



# Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors

## Subcommittee Report

### TRANSPORTATION, WATER & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

9.

Meeting Date: 12/04/2014

Subject: Monitor implementation of the Letter of Understanding with PG&E for the maintenance of PG&E streetlights in Contra Costa

Submitted For: Julia R. Bueren,

Department: Public Works

Referral No.: 13

Referral Name: MONITOR implementation of the Letter of Understanding with PG&E for the maintenance of PG&E streetlights in Contra Costa.

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#### Referral History:

Board of Supervisors accepted 2013 status report on street light maintenance by PG&E in coordination with Cities (Countywide) on January 7, 2014

#### Referral Update:

The Transportation, Water and Infrastructure Committee (TWIC) requested Public Works staff to report annually on the status of street light maintenance coordination efforts with PG&E. At the December 5, 2013 meeting regarding this item, in addition to receiving the report on PG&E Coordination with Cities and County for Street Light Maintenance, the Committee requested that Public Works staff consult with Danville staff on the Light Emitting Diode (LED) conversion program, and to report back to TWI Committee at their June 2014 meeting regarding AB 719, LED conversion.

#### Recommendation(s)/Next Step(s):

RECEIVE Report on PG&E Coordination with Cities and County for Street Light Maintenance.

#### Background:

The Public Works Department reported to TWIC at the October 2014 meeting regarding the conversion of LS-2 (County-owned) street lights to LEDs and referred this item to the County Board of Supervisors. On November 4, 2014 the County Board of Supervisors authorized the execution of PG&E Proposal Number 2 in an amount not to exceed \$450,000 for PG&E to replace high pressure sodium vapor lights (HPSV) with LED lights on all County-owned street lights, beginning in December 2014 through February 2015, Countywide.

As the LED conversion project is underway, this report will therefore focus on PG&E's coordination with Cities and the County for street light maintenance.

The Letter of Understanding (LOU), dated February 2008, between PG&E and County, states the commitment of PG&E for open communication and responsive service levels and actions in resolving issues related to street light performance. Communication channels have continued to remain open by conducting regular discussions at street light coordination meetings with the County, its constituent Cities and Towns.

Continuing the effort initiated in May 2008, and since reporting to TWIC on December 5, 2013, the County Public Works Department, PG&E and Cities have met on a quarterly basis. In 2014, meetings took place at Pittsburg, City of San Ramon, and Contra Costa County Public Works Department. Topics discussed throughout this year included: 1) Street Light Vandalism (copper wire theft); 2) Street Light Maintenance and Cost-saving Measures; 3) Light Emitting Diode (LED) Financing and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Rate Schedules; and the 4) Group Lamp Replacement of Street Lights per the Letter of Understanding (LOU) with PG&E.

The PG&E City/County quarterly meetings were valuable because those present were able to address issues related to street light maintenance, operations and increased efficiencies and LED conversions and rates.

Topics discussed at quarterly PG&E Street Light Coordination meetings are described in more detail below:

#### 1) Street Lights Vandalism (Copper wire theft)

Thefts of copper wire from street lights in several Cities and unincorporated County areas continue. Some cities in the County have opted to secure their electrical boxes with anti-theft devices such as security lids. Some cities are using more elaborate measures such as having tracking devices on copper wire to deter vandals from stealing the wire.

#### 2) Street Light Maintenance and Cost-Saving Measures

Overall coordination between PG&E, Cities and County on street light repairs is ongoing. Discussions in 2014 focused less on completion of routine calls for service than in prior years because that has improved a great deal over the past 24 months. PG&E's dedicated unit in Fresno has done well with the follow-up on street light outages and repairs. This was a team effort between PG&E and street light coordinators in Cities and the County. Notification is received – with a reference or case number – for outages reported directly to PG&E's website. PG&E monthly repair reports use this same reference or case number. The result has made the tracking of cases and receiving information on closed cases (street light repairs) a much simpler and faster task. The County still sends PG&E a list requesting repair updates but response time for the repairs and the timing for getting information about the repairs is much improved over the last year.

14-day "routine" repair cases: Response time for most routine repairs has been within 14 days throughout the year, as stated in the LOU. When an outage repair takes longer, the number of cases is small and the flow of information and communications regarding the pending repairs is excellent. County staff and PG&E at the Fresno unit are in constant communication via email. We believe that the ongoing presence of the Fresno unit will continue to reflect this notable improvement in the notification process by PG&E regarding street light repairs.

