

RESOLUTION NO. 1236

A RESOLUTION expressing concern over siting 500 Kv power lines above ground and within the City of Camas and requesting the appropriate authority to consider alternatives to placement of said power lines through the City of Camas as part of an alternatives analysis included in an environmental impact statement.

WHEREAS, the Camas City Council is the legislative body of the City of Camas and has adopted Comprehensive Plans and Ordinances setting forth the public vision and proper regulation of the public health, safety and welfare, and

WHEREAS, the Bonneville Power Administration is currently preparing a Draft Environment Impact Statement on a project identified as the I-5 Corridor Reinforcement Project, and

WHEREAS, the Bonneville Power Administration is currently considering no alternative to the funneling of a 500Kv power line above ground and through the City of Camas, and

WHEREAS, the Bonneville Power Administration has taken a position that it will not consider nor comply with the vision of the citizenry of the City of Camas as expressed through its public policy, and

WHEREAS, the Camas City Council held multiple workshops and meetings on this topic to gain information and hear from the public, and

WHEREAS, as a result of these meetings the Mayor of Camas felt compelled to express a position of the City of Camas to the Bonneville Power Administration through a letter dated March 19, 2012, attached as EXHIBIT "A".

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CAMAS AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION I

We urge the appropriate authorities to insist that Bonneville Power Administration consider and select alternatives, through the alternatives analysis portion of an environmental impact statement, that route the I-5 Corridor Reinforcement Project away from the urban area known as the City of Camas, and to further insist that no alternative be considered that includes routing of power lines above ground through the City of Camas.

SECTION II

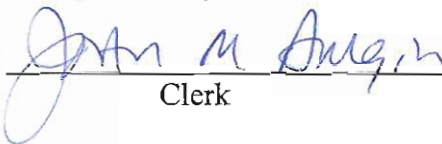
We have read, understand and fully support the ideas, positions and recommendations set forth in EXHIBIT "A".

SECTION III

We urge appropriate authorities to support the City of Camas in the realization of our vision for economic development opportunities and for the place we call home.

ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Council of the City of Camas this 19th day of ~~May~~, 2012.
March

SIGNED: 
Mayor

ATTEST: 
Clerk

APPROVED as to form:



City Attorney

Exhibit "A"

March 19, 2012

I-5 Corridor Reinforcement Project
P.O. Box 9250
Portland, Oregon 97207

RE: City of Camas Comment on Alternatives and Options for the Bonneville Power Administration, I-5 Corridor Reinforcement project.

BPA Comment Coordinator,

The following comments are offered in advance of a draft Environmental Impact Statement (E.I.S.) and reflect the position of the Camas community, the Camas City Council and that of the Mayor of Camas, related to the current status and proposed alternatives being considered by the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). These comments are additionally offered in advance of the draft Environmental Impact Statement (E.I.S.) anticipated to be released this spring.

1. **Routes (Generally):** The draft E.I.S. will include alternative transmission routes. In tracking the progress, it appears clear that all routes being analyzed lead to and through Camas. This concerns our community and invites the question, what alternatives does Camas have?

Camas is requesting that BPA expand the scope of the E.I.S. process to consider and evaluate in the E.I.S. alternative routes east of Clark County into Skamania County and across the Bonneville Dam.

2. **The Camas Vision:** Camas has a magnificent natural setting of greenery, mountains, and water; visual amenities and opportunities are an integral part of the city's environmental quality. As such, a focus of Camas' policies place emphasis on the protection of public views of significant natural and man-made features including views of the Columbia River, Lacamas Lake and the Washougal River. These include public places consisting of viewpoints, parks, scenic routes, and view corridors indentified in the City of Camas Comprehensive Plan, Camas Shoreline Master Plan, and the Comprehensive Park and Recreation plan. Additional adopted policies related to protection of public views are adopted under Camas Municipal Code (CMC 16.33.010).

As noted in a letter dated December 2009 to BPA from the Camas Community Development Director, Phil Bourquin, the City passed Ordinance 2030 in 1995 with findings, regulating electrical transmission lines and distribution facilities through Camas. This ordinance is based upon strong community values; the desire and need

to eliminate or minimize health and safety risks; to preserve property values; and to promote the general welfare by enhancing the livability of the Camas community.

Disappointment was the word of the day, when our City Council, during the course of our Annual Planning Conference on January 28, 2012, became aware that through an internal email in October of 2009, BPA had administratively decided not to consider the City of Camas Ordinance 2030 as “*a viable project option*” citing an opinion that the “*City of Camas adopted a very restrictive municipal ordinance*”, that “*...includes limits on EMF exposure (which would not be obtainable with respect to our proposed project) and/or a requirement to underground the transmission line, which would present a number of serious problems (associated with cost, reliability, and maintainability)...*”.

As Mayor, I insist our organization be one that seeks to embrace positive solutions to difficult challenges and to do so openly. The internal decision of BPA was quite contrary. I find placing the opinions of one or more internal staffers over and beyond the expression of an entire community through public policy, an abhorrent practice and one I would urge BPA to quickly work to resolve. If BPA has information that is contrary to the findings of the City, we are open to a public exchange of BPA assumptions and data. Camas in-turn is open to sharing the success we have had in placing underground transmission lines through our community, share the positive impact on the livability of our neighborhoods the project produced, and the ongoing corporate kinship we now enjoy with the undergrounding utility (Clark PUD).

