

June 24, 2008

REPORT TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Proposed Underground Utility District  
Baseline Avenue from Alamo Pintado Road to Lewis Street  
Ballard

Pursuant to Chapter 34, Section 34-3 of the Santa Barbara County Code, the County Road Commissioner shall submit a report to the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors describing the scope of a proposed utility undergrounding project. The report is also intended to detail the costs borne by the utility companies, the County, and private property owners. In addition, the report is intended to outline the estimated time required to complete the proposed project.

Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) has notified the County of Santa Barbara that sufficient funds are available in their Rule 20A allocation credit balance to undertake undergrounding projects in the PG&E territory within Santa Barbara County. The Utility Undergrounding committee, as appointed by Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors, has held meetings to discuss and evaluate which location within Pacific Gas & Electric's (PG&E) service area would be most in need of an undergrounding project. The Committee has selected and is recommending that Baseline Avenue from Alamo Pintado Road to Lewis Street be considered for the next project. This project has been discussed since 1989 and planned since 1992. Originally planned for completion in 2004, PG&E was unable to initiate the project until funding again became available in 2007. The area fulfills one or more of PG&E's Rule 20A requirements, which are:

1. Such undergrounding will avoid or eliminate an unusually heavy concentration of overhead electrical facilities;
2. The street or road or right-of-way is extensively used by the general public and carries a heavy volume of pedestrian or vehicular traffic;
3. The street or road or right-of-way adjoins or passes through a civic area or public recreation area or an area of unusually scenic interest to the general public; or
4. The street or road or right-of-way is considered an arterial street or major collector as defined in the Governor's Office of Planning Research General Plan Guidelines.

The project will accomplish the removal of overhead electrical, telephone and cable services on Baseline Avenue fronting 14 separate privately owned properties. The utility companies are prepared to proceed with the project upon adoption of a resolution by the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors creating a Utility Undergrounding District for the area designated. All the underground construction work by the utility companies will be completed by September 2008 with service conversion by October 2008 and removal of existing overhead facilities accomplished by November 2008. The serving utility companies will obtain all necessary utility

easements if any are required. A road improvement project completed in December 2002 included empty conduits for use by the utility companies in order to avoid road surface impacts.

The Public Works Department has received from the utility companies (PG&E, Verizon and Comcast Cable) reports of cost estimates for the conversion of overhead utilities to underground facilities within the proposed District. The estimated costs are approximately \$290,000 for PG&E, \$290,000 for Verizon and \$100,000 for Comcast for a total estimated cost of \$680,000.

Additional project costs not included above are associated with retrofitting the service connections to the private property. The reconnection of services will be also paid for by the utility companies pursuant to the 100 foot rule (recently authorized by the CPUC). Building permits, if required, will be the responsibility of the property owner. County administrative costs are provided each year by the General Fund in the annual budget, while encroachment inspection costs are borne by the road fund.

The boundaries of the proposed undergrounding district is described and shown as exhibits in the resolution to establish the underground utility district.

Notice to the affected property owners was given via letter dated June 2, 2008 describing the proposed undergrounding district, the proposed project, and its potential effects. Input from property owners will be presented at the hearing to consider adoption of the resolution to create the undergrounding district.