    - Utility and MISO input
- (10 minutes) **Brainstorming session: Gaps in critical participation in the Working Group?** - Jessica
    - Confirm existing Working Group is fully representative of critical agency division / program participation and/or identify who is missing
        - Sam: Has there been any tribal engagement?
            - Jessica: No, but would be good to consider as potential user of the Tool
        - Ray: Utility participation down the road is a key element – idea: can't get all the local governments involved, but there's groups (MPOs/RPOs) for planning that might have a good representative that could give us advice
            - Jessica: want everyone to think about the appropriate way to bring utilities into this – also want to hear more about permitting process on PUC side
            - Ray: we use GIS – applicants do review and include it in their applications, so they're developing documents and bringing them

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to us – the Tool could be one of those things that they check and include in their application – if it's helpful to him they could integrate it into their planning and application documents
    - Allie: Flag to deeper discuss engagement of energy stakeholders ie. MISO, utilities and/or transmission developers.
    - Jessie: other entities are using GIS, but they don't include key DOT layers, maybe stakeholder analysis is the focus of a future meeting
- (5 minutes) **Close out** - Jessica
    - Working Group #2 on Apr 2, 2026 (1:30-2:30PM CST)

Menti Poll Questions (See ppt for detailed answers):

1. **What is your level of interest in cross-agency coordination for transmission planning and early coordination?** (Multiple choice, select one):
    - Very high – central to my role
    - High – regularly relevant to my work
    - Moderate – occasionally relevant
    - Low – rarely relevant
    - Not relevant to my role
2. **What do you see as the biggest challenge to effective planning and early coordination around ROW colocation?** (Ranked choice or multiple choice):
    - Lack of early, shared information about ROW constraints
    - **Lack of understanding or training on MnDOT's ROW constraints**
    - Data silos across agencies or sectors
    - Unclear roles or expectations in planning or early coordination processes
    - Capacity or workload constraints
    - Skepticism about the value of colocation in highway rights of way
    - Concern about attracting unnecessary or unsuitable projects to the ROW
    - **Need for role clarity or coordination on transportation's role in transmission planning (vs. participation in PUC's permitting process and downstream permitting)**
3. **What types of benefits, if any, do you think earlier-stage coordination in project planning could provide?** (Select all that apply):
    - **Fewer conflicts identified late in the permitting lifecycle**
    - Clearer understanding of ROW constraints by utilities and developers
    - **Better-quality project proposals entering the early coordination and permitting process**
    - **Improved ability to evaluate impacts and mitigation options**
    - Reduced workload or fewer surprises for DOT staff
    - Better alignment across transmission, fiber, and broadband planning
    - Supports broader state goals (e.g., emissions reduction, energy or broadband access)
    - Benefits are limited or unclear
    - No meaningful benefits

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