

# **APPENDIX B**

## **Public Outreach Materials**



12300 Elm Creek Boulevard  
Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718  
763-445-5000  
greatriverenergy.com

October 18, 2023

Appleton to Benson 115-kV transmission line  
WO #208103

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

SUBJECT: Open House for the Appleton to Benson 115-kV transmission line project  
PID(s): 23-0860-000

Dear [REDACTED]

Great River Energy, Otter Tail Power Company, Missouri River Energy Services, Benson Municipal Utilities and Agralite Electric Cooperative are proposing to construct an approximately 28-mile, 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission line between Appleton and Benson, Minn. Construction is scheduled for early 2028. As a landowner along the project corridor, local governmental official, or agency representative, you are invited to attend the project's initial public Open House. The enclosed fact sheet will provide you with the project details and the proposed route.

The project will address low voltage concerns in the transmission system and enhance transmission reliability in the project area.

Four informational open house meetings will be held on November 1 and 2, 2023, to seek input on the proposed project. The open houses will be held on:

**Wednesday, Nov 1, 2023**  
**11:00 – 1:00 p.m. & 4:00-6:00 p.m.**  
**Appleton Civic Center**  
**323 W. Schlieman Ave.**  
**Appleton, MN 56208**

**Thursday, Nov 2, 2023**  
**11:00 – 1:00 p.m. & 4:00-6:00 p.m.**  
**McKinney's**  
**300 14<sup>th</sup> St. S.**  
**Benson, MN 56215**

Staff from the project partners will be present to answer project questions. No formal presentation will be given.

If you have any questions regarding this rebuild project and are unable to attend the meeting, please contact me at 612-840-4019 or [daukee@greenergy.com](mailto:daukee@greenergy.com). Thank you.

Sincerely,  
GREAT RIVER ENERGY

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dale Aukee'.

Dale Aukee  
Sr. Field Representative

Enclosure

# Appleton to Benson 115-kV transmission line

Great River Energy, Otter Tail Power Company, Missouri River Energy Services, Benson Municipal Utilities and Agralite Electric Cooperative are proposing to construct an approximately 28-mile, 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission line between Appleton and Benson, Minn. A Certificate of Need and Route Permit will be required from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC) before the line can be built. Additional project information will be provided at [greatriverenergy.com/AppletonBenson](http://greatriverenergy.com/AppletonBenson).

## Need

The project will address low voltage concerns and enhance transmission reliability in the project area.

## Overview

The map on the back shows the proposed 115-kV transmission line route. Approximately 20 miles of the proposed route will overtake and replace an existing 41.6-kV transmission line with the new 115-kV transmission line.

The new transmission line will be constructed primarily with wood poles, 60 to 90 feet above ground, generally 300 to 400 feet apart. Line angles and changes in direction might require the support of guy wires and anchors or steel poles on concrete foundations. A final design will determine the structure heights, span distances, and need for specialty poles.

## Permitting and public involvement

The MPUC is the permitting authority for this project. The MPUC and the Department of Commerce – Energy Environmental Review and Analysis (DOC-EERA) will hold public meetings to receive comments and suggestions. Additional opportunities to provide input will be available throughout the permitting and analysis process. DOC-EERA will prepare an environmental assessment for the project.



*Typical 115-kV circuit*

The utilities involved in the project will work with county, state, and federal agencies to secure road crossing permits and any other required environmental or construction permits. Contact information for Great River Energy representatives is listed on the back of this page.

## Easements

New or amended easements may be requested to provide adequate land rights for construction, operation, and maintenance of the new line. Property owners will be contacted by a project representative during the MPUC permitting process to begin the easement acquisition process. Easement negotiations will include a copy of the route permit, proposed pole locations, and review of the easement and compensation arrangements, along with information on tree removal, construction access, crop damage payments, and restoration of the right of way.

### Schedule

<b>MPUC Permitting</b>	<b>Q4 2024 – Q1 2027</b>
<b>Easements</b>	<b>Q1 2027 – Q2 2028</b>
<b>Environmental permits</b>	<b>Q3 2026 – Q4 2028</b>
<b>Transmission line construction</b>	<b>Q4 2028 – Q1 2030</b>

### Quick facts

**Length** – Approximately 28 miles

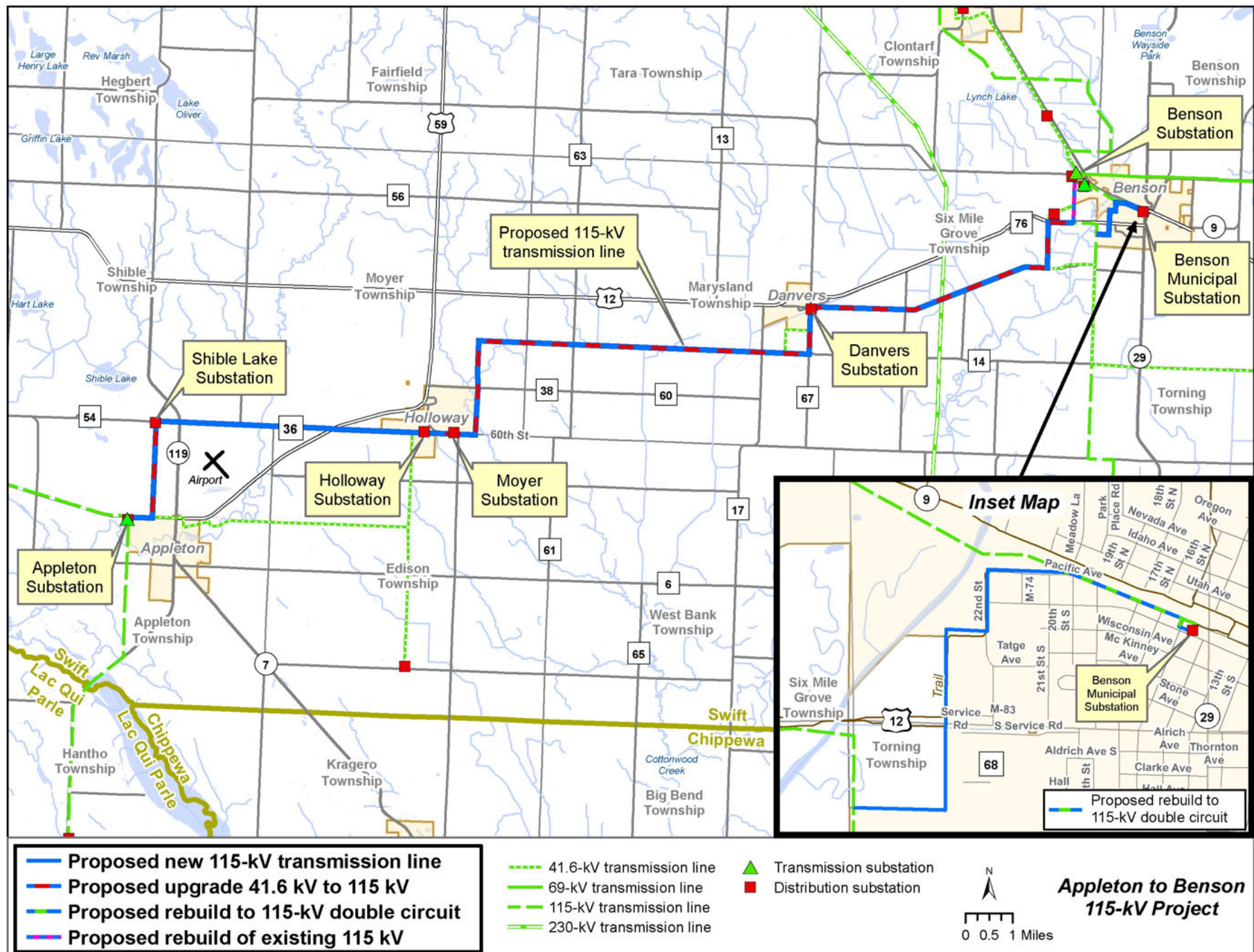
**Voltage** – 115-kV

**Structures** – 60- to 90-foot-tall wood poles

**Spans** – 300 to 400 feet apart

**Right of way** – 100-foot-wide right of way (50 feet on each side of the centerline)

## Proposed Appleton to Benson 115-kV project



Dale Aukee, Land Rights  
612-840-4019 | daukee@grenergy.com

Mark Strohfus, Transmission Permitting & Compliance  
763-445-5210 | mstrohfus@grenergy.com



