



City Council Agenda Report

Meeting Date: February 25, 2025

Prepared By: Nick Zornes

Approved By: Gabe Engeland

Subject: Underground Utilities – Chapter 11.25

COUNCIL PRIORITY AREA

- Business Communities
- Circulation Safety and Efficiency
- Environmental Sustainability
- Housing
- Neighborhood Safety Infrastructure
- General Government

RECOMMENDATION

Introduce an Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Los Altos Adding Chapter 11.25 Underground Utilities to Title 11 Miscellaneous Property Regulations of the Los Altos Municipal Code and find that this action is Exempt from Environmental Review Pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the State Guidelines Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970.

FISCAL IMPACT

Not Applicable.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed amendments are exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

Not Applicable.

BACKGROUND

The Los Altos Municipal Code reflects Underground Utility requirements in various Chapters and Titles. The intent of all pertinent code sections is to apply universally to all applicable projects and permits which require the undergrounding of utilities within the City of Los Altos. The proposed Chapter 11.25 will further enable and reinforce the requirement(s) of underground utilities within the City of Los Altos when applicable.

DISCUSSION

The purpose and intent of this chapter is to clarify when undergrounding of utilities is required in connection with a development project within the City of Los Altos. All development identified in the applicability section of the draft ordinance would provide for the undergrounding of existing and proposed utility facilities in compliance with the chapter, unless expressly exempted.

The draft ordinance helps to ensure that when applicable undergrounding of utilities is accomplished. The existing Los Altos Municipal Code contains provisions for underground utilities in various areas of the code (Chapter 11.20, Title 12, and Title 13). The draft ordinance will be in addition or in conjunction with the undergrounding provisions throughout the code.

ANALYSIS

The proposed underground requirements are as follows:

Service lines. All new and existing overhead utility lines, serving property located along a public or private street or alley shall be installed underground with:

- Construction of a single-family dwelling.
- Construction of a residential development with two or more dwelling units.
- Construction of a non-residential development which results in new gross floor area of (500) square feet or more of conditioned space in the aggregate over the preceding five (5) year period.
- An addition to an existing residential development that within a five (5) year period adds and/or replaces (500) square feet or more to the developments existing habitable square footage that is known and provided on the latest County of Santa Clara Assessors Office Tax Roll.

Frontage lines and poles. Existing utility poles and associated overhead utility lines located along a street abutting the frontage(s) of a development site shall be removed and the utilities replaced underground in association with the site improvements set forth below:

- Construction of a new single-family dwelling.
- Construction of a new residential development with two or more dwelling units.
- An addition to an existing residential development that within a five (5) year period adds and/or replaces fifty (50%) percent or more to the developments existing habitable square footage that is known and provided on the latest County of Santa Clara Assessors Office Tax Roll.
- Construction of a new non-residential development.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Draft Ordinance**
- 2. Appendix A – Chapter 11.25**