

CLEARANCES:	(Initial/Date)	Date Received in Council Office:	Agenda Date:	Assigned To:
Originator-		7/23/90	7/24/90	Council
Division Head-			8/7/90	Council
Department Head-			9/4/90	Council
Prosecutor Review-			12/4/90	Council/Finance
Purchasing/Budget Dir.-				
Executive-				

SUBJECT:

Receipt of proposed Initiative 4-90: "Shall new high voltage power transmission lines over 115,000 volts be restricted to industrial zones?"

ATTACHMENTS:

Initiative Information Sheet; Auditor's certification; sample initiative.

Ordinance

Puget Power notice

Official totals of November election

Public Hearing Needed? Yes / ☐ / No / ☒ /

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

Council's options for action on this item are listed on the attached "Initiative Information" sheet, which was prepared by Council Staff.

12/4:

Citizens voted (64.3 percent in favor) to enact the ordinance via initiative at the November election. In order to have the ordinance properly filed and codified, the Council Office staff wishes to assign a number to the ordinance.

ORIGINATOR'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

None.

12/4: Council staff recommends the Council authorize the numbering of the ordinance.

COMMITTEE ACTION (including dates):**COUNCIL ACTION (including dates):**

8/7: Postponed.

9-4-90: Discussion

12/4/90: assigned ord. number passed 7-0

Related File Numbers: _____

Ordinance or Resolution Number: ORD90-124

ORDINANCE NO. 90-124

An ordinance adopting an amendment to Whatcom County Code, Chapter 20.82.020, setting forth a limitation on the granting of conditional use permits for high voltage electrical power transmission lines.

WHEREAS, facilities for transmission of electrical power represent a land use which is single purpose, space consumptive, and irreversible;

WHEREAS, an existing corridor for high voltage electrical power transmission has already been established in Whatcom County by the Bonneville Power Administration;

WHEREAS, the development of additional corridors for high voltage power transmission lines represents a change of character for and is not harmonious with the rural, agricultural, suburban and urban land use districts of Whatcom County;

WHEREAS, the construction of high voltage power transmission lines represents a significant adverse impact on the natural environment, its wildlife, habitat, streams and other elements;

WHEREAS, health hazards are associated with exposure to the electromagnetic fields, including those generated by high voltage electrical power transmission lines;

WHEREAS, the Washington State Legislature has enacted legislation creating a task force to recommend additional research needs for limiting human exposure to electric/magnetic fields from electric transmission lines.

WHEREAS, the Whatcom County Council has previously recognized, in Ordinance No. 86-21, that residential land use in proximity to electrical transmission lines may not be in the best interest of public health and safety;

WHEREAS, the utilization of a new corridor for high voltage power transmission lines will diminish the value of property near any such corridor;

WHEREAS, this ordinance amendment conforms to the policies of the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan;

WHEREAS, plans by a private entity to establish a new corridor for high voltage electrical transmission lines in Whatcom County constitute an emergency making this control necessary to protect the public's safety, health and general welfare;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, that Title 20, the official Whatcom County zoning ordinance, Chapter 20.82.020, Public Utilities -- Conditional Uses be amended to read as follows:

Trunk utility lines, electronic communications and associated minimal maintenance and operation structures, water storage reservoirs with volumes exceeding 50,000 gallons or those with height in excess of 12 feet above the ground level measured within 20 feet in all directions of the tank, pumping stations, treatment plants, sanitary sewer outfalls, substations, and electrical substations shall require a conditional use permit and shall be subject to a threshold determination in accordance with the Whatcom County SEPA Ordinance. Solid waste facilities and large scale electrical generating plants are not conditional uses under the name "public utilities" but are restricted to where they are separately named as uses. Except on land where such permits have already been granted or in those districts classified as industrial, no conditional use permit shall be granted for electrical power transmission lines carrying more than 115,000 volts.