



**RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
COUNTY OF TULARE  
AGENDA ITEM**

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

ALLEN ISHIDA  
District One  
PETE VANDER POEL  
District Two  
PHILLIP A. COX  
District Three  
J. STEVEN WORTHLEY  
District Four  
MIKE ENNIS  
District Five

**AGENDA DATE:** July 9, 2013

Public Hearing Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Scheduled Public Hearing w/Clerk	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Published Notice Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Advertised Published Notice	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meet & Confer Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Electronic file(s) has been sent	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
Budget Transfer (Aud 308) attached	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Personnel Resolution attached	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Agreements are attached and signature line for Chairman is marked with tab(s)/flag(s)	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

CONTACT PERSON: Celeste Perez PHONE: (559) 624-7010

**SUBJECT:** Utilization of the California Public Utility Commission Rule 20A Program with the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) and the Southern California Edison Company (SCE) for Undergrounding of Utilities

**REQUEST(S):**  
That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive a presentation regarding the utilization of the California Public Utility Commission Rule 20A Program for the undergrounding of utilities, and
2. Provide direction to staff to proceed with projects identified in the report or provide an alternative direction.

**SUMMARY:**  
The California Public Utility Commission established the Rule 20A Program in 1967 to allocate funds to municipal agencies to convert overhead wire to underground facilities. This program requires that the two electric service providers within the County, PG&E and SCE to allocate work credits to all cities and counties each year. These credits are used exclusively for the conversion of overhead utility lines to underground facilities. The County previously performed undergrounding work under the Rule 20A Program in 2004 in Springville.

Work credits, which are a monetary based unit, are used to distribute Rule 20A funding. The amount of work credits an agency accumulates is based on the number of electric meters within the community or County. Since Tulare County has two service providers (PG&E in the north county and SCE in the south county) separate yearly allocations and accumulated balance of work credit allocations are

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available from each utility company which is listed below.

Company	Yearly Allocation	Current Balance
PG&E	\$170,928	\$5,868,111 (thru 1/28/13)
SCE	\$720,000	\$10,605,010 (thru 3/6/13)

Costs for undergrounding utilities typically run around \$500 to \$1,000 per linear foot depending on existing sub-surface soil conditions and congestion of utilities underground. The \$500 per foot cost is typical in the central valley floor, while the higher \$1,000 per foot cost would be for projects located in the foothills where rock formations are present. The program differs between utility providers, however, both typically require that candidate sites meet several criteria, which include: high density of overhead wires, high pedestrian and vehicle traffic volume, sites located in low/moderate income census track and having multiple Capital Improvement Projects programmed within the target area. Local agencies are responsible for defining and initiating work on a Rule 20A project. One of the first steps is to create an underground utility district. This requires definition of the district boundary, appropriate notification of the public and holding a public hearing. Once the district has been formed, work on the project can begin. Such a project can take three to seven years from initiation to construction. In addition, changing projects within this timeframe only adds to the timelines. The utility provider provides the design work. Other utility companies (such as AT&T and Comcast) also participate in a utility undergrounding project, following the utility provider's lead. They absorb their costs for the utility undergrounding project internally, rather than having a distinct utility undergrounding allocation. Once the project is designed, construction work can be completed by the utility companies. Southern California Edison staff has indicated that the difference in timelines can be attributed to the level of coordination between utility providers, oversight and project management that is provided. As each utility providers involvement increases project timelines usually decrease.

Typically, such projects underground the utilities not only within public right of way, but also within 150 feet of the right of way. This makes the road corridor appear much less cluttered. It requires work on privately owned parcels along the road, including in some cases the replacement of existing electrical boxes on structures. Unless the work is unusually complicated, all such work, up to a maximum of \$1,500 per residence or business may be paid using the Rule 20A funds.

Utility undergrounding projects typically improve roadway aesthetics, potentially increase property values, and improve road safety by eliminating utility poles that are subject to being hit by vehicles. Staff compiled a list of projects, separated by service provider, using the Rule 20A guidelines.

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**Pacific Gas and Electric Service Area, Estimated Balance - \$5,868,111**

- 1. State Route 63 (Road 128) in Orosi, from Avenue 424 to Avenue 419.** This is a fairly heavily traveled main road in the unincorporated community of Orosi. The downtown and El Monte Middle School front the property. The project is 3,200 feet long and the estimated cost is \$1,600,000.
- 2. State Route 63 (Road 128) in Orosi, from Avenue 414 to Avenue 408.** This is a second project on State Route 63 in the unincorporated community of Orosi. The project traverses the downtown section of the community. The project is 3,960 feet long and the estimated cost is \$1,980,000.
- 3. Merritt Avenue in Traver, from 6<sup>th</sup> Street to Canal Road.** This roadway carries the majority of traffic in this community, bisecting residential areas, a school and the post office. The project is 2,400 feet long and the estimated cost is \$1,200,000.

