

TOWN OF BELOIT

RESOLUTION NO. 26-10

RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE ROUTING AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE PROPOSED BELL CENTER–COLUMBIA–SUGAR CREEK–ILLINOIS/WISCONSIN STATE LINE (BECI) 765-kV HIGH-VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION LINE THROUGH THE TOWN OF BELOIT, ROCK COUNTY, WISCONSIN

WHEREAS, the Town of Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin, is a community characterized by established residential neighborhoods, rural residences, productive farmland, agricultural lands, woodlands, wetlands, waterways, open space, wildlife habitat, and other natural and community resources that contribute substantially to the Town's economy, environment, community character, and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, generations of Town of Beloit residents, farmers, and property owners have invested in, maintained, farmed, protected, and preserved these lands and natural resources, which remain an important part of the Town's identity, tax base, agricultural economy, residential character, and future; and

WHEREAS, the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, Inc. (MISO) has approved the Bell Center–Columbia–Sugar Creek–Illinois/Wisconsin State Line 765-kV Competitive Transmission Project ("BECI") as part of its Long-Range Transmission Planning portfolio, and Midcontinent Grid Solutions has been selected to develop the project; and

WHEREAS, the BECI Project is proposed to consist of approximately 190 miles of new single-circuit 765-kV transmission facilities extending across Wisconsin to an interconnection at the Illinois/Wisconsin state line, and a final transmission-line route has not yet been selected; and

WHEREAS, BECI is a regional bulk-transmission project and is not being proposed specifically to meet a demonstrated local electric need within the Town of Beloit; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board recognizes that regional transmission facilities may provide benefits to the broader electric system, but communities through which such facilities are routed may nevertheless bear significant and disproportionate local land-use, agricultural, environmental, economic, and property impacts; and

WHEREAS, construction of a new 765-kV transmission corridor through the Town of Beloit could require substantial rights-of-way and easements, clearing of vegetation, installation of large transmission structures, construction access, and permanent restrictions upon the use and future development of affected property; and

WHEREAS, such a corridor could fragment productive farmland, interfere with farming practices and agricultural operations, affect drainage systems, compact soils, cause crop losses, restrict the use of agricultural property, and reduce the productivity and long-term agricultural value of affected lands; and

WHEREAS, private property owners could be subjected to permanent transmission easements and restrictions affecting land that families have owned, maintained, farmed, improved, and intended to pass to future generations; and

WHEREAS, the proposed corridor could affect wetlands, waterways, woodlands, wildlife habitat, environmental corridors, groundwater and surface-water resources, open space, scenic views, and other natural resources while permanently altering the landscape and character of the Town; and

WHEREAS, a new transmission corridor could also affect property values, residential quality of life, schools, future development opportunities, orderly land-use planning, the Town's tax base, local roads and infrastructure, and the use and enjoyment of private property; and

WHEREAS, once a new transmission corridor is established, its impacts do not end when construction is complete, as transmission structures, easements, vegetation management, access requirements, land-use restrictions, and alterations to the landscape may remain for generations; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board finds that the Town of Beloit should not be required to bear avoidable losses or impacts to private property, productive farmland, agricultural resources, wetlands, waterways, wildlife habitat, natural resources, open space, community character, residential neighborhoods, schools, and future land-use opportunities when reasonable and less-impactful alternatives may exist; and

WISCONSIN TRANSMISSION SITING POLICY

WHEREAS, Wisconsin has established a specific state policy governing the siting of new electric transmission facilities under **Wisconsin Statute § 1.12(6)**; and

WHEREAS, Wis. Stat. § 1.12(6) provides that, to the greatest extent feasible consistent with economic and engineering considerations, reliability of the electric system, and protection of the environment, transmission facilities should utilize corridors in the following order of priority:

(a) Existing utility corridors;

(b) Highway and railroad corridors;

(c) Recreational trails, to the extent provided and applicable under Wisconsin law; and

(d) New corridors; and

WHEREAS, the placement of new corridors as the lowest statutory priority demonstrates Wisconsin's policy preference for utilizing existing infrastructure corridors where feasible rather than unnecessarily creating new corridors across previously unaffected private property, productive farmland, residences, schools, neighborhoods, and natural areas; and

WHEREAS, before the Town of Beloit is asked to bear the permanent impacts of a new 765-kV transmission corridor, the Town Board believes that existing utility corridors and other higher-priority corridors identified under Wisconsin law should be thoroughly and transparently evaluated; and

