



RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES

Board Memorandum

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES - WATER COMMITTEE

DATE: OCTOBER 13, 2021

**SUBJECT: WATER DIVISION'S CITYWIDE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
PROJECT COORDINATION**

ISSUE:

Receive an update on the Water Division's coordinated effort with the Citywide Capital Improvement Program.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Public Utilities Water Committee receive the update on the Water Division's coordination with the Citywide Capital Improvement Program.

BACKGROUND:

As part of upcoming Water Committee meetings, Riverside Public Utilities (RPU) staff was requested to present an update on the Water Division's project coordination with the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects at a future Water Committee Meeting.

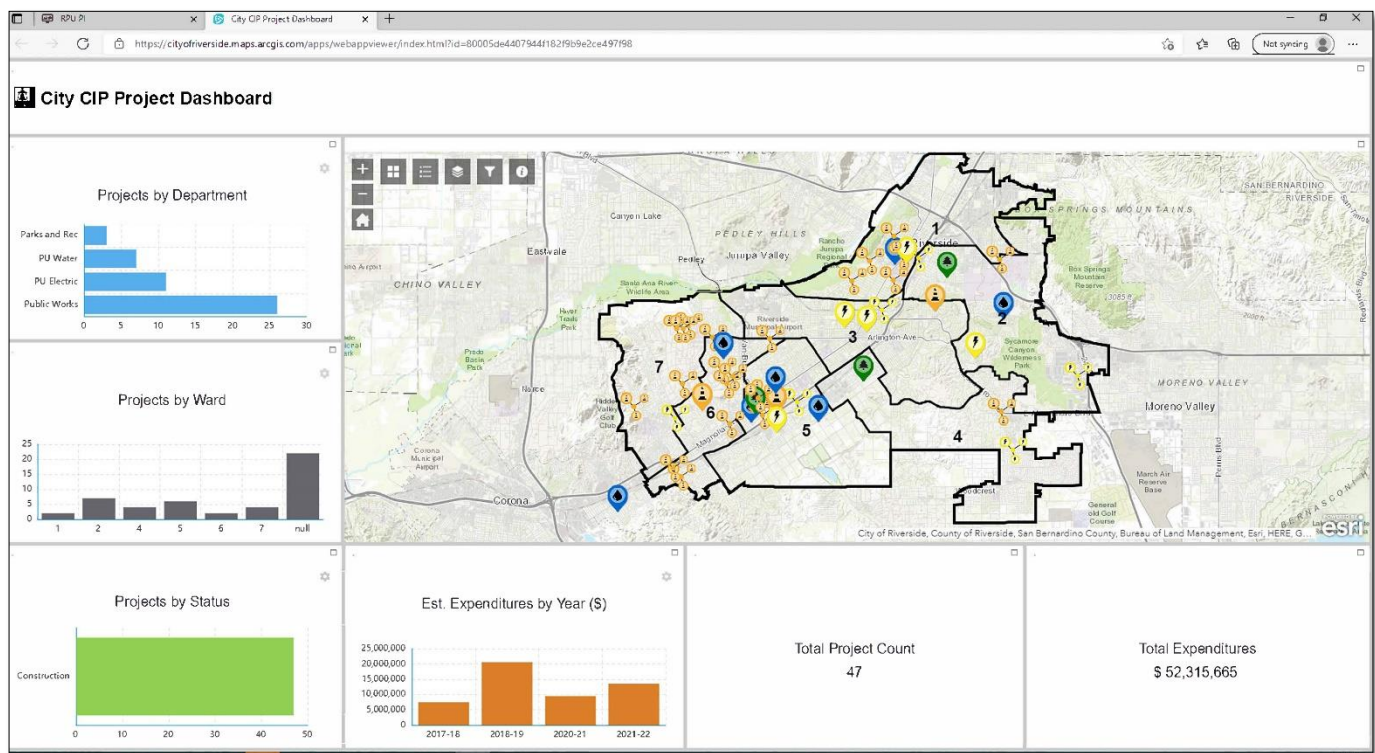
Much of the City of Riverside's water utility infrastructure lies underground and out of sight within the City's public street rights-of-way, hidden along with many other utilities such as electrical, sewer, stormwater, gas and telecommunication facilities. While public street right-of-way primarily provides the transportation network for the City, they are also essential utility corridors for various utilities to serve the City's residents. The Public Works Department operates and maintains the public street right-of-way which includes conducting routine paving and street rehabilitation and improvement work. With each Department and utility focused on their own priorities of maintaining their respective facilities, it is critical that these efforts are coordinated to minimize impacts to residents and customers, and to ensure that limited capital funds are wisely utilized.

DISCUSSION:

The Public Works Department owns, operates and maintains the City's public street right-of-way. Aside from utilities that are owned and operated by the City, outside agencies are required to obtain an encroachment permit to construct any facilities within the street right-of-way. Up until 2012, regular utility coordination meetings were held by Public Works which included City Departments (Public Works, RPU/Electric and Water) and outside utility agencies (SoCal Gas; AT&T, Spectrum, etc.). These meetings ended in 2012 due to staffing changes after which utility coordination was handled on a project-by-project basis by the Department or agency undertaking the project.

