



energizeEASTSIDE

frequently asked questions

What is Energize Eastside?

The Energize Eastside project will bring new higher capacity electric transmission lines to the Eastside. This effort will upgrade our existing transmission system. The new lines will provide dependable power for all Eastside communities for many years to come.

The new electric transmission lines will extend from an existing substation in Redmond to one in Renton. We won't know the exact route until we've completed a robust public engagement process and evaluation of requirements and constraints, which is currently underway.

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- Will construct approximately 18 miles of electric transmission lines from Redmond to Renton
- Will ensure the Eastside's power system can continue to support the area's dramatic growth
- Route identification occurring now; construction to begin in 2017
- We want to hear from you: find us at pse.com/energizeeastside

Why do we need it?

Much has changed on the Eastside in the last 20 years. Not only have communities grown and prospered, but the way we use electricity has changed—we plug in more devices and build bigger homes. Demand for electricity has grown dramatically, and it's time for our infrastructure to catch up.

Economic development and job growth on the Eastside depend on a robust electrical transmission system. The Bellevue-Redmond area has become a major regional economic and employment center with 140,000 jobs and 143 corporate headquarters. Recent growth trends are expected to continue – in fact, the Puget Sound Regional Council recently estimated the Bellevue central district will grow by more than 275% by 2040.

At the same time, this good fortune is straining our region's existing electric system. Growth studies project that demand for reliable power will exceed capacity as early as 2017. We have essentially outgrown the electric system that serves our communities. Without substantial updates, our good fortune could lose momentum.

How will PSE decide where to put the new electric transmission lines?

PSE's planners and engineers analyzed a variety of approaches to address the Eastside's growing energy needs, including reducing demand through conservation, increasing the capacity of

our existing electric transmission lines, generating energy locally, and building new infrastructure. PSE and third-party experts found that bringing new higher capacity electric transmission lines to the Eastside is the best way to meet growing demand.

We haven't yet determined the route new transmission lines will take, but we have identified potential route segments between Renton and Redmond, shown on the map to the right. We considered several factors to develop these segments, including geography, land use and impacts to the environment.

We are asking the public to provide input on which combination of route segments best serve the Eastside's needs. After collecting feedback from the public, a Community Advisory Group and other stakeholders, PSE will further evaluate requirements and constraints and select the preferred route and substation to move forward for final design, environmental review and permitting.

How will the public be involved?

It takes years to plan, permit and construct new electric transmission lines, which is why we are getting started now. Throughout 2014, PSE will engage our community in a conversation to identify a solution that works best for the Eastside. We will ask the public to provide input on which combination of route segments best serves the Eastside's needs. We will work with property owners, residents, businesses, hospitals and elected officials to reduce the impacts wherever possible.

Potential route segments



Route options will be configured to go from segment A to segment N and connect with one of the potential substation sites. Visit pse.com/energizeeastside to view the project route segments.

We are reaching out in a variety of ways and encourage you to get involved.

You can:

- Attend and observe Community Advisory Group meetings.
- Participate in community meetings.
- Send us your comments and questions via email at energizeeastside@pse.com or voicemail at 1-800-548-2614.
- Invite PSE to give an informational briefing at your neighborhood or community group meetings.
- Review the project website at pse.com/energizeeastside for the latest information.

When will construction start?

We plan to start construction in 2017, after a thorough public process. See pse.com/energizeeastside for details.

Who is building this project?

Puget Sound Energy will build, own and operate the new transmission line as part of our larger electrical transmission and delivery system that serves the region.

PSE has been meeting the Puget Sound region's energy needs for more than 135 years and is one of America's leading utility developers of wind power. We promote the development of other renewable resources as well, including solar power.

Throughout the assessment and design of this project, PSE has engaged consultants and contractors who are respected in their fields for the quality of their work, third-party perspective and their attention to detail. As we collaborate with the public during the route identification, permitting and construction phases, we will continue to engage some of the country's best consultants and contractors.

Can we conserve our way out of needing this project?

Over the past few decades, PSE has taken significant steps to get the most out of the electric system. In fact, through upgraded lighting, appliances and equipment, increased weatherization, and energy-efficient building technologies, PSE customers helped us save enough electricity to power 30,000 homes in 2012.

However, conservation alone won't create the capacity to keep up with our region's growth. Our Eastside economy and population are growing far faster than our conservation efforts can keep up and without substantial electric infrastructure upgrades, tens of thousands of residents and businesses will be at risk of more frequent and longer outages.

What about undergrounding? Can PSE bury the line?

While underground lines limit the visual impact compared to overhead lines, there are other factors to consider such as additional financial and environmental costs.

- *Putting power lines underground can have bigger environmental and neighborhood impacts.* Undergrounding transmission lines requires extensive vegetation removal, trenching and installation of large (20 feet x 30 feet) access vaults every quarter mile and can be very disruptive to neighborhoods and the environment.
- *Longer repair times for underground lines.* Repairs are much more difficult with underground lines, too. When an overhead line fails, our crews can often repair it within hours. Repair of underground transmission lines can take days and even weeks, depending on the repairs that need to be made.

- *Underground transmission lines cost more than overhead lines.* Our studies indicate that the cost of installing underground transmission lines in our area will cost three to six times the cost of overhead lines, and, if required by a local government, the difference cannot be passed on to PSE's customer base. Local customers who benefit must pay the difference, which could exceed \$25 million per mile.

What about EMF (electromagnetic fields)?

All of us depend on electricity to meet basic needs such as heating, cooling and lighting of our homes. EMF or electric and magnetic fields are found wherever there is electricity – in household wiring, electrical appliances, computers or power lines. We are surrounded by EMF in our daily lives.

Over the past 30 years, there have been many scientific studies conducted to determine if EMF has any effect on human health. To date, the scientific community has concluded that current evidence does not support the existence of any health consequences from exposure to EMF.

PSE understands that local residents may still wish to learn more. In an effort to educate our customers and neighbors on EMF, PSE will hire an expert to perform EMF modeling to characterize the existing and potential EMF measurements in possible corridors, and what EMF measurements might be generated in the final project design.

At PSE, safety is always our top priority and we are committed to keeping our customers informed. For more details about EMF studies, exposure limits and PSE's approach to EMF, visit www.pse.com/safety/ElectricSafety/Pages/Electromagnetic-Fields.aspx.

Who will pay for the project and how much will it cost?

Upgrades or additions to the electric infrastructure are shared by all of PSE's 1.1 million electric customers and paid for over time. Impacts to individual residential power bills will be small.

We don't yet know the total cost of the project, but estimates range from \$150 million to \$290 million. Once we select the route and determine the final design and alignment, we will have a better idea of the total cost.

For additional information/questions please visit our project website at

pse.com/energizeeastside or contact:

- **Leann Kostek**, Senior Project Manager
- **Cody Olson**, Community Projects Manager

We also welcome your comments and questions on the Energize Eastside project at energizeeastside@pse.com, or you can call the project voicemail at 1-800-548-2614.