

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



SAN JOAQUIN
COUNTY
Greatness grows here.



1. WHAT IS AN UNDERGROUND UTILITY DISTRICT (UUD)?

A UUD is a designated area of land where existing overhead utility lines (electricity, cable-TV, telephone) are relocated underground and any future installations will also be underground.

2. HOW IS THE UUD CREATED; IS IT NECESSARY TO SIGN A PETITION OR HOLD A REFERENDUM?

The San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors has the authority to pass a resolution designating a UUD if they believe it benefits the public, and provided that a public hearing is first conducted to consider public opinion and comment. Questions and comments from the public are also addressed by the San Joaquin County Department of Public Works staff via mailers, websites, and telephone prior to Board consideration of UUD designation.

3. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF HAVING UNDERGROUND UTILITIES?

The main benefit of undergrounding is to improve safety. Within a UUD, the utility companies remove existing roadside poles which are potential hazards for vehicles. Undergrounding may also improve service reliability by reducing outages, and it may enhance the appearance of the roadway.

4. WHAT ARE THE BOUNDARIES OF THE AREA TO BE DESIGNATED?

The proposed UUD limit is on both sides of Country Boulevard from Pershing Avenue to Franklin Boulevard.

5. WILL THE DESIGNATED UUD AREA CHANGE ANY OWNERSHIP RIGHTS?

No. Creating a UUD does not affect the ownership rights within the designated area. It only determines the boundary for which all overhead utilities must be placed underground.

6. WHAT IF WE DO NOT WANT TO UNDERGROUND THE EXISTING OVERHEAD LINES?

Future improvements to the roadway can still be made without moving the wires underground, but future roadway improvements would not have the safety, service and aesthetic benefits of a UUD. Please see Question #9 and #10 for more information.

7. WHAT IS RULE 20A UNDERGROUNDING AND WHO PAYS FOR IT?

The California Public Utilities Commission Rule 20A Undergrounding Program replaces all overhead lines with an underground system. It is paid with funds collected for undergrounding by utility companies from ratepayers. These collected funds are UUD work credits. Under Rule 20A, the California Public Utility Commission requires the utility company to allocate a certain amount of work credits each year to the cities and unincorporated counties for underground conversion projects.

8. WHY IS CREATING A UUD NECESSARY; WHY NOT JUST DO THE NECESSARY UNDERGROUNDING WORK?

Creating the UUD ensures that local government and the various utility companies have a common understanding about the boundaries for the area to be converted, and it also ensures that any future utility services in the District will be underground. Designating a UUD also meets the Public Utilities Commission regulations providing for the use of existing Rule 20A funds previously set aside for this purpose.

COUNTRY CLUB UNDERGROUND UTILITY DISTRICT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:



9. HOW ARE INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES IMPACTED BY THE CONVERSION?

If and when a UUD is designated, utility companies will be responsible for design and construction of the utility conversion. Subject to final design, the “main lines” along both sides of the road will be moved underground in one shallow trench. This allows for removal of the roadside utility poles.

The utility company will install service laterals. Some properties will also require a trench for their individual “service lines” and the replacement of their individual service panels to handle the new underground wires. In unique situations where service panels are far off the roadway, the undergrounding will stop at a point away from the road and outside the UUD, where the service line will emerge on the property and continue overhead to the existing service panel.

10. WILL PROPERTY OWNERS HAVE TO PAY FOR NEW SERVICE PANELS?

The utility companies have funds earmarked to pay for undergrounding within the limits set by the Public Utilities Commission regulations. These funds will cover panel conversions. However, substandard or unpermitted electrical connections located on a specific property may need to be brought up to building department standards at the property owners' expense.

11. WILL DIGGING TRENCHES FOR SERVICE LATERALS THREATEN LANDSCAPING, FENCES, OR OTHER IMPROVEMENTS ON MY PROPERTY?

Designers will consider trenching around or tunneling under any barriers and may also consider alternative paths for individual service lines to reduce potential conflicts with property improvements. Trenches will be open temporarily and then covered once the utilities are installed.

12. WHAT IF I DON'T WANT TO BE PART OF THE UUD, BUT MY NEIGHBOR DOES?

The Board has the authority to establish the UUD if the Board determines it is the best interest of the public. A public hearing is required before the Board establishes a UUD. Residents in the proposed UUD can participate in the hearing and express their opinions about the creation of the UUD or respond to the mailer. If the Board establishes the UUD, all properties in the UUD are legally required to participate.

13. WILL MY STREET BE COMPLETELY RESURFACED AFTER UNDERGROUNDING?

No. Any resurfacing of the entire roadway will be completed by the County as part of the scheduled maintenance work plan.

14. HOW LONG WILL I BE WITHOUT POWER?

The utility company will determine the power interruption. During the power conversion, the utility company will work closely with the residents to coordinate the cutover and minimize power disruption.

15. HOW LONG WILL THE UUD FORMATION TAKE BEFORE IT GOES TO CONSTRUCTION?

The formation of the UUD requires a Board resolution. The process for the Board resolution to establish an UUD will take about 6-8 months. If a UUD resolution is passed, we estimate that utility companies will take 4-7 years to complete the overhead conversion to underground.

16. WHO DO I CONTACT IF I HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THE UUD FORMATION?

Interested parties can call 800-229-8553 or email: UUDprogram@sjgov.org with any questions or comments.