

Letter to County requesting SCE Intervention

Kathryn Barger
Office of the Board of Supervisors County of Los Angeles
500 W. Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

4/21/26

Subject: *Urgent Policy Requests Regarding SCE Undergrounding Work in Altadena*

Dear Supervisor,

The Altadena Town Council is writing to formally request the County's intervention regarding Southern California Edison's (SCE) current undergrounding initiatives. While our community supports the long-term benefits of moving utilities underground, the current execution by SCE is placing undue financial and planning burdens on homeowners, causing irreparable harm to our heritage tree canopy, and proceeding without adequate local oversight. These issues have been repeatedly raised by our constituents for months on end, in public comment, forums with SCE, and in the media. (Please see attached Exhibit A)

As of March 28, 2026, *over 120 residents* have formally signed onto the actions outlined herein (see Exhibit B), providing firsthand testimony of the undue burden caused by SCE's current execution. Their collective feedback underscores a critical need for transparency and equity—especially for a community still in the midst of recovery. To resolve these systemic issues, the Altadena Town Council transmits the following requests (attached below) from the community to the Board of Supervisors.

We recognize undergrounding is complex and difficult to coordinate. But that does not excuse the manifest failures our community is witnessing by a company as well-resourced as SCE. The current lack of coordination is compounding the stress of a community still reeling from the Eaton Fire, and risks causing further irreparable harm. *Therefore, we are respectfully requesting that the County Board of Supervisors implement a temporary pause of all work being performed by SCE in the Public Right-of-Way within Altadena, related to the utility undergrounding, until the oversight, coordination, and funding measures requested in this letter are formally established.* Proceeding without the specific protocols risks irreversible environmental loss and subjects our constituents to unnecessary hardship that a well-planned project should avoid. Altadena deserves better.

Sincerely,



Nic Arnzen
Chair, Altadena Town Council

Community Recommendations Regarding SCE Undergrounding in Altadena

1. Adopt a Unified Undergrounding Ordinance

To successfully remove “stub” poles and avoid redundant construction, the County must adopt a unified undergrounding ordinance to compel all utilities to coordinate undergrounding. Currently, the lack of participation from Spectrum and AT&T Fiber means that poles will remain in place even after SCE work is complete. Without a mandate for coordination, our neighborhood will be forced to endure the inconvenience and expense of secondary trenching in the future when / if these telecommunications entities eventually move underground, or be left with a "worse-of-both-worlds" scenario: the community suffers the full disruption and environmental cost of trenching, yet is left with the ongoing fire hazard of overhead lines and the aesthetic failure of remaining "stub" poles.

2. Establish a Mandatory Resident Review & "Request for Change" Window

The current approach—where infrastructure plans become visible only at the survey staking stage—limits the community’s ability to stay informed and engaged in a timely way. The County must require that residents be notified of work which will impact their home, and be granted a formal 30-day window to review site-specific plans. To be effective, this window must include a formal 'Meet and Confer' requirement where SCE must demonstrate technical infeasibility before rejecting a resident's requested siting change. Furthermore, if a resident's proposed alternative is rejected, the County must provide a clear path for mediation via the Independent Ombudsman to prevent the default installation of new 'stub' poles in conflict zones. This allows residents to ensure that equipment placement does not conflict with their existing meter locations or future rebuilding plans—an essential protection for those recovering from the fire.

3. Clarify Any Oak Tree Permit Exemptions & Mandate Arborist Oversight

SCE is subject to the same ordinance as the residents which ensure infrastructure is not sited in locations where it is legally impossible for a homeowner to connect to it. Amy Bodek, Director of Regional Planning, recently wrote in response to community concerns:

"The County has oak tree protection requirements for private property, and utility trenching is not exempt from these requirements. It is therefore critical that SCE works in partnership with individual property owners to avoid oak tree impacts from trenching on their private properties."

Despite this SCE is placing service entrance caps (CAPs) directly among the root zones of our trees and in locations which require homeowners to trench through protected tree zones. Under current County ordinances, homeowners will be unable to obtain permits to continue those trenches to their meters without being in immediate violation of the law. Furthermore, in a community still grieving the loss of much of our natural tree canopy, the protection of the heritage trees that remain must be an absolute priority. We request that the County mandate a stamped letter from a certified arborist - reviewable upon request - for any work within a protected tree canopy.

