



October 7, 2021

Puget Sound Energy (PSE)
Via email: Kierra.Phifer@pse.com

RE: City of Bainbridge Island Response to Puget Sound Energy "Missing Link" Project

Dear Ms. Phifer:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written comments to Puget Sound Energy (PSE) on the presentation that was provided to the City Council at their regular meeting of July 20, 2021. That presentation included an overview of the "Missing Link" transmission line route options, which we understand to be the construction of a new electric transmission line between the Murden Cove and Winslow substations. This new line is expected to improve electric service reliability, reducing the frequency and duration of power outages for customers on Bainbridge Island. The City Council acknowledges that the selection of the specific transmission line route is PSE's, nevertheless, the City feels compelled to ensure the option selected meets the needs of our residents.

Overall, the City of Bainbridge Island supports PSE's efforts to improve the reliability and redundancy of the City's electric distribution system. Clean and dependable energy is a keystone in the City's Climate Action plan and is critical for supporting the transition to electric vehicles, transit systems, and other technologies that will contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

We welcome the opportunity to offer our support for an approach to the transmission line project alternative that balances needed service improvements with impacts on equity, the environment and community health. Therefore, we look forward to learning more about how PSE is approaching the following aspects of the alternatives analysis:

- The transmission line route options include areas that are located in proximity to vulnerable populations, public schools, and day care centers. Please provide the City with the information and analysis on how equity was considered and mitigated for the chosen alternative, particularly as it relates to vulnerable populations and youth, including accessible public outreach opportunities for these communities.
- There are several transmission line route options that would impact environmentally critical areas such as wetlands, and heritage trees. Please provide the City with the information and analysis on how environmental impacts were considered and mitigated for the chosen alternative, including potential impacts on the natural environment, consistency with the City's current environmental regulations, and impacts on residents who live in developed areas where vegetation is limited and is critical for quality of life.

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- Please provide the City with the information and analysis on how the cost-benefit analysis of undergrounding transmission lines was considered, particularly in light of comments from the Bainbridge Island Fire District regarding consideration of how fallen transmission lines can obstruct roadways and evacuation routes in the event of a major emergency. At a minimum, undergrounding should be considered in proximity to Fire Station 21's emergency helipad, which will greatly improve safety for air ambulance operations providing services for our community.
- Lastly, please provide the City with clarification and information regarding the need for this project, including system reliability data in the different areas of the Island, including information related to the specific system outages and locations that the project is expected to address; outage comparisons with other similar communities in the region; and, the cost-benefit analysis of this project as compared with other potential solutions.

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit our comments on your proposals for reliability projects. We look forward to continuing our work with you on this endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Blair King", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Blair King
City Manager