



**Environmental
Planning
Commission**

*Agenda Number: 10
Project Number: 1004243
Case #: 11EPC-40038
July 14, 2011*

Staff Report

Agent	City of Albuquerque Planning Department
Applicant	City of Albuquerque
Request	<u>Text Amendments and Update to the Electric Service Transmission and Subtransmission Facilities Plan (1995-2005) (the “1995 Electric Facilities Plan”), resulting in the Facilities Plan: Electric System Transmission & Generation (2010-2020) (the “2010 Electric Facilities Plan”)</u>
Location	City-wide (Albuquerque and unincorporated Bernalillo County)
Zoning	Not included, no changes proposed

Staff Recommendation

That a recommendation of APPROVAL of 11EPC-40038, based on the findings beginning on Page 15 and subject to the conditions of approval beginning on Page 17, be forwarded to the City Council.

Staff Planner
Catalina Lehner, AICP- Senior Planner

Summary of Analysis

The Electric Service Transmission and Subtransmission Facilities Plan (1995-2005) is a Rank II facility plan that describes the electric transmission system, applicable standards and proposed projects.

The proposed text amendments update the 1995 Electric Facilities Plan to address generation technologies, clarify the approval process, and update the project list. Some language and organizational changes are also included. The proposed text amendments result in the Facilities Plan: Electric System Transmission & Generation (2010-2020), which will supersede the 1995 Electric Facilities Plan.

Neighborhood representatives were notified via e-mail. Notice was published in the Albuquerque Journal, the Neighborhood News and on the Planning Department website. Staff has received a few informational inquiries and phone calls as of this writing, with no indications of opposition.

Suggested revisions are found in the proposed conditions of approval. Staff recommends that a recommendation of approval be forwarded to the City Council.

City Departments and other interested agencies reviewed this application from 5/31/11 to 6/10/11. Agency comments used in the preparation of this report begin on Page 22.

I. INTRODUCTION

Request

This request is for text amendments to update and improve the Electric Service Transmission and Subtransmission Facilities Plan (1995-2005) (“the 1995 Electric Facilities Plan”), which is currently in effect in the City of Albuquerque.

The proposed text amendments include the following: a list of proposed electric facility projects for 2010-2020 (Table 5), a description and clarification of review processes (Tables 1 and 2), the addition of generation technologies such as solar and wind, a glossary of technical terms, an appendix of photo examples, and updated text and graphics. The proposed text amendments are incorporated into a new version of the Electric Facilities Plan entitled Facility Plan: Electric System Transmission & Generation (2010-2020) (“the 2010 Electric Facilities Plan”).

Context & Scope

The Electric Facilities Plan is a Rank II facility plan that describes the electric transmission system serving the City of Albuquerque and unincorporated Bernalillo County. Figure 3 and Figure 5 of the proposed 2010 Electric Facilities Plan are maps of the existing transmission system. Figure 1, which has been updated, provides a graphic overview of the electric power system.

This request for text amendments applies only to the City of Albuquerque. An associated request for text amendments, applicable to unincorporated Bernalillo County, is being pursued concurrently through Bernalillo County’s development review process. The County Planning Commission (CPC) held a public hearing on July 6, 2011 and deferred the County request for three months. The date of the subsequent Bernalillo County Commission (BCC) hearing is undetermined as of this writing.

Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) Role

The EPC’s task is to make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the proposed revisions to the 1995 Electric Facilities Plan. As the City’s Zoning Authority, the City Council will make the final decision. The EPC is a recommending body with review authority.

II. OVERVIEW

Background

The Planning Department initiated the proposed text amendments because of the need to update the Electric Service Transmission and Subtransmission Facilities Plan (1995-2005) (“the 1995 Electric Facilities Plan”), particularly the list of electric facilities projects. Also, generation technologies such as solar and wind are becoming more common and need to be included in the Electric Facilities Plan.

Planning Staff worked in consultation with Staff from the Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) to develop the proposed text amendments. This effort was coordinated with Bernalillo County Planning Staff, who are taking an updated version of the Electric Facilities Plan through the County process. The County’s version of the proposed 2010 Electric Facilities Plan is substantially

similar to the City's version, though there are some differences with respect to the review and approval processes (see Tables 1 & 2 for the City and Tables 3 & 4 for the County).

History

The City of Albuquerque's efforts at electric service planning began over 30 years ago. On March 8, 1971, the Albuquerque City Commission adopted the Plan for Electric Service in Albuquerque ("the Electric Service Plan") as an element of the City Master Plan. The Electric Service Plan was amended in 1972 and 1981, by the Albuquerque City Council and the Bernalillo County Board of Commissioners, to include additional projects and standards that address the general location, extent and character of electric facilities. The Electric Service Plan was adopted as a facility plan to implement the concepts of the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan (Enactment No. 47-1982).

The Facility Plan: Electric Service Transmission and Subtransmission Facilities Plan (1985-1995) (the "1985 Electric Facilities Plan") superseded the 1981 Plan (Enactment 130-1985). The Electric Service Transmission and Subtransmission Facilities Plan (1995-2005) (the "1995 Facilities Electric Plan") superseded the 1985 Plan (Enactment No. 38-1996). In the Fall of 2000, the list of proposed electric facility projects was updated though the rest of the Plan remained unchanged (Enactment No. R-2000-116).

