Island County Comprehensive Plan

9. Utilities Element

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ISLAND COUNTY UTILITIES ELEMENT

I. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Utilities Element

This element has been developed in accordance with Section 36.70A.070 of the Growth Management Act to address utility services in Island County. Per WAC 365-195-320, the Utilities Element shall contain, at a minimum, “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”.

This utilities element is not intended to guide how, when, or precisely where utilities should be provided. The utility agencies do this themselves, based on demand for their services. It is important to note that, with the exception of the electrical utilities, detailed forecasts and plans have not been prepared by most utilities. Availability of these utilities does not determine where or when growth will occur; rather, the utilities discussed in this plan generally follow development.

In Island County, utility facility placement or siting problems have not to date generated County-wide concern or controversy. Major facilities, such as hydroelectric or nuclear generation sites, will likely never be proposed on Whidbey or Camano Island. The problems facing utility providers include issues such as the ability to meet anticipated local demand with modest transmission or distribution facilities and local siting of facilities such as electrical substations or cellular telephone towers.

Scope of the Utilities Element

Per WAC 365-195-210, certain utilities, such as water systems, sanitary sewers, surface water management facilities, and solid waste facilities are listed as “utilities” that need to be addressed by jurisdictions planning under the GMA. Some of these facilities are included in the Capital Facilities Element of the Island County Comprehensive Plan; others are addressed in various other plans, such as the Coordinated Water System Plan, the Solid Waste Management Plan, and in plans for special Purpose Districts such as water and sewer districts.

For the purpose of this plan component, the definition of “utilities” is limited to three general categories: natural gas, electrical, and telecommunications facilities (including telephone, cellular phone, and cable television services).

Essential Public Facilities

The Growth Management Act requires that each local jurisdiction planning under the Act provide a process within its Comprehensive Plan for identifying and siting “essential public facilities”, which are those facilities which are typically difficult to site, such as airports, solid waste facilities, and in-patient health facilities. The guidelines prepared pursuant to the Act suggests evaluating, in the Utility Element, whether any utilities should be classified as essential
public facilities, with special siting processes developed for them. The Act prohibits local jurisdictions from imposing outright bans on essential public facilities.

In the Regional GMA Inter-Utility Report which was prepared jointly by Puget Sound electrical utilities, the designation of utility (particularly electric facilities) as “essential public facilities” under the GMA is suggested. However, because most utility facilities of the scale needed in Island County will not require special siting processes, and it is highly unlikely that any new large-scale utility facilities, such as high-voltage electrical generating plants, will be proposed in Island County, no classification of utility facilities as essential public facilities is made herein.

II. GOALS AND POLICIES

Goals:

1. Facilitate the provision of utilities at levels of service and rates appropriate to accommodate planned development within Island County and its incorporated areas.

2. Ensure that utility service is provided in a manner that is environmentally sensitive, safe, reliable, economical, and aesthetically compatible with surrounding land uses.

3. Process permits and approvals for utility facilities in a fair and timely manner, and in accordance with predictable development regulations.

4. Improve accessibility to government through interactive audio/visual telecommunication, considering the geography of Island County.

Policies:

UTILITY PLACEMENT AND PERMITTING

1. Utility Placement and Timing

   a) When reasonable and feasible, promote the co-location of new public and private utility distribution facilities. Coordinate construction timing to minimize disruptions to the public and disturbances to the environment and archaeological resources, and reduce the cost to the public of utility delivery.

   b) Use utility corridors for joint uses, such as trails, open space, and recreation.

   c) Provide timely and effective notification of interested utilities of road construction and of maintenance and upgrades of existing roads to facilitate coordination of public and private utility trenching activities.

   d) Encourage efficient, cost effective and reliable utility service by ensuring that land will be made available for the location of utility lines, including location within public transportation corridors, consistent with franchise terms and conditions including the possible payment of annual fees.
e) Coordinate land use and facility planning to allow eventual siting and construction of distribution lines within rights-of-way which are being dedicated or within roads which are being constructed or reconstructed.

f) Encourage communication among the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC), and utilities regulated by the WUTC, regarding the requirements of the Growth Management Act, especially the requirement that service be provided concurrently with or in advance of demand.

g) Encourage system design practices intended to minimize the number and duration of interruptions to customer service, including underground lines where practicable.

