

CHAPTER 11

ESSENTIAL PUBLIC FACILITIES ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Essential public facilities are capital facilities “typically difficult to site, such as airports, state education facilities, state or regional transportation facilities, state and local correctional facilities, solid waste facilities, in-patient facilities including substance abuse facilities, mental health facilities, and group homes” (RCW 36.70A. 200). The City may also identify additional public facilities that are essential to providing services without which development cannot occur.

This chapter outlines a process for determining where essential public facilities can be located and what development standards are appropriate. This process is intended to avoid duplication in approval processes, consider the long-term as well as short-term costs of alternative siting criteria, provide for effective public review, major facility location, and emphasize reasonable compatibility with neighboring land uses.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

Growth Management Act Requirements

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires the comprehensive plan for each county and city planning under the Act to address both lands for public purposes and siting essential public facilities. The GMA states that the City:

- Shall identify lands useful for public purposes;
- Will work with the state and County to identify areas of shared need for public facilities;
- Shall prepare with other jurisdictions a prioritized list of lands necessary for the identified public uses;
- Shall include a process for identifying and siting essential public facilities; and
- May not preclude siting essential public facilities in their jurisdiction.

Confusion often arises as to the distinction between lands for public purposes and essential public facilities. Essential public facilities can be thought of as a subset of public purpose lands. Table 11-1 illustrates the distinctions.

GMA Goals

The following GMA Planning Goal guided development of this Element:

“Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.”

County-wide Planning Policies

In addition to meeting requirements of the GMA, siting of essential public facilities should be consistent with the County-wide Planning Policies. The policies address siting essential facilities as follows:

Policy 3 – Policies for Siting Public Facilities of a County-Wide or State-Wide Nature.

I. Identifying and Siting Essential Public Facilities:

- A. The Comprehensive Plan of each city, town and county that is planning under the Growth Management Act shall include a process for identifying and siting essential public facilities. (RCW 36. 70A. 200(1))
- B. Essential public facilities including those facilities that are typically difficult to site, such as airports, state education facilities, and state or regional transportation facilities, state and local correctional facilities, solid waste handling facilities, and in-patient facilities including substance abuse facilities, mental health facilities, and group homes. (RCW 36. 70A. 200(1))
- C. No city, town or county comprehensive plan or development regulation may preclude the siting of essential public utilities. (RCW 36. 70A. 200(2))

II. Development of Essential Public Facilities: When essential public facilities are proposed the potentially affected city(s) and/or town(s) and the county shall:

- A. Establish an Advisory Project Analysis and Site Evaluation Committee composed of citizen members and government representatives selected to represent a board range of interest groups. The Committee shall develop specific siting criteria for the proposed project and to identify, analyze, and rank potential project sites. In

addition, the Committee shall establish a reasonable time frame for completion of the task.

- B. Insure public involvement through the use of timely press releases, newspaper notices, public information meetings, and public hearings.
- C. Notify adjacent cities and towns and other governmental entities of the proposed project and solicit review and comment on the recommendations made by the Advisory Project Analysis and Site Evaluation Committee.

III. Siting Considerations: In siting of essential public facilities the Advisory Project Analysis and Site Evaluation Committee shall consider at least the following:

- A. Essential public facilities shall be developed in a timely, orderly, and efficient arrangement and be so located so as to not adversely affect the safety, health or welfare of the citizens residing around or near the facility.
- B. Essential public facilities sited near public water and sewer services shall be required to utilize such services.
- C. Essential public facilities sited where public water and sewer services are not immediately available shall be required to be constructed so as to be able to be serviced by public water and sewer services when they are available and, further, the essential public services shall be required to connect to such water and sewer services when they are available.
- D. Land adjacent to existing and proposed essential public facilities, which may be developed in the future, shall be compatible with such uses.
- E. Proposed essential public facilities shall be compatible with existing land uses.
- F. Adequate fire protection water supplies shall be required in all developing areas where essential public facilities may be sited.
- G. Undesignated landfills, dredging, waste discharges, and other activities with potential deleterious environmental impacts shall be controlled with appropriate rules and regulations adopted and enforced by the jurisdiction with authority.
- H. Essential public facilities shall not locate in resource lands or critical areas if incompatible.
- I. Essential public facilities shall not be located outside of UGA's unless they are self-contained and do not require the extension of urban governmental services.

**Table 11-1
Distinguishing Public Purpose Lands from Essential Public Facilities**

Public Purpose Lands	Essential Public Facilities
<p>FOCUS: Lands needed to accommodate public facilities.</p> <p>Lands needed to provide the public with government services, including services substantially funded by government, contracted for by government, or provided by private entities subject to public service obligations.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utility Corridors • Transportation Corridors • Sewage Treatment Facilities • Stormwater Management Facilities • Recreation • Schools • Other Public Uses 	<p>FOCUS: Facilities needed to provide public services and functions that are typically difficult to site.</p> <p>Those public facilities that are usually unwanted by neighborhoods have unusual site requirements, or other features that complicate the siting process.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large Scale Transportation Facilities • State Educational Facilities • State and Local Correctional Facilities • Solid Waste Handling Facilities • Airports • Inpatient Facilities, such as, Substance Abuse Facilities, Mental Health Facilities, and Group Homes

DESIGNATION OF ESSENTIAL PUBLIC FACILITIES

Definition

Essential public facilities are public and privately owned and/or operated facilities serving a public purpose and that are typically or historically difficult facilities to site. They include, but are not limited to:

1. Airports; state education facilities; state or regional transportation facilities, including designated highways of statewide significance; prisons, jails and other correctional facilities; solid waste handling facilities; and inpatient facilities such as group homes, mental health facilities and substance abuse

- facilities; sewage treatment facilities; and communication towers and antennas;
2. Facilities identified by the state Office of Financial Management as essential public facilities consistent with RCW 36. 70A. 200; and
 3. Facilities identified as essential public facilities in the City's development regulations.