In 2005-2006, efforts were made to update the 1995 Electric Facilities Plan. The EPC heard the Electric Facilities Plan (2005-2015) (the "2005 Electric Facilities Plan") on July 21, 2005 (Project #1004243/05EPC-00923) and recommended approval to the City Council. However, final action was not taken. The result is that the proposed 2005 Electric Facilities Plan was never adopted; the 1995 Electric Facilities Plan is currently in effect in the City of Albuquerque. However, because Bernalillo County adopted the Electric Facilities Plan (2005-2015) (Resolution 73-2005), this version of the Plan is currently in effect in the County.

III. ANALYSIS OF APPLICABLE ORDINANCES, PLANS AND POLICIES

Policy citations are in regular text; ***Staff analysis is in bold italics.***

A) CHARTER OF THE CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE

The Citizens of Albuquerque adopted the City Charter in 1971. Applicable articles include:

Article I, Incorporation and Powers

"The municipal corporation now existing and known as the City of Albuquerque shall remain and continue to be a body corporate and may exercise all legislative powers and perform all functions not expressly denied by general law or charter. Unless otherwise provided in this Charter, the power of the city to legislate is permissive and not mandatory. If the city does not legislate, it may nevertheless act in the manner provided by law. *The purpose of this Charter is to provide for maximum local self government.* A liberal construction shall be given to the powers granted by this Charter." (emphasis added)

Article IX, Environmental Protection

“The Council (City Commission) in the interest of the public in general shall protect and preserve environmental features such as water, air and other natural endowments, ensure the proper use and development of land, and promote and maintain an aesthetic and humane urban environment. To affect these ends the Council shall take whatever action is necessary and shall enact ordinances and shall establish appropriate Commissions, Boards or Committees with jurisdiction, authority and staff sufficient to effectively administer city policy in this area.”

Establishing and subsequently amending a Rank II Facility Plan to address electric system transmission and generation is an exercise in local self government (City Charter, Article 1). Standards for transmission line corridors and transmission/substation facilities, which address location, siting, environmental considerations and landscaping, generally express the Council’s desire to ensure the proper use and development of land, and to promote and maintain a humane urban environment (City Charter, Article IX).

B) COMPREHENSIVE CITY ZONING CODE

Preface & Intents

Authority and Purpose (summarized): The Zoning Code is Article 16, Chapter 14 of the Revised Code of Ordinances of Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1994 (ROA 1994). The administration and enforcement of the Zoning Code is within the City’s general police power authority for purposes of promoting the health, safety, and general welfare of the public. As such, the Zoning Code is a regulatory instrument for controlling land use activities for general public benefit.

Role of Land Use Boards (aka Amendment Procedure, summarized): The City Council is the zoning authority for the City of Albuquerque and has sole authority to adopt Rank I, Rank II (ex. facility plans) and Rank III Plans. Through the City Charter, the City Council has delegated broad planning and zoning authorities to the Environmental Planning Commission (EPC). The EPC is advisory to the City Council.

The proposed text amendments are to the Facility Plan: Electric Service Transmission and Subtransmission Facilities Plan (1995-2005). The application was filed in accordance with Zoning Code requirements.

The proposed text amendments generally further the intent of the Zoning Code because they would update and improve a Rank II facility plan, the general purpose of which is to promote and maintain the health, safety and general welfare of the public.

Zoning & Definitions

The Electric Facilities Plan does not address or include zoning. Zoning Code §14-16-1-5, the Definitions section, does not contain any definitions relevant to the request. Appendix C of the Comprehensive Plan contains a glossary. Facility Plan is defined as “a Rank 2 plan for major infrastructure construction or improvements (e.g. Electric Transmission Facilities Plan).”

A glossary of technical terms particular to the Electric Facilities Plan is included in the 2010- 2020 version of the Plan. The Glossary expands the definitions section of the 1995-2005 version of the Plan.

C) ALBUQUERQUE/BERNALILLO COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan, the Rank I planning document for the City and County, contains Goals and policies that serve as a framework for development and service provision and provide a means through which development and text amendment requests can be evaluated. Rank II plans, such as the Electric Facilities Plan, are more specific in focus yet carry out the Rank I plan's general guidelines and policies. Rank II plans are generally not regulatory in nature.

Goals and policies applicable to the proposed text amendments are listed here. Staff analysis follows in ***bold italics***.

Land Use (Section B)-

Regarding the application of Comprehensive Plan's Land Use Goals, note the following: The Central Urban Area is a portion of the Established Urban Area (see Page II-33) and is addressed here through the Established Urban Area Goal. The Rural and Semi-Rural Areas correspond almost entirely to land in the County, with the exception of a small part of the High Desert Development. The Rural and Semi-Rural Goals are not included here.

Developing and Established Urban Areas Goal: The Goal is "to create a quality urban environment, which perpetuates the tradition of identifiable, individual but integrated communities within the metropolitan area and which offers variety and maximum choice in housing, transportation, work areas, and life styles, while creating a visually pleasing built environment."

The proposed text amendments would generally contribute to creating a quality urban environment in the metropolitan area's Developing and Established Urban areas. Clarification of the approval process would help ensure that, depending upon the type of electric project, there is adequate review. The process and the existing standards for transmission and substation design, which are intended to minimize impacts, will be applied together and contribute toward creating a visually pleasing built environment. The request generally furthers the Developing and Established Urban Area Goal.

Environmental Protection & Heritage Conservation (Section C)-

Policy II.C.4a- Noise considerations shall be integrated into the planning process so that future noise/land use conflicts are prevented.