2. Permitting

a) Implement timely, predictable, and reasonable permit processes for utility service.

b) Review and amend existing regulations as necessary to allow maintenance, repair, installation and replacement of utilities, where consistent with the overall goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

c) Work with utility providers to enhance County and private Geographic Information Systems (GIS) development to help increase efficiency in permit processes.

CONSISTENCY WITH URBAN GROWTH AREAS AND LAND USE PLANNING

1. Planning for utilities is the primary responsibility of the utility providers and must be coordinated with the County Comprehensive Plan.

CONSERVATION, ENVIRONMENT AND HUMAN HEALTH

1. Facilitate and encourage conservation of resources to delay the need for additional utility facilities.

2. Once in place, continuing maintenance of utility facilities may disturb sensitive areas. Utility facilities should therefore be located outside such sensitive areas.

While harmful biological effects due to proximity to utility facilities such as electrical transmission lines or cellular tower sites have not been conclusively demonstrated, significant concerns remain, and study of the issues is ongoing. It is impractical to adopt specific standards at this time, as there is no scientific consensus as to what distances or levels might be appropriate. To address these environmental and health concerns, the County and affected utilities should.

a) Promote siting of facilities with respect for natural features, sensitive areas, and water quality and quality.

b) Monitor research into the health effects of emissions from utility facilities.

c) Adopt standards as necessary to protect the public from known health hazards.
NEW TECHNOLOGY

1. Exercise flexibility in reviewing proposals using innovative new technologies.
2. Consider changes to regulations and policies as appropriate to allow new utility technologies.

III. REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

State and Federal Regulation of Utilities

It is recognized that utility activities and development are also subject to regulation by various State and Federal agencies. While Island County acknowledges the roles and authorities of these agencies, it retains its right to prohibit throughout petroleum products pipelines within Island County.

Following is a listing of the major utility-regulating authorities, their roles and relevant laws:

Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission

The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC), composed of three members appointed by the governor, is empowered to regulate utilities (including, but not limited to, electrical, gas, telephone, telecommunications, and water companies). State law (WAC 480) regulates the rates and charges, services, facilities and practices of utilities. Any change in customer charges or service provision policy requires WUTC approval. Pursuant to the recent findings/conclusions of Washington State Supreme Court in Electric Lightwave, Inc., and Digital Direct V. WUTC, the WUTC does not have the authority to grant exclusive or quasi-exclusive areas of service to telephone companies.

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is an independent five-member commission with the US Department of Energy. FERC establishes rates and charges for the interstate transportation and sale of natural gas, for the transmission and sale of electricity, and the licensing of hydro-electric power projects.

Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978

The central theme of the National Gas Policy Act (NGPA) is encouragement of competition among fuels and suppliers across the country. As a result, natural gas essentially has been decontrolled. The NGPA also contained incentives for developing new natural gas resources, and tiered pricing structure aimed at encouraging the development of nationwide transmission pipelines. The result of the Act has been that many consumers are now paying less for natural gas than they were in 1980.

Northwest Power Planning Council

The Northwest Power Planning Council (NWPPC) focuses on the generation of electricity; however, its policies have implications for gas too.
State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)
Per WAC 197-11-800(24), many utility activities are exempt from environmental review under SEPA. This includes, except on lands covered by water, the installation of communications lines (telephone, cable television); installation or construction of electric facilities with an associated voltage of 55 kV or less, including underground installation of existing lines or upgrade of existing 55 kV lines to greater voltages; the installation of natural gas distribution lines (as opposed to transmission lines); and maintenance, repair, replacement, operation, or other activity related to the above, provided such activity does not raise the level of the action above the exemption threshold.

Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
The FCC regulates and licenses agencies and utilities, such as television, radio, telecommunications and cable TV providers.

The above is a listing of some of the major regulations and regulatory authorities with jurisdiction over utilities. Utility providers are also subject to other State and Federal regulations regarding rates, construction and service standards, and competition.

Local Regulation of Utilities
Local authorities may choose to regulate utilities subject to review under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), based upon established thresholds, zoning, shoreline management, and utility accommodation or land development ordinances.

Island County regulates placement of utility facilities within County rights-of-way in ICC 11.01, the Land Development Standards. All utilities discussed in this plan are subject to these requirements when placing facilities within County rights-of-way. Placement of utilities on public or private property is regulated under Island County’s Site Plan Review, Short Platting, Subdivision, and Planned Residential Development regulations.

