



March 15, 2025

Gary Huhta, General Manager
Public Utility District No. 1 of Cowlitz County
PO Box 3007
Longview, WA 98632

RE: Cowlitz PUD I-5 Corridor Electric Distribution Capacity Upgrades

Dear Mr. Huhta,

The Cowlitz Economic Development Council is pleased to support Cowlitz PUD's federal FY 2026 appropriations request for the I-5 Corridor Electric Distribution Capacity Upgrades Project. During this time of concern for power generation and distribution, this project aligns with the CEDC's desire to upgrade our infrastructure.

This project aligns with the economic development goals of the region and will help accommodate new business and residential growth along the I-5 corridor in the northern portion of Cowlitz County. The enhanced infrastructure will increase the available electrical capacity necessary to site new warehouse distribution, light manufacturing, commercial services and residential development in a currently underserved area of the County. Grid improvements will increase electric service reliability by reducing the duration and impact of outages during severe weather events. The CEDC also sees the opportunity for expansion of public EV charging locations along the I-5 corridor because of these investments, and the benefits these services bring to tourism-supporting businesses near the gateway to Mt St Helens.

The CEDC appreciates Cowlitz PUD's efforts to expand and enhance electrical grid capacity for the benefit of Cowlitz County residents. We fully support your request for federal funding to supplement the proposed infrastructure investments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ted Sprague", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Ted Sprague
President, Cowlitz EDC