

City Council Meeting
3/17/25

Legal Business:

Tonight, I have for the City Council a memorandum interpreting Wilsonville Code provisions 3.340 and 4.300 through 4.320. These provisions govern the undergrounding requirements in the City of Wilsonville. Portland General Electric has applied for a right-of-way permit in which it seeks to locate new high-voltage transmission lines and transmission poles along SW Grahams Ferry Road. City staff have informed PGE that under Wilsonville Code Section 3.340, PGE must underground its utilities. The only exception in Section 3.340 is that PGE may run new transmission lines on existing poles, but nothing in the Section 3.340 allows PGE to install new transmission poles.

PGE refers to a different provision, Wilsonville Code 4.310, to argue that high-voltage transmission lines are exempt from undergrounding requirements and, thus, it can install new transmission poles. However, Wilsonville Code Sections 4.300 through 4.320 are the undergrounding requirements for new developments. And the exception that PGE refers to is the exception that new development does not need to underground high-voltage transmission lines. Nothing in those provisions allow PGE to install new transmission poles.

PGE disagrees with staff's interpretation of these Wilsonville Code provisions. Thus, staff seek Council direction whether it agrees with staff's interpretation. If Council does, staff seek a motion to adopt the interpretations of Wilsonville Code 3.340 and 4.300 through 4.320, as described in the presented memorandum.