Within PG&E's service area, staff has identified three projects that meet the Rule 20A guidelines - one project in Traver and two in Orosi. Funding for these projects total \$4,780,000, which would leave a current balance of \$1,088,111 to be allocated toward other projects.

**Southern California Edison Service Area, Estimated Balance - \$10,605,010**

- 1. Possible Allocation to the City of Porterville** pursuant to a tentative settlement regarding the City's redevelopment project- \$750,000
- 2. Washington Avenue in Earlimart, from State Route 99 to S. Elm Avenue:** This road is located along a Health Care Center, Senior Center and an apartment complex. The length of the project is 1,800 feet and cost of the project is estimated at \$900,000.
- 3. Armstrong Avenue in Earlimart, from S. Lane to State Route 99:** This road traverses the commercial area and residential housing. The project is 2,300 feet long and is estimated to cost \$1,150,000.
- 4. Church Street in Earlimart, from Washington Ave. to Armstrong Ave.:** This road is located near a school and residential areas in town. The roadway is 2,500 feet long and the cost of the project is estimated at \$1,250,000.
- 5. W. Terra Bella Street in Pixley, from State Route 99 to Walnut Ave:** This road traverses the main business district in town. The project is 2,000 feet long and the utility undergrounding cost is estimated at \$1,000,000.

Staff has provided the board with four projects - three in Earlimart and one in Pixley that would allocate \$4,300,000 of the work credit balance. Currently \$10,605,010 is available for programming. After programming the above listed projects and reserving the \$750,000 for the City of Porterville, \$5,555,010 in funds will remain available for future undergrounding projects in the SCE utility area to go along with an annual allocation of \$720,000 per year. SCE allows mortgaging of annual

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allocations for up to five years, which would equate to an additional \$3,600,000. Adding this sum to the remaining balance, after programming the aforementioned projects, would represent \$9,155,000 in available funds for undergrounding other candidate projects.

Within the limits of the available funding, the Board of Supervisors may direct staff to initiate work on one or all of the proposed project locations, or request staff to investigate other utility undergrounding locations. If your Board approves the staff recommendation, staff will prepare the documents needed to establish an underground utility district for each site selected and return to your Board for further consideration.

**FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:**

Cost for construction, engineering and right of way are funded through the Rule 20A program which would not cost the General Fund. Staff time to develop each underground utility district and associated environmental costs are estimated at \$12,000 per district (\$84,000 for 7 districts) formed, cannot be charged to the Rule 20A program and will therefore be a General Fund expense.

**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF TULARE STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN:**

Strategic Initiative 1: Safety and Security includes the goal of improving and maintaining adequate transportation infrastructure. This project will provide a safe driving path for people by removing obstacles in the road right of way that could be struck by vehicle traffic.

**ADMINISTRATIVE SIGN-OFF:**

**Britt L. Fussel** Digitally signed by Britt L. Fussel  
DN: cn=Britt L. Fussel, o=RMA,  
email=bfussel@co.tulare.ca.us, c=US  
Date: 2013.06.25 14:22:08 -07'00' 6/25/13  
Britt L. Fussel, P.E. Date  
Assistant Director—Public Works  
County Surveyor

BLF: mlb

Cc: Auditor-Controller  
County Counsel  
County Administrative Office (2)

Attachment(s) Attachment A – SR63 in Orosi, Location Map  
Attachment B – Merritt Avenue in Traver, Location Map  
Attachment C – Washington, Church and Armstrong Streets in Earlimart, Location Map  
Attachment D - Terra Bella Street in Pixley, Location Map

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF TULARE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

IN THE MATTER OF UTILIZATION OF THE )  
CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITY )  
COMMISSION RULE 20A PROGRAM WITH ) Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_  
THE PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC )  
COMPANY (PG&E) AND THE SOUTHERN )  
CALIFORNIA EDISON COMPANY (SCE) )  
FOR UNDERGROUNDING OF UTILITIES )

UPON MOTION OF SUPERVISOR \_\_\_\_\_, SECONDED BY  
SUPERVISOR \_\_\_\_\_, THE FOLLOWING WAS ADOPTED BY THE BOARD  
OF SUPERVISORS, AT AN OFFICIAL MEETING HELD JULY 9, 2013, BY THE  
FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:  
NOES:  
ABSTAIN:  
ABSENT:

ATTEST: JEAN M. ROUSSEAU  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/  
CLERK, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Clerk

\* \* \* \* \*

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2. Provided direction to staff to proceed with projects identified in the report or provided an alternative direction.

