



Cathedral City

Legislation Text

File #: 2017-221, Version: 1

City Council

MEETING DATE: 6/26/2017

TITLE:

Public Hearing and Formation of Underground Utility District 2017-01

FROM:

John A. Corella, P.E. - City Engineer

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council conduct a Public Hearing; receive public comments; and approve the formation of Underground Utility District 2017-01.

BACKGROUND:

In 2009, the City entered into an agreement to partner with the City of Palm Springs to widen the Ramon Road corridor from San Luis Rey Drive east to Candlewood Drive. The proposed improvements include widening the corridor from four lanes to six lanes, including widening the bridge over the Whitewater River. In addition, the project will enhance pedestrian safety with new sidewalks along the north side of the road and a new multipurpose trail along the south side of the road.

Along the north side of Ramon Road between Crossley Road and San Luis Rey Drive, Southern California Edison (SCE) owns and maintains an overhead electric distribution line. Secondary to SCE, Spectrum owns and maintains an overhead cable distribution line hung on the same poles.

Due to the Ramon Road and Bridge Widening Project these overhead lines and respective poles will need to be relocated or undergrounded. Staff reviewed the cost of undergrounding vs. relocating and determined that undergrounding these lines in conjunction with the Project work is the most cost effective for the results. This will greatly improve the safety and appearance of Ramon Road in this area. Thus, Staff is recommending undergrounding the existing overhead utilities and removing the associated poles using SCE established Rule 20A Tariff funds and establishing Underground Utility District 2017-1(UUD 2017-1).

DISCUSSION:

In order for UUD 2017-1 to meet the criteria for Rule 20A Tariff funds the Project must meet at least

one of the following conditions: The Project is within an area of heavy concentration of overhead facilities with two or more circuits on poles; adjacent roadways must carry heavy vehicle or pedestrian traffic; the overhead facilities are located within a civic, recreational or scenic area; or the roadway is identified as an arterial roadway. This Project meets three of the above criteria.

Additionally, the Project must be in the Public's interest, the City must have an Undergrounding Ordinance in place and the length of the Project must be at least one block or 600 feet in length. The Project meets all these criteria.

On May 24, 2017, Council declared its intention to establish UUD 2017-1 on the north side of Ramon Road from 350 feet west of Crossley Road to the centerline of Agua Caliente Trail. A required public hearing on the formation of UUD 2017-1 was originally scheduled for June 14, 2017. Publication issues, due to the Memorial Day Holiday, precluded the Public Hearing Notice from appearing in the Desert Sun newspaper in time to hold the Public Hearing on June 14, 2017.

The required Public Hearing notice for this June 26, 2017 meeting has been published twice in the Desert Sun, first on June 8, 2017 and June 15, 2017. The notice of Public Hearing was also posted at City Hall, the City Library, Senior Center, the Boys and Girls Club and posted at the site. Notices were also sent to all the affected property owners and impacted utilities.

The Public Hearing will allow all persons interested an opportunity to be heard. The Public Hearing is to ascertain whether the public necessity, health, safety or welfare requires the removal of poles, overhead wires and associated overhead structures in accordance with Cathedral City Municipal Code Title 14, Chapter 14.28 and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Rule 20A requirements.

After closing the Public Hearing, staff recommends that a Resolution be adopted declaring the designated area an Underground Utility District and order the overhead removals and underground installation.

Resolution 2017- is attached.

FISCAL IMPACT:

SCE has established the Rule 20(A) Tariff to provide set aside funding to the City each year to pay for undergrounding existing overhead SCE utilities. The City has accumulated several years of allocations and, under the rules of the Tariff, can mortgage up to five years of future allocations. Currently, the City has approximately \$750,000 of available Rule 20(A) allocations including the five-year mortgage.

Due to the Rule 20(A) Tariff, there is no fiscal impact associated with this action. SCE will be able to use the Rule 20(A) allocations to offset their costs. In addition, under the rules of the Tariff, Spectrum is required to underground their facilities at their own cost.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution Declaring Formation of Underground Utility District 2017-01 and Ordering the Removal and Undergrounding of Poles, Overhead Wires, and Associated Overhead Structures Within Such

District.

2. Aerial Exhibit of UUD 2017-1 Boundary.