



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Public Works
Department No.: 054
For Agenda of: 10/21/2014
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Tme:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Scott D. McGolpin, P.E. Director, x3010
Director(s)
Contact Info: Mark A. Schleich, P.E. Deputy Director, x3605
Chris Sneddon, Deputy Director of Transportation, x3005

SUBJECT: Bradley Road Utility Undergrounding District from Amethyst Drive to North of Larch Avenue in Unincorporated Santa Maria; Fourth Supervisorial District

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Other Concurrence: N/A

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

- A. Rescind Resolution 09-180 declaring a certain portion of Bradley Road as an undergrounding utility district.
- B. Receive the attached Road Commissioner's report describing the boundary and scope of the proposed revised undergrounding district on Bradley Road.
- C. Adopt the resolution establishing a utility undergrounding district on Bradley Road from Amethyst Drive to approximately 525 feet north of Larch Avenue in Orcutt.
- D. Authorize the Public Works Director, or designee, to execute agreements with PG&E related to initiating the Bradley Road Utility Undergrounding District.
- E. Find that the proposed actions do not constitute a "Project" under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to 14 CCR 15378 (b) (5), in that they are governmental organizational or administrative activity that will not result in a physical change in the environment, and that the undergrounding of overhead utility systems is categorically exempt under CEQA pursuant to 14 CCR Section 15302 (c) and (d), and direct staff to file and post a Notice of Exemption.

Summary Text:

The Board formed the Bradley Road utility undergrounding district from Amethyst Drive to Larch Avenue on June 2, 2009 pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 34 of the County Code. This action modifies the boundary of the undergrounding district to include the last segment of overhead facilities

north of Larch Avenue and initiates the project by authorizing the public works director to enter into agreements with PG&E.

Background:

Utility undergrounding projects convert overhead utilities to underground in high volume roadway areas with heavy concentrations of overhead utilities. These roadways are generally in commercial centers or pass through civic areas. The program began in 1968 and is coordinated in the north county with the Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E). Undergrounding projects have been completed at various locations in the PG&E service territory with the most recent project on Baseline Avenue in Ballard completed in 2012. The Bradley Road project was initially created by the board on June 2, 2009 and encompassed Bradley Road from Amethyst Drive to Larch Avenue. The project was recommended to the Board by the utility undergrounding committee comprised of county staff and representatives from each of the affected utility companies because it met the criteria and is an extension of a prior Bradley Road project completed in 1986 that extended from the Clark Avenue.

This action modifies the Bradley Road undergrounding district by extending the northern boundary of the originally proposed project from Larch Avenue to a point approximately 525 feet north of Larch Avenue to account for a remaining segment of overhead utility facilities on Bradley Road between Larch Avenue and the Las Brisas housing development.

Design and construction costs are borne by each of the affected utility companies. Pursuant to PG&E tariff rule 20A, as regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), PG&E accumulates work credits annually for each participating municipality for the undergrounding of existing overhead utilities. Currently there is approximately \$4,946,584 in the PG&E credit account balance. The estimated PG&E share of this project is \$2,335,602. Verizon and Comcast participate in the undergrounding program under similar CPUC tariff rules but budget their costs per project. Cost shares from these utilities are not known but are anticipated to add an additional \$1,000,000 to the project.

This action further addresses recent revisions to the processing of utility undergrounding projects in the PG&E service territory. CPUC Advice Letters from PG&E (3602-E and 3767-E) now require execution of Agreements to Perform Tariff Schedule Related Work (Rule 20A General Conditions and Rule 20A Electric Panel Service Conversions) in order to initiate the project.

The General Conditions agreement was created to establish consistency between communities with undergrounding programs by formalizing the responsibilities of PG&E and the municipality. New responsibilities for the County include the provision of a digital base map for use by the utilities, the acquisition of any required easements, management of contaminated soil and cultural resources if found, and assisting in the location of a storage yard if needed. The agreement also put into writing the waiver of certain fees and conditions that were historically already practiced pursuant to Tariff Rule 20A.

The Electric Panel Service Conversion agreement formalizes the County's option to use 20A funds to pay for the conversion of private electrical panels (up to \$1,500 per panel) as well as perform panel conversions. The property owner is responsible for costs related to work exceeding these limits in addition to any code modifications or electrical permit fees.

The underground facilities will be installed in trenches located within the existing improved areas consisting of pavement, sidewalk and shoulder areas and will replace the existing overhead facilities.

This work is typically exempt from CEQA provided certain findings are made by the agency because it involves the replacement and reconstruction of existing utility systems with negligible or no expansion in capacity and converts existing overhead utility system facilities to underground where the surface is restored to the same condition. To date, there is no indication that either hazardous materials or cultural resources are known to exist in the project limits. Further, the creation of the boundary for an undergrounding district is considered to be a governmental administrative action that does not impact the environment and considered exempt from environmental review under CEQA.

This action initiates the undergrounding of the existing overhead utility systems in the proposed district boundary. PG&E places all undergrounding projects in its service territory on a project list and prioritizes them based on order of creation and cost such that work is expected to begin between 1 to 5 years of execution of the agreements.

Performance Measure:

The project will enhance the aesthetic and safety features of Bradley Road especially at the Union Valley Parkway and Foster Road intersections.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

Fiscal Analysis:

Undergrounding design and construction costs are borne by the utility companies. County costs are estimated to be \$35,000 to prepare a base map and conduct associated studies required by PG&E.

Staffing Impacts:

Legal Positions: None

FTEs: None

Special Instructions:

- A. Direct the Clerk of the Board to return copies of the certified minute order to:
 - Walter Rubalcava in the Public Works Department
 - Martin Wilder in the Public Works Department
- B. Direct the Clerk of the Board to record the resolution.
- C. Upon approval of this action, direct the Clerk of the Board to post the NOE and provide a date stamped copy to Martin Wilder.

Attachments:

Resolution 09-180

Notice of public hearing

Road Commissioner's report

Resolution with Exhibits A and B

PUC Advice Letter 3767-E regarding Rule 20A General Conditions agreement

PUC Advice Letter 3602-E regarding Rule 20A Electrical Panel Service Conversion agreement

Notice of Exemption

Authored by: Martin Wilder, Utilities Manager

Copy: Mark Paul, Deputy Director of Finance and Administration

Walter Rubalcava, Transportation Engineering Manager

Eric Pearson, Transportation Construction Manager