

PUD likes Chumstick site for new Leavenworth substation

by Mike Irwin

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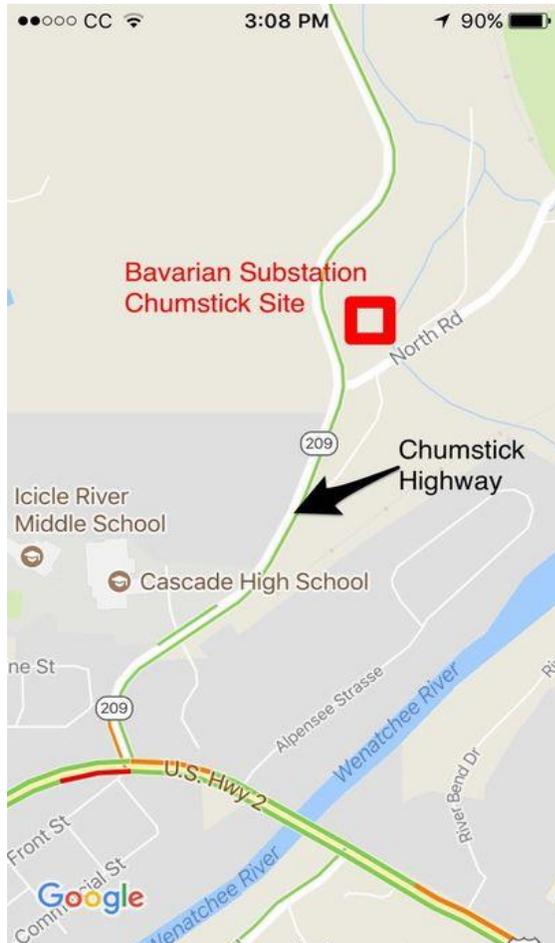


Photo provided

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The Chelan PUD's preferred location for its new Bavarian Substation is at the intersection of Chumstick Highway and North Road near Leavenworth.

LEAVENWORTH — Managers with the Chelan County PUD have recommended a 3-acre site on the Chumstick Highway for the utility's new Bavarian Substation following completion of a feasibility study on the project's top possible locations.

PUD commissioners heard Monday that the preferred site, about a half-mile north on Highway 2 at the junction of Chumstick Highway and North Road, also has the lowest projected construction cost and easy access from established roads.

The substation team will present its recommendations to the Leavenworth City Council at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday at the Leavenworth City Hall.

On Monday, PUD managers John Stoll and Gary Rice told commissioners that staff completing the feasibility study recommended the Chumstick site out of the four choices narrowed from 16 possible locations originally under consideration.

PUD commissioners approved purchase of the Chumstick site in April just weeks after seriously considering a rival site owned by the nonprofit Upper Valley MEND. That property is 1.5 miles up Chumstick Highway on the backside of Rattlesnake Hill.

The PUD feasibility study showed the Chumstick site surpassed the other three possible locations in budget and access, with construction of the Chumstick likely costing from \$6.5 million to \$7.2 million — about \$3 million less than the most costly build-outs at other sites.

The Chumstick site would also have the lowest cost for transmission lines at around \$1.6 million, while the estimates for lines at other sites hit a high of around \$2.5 million. Access to the Chumstick site was also readily available from North Road and the Chumstick Highway.

Recommendation of the Chumstick site is the first step in a timeline that will include a presentation to the Leavenworth City Council, application for a conditional use permit, evaluation of routes for transmission lines and kickoff of the design process. If all goes well, the PUD could begin late this year to buy equipment for the substation.

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