Locational Considerations

The following considerations have been made in developing policy and siting requirements for essential public facilities:

- Equitable distribution of public facilities should occur so that no one jurisdiction assumes cross jurisdictional burdens for facilities that no other jurisdiction wants.
- Siting issues among cities, the County, the State need to be coordinated to eliminate untimely review delays.
- Siting of some essential facilities is limited by the nature of the facilities' operational requirements and the siting requirements of state and federal agencies that need to be taken into account prior to and during the public review process. Specific siting needs for each type of facility and a need to identify design requirements and standard mitigation techniques should be stated as part of any siting decision.
- Future expansion of a facility is often determined by the initial siting and design decisions, which need to be acknowledged in the public review process.

Designated Facilities

The following facilities are designated as essential public facilities in consistence with the GMA, CWPPs and other goals and policies included in this Comprehensive Plan:

- Grant County International Airport: Type I
- Ephrata Landfill: Type II
- Big Bend Community College: Type I
- Grand Coulee Hydroelectric Project: Type I
- Columbia Basin Irrigation Project: Type I

- Coulee Medical Center: Type I
- SR 155: Type I
- Arsenic Treatment Plant: Type III
- Delano Solid Waste Transfer Station: Type II

SITING ESSENTIAL PUBLIC FACILITIES

Essential public facilities may be allowed as permitted or conditional (special) uses in the zoning ordinance. Essential public facilities identified as conditional (special) uses in the applicable zoning district, shall be subject, at a minimum, to the following requirements:

Classification of Facilities

Classify essential public facilities as follows:

1. Type One: These are major, multi-county facilities serving or potentially affecting more than one county. These facilities include, but are not limited to, regional transportation facilities, such as regional airports; state correction facilities; regional hydroelectric and irrigation facilities; and state educational facilities.
2. Type Two: These are local or inter-local facilities serving or potentially affecting residents or property in more than one jurisdiction. They could include, but are not limited to, county jails, county landfills, community colleges, sewage treatment facilities, communication towers, and inpatient facilities (e. g., substance abuse facilities, mental health facilities, and group homes). Such facilities that would not have impacts beyond the jurisdiction in which they are proposed to be located would be classified as Type Three facilities.
3. Type Three: These are facilities serving or potentially affecting only the jurisdiction in which they are proposed to be located.

In order to enable the City to determine the project's classification, the applicant shall identify the approximate area within which the proposed project could potentially have adverse impacts, such as increased traffic, public safety risks, noise, glare, emissions, or other environmental impacts.

Notification of Public

Provide early notification and involvement of affected citizens and jurisdictions as follows:

1. **Type One and Two Facilities:** At least ninety days before submitting an application for a Type One or Type Two essential public facility, the prospective applicant shall notify the public and jurisdictions of the general type and nature of the proposal, identify sites under consideration for accommodating the proposed facility, and identify opportunities to comment on the proposal. Applications for specific projects shall not be considered complete in the absence of proof of a published notice regarding the proposed project in a newspaper of general circulation in the affected area. This notice shall include the information described above and shall be published at least ninety days prior to the submission of the application.

The Grant County Department of Community Development may provide the project sponsor and affected jurisdiction(s) with their comments or recommendations regarding alternative project locations during this ninety-day period (the purpose of this provision is to enable potentially affected jurisdictions and the public to collectively review and comment on alternative sites for major facilities before the project sponsor has made their siting decision).

2. **Type Three Facilities:** Type Three essential public facilities are subject to the City's standard notification requirements.

Impact on Critical Areas or Resource Lands

Essential public facilities shall not have any probable significant adverse impact on critical areas or resource lands, except for "linear" facilities, such as highways, unless those impacts can be mitigated according the current ordinance requirements.

Alternative Site Analysis

Applicants for Type One essential public facilities shall provide an analysis of the alternative sites considered for the proposed facility. This analysis shall include the following:

1. An evaluation of the sites' capability to meet basic siting criteria for the

- proposed facility, such as size, physical characteristics, access, and availability of necessary utilities and support services;
2. An explanation of the need for the proposed facility in the proposed location;
 3. The sites' relationship to the service area and the distribution of other similar public facilities within the service area or jurisdiction, whichever is larger;
 4. A general description of the relative environmental, traffic, and social impacts associated with locating the proposed facility at the alternative sites which meet the applicant's basic siting criteria. The applicant shall also identify proposed mitigation measures to alleviate or minimize significant potential impacts; and
 5. The applicant shall also briefly describe the process used to identify and evaluate the alternative sites.

Compliance with Plans, Ordinances and Regulations

The proposed essential facility shall comply with all applicable provisions of the comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance, and other City regulations.

GOALS AND POLICIES

Goals and policies follow the shared vision for the future of Electric City for sustaining and improving our quality of life. Goals and policies are also consistent with the Planning Goals of the Growth Management Act. Goals are broad statements of a community's aspirations. Policies express a commitment to a course of action. Policies provide overall direction for implementation of a strategy. Policies provide clear guidance for decision-making subject to this Plan and form the basis for development regulations. Goals and policies for Essential Public Facilities are contained in Chapter 4 Policy Plan.