

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-R-43
CITY OF WHITEWATER, WISCONSIN

**A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE ROUTING OF THE BECI 765-kV TRANSMISSION
LINE PROJECT THROUGH THE CITY OF WHITEWATER, ITS
EXTRATERRITORIAL PLANNING AREA, AND ITS DESIGNATED GROWTH
AREAS, AND REQUESTING REMOVAL OF THE ASSOCIATED STUDY SEGMENTS
FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION**

WHEREAS, the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) approved its Tranche 2.1 long-range transmission portfolio in December 2024 and in January 2026 selected Midcontinent Grid Solutions, LLC (MGS), a joint venture of Transource Energy and BHE Transmission, to develop the Bell Center-Columbia-Sugar Creek-Illinois/Wisconsin State Line (BECI) 765-kV Transmission Line Project, an approximately 190-mile, \$1.2 billion transmission line crossing nine Wisconsin counties, including Jefferson, Walworth, and Rock; and

WHEREAS, MGS has published preliminary study segments, several of which pass through or immediately adjacent to the City of Whitewater's corporate limits, its extraterritorial planning jurisdiction, its sewer service area, and lands designated for growth in the City's adopted comprehensive plan and in the City's proposed Future Land Use and Growth Area Map; and

WHEREAS, the City is completing a comprehensive plan update pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 66.1001, in the course of which RDG Planning and Design has prepared a proposed Future Land Use and Growth Area Map delineating the City's planned growth areas; the map is attached to and incorporated in this Resolution as Exhibit A, and, although presently proposed, it reflects the City's current planning direction and the Common Council anticipates its adoption upon completion of the comprehensive plan update; and

WHEREAS, the project's typical structures would rise approximately 175 feet above grade within a right-of-way of approximately 180 feet, permanently committing any corridor they occupy and materially constraining adjacent land uses; and

WHEREAS, study segments southwest and south of the City traverse the City's southwest growth quadrant, which includes Whitewater High School, lands north of U.S. Highway 12 adjacent to the school campus planned for residential development, and lands south of U.S. Highway 12, including the Hoffman property, as well as property currently located in Tax Increment District #12 adopted in 2021 and identified for future manufacturing and mixed-use development; and

WHEREAS, study segments east and northeast of the City pass through or adjacent to the Whitewater University Technology Park and Innovation Center, the City's industrial park, and adjoining lands identified for future manufacturing growth, areas in which the City has committed

substantial public infrastructure investment and active tax incremental financing, and in which private employers have made significant capital commitments in reliance on the City's adopted land use plans; and

WHEREAS, the City operates under Wisconsin's municipal levy limits, Wis. Stat. § 66.0602, which tie allowable operating levy growth to net new construction; the permanent sterilization of developable residential and industrial land by a high-voltage transmission corridor would remove taxable development capacity, suppress adjacent property values, and reduce the City's fiscal ability to deliver services to current and future residents; and

WHEREAS, the City supports a reliable and resilient regional electric grid and recognizes the importance of transmission capacity to Wisconsin's economy, including the manufacturing growth the City is actively pursuing; the City's opposition is not to the BECI Project's purpose but to routing alternatives that would impose the project's most severe and permanent land use costs on a growing city, its school campus, and its designated growth areas when reasonable alternatives exist, including alignments farther from population centers and co-location with existing utility and transportation corridors; and

WHEREAS, MGS has stated that the published study segments are preliminary and subject to change based on landowner and community input, engineering, surveys, and studies; MGS is accepting public comment on the study segments through September 7, 2026, intends to present refined routes at public open houses in late 2026, and anticipates filing an application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin under Wis. Stat. § 196.491(3) in early 2027; and

WHEREAS, the present route development phase, before segments are refined and an application is filed, is the appropriate and most effective time for the City to state its position formally and on the record;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Common Council of the City of Whitewater, Walworth and Jefferson Counties, Wisconsin, as follows:

Section 1. The City of Whitewater formally opposes the routing of the BECI Project, including its structures, conductors, and right-of-way, within or immediately adjacent to: (a) the City's corporate limits; (b) the City's extraterritorial planning jurisdiction and sewer service area; (c) the southwest growth quadrant encompassing Whitewater High School, planned residential lands north of U.S. Highway 12, and the Hoffman property and surrounding lands south of U.S. Highway 12 planned for manufacturing and mixed-use development; and (d) the east-side corridor encompassing the Whitewater University Technology Park and Innovation Center, the City's industrial park, and adjoining future manufacturing lands, including Tax Increment District #10 adopted in 2021, all as generally depicted on the proposed Future Land Use and Growth Area Map attached as Exhibit A.

Section 2. The Common Council respectfully requests that MGS remove from further study all segments within or adjacent to the areas described in Section 1 and depicted on Exhibit A, as shown in the vicinity of the City on the MGS study segment map published August 2026, and prioritize alternatives that avoid schools, population centers, and municipally planned growth areas, with preference for co-location within or parallel to existing transmission and transportation corridors.

Section 3. The Common Council requests direct, formal consultation between MGS and City staff prior to route refinement, including provision of GIS data for all study segments within five miles of the City, and commits the City to constructive participation in identifying routing alternatives consistent with this Resolution.

Section 4. The City Manager and staff are authorized and directed to: (a) submit written comments to MGS consistent with this Resolution prior to the September 7, 2026 comment deadline, together with supporting excerpts of the City's comprehensive plan, the proposed Future Land Use and Growth Area Map prepared by RDG Planning and Design (Exhibit A), the City's official map, tax incremental district project plans, and development pipeline data; (b) represent the City at MGS public open houses and all subsequent engagement rounds; (c) coordinate with the Whitewater Unified School District, the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, the Whitewater Community Development Authority, Walworth and Jefferson Counties, and the adjoining towns to encourage aligned formal positions; and (d) monitor the anticipated Public Service Commission proceeding and return to the Common Council with a recommendation regarding formal party intervention should any proposed route remain within the areas described in Section 1.

Section 5. The City Clerk shall transmit certified copies of this Resolution, together with Exhibit A, to Midcontinent Grid Solutions; the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin; MISO; the members of the Wisconsin Legislature representing the City; the Walworth and Jefferson County Boards; the Whitewater Unified School District; and the Towns of Whitewater, Cold Spring, Lima, and Richmond and other towns within the BECI study area.

Section 6. This Resolution takes effect upon adoption. Adopted this 19 day of August, 2026.

Resolution was introduced by Council Member Artsmith, who moved for its adoption.

Seconded by Council Member Schanen.

DATE	Augusts 18, 2026			
	YES	NO	PASS	ABSENT
Michael Smith	X			
Orin Artsmith	X			
Steven Sahyun				X
Brian Schanen	X			
Neil Hicks				X
Gavin Kelleher	X			
Patrick Singer	X			
Total:	5		PASS	

Adopted: 8/19/24

John S. Weidl
John Weidl, City Manager

ATTEST:

Tiffany Albright
Tiffany Albright, Deputy Clerk

