

Floyds Fork Environmental Association
Founded 1991

To: Louisville Metro Government (LMG)
From: Floyds Fork Environmental Association
Teena Halbig, Co-Founder, 1991, Chair Clean Water
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Cc: Sheron Lear, FFEA President
Cc: Ray Ehlers, FFEA Vice President
Date: 7-4-26

Re: 25-LDC-0014 DATA CENTER COMMENTS

Floyds Fork Environmental Association, FFEA, MISSION is to protect, conserve and preserve Floyds Fork Creek and its Watershed.

Comments on data centers with the following requests:

- * Jefferson County must institute a Moratorium to allow more study and make the best standards to protect the welfare of the public which must include intensity of many issues. *Thankfully Metro Council is to consider a 6 m on the moratorium!*
- * Data centers, large or small, SHALL be permitted only in INDUSTRIAL M-3 zoning and NOT in RESIDENTIAL or other areas or near sensitive land uses like parks, schools. 8-2-26 ABC reported possible data centers in the sky?
- * Do not grant WAIVERS to standards/regulations.
- * *FFEA is in STRONG OPPOSITION to the Planning Director or his/her designee make all the decisions and review of data centers of any size.*
- * Provide public notice with a posted sign, and notice to neighbors, neighborhood organizations so that public meetings and a public hearing

before the Planning Commission for a re-zoning with a mandated CUP (Conditional Use Permit).

- * Must remove data telecommunications category.

- * Must remove “Accessory Uses” category and terminology where intensity was not determined.

- * 42 inch gas pipelines for gas turbines are dangerous and 26 explosions have occurred. How will government protect the public?

- * How will data centers dangerous chemicals (including diesel fuel) be monitored? Spills can pollute above ground but also contaminate underground aquifers. Especially, karst areas need special concerns. The Courier-Journal articles are attached and discuss problems with karst terrain by Mr. Vandeveld. The last 1/3 of Jefferson County is more karstified and PDS has the mapping which must be included.

- * How will the federally endangered **Indiana Bat** (*Myotis sodalis*) be protected or the KY endangered Glade Cress and Running buffalo clover (*Trifolium stoloniferum*) which is protected under KY law.

- * What is the air pollution standard for Particulate Matter generated by data centers? What is the P.M. reading allowed at the property line? Retention of trees is necessary to significantly help with P.M. Have health statistics been looked at for increases in heart attacks, etc.?

- * Noise: The World Health Organization suggests outdoor nighttime averages stay below 40 dB to prevent adverse health and sleep disruption. Even home generator noise is obnoxious and intrusive—whereas data centers might have more than one and must test periodically. Even a home generator noise is obnoxious!

- * Daytime Noise should only be a tad more up to 45dB and not 65dB at the property line.

- * Noise: **Infrasound vibrations** – who will do the testing? How will the acoustic sounds be addressed: **acoustic sound** is mechanical wave energy that travels through a physical medium like air, water, or solids, and can be perceived by human or animal hearing. Therefore a minimum distance should be 600 feet and not 200 feet (staff’s revision). Sensitive uses like day care centers, churches, community centers, parks, pet businesses, schools, colleges, residences, etc. need a further distance of 2,000 feet. Special treatments to control echoes and absorb sound of

walls, ceilings, roofing, etc. should be included in regulations. What will be required?

- * Costs must not be borne by the public. How will costs that be addressed.

- * MSD has big plans to extend more sewers in 3 counties: Oldham, Jefferson – which includes the Floyds Fork Watershed and Bullitt County but no mention to serve data centers which is illogical.

- * Design must be aesthetically pleasing by blending in architecturally with the surrounding area.

- * Decommissioning and a BOND FEE established. Will it be taken down to the concrete floor? Or totally removed? What is the Bond fee? These are very important issues to address.

