



# Chapter 6. Energy and Telecommunications Element

## Introduction

This Energy and Telecommunications Utilities Element provides information on energy and telecommunication providers that serve residents and businesses in the City of Longview (City). This element includes policies designed to ensure that Longview supports and makes adequate provisions for energy and telecommunications infrastructure in the City. In turn, this infrastructure will support economic growth and public safety and provide other essential communications services for the City in a manner that is compatible with adjacent and nearby land uses.

## Electricity

Public Utility District No. 1 of Cowlitz County (Cowlitz County PUD) builds, operates, and maintains the electrical system serving the City and its planning area.

Cowlitz County PUD is a municipal corporation of the State of Washington, formed to provide electric service within Cowlitz County. Cowlitz County PUD serves electricity to 46,700 residential, commercial, industrial, and street light customers in the County.

Table 6-1 below offers a breakdown of each PUD customer classification, compares the amount of electricity used by each type, and compares the average cost that each pays for electricity. While most customers are residential, the greatest electrical consumption is due to industrial customers.

**Table 6-1. 2005 Average Electric Usage and Cost Statistics**

Customer Type	Customer Count	Electric Consumption	Average Cost (per kilowatt-hour)
Residential	41,350	16.3%	4.98¢
Commercial	5,220	8.6%	6.20¢
Industrial	87	74.9%	3.153¢
Street Lighting	12	0.1%	5.70¢
Other	38	0.1%	6.30¢

Source: Cowlitz County PUD

Note: Average cost does not include City taxes.

Cowlitz County PUD buys over 90% of its wholesale power from Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). The majority of the BPA power comes from the Columbia River system hydroelectric projects. Major power lines bisect the City and Planning Area, and the City is considering the feasibility of recreation and trail opportunities in those locations.

Cowlitz County PUD offered customers a variety of residential, commercial and industrial energy conservation programs in 2005. The PUD invested \$2.43 million in these energy conservation programs, largely made available through credits provided by the BPA Conservation and Renewables Discount program.

The net increase in population and employment in Longview and throughout the region is expected to increase electric consumption. Longview will need to coordinate with Cowlitz County PUD to address growth projections and energy needs.

## Natural Gas

Cascade Natural Gas Corporation (Cascade) builds, operates, and maintains natural gas facilities serving the City and its planning area. Cascade is the natural gas provider for more than 220,000 customers in 93 towns and cities in Washington and

Oregon. Cascade's territory covers more than 32,000 square miles and 700 highway miles from one end of the system to the other. Cascade customers are served from four operational regions; the City of Longview is located in Cascades Western operational region.

While natural gas is not considered a utility that is essential to urban development, natural gas is an important alternative energy source that helps to reduce reliance on electricity. Cascade is one of the fastest growing natural gas utilities in the nation, serving a diverse area. Interstate pipelines transmit Cascade's natural gas from production areas in the Rocky Mountains and Western Canada. Since 2000, Cascade's customer base grew at a pace of 3 to 5%, which is more than double the national average. This high level of growth is the result of overall population growth in the company's service area, and the low level of market saturation for natural gas in the Northwest.

## Telecommunications

Telecommunication is the transmission of sound, images, and/or data by wire, radio, optical cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means. Telecommunications include, but are not limited to, telephone, personal wireless services, microwave, and cable.

### Telephones

Multiple telephone service providers operate within the City, including Qwest Communications International Inc. and the US Sprint Communications Company.

### Personal Wireless

Personal wireless facilities communication services use radio waves to transmit voice and or/or data using the radio frequency spectrum. These services include but are not limited to commercial mobile services (e.g., cellular). Personal wireless facility communication services use ground-based directional receivers (antennae), which may be located on freestanding poles or towers or on buildings and structures. Each antenna has ancillary power and radio equipment.

### Cable

Multiple cable operators provide service in the City, including Cowlitz Cablevision, Inc., last known as Adelphia Cable Communications, and Cascade Networks, Inc. Cable service provides broadcasting via a network of overhead and underground coaxial cables.

## Energy and Telecommunications Goals, Objectives, and Policies

- Goal UT-A** To ensure that energy and telecommunication providers make efficient use of facilities, improve service and aesthetic qualities of facilities, and accommodate growth in a timely manner.
- Objective UT-A.1** Furnish updates of population, employment, and development projections to energy and telecommunication utilities and service providers in order to ensure that appropriate services will be available as needed. Provide projection updates in conjunction with the review of the Longview Comprehensive Plan as provided in Objective LU-A.1, no less frequently than every 7 years.
- Policy UT-A.1.1** Ensure that City regulations allow for improvements and additions to electric, natural gas, and telecommunication facilities as needed to accommodate growth and provide reliable service.
- Policy UT-A.1.2** Require franchise agreements where necessary for utility use of the City rights-of-way.
- Policy UT-A.1.3** Coordinate with other jurisdictions in the implementation of multi-jurisdictional electric facility additions and improvements.
- Policy UT-A.1.4** Promote, when reasonably feasible, co-location of new public and private utility distribution facilities in shared trenches and coordination of construction timing to minimize construction-related disruptions to the public and reduce the cost of utility delivery to the public.
- Policy UT-A.1.5** To the extent feasible, require underground utility networks in new developments in the City.
- Policy UT-A.1.6** Where significant work in existing rights-of-way will occur, investigate with service providers the possibility of buried lines where existing overhead lines are presently located.
- Policy UT-A.1.7** Require communication facilities and poles, including cell or radio towers, to consider existing sites and co-locating prior to establishing new sites.

- Goal UT-B** To promote and support energy conservation.
- Objective UT-B.1** Review and update codes as necessary regarding State Energy Code requirements, solar energy and other alternative energy sources. Conduct the periodic review in conjunction with Comprehensive Plan review in Objective LU-A.1 at least every 7 years, or more frequently based upon State code updates.
- Policy UT-B.1.1** Support and encourage residents and businesses to participate in energy conservation and renewable resource development activities and programs established by the Cowlitz County Public Utility District.
- Policy UT-B.1.2** Encourage commercial and industrial sectors in efforts to investigate and apply energy efficient technologies and methods, such as cogeneration plants.
- Policy UT-B.1.3** Encourage homebuilders and residents in efforts to weatherize houses and apply energy efficient home building, heating, and cooling techniques.
- Policy UT-B.1.4** Encourage state of the art telecommunication services as a means to mitigate the transportation impact of development and growth.
- Policy UT-B.1.5** Provide information to developers, builders, and others concerning techniques for energy efficient land development, subdivision, and building design.
- Policy UT-B.1.6** Encourage site planning and subdivision designs that take advantage of solar radiation, climatic conditions, and natural features of the land.