The proposed text amendments would update the information in the 1995 Electric Facilities Plan with respect to noise. The noise level of new substation facilities shall not exceed National Electrical Manufacturers Association guidelines (see Appendix E). This regulation, and the fact that electric facility location is planned according to standards in the Plan,

contributes to preventing land use/noise conflicts. The request furthers Policy II.C.4a- Noise considerations.

Developed Landscape Goal: The Goal is to maintain and improve the natural and the developed landscapes' quality.

The proposed text amendments would not substantially alter existing standards for Transmission Line Corridor design and Transmission and Substation Facility design (revisions to these sections are mostly organizational). The quality of the natural and developed landscape would be maintained, and may generally improve over time due to the addition of a process to address generation technologies as they become more prevalent. The request furthers the Developed Landscape Goal.

Policy II.C.8c- Incidental structures such as signs, guywires, poles, fireplugs, street furniture and overhead utility wires shall be designed for minimal visual intrusion and mobility impediment to pedestrians.

The Electric Facilities Plan already recognizes the need to minimize the adverse visual effects of overhead transmission facilities (utility wires) and poles (electric transmission structures), and contains design standards to help achieve this. The proposed text amendments would not substantially alter the design standards, so the minimization of visual intrusion would continue. Generation facilities, for which a siting study is required, would be introduced. Required elements of the siting study include visual considerations and general appearance (see Appendix G). The request furthers Policy II.C.8c.

Community Resource Management (Section D)-

Service Provision Goal: The Goal is to develop and manage use of public services/facilities in an efficient and equitable manner and in accordance with other land use planning policies.

The electric system is a public service/facility that can be managed in part through the land use planning process. The Electric Facilities Plan already provides a mechanism through which electric facilities planning can be linked to land use planning Goals and policies, which the Plan's objectives and standards generally support. The proposed text amendments strengthen this mechanism by addressing generation technologies and making the approval process more transparent. The request generally furthers the Service Provision Goal.

Energy Management Goal: The Goal is to maintain an adequate, economical supply of energy through energy management techniques and use of alternative and renewable energy sources.

The proposed text amendments would contribute to ensuring that an adequate supply of electric energy is maintained. Planning electric facilities in ten-year periods, via the proposed Project List (Table 5), is a technique for managing electric energy. New projects and upgrades are needed to expand and maintain the electric transmission system. The proposed text

amendments also address alternative and renewable energy sources. The request furthers the Energy Management Goal.

Policy II.D.3c- Land use planning that will maximize potential for efficient use of alternative and renewable energy sources shall be undertaken.

The Electric Facilities Plan, a Rank II Plan, is a mechanism for land use planning as it relates to electric power. Including and addressing alternative generation technologies, such as solar and wind, is a key reason for updating the Plan. As such, the proposed text amendments are a step toward maximizing the potential for efficient use of alternative and renewable energy sources. The request furthers Policy II.D.3c- planning & alternative/renewable energy sources.

Economic Development Goal: The Goal is to achieve steady and diversified economic development balanced with other important social, cultural, and environmental goals.

The proposed text amendments would add an economic development section to the Electric Facilities Plan. Electric facilities projects generally support economic development efforts, which may require expansion of the transmission system and new substations.

The design standards and corridor location standards already in the Plan would not substantially change, and will continue to help ensure that electric projects are balanced with visual, ecological and land use considerations which promote overarching environmental and social goals. The request generally furthers the Economic Development Goal.

IV. DISCUSSION- PROPOSED 2010-2020 ELECTRIC FACILITIES PLAN

The Update Process

The process of revising the Electric Service Transmission and Subtransmission Facilities Plan (1995-2005) (the “1995 Electric Facilities Plan”) began in January 2010, when the need to update the project list and address generation technologies emerged. Staff from the City of Albuquerque, Bernalillo County and the Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) met regularly in the Spring and Summer to discuss potential updates, issues and revisions and what form these would take within the framework of the Electric Facilities Plan. An internal technical team was formed at PNM to address specialized electric topics as needed.

In September 2010, a draft version of the Facility Plan: Electric System Transmission and Generation (2010-2020) (the “2010 Electric Facilities Plan”) was distributed to Technical Team members (see Appendix I), who reviewed the draft and provided comments. Comments were addressed and almost all were incorporated into a revised draft version. The Technical Team included representatives from Long Range Planning, Code Enforcement and the City Engineer’s office. In sum, comments suggested the following: more explanation of the approval process and generation technologies, clarification of the Plan’s jurisdiction and scope (i.e.- distribution not included), discussion of

transmission line corridor location, consideration of possible corresponding amendments, and clarification regarding interconnection regulations.

The City, County and PNM Staff assigned to this project continued to work on the draft with the comments incorporated. The work consisted of improving and adding definitions, updating graphics and maps, refining the City approval process (i.e.- checking in again with Zoning counter Staff) and allowing time for the County process to be determined and internally approved.

Purpose & Overview

The purpose of the proposed 2010 Electric Facilities Plan is largely the same as that of the 1995 Electric Facilities Plan, which generally is to describe the electrical transmission system, list proposed projects and present standards for electrical facilities serving the City of Albuquerque and unincorporated Bernalillo County. With the exception of addressing generation technologies, the proposed 2010 Electric Facilities Plan serves the same purpose and features many similar components as the 1995 Electric Facilities Plan.

