

A large circular image on the left side of the slide shows a power transmission tower. The tower is a complex lattice structure of metal, silhouetted against a bright, hazy sky at sunset or sunrise. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a strong lens flare effect that illuminates the tower and the surrounding sky with warm, golden light. The sky transitions from a pale yellow near the horizon to a soft blue at the top.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 37 RELATED TO PUBLIC UTILITIES

Regulatory and Neighborhood Affairs Committee

November 14, 2023

Administration & Regulatory Affairs

Background

- Chapter 37 prescribes the regulations for investor-owned public utilities operating within the Houston city limits
- Most provisions in the ordinance have not been updated in more than 30 years and some in more than 40 years (1981 and 1994)
- Changes in State law over the decades are not reflected in the ordinance
- Majority of proposed amendments are intended to bring our ordinance into conformity with State law through updates, additions, and deletions



Proposed Substantive Amendments



• Current

- Definitions are spread throughout the chapter
- Language for Cable Rate Regulation and State-Issued cable/video franchises
- Rate filing requirements generic for all utilities; no electronic filing
- Ambiguous process for hearings before City Council
- Standards of service that refer to outdated state law

• Proposed

- Unified definitions in Article 1
- Eliminate local regulations for areas where local regulation has been preempted by the State
- Rate filing requirements for each utility type that mirror state filing requirements; allow for electronic filing
- Defined process for hearings before City Council
- Updated service standards to mirror standards prescribed by State law and PUC/RRC Commission requirements



Proposed Amendments (ctd.)

- **New utility relocation requirements**
 - Incorporating language from Chapter 40 regarding facility relocation
- **New Reporting Requirements**
 - Significant reports submitted to state are now required to be submitted to City
 - Electric outage summary
 - Electric storm hardening plan
 - Gas gathering, transmission, and distribution report
 - Water service interruption reports



Questions?

Thank You

November 14, 2023

Appendix I



Ordinance Outline

Current	Proposed
Article I – In General	Article I – In General (updated and consolidated definitions)
Article II – Communication Between Public Utilities and the City (removed; added into Article I)	Article II – Filings (one division per utility type)
Article III – Filing Requirements	Article III – Discovery Procedure and Hearings (clear process similar to that in state law)
Article IV – Hearings	Article IV – Standards of Service (one section for each utility type)
Article V – Standards of Service	Article V – Access to Public, Educational, and Governmental Cable Channels by Other Municipalities
Article VI – Cable Television Services (removed)	