• AUCTION CALENDAR • AUCTION CALENDAR • AUCTION CALENDAR •

**NOW thru OCT. 25** - 6 p.m. Online only. Shop equipment and tools, household, lawn and yard equipment, machinery, sporting goods, docks and lifts, fishhouses, large pull-type grader, misc. Timothy T. Johnson Estate, Lake Lillian, MN. **Zierner Auctioneers.**

**NOW thru OCT. 30** - 6 p.m. Tractors, farm misc., vehicles, trailers, machinery, etc. Robert (Bob) Clark Estate, Pennock, MN. **Zierner Auctioneers.**

**OCT. 20 thru OCT. 30** - Jim and Cindy Hjelm online only land auction. 79.78 surveyed acres in Douglas County. Kensington, MN. **Zielsdorf Auction and Real Estate Services.**

**SAT., OCT. 21** - 10 a.m. Tractors, combines/heads, skid loader and buckets, farm support items, guns, machinery, shop equipment and tools, antiques, collectibles, misc., etc. Bruce Paulson. **Zierner Auctioneers.**

**SUN., OCT. 22** - 11 a.m. Merle Berkeland, owner. Power wood working tools, hand tools, shop equipment, yard and garden, guns, furniture, misc. items. Located: Kandiyohi Auction Center, Kandiyohi, MN. **Zierner Auctioneers.**

**OCT. 26 thru NOV. 2** - Timed online Swift County, MN farmland auction. 145 +/- acres. Cashel Twp., Swift County, MN. **Steffes Auctioneers.**

**OCT. 26 thru NOV. 8** - 7 p.m. Online only. Parcel - 64 Deeded Acres +/- 61.9 tillable acres, Sect. 36, Twp. 120, Range 35, Dovre Twp., Willmar, MN. Roma L. Fostervold Trust. **Zierner Auctioneers.**

**OCT. 27 thru NOV. 6** - John and Mary Jane Skurat online only auction. Utility tractors, bobcat, skidloader attachment, shop tools, mowers, trailers, attachments, vehicles, guns, knives, more. Villard, MN. **Zielsdorf Auction and Real Estate Services.**

**OCT. 27 thru NOV. 7** - Large online only auction. Roger and Patricia Haugen, Madison, MN. JD and Farmall tractors, JD lawn tractor and Gator, Bobcat skid loader, barn find pickups and fuel truck, trailers, etc. **Mid-American Auction Co. Inc.**

**OCT. 28 thru NOV. 9** - Machinery, shop equipment, tools, tractors, lawn and yard equipment, antiques, collectibles, farm misc. household, etc. **Cletus Bitzan Estate. Zierner Auctioneers.**

**NOV. 17 thru NOV. 27** - David Wiegers estate building site online only auction. Boyd, MN. House, sheds and 12.62 acres. **Zielsdorf Auction and Real Estate Services.**

**MON., NOV. 27** - 10 a.m. Retirement farm machinery auction. 2009 JD 9770 combine w/JD tracks, full line of tillage and planting equipment, etc. Tom Vromen, owner, Milroy, MN. **Deutz Auctioneers.**

**FRI., DEC. 1** - JD farm equipment retirement auction. Neabauer Farms, Bird Island, MN. **Mid-American Auction Co. Inc.**

**DEC. 1 thru DEC. 11** - December Farmer/Dealer online only consignment. **Zielsdorf Auction and Real Estate Services.**

**DEC. 1 thru DEC. 11** - December online only consignment w/Joe and Lois McGeary farm retirement and Dale and Betty Noordmans farm retirement. **Zielsdorf Auction and Real Estate Services.**

**2024**

**FEB. 2 thru FEB. 12** - Dale and Debra Wussow downsizing online only auction. 30-40 guns, ammo, mounts, gun cabinets, male syrup equipment, NSF equipment, hunting tents, diamond jewelry and much more. **Zielsdorf Auction and Real Estate Services.**

**MARCH 8 thru MARCH 18** - March Farmer/Dealer online only consignment. Benson, MN. **Zielsdorf Auction and Real Estate Services.**

**MARCH 15 thru MARCH 25** - Helen Anderson Land auction. 3 parcels selling at auction with lake shore on Lake Minnewaska. **Zielsdorf Auction and Real Estate Services.**

**APRIL 19 thru APRIL 29** - Larry and Miriam Schuler online only auction, Granite Falls, MN. 2006 Newmar Dutch Star dsl. pusher, JD 6600 tractor w/loader, 2019 Bobcat Toolcat 5610, Wil Craft ATV, portable fish house, Chevy Camaro conv., and much more. **Zielsdorf Auction and Real Estate Services.**

**APRIL 26 thru MAY 6** - April sporting and recreation online only consignment auction. **Zielsdorf Auction and Real Estate Services.**

**JUNE 14 thru JUNE 24** - June Farmer/Dealer online only consignment. **Zielsdorf Auction and Real Estate Services.**

**JUNE 14 thru JUNE 26** - Steve and Sharyl Syverson moving online only auction. Fish houses, vehicles, household, tools and lots more. **Zielsdorf Auction and Real Estate Services.**

**AUG. 9 thru AUG. 19** - August Farmer/Dealer online only consignment. **Zielsdorf Auction and Real Estate Services.**

**OCT. 4 thru OCT. 14** - October Equipment, Sporting and Recreation online only consignment auction. **Zielsdorf Auction and Real Estate Services.**

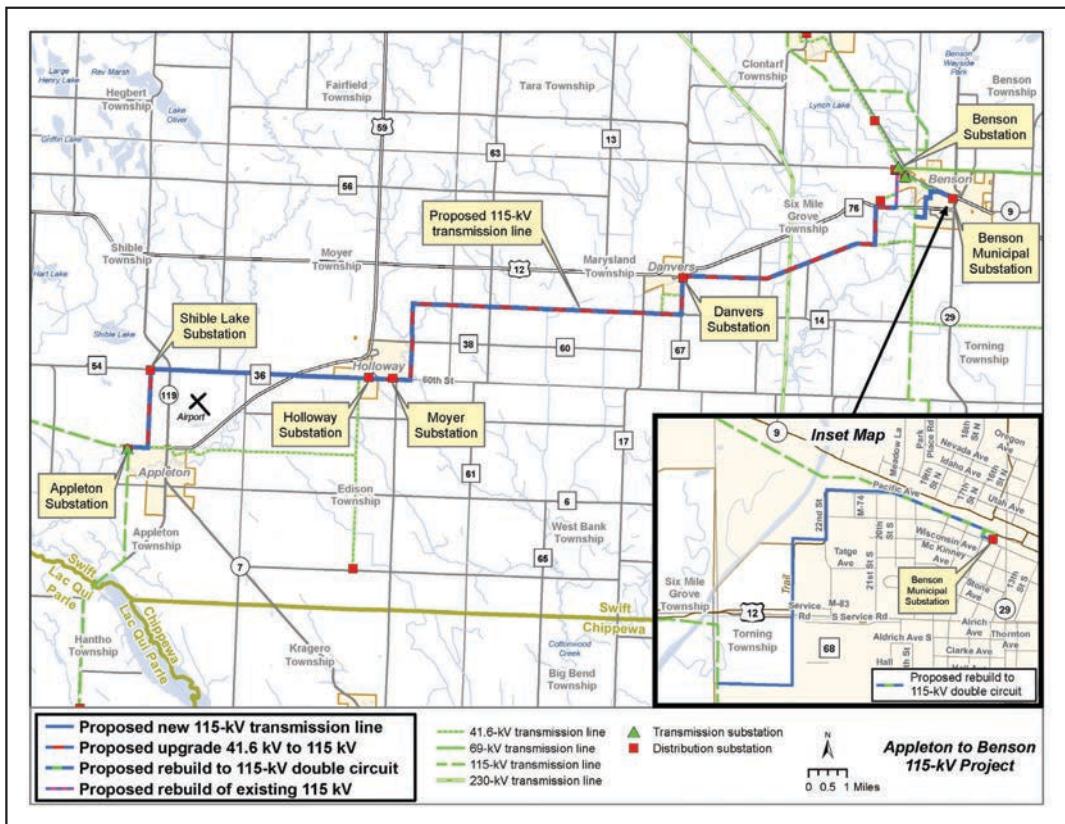
**DEC. 6 thru DEC. 16** - December Farmer/Dealer online only consignment. **Zielsdorf Auction and Real Estate Services.**

