



# County of El Dorado

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## Legislation Text

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Transportation Department recommending that the Board consider the following:

- 1) Approve the list of potential projects identified as those to be the potential recipients of Rule 20A funds over the next five years; and
- 2) Authorize the Department of Transportation to move forward with local utilities and the public to establish an Underground Utility District.

### FUNDING: Rule 20A tariff program

BUDGET SUMMARY:		
Total Estimated Cost		\$0
Funding		
Budgeted	\$	
New Funding	\$	
Savings	\$	
Other	\$10,768,040.00	
Total Funding Available	\$10,768,040.00	
Change To Net County Cost		\$0

Fiscal Impact/Change to Net County Cost: None

These funds are allocated annually and are cumulative to El Dorado County from the Rule 20A tariff program; however, they are held by Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) who contracts for the work to be performed. Currently the County of El Dorado is entitled to approximately \$10,768,040 in Rule 20A funding.

### Background:

In the latter part of 1967, the California Public Utilities Commission, (CPUC), directed that all privately owned electrical utility firms provide annual funding in the form of allocation credits to cities and counties for conversion of existing overhead utilities to underground. Because of the apparent benefits in such a program, El Dorado County enacted its Underground Utility Ordinance (Chapter 12.36) to govern the creation of Underground Utility Districts (UUD).

There are several steps to complete the approval process for a UUD to be formed. The utility companies will visit the proposed site to determine if the project qualifies as a public interest project. PG&E determines whether the allocation account has adequate credits to move forward on the project. The projects must be determined to be a public interest project by the governing public agency. A UUD requires persons owning at least 51% of the assessed valuation of property within the

proposed UUD to agree to the project to enable the Board of Supervisors to call public hearings to ascertain whether the public necessity, health, safety or welfare requires the removal of poles, overhead wires and associated overhead structures within the designated area proposed to be a UUD.

After UUD qualification, the County arranges a "boundary walk" where the County and utilities agree on a specific boundary. Once the specific boundary is identified then public meetings can be initiated to obtain the public opinion and buy-in on the project and at which time a petition would be signed.

Once the majority of property owners, as per County Ordinance 12.36.020, have agreed to said project a Public Hearing set by a formal resolution must be established. The Board must determine that the project is in the public interest and a resolution is passed to establish a UUD. The Board may also call for additional hearings if required.

**Reason for Recommendation:**

Each year El Dorado County is advised of a total dollar amount allocated by PG&E to be expended on undergrounding utilities within the County. The current amount is approximately \$10,768,040.00. It is the County's role to identify those projects wherein this type of work is to be performed. Rule 20A funds are to be used for projects which are in the general public interest and meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Undergrounding will avoid or eliminate an unusually heavy concentration of overhead electric facilities.
2. The street or road or right of way is extensively used by the general public and carries a heavy volume of pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
3. The street or road or right of way adjoins or passes through a civic area or public recreation area or an area of unusual scenic interest to the general public.

The Rule 20A funds are used to underground distribution lines (59 KVA or less). The current County Ordinance only allows distribution lines up to 34.5 KVA or less to be placed underground.

Projects can be incorporated with CIP projects and/or can be a stand alone project. The CIP project list is for your Boards consideration and are listed in order of construction dates. The projects that have obtained prior approval by the utility companies are indicated with an asterisk. The projects on the list that are not represented by a CIP number would be a stand alone project and can be considered in the future if a funding source can be appropriated. Once an approval by the subject property owners has been obtained DOT will request your Board hold a Public Hearing to make the finds necessary for your Board to establish the UUD.

**Action to be taken following Board approval:**

1. All Utilities will be provided a copy of the Board conceptual Rule 20A projects list to begin the UUD formational process.
2. Department of Transportation staff will move forward with the utilities to establish boundaries and obtain property owner approval.

**Contact:**

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