

## SECTION VIII - UTILITIES ELEMENT

### Introduction

The City of Stanwood is required, under GMA, to develop a Utilities Element in their Comprehensive Plan. Specifically, this element must consist 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 following facilities will be addressed in this Utilities Element:

- A. Electrical System
- B. Natural Gas
- C. Telecommunications
- D. Cable Television
- E. Solid Waste Disposal
- F. Recycling Programs
- G. Water System
- H. Sewer System

### Utilities Goals and Policies

#### *Coordination, Efficiency, and Safety*

#### Goal

*UTG-1* - To ensure that utilities including water, sewer, drainage, garbage disposal, electricity, natural gas, telecommunications, cable television and satellite transmission are available or can be provided to serve the projected population growth within the planning area in a manner which is efficient and safe.

#### Policies

*UTP-1.1* - If utility companies identify a need for major improvements to utility facilities, the City shall coordinate with those companies at the earliest possible stage of the planning for the needed facility. Coordination shall include consideration of alternatives to new facilities and alternative locations for the facilities.

*UTP-1.2* - Promote co-location of major utility transmission facilities such as high voltage electrical transmission lines and water and natural gas trunk lines within shared utility corridors, to minimize the amount of land allocated for this purpose and avoid the division of neighborhoods.

*UTP-1.3* - Coordinate and promote co-location of utility lines by sharing trenches and, when appropriate, sizing ductwork/conduit for future growth, during installation of, or improvements to, utilities.

*UTP-1.4* - Coordinate utility related construction between utility companies to minimize construction related disruption to the public and to reduce the costs of public utility

delivery.

*UTP-1.5* - Promote conservation measures to reduce the need for additional utility distribution facilities in the future.

*UTP-1.6* - Where safe, feasible, and does not pose a health danger, promote recreational use of utility corridors; for example, trails, bike paths, green belts, and similar facilities.

*UTP-1.7* - Encourage multi-family, commercial, and industrial developers to provide for satellite signal receiving facilities as part of an initial building and site design and to explore joint use of such facilities among neighboring properties.

*UTP-1.8* - Update the Utilities Element at least every five years to reflect changing regulatory conditions, electric load forecasts, and technology in cooperation with providing agencies.

*UTP-1.9* - Connect all new development within the city limits to public wastewater and water systems.

*UTP-1.10* - Require properties within 200 feet of a water main to connect to the City's water system.

*UTP-1.11* - Conserve water by promotion of programs to conserve and minimize use.

*UTP-1.12* - Consolidate new utility systems to all existing right-of-ways and utility easements whenever possible.

*UTP-1.13* - The goals and policy statements from the City's Water and Sewer Comprehensive plans are adopted herein by reference.

### ***Vegetation, Aesthetics, and the Environment***

#### **Goal**

*UTG-2* - Encourage improvements to utility facilities that are environmentally responsible, aesthetically acceptable to the community and safe for nearby inhabitants.

#### **Policies**

*UTP-2.1* - Ensure that utility companies limit disturbance to vegetation within major utility transmission corridors that are necessary for safety and maintenance of transmission facilities.

*UTP-2.2* - Require the undergrounding of new utility distribution lines with the exception of high voltage electrical transmission lines. High voltage lines are exempt due to the high cost and potential adverse environmental impacts of undergrounding such lines.

*UTP-2.3* - Require the undergrounding of existing utility distribution lines where physically feasible as streets are widened and/or areas are redeveloped. Assign a high priority to undergrounding of lines within view corridors.

*UTP-2.4* - Require landscaping of utility facilities to minimize adverse aesthetic impacts on the surrounding land uses.

*UTP-2.5* - Regulate construction of utilities within Stanwood's critical areas in accordance with the adopted City critical areas regulations and best available science.

*UTP-2.6* – Encourage the co-location of cellular facilities, as well as the removal of facilities that are no longer functional.

## Inventory and Analysis

### Electrical System

#### *Existing System*

Electricity is delivered to the City of Stanwood by the Snohomish County Public Utility District (PUD). The Snohomish County PUD is the largest single public utility customer of the Bonneville Power Administration. The area is serviced by 115,000-volt transmission lines. These high voltage transmission lines deliver power to Stanwood's only substation which is located at the east end of downtown by the Burlington Northern Railroad tracks and Cedar Street. This substation houses two transformer banks.

**Table UT-1  
Electrical Consumption within Stanwood City Limits  
January - December 2002**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Connections</b>	<b>Kilowatt Hrs. Per Month/ Per Consumer</b>	<b>Average Monthly Bill</b>
Residential	1,579	866	\$69
Commercial	152	14,863	\$1,053
Industrial	5	50,069	\$3,609

#### *Future Needs*

The Snohomish County PUD has stated that they do not anticipate having any problems meeting the future electrical needs of the Stanwood area over the next 20 years.

