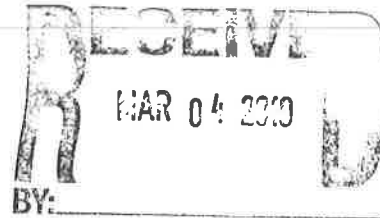




Colorado Springs Utilities

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March 1, 2019

Mr. Craig Dossey
Executive Director, Planning and Community Development
El Paso County
2880 International Circle, Suite 110
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

Re: AASI-Revisions to Chapter 5, Site Selection and Construction of Major Facilities of a Public Utility (File #AASI184)

Dear Mr. Dossey:

Colorado Springs Utilities would like to submit the following comments regarding El Paso County's proposed revisions to Chapter 5 of its 1041 regulations pertaining to the site selection and construction of major facilities (transmission lines, substations, power plants and gas pipelines) of a public utility.

We are aware that several other utility organizations have submitted comments to El Paso County regarding their concerns with the proposed revisions improperly attempting to regulate the siting of electrical distribution facilities verses electrical transmission facilities. While we do not disagree with those concerns, we would like to focus on how we work with El Paso County on local projects that benefit our community now and in the future.

Colorado Springs Utilities is studying how to accelerate the decommissioning of the Martin Drake Power Plant in downtown Colorado Springs following Utilities Board direction. Closure of the facility will, in part, help our community stimulate downtown redevelopment and economic growth. Proposed projects enabling Drake's decommissioning necessitate new and upgraded electrical transmission lines and facilities that will traverse El Paso County land and enclaves in some areas.

Our concern with the proposed revisions to Chapter 5 of the 1041 regulations is how the revised language prevents El Paso County and Colorado Springs Utilities from working together by removing discretion from El Paso County staff to approve any "major" transmission line (over 69kv) that may someday impact an arterial right of way. Instead, the decisions are escalated to the Board of County Commissioners and the Executive Director of the El Paso County Development Services Department. The opportunity to obtain an Administratively Approved Permit is narrowed to only minor transmission lines and minor pipelines located in the new expansive "Protection Zone."

Colorado Springs Utilities would like to meet with you to determine if a solution can be achieved that best serves both of our intentions to benefit our community. We propose further revisions are incorporated into the amended ordinance, such as:

- Consider time and place restrictions to reduce the scope of covered facilities. Possibilities include carving out shorter line segments (e.g., 10 miles and less), line segments located in certain non-rural zones, and line segments in enclaves.

- Apply the "Review Criteria – Minor Transmission Lines and Minor Pipelines within the Protection Zone" in the new section 5.204 equally to "Major Transmission Lines and Major Pipelines." This would allow El Paso County staff to maintain its discretion to approve such facilities on a case-by-case basis under certain listed conditions.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to working with you for the benefit of our shared community and to meeting with you to discuss the ordinance within the next month.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'P. Tunnah', with a stylized, flowing script.

Phil Tunnah
Chief System Planning & Projects Officer
Colorado Springs Utilities