

# Ontario council backs Edison protesters

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POSTED: 10/08/14, 8:33 PM PDT | UPDATED: 1 MIN AGO

ONTARIO >>The City Council has voted unanimously to support the fight to underground part of the [Tehachapi Renewal Transmission Project](#) through south Ontario.

More than 50 people attended the meeting Tuesday evening to protest the giant towers planned for their neighborhood, especially in Archibald Ranch.

Many of the same people [rallied Sept. 27](#), hoping to get support from state Sen. Norma Torres, D-Chino.

City Attorney John Brown reported that the city had asked him to investigate possible filing for a rehearing with the [California Public Utilities Commission](#) seeking a reopening of discussion on the route the new towers will take.

“We will fight with you all,” Mayor Paul Leon said to applause. “I absolutely believe that together we can do it, so let’s go.”

Brown said his department would be “getting on it immediately” and that the main concern was equal treatment for Ontario, especially since there was already a precedent. Residents in Chino Hills put up a multi-year fight and recently won approval from the PUC ordering the lines be placed underground in their city.

A group of south Ontario residents has organized as “Save Archibald Ranch” in recent weeks. The group has voiced concern over what they say is the possibility of adverse health effects from the high voltage lines, towers or lines falling over, and the prospect of lower property values.

The residents said they are seeking reconsideration from the PUC that would lead to undergrounding of the towers in Ontario, or rerouting the line away from neighborhoods.

Torres recently met with the residents and told them she would try to find out more information, get in contact with the specific organizations, and potentially delay the project so that more options can be evaluated.

These residents are also being supported by Rep. Gloria Negrete McLeod, D-Montclair, who recently sent a letter to PUC President Michael Peevey seeking additional community input be allowed on the planned installation of 500-kilovolt transmission wires through town as part of the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project, or TRTP.

McLeod said the concerns of the residents “must be adequately heard prior to any construction of this local project that has potential risks to the health of people and our economy.”

“I’m urging that CPUC heed the voices of members of our community and fully develop an alternative plan that takes into consideration their concerns,” McLeod said. “I am ready to assist in the effort to ensure that our community is heard by the state.”

The 250-mile TRTP aims to bring wind energy from wind farms in Central California to the Los Angeles Basin. It’s part of a state initiative for sustainable energy.

A 30-day window for objection to the project occurred from Dec. 24, 2009, to Jan. 24, 2010, according to Edison.

“Southern California Edison is aware of the communities’ concerns regarding the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project,” according to a statement from Edison. “The impact of the project was fully considered by the California Public Utilities Commission in 2009 and again in 2013.”

McLeod wondered, though, why the group of Ontario residents hadn’t objected earlier during the public hearing process.

“I understand their concern,” she said. “Nobody wants the big power lines near their homes. ... I think it may make it more difficult because the chime-in process was early on years ago.”

Suzanne Moore, a resident of the Archibald Ranch community said the community was not informed about the project in the past. Moore said she shared concerns about health, noise and property values from the project.

“We really truly were not informed about what Southern California Edison was going to be doing in our neighborhoods,” Moore said. “We had no clue they were going to put these types of towers in our neighborhoods.”