

Bulletin 2024-09

May 23, 2024

Updates to upcoming Rule 007 consultation sessions

The AUC is currently conducting a review of [Rule 007: Applications for Power Plants, Substations, Transmission Lines, Industrial System Designations, Hydro Developments and Gas Utility Pipelines](#), as set out in [Bulletin 2024-08](#). As part of the broader Rule 007 consultation process, the AUC will be hosting a series of working sessions on specific topics. Due to the level of interest in these sessions, the AUC has modified its plan for the sessions as set out in the table below.

Date, time	Format	Topics
Wednesday, May 29, 2024, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.	Virtual only	Power plant applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval renewal requirements (including time limits). • Approval transfers. • Agricultural land. • Land classification. Renewable power plant applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate setbacks from residences and other important infrastructure.
Monday, June 3, 2024, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.	Virtual only	Energy storage facilities Power plant applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reclamation security.
Tuesday, June 4, 2024, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.	Virtual only	Municipal-focused issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land-use, including agricultural use and setback requirements. • By-laws on reclamation plans or security requirements. • Other concerns from municipalities.
Wednesday, July 10, 2024, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.	In-person only	Power plant applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval renewal requirements (including time limits). • Approval transfers. • Agricultural land. • Land classification.

	<p>Renewable power plant applications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate setbacks from residences and other important infrastructure. <p>Energy storage facilities</p> <p>Power plant applications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reclamation security. <p>(Note: these topics are repeated from the May 29 and June 3 sessions)</p>
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Due to the increased interest in the sessions, we encourage parties to register for a virtual or in-person session. The sessions will be facilitated and participation and feedback during the July 10 in-person session will be focused to parties who did not attend the virtual sessions. Any registered parties wishing to change their registration from the May 29 or June 3 virtual sessions to the July 10 in-person session must notify laura.johnson@auc.ab.ca by **Monday, May 27, 2024**.

The May 29, June 3 and July 10 sessions are intended for all participants, while the June 4 session has been designated for municipalities.

The oral consultation sessions are intended to be targeted, productive working sessions and will be facilitated by AUC staff based on the discussion points set out in the Appendix. Each session will be moderated. Specific projects previously, currently, or potentially before the AUC will not be discussed, and any references to specific projects will be redirected.

Those registered for a virtual session will receive a Microsoft Teams invitation from an AUC staff member.

The July 10 in-person session will be held at the AUC’s Calgary office located at 600 Third Avenue S.W. on the 14th floor. The AUC requests that participants arrive approximately 15 minutes in advance of the scheduled start time to allow for a prompt start.

In consideration for all participants and to encourage candid discussion, these sessions are not intended to be observed and all participants are asked to come prepared to participate in the group discussion. The sessions will not be recorded or live-streamed, but AUC staff will make note of key discussion points. Participants will not have the opportunity to make prepared presentations. Interested parties wishing to comment on changes to Rule 007 have an opportunity to submit their views in writing through the [Rule 007 AUC Engage page](#) should they choose not participate in the offered sessions. The deadline for written submissions is **September 3, 2024**.

After the topics under review have been considered, the AUC will prepare a blacklined version of proposed changes to Rule 007 and will share it through AUC Engage for written feedback.

Any questions related to this bulletin may be directed to Laura Johnson at laura.johnson@auc.ab.ca.

Alberta Utilities Commission

Appendix: Topics for discussion

May 29, 2024, 1 to 4 p.m.

Capture of topics requested for consideration beyond what has been identified for oral or written consultation.

- Are there areas where the AUC can find efficiencies?

Time limited to 15 minutes.

Power plant applications

- Approval renewal requirements (including time limits).
 - Please comment on the following: the Commission is considering approving a longer period to construct in the original approval but increasing its scrutiny of future time extension applications.
 - Should the Commission consider adopting standard construction periods for power plants that it will apply for new power plants going forward?
 - What would be a reasonable initial period to construct?
 - Should the amount of time differ for different types of power plants?
 - If the Commission were to implement a maximum number of time extensions allowed, what would be a reasonable number?
 - Would a maximum length of time from the initial approval be a better metric than maximum number of time extensions?
 - What reasons should be considered acceptable for a time extension to be approved?
- Approval transfers.
 - What criteria should the Commission consider when assessing approval transfers, including information to ensure the new operator will have sufficient funds available at the project's end of life?
 - What are the implications of approval transfer applications being subject to the regulatory regime in place at the time of the application for a transfer?
- Agricultural land.
 - Comment on interim requirements listed in [Bulletin 2023-05](#).
 - What are the impacts of a requirement for earlier soil field verification on Class 1 or 2 agricultural land?
 - What timing should be considered?
 - What would the verification entail?
 - What would the costs of doing this look like? Would they be prohibitive?
 - Comment on these potential information requirements.