**BE PART OF THIS AUCTION CALENDAR BY CALLING 320-843-4111. PEACH, CANARY, MONITOR-NEWS, EXTRA AND ON-LINE!**

NOTICE

PROPOSED PROJECT

The route the utilities are proposing for the transmission line will largely leverage existing transmission line corridors and is shown on the map below:



We encourage you to attend the open house to get information about the project and have your questions answered. If you are unable to attend one of these meetings, contact us with questions.

**Dale Aukee**  
Land Rights  
612-840-4019  
daukee@grenergy.com

**Mark Strohfus**  
Transmission Permitting & Compliance  
763-445-5210  
mstrohfus@grenergy.com

THE APPLETON TO BENSON TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT will enable Great River Energy, Otter Tail Power Company, Missouri River Energy Services, Benson Municipal Utilities, and Agralite Electric Cooperative to maintain reliable and resilient service to electric customers in west central Minnesota by constructing an approximately 28-mile, 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission line between the existing substations near Appleton and Benson.

Additional project information and updates are available at [www.GreatRiverEnergy.com/appletonbenson](http://www.GreatRiverEnergy.com/appletonbenson)





# GRE hosting open houses on power line project...From 1

Monitor-News.

The new transmission line will be constructed primarily with wood poles that will be 70 to 90 feet above ground, and generally 350 to 400 feet apart, the power companies say.

Property owners will be contacted by a project representative during the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC) permitting process to begin the easement acquisition process.

New or amended easements may be requested to provide adequate land rights for construction, operation, and maintenance of the new line, they say.

Easement negotiations will include a copy of the route permit, proposed pole locations, and review of the easement and compensation arrangements, along with information on tree removal, construction access, crop damage payments, and restoration of the right of way, according to the utilities.

Interested property owners and community members are welcome to attend an open house Wednesday, Nov. 1, or Thursday, Nov. 2, to learn more about the project.

Approximately 20 miles of the proposed route will replace an existing 41.6-kV transmission line with the new 115-kV line.

"The open house is an opportunity for property owners and community members to get information about the project and ask any questions they have," Strohfus said.

"Property owners along the line may also contact us at their convenience to discuss the project." Strohfus can be reached at 763-445-5210 or [mstrohfus@grenergy.com](mailto:mstrohfus@grenergy.com).

A fact sheet, which includes a detailed map, can be found at [greatriverenergy.com/appletonbenon](http://greatriverenergy.com/appletonbenon).

This is a different project from the one for which there was an open house in Benson last Tuesday.

That project involves a proposal to build a 345-kV transmission line from Big Stone, S.D., to Alexandria. A segment of the transmission line is likely to pass through Swift County's western half and may come close to the City of Benson.

Otter Tail Power Company and Missouri River Energy Services have been conducting the public meetings about the project.

It is a much bigger transmission line than the 115-kV line that will run from Appleton to Benson. To get an idea of what the 345-kV line will look like, picture the power poles that run along Interstate Highway 94. The new transmission line going to the Alexandria area will connect to those towers, adding a second line for power to the Twin Cities.

Each single pole will have a concrete foundation and average of 150 feet in height. There will be four to six structures per mile and, for now, just one line is proposed for the poles. A second line could be added while the first phase of the project is underway as demand for power in the Twin Cities metropolitan area continues to increase.

While the towers along I-94 are silver galvanized steel, the ones going from Big Stone to Alexandria will be weathering steel, which has a rust-colored look. Langston said the utility thought they would "go a little better in rural communities."

It is expected to take nearly seven years for additional planning and construction before the lines are finally energized in mid-2030.

Construction of the power will also serve the expanding wind and solar renewable energy projects in place and planned in western Minnesota.

Otter Tail and Missouri River say the new power line will allow more low-cost renewable energy to flow from the generation resources to customers and reduce congestion on the existing transmission system created by an increasing amount of renewable trying to access the power grid.



Last Tuesday, Otter Tail Power Company and Missouri River Energy Services conducted an open house on proposed 345-kV transmission line from Big Stone, S.D., to Alexandria. A segment of the transmission line is likely to pass through Swift County's western half and may come close to the City of Benson.



## 2nd Slide Committee seeking donations...

From 6

\$1,000 from 10 families/businesses  
\$5,000 from 5 families/businesses  
\$10,000 from 1 family/business

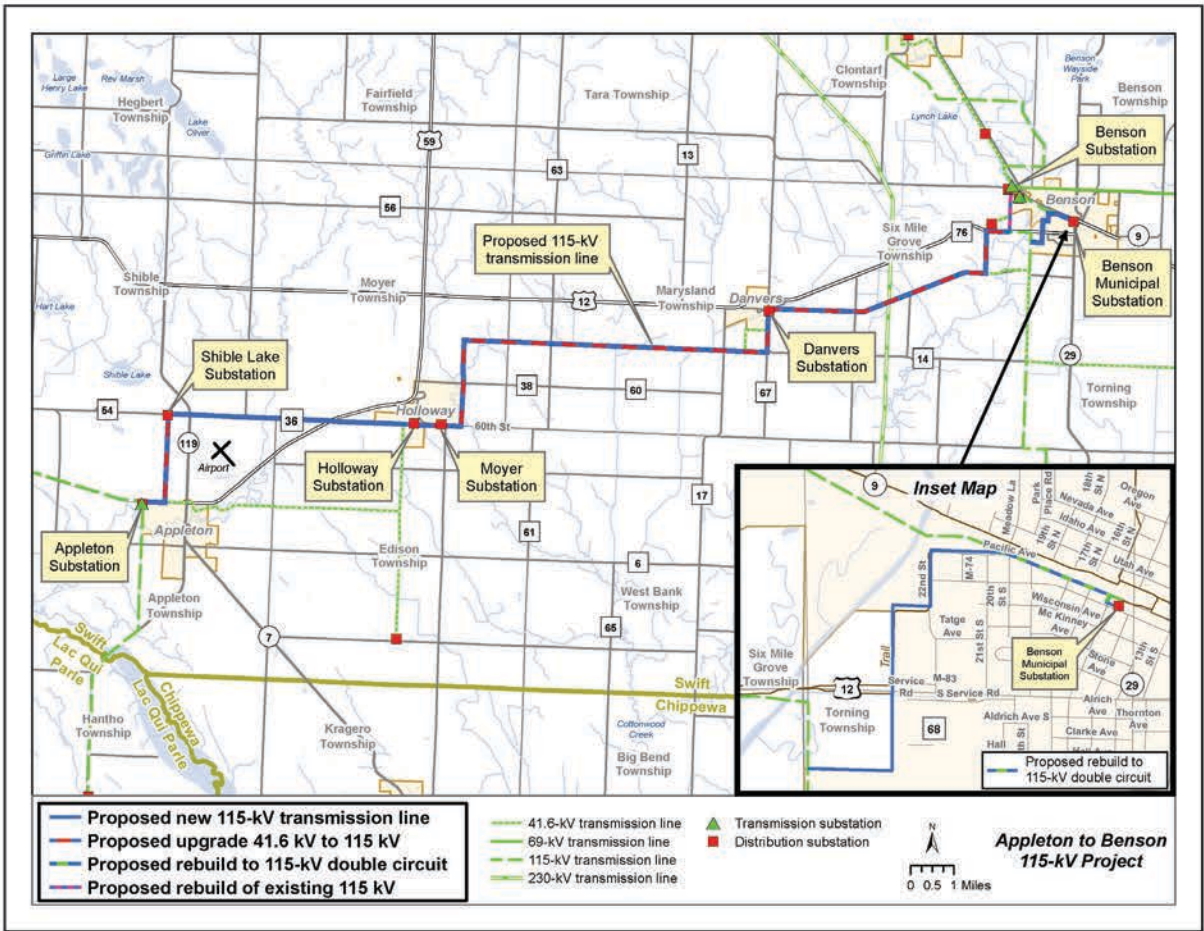
Our pool is a huge asset that will continue to serve our community for generations to come.