The Citywide CIP Project Coordination effort was started in May 2017 as an attempt to re-establish and improve project coordination on Public Utility projects with other City Departments. The objectives of this effort were to identify opportunities to save costs; minimize disruptions; optimize customer communications; handle potential conflicts that may arise; and provide a unified front to our customers. Currently, there are four (4) Departments that are actively participating in this effort, including Park and Recreation, Public Works, RPU/Electric and RPU/Water. These meetings are also attended by staff from the City Manager's Office of Communications Division, as well as the Community and Economic Development Department. Meetings were initially held on a quarterly basis and have transitioned to a bi-annual basis once an online Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping application was developed and deployed to support the CIP project coordination effort.

RPU/Water's GIS staff worked with the City's Innovation and Technology (IT) Department to develop an internal-facing GIS mapping application. The mapping application was intended to facilitate internal Department communication and displays the current and future CIP projects for each of the four City Departments. The application provides relevant project information such as project manager contact information, project status, work order information, project schedule, and any related project documentation. The web-based GIS application allows CIP project information to be communicated in an easy-to-understand format to a wide range of City users. A screenshot of the mapping application is shown below.



A future version of the GIS mapping application will include a public-facing mapping application that can be accessed by customers and residents to obtain limited CIP project information. In addition, the future version will feature a more streamlined data input process and automatically update based on data from the City's work order management system; currently the existing mapping application requires Departments to manually input and update project information.

Since the restart of the utility coordination effort, several projects have been successfully identified and coordinated between City Departments. Public Works' Magnolia Avenue Street Improvements project was coordinated in conjunction with RPU/Water's Techite Pipeline Replacement Project, along with RPU/Electric's installation of fiber conduit within a portion of the overlapping project areas within Magnolia Ave. Coordinating this work between the Departments allowed for savings to be realized through reducing contractor interference, minimizing traffic and utility shutdown impacts to customers, and ensuring proper coordination of the paving work so as not to have redundant paving efforts from multiple street openings for the installation of water facilities and electrical conduit. An estimated \$620,000 was saved through coordinating the paving work between RPU/Water and Public Works. Similar coordination between these two Departments on RPU/Water's Wells and Cypress Main Replacement Project, Phase I resulted in an estimated savings of \$250,000 through paving coordination with Public Works.

Proactive CIP project coordination offers numerous benefits including project cost and schedule savings; improved project delivery success; avoidance of unanticipated project interferences, and minimized duplication of efforts resulting from a lack of proper project sequencing. In addition, reducing customer disruptions and avoiding repeated tearing up of the same streets by different Departments helps communicate to residents that public funds are being stewarded efficiently and demonstrate the City's commitment to maintain a high quality of life for City residents.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The Water Division's CIP Project coordination supports the City Council Strategic Plan 2025 Priorities and Goals for:

High Performing Government:

Goal 5.2. Utilize technology, data, and process improvement strategies to increase efficiencies, guide decision making, and improve access to and delivery of financially sustainable City services.

Goal 5.3. Enhance communication and collaboration with community members to improve transparency, build public trust, and encourage decision-making.

Infrastructure, Mobility & Connectivity:

Goal 6.2. Maintain, protect and improve assets and infrastructure within the City's built environment to ensure and enhance reliability, resiliency, sustainability, and facilitate connectivity.

Goal 6.5. Incorporate smart city strategies into the planning and development of local infrastructure projects.

The Water Division's participation in the Citywide CIP coordination aligns with the City Council's Strategic Plan 2025 Cross-Cutting Thread themes:

1. **Community Trust** – Coordination of City CIP projects serves in the public interest by minimizing construction and traffic impacts and ensuring that public funds are being used efficiently and cost-effectively in the execution of CIP projects.
2. **Equity** – By effectively coordinating CIP projects and minimizing wasted efforts, additional

resources are made available to accommodate CIP projects throughout the City. In addition, the use of a GIS mapping application allows staff to visualize and plan how CIP allocations are made equitably throughout the City's various Wards and Neighborhood Areas.

3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – Coordination of CIP projects helps ensure that work can be appropriately scheduled to minimize wasted efforts and capitalize on Department synergies that arise when projects are successfully coordinated, saving money from redundant paving efforts, contractor interference, and miscommunications.
4. **Innovation** – Through the CIP coordination effort, staff has been able to create process improvements to the current method of utility coordination, leveraging the use of GIS technology to disseminate CIP project information in an innovative and efficient manner. Project statuses and relevant details can easily be accessed and updated to ensure that users have the latest information for project planning and coordination purposes.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – Improved CIP project coordination helps to facilitate improvements to our utility infrastructure which ensures RPU's ability to be more resilient over time.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associate with this update on the Water Division's participation in the Citywide CIP Projects.

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Attachment:	Presentation
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