4. Appoint an Independent Ombudsman for SCE Oversight

This infrastructure work will take *years* to complete. We request the county appoint a local *Independent Ombudsman* to manage real-time disputes and ensure SCE's adherence to its stated goals on communication and safety, as well as county regulations. This role would significantly alleviate the administrative strain on County departments already overburdened with regional recovery efforts, as well as create a dedicated, known point-of-contact for residents to voice concerns.

5. Petition the CPUC for "Trench-to-Meter" Scope (SB 884 Framework)

We urge the County to require SCE to include "behind-the-meter" work—specifically service lateral trenching and panel conversions—within the ratepayer-funded scope. Original Commission Staff Proposals (e.g., SP-26) recognized that a complete wildfire safety solution must include the customer reconnection. Including these costs in the utility's capital budget ensures an equitable transition for all residents, regardless of financial liquidity.

Vote Tally

Approve - Greene, Yu, Vega, Cippola, Whirlledge, Wong, Carmody, Anderson, Moulden, Stewart-Gordon, Sutherland, Mahramas, Wilkins

Oppose –

Abstain -

Missing Vote – Marcussen, Marona

Chair chooses to vote in the event of a tie

Chairs Notes

Letters was circulated, discussed and went through multiple drafts prior to coming to being read and voted on at meeting. Concerns were considered and the biggest adjustment to the letter was making it less of a Town Council directive and focusing on the requests made by the community. It essentially was intended to be an introductory letter for the community's concerns outlined in their own document. Accompanying the community document were two exhibits- one linking multiple community meetings where concerns and objections were highlighted, and the other a listing of the community members attaching themselves to the letter. You can find those below.

Chair sent the letter on the council's behalf and while agreeing with the bulk of the letter remained concerned about the request to pause all undergrounding and the potential detrimental effects that would have on the recovery. Chair also expressed concerns for the financial impact that could potentially be passed along to residents from higher future rate hikes by SCE to offset the cost of such delay. Chair suggested prior to any pause there should be a meeting between the major parties, Community, SCE, and County. The meeting has since been scheduled where the details and requests in the community document will be discussed.

Ultimately, Chair appreciated the efforts to amplify the voices of the community recognizing that is the Altadena Town Council's main objective and purpose.

Exhibit A

List of Public Forums, and Media:

- August 4, 2025 - LAist - [As utilities start to bury power lines, homeowners are increasingly worried about the cost](#)
- October 22, 2025 - [The Community Forum on SCE Undergrounding in Altadena, with ACONA / Altgether](#)
- January 24, 2026 - KTLA - [Altadena residents angered over costs of underground powerline installation effort](#)

- February 9, 2026 - NBC4 - [Altadena residents raise concerns over trees' wellbeing amid underground work](#)
- February 17, 2026 - Los Angeles Times - [Altadena asked Edison to bury power lines. Some fire victims say that could cost them \\$40,000](#)
- February 24, 2026 - [ACONA Meeting 2/24/26](#)

Exhibit B

Resident Signatures in Support:

Robert Steller, Altadena resident

Vivien Fortunaso, Altadena resident

Nancy Robb, Altadena resident

Thomas Bilheimer, Altadena resident

Hermann Kenechtle, Altadena resident

Maria Isela Kenechtle, Altadena resident

Micheal Burton, Altadena resident

Grant Rickard, Altadena resident

Evanna Manley, Altadena resident

Lynne McDaniel, Altadena resident

Richard Rieber, Altgether neighborhood captain

Alexis Rieber, Altadena resident

Rob Lange, Altadena resident

Gretta Treuscorff, Altadena resident

Lennox Munroe, Altadena resident

Tricia Lanza, Altadena resident
Petra Wennberg, Altgether neighborhood captain
Leigh Adams, Altadena resident
Susan Littenberg, Altadena resident
Rebecca Latta, certified arborist
Lisa Wintner, Altadena resident
Susan Schwartz, Altadena resident
Alma Cielo, Altadena resident
Lindsay Bremner, Altadena resident
Patricia Harrison, Altadena resident
Alyson Granaderos Phillips, Altadena resident
Craig Phillips, Altadena resident
Wynne Wilson, Altadena resident
Altadena Green, Heritage, Preservation, Renewal
Carolyn Hove, Altadena resident
Jenny Somerville, Altadena resident
Gail Jamentz, Altadena resident

