

# Electric System Development Charge Outreach Plan – PROPOSED

## Background

The PUD is exploring a funding mechanism to recover the costs of additional substations to accommodate future customer growth and expansion with little to no further impact on customer rates.

Based on input gathered during the strategic planning process, customers expressed a preference to keep rates low while still encouraging economic development in the County by exploring options where growth can help pay for growth. Staff were directed to evaluate options, which includes the implementation of a system impact fee for electric services. PUD staff and a consultant developed an option, and now the Board has directed staff to present this option publicly and solicit feedback on the plan.

## What is the decision to be made?

Determine the right level of fees to be assessed for new or expanding electric customer growth that will support substation construction while keeping rates low.

## Decision-maker:

The Board of Commissioners will make a final decision on path forward. Staff will provide options, which will be accompanied by feedback gathered from the community, to help the Board evaluate these options.

## Public Involvement:

The PUD will ensure that the public understands the system impact fee options and will collect input and feedback to present to the Board.

## Outreach Plan Components:

- **Online Open House:** A step-by-step explainer of the background (Strategic Plan direction), need and alternatives, and the proposed plan. Includes FAQ and comment form.
- **Video Explainer:** A short video that explains how we got here, why this is needed and what the proposed plan includes. Will be included in the Online Open House and used at public events.
- **Print Materials:** Similar content as the Online OH, printed for public events.
- **Strategic Plan Topic Team Preview:** Hold a kick-off meeting with the Strategic Plan Economic Development Topic Team to preview the materials above, explain the plan in detail, answer any questions, and collect feedback. This team can help us anticipate any public questions, concerns or points of confusion on the topic and adjust materials as needed prior to public outreach.
- **Public Drop-in Sessions:** Hold several drop-in sessions in various areas around the county (Wenatchee, Chelan, Leavenworth) and remotely (Zoom). Drop-in sessions are a less formal way for staff to explain concepts and answer specific questions in a one-on-one or small group setting. Will cover similar material as what is included in the Online Open House and collect feedback.
- **Regular Board Updates:** Regularly update the Board on progress and at the end present summary of public feedback collected.

## Public Outreach Plan

Timing	Tool	Objective/Notes
Aug. 2	Board Outreach Plan Preview	Present this plan to the Board and incorporate feedback
Early Sept.	Webpage/Online Open House	In-depth explainer the proposed plan with comment form to collect feedback. <b>We will first preview this to Topic Team for feedback, then publish for public use later.</b>
Early Sept.	Video explainer	Create a short video that helps explain the reason why the SDCs are needed, how the strategic planning process informed our decision to move forward with this option, and how it would work in practice. Embed in Online OH and use at in-person events.
Early Sept.	Fact Sheets/FAQ/ supporting materials	Similar information as in Online OH on print materials for upcoming outreach events.
Late Sept.	Preview presentation to Strategic Plan Topic Team	Preview all materials above with the Topic Team and determine if there are any initial concerns, points of confusion, questions, etc.
Oct.	Board update presentation	Present feedback from Topic Team and next steps for public outreach.
Late Oct.	Incorporate Topic Team & Board feedback	Update Online Open House, fact sheets or other materials to incorporate initial feedback from the Topic Team and the Board.
Late Oct.	Advertise public drop-in sessions and Online Open House	Postcard, email update, media outreach and direct outreach to key stakeholder groups (building/developer/real estate stakeholders, etc.)
Nov.	In-person public drop-in sessions	Hold several drop-in sessions in different areas in the county (Wenatchee, Leavenworth, Chelan).
Nov.	Zoom drop-in sessions	Hold drop-in sessions on Zoom for those who would prefer to attend remotely.
Dec.	Board results presentation	Present a summary of outreach to date and feedback collected to the Board to inform their decision.

**Stakeholder & public meetings highlighted in yellow. Board updates highlighted in green.**