IV. INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS
This section describes existing utility systems within the County and describes improvements that are necessary to meet anticipated demand consistent with the County’s growth projections. Descriptions of these systems are supplemented with maps which illustrate the utility systems and any anticipated or proposed improvements necessary to provide adequate service to the community. Also discussed are issues relating to siting and health that are particular to each type of utility.

Most of the information contained in this inventory is excerpted from plans developed by the utilities themselves. Detailed written plans were not available from all utilities, and efforts were made through direct contact with utilities providers to gain information regarding existing and proposed facilities. This inventory does not include all of the data or information available, but attempts to present the relevant information in an organized and useful format.
NATURAL GAS

CASCADE NATURAL GAS CORPORATION

Cascade Natural Gas Corporation (CNG), a privately owned for-profit corporation, is the sole provider of natural gas in Island County. CNG obtains natural gas from the Northwest Pipeline Corporation, which owns and operates an interstate pipeline that links major deposits of natural gas in Alberta, Canada and New Mexico.

Washington State requires gas providers to demonstrate that existing rate payers will not subsidize new customers. Thus, gas transmission line extensions are not planned in advance but are initiated only when there is sufficient customer demand.

As of 1990, Cascade Natural Gas Corporation served 1,412 residential and 376 commercial accounts in its Island County service area.

Existing System

Natural gas is supplied to the County through a 6-inch high-pressure line which follows SR 532 onto Camano Island. A limited service area exists on northeastern Camano Island. A submarine 6-inch high-pressure main originates at Brown’s Point on Camano Island and connects Whidbey Island at Strawberry Point (Figure 1). Service on Whidbey Island is limited to the City of Oak Harbor, NAS Whidbey Island, and surrounding unincorporated areas within reasonable distance of the transmission main.

Future Demand and Proposed Facilities

The location, capacity and timing of any improvements to the existing Cascade Natural Gas Corporation distribution system are driven purely by demand. This means that future connections are not planned in advance; rather, connections are initiated by customer requests. This includes installation service for new development and conversion from electricity or oil to natural gas. Also, unlike some utility providers, natural gas service may legally be refused to potential customers if the extension is not cost-effective to the company.

Cascade Natural Gas Corporation projects net Island County customer growth (both Camano and Whidbey Islands) to occur at the approximate rate of 150 to 200 customers per year within existing service areas. The majority of this is to occur in the Oak Harbor area, as there is limited accessibility to the Camano Island facilities. No major new facilities, upgrades, or extension of services beyond existing service areas is planned or anticipated within the next 20 years, but the utility is willing to serve major new development outside existing service areas if the development occurs relatively close to existing mains.

See Figure 1 for graphical information regarding Cascade Natural Gas Corporation facilities in Island County.
ELECTRICAL UTILITIES

Electricity is vital to any community, yet its benefits are commonly taken for granted, and the vast network of generating facilities, transmission lines, switching stations, and distribution lines are rarely given a thought until the lights go out in a November windstorm. Electrical service providers must coordinate and plan their activities to a much greater degree than less critical utilities, such as cable television. Under State law, electrical utilities must provide electricity upon demand.

The Northwest derives two-thirds of its electricity from hydro-power. Diminishing natural resources, lack of available sites for new generating stations, and growing needs pose significant regional challenges for electric utilities. Local issues involve siting of transmission systems, substations and distribution lines. Recognizing the need for integrated and cooperative planning, the five major electrical utilities in the Pacific Northwest (Puget Sound Energy, Snohomish county PUD, the Bonneville Power Administration, Seattle City Light, and Tacoma Public Utilities) developed a long-term plan. Prepared specifically for local jurisdictions planning under the GMA, the Regional GMA Inter-Utility Report (November, 1992) addressed major facility needs over the next twenty years for the Puget Sound region. The joint plan represents a commitment by these utilities to work closely with each other and with local jurisdictions.

Being regional in scope, the Inter-Utility Report does not address in detail those transmission facilities which are considered local, such as 115kV (kilovolts, or 1,000 volts) transmission lines which serve distribution substations. Currently, all transmission lines serving Island County are 115kV.

