

**City of Berkeley
Utility Undergrounding Subcommittee
of the
Public Works Commission**

MEETING AGENDA

Subject: Utility Undergrounding

Date: February 23, 2017, 4:00 – 5:30 pm

Location: Elm Conference Room
1947 Center Street, 4th Floor

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Comments from the Public (3 minutes each speaker)
3. Discuss/Action:
 - A. Approval of notes from January 26, 2017 undergrounding meeting (attached)
 - B. Progress report by De En Ni and Daniel Bradway on their studies
 - C. Undergrounding status report to Council on February 28, 2017
 - D. Planning for meeting with utility service providers (attached report)
 - E. Planning for visits to cities with undergrounding programs (attached report)
 - F. Planning for community input
 - G. Next meeting
4. Adjournment

An agenda packet is available for public review at the Engineering Division front desk.

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Acting Commission Secretary:

Tracy Clay, Supervising Civil Engineer
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Utility Undergrounding - meeting notes

Meeting Date/Time: January 26, 2017, 4:00 pm

Meeting Location: Elm conference room

Attending:

Affiliation	Team Member	Affiliation	Team Member
Public Works Commission (PWC)	Ray Yep ✓	Public Works Department	Tracy Clay
	Larry Henry		Ken Emeziem
	Nic Dominguez ✓		
Disaster & Fire Safety Commission (DFSC)	Bob Flasher	Harris & Associates	Rocco Colicchia
	Victoria Legg ✓		
	Paul Degenkolb ✓		
Transportation Commission (TC)	Tony Bruzzone ✓		
	Ben Gerhardstein		

✓ Indicates present at meeting

Meeting Notes

1. Subcommittee Chair Ray Yep called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.
2. Public comments:
 - Sam Ginsberg attended from the public. He did not have any comments.
 - Braden Litzinger attended on behalf of Councilmember Sophie Hahn.
 - Marvin Snow attended and participated on specific topics in the meeting.
 - Robert Krumme attended and participated on specific topics in the meeting.
 - Nancy Holland, Francis Wilson, and Dorthea attended to discuss a letter from Comcast. The letter describes aerial/undergrounding work to provide service to 1974 University Avenue. The attendees expressed concerns about the safety of having too many wires on utility poles.
3. Goldman School studies
De En Ni attended and provided an overview of the studies Daniel Bradway and he are conducting.
4. Undergrounding report to Council
The status report is currently scheduled for the February 14, 2017 Council meeting. Ray summarized the latest updates to the report. Ray also emphasized that the commissioners will need to combine the information from the Harris report, Goldman school studies, and our own research into a recommendation to Council. This will occur in the 2nd half of 2017.
5. Involvement of the Energy Commission
Ray said that the person we had in mind is no longer on the Energy Commission. Ray discussed this with Tony and has decided to delete the request to add the Energy Commission. We can work with them informally, if needed.

6. Meeting with utility service providers

We discussed holding a meeting with utility service providers. This will include PG&E, AT&T, Comcast, and other appropriate providers. We will target to hold this at our February sub-committee meeting. If we have difficulty lining up the participants, we will move it to March. Ray will contact Ken Emeziem, Tracy Clay, Susan Wengraf, and others for suggestions on attendees.

7. Visiting cities with undergrounding programs

Ray suggested planning visits to cities with undergrounding programs to help us with our evaluation. There was general consensus that this is a good idea.

- Victoria will research San Diego, Palo Alto, Piedmont, Santa Barbara, San Francisco, Anaheim, etc. to determine appropriate cities to visit.
- Paul will talk with people in his office for information on Christchurch NZ, Italy, and other places where they have travelled to investigate earthquakes.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.

End of notes.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Undergrounding sub-committee
FROM: Ray Yep
SUBJECT: Planning for a meeting with utility service providers
DATE: February 23, 2017

The following is a status report on planning a meeting with utility service providers.

Search for Utility Contacts

I inquired with the following people for contacts at utility service providers.

1. Ken Emeziem:
 - PG&E: Lizette Burtis, (L2B9@pge.com), Rule 20A Northern Region Program Liaison, Pacific Gas & Electric Co. , 111 Stony Circle, Santa Rosa, CA 95401, Cell [707-321-0206](tel:707-321-0206)
 - AT&T: Alice Chen, Design Engineer, [510-727-4088](tel:510-727-4088); (sc4379@att.com)
 - Ken does not have info for Comcast
2. Councilmember Susan Wengraf:
 - PG&E: Tom Guarino's email: Tgg3@pge.com
 - AT&T: Daren Chan, Area manager for external affairs, 925-823.2243, daren.l.chan@att.com

Communications with PG&E

I contacted Tom Guarino and got transferred to Treva Reid. Treva's contact is:

Treva Reid
East Bay Public Affairs Team | Pacific Gas and Electric Company
Alameda and Contra Costa Counties
O: [510.874.2244](tel:510.874.2244) | C: [510.426.1464](tel:510.426.1464)
www.pge.com

Treva is checking the availability of their representative who leads their work in Berkeley.

Communications with AT&T

Daren Chan, Alice Chen, and David Cheney are confirmed to meet on either March 16 or April 6. Daren is not available to meet on March 23, which is the normal 4th Thursday for our undergrounding sub-committee meetings. Daren is requesting that the meeting start earlier than 4:00 pm (3:00 pm will be fine with them).

Larry Henry previously worked for AT&T and contacted John Stankey, CEO of the AT&T Entertainment Group. John referred Larry to Eric Boyer, senior vice-president of product marketing in the AT&T Entertainment Group. We are currently arranging a conference call with Eric.

