

Utilities Element

Introduction

Purpose and Relationship to GMA

The purpose of the Utilities Element is to provide goals and policies for the efficient and predictable siting of utility facilities and services within the City consistent with public obligations.

The Utilities Element is developed in accordance with the Growth Management Act to direct the City of Newcastle's current and future locations and uses of utilities. RCW 36.70A.070 requires the City to plan, scheme or design the following:

A utilities element consisting of the general location, proposed location, and capacity of all existing and proposed utilities, including but not limited to, electrical lines, telecommunication lines, and natural gas lines.

The Utilities Element is consistent with the King County Countywide Planning Policies and the elements of the Comprehensive Plan. The Utilities Element includes private utilities, (those not provided by the City of Newcastle) electricity, telecommunications, and natural gas.

Organization of the Element

This Element begins by listing the Utility Goal for the City of Newcastle. The Goal is broad and encompasses a variety of utilities that are important to a growing community. The Goal is followed by Policies that encourage the distribution and location of utilities.

The Utilities Appendix provides further information on the current and future capacity for electricity, natural gas and telecommunications, which includes conventional telephones, cellular telephones and cable.

Utilities Goal

UT-G1 To ensure that utilities including electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications transmission are available or can be provided to serve the projected population growth within the planning area in a manner which is fiscally and environmentally responsible, aesthetically acceptable to the community and safe for nearby inhabitants.

Utilities Policies

UT-P1 The City of Newcastle shall require that the undergrounding of new utility distribution lines, with the exception of high voltage electrical transmission lines, be based on coordination with local utilities.

UT-P2 The City of Newcastle shall require the undergrounding of existing utility distribution lines where physically feasible as streets are widened and/or areas are redeveloped based on coordination with local utilities.

UT-P3 The City of Newcastle shall promote collocation of major utility transmission facilities such as high voltage electrical transmission lines and

water and natural gas trunk pipe lines within shared utility corridors, to minimize the amount of land allocated for this purpose and the tendency of such corridors to divide neighborhoods.

- UT-P4 The City of Newcastle shall promote collocation of utility distribution facilities and share trenches in coordination of construction timing to minimize construction related disruption to the public and to reduce the cost of public utility delivery.
- UT-P5 The City of Newcastle shall monitor current research efforts to determine whether electrical or magnetic fields pose a potential health danger. The City shall coordinate with other jurisdictions to pursue development of land use regulations consistent with the findings.
- UT-P6 The City of Newcastle shall promote conservation measures to reduce the need for additional utility distribution facilities in the future.
- UT-P7 Where found to be safe, the City of Newcastle shall promote recreational use of utility corridors such as trails, sport courts, and similar facilities.
- UT-P8 The City of Newcastle shall encourage utility providers to limit disturbance to vegetation within major utility transmission corridors to what is necessary for the safety and maintenance of transmission facilities.
- UT-P9 The City of Newcastle shall encourage utility providers to exercise restraint and sensitivity to neighborhood character in trimming tree limbs around aerial lines.
- UT-P10 The City of Newcastle shall encourage the planting of appropriate varieties of trees in the vicinity of power lines in compliance with applicable state regulations and sensitivity in tree maintenance.
- UT-P11 The City of Newcastle shall encourage multi-family, commercial and industrial developers to provide for satellite signal receiving facilities and telecommunications wiring as a part of an initial building and site design and to explore joint use of such facilities among neighboring properties.
- UT-P12 The City of Newcastle shall encourage the replacement of outdated equipment with technologically updated or advanced alternatives, providing that the cost of the updated equipment is fiscally reasonable.
- UT-P13 The City of Newcastle shall encourage cellular/wireless service providers to provide for collocation of cellular communication antennas when new telecommunications facilities are proposed, and to explore joint use of such facilities in order to reflect sensitivity to neighborhood character and reduce potential aesthetic impacts.