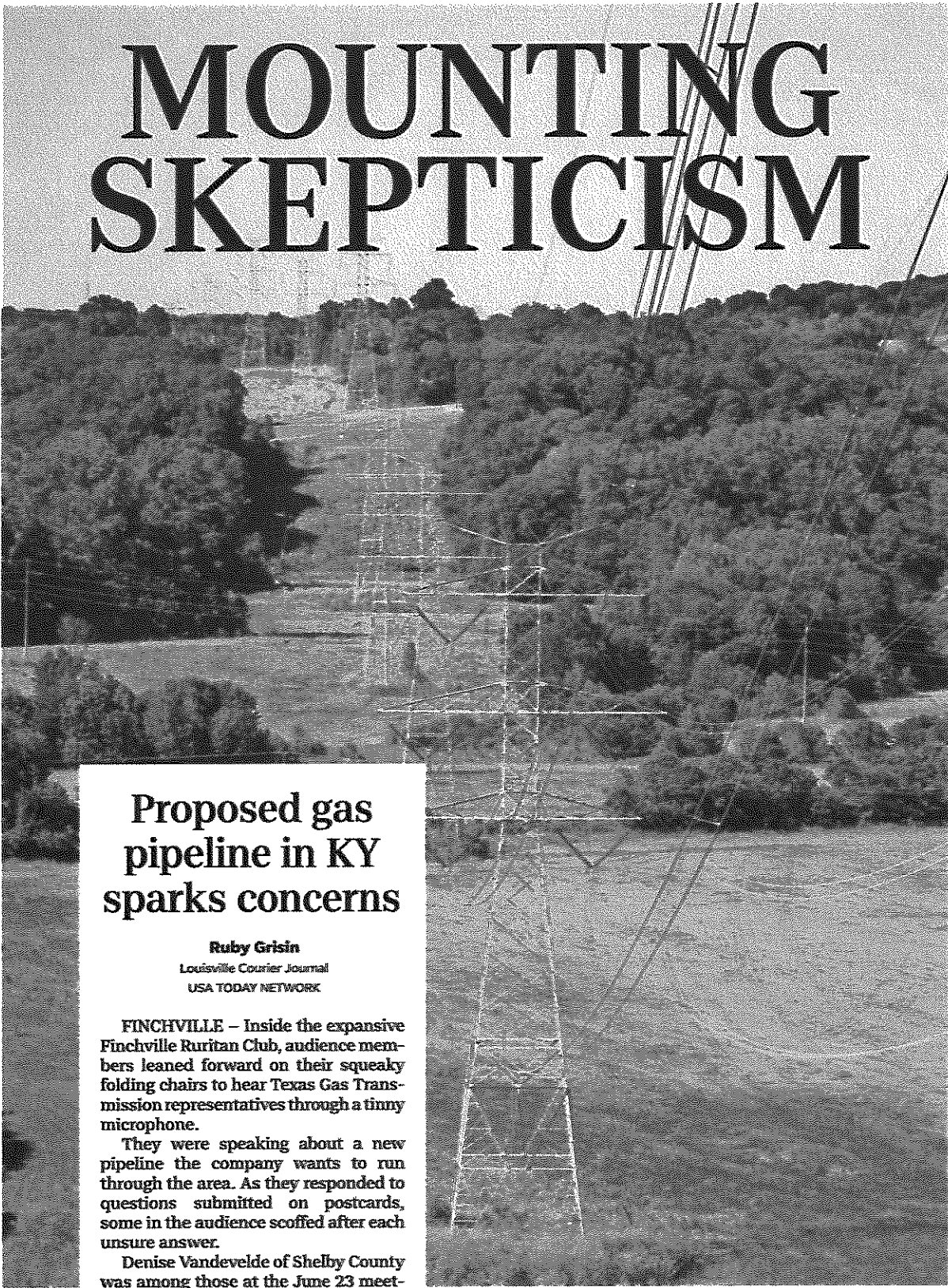
- * Waste heat must not be felt by neighbors; however, increased temperatures of up to 12 degrees when close to a data center is reported so please do more research. There should be NO temperature increases to adjacent uses.

