

8.0 UTILITIES.

8.1 Introduction

The Utilities Element of the Yakima Urban Area Comprehensive Plan provides an overview of the utilities provided by non-municipal providers. These utilities include natural gas, electricity, and telecommunications. Each private or semi-public utility should plan their system in alignment with major growth decisions and when gaps in capacity are identified.

City-provided services are addressed in the Capital Facilities Element and the Capital Facilities Plan.

Electric and telephone utilities are generally available throughout the entire urban areas. Cable television and natural gas are generally available within the City limits and available in some areas within unincorporated portion of the urban area. The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC) regulates provision of these services and the costs that a utility can recover in order to ensure consistency and responsibility on the part of the provider. The City of Yakima has the authority to determine appropriate locations for existing and proposed utilities and to regulate this through the use of the local land use laws.

Utilities - Growth Management Act

Each comprehensive plan shall include...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. (RCW 36.70A.070(4))

8.2 Conditions and Trends

The utilities listed in Exhibit 8-1 serve Yakima residents. The following section provides descriptions of these utilities.

Exhibit 8-1. Utility Service Providers

Facility Type	Provider	Description	Applicable Plans
Electricity	Pacific Power and Light Company	Provides supply of electrical power through transmission lines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2015 Integrated Resource Plan Update
Natural Gas	Cascade Natural Gas Corporation	Provides supply of natural gas from interstate pipelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2011 Cascade Natural Gas Integrated Resource Plan
Telecommunications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CenturyLink/Qwest • Integra • Charter Spectrum • Cellular services are provided by a variety of national and regional carriers. 	Provides transmission of information through telephone, radio, cellular telephone, and cable television.	



Electricity

Pacific Power and Light Company owns and maintains the power grid within the city limits. The company, formed in 1910 from several small electric companies, serves portions of Yakima, Benton, and Kittitas counties within the Yakima Valley (Pacific Power, 2016). The large concentration of agriculture and food processing in Yakima make up a good portion of energy demand in the City (PacifiCorp, 2015).

Pacific Power provides a 99.97 percent service reliability. Currently, the Union Gap substation near Yakima is being upgraded to enhance reliability, security, and operational flexibility for the transmission grid that delivers directly to homes and businesses. The River Road and Punkin Center substations, which also serve the Yakima area, are currently being upgraded to increase their capacity. In addition, Pacific Power has proposed a 230-kilovolt line that will connect the existing Bonneville Power Administration power substation near Vantage, Washington to the Pomona Heights substation near Selah, benefiting customers through increased operation flexibility and security of the transmission grid. The timeline for this project involves construction beginning in late 2016 and service beginning in late 2017. (Pacific Power, 2016)



Natural Gas

Cascade Natural Gas Corporation provides natural gas service to Yakima and the surrounding area and is a subsidiary company of MDU Resources Group, Inc., which serves over a million customers with electricity and natural gas services (MDU Resources Group, Inc., 2014). Cascade serves more than 272,000 customers and 96 communities, concentrated heavily in western and central Washington State (Cascade natural Gas, 2016). Cascade's production areas are in the Rocky Mountains and western Canada and the resources are transmitted through interstate pipelines from the production areas to the service area (Cascade natural Gas, 2016).



The Cascade Natural Gas Corporation is served by Northwest Pipeline, LLC, which is owned and operated by the energy infrastructure company Williams. The pipeline has a peak design capacity of 3.9 million dekatherms per day, with storage capacity of 14 million dekatherms, and 2,900 miles of pipeline throughout the Pacific Northwest and Intermountain Region. (Williams, 2016)

Telecommunications - Digital

Yakima is served by CenturyLink, Integra, and Charter Spectrum (New Vision, 2016).

- CenturyLink/Qwest offers Yakima customers internet, phone, and television services.
- Integra offers internet customers fiber, on-network, multi-service POP, and Ethernet services. Fiber is only available in select areas of the city. On-network and multi-service POP are only available in select buildings.

- Charter Spectrum offers Yakima customers television, internet, and phone services.

Telecommunications – Cellular

Local telephone service is provided by Qwest, which is now merged with CenturyLink (WUTC, 2016). Yakima’s cellular network is served by Verizon, AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile, and U.S. Cellular.

8.3 Goals and Policies

All new. The 2006 plan has only water and wastewater goals/policies in the Utilities chapter (which are being moved to the Capital Facilities Element.)

These goals and policies address utility provision in concert with growth. For additional goals and policies around conservation and energy see the Energy Element.

GOAL 8.1. Provide all utilities at an acceptable level of service to accommodate future demands.

Policies

- 8.1.1. Ensure adequate communication between the City and utility providers to coordinate growth and development of service capacities.

GOAL 8.2. Ensure that utilities are provided in a reliable, sustainable, and safe manner.

Policies

- 8.2.1. Use land use, design, and construction policies and regulations to manage placement and construction of utilities, encouraging the efficient use of land and co-location of facilities where feasible.
- 8.2.2. Ensure that utility facilities are designed, built, and maintained to have a minimal impact on surrounding neighborhoods.
- 8.2.3. Educate utility providers and utility consumers on the costs and benefits of emerging technologies that may provide added sustainability and reliability.
- 8.2.4. Allow Yakima to be competitive for businesses by encouraging provision of high quality telecommunications services.

8.2.5 Support the undergrounding of utility lines in new development and in substantial redevelopment or major [rights-rights-of-of-way](#) improvements.

8.4 Implementation

Yakima’s Comprehensive Plan is implemented through the actions and investments made by the City with the support of its residents and stakeholders. Some of these actions include regulatory changes, partnerships, coordination, administrative acts, policy changes, and capital investments. The following implementation items aid in this process.

Exhibit 8-2. Utilities Element Implementation

Implementation Item	Action Type	Results
Capital Facilities Plan	Functional plan and funding plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital investment in utilities
Land Use Code	Regulatory law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-designed and appropriately-located utility facilities
Development Review	Review process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of private provider facilities
Cascade Natural Gas 2011 Integrated Resource Plan	System Plan, updated periodically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural gas provided in coordination with growth
Pacific Power 2015 Integrated Resource Plan Update	System Plan, updated periodically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power provided in coordination with growth
Local wireless telecommunication service providers	Coordination between City and private providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecommunication services provided in coordination with growth

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