HIPLE TO HELIX (INDIANA)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Updated November 2026

PROJECT DETAILS

What role does MISO play in planning new transmission projects?

MISO's Long Range Transmission Plan (LRTP) is a multi-year, regionwide planning effort to build the transmission infrastructure the Midwest needs to keep the grid reliable, affordable and resilient to protect against extreme weather and to support electricity demand as it grows and power generation resources evolve. On July 25, 2022, MISO's Board of Directors approved the first phase of that plan — Tranche 1, a $10.3 billion portfolio of 18 transmission projects — for inclusion in MISO's 2021 Transmission Expansion Plan (MTEP21).

What is the Hiple to Helix Project, and how does it benefit Indiana?

The Hiple to Helix Project is one of those Tranche 1 projects. It is a new double-circuit 345 kV transmission line connecting NIPSCO's Hiple Substation in LaGrange County, Indiana, to the Michigan Electric Transmission Company's (METC) Helix Substation in Calhoun County, Michigan. Republic Transmission is responsible for the Indiana portion of the line, and METC is responsible for the Michigan portion. This new bi-directional connection will allow electricity to flow in either direction, based on regional need.

For Indiana, the project will be an added high-voltage path across the northern part of the state. It will help relieve congestion on the existing system and keep power flowing during high demand or when other lines are out for maintenance or storm repairs. It will also give Indiana utilities and consumers access to a broader, lower-cost mix of generation resources from across the MISO region.

Why is Republic Transmission building this line instead of NIPSCO?

Under the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's Order No. 1000, certain large transmission projects in MISO's regional plan are open to competitive bidding, rather than being automatically assigned to the utility that already operates in the area. Any qualified developer can propose to build, own and operate the new line, with MISO comparing and selecting the winning proposal based on cost, design and long-term operations and maintenance.

The Indiana portion of the Hiple to Helix Project, which MISO calls the Hiple to IN/MI State Border Project, was one of those competitively bid projects. MISO received seven proposals and selected Republic Transmission in 2023 to build, own and operate the line. Republic Transmission will coordinate with local utility NIPSCO to connect the line into the Hiple Substation.

What will the transmission line look like?

The predominant structure will be a self-supported monopole, either pre-stressed spun concrete or tubular steel. Guyed structures will be required in locations where the line changes direction sharply. Structure height will vary depending on terrain and engineering considerations but will typically be around 110 feet tall.

Who pays for the project, and will it raise my electric bill?

The cost of the Hiple to Helix Project is shared by utilities and their customers across MISO's Midwest region, which serves millions of customers in multiple states. Each utility in the region pays a share based on how much electricity its customers use, and that cost is recovered through electric rates over the life of the line.

Transmission costs make up a relatively small part of a typical residential bill, and the cost of this project represents only a small share of that amount.

FAQS, CONTINUED

MISO's analysis found that the Tranche 1 portfolio delivers benefits well in excess of its costs — including lower congestion, avoided outages and access to lower-cost generation. Additionally, Republic Transmission was selected to build the project because its cost commitment was more than 30% below MISO's original per-mile cost estimate and included long-term cost protections for consumers.

What environmental considerations went into the project's design?

Routing and design of the line have been informed by desktop review of development, wetlands, streams, floodplains, woodlands, threatened and endangered species habitat, and cultural and historic resources along the corridor, as well as permitting agency consultation and feedback gathered at the Open Houses. The goal of our extensive routing analysis is to avoid impacts wherever possible. Where impacts cannot be avoided, we are committed to minimizing them to the extent practicable. Republic Transmission will also obtain all required federal, state and local permits and approvals before construction, and will comply with their conditions throughout construction and operation of the project.

Why isn't the line being built underground?

The project was studied and approved by MISO as an overhead 345 kV transmission line. Burying a line of this voltage requires multiple large, insulated cables in underground duct banks, which typically costs six-to-ten times more than overhead construction. Underground lines also require more extensive excavation, make road and stream crossings more complicated, and are harder and slower to repair when problems occur. Overhead construction lets the project deliver its reliability benefits at a lower cost to customers across the region.

How will my community benefit from the project?

The region will benefit from a stronger, more reliable grid to withstand overload issues identified by the MISO study. This project will provide a new, high-capacity path (345 kV transmission line) for power to travel, enabling access to lower cost generation — all delivered at a cost 30% below what MISO originally estimated.

The project will support local economic development in LaGrange and Steuben counties through construction jobs, local taxes paid by Republic Transmission to fund essential services in the state, community donations and more. Local businesses will also benefit from purchases by our contractors who will live, eat and shop in the community during construction.

LANDOWNERS

What is an easement, and why does Republic Transmission need one on my property?

An easement is a legal right that allows Republic Transmission to use a defined portion of a property to construct, operate, maintain and repair the transmission line, and to manage vegetation within the right-of-way. Landowners retain ownership of the land itself — the easement only grants the specific rights needed to safely build and operate the line.

How wide is the easement?

The project's typical permanent easement is 150 feet wide. In some locations, engineering or terrain considerations may require a wider permanent easement. Additional temporary workspace may also be needed during construction and is negotiated separately.

FAQS, CONTINUED

What can I do with the land within the easement area?

In most cases, existing land uses — including normal farming operations — are compatible and can continue within the easement after construction, within safety limits. Certain structures and tall vegetation may need to be restricted where they could interfere with the safe operation of the line. Republic Transmission will work with landowners to address property-specific concerns, including access, drainage, crops, fences, construction, restoration and operation.

How many structures will there be on my property, and can I weigh in on placement?

The number of structures on a property depends on how much of the line crosses it. Structures are typically placed in the center of the easement, roughly 600 to 900 feet apart, with exact spacing set by terrain and final engineering. At sharp turns in the line, structures may need guy wires for added support.

Exact structure locations will be determined during detailed design. Republic Transmission will work with landowners to understand property-specific concerns, such as field operations, drainage, irrigation and buildings, and will consider them in placement where feasible while meeting safety and engineering requirements.

Who is my point of contact?

Republic Transmission has engaged Contract Land Staff (CLS) to work directly with landowners through acquisition and construction. Land agents from CLS will be reaching out to landowners on the selected route in the coming weeks and months. Landowners can also reach the CLS Project team at 260-208-8085 or Hiple-Helix@contractlandstaff.com.

How can I share feedback or raise a concern as a landowner?

Republic Transmission values transparent communication with landowners throughout permitting, construction and operation of the line. Landowners can share feedback, ask questions, or report a concern at any time by contacting their CLS land agent or using the contact form on the project website.

What are the next steps?

Landowners on the selected route will be notified via mail. Contract Land Staff (CLS) land agents will reach out to those landowners to discuss survey access, the proposed easement, construction, and the anticipated schedule.

Over the coming months, Republic Transmission and its contractors will complete field surveys, detailed engineering, and permitting, and work with landowners on easement agreements, ahead of construction that is expected to begin in 2028.