

**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
INTERDEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

CONSENT AGENDA

ITEM NO.

18

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Thomas G. Wendorf, P.E., Director of Public Works

THROUGH: Terry M. Brechtel, City Manager

COPIES: Melissa Byrne Vossmer, Andrew Martin, Louis A. Lendman, Milo D. Nitschke, and file

SUBJECT: Utility Conversion at Woodlawn Avenue from San Antonio to Lake

DATE: June 26, 2003

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This ordinance appropriates funds from 2002 Certificates of Obligation in the amount of \$38,000.00 payable to SBC and authorizes City Public Service (CPS) to appropriate funds in the amount of \$500,000.00 from the CPS Overhead Conversion Fund for the relocation of their underground facilities in connection with the Woodlawn Avenue from San Antonio to Lake project located in Council District 7. This is an authorized 1999 General Obligation Street Improvement Bond project.

Staff recommends approval of this ordinance.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 1993, the City Public Service Board of Trustees adopted a resolution to amend the CPS Budget by establishing a permanent fund to finance the conversion of overhead utility lines to underground operation. On June 19, 1995 the City Public Service Board of Trustees adopted a resolution to expand the definition of eligible projects financed by the utility conversion fund to include those that relocate and/or redesign existing or planned overhead transmission and/or distribution facilities for aesthetic purposes. This same resolution expanded the eligible costs of projects financed by this fund to include expenses for certain services and administrative expenditures by the City of San Antonio incidental to project selection and implementation, and to include certain work on individual customer's property to convert service through and including the meter loop conversion. The ordinance prohibits the use of these funds to pay for conversion of any utility except CPS. As such, if a project requires the conversion of an SBC line, the City is responsible for paying the cost.

The establishment of Utility Conversion Districts (UCD) requires mechanisms to identify and designate the specific corridors and areas to be modified to determine the nature of the improvements to be required in each such corridor or area, and requires the various utility

companies to implement these projects as parts of public works or civic improvement projects as directed by City Council. The original ordinance directed SBC and other utilities to adjust their facilities, when the improvements were associated with capital improvement projects. Subsequently, a state law was passed that required SBC to only relocate their telephone lines if a street was being widened or straightened. In recent months SBC's strict interpretation of this statute has caused SBC to seek reimbursement of their costs in converting their aerial facilities to underground facilities. This has slowed down the progress of these projects because they require additional monies from the City.

To facilitate the UCD program, City staff compiles a list of projects that represent the different areas of the city. Citizens, City Council, developers, and other interested entities such as the Texas Department of Transportation and the Metropolitan Planning Organization recommend projects for inclusion on this list to City staff. Once the list is supported by City Council, the City staff will then proceed to meet the criteria outlined in the ordinance such as coordinating with the Planning Department, the Zoning and Planning Commissions, and the Development Services Department to assure that the UCD meets all guidelines for implementation prior to going to City Council for final approval. Upon City Council approval the city will advise CPS that they are authorized to spend the conversion funds on this UCD and the design work will begin by all utilities. All the affected citizens and neighborhood associations will be kept informed of the process as it moves along the approval trail.

The project considered today is being submitted individually due to the urgency of the Woodlawn Avenue from San Antonio to Lake project associated with the UCD and moving the project forward. City staff has met with the citizens on this project numerous times and they are in favor of the UCD by more than the two-thirds required by the original ordinance setting up the process.

This ordinance provides for utilities currently located overhead along the project path, including SBC utilities, to be converted to underground locations as part of the 2003-CPS Utility Conversion Project. This project is part of the larger UCD program that originally included seventeen projects citywide that met the criteria for Utility Conversion Districts. Many of the projects have associated costs for the conversion of SBC facilities. These additional costs were not a part of the Capital Improvement Programs budget through either the bond or CDBG budgets and must be addressed separately. Due to the urgency of the capital improvement project, the Woodlawn Avenue from San Antonio to Lake project is being brought forward to be submitted separately.

Projects on the Utility Conversion District list will be re-evaluated to assure that the conversion is feasible and is still desired by the community. One of the projects was submitted and approved by City Council on March 27, 2003, Ordinance No. 97364, Medical Center Area: Louis Pasteur (Floyd Curl-Ewing Halsell), and is presently under construction. An overview of the program will be presented to City Council by the end of September.

This project provides for the reconstruction of Woodlawn Avenue from San Antonio to Lake to 36-foot width. Bicycle lanes, enhanced parkway improvements, new curbs, sidewalks, and

driveway approaches. All utilities which are currently located overhead will be converted to underground locations. This project has completed the design phase and will be scheduled for bid advertising immediately upon the completion of the underground conversion.

POLICY ANALYSIS

Approval of this ordinance will be a continuation of City Council policy to complete previously approved 1999 General Obligation Street Improvement Bond funded Capital Improvements Projects.

FISCAL IMPACT

This is a one-time capital improvement expenditure within budget and included in the Capital Improvement Program Budget. Funds in the amount of \$38,000.00 are available from 2002 Certificates of Obligation payable to SBC.

Funds in the amount of \$500,000.00 are available from the CPS Utility Conversion Fund for relocation of underground facilities

COORDINATION

This request for ordinance has been coordinated with the Finance Department, the Office of Management and Budget, SBC, and City Public Service.

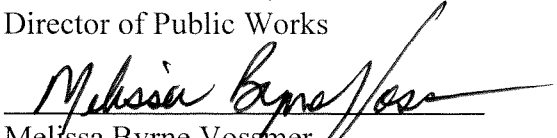
SUPPLEMENTARY COMMENTS

The Discretionary Contracts Disclosure Form required by the Ethics Ordinance is not required.

ATTACHMENTS

I. Project Map

for 
Thomas G. Wendorf, P.E.
Director of Public Works


Melissa Byrne Vossmer
Assistant City Manager

Approved:

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Terry M. Brechtel
City Manager