In terms of reliability and costs, our research suggests that overhead lines are exposed to more elements that cause them to fail, turn off or need to be periodically maintained including, wind, ice, lightning, contamination, trees and so forth. While it is understood that when underground transmission lines fail, the repair process usually takes longer and costs more per occurrence. However, because undergrounding requires less routine maintenance, a case can be made for underground transmission lines having a lower lifetime cost. At the end of the day, if BPA were to examine the root causes of distribution system reliability indices (CAIFA, SAIDI, and the like) transmission system outages are nowhere near the top 10 causes, and therefore reliability of undergrounding is a nonissue.¹

In evaluating alternatives and options overhead transmission lines are cheaper to initially construct (4-14 times more for underground), but consider the overall cost to the ratepayers over the life of the project (50 yrs plus for underground), the cost to impacted property owners in lost property values, municipalities in lost revenues (property and sales taxes) over the life of the project, increased costs of extending roads, water and sewer through areas of non-use, and impact to the natural and human environment of Camas.²

Camas insists that within our city limits and urban growth area, the only acceptable

¹ Transmission and Distribution World, April 1, 2006, by Vito Longo

² Engineering News Record, January 23, 2012, Brian Dorwart

means by which additional transmission lines and facilities could be routed would be by underground transmission in accordance with our adopted Ordinances. We value our environmental resources; our recreational resources are prized, and where people live, work and breathe absolutely matter. Any alternative method would have a significant negative effect on our views, our vision, our residents, business, land values, municipal infrastructure costs and maintenance, and the use and enjoyment of our protected open spaces.

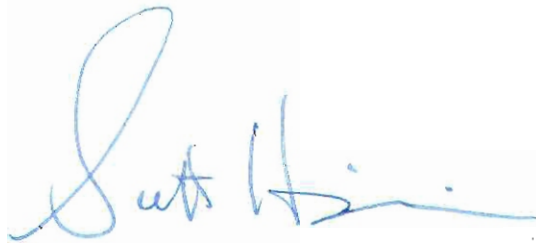
3. **Routes (Specifically):** Our community is concerned with 1) EMF impacts from the towers on existing, approved or planned businesses and residences; 2) Economic impacts to the City through lost revenues; 3) Environmental impacts associated with the placement of lines and maintenance roads, maintenance practices, and compliance with the goals and policies of the State of Washington Shoreline Management Act as it relates to Lacamas Creek, the Washougal River and the Columbia River; 4) Ice fall zones around transmission towers and impacts on pedestrians, vehicles, residences, highways and other; 5) Views of Green Mountain toward Lacamas Lake, views of the Columbia River Gorge, and overall aesthetics throughout the City.
- Segments 40, 44 and 46 run through the Camas Meadows Corporate Center which includes several technology related industries including Logitech, Plexys, Lightfleet, Reality Engineering and C.I.D. as well as professional offices in a natural and park like setting. Additionally, several employment ready lots are currently available. This segment runs through the Two Creeks Residential Development with 45 dwelling units occupied, 4 units under permit review and a total of 123 units at buildout. Much of the open space surrounding these uses include the Camas Meadows Golf Course, a regional trail system, Camp Curry Regional Park and protected sensitive lands including, wetlands, Oregon White Oak, and Bradshaw Lomatia.
 - Segments 41 and 50 run through areas that were annexed into the City of Camas in 2008 with agreements in place involving significant master planning efforts to accommodate growth of the City over a 20 year planning period. These areas include significant views of Lacamas Lake from Green Mountain; portions of the Camp Curry Regional Park, the planned economic development area of the North Shore of Lacamas Lake and heading south east across SR500 into an area annexed in 2011, adjacent to the Camas High School.
 - Segment 52 runs through: 1) The existing established Goot Park neighborhood; adjacent to an approved 47 unit residential development along SE 3rd Avenue; 2) Through City owned and developed open spaces including parking areas, trails, picnic areas, fishing, wetlands, and salmon spawning areas; 3) Along Highway 14 and crossing over to Lady Island.

4. **City Watershed and BPA Herbicide use to control underbrush:** This is particularly important in the water shed alternative (section 34, 35, and Q) that is used as a potable water source which includes public consumption and industrial process water that can be impacted by impurities. Mechanical removal should be the only viable alternative for brush control and should take into consideration erosion and other water quality impacts in analyzing this alignment. Road spurs to access the line can add significant runoff and erosion issues. Direct discharge to streams should be addressed to account for sediment and increased stream flow (scouring impacts) due to added hard surface and removal of the tree canopy for water uptake. The use of herbicide for brush control in Section 52 and the NUGA line is also of concern. The Washougal River is a critical habitat for 5 threatened salmonid species and has urban densities that would not be conducive to the use of chemical applications. Our NPDES phase 2 permit and local compliance documents again lists mechanical means of removal as the preferred alternative to vegetation control when required.

The City of Camas is currently developing of a forest management plan to provide sustainable logging practices within the City owned portion of the water shed. Power line installation and the permanent deforestation that would occur may take a significant area out of the possible land available for a sustainable forestry plan reducing the overall sustainability and income generation potential of the property. This could have long term rate impacts to the City utility customers. Exchanging BPA profits at the cost to City of Camas ratepayers is not an acceptable alternative.

The City of Camas will maintain its livability and continue to be the great place many call home. We invite you to work with us in this ongoing effort and look forward to working with you in finding effective solutions consistent with our community values.

Sincerely,



Scott Higgins
Mayor City of Camas

- c. U.S. Senator Cantwell
U.S. Senator Murray
U.S. Congresswoman Herrera-Beutler