

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY  
BOARD AGENDA LETTER**



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

**Agenda Number:**  
**Prepared on:** 11/14/02  
**Department Name:** Public Works  
**Department No.:** 054  
**Agenda Date:** 1/7/03  
**Placement:** Administrative  
**Estimate Time:**  
**Continued Item:** NO  
**If Yes, date from:**

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Phillip M. Demery, Director  
Public Works Department

**STAFF** Mark Schleich, Deputy Director  
**CONTACT:** Martin Wilder, Utility Manager, x8755

**SUBJECT:** Proposed Utility Undergrounding District along Baseline Avenue between Alamo Pintado Road and Lewis Street in Ballard; Third Supervisorial District

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**Recommendation(s):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Receive the attached report which sets forth the boundary of a utility undergrounding district along Baseline Avenue (inclusive of fronting properties) from Alamo Pintado Road to Lewis Street in Ballard, the project schedule; and the estimate of project costs;
- B. Set a public hearing for February 4, 2003 to ascertain the need for forming the utility undergrounding district. (Estimated time 10 minutes);
- C. On February 4, 2003, consider adoption of the resolution creating the proposed utility undergrounding district.

**Executive Summary and Discussion:**

Pursuant to California Public Utility Commission (CPUC) regulations, utility companies with existing overhead utilities must plan for conversion from overhead to underground services along roadways meeting certain criteria. The criteria generally includes any one of the following:

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.

A utility undergrounding project has been proposed along Baseline Avenue from Alamo Pintado Road to Lewis Street in Ballard including 14 properties that front Baseline Avenue. The project is a result of planning by the community of Ballard, the Public Works Department, the Planning & Development Department, and affected utility companies (PG&E, Verizon Communications and Comcast Cable). An undergrounding project has been discussed in this area since 1989 and planned since 1992. Sufficient funds are now available in the PG&E allocation credit balance to initiate the project. The scope of the project was discussed by community members and staff. The board appointed Utility Undergrounding Committee concurred with the suggestion to recommend the project to the board. The board will be asked to consider the adoption of a resolution to form the district at the February 4, 2003 hearing.

This project will accomplish the removal of overhead electrical, telephone and cable services along Baseline Avenue from Alamo Pintado to Lewis Street in the community of Ballard in addition to undergrounding utility service connections to the affected properties. All project costs except service connections will be borne by the utility companies. Each affected property will be required to connect to the underground utilities. Service connections not originating from Baseline Avenue will not be affected. PG&E service connections may vary between \$100 and \$1,000 per property and will require an electrical permit from the County Building Department. Verizon service connection may vary from none to approximate \$400 per property. Comcast Cable service connections are not expected to cost the property owner provided the property was already had cable service. County administrative costs are budgeted by the General Fund annually. The attached report details the boundaries of the proposed district, the estimated costs and the project time line schedule. All the underground construction work by the utility companies is expected to be completed by June 2004 with conversion of service connections to the properties by July 2004 and overhead utility removal by September 2004.

**Mandates and Service Levels:**

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

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Project construction costs are estimated to total \$240,000, (\$100,000 for PG&E, \$100,000 for Verizon, and \$40,000 for Comcast Cable) will be borne by the utility companies. Each property owner will be responsible for service connection conversion from overhead to underground. County administrative costs are budgeted in Department 054, Fund 0001, Program 4001, Account 7460 as shown on page D-304 of the 2002/2003 budget.

**Special Instructions:**

1. Public Works staff will notify the property owners of the public hearing date and content in accordance with Section 34-2 of Chapter 34 of the Santa Barbara County Code. Public Works staff will notify owners and utility companies within 10 days after adoption of resolution.
2. Clerk of the Board; please return one copy of the executed resolution prior to recording to the Public Works Department, Solid Waste and Utilities Division, attention Sheila Engellenner for proper noticing after action.
3. Resolution is to be recorded in the County Recorder's Office

**Concurrence:**

County Counsel