- If farming currently takes place on the project lands, please provide further details about the type and rotation these cultivated crops.
 - If the project will be sited on productive agricultural land, describe how the benefits of this project will offset the loss of agricultural land.
- What are the key constraints involved in co-locating agricultural activities with energy production?
- How is agricultural value considered during project siting?
- Please describe what a successful agrivoltaics operation looks like. Do these projects have production targets?
- Do you have a working definition of best-use?
- Land suitability rating system (LSRS).
 - How accessible is the LSRS? Are the limitations, basis of assessment methodology and its use clear?
 - Do you contest the LSRS values and if so, what approach do you use to verify or contest the LSRS.
 - Does the LSRS have any limitations that you'd like to bring to the AUC's attention?

Renewables power plant applications

- Appropriate setbacks from residences and other important infrastructure.
 - What would a reasonable setback for renewable project infrastructure to neighbouring residences be?
 - How should the setback be measured (e.g., from closest infrastructure, from property boundary)?
 - What other infrastructure/facilities/land should be subject to setbacks from renewable project infrastructure?
 - Should there be different setbacks for public vs. private facilities?
 - Should the Commission establish setbacks from renewable energy facilities to residences and other important infrastructure? Renewable energy facilities include wind power projects, solar power projects, and energy storage facilities.
 - Should the Commission treat wind power projects, solar power projects and energy storage facilities differently when considering appropriate setbacks?
 - Should the Commission treat different types of infrastructure differently when considering appropriate setbacks for renewable energy facilities? Relevant infrastructure could include residences, hospitals, schools, parks, roads, railways, airports, aerodromes, heliports and industrial facilities.
 - Are there other types of infrastructure the Commission should include in the list above?
 - What factors should the Commission consider when establishing setbacks for renewable energy facilities? Potential factors could include noise (i.e. compliance with Rule 012: *Noise Control*), safety, including fire risks, visual impacts, including glare from solar power projects and shadow flicker from wind power projects, other environmental effects, and agricultural impacts.

June 3, 2024, 1 to 4 p.m.

Capture of topics requested for consideration beyond what has been identified for oral or written consultation.

- Are there areas where the AUC can find efficiencies?

Time limited to 15 minutes.

Energy storage facilities

- Should the interim requirements apply to energy storage facilities?
- Are checklist applications suitable for energy storage facilities under 10-megawatts (MW)? Under one MW? If yes, provide any factors that the Commission should consider in establishing a checklist application for energy storage facilities (e.g. emergency response, site-specific risks).
- Can the use of setback distances serve as a proxy for air quality dispersion modelling? If so, what are the recommended setback distances and the basis for the distances, taking into account different battery chemistries, the size of the battery storage facility, other factors?
- Discuss the need for preliminary site-specific emergency response plans to be in place and be finalized prior to construction and operations.

Power plant applications

- Reclamation security
 - Comment on interim requirements in these bulletins:
 - [Bulletin 2023-05](#)
 - [Bulletin 2024-08](#)

June 4, 2021, 1 to 4 p.m.

Municipal-focused issues

- Land-use, including agricultural use and setback requirements.
 - How are the LSRS (or similar) used in municipal bylaws and regulations?
 - Are there other measures of agricultural value that the municipalities consider or prefer?
 - Any limitations for LSRS that the commission may not fully appreciate?
 - What are the big issues in aligning agricultural value with energy production?
 - How is agricultural value considered during siting of other projects (i.e. non-renewable).
 - What does best-use mean to you?

- By-laws on reclamation plans or security requirements.
 - What do parties think of the interim requirements in the bulletin regarding reclamation, security and municipal land use?
 - [Bulletin 2023-05](#)
- Other concerns from municipalities.

July 10, 2024, 1 to 4 p.m.

All issues as listed for the May 29 and June 3, 2024, sessions.