



Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

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4822 Madison Yards Way
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Public Service Commission of Wisconsin
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May 17, 2021

Re: Application of the Village of Somers, as a Water Public Utility, for Authority to Construct a Water Transfer Station and Phase I Water Mains West of the Subcontinental Divide in the Village of Somers, Kenosha County, Wisconsin

5545-CW-101

To the Person Addressed:

The Village of Somers Water Utility (SWU or the Applicant) filed an application with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (Commission) on January 24, 2021, seeking authority to construct a water main pipeline and water transfer station in the Village of Somers. The Commission is a state agency that regulates utilities and investigates proposed water supply projects over a certain cost. Commission and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff are now analyzing the application and conducting a review of the environmental impacts of the proposed project.

Commission staff is writing to landowners along the proposed route of this project. Commission staff is also sending this notification letter to public officials in the project area. If you are a county or municipal clerk, please post this announcement publicly. The Commission encourages persons with local information or environmental concerns to submit comments on the proposed project to the Commission.

The deadline for submitting environmental review scoping comments is June 2, 2021.

Comments on the scope of the environmental assessment (EA) can be submitted through:

- The Commission's website at <http://psc.wi.gov> then click "file a comment" on the bottom left hand side of the page, then locate docket 5545-CW-101, or
- A letter or email addressed to the environmental assessment contact for the docket (see contacts at the end of this letter).

Please note that comments will be made available to the public via the Commission's Electronic Records Filing System. Personally identifying information is not edited or deleted from submissions. Effective topics to mention in comments on the scope of the EA include:

- Any potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed project, or
- Any specific actions or changes to the proposed project that might minimize or mitigate the potential impacts of the project.

Project Description

The proposed project would consist of water main pipeline construction, with most occurring adjacent to local roads. The water main would cross the subcontinental divide between the Great

Lakes and Mississippi River basins, and is subject to additional permitting to determine if the project is in compliance with the Great Lakes Compact.

The project would construct the following facilities:

- 10,200 lineal feet of 16-inch, 13,870 lineal feet of 12-inch, and 180 lineal feet of 8-inch water main installed by open cut trenching;
- 520 lineal feet of 16-inch and 1,400 lineal feet of 12-inch water main installed by horizontal directional drilling (trenchless construction); and,
- One 40' x 40' water transfer station.

SWU is planning to conduct construction activities in 2021 if Commission authorization is received and all necessary permits are obtained. SWU would acquire all necessary easements and permits prior to the start of construction. Site preparation activities would include clearing vegetation and grading soil, as needed, to provide a level work area for pipe laying and transport. As most construction would occur adjacent to roads, the road shoulder would likely be closed to provide more room for construction crews. The installation of the water supply pipeline would predominately be done through open trenching, where any hard surface or paving and soils are excavated and then replaced after the pipe is installed.

Construction equipment to be used includes dozers, graders, excavators, trenchers, backhoes, dump trucks, and various other trucks or machinery. Trench sizes can vary depending on construction areas, available space, any existing infrastructure, or environmental requirements. Trench dimensions for similar water main construction projects have been eight feet wide by eight feet deep. Where the water main would cross wetlands, waterways and some roads, the pipeline would be installed using horizontal directional drilling to reduce impacts of construction. The disturbance zone would primarily be within the public road right-of-way (ROW), with the exception of a portion of the water main on County Highway E (CTH) which would be installed within an easement along the south side of the roadway.

Project Cost

The proposed project is estimated to cost approximately \$5.6 million. The Applicant states that \$4,079,919 would be financed by special assessments or “contributed finances”. The Applicant states that the property owners adjacent to the water main would pay a special assessment based on a 12-inch main and their frontage to the main. This cost comes out to approximately \$100 per foot of frontage for the water main that is proposed to be charged to adjacent property owners. The remaining \$1,480,081 is proposed to be financed by tax incremental financing or “utility/municipal finances”.

Project Location

A map showing the proposed project route is attached to the end of this letter. The proposed project would construct a new water transfer station in the Village of Somers, located on the south side of County Highway (CTH) L (also known as 18th Street) approximately 1,200 feet

east of the intersection with CTH H (also known as 88th Ave). The project would construct and install water main pipeline from this new water transfer station to the west, crossing 88th Ave and proceeding to the intersection of CTH L and 100th Avenue. At this intersection, the pipeline would proceed north, along 100th Avenue, to the intersection with CTH E (also known as 12th Street). At this intersection, the pipeline would proceed west along CTH E to the intersection with the Interstate 94-East Frontage Road (also known as 120th Avenue). The pipeline would then proceed south along the eastern side of the frontage road, to finish just north of the intersection of 120th Avenue and Burlington Road. Many of the surrounding properties are rural, with acres of agricultural fields, farmsteads and rural houses, and a country club in the project area. An interactive webmap of the proposed project is available at:
<https://maps.psc.wi.gov/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=5a3a8c0b2d234a4a9bd1a66d1e2b144d>.

Project Need

The SWU purchases drinking water on a wholesale basis from the Kenosha Water Utility and provides service to areas of the Village of Somers. SWU states in the application that the project is needed to meet its current and future water customer supply needs for the areas within the Village of Somers outside the area currently served by the municipal water system. Initially, three customers outside the current municipal water service area would receive water from the proposed project. These would be located on the East Frontage Road to I-94 and are a BP gas station, a Kwik Trip gas station, and the Pritzker Military Museum and Military Archives.

Project Review

Commission staff is reviewing and analyzing information about the need for the project, its effects on the ability of SWU to serve its water customers, its proposed routes, and its potential environmental and social impacts. The Commission will review the application and Commission staff's analyses and determine whether to approve, modify or deny SWU's application. If the project is approved, the Commission will decide upon any conditions or modifications.

This is a Type II action under Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 4.10(2) as a result of the diameter and length of the proposed water main pipeline. The Commission is seeking comments on the environmental aspects of this proposal to assist in the preparation of an environmental assessment (EA). The information gained through the EA process will determine whether the proposed project warrants preparation of an environmental impact statement.

For more information or to review project application materials and additional related documents, refer to the following:

- Go to the PSC website (<http://psc.wi.gov>) and select the "E-Services" tab, then docket search number 5545-CW-101.

To the Person Addressed
Docket 5545-CW-101
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- Contact the Environmental Analyst for this project:
Stacy Schumacher
stacy.schumacher@wisconsin.gov (608) 267-2547
Public Service Commission, P.O. Box 7854, Madison, WI 53707-7854

Public Service Commission Contact for Media

Members of the media are urged to contact Jerel Ballard, Communications Director, before contacting any Commission staff associated with this project. Mr. Ballard can be reached at (608) 267-3871 or jerel.ballard@wisconsin.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/ Stacy Schumacher

Stacy Schumacher
Environmental Analysis and Review Specialist
Division of Digital Access, Consumer and Environmental Affairs

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Attachment: Map of the proposed project area

Somers Water Main Project 5545-CW-101