WHEREAS, if a higher-priority corridor is rejected in favor of establishing a new corridor through the Town of Beloit, affected municipalities, residents, farmers, and property owners deserve a clear explanation of why that alternative was determined not to be feasible; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin's statutory framework for major transmission facilities requires the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin to consider factors including alternative locations or routes, individual hardships, engineering, economic, safety, reliability and environmental considerations, public interest, and interference with orderly land use and development; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board believes that the homes, neighborhoods, farms, private property, wetlands, waterways, agricultural lands, environmental resources, and land-use plans of the Town of Beloit deserve full consideration during that review; and

WHEREAS, the impacts of a project of this magnitude do not stop at municipal boundaries, and the Town of Beloit shares interconnected agricultural lands, waterways, wetlands, environmental resources, transportation systems, and community interests with neighboring Rock County municipalities, including the Towns of Rock, Turtle, and La Prairie; and

WHEREAS, cooperation and communication among affected Rock County municipalities and their residents can help ensure that local concerns are meaningfully represented throughout the BECI planning and regulatory process.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

that the Town Board of the Town of Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin, **formally and unequivocally opposes the routing and construction of the proposed BECI 765-kV high-voltage transmission line through the Town of Beloit**, particularly where such routing would establish a new transmission corridor or cause substantial and avoidable

impacts to residents, private property, productive farmland, agricultural operations, established neighborhoods, wetlands, waterways, woodlands, wildlife habitat, natural resources, property values, land-use planning, or the character and quality of life of the Town.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,

that the Town Board requests that Midcontinent Grid Solutions, MISO, the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, and all other agencies and entities involved in the planning, routing, review, or approval of the BECI Project give full consideration and effect to the transmission-line siting priorities established under **Wis. Stat. § 1.12(6)**.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,

that before any BECI route through the Town of Beloit is selected or approved, the Town Board requests a clear and documented evaluation addressing:

1. Whether existing utility corridors can feasibly accommodate the proposed transmission facilities;
2. Whether highway or railroad corridors can feasibly accommodate the proposed facilities;
3. What existing and alternative corridors were evaluated and the reasons each was accepted or rejected;
4. Why establishment of a new transmission corridor through the Town of Beloit would be necessary if a higher-priority corridor identified under Wis. Stat. § 1.12(6) is reasonably feasible;
5. The anticipated impacts of each proposed route upon residences, schools, established neighborhoods, private property, productive farmland, agricultural operations, wetlands, waterways, woodlands, wildlife habitat, environmentally sensitive areas, property values, local roads, community development, and existing land-use plans;
6. The individual hardships that may be imposed upon affected residents, farmers, and property owners;
7. The cumulative impacts of additional large-scale energy and infrastructure development upon the Town of Beloit and surrounding Rock County communities; and
8. What measures have been considered to avoid, minimize, or mitigate those impacts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,

that the Town Board urges the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin to carefully evaluate whether any proposed BECI route through the Town of Beloit satisfies all applicable requirements of **Wis. Stat. § 196.491**, including applicable considerations relating to alternative routes, individual hardships, public interest, engineering, economics, safety, reliability, environmental impacts, and orderly land use and development.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,

that the Town Board urges the project developer and reviewing agencies to avoid establishing a new transmission corridor through the Town of Beloit when a higher-priority existing utility, highway, railroad, or other legally preferred corridor can feasibly be utilized consistent with Wisconsin law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,

that the Town Board supports cooperation and communication with the **Towns of Rock, Turtle, and La Prairie, Rock County, affected residents, farmers, landowners, and other neighboring municipalities** regarding the BECI Project and encourages a coordinated effort to protect the homes, property, agricultural lands, waterways, environment, and natural resources of our communities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,

that the Town of Beloit reserves its right to participate in proceedings before the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, submit comments, resolutions and evidence, identify and advocate for alternative routes, raise concerns regarding impacts upon the Town and its residents, and exercise any other rights available to the Town under Wisconsin law.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED,

that nothing in this Resolution is intended to conflict with or supersede applicable state or federal law or the lawful jurisdiction of the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin or any other governmental agency.

Rather, this Resolution constitutes the formal position of the Town of Beloit regarding the proposed BECI Project and requests full consideration of Wisconsin's transmission-siting priorities, alternative corridors, individual hardships, land-use considerations, environmental impacts, agricultural impacts, natural-resource protections, and the interests of affected local communities.