- * Number of trips per day for supplies trucked in should be accounted for as well as the few employees after all the construction vehicles and goods to set up a data center must be known.

- * Do not use water from Floyds Fork Creek or its tributaries or underground aquifers which would threaten biodiversity of flora, fauna or fowl. Costs of water should not be passed on to customers but the data center must pay. Do not use springs or wells, either. It is best to not allow data centers or uses in the Floyds Fork Watershed due to environmental constraints.

- *Deforestation: Do not remove forested areas because trees hold CARBON and reduce temperatures and help reduce noise and dust and help the ecology as well as serve as wind breaks and provide canopy.

- *Costs: Must not be passed on to customers in the form of fees and rate increases because government can have the data centers pay instead.



MOUNTING SKEPTICISM

Proposed gas pipeline in KY sparks concerns

Ruby Grisin

Louisville Courier Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

FINCHVILLE – Inside the expansive Finchville Ruritan Club, audience members leaned forward on their squeaky folding chairs to hear Texas Gas Transmission representatives through a tinny microphone.

They were speaking about a new pipeline the company wants to run through the area. As they responded to questions submitted on postcards, some in the audience scoffed after each unsure answer.

Denise Vandeveld of Shelby County was among those at the June 23 meeting. She said she received a letter from Texas Gas in April asking for permission to survey her property, but when she contacted her public officials for more information, she said she was told they knew nothing about it.

See PIPELINE, Page 11A

LG&E has an easement, shown here, on the property of Steve Henry, founder of Floyds Fork conservation organization Future Fund. Henry owns roughly 2,000 acres in the Parklands of Floyds Fork for conservation use in glade cress (an endangered flower) habitat. Henry has received a letter from Texas Gas Transmission requesting a survey of his land for a proposed gas pipeline. MICHAEL CLEVENGER/COURIER JOURNAL

INSIDE: DETAILS ABOUT THE PROPOSED GAS PIPELINE, 6A

Pipeline

Continued from Page 1A

Vandevelde created a Facebook group May 15 where residents could come together to share knowledge and concerns about the pipeline. A month later, she founded an inter-county organization, Kentucky Counties United, with three other Shelby County residents. Serving as its president, Vandevelde is now working to inform her neighbors about the dangers she believes are right around the corner due to a 465-mile pipeline that could cut through three states, including a small portion of Jefferson County, as it makes its way toward her and her neighbors.

The Borealis Project, a proposed natural gas pipeline overseen by Owensboro-based Texas Gas and owned by Boardwalk Pipelines, part of the New York City-based Loews Corporation, is "designed to meet the region's ever-increasing energy demands" while moderating costs, officials say. While not directly supplying homes and businesses, it will "fuel ... power plants and other large industrial users" and "indirectly benefit local residents served by those utilities."

At one point during the Q&A period, outbursts erupted after listeners were confused by Texas Gas' responses and wanted to ask follow-ups. As the moderator urged the audience to remain civil, one man sprung up from his chair.

"I thought this was a meeting to oppose these people, and I have been misinformed, so I'm leaving. I've heard enough of you people," he said. "They're not telling you the truth. They're going through Shelby County because they don't want to pay to go through Lake Forest and [Jeffersonton]. Why don't you just admit it?"

The audience applauded in response before he was escorted out by security.

'It's scary': Public grapples with transparency and information gaps

Landowners surrounding Louisville who spoke with The Courier Journal showed letters they received from Texas Gas in April requesting permission to survey their properties for a natural gas pipeline. Many said they were confused, as it was their first time hearing of a new pipeline at all.

Trimble County resident Jennifer Seay Pineda said she contacted multiple county officials about the letter, but like Vandevelde, she said she was told they had no information. In one case, she said an official at Trimble County Planning and Zoning told her to discard the letter because it "sounds like a scam."

"It's scary that nobody at the county level knows anything," Pineda said during a May 28 interview.