All interested donors are asked to make checks payable to the City of Benson, and mail to 1410 Kansas Avenue, Benson, MN, 56215. Take the Plunge everyone! Thank you!

## NOTICE

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[daukee@grenergy.com](mailto:daukee@grenergy.com)

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Additional project information and updates are available at [www.GreatRiverEnergy.com/appletonbenon](http://www.GreatRiverEnergy.com/appletonbenon)



NOW HIRING!

**Divine House , Inc.** is currently accepting applications for **Direct Support Professionals** at our Benson sites.

- Experience working with people with disabilities or background in the medical field and experience helpful, but not necessary.
- Competitive wages starting at \$15 per hour.



Contact Rick Buddy at  
320-231-2738 ext 373 or  
Apply online at  
[www.divinehouse.org](http://www.divinehouse.org) or  
Divine House, Inc.  
320 SW 4th St.  
Willmar, MN 56201 EOE

LAND FOR SALE

**Time To Sell Your Land?**  
**Now offering online land auctions**  
Reasonable rates, all advertising included!

Swift County Hunting Land

- 41.6 Acres – Section 2, Shible Township  
Trees/Grass and Frontage  
3 Acre Site for the Camper or Cabin  
~~\$120,000~~ Price Reduced to \$99,500!

320-815-0460  
[HughesRealEstate.net](http://HughesRealEstate.net)



NOTICE

PLEASE JOIN US FOR AN

OPEN HOUSE

about an important electric transmission project being proposed by several utilities, to be built in Swift County

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 1, 2023

11:00-1:00 and 4:00-6:00

Appleton Civic Center  
323 W Schlieman Ave, Appleton, MN

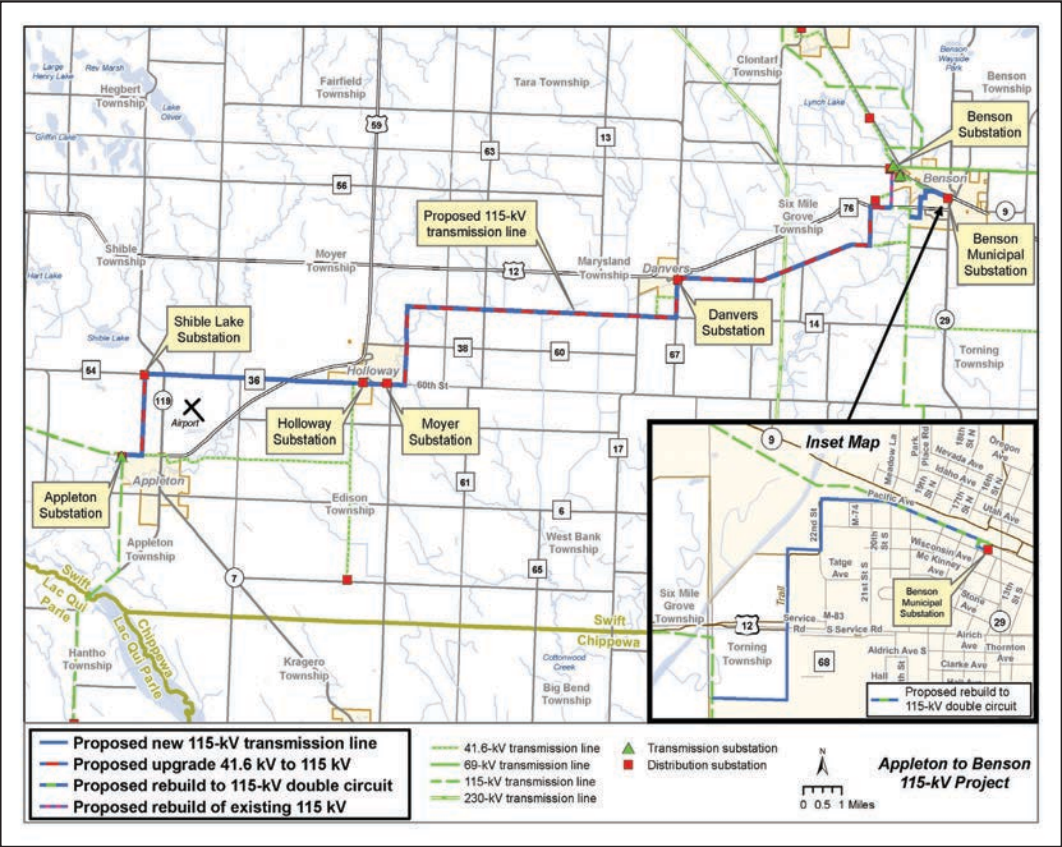
THURSDAY, NOV. 2, 2023

11:00-1:00 and 4:00-6:00

McKinney's  
300 14th St S, Benson, MN

PROPOSED PROJECT

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# Residents seek common ground on nitrate pollution...From 10

they're closely connected to groundwater, they're at risk of pollution.

In Minnesota, several state agencies regulate different aspects of water. The petitioners argue that's led to an ineffective response to the nitrate issue.

"It is so easy for agencies to say, 'Well, I'm just dealing with drinking water. I'm just dealing with surface water. I'm just dealing with water quantity,'" Wotzka said. "Somebody needs to put the big picture together."

In a joint statement, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and state health and agriculture departments acknowledged southeastern Minnesota's porous landscape is uniquely susceptible to groundwater contamination, exacerbated by climate change and more extreme rainfalls.

"State agencies, counties,

cities and community members have been working to protect drinking water from nitrate contamination produced by faulty septic systems, agricultural runoffs, landfills and wastewater," they stated.

The agencies mentioned Minnesota's groundwater protection rule, which restricts the use of nitrogen fertilizer in the fall and on frozen soil in vulnerable areas, as well as a nitrogen fertilizer management plan that promotes best practices.

"While progress has been made, more work is required by state agencies, local governments, industry, farmers and homeowners to protect our waters, especially as we continue to adapt to our changing climate," they stated.

**Major source: Cropland farming**

Officials from the state Pollution Control Agency say 89 percent of nitrate in southeast Minnesota water comes from commercial fertilizer and manure spread on cropland. That's higher than the statewide average.

The petitioners say state agencies have relied mainly on voluntary approaches to get farmers to reduce nitrogen pollution, which they say haven't worked.

They want the EPA to investigate the sources of nitrate, require those responsible to provide free well testing and, if needed, an alternative source of water.

"It can cost up to \$30,000 to dig a deeper well for a private well owner," Griffith said. "So in lower income rural communities, that can be an unachievable cost to meet."

The petitioners are also calling for a moratorium

on new or expanded large livestock farms until nitrate levels in contaminated wells reach safe levels.

The groups say CAFOs, or concentrated animal feeding operations where animals are raised in confinement, produce too much manure that's applied to farm fields in the region.

Aaron and Amy Bishop live in Harmony Township in Fillmore County, about a mile from the Iowa border. Water from their well, which is more than 600 feet deep, is safe to drink. But many of their neighbors' water isn't, they said.

