

UNDERGROUNDING PROJECT

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



1. What is undergrounding?

Undergrounding is the process of placing utility lines, such as electric and telecommunications, underground instead of on existing overhead utility poles.

2. What are the benefits?

The benefits of undergrounding include increased resiliency against weather events, improved service reliability, improved safety, and enhanced aesthetics. According to Florida Power & Light Company (FPL), on a systemwide basis, underground neighborhood power lines performed about 5 to 14 times better than their overhead counterparts during the 2024 hurricane season (Hurricanes Debby, Helene and Milton). These lines perform approximately 50% better on a day-to-day basis.



Current View

3. Isn't Florida Power & Light Company (FPL) already undergrounding their system?

FPL has a program called the Storm Secure Underground Program (SSUP) that undergrounds portions of their system. Areas to be undergrounded are determined based on selection criteria that have been approved by the Florida Public Service Commission (FPSC). Currently, FPL's SSUP undergrounds lateral lines while leaving feeder lines overhead and they anticipate it will take several decades to complete their work systemwide. This approach, if applied to the full municipal limits of Surfside, would result in approximately 60% of the overhead power lines in the Town remaining in an overhead configuration. It is important to note that FPL's SSUP converts ONLY the power lines. Communication lines would be left in an overhead location even if FPL converted power lines in the Town to an underground location. To learn more about FPL's SSUP, visit:

<https://www.fpl.com/reliability/storm-secure-underground-program.html>

4. What will the new equipment look like?

An example of a typical residential equipment placement can be found below. The equipment shown are examples of the following: [From left to right] Comcast pedestal, AT&T vault, Breezeline pedestal, Florida Power & Light Company (FPL) transformer.



New Equipment



Current View

5. Which communications providers are involved?

AT&T, Breezeline, and Comcast all have overhead facilities that would be relocated underground.

6. Which communications providers are involved?

In a flood situation, Florida Power & Light Company (FPL) has stated that they turn off the power grid in the area impacted. After the water has receded, crews will inspect the lines and equipment and then turn the grid back on when deemed safe. Equipment that is damaged would be repaired or replaced by FPL.

7. What construction impacts are expected?

Undergrounding project impacts are much like any other underground utility construction project. There will be boring machines to place conduits underground, excavations made in locations where boring cannot be performed, utility crews installing equipment and pulling wire, and intermittent roadway impacts requiring temporary lane closures. During the conversion process, there will be brief service interruptions when existing services are transferred to the new system. These interruptions generally can last up to four hours. Cranes will be used to remove the overhead poles and wires towards the end of the project. Any property impacts resulting from the work will be restored.

8. How is the Town's program set up?

The Town has been divided into three areas – North, Central, and South – to stagger the work to minimize construction impacts across the Town during the implementation of the program.

9. What progress has been made?

The first of three areas has been designed and is ready for construction. Design of the second area is currently underway. Design of the third area will follow the second.

10. How long is it going to take?

Once construction begins, the program is anticipated to take approximately 5 years to complete.



Current View

11. How much is it going to cost?

The current program is estimated to cost approximately \$79 million. This cost includes a \$5.7 million contribution by Comcast that is still being negotiated. Financing costs are excluded. Street lighting is included. Easements are being obtained on a voluntary basis therefore no costs for easement acquisition are included.

12. How will the program be financed?

A debt service millage will be levied to satisfy the monies borrowed by the Town to pay for the project. Voters have already approved about half of what is needed and will be asked to approve the balance of the financing to complete the project. The approval allows the Town to issued bonds to pay for the project costs over a longer, and more affordable, period.

13. How much will everyone have to pay annually?

The final financing plan will depend upon several factors influenced by the timing of the bond issues, but our Finance team has presented a tentative plan that would have a home with a taxable value of \$500,000 paying about \$155 per year. As your home value increases, you will pay more, but your home value is capped at a 3% annual increase under Florida law. We expect the new construction already underway, and those projects approved but not yet begun, to help reduce the cost to existing property owners.

14. Why do I have to pay if my property is already served underground?

Regardless of whether you are already served from an underground line, everyone benefits when the Town's overhead infrastructure is converted underground. When the overhead lines that are directly upstream of your service line are undergrounded, the resiliency and reliability of your system is directly enhanced in addition to the safety and aesthetic benefits realized by the community. As such, all properties are included in the program.

15. Where is further information available?

Further information can be obtained by contacting Andre Eugent, Public Works / CIP director, at (305) 861-4863 ext 305.



Current View