An electric power network, from large generating stations to the outlet on the wall, involves a series of “step-downs”, through transformers. From any of a number of Columbia River hydroelectric generators, 500kV (and lower voltage) transmission lines terminate at transmission substations, where the voltage is typically stepped down to 115kV. At distribution substations, the voltage is stepped down to distribution levels, usually between 4kV and 35kV. For service lines to individual customers, this voltage is reduced to 120 or 240 volts by transformers on utility poles.

Electrical facilities of less than (55kV) are generally referred to as distribution facilities, while facilities of greater than 55kV are referred to as transmission facilities. For the purposes of this inventory, only transmission facilities and other major facilities are addressed.

Possible health effects from proximity to electrical transmission facilities have been given substantial attention during the last decade or so. Although research is ongoing, electrical and magnetic fields of the type and levels found near electrical power facilities have not been conclusively demonstrated to cause adverse effects in humans. In response to these concerns, new facilities are sometimes designed or located to reduce exposure to electric and magnetic fields. The Environmental Protection Agency has not adopted any standards relating to electrical or magnetic fields.
SNOHOMISH COUNTY PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT

Since 1949, Camano Island has been provided electrical utilities by the Snohomish County PUD, the second largest publicly-owned utility in the Pacific Northwest in terms of number of customers. The three elected commissioners of the district set policies and adopt rates and charges for services. The main offices of the PUD are located in Everett, with five regional offices, including one in Stanwood. As of 1993 Snohomish County PUD was serving nearly 222,000 customers through 4,806 miles of line (282 miles of transmission) as of 1992, the PUD served 5,464 residential and 302 commercial connections on Camano Island.

Existing System

Camano Island, being primarily rural in nature, does not have sophisticated urban electrical utility needs, and an inventory of existing facilities is relatively brief.

A 115 kV transmission main extends from Stanwood, across Davis Slough, following SR 532 to Terry’s Corner where it turns south and follows East Camano Drive for approximately 4 miles until it veers west along Camano Hill Road. After about 1.5 miles, the line travels overland and terminates near the intersection of Monticello Drive and Elger Bay Road. Two substations, one near Terry’s Corner and the other at the terminus of the transmission main, comprise the remainder of PUD’s transmission facilities on Camano Island. A distribution network spreads from the main transmission facilities.

Future Demand and Proposed Facilities

By 2000, the utility anticipates serving 6,360 residential and 360 commercial connections, and by 2010, 7,750 residential and 430 commercial (based on an average of 2% per year anticipated growth rate over the twenty-year planning period). To meet these demands, Snohomish County PUD intends to install a 115 kV transmission line between the Lake Goodwin and North Stanwood substations within the next ten years. Within the next fifteen years, the utility intends to install a double 115 kV line between the Stanwood and Terry’s Corner (North Camano) substations; a third substation on Camano Island, between the existing Terry’s Corner and South Camano substations; is likely within the next 20 years. The anticipated growth rate used by the PUD may be low. Island County estimates a 2.8% compound growth rate on Camano Island (1990-2016).

See Figure 2 for additional information on the PUD’s existing and proposed facilities on Camano Island.

PUGET SOUND ENERGY

With roots dating to the 1880s, Puget Sound Energy is one of the oldest investor-owned utilities in the Northwest, and, with nearly 800,000 customers, it is the largest electric utility in Washington. Its service area spans approximately 4,500 square miles in nine Washington counties. About 40% of Puget Sound Energy’s electrical needs are met by
hydroelectric projects on the Columbia River. The remainder is generated by smaller hydroelectric, coal, gas, or oil-fired facilities.

Puget Sound Energy has developed a detailed “Draft GMA Electrical Facilities Plan - Island County/Whidbey Island”. This document was used to prepare the following inventory. As of December 1997, Puget Sound Energy served approximately 36,100 customers (approximately 32,050 residential and 4,050 commercial, industrial and other) on Whidbey Island. Puget Sound Energy also transports power to the Whidbey Island Naval Station (a Bonneville Power Administration customer).

Existing Facilities

Whidbey Island is served exclusively by Puget Sound Energy. Power for Whidbey Island is generated by Columbia River hydroelectric projects in Eastern Washington and British Columbia, along with other facilities in Whatcom and Skagit Counties, including gas-fired combustion turbines at the Texaco refinery near March Point on Fidalgo Island.

