

AGENDA ITEM FOR ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING () Discussion only
(X) Action

FROM (DEPT/ DIVISION): Community Development Department

SUBJECT: Comments on Umatilla-Morrow Connect Transmission Line Preliminary Application for Site Certificate

<p>Background: Umatilla Electric Cooperative proposes a 230 kV transmission line to connect UEC's Highway 730 Switchyard (Morrow County) and Ordinance Switchyard (Umatilla County) to increase their system's reliability. The portion within Umatilla County is primarily located on lands owned by the Columbia Development Authority. Umatilla County Community Development Department, as Special Advisory Group, has conducted a review of the submitted preliminary application and has prepared a comment letter to be sent on behalf of the Umatilla County Board of Commissioners.</p>	<p>Requested Action: Approve and authorize Chair to sign comment letter to be sent to Oregon EFSC.</p>
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ATTACHMENTS: Proposed pASC Comment Letter

Date: (8/7/2025) Submitted By: Megan Davchevski, Planning Division Manager

*****For Internal Use Only*****

Checkoffs:

- () Dept. Head (copy)
- () Human Resources (copy)
- () Fiscal
- () Legal (copy)
- () (Other - List:)

To be notified of Meeting:
Robert Waldher, Megan Davchevski

Needed at Meeting:

Scheduled for meeting on: August 13, 2025

Action taken:

Follow-up:



Board of Commissioners

216 S. E. 4th Street
Pendleton, OR 97801
541-278-6204

Daniel N. Dorran
541-278-6201

John M. Shafer
541-278-6203

Celinda A. Timmons
541-278-6202

August 13, 2025

Oregon Department of Energy
Attn: Christopher Clark, Senior Siting Analyst
550 Capital Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Umatilla-Morrow County Connect Transmission Line
Response to Preliminary Application for Site Certificate

Dear Mr. Clark:

The Council has appointed the Umatilla County Board of Commissioners (Board) as a Special Advisory Group. We appreciate the opportunity to review the pASC and provide the following comments.

The Umatilla County Development Code (UCDC) and Comprehensive Plan documents effective on May 29, 2025 are available online at the following links:

https://co.umatilla.or.us/fileadmin/user_upload/Planning/Umatilla_County_Comp_Plan_4-29-2025.pdf

https://umatillacounty.net/fileadmin/user_upload/Planning/Umatilla_County_Development_Code_May_7_2025.pdf

The Board provides the following responses to your specific requests:

1)

a. The pASC maps have a different site boundary than the maps provided in the NOI. The new site boundary within Umatilla County does not include lands zoned Exclusive Farm Use (EFU), therefore the EFU development standards are no longer required to be addressed. The code sections that specifically apply within the EFU zone are UCDC 152.059 and UCDC 152.617(II)(7). Should the site boundary be amended to include lands zoned EFU, these provisions would once again be applicable and required to be addressed.

Since the County's response to the NOI, there have not been any amendments or changes to the recommended applicable substantive criteria.

b. The Comprehensive Plan Policies not implemented through the Development Code have been addressed in Exhibit K.

c. Umatilla County finds the following applicable substantive criteria are not currently satisfied:

1. UCDC 152.240 Master Plan and Design Review on lands zoned Depot Industrial (DI) (Exhibit K, page 30). This section is listed but not addressed by the applicant. The specific code language is:

(A) Master Plan Required for Subarea 1. A master plan is required prior to issuance of a zoning permit for development in Subarea 1 because of the unique size and location characteristics of the subarea and the potential range of uses.

The UCDC defines development as: Any man-made change to improved or unimproved real estate, including, but not limited to, construction, installation or change of a building or other structure, land division, establishment or termination or a right of access, storage on the land, tree cutting, drilling and site alteration such as that due to land surface mining, dredging, grading, paving, excavation or clearing.

The UCDC defines structure as: Something constructed or built and having a fixed base on, or fixed connection to, the ground or another structure. Any constructed or erected object which requires location on the ground or is attached to something located on the ground. Structures include but are not limited to buildings, decks, fences, signs, masts and towers, flagpoles, antennas, smokestacks, earth formations and **utility poles for overhead transmission lines**. Structures do not include paved areas.

