

**CITY OF ALBANY  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA  
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Date: October 4, 2010

Reviewed by: BP

**SUBJECT:** Contract with Robert Gray & Associates for the design of the Buchanan/Marin Utility Overhead Conversion District

**REPORT BY:** Randy Leptien, City Engineer/Aleida Andrino-Chavez, Transportation Planner

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

That the City Council authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract agreement with Robert Gray & Associates (RGA) for the design of the Buchanan/Marin Utility Overhead Conversion District in the total amount of \$53,065, divided into two payment phases. Phase 1 (FY 2010-11) totaling \$20,000, and Phase 2 (FY 2011-12+) totaling \$33,065.

**BACKGROUND**

In June 2010, the City Council adopted Resolution No, 2010-32 for the creation of a Utility Undergrounding District along the south side of Buchanan Street, between Cleveland and San Pablo Avenue, and along both sides of Marin Avenue, between San Pablo and Masonic Avenues, which would be called the Buchanan/Marin Utility Overhead Conversion District. Maps representing the utility district are attached (Exhibit B).

Resolution No. 2010-32 allows the City to initiate the process with PG&E by placing the City in the queue with other eligible Rule 20 projects. In California, undergrounding projects are being funded by the Rule 20 Program, which was established by the California Public Utilities Commission and enables PG&E to recover costs from rates paid by its electric ratepayers for a particular undergrounding project. As of May 13, 2010, the City of Albany accrual under the Rule 20 Program reached \$2,535,211 in "Work Credits" (Exhibit C). Once a project is placed in the queue, staff estimates it will take at least two years, from the date of resolution adoption for construction to begin. It is expected that this project be built along with the extension of the bike lanes along Marin Avenue from Cornell Avenue to San Pablo Avenue, which is part of the Buchanan Bicycle and Pedestrian Path project.

**DISCUSSION**

Two public hearings were conducted regarding the creation of the utility district. One was held by the Traffic and Safety Commission in March, and one held by the Council in June 2010 when Resolution No. 2010-32 was adopted. Because of the complexity of this utility undergrounding effort, the City needs an expert to design the project and coordinate with

PG&E to bring it on-line within a timeframe that coincides with the Class II portion of the Buchanan Bikeway project. At the June City Council meeting, staff recommended that the City enter into a contract agreement with Robert Gray & Associates, Utility Design Consultants and Engineers, for the preparation of street light design, utility composite design, and consulting services. RGA specializes in complex utility undergrounding projects. Exhibit A presents RGA's scope of services and proposal for Council consideration. The contract amount is \$53,065. Staff suggests \$60,000 be used for budgeting purposes.

**ANALYSIS**

The Buchanan/Marin Utility Overhead Conversion District project will occur over several years and include several steps such as survey work, preliminary design and coordination while waiting in the queue for receipt of Rule 20A funding, preparing final street light and utility composite plans, and ultimately constructing the project. Because of this multi-year project, staff recommends the RGA contract, and work by the City Engineer (LCC) be divided into two phases.

	<b><u>Phase 1 (FY 10-11)</u></b>	<b><u>Phase 2 (FY 11-12+)</u></b>	<b><u>Total City costs (est.)</u></b>
RGA Utility engineers	\$ 20,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 60,000*
LCC (survey, plan	<u>\$ 10,000</u>	<u>20,000</u>	<u>30,000</u>
review, coordination)	\$ 30,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 90,000
		- \$ 30,000* (reimb)	- \$ 30,000* (reimb)
		<u>\$ 30,000</u>	<u>\$ 60,000</u>
Other City costs:			
Street Light replacements		\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
Construction management		<u>30,000</u>	<u>30,000</u>
	<b><u>\$ 30,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 160,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 190,000</u></b>

\* Approximately 50% of RGA fees reimbursable from Rule 20A.

Phase 1 (FY 2010-11) would include survey work, preliminary design, and coordination. Phase 2 (FY 2011-12, probably 2012-13) would include final design, construction management and street light replacement. Rule 20A pays for construction costs and approximately 50% of the design costs, but does not pay for surveys, internal review and coordination costs incurred by the City (City Engineer), construction management, or street light replacement. Existing street lights are located on telephone poles, which will ultimately be removed and the lines undergrounded. Thus, new street lights will be installed.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT**

Utility undergrounding has a number of benefits for a community including beautification, vehicular safety, and elimination of power line interference with trees. It will also improve visibility and accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The amount of the contract with RGA is \$53,065, of which approximately 50% is reimbursable from Rule 20 funds. Therefore, the cost to the City will be less than \$30,000. As recommended, the FY 2010-11 phase of the RGA contract would be \$20,000. Survey and coordination costs for the City Engineer during FY 2010-11 would be about \$10,000. In order to start this project moving forward, it is recommended that \$30,000 of Measure F - Streets project funds be used.

The total Buchanan/Marin Utility Overhead Conversion District project cost is estimated to be \$2,600,000, of which the City's portion will be about \$190,000, as discussed above. It is recommended that Phase 2 costs (FY 2011-12 and 2112-13) come from future Landscape and Lighting Assessment District (LLAD) funds.

### **Attachments**

Exhibit A: RGA Proposal

Exhibit B: Maps showing proposed Underground District boundaries

Exhibit C: PG&E letter dated May 23, 2010