



*City of Arts & Innovation*

# City Council Memorandum

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL** **DATE: MARCH 9, 2021**

**FROM: PUBLIC UTILITIES DEPARTMENT** **WARD: 1**

**SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM FOR THE HUNTER SUBSTATION REPLACEMENT PROJECT; AND APPROVAL OF THE HUNTER SUBSTATION REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

## **ISSUES:**

Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Hunter Substation Replacement Project; and approve the Hunter Substation Replacement Project.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the City Council:

1. Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Hunter Substation Replacement Project; and
2. Approve the Hunter Substation Replacement Project.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Hunter Substation is located at 1731 Marlborough Avenue, between Chicago and Columbia Avenues, and serves approximately 4,700 customers comprised of residents and businesses within the Hunter Industrial Park and Northside communities north of the 215/60/91 Freeway interchange. Hunter Substation was commissioned in 1960 and is one of the oldest substations in the Riverside Public Utilities (RPU) electric system.

The Hunter Substation is in dire need of replacement to meet RPU's goal to ensure reliable, safe and efficient electrical service. The average age of the substation equipment is over 40 years old and beyond its useful life. In 2014, Circuit Breaker No. 52-3, which has exceeded its design life, failed in service and resulted in a near miss incident. In addition, a seismic study conducted in April 2013, found that the majority of the substation structures beyond rehabilitation, recommending replacement of majority of substation structures and associated equipment. The seismic rehabilitation work was identified as an infrastructure project in the 2017 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan for the City of Riverside and for Riverside County. The substation 69kV bus structures and configuration poses electrical reliability and safety risks.

The electrical capacity of Hunter Substation is near its maximum design capacity. The 10-year load forecast in this area is projected to add 20-25 megawatts. Hunter Substation does not have the electrical capacity or physical space to serve the forecasted load. Transferring electrical loads to nearby substations is not possible due to the limited capacity of adjacent substations.

On February 27, 2018, the City Council unanimously approved the acquisition of 1.38 acres of land located at 1395 Chicago Avenue, Assessor's Parcel Number 210-060-033, for the Hunter Substation Replacement Project and future water facility.

On January 14, 2019, the Board of Public Utilities (Board) approved Work Order No. 1826767 in the amount of \$2,000,000 for a portion of the project to develop the preliminary design, prepare California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents, and hire a consultant to act as an owner engineer throughout the project.

## **DISCUSSION:**

The new substation will be constructed on the newly acquired land so that the existing facilities can remain in service during construction and minimize electric service disruptions to customers in the area. The new substation will have four sub-transmission lines and four transformers. The existing sub-transmission lines entering and leaving the substation will be reconfigured to terminate at the new structures. New distribution vaults and underground structures will be installed to tie to the existing distribution circuits. Four new distribution circuits will also be added to accommodate future loads and alleviate overloading of neighboring Riverside and University substations.



Proposed Hunter Substation Replacement Site

To minimize overall disruption during construction to the area, the replacement substation will be constructed on a new parcel, adjacent to the existing substation site. The new substation project timeline is planned as follows: 1) Request for Proposals and procurement process by April 2021; 2) award contract by October of 2021; and 3) complete construction by June of 2024.

As part of the CEQA environmental review process, RPU retained TRC Companies, Inc. (TRC) to prepare the Initial Study (IS) to determine if the proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact on the environment. Based on TRC's findings, a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was prepared along with the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. The Notice of Intent (NOI) was recorded with the County of Riverside on July 22, 2020. The NOI was also published in Press Enterprise newspaper for a review and comment period between July 28, 2020, and August 20, 2020 pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15105(b). RPU also established a Project website to enable the public to obtain additional information on the Proposed Project and review all the Initial Study and Proposed Negative Declaration documents. RPU did not receive any comments during the public comment period and the Final IS/MND was completed with no comments as provided in Attachment 2. Therefore, pursuant to Section 15073.5 of the State of California CEQA Guidelines, recirculation of the IS/MND is not required.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with the action to adopt the environmental documents and Project. The establishment of a project budget based on the costs associated with the engineering, procurement and construction of the Project, estimated to be \$28,000,000, will occur subsequent to this action.

Prepared by: Todd M. Corbin, Utilities General Manager  
Certified as to  
availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer  
Approved by: Al Zelinka, FAICP, City Manager  
Approved as to form: Kristi J. Smith, Interim City Attorney

### **Attachments:**

1. Project Site Map
2. Hunter Substation Replacement Project Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative
3. Presentation