The proposed transmission line will be located within the Depot Industrial Subarea 1. A local Zoning Permit will be required for the utility poles and overhead transmission line. Prior to issuance of a Zoning Permit for any development (including a transmission line), a Master Plan is required to be submitted and reviewed in accordance with UCDC 152.240.

At the time of this letter, a Master Plan for Subarea 1 has not been submitted. While Umatilla County acknowledges this is not the burden of UEC, but rather the landowner, it is a pre-requisite to obtaining any Zoning Permits.

2. In the Light Industrial (LI) zone, a utility facility may be permitted with a Conditional Use Permit, as stated in UCDC 152.303(18) and outlined 152.616(CCC), also applicable is 152.615. Although 152.615 and 152.616(CCC) are addressed elsewhere in Exhibit K, section 2.6.4 (Exhibit K, page 31) is misleading in only referencing that a zoning permit is required.

- 2) Umatilla County recommends that a combination of the substantive criteria and statewide planning goals be evaluated when considering approval of this facility.

- 3) Umatilla County recommends that the local fire protection district, Umatilla County Fire District #1 be consulted on the Wildfire Prevention and Risk Mitigation Plan.

- 4) Umatilla County has not received any land use permits from UEC for the proposed facility at this time. Necessary permits include a Conditional Use Permit, Zoning Permits and Access/Utility Permits. Access and Utility Permits may be obtained from County Public Works.

Comments regarding Exhibits are in the ODOE provided table below.

Umatilla-Morrow County Connect Project Comments on the preliminary Application for Site Certificate (pASC) From Umatilla County Board of Commissioners			
Exhibit	Rule/ Ordinance/Law Reference	Pg. / Para. / Sentence Reference (as needed)	Comment or Information Request
K		Pg. 34 Section 2.6.8	The section states an Emergency Response Plan is viewable if requested. Review and approval by Umatilla County Emergency Management should be added as a condition of approval.
F		Pg. 10 Map/Tax Lot 4N2725A000201	Owner is Madison Ranches Land 1 LLC 29299 Madison Road Echo OR 97826
F		Pg. 11 Map/Tax Lot 4N27000200	Owner is Columbia Development Authority PO Box 200 Boardman OR 97818
U		Pg. 3 sub 2.3.6	Umatilla County has Solid Waste Franchise agreements. For this project, all waste located on the Umatilla County side shall be disposed of with Sanitary Disposal. This should be added as a condition of approval.
V			Several pages of the Wildfire Mitigation Plan contain redacted paragraphs and mapping. Non-redacted versions should be shared with local fire districts and Umatilla County Emergency Manager. This should be added as a condition of approval.
W		Pg. 8	Umatilla County has Solid Waste Franchise agreements. For this project, all waste located on the Umatilla County side shall be disposed of with Sanitary

			Disposal. This should be added as a condition of approval.
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Emergency Response

As previously commented in the County's response to the NOI and in the table above, an emergency response plan is expected to be prepared and submitted to Umatilla County Emergency Management. The County is requesting that this document be provided. The Emergency Response Plan will be reviewed and acknowledged by the local Emergency Manager, Sage Delong.

In conclusion, the County appreciates the opportunity to work with the Department on review of the pASC for this proposed facility, and will likely have additional comments as we continue our review and evaluate any applicant responses to the information requested in this comment letter.

Sincerely,

Celinda A. Timmons,
Chair
Umatilla County Board of Commissioners

CC: Doug Olsen, Umatilla County Counsel
Robert Waldher, Community Development Director
Megan Davchevski, Planning Division Manager
Umatilla County Planning Commission
Tom Fellows, Umatilla County Public Works Director
Sage Delong, Umatilla County Emergency Manager
Dawn Hert, DLCD Regional Representative
City of Umatilla
City of Hermiston
Ken Patterson, Manager, Oregon Department of Transportation, Region 5
Teresa Penninger, Oregon Department of Transportation, Region 5
Tamra Mabbot, Morrow County Planning Director