The Bishops are members of Responsible Ag in Karst Country, a grassroots organization that formed in 2018 in opposition to a proposed hog expansion.

"Obviously, agriculture is a huge contributor to the problem. But these farmers are also our neighbors, and

they drink this water too," Amy Bishop said. "So hopefully, if more information comes out, they'll also recognize that this is the water they drink. And maybe there's some way to start to reduce that."

Some farmers say it's unfair to blame the nitrate problem solely on them.

"As a farm guy, it's hard to read the petition and not view it as an attack," said Warren Formo, executive director of the Minnesota Agricultural Water Resource Center, formed in 2008 by the state's major farm organizations. "It's the tone and the tenor of it, and then singling agriculture out (for) what we see as some pretty drastic requirements."

Many farmers in the region have substantially changed how they handle fertilizer and manure over the last two decades, Formo said. That includes following the state rule restricting the use of commercial fertilizer in sensitive areas in the fall, when it's more likely to leach into the groundwater.

"We haven't seen analysis, specifically in some of these areas, to see if it is making a difference," Formo said.

One farmer voicing concern about the petition is state Rep. Steve Jacob, R-Altura, a former Winona County commissioner serving his first term in the Legislature.

Jacob said he cares about water quality and practices conservation measures on the land where he grows corn and beans, including no-till farming and cover crops. But he doesn't support additional federal involvement.

"There's two approaches: the carrot approach and the stick approach," he said. "They're saying [use] the stick approach. And not only is state and local government not enough, we need to have the federal government come in and bring the stick approach."

Jacob said he's counted more than 30 groups and dozens of programs already addressing water quality in southeast Minnesota.

"We know what best management practices are. And we need to implement those," he said. "We should be streamlining things into less organizations, putting more of those dollars into actual programs on the ground, rather than all these expanded government programs."

Even if the EPA doesn't respond to the petition, environmental groups hope it's raising awareness about the nitrate issue.

They're hosting a series of public forums around the region, including one in Lanesboro on Nov. 16.

"There's just so many people who aren't aware that it's an issue," Amy Bishop said. "So just hopefully getting the conversation started, so that more people start to think about this, and maybe start to be vocal about it."

They're also urging well owners to get their water tested to find out the nitrate level.

The Minnesota Department of Health recommends having your well tested for nitrate every other year, through an accredited lab or your county environmental or public health service.

## Semi, train collide...From 1

er covered the front of the BNSF engine sitting several hundred feet west of the crossing.

Corn covered the ground beneath the tracks and was scattered on both sides of the tracks in the direction of the impact on the trailer.

Evans was treated at the scene and released.

The Swift County Sheriff's received the call on the accident at 9:25 Friday morning. Sheriff's deputies, the Benson police, and the CentraCare-Benson Hospital ambulance responded to the accident.

The crash is still under investigation, the sheriff's office said.

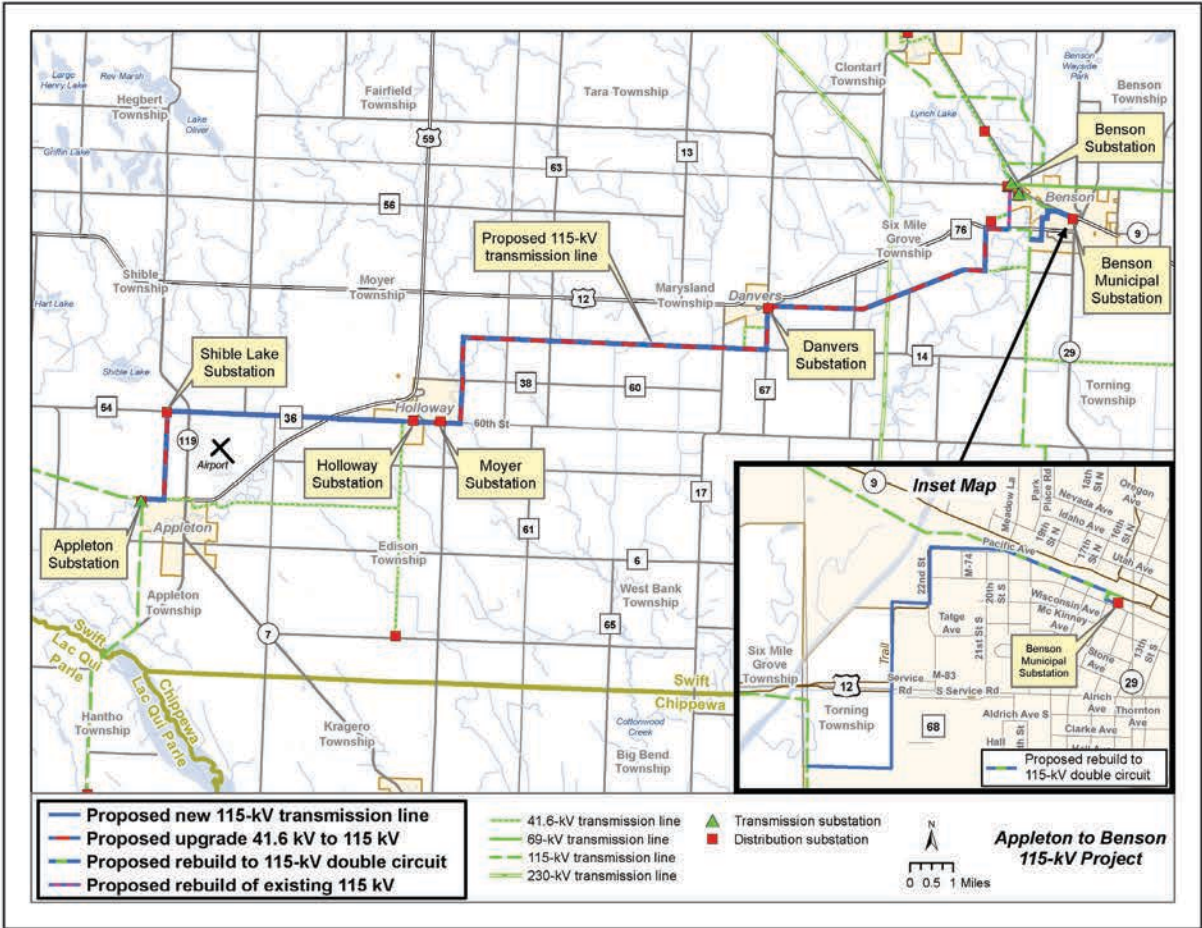


While the cab of the semi was on one side of the tracks, most of the trailer was on the other.

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# AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

County of Swift, State of Minnesota

## The Appleton Press

241 W. Snelling Ave., Appleton, MN 56208  
Ph. 320-289-1323 | www.appletonpress.com

I, April M. Ehrenberg, being duly sworn, on oath, deposes and says that I am the publisher or the authorized agent of the publisher of the newspapers known as The Appleton Press and The Milan Standard and has full knowledge of the facts herein stated as follows:

- (A) These newspapers have complied with the requirements constituting qualification as a legal newspaper, as provided by Minnesota Statute §331A.02 and other applicable laws, as amended.
- (B) The printed Public Notice that is attached to this Affidavit was published on the date(s) and in the newspaper stated below and said Notice is hereby incorporated as part of this Affidavit. Said Notice was cut from the columns of the newspaper specified. Printed below is a copy of the lower-case alphabet from A to Z, both inclusive, and is hereby acknowledged as being the kind and size of type used in the composition and publication of the Notice:
- a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z
- (C) The dates of the month and the year and day of the week upon which the Public Notice attached was published in the newspaper are as follows:  
**Wednesday, October 18, 2023**  
**Wednesday, October 25, 2023**
- (D) The publisher's lowest classified rate paid by commercial users for comparable space, as determined pursuant to §331A.06, is as follows:  
**63 inch display advertisement 2 times at \$800.00**
- (E) Mortgage Foreclosure Notices [Effective 7/1/15]. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes §580.033 relating to the publication of mortgage foreclosure notices: The newspaper's known office of issue is in **SWIFT** County. The newspaper complies with the conditions described in §580.033, subd. 1, clause (1) or (2). If the newspaper's known office of issue is in a county adjoining the county where the mortgaged premises or some part of the mortgaged premises described in the notice are located, a substantial portion of the newspaper's circulation is in the latter county.