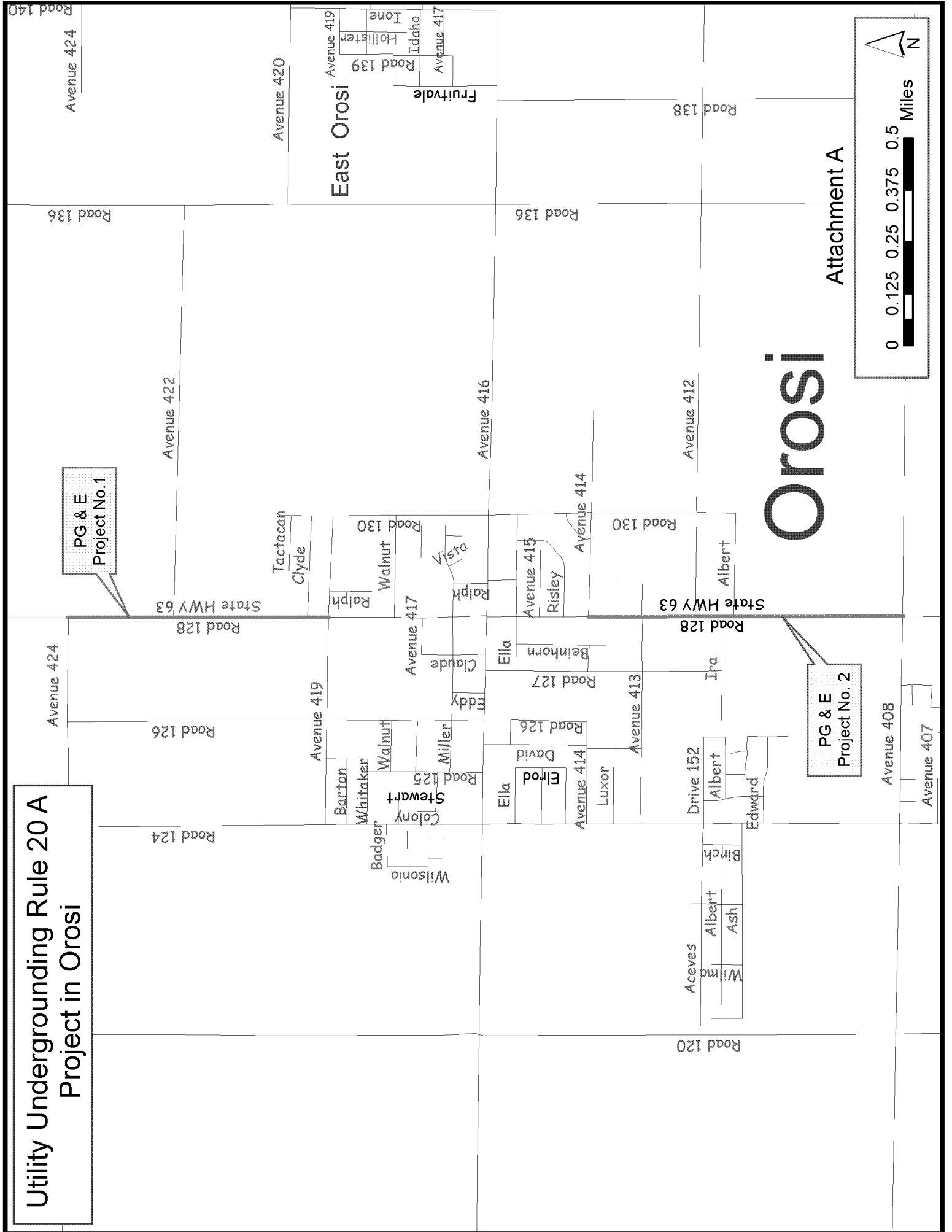
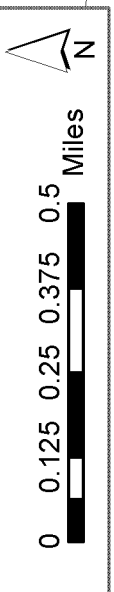
# Utility Undergrounding Rule 20 A Project in Orosi

