

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: CHRIS CATBAGAN, ASSOCIATE ENGINEER
TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS
SUBJECT: RESOLUTION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN
UNDERGROUND UTILITY DISTRICT ON FULTON ROAD
BETWEEN GUERNEVILLE ROAD AND PINER ROAD
AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Transportation and Public Works Department that Council, by resolution, approve the establishment of an Underground Utility District on Fulton Road between Guerneville Road and Piner Road.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This proposed action, required by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), will adopt a resolution establishing an Underground Utility District (UUD) on Fulton Road between Guerneville Road and Piner Road, in order to place the UUD in PG&E's queue for project design.

This proposed action will allow for the conversion of overhead utility lines in the district to underground, and associated work.

This resolution supports Council Goal 3: Provide Leadership for Environmental Initiatives 1) Improve transportation network to reduce vehicle miles traveled and promote multi-modal transportation.

BACKGROUND

The procedure of forming an Underground Utility District (UUD), consistent with the California Public Utility Commission (CPUC), is defined in the Santa Rosa City Code Chapter 13-12 Underground Utilities.

The purpose of establishing an UUD is to define the boundaries of all affected parcels. The proposed Fulton Road UUD, between Guerneville Road and Piner Road, will underground the overhead PG&E electrical, AT&T, and Comcast communication lines and remove all of the utility poles within the proposed district boundary.

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The California Public Utility Commission (CPUC) requires the Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) to collect funds from ratepayers for the use in undergrounding existing overhead utilities, known as Electric Rule 20A (Rule 20A).

Rule 20A program funding is set aside each year by PG&E to share with the City of Santa Rosa. As of January 20, 2016, the City's allocation balance was \$5,091,062 with the annual proceeds at approximately \$460,000. Staff has estimated that the Rule 20A funding needed for the proposed Fulton Road UUD is \$6.25 million. The Rule 20A allocation balance for construction in year 2020 will be \$6.5 million.

Projects performed under Rule 20A are nominated by the City and discussed with PG&E. Projects which qualify for use of Rule 20A funds must be in the general public interest and meet one or more of the following requirements:

- Undergrounding will avoid or eliminate an unusually heavy concentration of overhead electric facilities.
- The street, road or right of way is extensively used by the general public and carries a heavy volume of pedestrian or vehicular traffic, such as major arterial or collector streets.
- The street, road or right of way adjoins or passes through a civic area or public recreation area or an area of unusual scenic interest to the general public.

On June 21, 2016, City Council approved work order #A010070-2011-62 for preliminary design and environmental documentation for the proposed road widening improvements on Fulton Road from Guerneville Road to Piner Road.

In order to place the proposed Fulton Road UUD project in PG&E's queue for project design, the City and PG&E require a public hearing for property owners and the utilities parties with the City's approval of the UUD establishment resolution. Within the resolution is an order to the public utility companies to remove overhead wires, poles, and facilities and place them underground.

After establishing an UUD, the City must enter into a General Condition Agreement with PG&E to perform work pursuant to Rule 20A. The terms of this agreement have been reviewed by the City Attorney.

On December 30, 2015, staff sent a "letter of intent" to PG&E regarding undergrounding within the Fulton Road widening improvements. On January 5, 2016, staff met with a PG&E Program Liaison to discuss the potential of an overhead conversion project.

On January 28, 2016 and April 5, 2016, staff walked the proposed UUD boundary limits with PG&E staff. Staff reviewed the proposed UUD with representatives of PG&E and mutually agreed on the boundaries of the proposed district.

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In the northern end of the proposed Fulton Road UUD, there are five (5) parcels located in unincorporated area. In order to address this issues, we have contacted Susan Klassen, the Director of Sonoma County Transportation and Public Works. In September 19, 2016, Susan Klassen agreed she would present and establish an UUD via resolution to the County Board of Supervisors. The affected property owners within the unincorporated areas would be notified by the County for their corresponding participation in the proposed Fulton Road UUD and a County Public Hearing.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

On June 21, 2016, the City Council, approved work order #A010070-2011-62, for Preliminary Design and Environmental Documentation for the proposed improvements to Fulton Road from Guerneville Road to Piner Road - Widen to Four Lanes with GHD Incorporated of Santa Rosa, CA.

ANALYSIS

1. If the resolution is adopted, the proposed Underground Utility District (UUD) project will be placed in PG&E's queue for project design, which would enhance Fulton Road improvements by removing unsightly utility poles and wires.
2. If this resolution is adopted, then no future overhead lines, poles, nor structures for utility purpose, will be allowed in the Utility Underground District once construction of the new facilities are complete.
3. In UUD subjected to Rule 20A, all of the cost of design and construction of undergrounding (except for street lighting) are paid through credits by the utility companies. The Rule 20A funds do not pass through the City, but are credits that can be used by PG&E to underground utilities.
4. The City has the option of cancelling the UUD and removing it from PG&E's queue at any time after it is formed, which would only have Rule 20A credits removed from work that had been performed up to that point.

FISCAL IMPACT

This action does not have a fiscal impact.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378. Future projects proposed to take place within the UUD will be subject to environmental review under CEQA.

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BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Pursuant to City Code Chapter 13-12, the City has notified concerned utility companies and all affected property owners within 300 feet of the proposed Fulton Road segment as shown on the last equalized assessment roll. The Notice of Public Hearing included the time and place, which was sent by mail 15 days prior to the date thereof.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Rule 20A Boundary Map
- Resolution

CONTACT

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