

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

TO: City Planning Committee
FROM: Administration
DATE: September 16, 2024
RE: Zoning Amendment – Whistle Bend Electrical Substation

ISSUE

An application to amend the zoning of a 0.75 ha parcel of vacant Commissioner’s land, located south of Phase 7 of Whistle Bend, from FP – Future Planning to PU – Public Utilities, to allow for the development of a new Electrical Substation to address increasing power demands.

REFERENCE

- [Zoning Bylaw 2012-20](#)
- [Whitehorse 2040 Official Community Plan](#)
- [2020 Planning & Preliminary Engineering Design Report for Whistle Bend Future Areas](#)
- Location Map (Attachment 1)
- Proposed Zoning Amendment Bylaw 2024-47 (Attachment 2)

HISTORY

An application was received to rezone a 0.75 ha parcel of vacant Commissioner’s land, located south of Phase 7 of Whistle Bend from FP – Future Planning to PU – Public Utilities to allow for the development of an Electrical Substation. The applicant is seeking the zoning amendment since electrical substations are not a permitted use in the FP zone.

The applicant has completed the Yukon Environment and Socio-economic Assessment process and conducted technical studies for this location, including a Noise Impact Assessment. Additionally, they have secured the lease agreement with the Yukon Government for the subject site.

The proposed zoning amendment application was reviewed by the Development Review Committee (DRC) on August 28, 2024. No issues were raised by the DRC.

The proposed schedule for the Zoning Bylaw amendment is:

Planning Committee:	September 16, 2024
First Reading:	September 23, 2024
Newspaper Ads:	October 25 and November 1, 2024
Public Hearing:	November 12, 2024
Report to Committee:	November 18, 2024
Second and Third Reading:	November 25, 2024

ALTERNATIVES

1. Proceed with the amendment under the bylaw process; or
2. Refer the amendment back to Administration.

ANALYSIS

Site Context

The subject site encompasses approximately 0.75 hectares and is located on vacant Commissioner's land, approximately 40 meters west of Lot 1246 in Whistle Bend (Plan No. 100043985), Whitehorse, within Quad 105 D/14 in the Whistle Bend neighbourhood. The site is zoned FP – Future Planning, the area to the east is designated RCS3 – Comprehensive Residential Single Family 3 and to the southwest, the zoning is PE – Environmental Protection, intersected by a power line. To the north lies the City's stormwater dry pond. The subject site is currently forested, and while the trees will need to be cleared to accommodate the substation, a treed buffer will be preserved around the substation. The surrounding area remains under development, with no residential structures currently constructed.

2040 Official Community Plan and 2020 Whistle Bend Plan

The subject site is designated as Residential – Urban in the OCP. The Residential – Urban area is intended to accommodate a wide range of residential housing forms and compatible uses, located primarily within the Urban Containment Boundary, and connected to municipal services. To ensure electrical services, the Substation is needed in order to connect the future phases of Whistle Bend and provide increased system capacity, restoration options, and proper backup for the only current Whistle Bend substation.

The 2020 Planning & Preliminary Engineering Design Report for Whistle Bend Future Areas guided the development of the Master Plan for phases 8 to 15. The Report indicated the placement of an electrical substation within this approximate area.

Zoning Bylaw

The purpose of the PU zone is to provide a zone for public utility installations and facilities involving disposal, recycling, or similar uses that may generate nuisance impacts for adjacent land uses. The PU zone allows for principal uses such as emergency and protective services and public utilities. Electrical Substations fall within the definition of Public Utilities in the Zoning Bylaw.

The proposed Electrical substation is an appropriate and necessary use for this area, aligning with the intent of the PU zone. The zoning designation is intended to allow uses that may involve potential nuisance impacts, such as noise or visual disturbances. The applicant has addressed these potential nuisances by conducting a Noise Impact assessment, retaining a treed buffer and situating the substation near existing power lines and the dry pond.

The substation will support the area's continued development by providing reliable electrical infrastructure, critical for both residential and commercial expansion. This use is fully compatible with the proposed zoning, aligns with the 2020 Planning & Preliminary Engineering Design Report for Whistle Bend Future Areas and is essential for meeting the future energy needs of the expanding community. As such, Administration considers an Electrical Substation an appropriate use on the subject site.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council direct that Bylaw 2024-47, a bylaw to amend the zoning of the 0.75 ha parcel of vacant Commissioner's land, located south of Phase 7 of Whistle Bend, from FP – Future Planning to PU – Public Utilities to allow for the development of the new proposed Electrical Substation, be brought forward for consideration under the bylaw process.