Synopsis of Revisions

The proposed text amendments would result in the following, notable differences between the proposed Plan and the Plan to be superseded:

- 1) the 2010-2020 Electric Facilities Projects list (Table 5), which includes new projects and removes completed projects;
- 2) the addition of tables (Table 1 and Table 2) to describe the updated, clarified project review and approval processes in the City;
- 3) the inclusion of generation facilities, such as solar and wind technologies;
- 4) usage of the term “electric system”, which refers to transmission and generation facilities. The previous term “electric service” included subtransmission facilities but not generation facilities;
- 5) some new and revised descriptive language and graphics, and
- 6) some re-wording and moving of substantially similar language.

V. SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

Electric Facilities Projects List

Table 5 contains proposed electric facility projects for 2010 through 2020. For each proposed project, the following are listed: project number, name, description, predicted in-service year and purpose/ function. Proposed projects include new substations, new switching stations, new transmission lines and upgrades, and repowering the Reeves and Person generation stations.

Each time the Electric Facilities Plan is updated, a new Electric Facilities Project list for the timeframe in question is included. Updating the proposed project list is significant in terms of content, though doing so does not differ procedurally between the 1995 Electric Facilities Plan and the 2010 Electric Facilities Plan.

Review & Approval Process

Content: The review and approval process proposed in the 2010 Electric Facilities Plan can be summarized as follows:

Five types of actions pertain to Transmission & Substation Facilities (see Table 1 for more examples). The process is:

Action Type	Insignificant	Minor	Major	Project approval	Plan adoption
Example	Replacing 8 or fewer structures in the same locations	Existing substation expansion	Amending design standards	Reviewing specific projects listed in the Plan	Adopting a new version of the Plan
Approval Process	Administrative	DRB	EPC	EPC	City Council

Five types of projects pertain to Generation Facilities (see Table 2 and Appendix H for examples). The process is:

Project Type	Rooftop Solar	Ground-Mounted Solar	Ground-Mounted Wind	Rooftop Wind	Other Technologies
Approval Process	Administrative	DRB	EPC	EPC	City Council

Update: The review and approval process is a key difference between the 1995 Electric Facilities Plan and the 2010 Electric Facilities Plan. The 1995 Electric Facilities Plan delineates three types of revisions: major amendment, minor change and insignificant change. For major amendments, the approval body is the City Council and the Board of County Commissioners (BCC), after recommendation by the EPC and the County Planning Commission (CPC). Minor changes are heard by the Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) and the BCC without adoption as amendments; insignificant changes do not require EPC and BCC approval and can be approved administratively.

In the 2005 timeframe, City and PNM Staff discussed the possibility of streamlining the review and approval process- an idea that apparently had come from City Council some years back. It is inefficient for City Council to review relatively insignificant requests, such as adding to the project list or modifying an already-listed project. Review and approval of such requests can be accomplished at the EPC, at the Development Review Board (DRB) or through administrative approval by Staff depending upon the request. Tables were added to the unadopted 2005 Electric Facilities Plan draft to clarify the process by type and magnitude of request. Improved versions of these tables are included in the proposed 2010 Electric Facilities Plan (see Table 1 and Table 2).

Inclusion of Generation Technologies

Another key difference between the 1995 Electric Facilities Plan and the 2010 Electric Facilities Plan is the inclusion of generation technologies. Generation technologies are described in detail in Appendix H. Included are currently available generation technologies, such as coal-fired and natural gas, and emerging technologies such as fuel cells and biomass.

Though many types of generation technologies exist, the most familiar at this time are solar and wind. These can be solar panels, on rooftops or on the ground, and wind turbines, usually on the ground but possibly on a rooftop. See the descriptions of Solar Energy Generation and Wind Energy Generation in Appendix H.

VI. ANALYSIS- SUGGESTED REVISIONS TO THE PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENTS

New suggested language is [+underlined and bracketed+]. Deleted language is [underlined, bracketed and struck through]. Planning Staff's explanation follows in ***Bold Italics***. Page references are to the proposed 2010 Electric Facilities Plan. Suggested revisions are listed roughly in order of magnitude, from relatively substantive to minor.

I. TABLE & ASSOCIATED TEXT CLARIFICATIONS

A. Table 2, Rows 4 & 6 (middle column):

Solar electric generation installations or facilities mounted on the ground, such as “sunflower”, panel or other type [~~sites are straight zoned~~] . [+SU-1 zoned sites are reviewed by the EPC.]

Wind electric generation installations or facilities mounted on the ground, such as a wind turbine (blade, rotator or other type) [~~sites are straight zoned~~] . [+SU-1 zoned sites are reviewed by the EPC.]

This text refers to sites that are 4.9 acres or less. The reference to straight-zoned sites is unnecessary, which Staff now realizes. A note should be added to indicate that SU-1 zoned sites 4.9 acres or less are reviewed by the EPC, to make transparent the intention to use established development review practice for the SU-1 zone.

B. Table 2, Rows 5 & 7 (middle column):

Solar electric generation installations or facilities mounted on the ground, such as a field of “sunflowers” or a farm of panels [+ . Sites+] [~~sites~~] are 5 acres or greater [~~and not straight zoned (ex. SU-1, IP, SC designation)~~] .

Wind electric generation installations or facilities mounted on the ground, such as a field of wind turbines (blade, rotator or other type) [+ . Sites+] [~~sites~~] are 5 acres or greater [~~and not straight zoned (ex. SU-1, IP, SC designation)~~] .

This text refers to sites that are 5.0 acres or greater. The reference to straight-zoned sites is unnecessary, which Staff now realizes. A note should be added to indicate that SU-1 zoned sites 4.9 acres or less are reviewed by the EPC, to make transparent the intention to use established development review thresholds for site size.