Next Steps

1. Confirm the attendance of a PG&E representative by Treva Reid.
2. Hold a conference call with Eric Boyer and confirm the attendance of AT&T representatives.
3. Search for a contact with Comcast.
4. Target to hold the meeting in late March or in April.

Notes for Undergrounding Subcommittee meeting 2.23.17-VQL

The following municipalities have been approached and have assented to a meeting with Council member Susan Wengraf and select members of the Undergrounding Subcommittee. Both have active undergrounding projects.

1. City of San Diego

Briefly, their program is intended to be completed by 2065. Based on the information on their website, every council district is divided up into UUDs and every district has at least one UUD completed each year. There is an interactive map where one can click on their council district, locate their UUD and learn when their street will be under-grounded. As I understand it, the cost is fully borne by the utility district rather than the homeowner paying a portion out of pocket.

San Diego has a lawsuit against it claiming their utility fees of 1.15% and surcharge of 3.537% were "hidden surcharges" earmarked for undergrounding and constitute an illegal tax. The trial is scheduled to begin in April, 2017.

Their website references replacement of wooden utility poles with steel poles in outlying fire prone areas.

The project is managed by their Transportation Department.

12.30.16

Happy New Year to you as well. The Utility Undergrounding Program is in my Department, and here is the link to the website: <https://www.sandiego.gov/undergrounding>. She (referring to Susan Wengraf) can contact me or Jim Nabong at 619-533-3721 (copied on this email). We'd be happy to provide any information she needs.

Thanks,

Kris McFadden
Director
Transportation & Storm Water Department
T (619) 236-6594
KMcFadden@sandiego.gov
Jim Nabong
JNabong@sandiego.gov

2. City of Anaheim

Like just about every other city, undergrounding started here in the 1960s and picked up speed in the 1990s. Their stated purpose is to improve the visual aesthetics along major streets, enhance roadway lighting as well as improve utility reliability. 2016 council priorities are major arterials, beach and East as well as consideration for council district parity. Before and after pictures from the 2016 report to council show numerous, but not all, wires and poles removed.

Undergrounding is paid for with 20A funds and a 4% utility surcharge. Cable and telephone companies are to pay their own way. There is no mention of any lawsuits regarding the legality of the surcharge. The program is run out of their Public Works Department.

<http://www.anaheim.net/DocumentCenter/View/2329>

Notes for Undergrounding Subcommittee meeting 2.23.17-VQL

2.16.17

Yes, it would be our pleasure to share details of our undergrounding program, upon your visit we could even show you some active projects.

You can coordinate through me.

Thanks again for reaching out, we look forward to it.

Thanks

Timothy Bass

714-765-4287

tbass2@anaheim.net

3. The City of Palo Alto

I recommend contacting the City of Palo Alto, if you agree, to determine if their program is still active as I think this is being debated. Like San Diego, the City of Palo Alto has its own utility service. Utility poles are owned jointly with AT&T. Their website indicates that 1% of electric utility revenue has been spent on undergrounding - about 100 locations per year.

Between 1965 and 2016, 47 UUDs districts were identified in areas marked as "general public interest benefit districts". 43 have been under-grounded; homeowners in these districts only pay hookup fees whereas in other districts, homeowners pay more. Their website indicates 2,400 residential dwellings have benefited from under-grounded whereas 14,000 residential dwellings would still need to be under-grounded.

Sometime in 2015 or early 2016 Google offered to add fiber optic in Palo Alto and in Santa Clara but pulled out in October, 2016. In addition, AT&T and Comcast have also pulled out of future projects, meaning less cost sharing. This was the subject of a council meeting in January, 2016. Residents who have not benefited from under-grounding are critical of who has and who has not benefited from the program thus far. Also of concern is that work completed in the 1980s, specifically downtown, is now ready to be redone based on the 30 year lifecycle for under-ground electrical equipment.

Tom Ting, Electrical Engineer, was the city employee addressing council questions in January. The project is run out of the Electrical Engineering and Operations Office, phone number 650-566-4500.

I do not recommend contacting the following cities at this time:

1. Santa Barbara. It appears work stopped in 2011 after a lawsuit was filed against the city claiming the 1% resident franchise fee for new utility poles and lines was an illegal tax. In 2015, an appellate court ruled in favor of the plaintiff and the lawsuit is now waiting to be heard by the California Supreme Court.

2. City of San Francisco. SF under-grounded over half its line miles before it stopped its program. It appears the reasons include that it has already borrowed over \$53MM in 20A funds and the expectation that the city will not be successful in getting a 2/3 vote approving a new tax. Homeowners can pursue under-grounding using the 20B funding method, which raises the parity issue since the North side of the city used much of the 20A funds. The existing 7.5% Utility Users Tax for commercial accounts and 7.5% Cell Phone User Tax goes into the general

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fund. An under-grounding advocacy group has a website but it has not been updated since 2007.

3. City of Oakland. As of now, their website only provides a “toolkit” for interested homeowners wishing to tap 20B funds to under-ground their neighborhoods because 20A projects has a 40 year waiting list.

4. City of Piedmont. In 2010 city council approved a two year moratorium on under-grounding while it sorted out the Piedmont Pines and Hampton Seaview undergrounding projects. The moratorium was extended to 2014 but appears to still be in effect. There is no indication on their website that they will start up this program again. Since 2010, three different city administrators have been responsible for following this matter so I question whether insight can be gleaned into how they structured their program and how they managed the difficulties they encountered.

5. San Leandro, having access to already existing conduit, entered into a public private partnership to add fiber optics to an 11 mile loop. This was limited to an industrial business and service district.