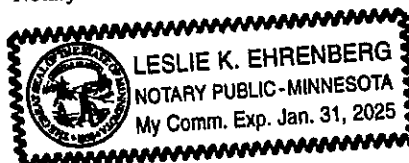
By:

*April M. Ehrenberg*

April M. Ehrenberg  
Advertising Manager and Bookkeeper

Subscribed and sworn to before me on  
this 25th day of October 2023.

*Leslie K. Ehrenberg*  
Leslie K. Ehrenberg  
Notary Public





# NOTICE

## PLEASE JOIN US FOR AN OPEN HOUSE

about an important electric transmission  
project being proposed by several utilities,  
to be built in Swift County

**WEDNESDAY, NOV. 1, 2023**

11:00-1:00 and 4:00-6:00

Appleton Civic Center  
323 W Schlieman Ave, Appleton, MN

**THURSDAY, NOV. 2, 2023**

11:00-1:00 and 4:00-6:00

McKinney's  
300 14th St S, Benson, MN

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### Dale Aukee

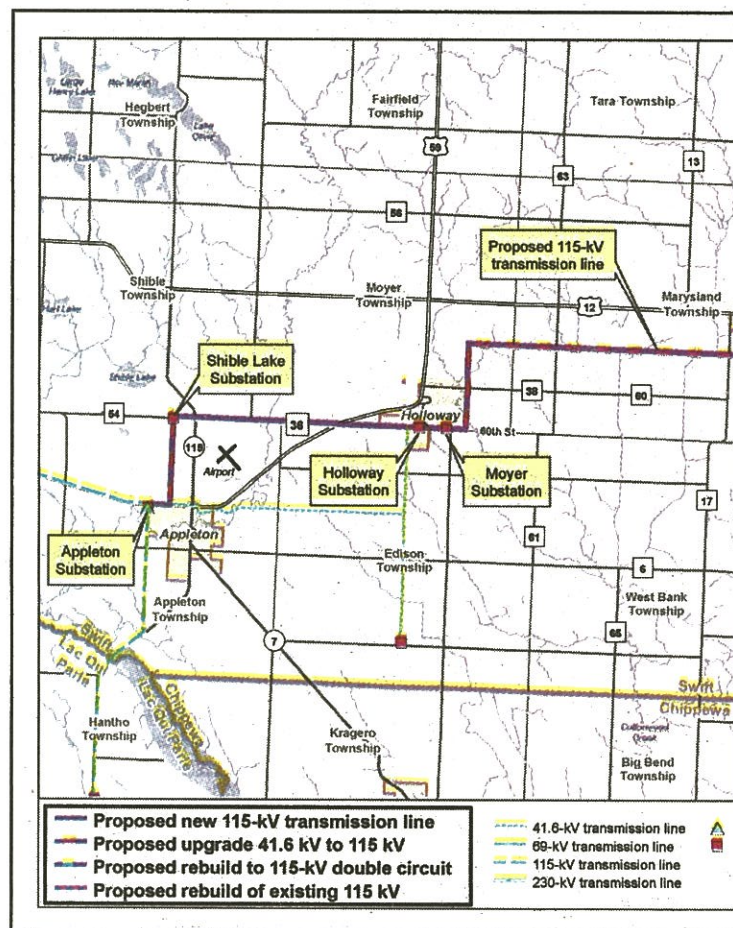
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mstrohfus@grenergy.com

## PROPOSED PROJECT

The route the utilities are proposing for the transmission line follows existing transmission line corridors and is shown on the map.



**THE APPLETON TO BENSON TRANSMISSION LINE**  
Great River Energy, Otter Tail Power Company, Mississippi Valley Power Company, and Benson Municipal Utilities, and Agralite Electric Cooperative are proposing to build a new and resilient service to electric customers in west central Minnesota. The project involves an approximately 28-mile, 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission line with substations near Appleton and Benson.

**Additional project information and updates are available at**  
[www.GreatRiverEnergy.com/appletonbenson](http://www.GreatRiverEnergy.com/appletonbenson)





# PAH tour by Key Capital Funding Committee

Continued From Front

Capital Investment committee were given an information hand-out on the status of current funding efforts and projected budgets for the next phases in the overall program.

While all these discussion points were briefly addressed, Rep. Anderson stressed an equally important aspect of this site visit. "I know a lot of the members personally ... it comes down to who you know," says Anderson, and adds, "They see a lot of options, they've done four trips around the state." He stressed that "it's critical that the committee remembers Appleton and the importance of the area."

Anderson further explained that when bonding bills come up for a vote in the House, they require a 'super' majority; both parties must endorse it in order to pass. "Bonding bills can become political," he acknowledged. "I don't look for it to come early in the session," he explained, " ... but probably later, and that session ends towards the end of May next year.

The total budget currently for all phases for the AHC projects is \$2.4 million. Andersons says that since the PAH is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, that the funding has to be a cash awarding process - sometimes harder to get as there is a lot of competition for that."

Board Member Brian Wojtalewicz whose portion of the welcoming presentations shared the landmark's historical legacy with the group, says he felt that the "committee visit showed a level of interest that has us excited about our prospects for the future." Wojtalewicz heard a number of favorable comments, "What a surprising gem," "Very good presentation," and "Yes, we are viewing a lot of projects, but this is very impressive!"

The Preserve Appleton's Heritage board and patrons, as well as the community of Appleton and surrounding region, should remain hopeful that those favorable impressions remain fresh and come to the forefront during that critical bonding selection process next spring.



PAH Board Member, Kristie Fernholz addressing the committee during an assembly in the Opera House hall.

## Overview of Preserve Appleton's Heritage Projects/Updates

### Renovations/Updates:

- Restroom Upgrade
- New HVAC System
- LED Light Conversion
- Storm-damaged Roof Repair
- Updating Kitchen Space (Coffee shop space)

### Funding Efforts and Projected Costs:

- Launched fund-raising platform – raised \$199,950 from 300 donors;
- Opened 'furniture restore' fund-raiser;
- HVAC/LED, etc. raised \$129,038;
- Phase I – Seeking \$418,000 for masonry work (\$100,000 match/2023-24 MNHS project);
- Nonprofit Capital Request: Phase 1B, \$369,000 for windows, doors
- Nonprofit Capital Request: Phase 2, \$1,656,000 for interior Opera House, fire system, plumbing, elevator, ADA access;
- Nonprofit Capital Request: Phase 3, \$375,000 for update annex, windows, doors, etc.
- Total cost of Phases 1B, 2, 3: \$2,400,000.



Minnesota's House State Funding Committee regional tour included a stop at the Appleton Heritage Center.

# Get to Know Your City Employees

Nathan Grengs is a wastewater/water operator with the City of Appleton. He has a degree in water environmental technologies from St. Cloud Technical and Community College.

Born and raised in Clarkfield, he currently lives in Dawson.

When asked what he likes best about working for the City of Appleton, Grengs said, "The opportunity to do something different every day."

Grengs is a member of Viessman's Softball and the Dawson Bowling League.

At the top of his list of hobbies is cooking. "I have competed in many culinary competitions and I also make cooking videos," said



Nathan Grengs  
Wastewater/Water Operator

Grengs. "I'm also an avid musician. I play a few instruments and have played in a few bands."

# Trunk or Treat to be held October 28

The Appleton Area Chamber of Commerce will be sponsoring Trunk or Treat again this year. The event will be held Saturday, October 28, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Appleton Power Equipment, Hardware and Floral.

Individuals, groups, and organizations are sought to make a "Trunk" for the event. To take part, decorate your vehicle's trunk in a Halloween theme and pass out treats as area children go from one trunk to the next.