At the start, Vandevelde agreed communication seemed ineffective, but since the issue was raised at a May 5 Shelby County fiscal court meeting, she said her magistrates have been doing an excellent job with communication, even backing her coalition against the pipeline.

At a June 1 Trimble County fiscal court meeting, Judge-Executive John Ogburn Jr. explained the difficulty he and other county officials have had getting their own questions answered by Texas Gas about the pipeline.

Texas Gas officials said the company hosted introductory meetings about the Borealis Project with state and federal lawmakers in late 2025 and engaged with county officials along the proposed route in early 2026. Information is planned to be shared as it becomes available, but several factors, including



Steve Henry, right, who founded Future Fund and is an environmental advocate in Louisville, discusses a proposed Texas Gas pipeline bordering Louisville with Jeff Frank, a Friends of Floyds Fork advocate, on June 2. The pipeline could possibly go through Henry's property in the Parklands of Floyds Fork. MICHAEL CLEVELAND/COURIER-JOURNAL

the pipeline's route, have not yet been finalized.

"We know our projects cross land that people live on, work on and care deeply about. That's why we seek to treat our neighbors as partners and are transparent about how our projects may affect their property," the company said in a statement to The Courier Journal.

A law student, Pineda is also concerned about how Texas Gas might use its right to eminent domain - a power granted to the government where it may obtain private property for public use without the landowner's consent - to seize parts of her and her neighbors' properties later down the line.

When asked how they might use eminent domain for the Borealis Project, company officials said it would be "a last resort option that is rarely utilized." If Texas Gas is unable to reach an agreement through private negotiations with landowners, the company can request eminent domain, allowing a court to decide if the easement is granted and how much compensation the landowner receives.

Many of those contacted by Texas Gas are also worried about pipeline explosion risks.

A 2019 natural gas pipeline explosion near Danville left one dead, six injured and 75 displaced from their homes, according to a report from the U.S. National Transportation Safety Board. An investigation revealed the explosion was caused by a manufacturing defect that degraded the line's exterior coating and insufficient corrosion prevention, causing the outer surface of the pipeline to crack. The report also found the impact radius of the pipeline's rupture was incorrectly calculated.

Since 2006, 29 civil administrative enforcement actions have been brought against Texas Gas by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, many of which are related to corrosion, design and maintenance. The company does not have any reported explosions or injury-causing incidents, but a January 2026 pipeline failure in DeBerry, Texas, prompted PHMSA to issue a Corrective Action Order.

While many residents already have smaller pipelines running through their properties, Vandevelde worries the new

line will come with unprecedented risks due to its magnitude.

"This pipeline is a 42-inch, high pressurized natural gas pipeline. It's not just another pipeline," she said. "A small person could walk through this thing. It's basically a bomb."

Concerns for a protected species

The Texas Gas pipeline's current proposed route also cuts through critical habitat for the Kentucky glade cress, a rare, endangered flower that only grows on ridge-edge benches in extreme southeastern Jefferson County and northeastern Bullitt County.

Steve Henry, founder of Floyds Fork conservation organization Future Fund, owns roughly 2,000 acres in the Parklands of Floyds Fork for conservation use in glade cress habitat. After he received the same April letter requesting to survey his land, Henry said he scheduled a meeting between his organization and Texas Gas' environmental consultants, who abruptly cancelled and have yet to reschedule.

LG&E has long possessed an easement in the Parklands for its utilities similar to the one Texas Gas might obtain. During the installation process, Henry said the company damaged the existing glade cress habitat and paid to have it replanted. Henry is worried a similar habitat destruction could follow the Texas Gas pipeline.

"If they want to be good citizens ... it would be our hope that they would make accommodations with other parcels that we could replant," he said.

Texas Gas representatives said their goal is to avoid sensitive habitats whenever possible. In cases where it is not possible to avoid them, the company will coordinate with both federal and state Departments of Fish & Wildlife to find a solution.