The Town Clerk is authorized to transmit this Resolution, at the direction of the Town Board and at the appropriate time, to the **Public Service Commission of Wisconsin**,

Midcontinent Grid Solutions, MISO, Rock County, neighboring affected municipalities, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the Governor of Wisconsin, the Town's state and federal representatives, and other appropriate agencies and officials.

Submitted to the Town Board for consideration this 21 day of SEPTEMBER, 2026.

Adopted this 21 day of SEPTEMBER, 2026.

Town Chairperson Diane M. Greenlee

Town Clerk [Signature]

RELEVANT WISCONSIN STATUTES AND REGULATORY PROVISIONS

WISCONSIN STATUTE § 1.12 — STATE ENERGY POLICY

Section 1.12(6) — Siting of Electric Transmission Facilities

Wisconsin law establishes an order of priority for siting new electric transmission facilities, including high-voltage transmission lines.

To the greatest extent feasible consistent with economic and engineering considerations, reliability of the electric system, and protection of the environment, the statutory priorities are:

- (a) Existing utility corridors;
- (b) Highway and railroad corridors;
- (c) Recreational trails, to the extent permitted and applicable under the statute; and
- (d) New corridors.

For purposes of the Town's position regarding BECI, this provision is particularly important because **new corridors are the lowest-priority category identified by Wisconsin law.**

The Town therefore requests that higher-priority existing corridors be thoroughly evaluated before any new transmission corridor affecting the Town of Beloit is selected.

WISCONSIN STATUTE § 196.491 — ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION FACILITIES AND CERTIFICATES OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY

Wis. Stat. § 196.491 establishes Wisconsin's regulatory process for major electric generating and transmission facilities.

Under **Wis. Stat. § 196.491(3)(d)**, the Public Service Commission must make the determinations required by Wisconsin law before approving a qualifying facility.

Among the considerations particularly relevant to the Town of Beloit are:

- Alternative locations and routes;
- Individual hardships;
- Engineering and economic factors;
- Safety and reliability;

- Environmental factors;
- Whether the design and location or route is in the public interest; and
- Whether the proposed facility would **unreasonably interfere with the orderly land use and development plans for the area involved.**

WISCONSIN STATUTE § 1.11 — WISCONSIN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

Wis. Stat. § 1.11 establishes Wisconsin's environmental policy and provides the framework for environmental review of qualifying major governmental actions.

To the extent applicable to the BECI approval process, the Town requests full consideration of potential impacts upon wetlands, waterways, agricultural lands, wildlife habitat, woodlands, natural resources, residents, and other environmental resources potentially affected by the project.

WISCONSIN ADMINISTRATIVE CODE PSC § 111.55 — HIGH-VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION-LINE CPCN APPLICATIONS

PSC § 111.55 requires applicants for qualifying high-voltage transmission facilities to provide detailed information regarding proposed routes and the factors considered in choosing them.

Relevant routing information includes matters such as:

- Water resources, wetlands, lakes, rivers, and streams;
- Vegetative cover and wildlife habitat;
- Existing and proposed land uses;
- Areas of residential concentration;
- Environmental and natural resources;
- Opportunities for corridor sharing; and
- **Information demonstrating how the transmission-line siting priorities contained in Wis. Stat. § 1.12(6) were considered.**

WISCONSIN STATUTE § 85.02 — DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

To the extent applicable to transportation corridors and agency decisions involving transmission siting, Wisconsin law requires the Department of Transportation to implement applicable state policy concerning transmission-facility siting under **Wis. Stat. § 1.12(6).**

STATEMENT REGARDING THESE AUTHORITIES

The statutes and regulatory provisions identified above are included to identify Wisconsin policies, review standards, siting priorities, and protections relevant to the proposed BECI transmission project.

Nothing in this Resolution is intended to claim that the Town of Beloit possesses final transmission-siting authority reserved under Wisconsin law to the Public Service Commission or another governmental body.

The Town's position is that before a new 765-kV transmission corridor is established through our community, Wisconsin's existing-corridor priorities must receive meaningful consideration, reasonable alternatives must be thoroughly evaluated, and the impacts upon the people, private property, farmland, neighborhoods, waterways, environment, and natural resources of the Town of Beloit must be fully considered.