



March 25, 2003

Billie C. Blanchard  
Public Utilities Regulatory Analyst  
Public Utilities Commission  
Energy Division (Analysis)  
505 Van Ness Avenue, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: *San Bruno's Request that the CPUC Instruct PG&E to Eliminate San Bruno/Glenview as a Transition Station Site and to Study Less Conspicuous and Less Intrusive Alternatives***

Dear Ms. Blanchard:

On behalf of the City Council of San Bruno (City) and the San Bruno Redevelopment Agency (RDA), I am requesting that the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) take immediate action to instruct PG&E to eliminate San Bruno Avenue and Glenview Drive as a proposed site for an overhead to underground transition station and to study other less conspicuous and less intrusive alternatives.

The City and the RDA are vehemently opposed to PG&E creating a permanent blight in San Bruno by locating a large industrial power facility with associated massive utility towers and overhead wires at a "gateway" to our City. Instead, we suggest that the CPUC focus on the following possibilities:

- To place the entire project underground in order to avoid a considerable impact and burden on any one city;
- To place a transition station at some earlier point in the route (for example, at Trousdale in Burlingame);
- To place the transition station adjacent to the existing PG&E substation on the west side of Skyline Boulevard at Sneath Lane where the impact will be less dramatic; or
- To place a transition station in a less conspicuous place on the west side of Skyline Boulevard.<sup>1</sup>

The residents agree. Over two hundred residents of San Bruno appeared at a special council meeting on Thursday, March 20, 2003. Every single speaker voiced strong opposition to PG&E locating its transition station at the currently proposed site. The residents are rightly concerned about aesthetic impacts, environmental impacts, impacts on property development and values, as well as noise, safety and health issues.

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<sup>1</sup> The City's Community Development Director and Public Works Director both wrote letters to the CPUC detailing possible alternatives. They are attached to the resolution. The City wishes to remove from consideration as an alternative – and would oppose – placing underground power lines through Crestmoor Canyon.

Allow me to tell you why there is such overwhelmingly, unanimous and vehement citywide opposition to San Bruno becoming a power dump for San Francisco and the rest of the Peninsula. The westerly entrance to San Bruno from Highway 280 via Skyline Boulevard guides travelers and residents along a scenic corridor adjacent to an open space reserve to the four corners of San Bruno Avenue and Glenview Drive – called the “gateway.” At one corner is a vital neighborhood shopping center. PG&E’s proposed transition site is directly across the street from the retail/residential area and sits smack in the middle of a designated redevelopment area.

As you know, the purpose of an RDA is to eliminate blight. In fact, San Bruno’s RDA has been highly successful in developing major projects within its other redevelopment sites, including a state of the art mixed-use residential and commercial center (“the Crossing”), refurbishing a major retail center (“The Shops at Tanforan”) and rehabilitating the downtown commercial center (“The Avenue”). The RDA has had this area on its radar screen for some time. Given its excellent track record, the RDA will accomplish its goal here, too.

An important step was to rehabilitate a lot on San Bruno Avenue next to what is now the proposed PG&E site. The lot owner had abandoned his gas station business. Leaky tanks contaminated the site. Through City and County efforts, the owner was compelled to clean up the site. Nearing final remediation, the owner recently sold the lot to a developer. The developer proposes to build some attractive town homes there. Under state law, a town home development is one of the few permitted uses due to the seismic risk. The town home lot sits adjacent to a fault line. However, the proposed PG&E site sits directly atop an earthquake fault, which is an issue of concern to all of us.

An attractive feature to a prospective town home tenant is access to the beautiful open space just across Skyline. In fact, the City’s Planning Commission already approved the Church of the Highlands’ plans to create an open parking lot on the proposed PG&E site. The lot will provide parking for the public using the reserve and for the Church. The Church already has a ten-year lease from Caltrans on the proposed PG&E site. Accordingly, significant progress has been made in reducing blight and developing the area.

Now, thwarting the City’s progress and contrary to its plans for the area, *PG&E’s proposed project will create a new blight that the City/RDA will never be able to undo.* Instead of greenery, the welcoming sign of the “gateway” will be massive utility towers with wires looping over the roadway to a large industrial complex. Needless to say, the town home developer is also opposed to the PG&E site. (See attachment to resolution).

In addition, the City and the RDA are seriously concerned that PG&E lacks investment in a true mitigation effort. PG&E says that it will landscape the almost fifty-foot transition towers with fifteen-gallon trees. That is a little like putting a tutu on an elephant. How can the people of San Bruno trust that PG&E will mitigate the impacts of this project when its mitigation proposals, like the trees, cannot be taken seriously?

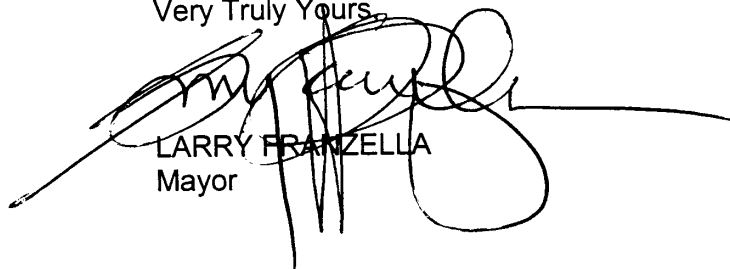
Having met with the residents and having thoroughly discussed this project with the City Council and with the public at several meetings, this City is vehemently opposed to PG&E

locating its transition station at Glenview and San Bruno Avenues. Instead, the CPUC should compel PG&E to place the entire project underground. Failing that, the CPUC must require PG&E to place the transition station further south (for example, Trousdale).

If it is to be located in or adjacent to San Bruno, the City strongly suggests that co-locating the transition station with the existing substation just south of Sneath Lane should be studied. A transition station within or adjacent to an existing PG&E site would not alter the environment as drastically as it would at San Bruno and Glenview. Alternatively, the transition station should be hidden on the west side of Skyline in the least conspicuous place possible and further from the earthquake fault.

Accordingly, the Council and the RDA Board have directed me to send you this letter and the enclosed resolution incorporating public comment requesting that the CPUC direct PG&E to eliminate from its plan San Bruno Avenue and Glenview Drive as the proposed site for the transition station and instead to study the alternatives. Should you have any questions, please feel free to call me.

Very Truly Yours,



LARRY FRANZELLA  
Mayor

cc: Charlotte TerKeurst, Administrative Law Judge  
Loretta M. Lynch, Commissioner  
Harriet Burt, CPUC  
Travis Kiyota, PG&E  
San Bruno City Council  
San Bruno Redevelopment Agency Board  
Frank Hedley, City Manager