



City of Coral Gables
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
August 25, 2020

ITEM TITLE:

Resolution. A Resolution Approving Staff's Recommendation to Adjust the Expected Timeline for Community Engagement and the City Commission's Consideration of Whether to Place a Ballot Question before Voters Relating to the Undergrounding of Utilities Citywide.

BRIEF HISTORY:

In November 2019, the City Commission was presented ballpark estimates for the conversion of overhead utilities to underground utilities. After the presentation, the City Commission adopted Resolution No. 2019-347 directing staff to focus on the preparation of a community engagement campaign to include educational materials, vignettes, renderings, community meetings, charettes, and written/oral surveys/polls in order to effectively communicate with community stakeholders and learn their views on the undergrounding of utilities.

In December 2019, the City Commission was presented a preliminary action plan timeline for the analysis, project scoping, community engagement, and expected timeline for workshops and possible City Commission action. At that time, the expected timeline was to immediately begin work on the community engagement campaign, hold workshops with the City Commission in April 2020, and place any necessary items on the June 2020 City Commission meeting for the Commission's consideration, with an eye toward the possibility of placing a ballot question on the November 2020 ballot.

Between December 2019 and March 2020, in preparation for community engagement and outreach, the project lead team worked on a preliminary financial analysis, cost estimates, project scoping, and mapping and on preparing community outreach materials with that information. The team also began obtaining preliminary feedback from the community and large-scale citywide community engagement meetings were scheduled for the end of March 2020. However, days prior to the first large-scale meeting, the community was shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the health and safety risks resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, since mid-March 2020, the campaign has remained suspended.

The suspension of the campaign derailed the original timeline. Accordingly, staff will be presenting an update to the City Commission and recommending that, if the City Commission wishes to continue working toward the possibility of having a question relating to the citywide undergrounding of utilities on a future ballot, that the matter not be placed before the voters prior to 2022 in order to allow for the community engagement campaign to resume in the second half of 2021, should it be safe to do so at that time.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Draft Resolution