C. Page 3, Paragraphs 2 & 4:

Generation: In the City of Albuquerque, ground-mounted solar [~~and ground-mounted wind~~] generation facilities or installations [~~between 2.1 acres and~~] 4.9 acres in size [~~+ or less~~] [~~and ground-mounted wind generation projects between 1.1 acres and 4.9 acres in size~~], as noted in Table ~~[3]~~ ~~[+2+]~~.

Generation: In the City of Albuquerque, ground-mounted solar and [~~ground-mounted~~] wind generation facilities or installations 5 acres or greater [~~and not straight-zoned~~] [~~+in size~~], as noted in Table ~~[3]~~ ~~[+2+]~~.

These revisions clarify that the threshold site size is 5 acres. Consistent with established practice, the EPC reviews projects on sites 5 acres or greater; the DRB or Staff reviews projects on sites less than 5 acres.

D. Table 2, Row 1:

Action Type & Definition [~~Action~~] [~~Project~~] Type & Definition

The items listed are projects, not actions.

E. Table 5:

Add a new column to indicate the location of a proposed project as City or County.

Readers will readily know project location and jurisdiction.

2. DEFINITION & ASSOCIATED TEXT REVISIONS

A. Glossary, Page 16:

Prudent Avoidance: The practice [~~or methods~~] of avoiding areas of public concern [~~to the greatest extent practical and feasible.~~] that minimize EMF exposure to the public when they are feasible, reasonable, practical and low cost or no cost. [~~Examples include schools and childcare centers.~~]

This definition is revised for clarification purposes.

B. Page 11, Paragraph 1:

The utility land use siting policy is to [~~practice prudent avoidance, which means utilizing~~] [~~utilize~~] methods that will minimize EMF exposure to the public when it is [~~feasible~~], reasonable, practical and low cost or no cost to the utility.

The text is revised to specify the connection between siting and prudence avoidance and to make the text more closely track the revised definition.

3. TEXT RE-ORGANIZATION

A. Page 2-3, Approval Process:

Tables 1, 2, 3 ~~[or]~~ ~~[+and+]~~ 4, Approval Processes, describe the ~~[+various+]~~ approval paths ~~[+ . +]~~ ~~[for the following actions:]~~ ~~[+See also Section IV of this document+]~~

This sentence is revised to indicate that detailed information is located in another section of the document.

B. Page 8, beginning and end of section:

Move part of the “B. Approval Processes” text, starting with the last paragraph on page 2 and continuing onto page 3, to the end of Section IV on pages 9-10.

The details of the project review and approval process are more appropriately located in the Implementation section. The general language which precedes it should remain on page 2.

C. Page 8, top:

Change the section heading as follows: IV. IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF TRANSMISSION AND SUBSTATION FACILITIES ~~[+ , APPROVAL PROCESSES+]~~

The heading is revised to reflect the re-organization as stated above.

4. MINOR, EDITORIAL REVISIONS

A. Page 2, Paragraph 5:

Electric generation technologies have remained ~~[+largely+]~~ the same for decades ~~[+though technologies continue to evolve+]~~.

These revisions bring the sentence up to date. The 2010 Electric Facilities Plan includes existing and emerging generation technologies.

B. Page 10, Paragraphs 5 & 7:

Economic Development ~~[Requirements]~~:

Redevelopment/Revitalization ~~[Requirements]~~:

The idea behind discussing economic development and redevelopment/revitalization is to note that, when such projects come in, they may need electric facilities that have not been programmed. This is not a requirement.

C. Page 11, Paragraph 2:

All parties shall review any substantial changes in the information or substantial new findings relative to the ~~[+ Plan+]~~ (Appendix F).

The word “Plan” was inadvertently omitted from the end of this sentence.

D. Page 12, Paragraph 3:

Both privately and utility-owned electric generation [+must+] follow the applicable procedures in Appendix G.

It makes sense to add the word “must”. Appendix G states that electric generation facilities are required to have a siting study.

5. MINOR CORRECTIONS & UPDATES

A. Page i, last line:

[Figure 7 – El Paso Electric Company Correspondence]

The above referenced correspondence is found in Appendix I, and Appendix I is included with the list of appendices on p. ii.

B. Appendix C, Paragraph 3:

Only medium and low water use plants from the How-To Guide to Xeriscaping by the [City of Albuquerque] [+Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority+] will be used for landscaping.

The correct agency name is now mentioned.

C. Appendix E, Sound Level Table:

Verify the number on line 77, second column.

This number is much larger than those near it and may be incorrect. If so, the correct number will be substituted.

D. Appendix G, last paragraph:

Remove the underlining. Replace the word “and” with “that” in the last sentence.

The underlining was inadvertently left on and the minor change is grammatical.

6. REFERENCING & CLEAN-UP, GENERAL

A. Document:

Add sequential pagination throughout the document.

B. Pages i and ii:

Add page references to the lists of tables and figures.

C. Page 3, Paragraphs 1 – 7:

Add page references to these paragraphs.

D. Figures:

Label the Figures at the top of each Figure.

7. REFERENCING & CLEAN-UP, APPENDICES

A. Appendix E:

Remove the reference to Appendix A on the first page of Appendix E.

B. Appendix H:

Make the following, minor changes:

Battery Storage- add the word “costs” after maintenance.

Biofuel- change “ot” to “of” and insert “which can” after the word residues (second to last sentence).

