

WAC 468-34-330 Scenic enhancement. (1) Undergrounding requirements within scenic areas: In the interest of protection and preservation of roadside appearance and visual quality of scenic areas, the following requirements shall pertain to highway sections classified in accordance with the definitions set forth in subsection (3) of this section.

Class A and B:

Initial franchises and franchise amendments where aerial facilities are nonexistent: Installation shall be underground except as may be justified as special exceptions listed in subsection (2) of this section.

Initial franchises and franchise amendments where aerial facilities exist: An aerial facility may be allowed on existing poles with the franchise to expire on the date of the existing franchise for the aerial line. No major reconstruction of the existing pole line or construction of a new aerial facility will be allowed except as may be justified under subsection (2) of this section.

Franchise renewals of existing aerial facilities: Upon expiration of an existing franchise, one franchise renewal for a period of twenty-five years may be granted for existing aerial lines with a special provision included in the franchise requiring the utility to apply for an initial franchise, franchise amendment or franchise renewal for burial of the facility either at the time major reconstruction of the line, for that portion of line to be reconstructed, or prior to expiration of the first franchise renewal. Existing facilities may be allowed to remain aerial if justified under subsection (2) of this section.

In considering approval of aerial facilities as special exceptions under subsection (2) of this section, greater emphasis upon the justification of facilities within Class A route segments shall be given by the department as compared to those in Class B.

Class C and D:

Aerial installations within highway sections having Class C and D scenic classification are permitted.

Class AX and BX:

An aerial facility may be allowed if found acceptable to the department based on design and/or location which will not detract from scenic values typical of those defined in Classes A and B.

(2) Special exceptions: Special exceptions may be made where one or more of the following conditions exist:

Power lines of voltage in excess of 35 KV. Special design should be incorporated to minimize the visual impact of the facility.

Other utility locations are not available or are usually difficult and unreasonably costly, or are more undesirable from the standpoint of visual quality.

The placing of the utility underground is not technically feasible or is unreasonably costly.

The impact of the required undergrounding adversely affects the utility consumer rates or the long term economics of the utility.

(3) Classifications:

Class A—Superior scenic qualities: Unique settings of superior scenic quality, historic or cultural, interest that should be protected or preserved by special treatment for heritage of others. Panoram-

ic views from the highway of ocean beaches, scenic valleys, lake frontage, mountain forests, rivers, etc.

Class B—High scenic value: Areas where valuable scenic and environmental amenities exist and are enjoyed generally by travelers and public and deserve serious consideration for preservation and protective measures.

Class C—Secondary scenic importance: Scenic characteristics are of marginal importance.

Class D—Industrial, heavily urbanized or deteriorated areas: Industrial areas, urban settings and blighted areas which expense for beautification measures is not appropriate.

Subclass X—Alternative for Class A and B: Areas where based on design alternatives, such as configurations, color and location, an aerial facility could be allowed without changing the landscape quality.

General criteria: Classifications are to be based on the scenic values of the view from the roadway including the roadway appearance attainable after ultimate improvements within the right of way. Sections are to be of sufficient length to sustain separate distinguishable area characteristics.

[Statutory Authority: 1977 ex.s. c 151. WSR 79-01-033 (DOT Order 10 and Comm. Order 1, Resolution No. 13), § 468-34-330, filed 12/20/78. Formerly WAC 252-04-285.]