# Holloway Halloween party set

Holloway Baseball and the Moyer Eagles 4-H Club will be hosting a Halloween party on Friday, October 27, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Holloway Community Center.

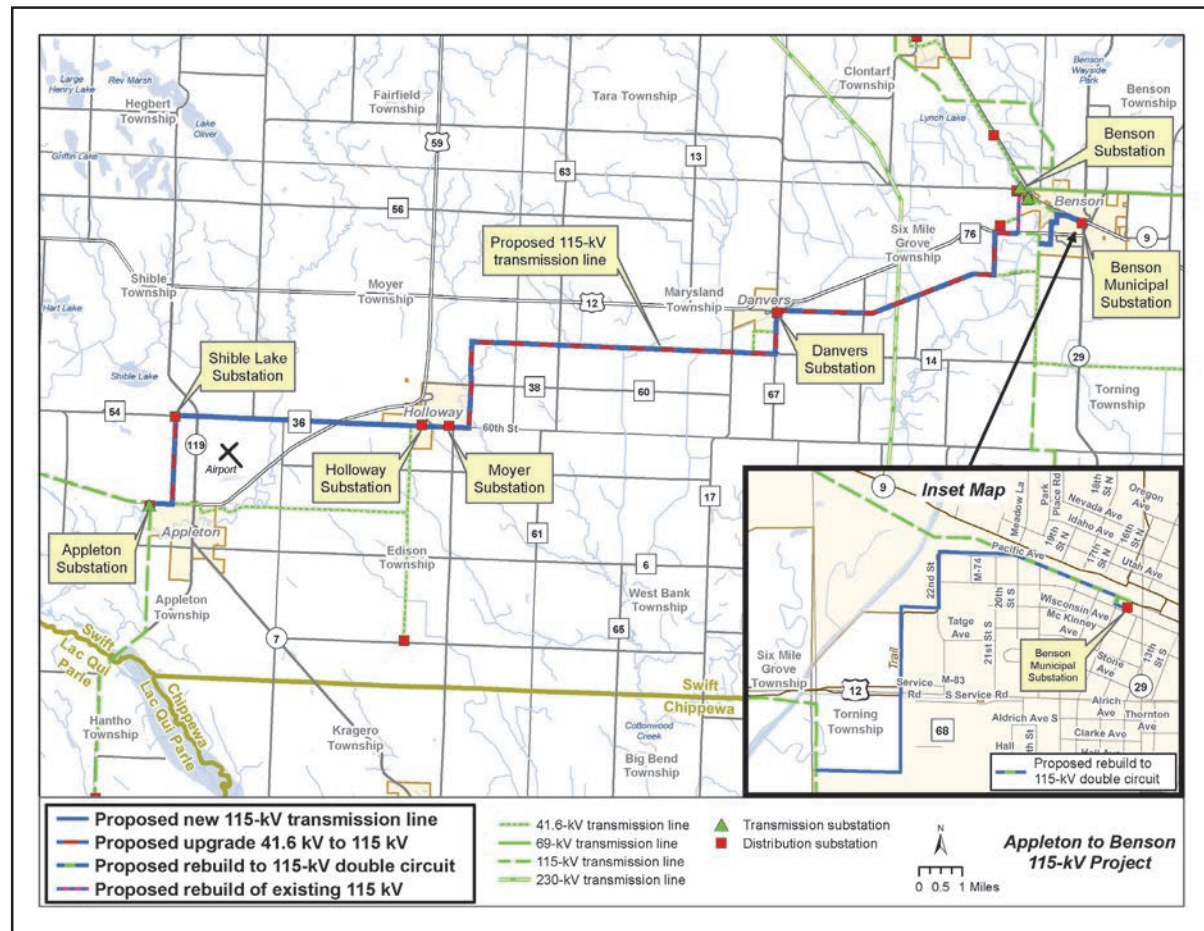
A light supper will be provided. There will be games, prizes, and candy galore! Don't forget to bring your trick or treat bag. Costumes encouraged.

Anyone wishing to donate candy to the Holloway Halloween party, a drop-off box is located at the Holloway Cafe.

# N O T I C E

## PROPOSED PROJECT

The route the utilities are proposing for the transmission line will largely leverage existing transmission line corridors and is shown on the map below:



We encourage you to attend the open house to get information about the project and have your questions answered. If you are unable to attend one of these meetings, contact us with questions.

**Dale Aukee**  
Land Rights  
612-840-4019  
daukee@grenergy.com

**Mark Strohfus**  
Transmission Permitting & Compliance  
763-445-5210  
mstrohfus@grenergy.com

THE APPLETON TO BENSON TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT will enable Great River Energy, Otter Tail Power Company, Missouri River Energy Services, Benson Municipal Utilities, and Agralite Electric Cooperative to maintain reliable and resilient service to electric customers in west central Minnesota by constructing an approximately 28-mile, 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission line between the existing substations near Appleton and Benson.

Additional project information and updates are available at [www.GreatRiverEnergy.com/appletonbenson](http://www.GreatRiverEnergy.com/appletonbenson)





## Letters to the editor



Letter to the editor:

The purpose of arts education is not to produce more artists, though that is a byproduct. The real purpose of arts education is to create complete human beings capable of leading successful and productive lives in society.

Renovating our school theater to provide our students with an updated space to share their talents and knowledge with their community will not only elevate their performances but also boost their self-confidence. Knowing that their friends and family support the arts in our school and have a comfortable venue to enjoy their shows will motivate our musicians to reach new heights in their musical journey.

Please consider Voting yes on November 7th!

Nyssa Jimenez  
LqPV 5-12 band director

The 2019 referendum was basically a huge catch-up. We hadn't made a single substantial investment in district facilities since LQPV high school was built in 1990 ... three decades. Our elementary schools in Appleton and Madison hadn't been touched since the middle of the last century. \$40 million was needed to make up for all those decades where we didn't do enough. Did it go smoothly? From my outside perspective it was a mess, but I'm giving the school a break for three reasons 1) COVID created unprecedented disruption in the construction industry, 2) of course renovation of old buildings comes with unwelcome surprises, and 3) we aren't going to use the same construction management company again. Despite those challenges, we have two vastly improved elementary schools, added much-needed practice gym space at the high school, the Ag2School credit is paying 70 percent of the tax burden for ag landowners, and LQPV still has some of the lowest property tax rates in the region, if not the state. Regardless of the process, the outcome eventually matched our expectations.

The \$13 million for the HVAC wasn't necessary in 2019, but the system is now at end of life. The good news is that the project will now be financed with the full benefit of Ag2School, which was only 40 percent in 2019. Delaying was a good decision, and the taxpayers have benefited as a result.

This 2023 referendum is the next step into a "new normal." Just like owning a house, you can't just write a big check at the beginning and think you're done. Buildings are a collection of parts, and when worn out they must be replaced.

We've seen the wrong way: ignoring the need for necessary repairs and im-

provements for years simply gives us the illusion of saving money; eventually the bill comes due.

The right way is to take advantage of opportunities. The Ag2School credit means that 56.5 percent of the bill is paid by the state.

The right way is to make consistent but manageable investments over time. If our 2023 referendum is approved, the school will issue 10-year bonds. Then in 2033 we should do it again. We will have a new list of needs, and when one bond issue expires, we'll start paying for a new one. Then repeat in 2043, 2053, and so on.

The right way for taxpayers is boring and predictable. Our school board, administration, and voters must commit to a disciplined long-term plan, so we don't get hit with another \$40 million earthquake followed by aftershocks of \$13 million and \$6.5 million. The next step toward boring and predictable is up to us. Vote Yes on November 7!

Jake Sieg, Madison  
LQPV Vote Yes Committee

## Cat Kid Comic Club: The Musical to be presented in Dawson

Dawson-Boyd Arts Association is pleased to present a live children's theater experience for area students on Thursday, October 26 at Memorial Auditorium in Dawson.

