



CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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September 5, 2006

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt resolutions of intention to establish Underground Utility Districts 40 and 41, for portions of Willow Street and Alamitos Avenue, respectively, and set a public hearing on establishing Underground Utility Districts No.'s 40 and 41 for Tuesday, October 10, 2006, at 5:00 p.m., and direct the City Clerk to mail notices of the public hearing, together with a district map and letter of information, to all concerned utilities and to all affected property owners as shown on the last equalized assessment roll. (Districts 1, 2, 6 and 7)

DISCUSSION

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) enacted Rule 20 in 1968 in order to systematize the conversion of overhead utility facilities (electric, telephone and cable TV) to underground facilities. The CPUC established the criteria of Rule 20A in order to maintain a general public benefit wherein recovery of the costs of a project are included in electric rates.

The allocation concept was developed to ensure equitable treatment of every local government by Southern California Edison (SCE) and ensure a fair division of SCE funds among the local governments in its service territory. The allocation formula was developed by the SCE and the League of California Cities (on behalf of local governments) and was approved by the CPUC. The allocation formula for SCE is a method of calculating a fair allocation for all communities within our service territory based on the number of overhead electric meters in each community. The exact formula is found within the CPUC Rule 20A tariff. Long Beach's allocation typically amounts to \$2.5 million per year.

Projects that qualify for funding under tariff Rule 20 A are: 1) Arterial and Collector Roads, 2) located on or in heavy volume of pedestrian or vehicle traffic streets, 3) streets and roads with an unusually heavy concentration of overhead electrical facilities, 4) streets, roads and highways of scenic interest, or 5) streets or roads near civic areas.

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City staff, in conjunction with assistance from SCE, developed a priority listing for potential utility undergrounding districts using the project criteria established by the CPUC under Rule 20 A. Attached is a copy of the results of that effort. SCE has indicated that Long Beach's current share of SCE 's undergrounding budget will allow for the following top two listed projects to proceed:

Willow Street from the westerly City Limits to Atlantic Avenue is a major arterial with a heavy concentration of overhead utility lines in an area of dense commercial land use. The Underground Utility Advisory Committee gave a high priority to undergrounding utilities along this street section, due to the high degree of visual streetscape enhancement that could be achieved. This project is to be known as Underground Utility District No. 40. A map showing the district is attached to the Resolution of Intention.

Alamitos Avenue from Seventh Street to Pacific Coast Highway is classified as a regional corridor and also has a heavy concentration of overhead utility lines. The section of Alamitos Avenue to the south between Seventh Street and Ocean Boulevard has already been undergrounded as a part of Underground Utility District No. 39 (along with Seventh Street). By undergrounding the utilities north of Seventh Street, this streetscape enhancement would be continued northerly connecting to the previously undergrounded utilities along Pacific Coast Highway. Elimination of the utility poles will enhance ADA rule compliance on this street where narrow sidewalks are very common and pedestrian traffic is very high. This street section was prioritized by the Underground Utility Advisory Committee as Underground Utility District No. 41. A map showing the district is attached to the Resolution of Intention.

In order for SCE to begin preparing plans for these projects, the City must establish these areas as Underground Utility Districts. This is done by first adopting the attached Resolutions of Intention and setting a public hearing date for this matter. At the conclusion of the hearing, the City Council will be asked to formally create the two undergrounding districts described above. SCE estimates the undergrounding process will take up to three years from the date the Districts are formally adopted by the City Council.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Lisa Peskay Malmsten on April 14, 2006, and Budget Management Officer David Wodynski on August 24, 2006.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

City Council action is requested on September 5, 2006, so that notices for the required public hearing may be distributed and SCE can begin project planning.

FISCAL IMPACT

The estimated cost of these projects to be funded by SCE with rate reimbursements under PUC Rule 20A allocations is \$6,800,000 for Willow Street and \$2,700,000 for Alamos Avenue. The City may incur some minor costs (approximately \$20,000) for construction of underground electrical feeds to the City-owned street lighting system. These costs will not formally be known until final plans have been developed for the project. Such funds, if needed, will come from those budgeted in the General Fund (GP) in the Department of Public Works (PW) for street light maintenance.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,



CHRISTINE F. ANDERSEN
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

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Attachments

APPROVED:



GERALD R. MILLER
CITY MANAGER