Distributed Generation- add the words “descriptions of” after “See”.

Fuel Cells- change “are” to “is” in the last sentence.

Geothermal- add a comma after “turbine”.

The revisions in 5. and 6. above will make it easier to navigate the document and find related information, as well as provide minor clarifications.

VII. COMMENTS

Concerns of Reviewing Agencies / Pre-Hearing Discussion

City Departments and other agencies reviewed this application from 5/31/’11 to 6/10/’11. Few agency comments were received. Long Range Planning remarks that the request will facilitate the orderly development of electric facilities. PNM requests that readers refer to the letter already submitted. Code Enforcement Staff reviewed the request, but had no comments. The applicant and a PNM representative were present at the pre-hearing discussion meeting on June 15, 2011. Agency comments begin on p. 22.

Neighborhood Concerns

The proposed text amendments were announced in the Neighborhood News and posted on the Planning Department’s web page. The Office of Neighborhood Coordination (ONC) sent e-mail notification on June 9, 2011 to the list of neighborhood representatives (see attachment).

As of this writing, Staff has received a few inquiries requesting the Plan (see attachments). A citizen called and expressed concern about energy sources and oil usage; Staff explained what the proposed text amendments address. Another citizen called to discuss the Plan and electric facility issues in his area. Specifically, we talked about landscaping around substations, landscaping standards in the Plan, EMFs and electric needs Downtown.

VIII. CONCLUSION

This request is for text amendments to update and improve the 1995 Electric Facilities Plan. The proposed text amendments include electric facility projects for 2010-2020, clarification of the review process, generation technologies, a technical glossary, photo examples and some language, organizational and graphic changes. Incorporation of the proposed text amendments results in the 2010 Electric Facilities Plan. The EPC's role is to make a recommendation to the City Council.

The Office of Neighborhood Coordination (ONC) notified the affected neighborhood representatives by e-mail. The proposed text amendments were announced in the Albuquerque Journal, the Neighborhood News and on the Planning Department's web page. As of this writing, Staff has received a few requests for a copy of the Plan and a couple of calls from interested parties.

Staff finds that the proposed text amendments generally further applicable Goals and policies, and the overarching intent of the City Charter and the Zoning Code. The suggested revisions in the conditions of approval are intended to improve clarity and remedy minor errors. Staff recommends that an approval recommendation be forwarded to the City Council.

RECOMMENDED FINDINGS - 11EPC-40038, July 14, 2011- Text Amendments to the Electric Facilities Plan

1. This request is for a recommendation to the City Council regarding text amendments to the Electric Service Transmission and Subtransmission Facilities Plan (1995-2005) (the “1995 Electric Facilities Plan”), a Rank II facilities plan which describes the electric transmission system serving the City of Albuquerque and unincorporated Bernalillo County.
2. The proposed text amendments consist of the following: a list of proposed electric facility projects for 2010-2020, a description and clarification of the review process, the addition of generation technologies such as solar and wind, a glossary of technical terms and an appendix of photo examples. Some language, organizational and graphic improvements are also included.
3. The proposed text amendments have been incorporated into an updated version of the 1995 Electric Facilities Plan entitled Facility Plan: Electric System Transmission & Generation (2010-2020) (the “2010 Electric Facilities Plan”).
4. The EPC’s task is to make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the proposed text amendments. The City Council is the City’s Zoning Authority and therefore will make the final decision. The EPC is a recommending body.
5. The 2010 Electric Facilities Plan is being considered concurrently through Bernalillo County’s development review process (ZSPR-20110001). The County Planning Commission (CPC) held a public hearing on July 6, 2011 and deferred the County request for three months. The date of the subsequent Bernalillo County Commission (BCC) hearing is undetermined as of this writing.
6. The Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan, the City of Albuquerque Comprehensive Zoning Code and the 1995 Electric Facilities Plan are incorporated herein by reference and made part of the record for all purposes.
7. Intent of the City Charter:

Establishing and subsequently amending a Rank II Facility Plan to address electric system transmission and generation is an exercise in local self government (City Charter, Article 1). Standards for transmission line corridors and transmission/substation facilities, which address location, siting, environmental considerations and landscaping, generally express the Council’s desire to ensure the proper use and development of land, and to promote and maintain a humane urban environment (City Charter, Article IX).

8. Intent of the Zoning Code (Section 14-16-1-3):

The proposed text amendments generally further the intent of the Zoning Code because they would update and improve a Rank II facility plan, the general purpose of which is to promote and maintain the health, safety and general welfare of the public.

9. The request furthers the following Comprehensive Plan Goals regarding Land Use and Environmental Protection & Heritage Conservation, respectively:

A. *Developing and Established Urban Area Goal (Section B.5)*: The proposed text amendments would generally contribute to creating a quality urban environment. Clarification of the process would help ensure adequate review of projects, which must follow design standards to minimize impacts and contribute to a visually pleasing built environment.

B. *Developed Landscape Goal (Section C.8)*: The proposed text amendments would not substantially alter existing design standards. Quality of the developed landscape would be maintained, and may generally improve due to the addition of a process to address generation technologies.

10. The request furthers the following Community Resource Management Goals of the Comprehensive Plan:

A. *Service Provision Goal (Section D.1)*. The electric system can be managed in part through land use planning. The Electric Facilities Plan already provides a mechanism to link facilities planning to land use planning Goals and policies. The proposed text amendments strengthen this mechanism by addressing generation technologies and making the approval process more transparent.

