



# FEASIBILITY STUDY

2020-12-17



## Executive Summary

MLEC (Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative) is a not-for-profit, electric distribution cooperative owned by the members they serve. They provide service to over 13,000 members in parts of Aitkin, Crow Wing, and Mille Lacs counties and their headquarters is located at 36559 US Highway 169, one mile east of Aitkin, MN.

The current site and buildings have served as the MLEC headquarters since the 1960's however, it has become increasingly apparent, that the existing facilities have reached the limit of their effectiveness. Facilities play an important role in supporting the functions of any organization and MLEC is now in the position to review their current facilities within the context of how they accommodate their current needs and how it can accommodate anticipated growth and future needs. The appropriate design solution will allow MLEC to continue to deliver safe reliable electricity, continue to build out the MLEC Fiber Internet network, operate effectively, efficiently, and allow MLEC to serve its members in the best possible way.

To ensure an accountable response to addressing its space needs, MLEC undertook a needs assessment process for their current facility. Facility and site needs were identified and prioritized which are accompanied with associated project costs, renovation and new construction options were considered on the existing site and a new site. MLEC also provided department analysis for their current and future needs, in an attempt to quantify the required space as well as how the departments should be configured to optimize operational efficiency.

Upon review of the existing site, facilities and department analysis, Widseth recommends that MLEC pursue a location that allows them to serve their membership effectively while minimizing the cost to each member. Identifying a new strategic location for a new facility will position MLEC within close proximity to the majority of the member density for fast and effective response times and service.

The demand for increased services indicates a real need for improved facilities. A new facility is the most appropriate, cost-effective, flexible, and responsible solution that allows MLEC to serve the membership effectively while minimizing the cost to MLEC Members.

As a result of this process, Widseth recommends constructing a new 69,240 square foot facility on a new 31.5 acre site. Please refer to the following assessment that contains information illustrating how we arrived at this conclusion.



*Existing MLEC Site Plan*



**Proposed MLEC Site Plan**