

# MEMORANDUM

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
County of Placer

TO: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

DATE: July 22, 2008

FROM: KEN GREHM / BOB COSTA

SUBJECT: LAKE TAHOE AREA UTILITY UNDERGROUND CONVERSION  
DISTRICTS - ELECTRICAL PANEL CONVERSIONS

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## ACTION REQUESTED / RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution revising procedures for conversion of electrical panels within the Carnelian Bay No. 1, Tahoe Vista/ Kings Beach Nos. 10 and 11, and Tahoe City No. 12 Underground Conversion Districts by allowing private property owners to perform conversion work on their property with some reimbursement.

## BACKGROUND / SUMMARY

Currently defined utility undergrounding districts in the Tahoe area were established by your Board at various times between 1992 and 1998. These districts are created for the purpose of replacing unsightly overhead utility wires with underground facilities, thus improving scenic conditions. The serving utility companies do all design and construction of these utility conversion projects, with the exception of some service lateral work and meter modifications on the customer's property. Individual property owners are required to accommodate service from the newly relocated facilities, at their expense.

On October 21, 2003, by Resolution 2003-263, your Board established revised procedures for use of CPUC Rule 20 funding to reimburse property owners for a portion of electric panel conversion costs within the Lake Tahoe area underground conversion districts. The procedures adopted in 2003 require the Department of Public Works (DPW) to hire an Electrical Contractor to perform panel conversions on each parcel, rather than each parcel owner having the work performed by a contractor that they would hire. This procedural change was made based on DPW's understanding of a reimbursement requirement of Sierra Pacific Power Company, the utility company responsible for administration of the Rule 20 funds for projects in the Tahoe area.

Those revised procedures are proving difficult to implement, and Sierra Pacific Power Company has indicated that the procedures that were in place prior to the 2003 modification are acceptable for the reimbursement of Rule 20 funds. According to their staff, Placer County is the only jurisdiction that they work with on these projects that implemented revisions; others continue to use the original procedures. DPW is requesting that your Board approve a revision to our procedures to change them back to those previously in effect, and which are consistent with other jurisdictions. A similar revision was authorized by your Board on June 13, 2006 for the Squaw Valley Utility Undergrounding Project, completed last year, and the revised approach was successfully implemented.

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This resolution restates provisions to cover a portion of the expected cost to individual property conversions with the allocations from the Rule 20 funds. Reimbursement amounts of \$500 per residence, and \$1500 per commercial service and eligibility requirements, as established in Resolution 2003-263, will not be affected by approval of this request.

**ENVIRONMENTAL**

This project is exempt from California Environmental Quality Control Act (CEQA) under CEQA Guidelines 15302(d), Replacement or Reconstruction.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

DPW's annual budget includes funding for staff time to coordinate and monitor these projects. The proposed action is expected to reduce staff time by a minor amount, thus producing a positive fiscal benefit.

Attachment: Resolution  
Location Map

# Before the Board of Supervisors County of Placer, State of California

In the matter of: A RESOLUTION REVISING  
PROCEDURES FOR ELECTRICAL PANEL  
CONVERSIONS WITHIN THE CARNELIAN  
BAY NO. 1, TAHOE VISTA / KINGS BEACH  
NOS. 10 AND 11, AND TAHOE CITY NO. 12  
UNDERGROUND UTILITY CONVERSION  
DISTRICTS

Resol. No:.....

Ord. No:.....

First Reading:.....

The following RESOLUTION was duly passed by the Board of Supervisors  
of the County of Placer at a regular meeting held on \_\_\_\_\_, 2008,  
by the following vote on roll call:

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Signed and approved by me after its passage.

Attest:  
Clerk of said Board

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman, Board of Supervisors

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of the County of Placer has established the Carnelian Bay No. 1, the Tahoe Vista / Kings Beach Nos. 10 and 11, and the Tahoe City No. 12 Underground Utility Conversion Districts; and

WHEREAS, the funding of the conversion of underground utilities within these districts is provided by the serving utility companies under CA PUC Rule 20A and other tariffs; and

WHEREAS, the conversion of underground utilities within said district may necessitate the upgrade or modification of electric meters and service panels by individual property owners.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Placer, State of California, that funds allocated to these projects by the serving public electric utility be utilized to perform the following work on underground customer service connections required to complete the underground conversion project:

- A. The installation of no more than 100 lineal feet of each customer's underground electrical lateral connection required by the project. This work is to be completed by the serving utility company as part of the project.**
  
- B. The conversion of electric service panels to accept underground service, up to \$500 per residential service entrance and up to \$1,500 per commercial, industrial, or multi-family service entrance, excluding permit fees. This work is to be completed by the customer utilizing a properly licensed electrical contractor, and said work must be completed within the timeframe specified by the County. Reimbursement to the customer is subject to acceptance of the work by serving utility and County approval of an acceptable invoice from the electrical contractor that shows payment in full for the work performed. Any costs in excess of the stipulated amounts shall be the sole responsibility of the property owner(s).**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the electrical utility which undertakes underground installation of its facilities shall use the underground conversion allocation computed pursuant to decisions of the Public Utilities Commission of the State of California for the purpose of providing to each premise in each Underground Utility Conversion District individual electric service trenching and conductor, as well as backfill, paving and electrical conduit, if required.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the County intends to utilize Rule 20A funding for the meter panel conversion option provision based on the December 7, 1999 Advice Letter, CPUC Advice 1930-E. Actual dollar amount per service to be funded by Rule 20A shall not exceed \$1,500. The underground conversion allocation participation on private property is limited to those properties upon which a residence, commercial establishment or other structure that currently receives electrical power exists as of the adoption of this resolution.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** by said Board that the Director of Public Works shall notify all property owners in these Underground Utility Conversion Districts that the financial assistance contained in A and B above is available to offset the cost of converting individual services to accept underground supply of electricity.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** by said Board that the Director of Public Works is authorized to request, receive, and disburse Rule 20A funds provided by the serving utility company in accordance with this Resolution.

**Exhibit A  
Tahoe Area Underground Projects  
Location Map**