From the March Point substation, two 115 kV lines cross Deception Pass and terminate at the Whidbey Substation in Oak Harbor. From this substation, two 115 kV lines run south to the Greenbank Substation, then continue on to the Freeland Substation. From Freeland, a single 115 kV line runs east to the South Whidbey Substation near Langley, then on to the Langley Substation located about midway between Langley and Clinton. Puget Sound Energy has a total of three transmission substations and eight distribution substations serving Whidbey Island. (See Figure 3)

Whidbey Island’s sole generating facility is a diesel combustion turbine located at the South Whidbey Substation near Langley. Originally installed to maintain transmission voltage levels at the south end of the island, the generator now serves as a backup power source for part of the south island area when transmission service from the north is interrupted. Re-supplied via tanker truck from the mainland, the generator has a three day supply of fuel. The generator has a limited service area which can be further reduced by transmission line outages, and can be put completely out of service should weather or road conditions prevent refueling. Whidbey Island is thus largely dependent on mainland sources of power. Puget Sound Energy has a service center and business office in Oak Harbor.

Future Demand and Proposed Facilities

Using Island County’s growth projections, Puget Sound Energy has forecast future demand for electrical service. By 2010, Puget Sound Energy anticipates serving approximately 45,600 customers (40,500 residential and 5,100 other) on Whidbey Island.

Puget Sound Energy anticipates a need for a third 115 kV line from March Point to North Whidbey by 2010. Intended for a different route than the two existing lines, the new line will reduce the likelihood of losing power over the entire island, as has happened during severe winter storms. The line would be initially energized at 115 kV, but would be designed for later upgrade to 230 kV to accommodate future load growth.
A second 115 kV line is under construction (to be completed in 1998) from the Freeland Substation to the South Whidbey Substation will provide a second transmission path to the south island area. This second line will improve transmission system reliability resulting in fewer outages in the historically vulnerable south island area.

Puget Sound Energy anticipates the need for up to four additional distribution substations to accommodate projected load growth by 2010. Three of these stations are anticipated to be sited such that additional transmission lines (beyond those discussed above) will not be required. A fourth substation proposed for the south end of the island would be integrated into the existing system by a new 115kV transmission line (route to be determined). The timing of installation of any of these facilities will be dependent on actual future land use development patterns and densities.

While it is recognized that it is the responsibility of the utility to plan for future growth, and to determine what facilities might be necessary to support projected growth, the exact location of these facilities are subject to local and State regulation (see, for example, Goals and Policies, Section II). Thus, it may be necessary for Puget Sound Energy to consider alternative corridors and locations for proposed facilities.

Puget Sound Energy has provided an inventory and analysis of existing facilities and future facility needs for the Island County service area based on growth projections provided by the County; these materials were used to develop Figure 3.

**TELECOMMUNICATIONS UTILITIES**

**TELEPHONE**

Two standard telephone utilities serve Island County. GTE-NW serves all of Camano Island and northern and central portions of Whidbey Island. Whidbey Telephone’s existing service area begins at Greenbank and covers the southern part of Whidbey Island. Recently Whidbey Telephone’s franchise was expanded to include all of unincorporated Whidbey and Camano Islands.

The provision of telephone services is driven by the needs of its customers. As the population grows, telecommunication facilities will be upgraded to ensure adequate service levels. It is also possible that facilities will be upgraded as technology advances. Telephone companies already provide, or will likely soon provide, additional services such as “cable television” and access to computer networks such as the Internet.

Like investor-owned gas and electric companies, telephone companies are regulated by the WUTC, which ensures reliable service is provided at reasonable rates. It would be to the economic advantage of Island County to have rates restructured to eliminate intra-county toll charges.

Standard telephone facilities include a central plant, which houses switching gear (often in the same building as central offices), remote switching stations, microwave and the familiar utility poles and overhead lines. Underground installation of telephone lines and use of efficient fiber optic systems is becoming more common as technology advances and the regulatory framework responds to aesthetic concerns.
TELEPHONE: GTE-NW

GTE-NW’s service area in Island County includes the incorporated areas of the City of Oak Harbor and the Town of Coupeville. Most of GTE-NW’s major facilities are located on the mainland. GTE-NW has office facilities located in Oak Harbor.

