TO: **PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

FROM: **HENRY NGUYEN** **DEPARTMENT: UTILITIES**

DATE: **NOV 12, 2019**

SUBJECT: **PARK IMPROVEMENT ORDINANCE FOR THE INSTALLATION OF UTILITIES EQUIPMENT AT THE EXISTING PEERS PARK WATER PUMP STATION**

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) recommend that the City Council adopt a Park Improvement Ordinance for the installation of electric utility equipment at the existing Peers Park water pump station (Attachment A).

BACKGROUND

Caltrain is electrifying its fleet to improve air quality, reduce noise, and increase ridership. In order for Caltrain to complete its electrification project, overhead utilities currently crossing the railroad must be either at a minimum height of 40 feet or placed underground. City of Palo Alto Utilities (CPAU) has two overhead electric lines above the railroad crossings near Peers Park (between Rinconada and Tennyson). By combining the two overhead lines into one and placing that new line underground ("the Project"), CPAU can meet Caltrain's requirement and improve the aesthetics of the area simultaneously.

DISCUSSION

Two CPAU overhead electric lines cross the railroad near Peers Park, which are attached to 2 wooden utility poles. As part of the Project, the poles and overhead cables will be removed and replaced with 1 new pad-mounted switch (53" tall x 63" wide x 62" deep), 5 new underground vaults (1 that is 5' x 10', 2 that are 4'6"x 8'6" and 2 that are 30" x 48") and new underground conduits connecting these vaults. These new facilities are shown in detail in the attached Exhibit A. The only visible addition will be the pad-mounted switch, which will be placed within the paved area at the park where the existing CPAU water pump station is located. The rest of the vaults and conduits will be underground.

Park Impacts During Construction

CPAU will use a horizontal drilling method, also called the bore method, to minimize impacts at the park. The bore method will require three bore pits (two 5'x 5' pit for conduit that will run underground in the park, and one 6'x 12' pit for the conduit that will cross beneath the railroad) connected by a channel, or casing.

After the channel is established, the casing will be assembled and pulled into the channel all at once, to prevent the channel from collapsing. During this phase, which will take 1 to 2 days, the

casing will sit above ground. This process is repeated when the conduits are pulled into the casing. Utilities will fence off the area surrounding the bore pits, leaving the rest of the park open for use.

Timeline and length of Construction

Once permits are in place, CPAU plans to start construction in February 2020. The Project will take approximately 4-6 weeks.

Traffic and Parking Impacts

No street closures will be needed in the Peers Park area. Construction worker vehicles will utilize street parking during the day.

Park Impacts After Construction

Other than the pad-mounted switch, everything else installed as part of this project will be placed underground. The pad-mounted switch will be located directly in front of the existing CPAU water pump station near the train tracks, which is about 200 feet from the dog park. Once the Project is in place, CPAU will access the pad-mounted switch for maintenance approximately once per year. The cables that will be installed in the underground conduits are designed to last approximately 40 years. Thus, no CPAU access to these conduits will be required under normal operating conditions. The 2 underground vaults which will be inside the dog park do not require ventilation and will have mulch placed on top of their covers, which will permit full access to the area by park goers. The other 3 vaults will be placed beneath the paved area and will not limit park access.

Impact to CPAU's Electric System

By reducing the number of overhead electric line crossings from 2 to zero, CPAU will eliminate the risk of overhead faults and increase system reliability. Installing the pad-mounted switch will also increase the security and flexibility of CPAU's electric distribution system.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Park Improvement Ordinance
Attachment B: Diagram and Map of New and Existing Utilities Equipment at the Peers Park Water Pump Station.