

Consolidated Transmission Planning

Issue Description

MISO currently performs reliability and economic planning studies through the MTEP processes and interconnection and transmission service request studies within separate transmission planning processes. There are currently efforts underway in the Planning Advisory Committee and the Planning Subcommittee to better align the timing and study assumptions between these processes to facilitate better coordination, more consistent study results and the identification of more cost-effective network upgrades that can meet multiple transmission needs. These efforts have resulted from the issues identified by the Coordinated Planning Process Task Team (CPPTT)¹. These efforts can best be called “Coordinated Planning”.

The Integrated Roadmap item IR090² is focused on “Consolidated Planning”. While coordination of planning efforts can be beneficial in the short term, IR090 argued that ultimately the greatest benefits to consumers would be the implementation of a Consolidated Transmission Planning process, where some or all of the existing planning silos are combined so that multiple transmission needs (reliability, economic, interconnection, replacement of aging assets etc.) can be considered at the same time. This has greater potential to ensure comparable treatment and to increase MISO’s ability to identify the most cost effective transmission and non-transmission solutions to the regions existing and future transmission needs.

Consideration of Coordinated Planning and Consolidated Planning where transmission upgrades meet multiple needs and have multiple beneficiaries raises questions of cost allocation. It remains important that GI customers and utilities continue to receive appropriate price signals regarding the most cost effective locations to interconnect at the same time we work to ensure that the costs of building out of the regional grid are fairly shared among the cost-causers and

¹ The CPPTT identified additional issues that are also being worked on, but that do not fall under the category of Coordinated Planning.

² IR #90 states: “Develop a process by which MISO consolidates, to the maximum extent possible, the transmission needs identified as the basis for smaller projects in Appendices A and B as well as the needs driving the advanced projects in the interconnection queue to develop larger, more comprehensive projects that would meet the needs for the smaller projects in a more cost effective way. Additionally, if the TO’s also provided lists of other transmission assets that were nearing the end of their useful lives and in-need of a rebuild say within 10 or 20 years, MISO could incorporate those needs within the same process. In short, MISO should be planning for the consolidated needs of the projects specified under the bottom up approach as is required under Attachment FF. The result could be a system that more efficiently meets the various needs on the system and is also more capable of timely accepting proposed interconnections and thereby providing more energy choices for utilities and consumers.” <https://www.misoenergy.org/stakeholder-engagement/issue-tracking/consolidated-transmission-planning/>

beneficiaries. There are reasonable questions being asked about whether the current cost-allocation tariff provides the proper tools to allocate those costs appropriately. Transparent evaluation of benefits, cost causers, and beneficiaries as well as a consideration of FERC cost allocation principles will be helpful as MISO's cost allocation approaches are considered.

Ultimately, the idea of a consolidated transmission planning process is to optimize transmission planning to fairly and efficiently evaluate the potential solutions that could be deployed to address all types of future needs including the rapidly changing generation portfolio. This effort must seek to facilitate holistic transmission planning that will ensure future transmission expansion plans deliver needed reliability and support state and utility resource plans while being cost-effective for customers.

Potential Questions

As MISO frames the Consolidated Transmission Planning effort³, the following questions are suggested for the AC discussion of this Current Issue:

- Are MISO's current siloed planning processes failing to meet the future needs of MISO members and to identify the most cost effective transmission upgrades to meet those needs? If so, how?
- Can consolidation of MISO's various planning processes (reliability, economic, interconnection, etc.) and consideration of all of these needs at the same time produce a better expansion plan that reduces overall transmission costs?
- What guidelines or principles might be considered by MISO and stakeholders working to develop Consolidated Planning?
- What cost allocation issues must be addressed when moving to Consolidated Planning?
- What are the biggest challenges or barriers to moving to a Consolidated Planning process?
- Is the current roadmap item IR090 scope adequate to expand opportunities for non-transmission alternatives (NTAs) and for improvements to the efficiency of the existing grid (e.g., dynamic line rating and impedance controls)?

³ Reminder: "Consolidated Planning is different from "Coordinated Planning" that simply aligns the timing of planning processes and compares results of the various silos.