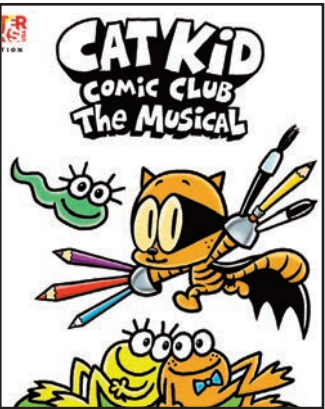
Students from Dawson-Boyd's Stevens Elementary, along with students from neighboring elementary schools including Appleton-Milan, Madison-Marietta-Nassau, Lakeview, Canby, Ortonville, Ramsey, Bert Raney and Minneota will experience The TheaterWorksUSA's production of Cat Kid Comic Club: The Musical.

Students will follow along as Cat Kid and Molly Pollywog start an epic club to teach 21 rambunctious baby frogs how to make their own comics! Their fishy father Flippy is overjoyed that his kids will learn to unleash

their creativity, but when the frogs' constant bickering and outrageous imaginations send their comics comically off the rails, Flippy flips out! Will the club survive? Will the frogs ever get along? And will creativity finally save the day? All will be answered in this madcap musical based on Dav Pilkey's irreverently hilarious book series.

Cat Kid Comic Club: The Musical has a book and lyrics by Kevin Del Aguila, music by Brad Alexander, and direction and choreography by Marlo Hunter.

TheaterWorksUSA consistently brings high quality, fun productions to Memorial Auditorium. Combining their musical talent with a familiar character, Cat Kid Comic Club: The Musical is sure to entertain audiences while educating students about



conflict resolution. For more information on this production visit: [twusa.org](http://twusa.org). Dawson-Boyd Arts Association can be reached at 320.312.2311 or by visiting [dawsonboydarts.org](http://dawsonboydarts.org). Event sponsor for this performance is Madison Dental Clinic – Brandon Ulstad DDS.

## Get to Know Your City Employees

Brian Knutson is a wastewater/water operator with the City of Appleton. A graduate of Benson High School, he continued his education at Minnesota State Community and Technical College (M State) in Wadena to obtain his electrician's degree.

Currently, Knutson lives in Morris with his wife and step-son.

When asked what he likes best about working for the City of Appleton, Knutson said, "The different variety of work."

Knutson is a member of Gamblers Softball, Met Lounge Dart Team, K-Town Dart League, and coaches Babe Ruth Baseball.

In his spare time, he enjoys sports, hunting, fishing,



**Brian Knutson**  
Wastewater/Water Operator

and underwater basket weaving.

Letter to the editor:

Again? Already? That's probably what many people think when hearing that on November 7, LQPV schools are asking voters to approve a \$6.5 million referendum for updating school facilities. We just had a \$40 million referendum in 2019, and \$13 million was authorized earlier this year for air handling equipment. When you add it up, that's a lot of millions! Do we really need this? Can we afford it? The answers are yes to both, but understanding why and how requires some digging. This letter is about making good financial decisions with public tax dollars, so that we can meet our school facility needs AND best manage the funding burden on our citizens.

## Great River open houses

Continued From Front

owners and community members to get information about the project and ask any questions they have," said Strohfus. "Property owners along the line may also contact us at their convenience to discuss the project." Strohfus can be reached at 763-445-5210 or [mstrohfus@grenergy.com](mailto:mstrohfus@grenergy.com).

Open houses will be held Wednesday, November 1, at the Appleton Civic Center in Appleton and Thursday,

November 2, at McKinney's in Benson. No formal presentation will be given at either event.

Those interested are encouraged to stop by anytime between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. or from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. either day to learn about the project.

A fact sheet, which includes a detailed map, can be found at [greatriverenergy.com/appletonbenson](http://greatriverenergy.com/appletonbenson).

# NOTICE

PLEASE JOIN US FOR AN

OPEN HOUSE

about an important electric transmission project being proposed by several utilities, to be built in Swift County

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 1, 2023

11:00-1:00 and 4:00-6:00

Appleton Civic Center

323 W Schlieman Ave, Appleton, MN

THURSDAY, NOV. 2, 2023

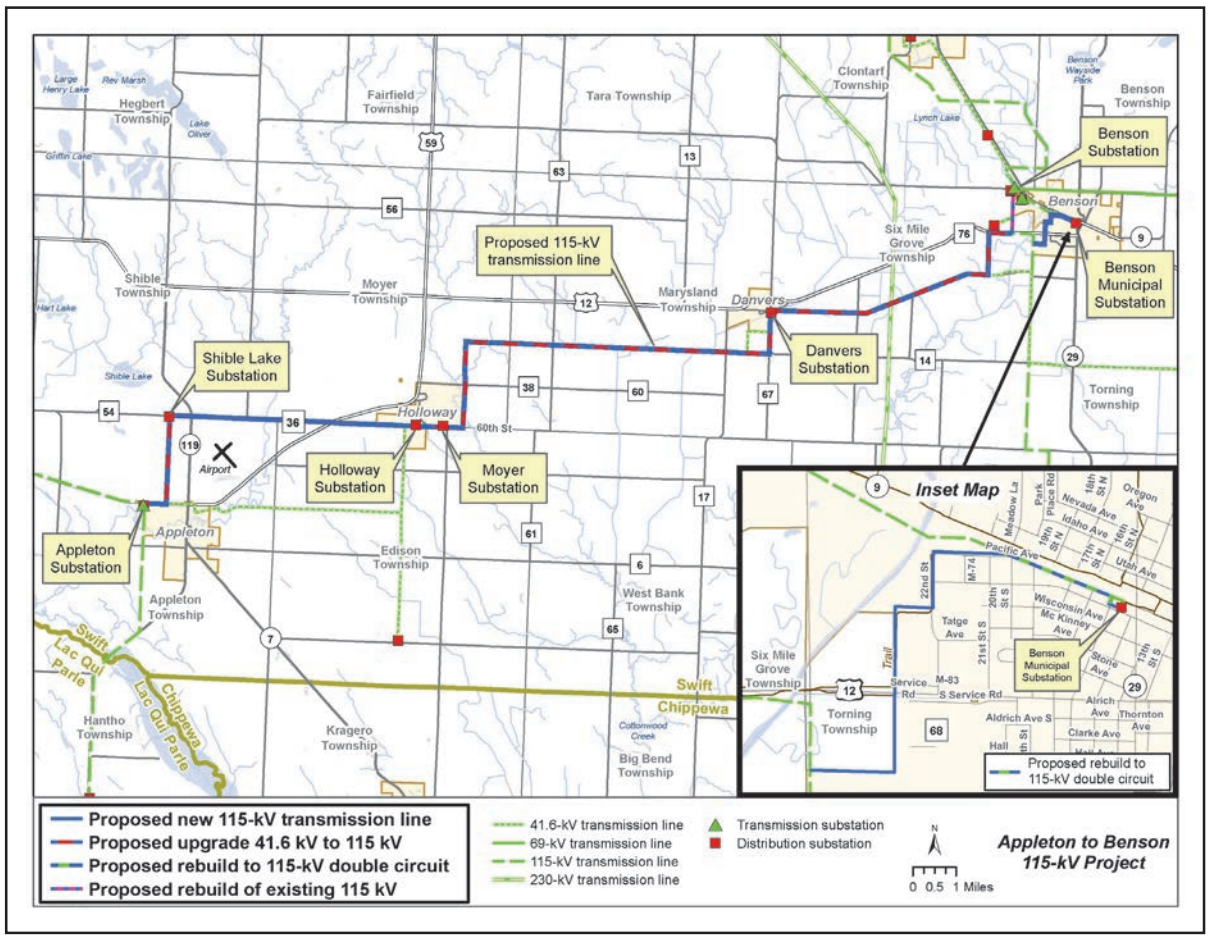
11:00-1:00 and 4:00-6:00

McKinney's

300 14th St S, Benson, MN

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