It is currently unclear if the Floyds Fork Development Review Overlay, which determines guidelines for development in a 13,000-acre area around the waterway, will apply to the Texas Gas pipeline. Louisville Metro Government spokesperson Emily Martin said the Office of Planning has not yet received the pipeline project for review.

Regardless of the exact location of the pipeline, Friends of Floyds Fork ad-

vocate Jeff Frank said excavating for a pipeline of 42 inches in diameter would disrupt the hydrology that allows glade cress to thrive. Future Fund does not have any special legal leverage as a conservation organization, meaning the same risk of eminent domain looms for them as it does for residential landowners.

"The hope is that we negotiate in good faith and that there are thoughtful people on the other side of the aisle," Frank said.

Trouble on 'holey' ground

Vandevelde, the Shelby County resident, and her husband, Jerry, a geotechnical engineer for almost 50 years, doubt the viability of a new pipeline in a terrain that is known to produce sinkholes.

Karst terrain, which is largely made up of bedrock like limestone, is soluble in slightly acidic water and poses significant challenges to pipeline developers. As rock dissolves gradually from weathering, underground voids grow until the surface above them collapses, creating a sinkhole.

"When you want to put a 42-inch, high pressurized natural gas pipeline in terrain like this and a sinkhole opens up under it, then that pipeline no longer has the stability that it needs to hold together," Denise Vandevelde said.

Both are also concerned about how a pipeline in a karst region might pollute surrounding groundwater.

At a public meeting, Texas Gas officials said they have been operating in karst terrain for 70 years and have "not had a single pipeline failure; but landowners are still skeptical."

In her June 23 presentation, Denise Vandevelde questioned why, despite all the challenges and inconveniences landowners, Texas Gas aims to pass through north-central Kentucky. Her conclusion: because the land is cheaper.

"Our community should not be expected to bear the risk simply because it's more convenient and more profitable to someone else," she said. "We should not be forced to accept a risk that can become a disaster waiting to happen."

Contact reporter Ruby Grisin at rgisin@usatodayco.com.

Landowners not happy about pipeline

Proposed project would go through parts of Jefferson County, surrounding area

Ruby Grisin

Louisville Courier Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

A proposed natural gas pipeline in the greater Louisville area has sparked backlash from landowners, prompting discussions around transparency and safety.

In late April, residents and business owners in parts of Jefferson County and its surrounding area received letters from Texas Gas Transmission requesting permission to survey their property. The surveys, officials said, would help route engineers determine an ideal path for their new 42-inch high pressure natural gas pipeline passing through Kentucky.

Many letter recipients are concerned about pipeline safety, property ownership and unanswered questions as Texas Gas remains in its preliminary planning stages. With opposition building, Texas Gas officials say they want to be transparent about their intentions and approval processes.

Here's what we know about the project so far:

What is the Texas Gas Borealis Project?

The Borealis Project is a proposed natural gas pipeline stretching a total of about 465 miles through Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky. It is overseen by Owensboro, Kentucky-based Texas Gas Transmission, LLC, which is owned by Boardwalk Pipelines, a part of the New York City-based Loews Corporation.

Texas Gas officials said the pipeline is

meant to address increasing energy demands in the region. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, gas demand is expected to increase by nearly 60% in the next 20 years. While it will not directly supply homes and businesses, the proposed pipeline would fuel power plants and other large industrial users, from which Kentucky residents will "indirectly" benefit if served by those utilities.

"Expanding access to supply can help moderate energy costs over time, while construction and ongoing operations bring new jobs and economic activity to the area," officials said in a statement. "Pipeline infrastructure also contributes long-term property tax revenue, helping support schools, roads and other essential community services."

The project has two main components, a Borealis mainline pipeline and a Borealis supply leg pipeline. The mainline will consist of about 265 miles of a 42-inch natural gas pipeline stretching from Ohio to Kentucky. Around 80% of the mainline route is proposed to be constructed along existing utility corridors, and it will involve additional compression at an existing compressor station in Indiana.

