



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: Councilmember Donald Rocha
SUBJECT: VERIZON SMALL CELL AGREEMENT
DATE: June 25, 2018

Approved Don Rocha Date 6/25/18

RECOMMENDATION

That staff be prepared to answer the following question at the council meeting:

What are the City's options—either through the agreement before us on this item or some other means—to ensure that small cell installations by telecom carriers on PG&E poles meet the same aesthetic and design standards as installations on City light poles.

ANALYSIS

I have recently heard concerns from residents in my district about a proposed Verizon small cell installation on a utility pole located in the public right-of-way on Fairglen Drive. Residents point out that such installations require attaching a significant amount of equipment to the pole, and judging from instances where small cells have already been installed on utility poles, the equipment is large and unsightly. I've attached pictures of one such installation on Cherry Ave. just north of Koch Ln. As you can see in Attachment 1, it involves multiple boxes and exposed wires attached to the pole just above head height. Attachment 2 shows the entire pole, including the antenna that is attached to the top.

On discussing this issue with Public Works staff, I've learned that the City does not have the ability to regulate the design of equipment on utility poles. The City has taken great care to ensure that equipment installed on City light poles does not degrade the visual quality of our neighborhoods, but we cannot directly impose the same requirements on utility poles, raising the possibility that unsightly equipment will be installed on utility poles throughout the City.

Even though the City does not have the ability to directly regulate equipment on utility poles, we do have relationships with telecom carriers. The agreement before us now with Verizon is part of that relationship. As we consider this agreement, we should ask whether there may be an opportunity to come to an understanding with telecom carriers that any of their installations in the public right-of-way, whether they are located on City property or on utility poles, should meet basic design standards that uphold the quality of our neighborhoods.

Attachment 1



Attachment 2