PG & E  
Project No. 1

PG & E  
Project No. 2

# Orosi

Attachment A



Utility Undergrounding Rule 20 A  
Project in Traver

Avenue 368

Canal

Baker

Bowhay

Bullard

Jacobs

Merritt

Church

Zante

Kitchner

PG & E  
Project No. 3

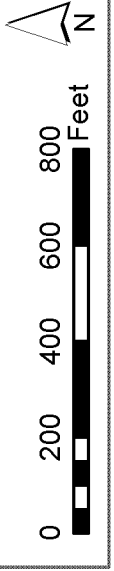
Burke

6th

State Hwy 99

# Traver

Attachment B



Utility Undergrounding Rule 20 A  
Project in Earlimart

# Earlimart

SCE  
Project No. 2

Washington

Mary Ann

Kenneth

Cannon

Franklin

SCE  
Project No. 4

Church

Clay

Spring

State

State Hwy 99

Market

Front

Wilson

Valente

School

Film

Tulare

Olive

Lane

Oak

Armstrong

Avenue 48

Cedar

SCE  
Project No. 3

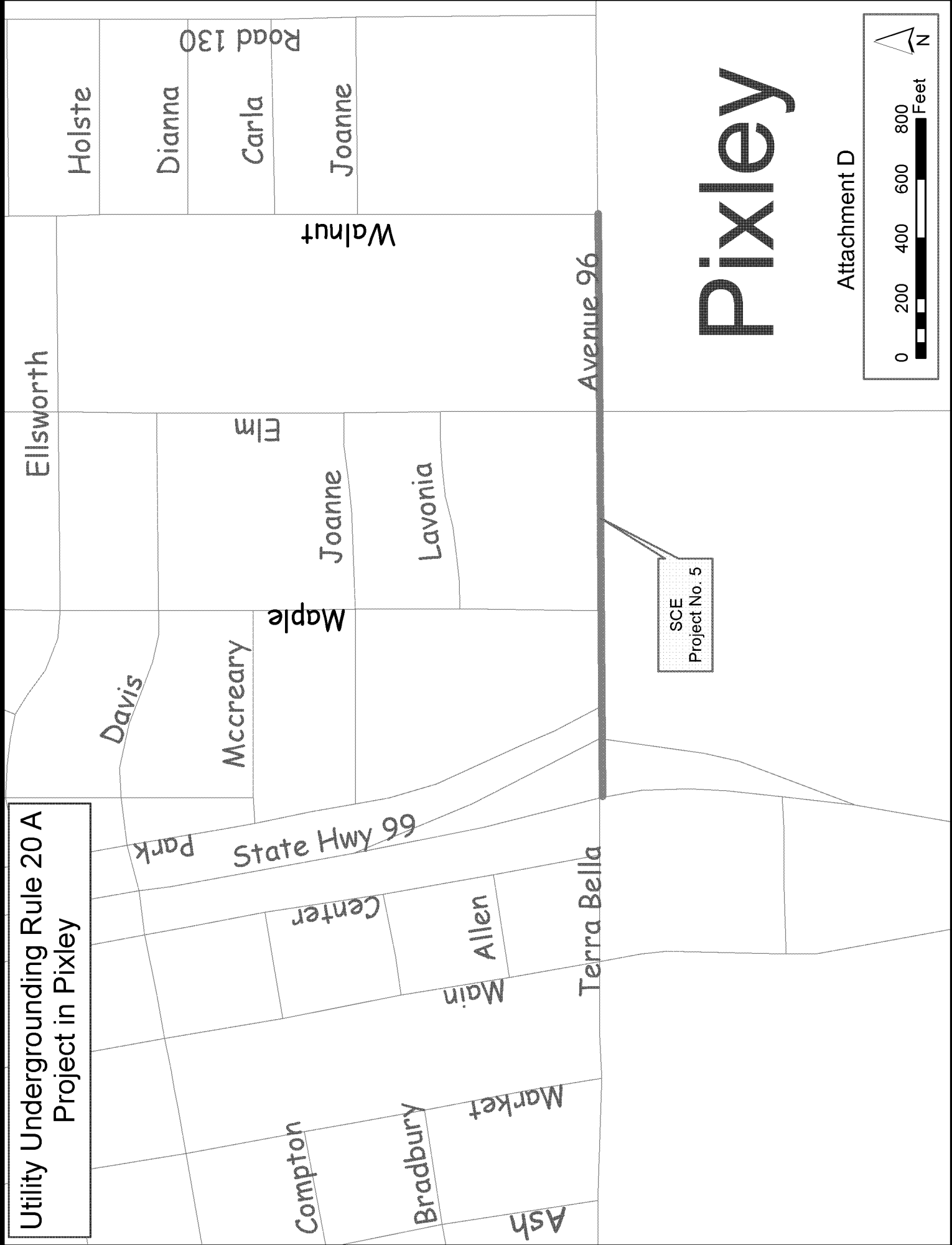
Dietz

Attachment C





Utility Undergrounding Rule 20 A  
Project in Pixley



SCE  
Project No. 5

# Pixley

Attachment D