The supply leg pipeline will require about 200 miles of a 42-inch pipeline in Ohio.

What is the timeline for the Texas Gas pipeline?

To move forward with construction, Texas Gas must first obtain certification from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. A preliminary timeline on Boardwalk's website indicates the company is currently in its "Public Engagement and Early Planning" phase, which allows stakeholders to voice opinions as the route is refined during land surveying.

"These activities help us determine a

viable route based upon on-the-ground inspections and feedback from local officials and landowners," Texas Gas officials said.

A formal application is planned to be submitted to FERC in late 2027.

If the project is approved, FERC will grant Texas Gas a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity, and construction would likely take place in 2028 and 2029. At this point, landowners directly impacted by the project would be contacted by land agents to discuss property specific details like schedules and access. Landowners who previously denied permission to survey may be contacted again at this point, officials said at a public meeting June 23.

According to the preliminary timeline, the project would begin service in the second half of 2029.

"As we do with all our projects, we are following the FERC process and plan to host open houses this fall in communities along the pipeline route," a Texas Gas spokesperson said. "Once the dates and locations are set, we will be notifying local officials, landowners and other interested parties so that they can choose to participate and learn more."

Where will the Texas Gas pipeline go?

Route engineers are currently working to ensure viability, depending on conversations with residents and businesses along the proposed pipeline path. From these conversations, Texas Gas intends to map a specific, finalized route and conduct more outreach.

"The route is under development and subject to change, which is why we have only shared the broader regional maps," officials said. "Later, we plan to make a mapping tool available on the website that will allow users to see more specific information about the proposed pipeline in relation to their property."

Based on the landowners who re-

ceived land survey requests and preliminary maps from the developer, it is expected the pipeline would pass through parts of far southeastern Jefferson County, as well as Oldham, Hardin, Shelby, Trimble, Bullitt and Spencer counties.

Why does Texas Gas want to survey property?

At the June 23 public meeting, Texas Gas representatives said route engineers survey land during the first stage of planning in order to pin down an exact path that avoids obstructions and potential risks like homes, portions of the watershed and existing septic systems. While landowners are not required to grant permission for Texas Gas to survey their property, it is possible land agents will return and ask again further along in the process.

If route engineers determine a particular property is necessary to the route, they may seek eminent domain, which allows the government to seize ownership of private property for public use so long as it provides "fair compensation" to the owner.

Officials said the survey process results in "very little ground disturbance" in most cases, but some repairs and reforestation may need to be factored into the agreed upon easement compensation in certain cases. When surveying, the land agents typically focus on an area that is approximately 300 feet wide to determine the best location for the permanent 50-foot right-of-way easement.

"Once we've assessed the property and determined the route, we work directly with each landowner to agree on a right-of-way easement and fair compensation for both the temporary and permanent use of their property," Texas Gas representatives said.

Reporter Ruby Grisin can be reached at rgrisin@usatodayco.com.

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Environmental issues:

Noise: Low Frequency high frequency limits: how will it be measured(db) and distances to be measured. Allowances for wind propagation?

Measured by site and individual sources?

Vibration: Power sources can generate based on type or size. Investigate possible sources of a typical data center

Lighting: low level fixtures?

Air pollution: from back-up generators: diesel or natural gas. CO2, Nox and particulate.

Urea type scrubbers for diesel? Consult experts for state of the art applicable to the technology that may be used.

Water usage: Ensure that cooling towers and other water recirculating technologies are be used to minimize water consumption. Provisions for descaling waste water disposal.

General Points

Remove statements on prevailing wages. This is a covert gift to unions. Local governments should not interfere with business' supplier choices. This can be viewed as a deterrent for site selection.

Require investment obligations to support utility capacity additions to minimize impact on residential customers. Performance bonds?

Why not allow turbine power generation per site so they are energy independent and divorced from the grid.

Council members should be required to visit typical sites before voting .

Received
August 5, 2026
25-LDC-0014