TELEPHONE: WHIDBEY TELEPHONE

Whidbey Telephone is an independently owned and operated telephone utility serving roughly the southern half of Whidbey Island, with main offices in Freeland. In addition to its standard telephone service, the company also provides marine communications and access to the Internet. Whidbey Telephone has added an extensive network of optic fiber systems to its existing wire line system.

Future Demand and Proposed Facilities

Existing telephone facilities and some minor upgrades, mainly at the distribution level, will adequately serve the County’s needs during the planning period, and no major new major facilities are planned by either GTE or Whidbey Telephone.

CELLULAR TELEPHONE SERVICE

Cellular telephone service is becoming increasingly popular. A cellular system consists of cells (a geographic area served by a transmitting and receiving tower), cell sites (the tower site, also including a base station radio and interconnecting equipment), a switching station (which receives and distributes signals from the cell sites via conventional land lines and microwave signals), and, of course, the cellular phones themselves. Cellular phones can operate only within the range of a given cell site. Thus, in order to cover broad service areas, cell sites must be located close enough to one another so that service is uninterrupted as the user moves from one location to another.

Cellular towers can pose siting problems. The towers can be free-standing structures, but are often placed on top of existing structures where convenient; this is more common in urban areas, and creates less of a visual impact than free-standing towers. As service expands or changes, existing cell sites may need to be reconfigured.

Because of growing use of digital technology, existing cell sites will be able to serve greater capacity than with the existing analog system. Thus, capacity is not anticipated to be a problem in the future.

At the Federal level, cellular phone facilities are regulated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which has jurisdiction over the public airwaves, assigning frequencies and licensing operators. The FCC requires that transmitting towers be located such that transmission of signals is unobstructed. Local jurisdictions can regulate tower siting to the extent that a Federally-licensed use is not impeded. Thus, a local jurisdiction can deny approval of a tower at a particular site, but cannot impose an outright ban on towers within its jurisdiction.
The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and WSDOT Aviation Division also review proposed towers when they exceed 200 feet in height (above ground level) or when the proposed location is within 20,000 feet of a major airport (serving military and commercial aircraft) or within 10,000 feet of a smaller airport. While not having the authority to deny potential sites, the FAA coordinates its review process with the FCC, who may deny a particular site if the FAA objects.

There are two providers of cellular telephone service in Island County - A T & T Wireless Services and US WEST. Figure 4 is a map of existing and known proposed cellular telephone facilities.

**CELLULAR: A T & T WIRELESS SERVICES**

**Existing System**

Interstate Cellular Telephone Company, doing business as A T & T Wireless Services, operates three towers in Island County (see Figure 4).

**Future Demand and Proposed Facilities**

No information is available regarding major new facilities planned by A T & T Wireless Services.

**CELLULAR: US WEST**

**Existing System**

US WEST has provided cellular phone service in Island County since 1990, and currently operates two existing cell sites in the County - one on North Whidbey near Polnell Point, and one near Freeland. The Freeland cell site is currently undergoing upgrade. Coverage of Island County is also provided by cell sites located near Anacortes, Port Townsend, Lake Goodwin (near Smoky Point), and Everett.

See Figure 4 for additional information regarding major cellular telephone facilities operated by US WEST.

**Future Demand and Proposed Facilities**

US WEST has indicated that minimal additional facilities are required within the planning period to cover additional demand for its cellular phone services. A proposed cell site, to be located on NAS Whidbey Island, would be exempt from local regulation regarding siting. Another is planned for South Whidbey, near Clinton, on top of an existing fire station.

**CABLE TELEVISION (CATV)**

Cable carries data via coaxial cable from trunk lines, which originate at a “head-end site”, which processes information and generates it through the distribution system. Though the term “cable” implies wiring throughout the system, many cable systems also utilize
satellite dishes and microwave antenna. Cable distribution lines are often run using leased overhead utility poles, but underground installation of cable systems is becoming more common.

Six cable companies serve Island County. Cable companies and cable service change often, and require relatively minor facilities. No new major facilities will be required for CATV providers to meet anticipated growth in Island County. Therefore, detailed information regarding CATV providers is unnecessary.
Figure 1  Cascade Natural Gas Service Areas and Transmission Facilities
Figure 2  Snohomish County PUD Generalized Location of Existing and Future Electric Facilities
Figure 3  Puget Sound Energy and Future Electric Facilities
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