

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
BOARD AGENDA LETTER**



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
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Agenda Number:
Prepared on: 3/4/05
Department Name: Public Works
Department No.: 054
Agenda Date: 4/5/05
Placement: Administrative
Estimate Time:
Continued Item: NO
If Yes, date from:

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Phillip M. Demery, Director
Public Works Department

STAFF CONTACT: Mark A. Schleich, Deputy Director, Resource Recovery & Waste Management Div.
Martin J. Wilder, Manager x8750

SUBJECT: Proposed Underground Utility District along East Valley Road in Montecito, First Supervisorial District

Recommendation(s):

That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Receive the attached Road Commissioner's report, which sets forth the boundary of a utility undergrounding district along East Valley Road (inclusive of fronting properties) in Montecito, the project schedule; and the estimate of project costs;
- B. Adopt the resolution creating the proposed utility undergrounding district along East Valley Road in Montecito and rescinding Resolution No. 04-352.

Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:

The recommendation(s) are primarily aligned with Goal No. 2. A Safe and Healthy Community in Which to Live, Work, and Visit.

Executive Summary and Discussion:

On December 7, 2004, the board adopted Resolution No. 04-352 that created a utility undergrounding district along portions of East Valley Road and Olive Mill Road. Said district encompassed East Valley Road from Hot Springs Road to Pimiento Lane and Olive Mill Road from Channel Drive to State Route 101.

The adoption of the resolution formed the undergrounding district pursuant to the California Public Utilities (CPUC) Rule 20A. Tariff Rule 20 was enacted in 1968 by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to provide a mechanism to place existing overhead utilities underground. Pursuant to part A of Tariff Rule 20, the CPUC requires utility companies with existing overhead utilities to plan for conversion of

utility service from overhead to underground. The 20A undergrounding projects must adhere to the following criteria:

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 Board adopted the original undergrounding district based on the recommendations of the community of Montecito, the Montecito Association, the Public Works Department, the Planning & Development Department, and affected utility companies (Southern California Edison, Verizon Communications and Cox Cable). The project was derived from a priority list of potential undergrounding projects within the community and was recommended for approval by the board by the Utility Undergrounding Committee on June 30, 2004. Amongst the two parts in the project (East Valley Road segment and the Olive Mill Road segment), a priority was placed on the East Valley Road segment due to higher use and because it would adjoin the San Ysidro Road East Valley Road intersection Underground Utility District established by the board on September 11, 1968 (the County's first undergrounding district in the Edison territory).

Because Edison could not begin significant work on the design of the project, specific costs were unknown. For this reason, discussions with the stakeholders included the possibility that the Olive Mill Road segment may need to be scaled back or eliminated in order to utilize available funding as described in Paragraph 9 of the original undergrounding resolution (Resolution 04-352). After creation of the undergrounding district, Edison commenced preliminary work that included revised cost estimates for the overall design and construction of the project. The revised Edison estimates indicated that the total costs would be \$3.3 million, which exceed the proposed budget of \$1.6 million. However, the cost for the East Valley Road segment is estimated to be within the proposed budget. Factors that caused cost revisions include very rocky soil, work in a Caltrans roadway, significant traffic, and existing shallow undergrounded utilities. This information has been shared with the stakeholders and they have concurred with the revised project and the recommendations of this board letter. In summary, approximately \$1.6 million is available for the project based on Edison allocations to the County of approximately \$275,000 per year for calendar year 2007 in addition to future allocations from 2008 through 2012 as allowed by CPUC tariff rules.

Past and recently approved undergrounding projects in the South County Edison territory have been the Hollister Avenue/Fairview Avenue intersection in 1996 at a cost of \$864,120, Upper State Street east of Modoc Road in 1995 at a cost of \$901,477, Santa Claus Lane in 1995 at a cost of \$176,756, Los Carneros Road in 1995 at a cost of \$243,323, and the Hollister Avenue/State Street area in 1993 at a cost of \$852,724. The board also approved a proposed project along El Colegio in Isla Vista in February of 2004, which is estimated to cost \$2.3 million. The East Valley Road project in Montecito will directly follow the El Colegio project.

The proposed scope of work includes the removal of the overhead electrical, telephone and cable services along the boundary area described above and includes undergrounding utility service connections to the affected properties (up to 100 feet). All project costs except service connection work further than 100 feet

from the road and electrical panel conversions will be borne by the utility companies. Each affected property will be required to connect to the underground utilities. Service connections not originating from the proposed undergrounding locations will not be affected. Southern California Edison service connections may vary in cost between \$100 and \$400 per property. The property owner will also be responsible for building permits, if required, that may be associated with electrical panel modifications estimated at \$470 for single meter services to \$750 for multiple meter services. Reconnecting Verizon service connections may vary in cost from no cost to \$400 per property. The cost of reconnecting Cox Cable service connections may vary between \$100 and \$500. Total service reconnection costs (for electric, phone, and cable), therefore, are expected to range between from \$200 to a high of \$2,050. Each resident will have site specific conditions that will vary the cost of reconnecting.

The attached report details the revised boundaries of the proposed district, the estimated costs and/or available funding, and the project schedule. Completion of the underground construction work by the utility companies is expected by December 2008 with conversion of service connections to the properties by April 2009. This action adds one year to the schedule as presented in the original resolution in order to accommodate a transition from the El Colegio project in Isla Vista.

Mandates and Service Levels:

There are no changes in programs or service levels with this action.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Project design and construction to be borne by Southern California Edison are estimated at \$1.6 million. Verizon and Cox Cable do not track a credit balance for allocations for undergrounding projects under their tariff rules but rather plan undergrounding work in fiscal year budgeting. The property owner will be responsible for certain service reconnection costs. County costs include only administrative functions and are budgeted in Department 054, Fund 0001, Program 4001, Account 7460 as shown in the FY 2004/2005 budget.

Special Instructions:

1. Public Works staff will notify the property owners and utility companies within 10 days after the adoption
2. Clerk of the Board; please return one copy of the executed resolution prior to recording to the Public Works Department, resource Recovery & Waste Management Division, attention Martin Wilder for proper noticing after adoption.
3. Resolution to be recorded in the County Recorder's Office.

Concurrence:

County Counsel