**Natural Gas**

*Existing System*

Natural gas is supplied to the Stanwood area by Cascade Natural Gas which purchases gas from the Northwest Pipeline. There are two main gas lines operated by the Northwest Pipeline. These lines are 26 and 30 inches in diameter and operate under 600 and 1,000 lbs./sq. inch (PSI), respectively. Cascade Natural Gas runs a six-inch line from Route 9 under 200-250 PSI to the Camano Island Bridge. From there, the pressure is reduced to 40-45 PSI and the Stanwood service line is reduced to four inches. Over the past several years, Cascade Natural Gas has significantly extended mains and lines into the Stanwood area. In January of 1994, Cascade Natural Gas supplied 371 customers in the Stanwood area. As of March 2003, 1,291 customers in the Stanwood area (includes Camano Island) are supplied by Cascade Natural Gas.

*Future Needs*

Cascade Natural Gas states that it does not foresee any problem with supplying natural gas to the Stanwood area, even if the population were to double or triple over the next 20 years.

**Telecommunications/ Information Superhighway**

*Telephone*

*Existing System*

Verizon is the local provider of telephone service to the Stanwood area. Each telephone customer can choose between multiple long distance service providers. Verizon also provides DSL internet service to the Stanwood area.

**Table UT-2  
Percent of Housing Units With No Telephone Service**

<b>State</b>	<b>Stanwood</b>	<b>Arlington</b>	<b>Marysville</b>	<b>Snohomish County</b>	<b>Skagit County</b>
1.4	1.2	.67	.65	1.1	1.5

Source: US Census 2000

*Future Needs*

Verizon states that it has no difficulty keeping up with the demand for telephone service in the Stanwood area.

**Cellular Phones**

*Existing System*

Cellular phones are operated by a sender, who sends a message to a receiving station or "cell site," which relays the message by wire to the switching station. The message is

then sent to the receiver by wire. Therefore, the only part of the message sent through the airwaves is from the sender to the cell site. If the receiver is on a cellular phone, then, obviously, the message goes from the switching station to a cell site to the receiver on a cellular phone. Cell sites can be anywhere from five to 30 miles apart depending on the local terrain or other barriers to the broadcast signal.

Cellular phone service is currently available in the City of Stanwood from numerous providers. The exact number of customers is confidential information.

#### *Future Needs*

Providing future cellular service to Stanwood does not present a problem because Stanwood is relatively small in area and only a few cell sites are needed to service the area. There is also a large selection of undeveloped parcels within the city limits and in the adjacent lands from which future cell sites could be chosen.

The City strictly regulates cellular towers and encourages the co-location of cellular facilities.

### **Cable Television**

#### *Existing System*

Cable and digital cable television are provided by Wave Broadband. Northland Cable has a total of 673 customers in the Stanwood incorporated area. No distinction is made between residential, commercial, or industrial subscribers. There are isolated pockets of Stanwood that do not have cable service. These include Viking Village and 267th St. NW (south of SR-532).

#### *Future Needs and Issues*

There do not appear to be any difficulties in providing cable television in the future. Northland Cable anticipates upgrading their lines by the end of 2004 to include internet service. Cable internet service is currently becoming available in the Stanwood area.

### **Solid and Hazardous Waste Disposal and Recycling Programs**

#### *Existing System*

Private: Currently, Stanwood utilizes the private services of Waste Management of Skagit County for solid waste disposal and curbside recycling. They have 1028 accounts inside the City limits of Stanwood. Of these accounts, 836 are residential, 183 are commercial (front-load containers), and 9 are industrial (scheduled roll-off boxes).

Public: Snohomish County is also an active participant in waste and recycling services in Stanwood. The County contracts to have automobile oil, antifreeze and batteries hauled away from the collection sites at Twin City Auto and Schucks Auto Supply. Every year, the County sponsors a City of Stanwood hazardous waste collection event. During that time (typically two days), local residents can drop off hazardous waste, at a designated site, at no cost and the County handles the disposal.

### *Cost of Waste Disposal*

The costs of solid, fluid and hazardous waste disposal continues to climb dramatically. In 1974, there was no cost to take garbage to the dump. In 1984, it cost \$35 to leave one ton of garbage (prorated). In 1994, it cost \$89 per ton, and it still does in 2003. In 2003, the cost for a passenger car to dump waste is \$15.10. The cost for trucks, SUV's and station wagons to dump waste is \$16.75 for up to 360 lbs. After 360 lbs, additional weight is charged at a pro-rated rate of \$89 per ton. Essentially, a pickup truck load will cost from \$16.75 to \$89.

### *Destination of Waste and Recyclable Materials*

All solid waste is taken to the Arlington Transfer Station. From there, it is removed to various disposal sites. Household recyclable materials are taken to the Arlington Transfer Station as well.

### *Future Needs*

With regional landfill operations closing all the time, the cost for waste disposal will continue to climb. The solutions in dealing with waste must be creative and efforts to increase recycling should be intensified. If the price to deposit waste exceeds what the public is willing to pay, then litter violations will increase. Consumers can continually seek new sites to deposit garbage but recycling a higher percentage of refuse may become a more viable solution.

## **Water System**

The City of Stanwood Comprehensive Water System Plan is adopted by reference. Please refer to this document for information on the City's water system.

## **Sewer System**

The City of Stanwood Waste Water Facilities Plan is adopted by reference. Please refer to this document for information on the City's sewer system.