Electric Corrective (EC) 90-day cases: PG&E submits a monthly outage report to agencies. With this report, agencies can track repairs and also see outages of which they were previously unaware, that may have been reported directly to PG&E and not come through the County or City which they are located within. This can allow staff to follow-up, as needed. PG&E continues to provide the County monthly outage reports with information on outstanding and incomplete repairs for the EC 90-day cases.

With the new improvements in the notification process, PG&E's Streetlight Maintenance Department is now sending emails to County staff when street lights are repaired. However, County staff continues to assist PG&E by providing a list of outstanding cases and requesting their status. In the past, responses were not consistent and, at times, information about the status of a case was difficult to obtain from PG&E. This has notably improved in 2013-14 where immediate responses via email are now available to County staff by PG&E.

### 3) Light Emitting Diode (LED) Financing and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Rate Schedules

- Light Emitting Diode (LED) Financing and related legislation, specifically AB 719 update  
Since reporting to TWIC on December 5, 2013 and throughout the year, Tom Guarino, PG&E, has been asked to deliver updates on legislation, specifically AB 719 which was approved by the Governor on October 7, 2013 and is now a chaptered law. This bill requires the PUC to order electrical corporations to submit tariffs by July 2015 to be used to fund energy efficiency improvements in street light poles owned by the electrical corporations. The PG&E City/County Street Light Coordination Meetings have not yet had a complete report about this legislation and the plan to implement. However, there have been draft tariff schedules shared with those present at the meetings.

- CPUC updates: The CPUC approved a tariff for the conversion of PG&E-owned (LS-1) high pressure sodium vapor (HPSV) lights to LEDs throughout the state in 2012. As of August 2014, PG&E has an approved rate schedule for doing the conversions of HPSVs to LEDs.

### 4) Group Lamp Replacement of Street Lights per the Letter of Understanding (LOU) with PG&E

PG&E's Group Lamp Replacement Program, which was created to replace HPSV lights across the County and Cities at the end of their life cycle, has been completed in many areas including Discovery Bay, Brentwood, Martinez, Richmond, Lafayette, Oakley and Bethel Island; however, other locations remain incomplete at this time. The group lamp replacement program mainly focuses on areas that may have underground wiring issues due to third-party digging and damaged wires. Now that the CPUC has approved the rate schedule and the funds (approximately \$50 million) for PG&E to convert HPSV lights to LEDs, the group replacement program should use those funds and continue the program to install LEDs throughout the County. As discussed at the PG&E Coordination meeting in October 2014, PG&E plans to do LED replacements on LS-1 (PG&E owned lights) in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

Due to the timing of the start in 2015, we would encourage PG&E to consider adding the County (Unincorporated Area) to the list of jurisdictions to start in 2015. If this doesn't take place, that work might end up falling into the PUC's General Rate Schedule that starts January 1, 2017, which could lead to further delays. The County has been patient about the group lamp replacement program that was not fully executed by PG&E and would like to assure that the LED Group Lamp Replacement Program be done as quickly as possible so that there is consistent and safe street lighting Countywide.

At the recent PG&E Street Light Coordination meetings, there are the beginnings of discussions to revise the LOU to bring it current with street light technology and repair expectations. One change that will be recommended is to change the “group lamp replacement” to the conversion in a systematic manner of the high pressure sodium vapor lights to LEDs. More review at the PG&E Street Light Coordination meetings is needed before the revised LOU will be ready for Board of Supervisor’s discussion.

#### Conclusion/Next Steps:

The County, Cities, and PG&E are committed to continue the well-organized and efficient system for street lights. PG&E’s reorganization and relocation of the call center in 2012 has continued to provide ongoing program improvements in the timeliness and reporting of street light repairs. PG&E’s Fresno unit group dedicated to street light outages has improved customer service for the Cities, the County, and PG&E.

1. PG&E, Cities and the County should continue to coordinate on the LED replacement projects throughout the County.
2. PG&E, Cities and the County should continue to coordinate on and pursue changes to the LOU to reflect the challenges of 2014 and beyond.
3. PG&E Street Light Coordination meetings should continue on a regular basis as noted in the PG&E Letter of Understanding (LOU) dated February 22, 2008. These meetings enable City and County staff to collaborate on street light issues, cost effective methods to assure energy efficient street lighting and safety for the residents and visitors to the County and City. By working together to develop improvements in street lighting, Cities, the County and PG&E are able to improve the delivery of excellent quality street lighting throughout the County.

#### Fiscal Impact (if any):

No impact on the general fund. All costs for street lights are funded by County Service Area L-100 or County Facilities District 2010-1.

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