B. *Energy Management (Section D.3)*. The proposed text amendments would contribute to maintaining an adequate supply of electric energy. Planning electric facilities is a technique for managing electric energy; projects serve to expand and maintain the electric transmission and generation system.

C. *Economic Development (Section D.6)*. The proposed text amendments would add an economic development section. Electric facilities projects generally support economic development efforts. The existing design and location standards will continue to help ensure that electric projects are balanced with visual, ecological and land use considerations which promote overarching environmental and social goals.

11. The request furthers the following, applicable Comprehensive Plan policies:

A. *Policy II.C.4a- noise considerations/planning process*. The proposed text amendments would update the Electric Facilities Plan with respect to noise. Noise levels shall not exceed National Electrical Manufacturers Association guidelines. This regulation, and the fact that electric facility location is planned according to standards, helps prevent land use/noise conflicts.

- B. *Policy II.C.8c-incidental structures/visual intrusion.* The existing design standards serve to minimize adverse visual effects. The proposed text amendments would not substantially alter the design standards; minimization of visual intrusion would continue. The siting study required for generation facilities would address visual considerations.
- C. *Policy II.D.3c- alternative/ renewable energy sources.* The Electric Facilities Plan is a mechanism for land use planning. Addressing alternative generation technologies, such as solar and wind, is a key reason for updating the Plan. The proposed text amendments are a step toward maximizing the potential for efficient use of alternative and renewable energy sources.
12. The revision process began in January 2010 with the need to update the project list and address generation technologies. Staff from the City of Albuquerque, Bernalillo County and the Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) collaborated. A Technical Team was formed; members reviewed a draft version Plan and provided comments.
13. The proposed 2010 Electric Facilities Plan features two significant improvements in addition to the standard updating of the Electric Projects list: clarification of the review and approval process and incorporation of generation technologies such as solar and wind.
14. The proposed text amendments warrant revision in places to improve clarity and remedy minor errors. The proposed conditions of approval are intended to achieve this.
15. The proposed text amendments were announced in the Albuquerque Journal, the Neighborhood News and on the Planning Department's web page. The Office of Neighborhood Coordination (ONC) sent e-mail notification on June 9, 2011 to neighborhood representatives. As of this writing, Staff has received a few informational inquiries and phone calls. There is no known opposition to the request.

RECOMMENDATION - 11EPC-40038, July 14, 2011

That a recommendation of APPROVAL of 11EPC-40038, text amendments to the Electric Service Transmission & Subtransmission Facilities Plan (1995-2005), be forwarded to the City Council based on the preceding Findings and subject to the following Conditions of Approval.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL- 11EPC-40038, July 14, 2011- Text Amendments to Electric Facilities Plan

1. TABLE & ASSOCIATED TEXT CLARIFICATIONS

- A. Table 2, Rows 4 & 6 (middle column):

Solar electric generation installations or facilities mounted on the ground, such as “sunflower”, panel or other type ~~[-sites are straight zoned]~~ . [+SU-1 zoned sites are reviewed by the EPC.]

Wind electric generation installations or facilities mounted on the ground, such as a wind turbine (blade, rotator or other type) ~~[-sites are straight zoned]~~ . [+SU-1 zoned sites are reviewed by the EPC.]

B. Table 2, Rows 5 & 7 (middle column):

Solar electric generation installations or facilities mounted on the ground, such as a field of “sunflowers” or a farm of panels [+ . Sites+] ~~[sites]~~ are 5 acres or greater ~~[and not straight zoned (ex. SU-1, IP, SC designation)]~~ .

Wind electric generation installations or facilities mounted on the ground, such as a field of wind turbines (blade, rotator or other type) [+ . Sites+] ~~[sites]~~ are 5 acres or greater ~~[and not straight zoned (ex. SU-1, IP, SC designation)]~~ .

C. Page 3, Paragraphs 2 & 4:

Generation: In the City of Albuquerque, ground-mounted solar [+and ground-mounted wind+] generation facilities or installations ~~[between 2.1 acres and]~~ 4.9 acres in size [+ or less+] ~~[and ground-mounted wind generation projects between 1.1 acres and 4.9 acres in size]~~, as noted in Table ~~[3]~~ [+2+].

Generation: In the City of Albuquerque, ground-mounted solar and [+ground-mounted+] wind generation facilities or installations 5 acres or greater ~~[and not straight zoned]~~ [+in size+], as noted in Table ~~[3]~~ [+2+].

D. Table 2, Row 1:

Action Type & Definition ~~[Action]~~ [+Project+] Type & Definition

E. Table 5:

Add a new column to indicate the location of a proposed project as City or County.

2. *DEFINITION & ASSOCIATED TEXT REVISIONS*

A. Glossary, Page 16:

Prudent Avoidance: The practice [+or methods+] of avoiding areas of public concern ~~[to the greatest extent practical and feasible.]~~ that minimize EMF exposure to the public when they are feasible, reasonable, practical and low cost or no cost. ~~[Examples include schools and childcare centers.]~~

B. Page 11, Paragraph 1:

The utility land use siting policy is to [+practice prudent avoidance, which means utilizing+] [utilize] methods that will minimize EMF exposure to the public when it is [+feasible,+] reasonable, practical and low cost or no cost to the utility.

3. *TEXT RE-ORGANIZATION*

A. Page 2-3, Approval Process:

Tables 1, 2, 3 ~~[or]~~ [+and+] 4, Approval Processes, describe the [+various+] approval paths [+ . +] ~~[for the following actions:]~~ [+See also Section IV of this document+]

B. Page 8, beginning and end of section:

Move part of the “B. Approval Processes” text, starting with the last paragraph on page 2 and continuing onto page 3, to the end of Section IV on pages 9-10.

