



**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE**  
**City Commission Agenda Memo**

**#12-2384**

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**TO:** Honorable Mayor & Members  
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

**FROM:** Lee Feldman, City Manager

**DATE:** November 6, 2012

**TITLE:** Establish an Underground Utility Planning Service Area (UUPSA) and  
Schedule Public Hearing Undergrounding of Utility Facilities – Special  
Assessment Program

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**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the City Commission adopt a resolution establishing an Underground Utility Planning Service Area (UUPSA) in anticipation of the costs to be incurred for the utility underground project; to schedule a Public Hearing before the City Commission on December 4, 2012 to set a fee for the initial upfront costs to the affected property owners.

**Background**

On May 18, 2010, the City Commission adopted an ordinance which establishes a process for communities to follow in order to underground their overhead utilities (power, telephone, cable TV, etc.) and creates a mechanism for the benefited community to pay the cost of undergrounding through special assessment.

On March 20 and May 1, 2012, at the request of the community the City Commission discussed amendments to the undergrounding of utility lines special assessment program. The City Commission agreed conceptually that the 70% approval should be based on those property owners that respond, rather than all property owners in the assessment area as the Ordinance is currently written. In addition, the Commission agreed to provide for 90% design plans prior to the ballot process as long as a process was established for repayment of any upfront costs by the City should the special assessment project not reach the 70% approval required to move forward. The process as outlined includes a method of reimbursement to the City of any “up-front costs” for preparation of construction plans and detailed cost estimates by a fee to be collected on the City’s utility billing system over a term of two years.

On September 18, 2012 and October 2, 2012 the City Commission adopted on first reading and second reading an ordinance amending Chapter 25 – Streets and Sidewalks, providing for undergrounding of utility facilities and underground utility line assessment program.

The following amendment has been included in Code Amendment – Chapter 25, Streets and Sidewalks:

1. Section 25-129.4. - Inclusion of a fee method of reimbursement to the City of any “upfront costs” for preparation of construction plans and detailed cost estimates. Modification that the ballot process will begin at 90% completion of construction plans. Modification to the completed ballot turnaround time by the owner back to the City Clerk’s office from 6 months to 30 days. Requirement that the ballot include drawings depicting the location and dimensions of all associated above-grade structures accessory to the UULF.

The total anticipated cost of all consultant and utility design upfront costs is \$404,300 (Keith & Schnars \$222,800, FPL \$102,000, TECO gas \$7,500, AT&T \$57,000, testing services \$15,000, Comcast has not provided any design fee estimates). This equates to approximately \$454 per property within the UUPSA or \$19 per month for the 24-month repayment term. FPL has indicated a minimum 24 month design period for their proposed underground facilities.

**Resource Impact**

There is a fiscal impact to the City in the amount of \$404,300 for consultant and utility design upfront costs that will be handled by a budget amendment contingent upon the approval of the Public Hearing on December 4, 2012.

**Attachments:**

Exhibit 1 – Proposed Resolution

Exhibit 2 – Underground Utility Planning Service Area (UUPSA) Map

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