



Engineer's Report for Proposed Park Avenue Underground Utility District 2021-02

In the City of Laguna Beach, California
May 12, 2021

Prepared By: City of Laguna Beach Public Works Department, 505 Forest Avenue
Laguna Beach, California 92651; Phone: (949) 497-0711

I. INTRODUCTION

An underground utility district is proposed to be established for a portion of Park Avenue between Wendt Terrace and a point approximately 500 feet easterly of St. Ann's Drive in the City of Laguna Beach for the purpose of removing all existing overhead utilities of, but not limited to, Southern California Edison (SCE), Cox Communications (Cox), and Frontier Communications (Frontier) within the district boundary and placing them underground. The boundary of the proposed district is shown on the attached Exhibit "A." Chapter 21.24 of the Laguna Beach Municipal Code sets forth provisions for establishing such an underground utility district. This Engineer's Report is required to establish an underground district.

The project proposes to place underground all existing overhead utilities within the Park Avenue district boundary and provide underground utility service connections to all properties within the district. This project is also proposing construction of new streetlights, to replace current lights, which are owned by SCE and located on wooden poles. In summary, the Park Avenue undergrounding project will underground all overhead utility lines and eight (8) wooden poles and will install a new streetlight system and other appurtenant structures.

In addition, this project was recommended in the *Wildfire Mitigation and Fire Safety Report* approved by the City Council on July 23, 2019. The report identified utility undergrounding in key areas to reduce fire risks for the City and provide significant safety benefits to the general public. Park Avenue was identified as a high priority route where existing poles and wires could potentially block the road and delay emergency access or evacuation.

II. PHASES OF THE WORK

The proposed utility undergrounding district will be completed through the following phases of work.

Design

Upon approval by the City Council of a resolution to establish the underground utility district, construction drawings will be developed by the utility companies. The drawings will establish the

proposed locations for all above or below-ground conduits, handholes, transformers, streetlights, pedestals, and any other required electrical or communications equipment. The design process involves preparation of a civil land survey carried out by Public Works Department of the City, and development of a set of construction drawings by SCE. These drawings will then be distributed to both Cox and Frontier, so that they may prepare their designs, typically utilizing a joint trench with the SCE facilities. The City will also prepare design and specifications for the streetlight construction portion of the project. The locations for easements that might be required to be acquired on private properties for structures and conduits shall be determined at this stage of the project. If easements are required, the affected property owners will be contacted to coordinate the conveyance and recording of such easements.

Construction

The construction phase will consist of (a) construction of underground utilities for, but not limited to, SCE, Frontier, and Cox, (b) construction of service connections for those properties that are served by the district, and (c) installation of streetlights and connections to be owned and maintained by the City of Laguna Beach.

Removals

The last phase of the project consists of completing the final connections for the private properties to the new underground system and the removal of all existing overhead utility wires and poles within the district boundary as shown on Exhibit "A." The utility companies are responsible for the removal of their respective wires, poles, and the repair of the City's rights-of-way.

III. COST OF THE WORK

The City's Public Works staff estimates the total cost of the project in the amount of \$1,700,000, which includes the costs for design and construction of underground electrical and communications systems, private property conversions, and installation of new streetlights.

SCE's portion of the project includes design and construction of the underground system in the City's rights-of-way and private property stub-outs pursuant to the California Public Utility Commission (CPUC) Rule 20 guidelines. SCE's portion also includes overhead system removals and contingencies for SCE, Cox, and Frontier. A single trench will be constructed for joint use by SCE, Cox and Frontier. Total cost for this portion of the work is currently estimated to be about \$1,000,000. A more refined cost estimate will be prepared by SCE and reviewed by the City after the construction drawings are developed.

The City will prepare the design for streetlights and hire a contractor for construction of private property trenches and electrical panel conversion equipment installation on private property. Public Works staff estimates that streetlight design and construction will cost approximately \$100,000. Private property connections will cost approximately \$450,000. These cost estimates will be refined when designs and construction estimates for streetlights, communication, and electrical systems are available. An additional \$150,000 is estimated for construction contingencies to address unforeseen conditions.

Once the district has been established by resolution of the City Council, SCE, Cox, and Frontier shall use approved City funds for the design and construction of the underground facilities and the conversion for all properties currently receiving service from the overhead utilities within the district. The City's

Public Works staff will use approved funds to hire a contractor to perform work on private property for the installation of underground electric service lateral and the conversion of electrical panel to accept underground service. After installation, each property owner in the district shall be responsible for the maintenance of the conduit and electrical conversion equipment located on, under, or within any structure on the premises served. Approved funds will also be used for installation of a new City-owned streetlight system.

IV. SCHEDULE OF THE WORK

The estimated project schedule is:

Planning and Design	18 months
Construction	16 months
Overhead Facilities Removal	4 months
Total	38 months

It is expected that the proposed undergrounding, conversion of private services, and removal of overhead utilities and poles will be completed by the end of December 2024.

Prepared by:



Thomas Perez,
Capital Program Manager

Prepared under the supervision of:



Mark Trestik, PE
City Engineer, RCE: 53708

Exhibit "A"

Boundary Map

Underground Utility District No. 2021-02

