Common Questions About the Valley North Project

Misconception: "The public is being shut out of the process."

Fact: Public engagement is a core part of the Valley North planning process. Valley Link is planning multiple rounds of open houses and public meetings to gather feedback from landowners and residents before a route is selected. Open houses are not public hearings. They are specifically designed to allow individual stakeholders to meet with individual experts (i.e. landowners to review their parcel and ask questions). Feedback received from communities is incorporated into route evaluation and refinement. The open-house format also allows residents to speak directly with engineering, environmental and right-of-way experts and receive answers to their specific concerns. Valley Link is also utilizing an interactive map on its website that allows landowners and others to review study segments and provide comments.

Misconception: "The route has already been chosen."

Fact: No final route has been selected. In fact, Valley Link is seeking public input before routes are developed. The Valley North team has decided to do two rounds of open houses. During the first round in June and July 2026, only study segments have been developed. The team is engaging the public very early in the process, but the company wants feedback to refine potential routes. This feedback, as well as technical requirements and environmental considerations, will be considered before potential routes are developed. The team will then do another round of open houses in the fall to once again solicit feedback, before a preferred and alternate route are submitted to the Public Service Commission, which ultimately votes on the project and a route.

Misconception: "West Virginia doesn't need this project – it's only for Virginia."

Fact: Valley North will make reliable power available for future economic development projects in West Virginia. As the grid demands grow, less power is available for big developments in West Virginia. New transmission lines ensure that power will be available to future business and development in West Virginia. The electric grid operates as an interconnected regional system. PJM, the independent grid operator serving 13 states and Washington, D.C., identified the need for additional transmission infrastructure to maintain reliability and meet rapidly growing electricity demand throughout the region. Valley North was selected through PJM's competitive planning process because it addresses regional reliability needs that affect customers across multiple states, including West Virginia.

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The Valley North Project strengthens the underlying system that supports everything from homes and small businesses to hospitals, schools and emergency services. It's not about sending power somewhere else. A helpful way to think about it is like an interstate highway for electricity. Even if traffic is passing through, local communities benefit because the highway reduces congestion, improves access and allows for local "off ramps" that support future growth and reliability.

Misconception: "West Virginia is just becoming an extension cord for data centers."

Fact: Valley North is designed to strengthen the backbone of the regional electric grid. Reliable electricity supports manufacturing, agriculture, healthcare, education, small businesses, residential customers and emerging industries across the region – including in West Virginia. PJM identified the project as necessary to maintain reliability and support future energy demand growth, not to serve a single customer or industry. Without Valley Link, West Virginia is limiting available power for future economic development projects.

Misconception: "Valley Link is going to take people's land."

Fact: Property owners maintain ownership of their land. Valley Link seeks to acquire easements, not ownership of entire properties, and compensates landowners based on appraisals and negotiations. Many existing uses of the property – including farming, grazing and access roads – can continue after construction. Eminent domain would only be considered as a last resort if no viable alternatives exist.

Misconception: "The project will destroy West Virginia's environment."

Fact: Environmental stewardship is a major factor in route selection. Valley Link conducts environmental studies and works with agencies such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, EPA and Army Corps of Engineers to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts. The project team evaluates wildlife habitat, wetlands, streams, historic resources and threatened or endangered species before routes are finalized. Impacted areas are restored following construction.

Misconception: "The EMF from transmission lines causes cancer and other serious health problems."

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Fact: Electric and magnetic fields (EMF) are produced whenever electricity is used. Decades of research conducted by organizations including the World Health Organization and National Cancer Institute have not established a cause-and-effect relationship between power-line EMF exposure and adverse health effects. Valley Link is also conducting EMF modeling for the project and plans to submit those findings during the regulatory process. Learn more about EMF on this online tool on Valley Link's website: Valley Link: Electric and Magnetic Fields and Health

Misconception: "They could just bury the line underground."

Fact: Underground 765-kV transmission lines are not a proven or practical technology. There are no underground 765-kV transmission lines operating anywhere in the world. Underground construction would also involve significantly greater costs to ratepayers, longer outage-repair times, more extensive ground disturbance and greater impacts on utility customers. Valley Link determined that an overhead 765-kV line is the most practical solution for meeting regional reliability needs.

Misconception: "West Virginia communities won't see any benefits from this project."

Fact: Valley North is expected to create construction jobs, generate local tax revenue, support local businesses and strengthen electric infrastructure necessary for future economic development. In fact, the Valley North line can be utilized by future development projects in West Virginia, which strengthens West Virginia's position in the competition for new businesses looking for places to locate. Every $1 invested in infrastructure can generate up to $1.50–$2.50 in broader economic activity, amplifying these local benefits over time.

Access to reliable electric service is increasingly critical for agriculture, manufacturing, healthcare, logistics and technology-dependent industries – and the Valley North line can provide that potential interconnection for new or growing industries within its path.

Misconception: "This is just PATH 2.0."
Fact: Valley North is a separate project from PATH. It was developed under a different PJM planning process, addresses different reliability needs and is supported by different technical analyses.

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Misconception: "Farmers won't be able to use their land."

Fact: Normal agricultural activities – including planting, harvesting, grazing livestock and operating farm equipment – can and do continue beneath transmission lines. Easement areas remain productive farmland in locations throughout the country.

Misconception: "My electric bill is going to skyrocket."

Fact: Transmission costs are spread across millions of customers in the regional PJM system and recovered over the life of the asset, which is typically 60 years. Customer impacts will be relatively small compared to overall electric bills.

Misconception: "Property values automatically decline near transmission lines."

Fact: Appraisal research has found that transmission lines do not systematically reduce property values. Communities may also benefit from increased tax revenues and infrastructure investment associated with the project.