C. Page 8, top:

Change the section heading as follows: IV. IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF TRANSMISSION AND SUBSTATION FACILITIES [+ , APPROVAL PROCESSES+]

4. *MINOR, EDITORIAL REVISIONS*

A. Page 2, Paragraph 5:

Electric generation technologies have remained [+largely+] the same for decades [+though technologies continue to evolve+].

B. Page 10, Paragraphs 5 & 7:

Economic Development [Requirements]:

Redevelopment/Revitalization [Requirements]:

C. Page 11, Paragraph 2:

All parties shall review any substantial changes in the information or substantial new findings relative to the [+ Plan+] (Appendix F).

D. Page 12, Paragraph 3:

Both privately and utility-owned electric generation [+must+] follow the applicable procedures in Appendix G.

5. *MINOR CORRECTIONS & UPDATES*

A. Page i, last line:

[Figure 7 – El Paso Electric Company Correspondence]

B. Appendix C, Paragraph 3:

Only medium and low water use plants from the How-To Guide to Xeriscaping by the [City of Albuquerque] [+Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority+] will be used for landscaping.

C. Appendix E, Sound Level Table:

Verify the number on line 77, second column.

D. Appendix G, last paragraph:

Remove the underlining. Replace the word “and” with “that” in the last sentence.

6. *REFERENCING & CLEAN-UP, GENERAL*

A. Document:

Add sequential pagination throughout the document.

B. Pages i and ii:

Add page references to the lists of tables and figures.

C. Page 3, Paragraphs 1 – 7:

Add page references to these paragraphs.

D. Figures:

Label the Figures at the top of each Figure.

7. *REFERENCING & CLEAN-UP, APPENDICES*

A. Appendix E:

Remove the reference to Appendix A on the first page of Appendix E.

B. Appendix H:

Make the following, minor changes:

Battery Storage- add the word “costs” after maintenance.

Biofuel- change “ot” to “of” and insert “which can” after the word residues (second to last sentence).

Distributed Generation- add the words “descriptions of” after “See”.

Fuel Cells- change “are” to “is” in the last sentence.

Geothermal- add a comma after “turbine”.

***Catalina Lehner, AICP
Senior Planner***

cc: City of Albuquerque, 600 2nd St. NW, Albuquerque, NM 87102
PNM, Attn: Laurie Moye, Alvarado Square, Albuquerque, NM 87158-0920
Catherine VerEecke, Bernalillo County Zoning, Planning, Building Dept., 111 Union Square
St. SE, Suite 100, Albuquerque, NM 87102
Frank Martinez, Citizens Information Committee of Martineztown, 501 Edith NE,
Albuquerque, NM 87102

CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE AGENCY COMMENTS

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Code Enforcement

Reviewed, no comment.

Office of Neighborhood Coordination

City-Wide. 6/7/11 – a e-mail to ONC’s NA/HOA and Coalition Reps will be sent out – siw

⇒ Note: ONC sent this notification on June 9, 2011.

Long Range Planning

This will update the existing plan and clarify the standards in that plan. All new electric facilities will be subject to the plan. The update will facilitate the orderly development of electric facilities in the Albuquerque area.

CITY ENGINEER

Transportation Development Services

- Reviewed, no comments.

Hydrology

- The Hydrology Section has no objection to the Facilities Plan.

DEPARTMENT of MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT

Transportation Planning

- Reviewed, and no comments regarding on-street bikeways, off-street trails or roadway system facilities.

Traffic Engineering Operations

- No comments received.

Street Maintenance

- No comments received.

New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT):

- No comments received.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS FROM THE CITY ENGINEER, MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT and NMDOT:

Conditions of approval for the proposed Sector Development, Area, FAC or Comp Plan Amendment shall include: a. None.

WATER UTILITY AUTHORITY

Utility Services

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Air Quality Division

Environmental Services Division

PARKS AND RECREATION

Planning and Design

Open Space Division

City Forester

POLICE DEPARTMENT/Planning

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

Refuse Division

FIRE DEPARTMENT/Planning

TRANSIT DEPARTMENT

<i>Project # 1004243 11EPC-40038 AMNDT TO SECTOR DEV, AREAM FAX, OF COMP</i>	Adjacent and nearby routes	None
	Adjacent bus stops	None
	Site plan requirements	None.
	Large site TDM suggestions	N/A
	Other information	None

COMMENTS FROM OTHER AGENCIES

BERNALILLO COUNTY

ALBUQUERQUE METROPOLITAN ARROYO FLOOD CONTROL AUTHORITY

No objection to amendment to plan. AMAFCA will review the future plans as they develop with respect to construction adjacent to the AMAFCA's facilities.

ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS (APS)

Project #1004243 11EPC-40038 AMNDT TO SECTOR DEV, AREA, FAC, OR COMP	Bernalillo County and the City of Albuquerque propose the Electric System Transmission and Generation Facility Plan. The Plan will state policies for the system of electric transmission facilities in the City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County, the standards stated within the plan will also help decide where to place transmission line corridors as well as economic feasibility for transmission line corridors and other operating requirements. APS has no objection to this proposal.
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MID-REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF NEW MEXICO

PNM has already submitted a letter regarding the Facility Plan. Please refer to comments contained in the letter.