The following table is updated on an ongoing basis, and can be found at:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1u99w2jgkEb-ttCOcQ1UFQubok0a7CTvOljva5_iPkw/edit?usp=sharing

Adam Fischer	625 Devirian Place, 91001	
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Lauren Randolph	3581 Glenrose Ave, Altadena 91001	Yes to all of this!
Felicia Ford	2530 Lincoln Ave Altadena, CA 91001	We MUST band together, and maintain one voice to secure an equitable resolution.
Courage Escamilla	979 Concha St, Unit E	SCE should NOT be making a profit from ANY of this! And yes, ALL lines should come down. Not just power lines! Obviously!
Elizabeth Campbell	2211 Navarro Ave Altadena CA 91001	
Jacques Laramee		
David Timoner	537 E Altadena Drive Altadena, CA 91001	
Courtney Cummings		#Altadenaforever
Margaret DeWitt	3506 Canyon Crest Rd	
Windy Watson-Crick		
Stefanie Lynch		
My-An Le		
Vanessa Bennett	565 Sunset Dr	
Fortunaso Vivien	3192 Mount Curve Ave. Altadena.	I whole heartedly support this letter to the county.

Susan Lee		
Daryl Bilandzija	570 E. Las Flores Dr.	
Martin Kirby	3288 N. Mount Curve Ave, Altadena	
Bridget Fonger	3587 Glenrose avenue	
Adam Waring	3632 Glenrose Ave. Altadena, CA 91001	
Josephine Mahoney		
Kat@katsmacarons.com	914 Parkman street 91001	Waive the fee to hook up the electricity to the homes. They are the ones that burned everything down. Why should we have to pay for it? Especially since they had millions in profit last year!
Ari Kennedy	3367 Ellington Villa Drive, Altadena CA 91001	
NANCY TUCKER		
Richard Rieber	1077 Alta Pine Dr.	
Alexis Rieber	1077 Alta pine Altadena	
Fiona John	523, E Mount Curve Ave,	SCE must do the right thing for Altadena!

	Altadena CA 91001	
Eric Puestow	4119 Aralia Rd Altadena CA 91001	
Denise Ruffner	491 Devonwood rd y	
Jessica Ourique		
Don Cummings	3632 Glenrose Avenue Altadena CA 91001	SCE is for profit. SCE has the money to do this correctly.
Kelly fluker	3277 thurin avenue	
Kelly Guzman	3585 McNally Ave Altadena	Our undergrounding has been completed, but they caused me more undo trauma. They placed the box in the wrong space and dug up the remains of my garden to place it there. It's not much, but when you have next to nothing left, a few surviving rose bushes means the world to you.
Ivan Golubev	2046 Glenview Terrace, Altadena, CA, 91001	
Cindy Morin	121 Laurel Dr	
Colleen Boye	474 W Terrace St, Altadena CA 91001	

Ken Nichols	920 Alta Pine	Thank you for trying!
Andrea Silva		
Lisa Haussler	2001 Pinecrest Drive, Altadena 91001	
John Mayo	2054 Madison Ave, Altadena, CA 91001	
Robert Steller	1989 Mar Vista Avenue, Altadena	
Charles Manning	2585 Catherine Rd Altadena 91001	Agree
Seth Gold	471 E Poppyfields Dr, Altadena	
Mary Alvin Nichols	920 Alta Pine Dr, Altadena, CA 91001	
John Franchak	304 Marathon Road, Altadena, CA 91001	
Aria Greenlee	Altadena, CA	

Kimberly Grant	588 W loma Alta Dr Altadena, CA 91001	Also we should not have to any \$ to them enhancing their company by putting waters wires underground we are paying a monthly service which they already have increased rates. Now we have to pay to connect to their electricity underground., have our beautiful Oak Trees disturbed.
Henrique Ourique	957 W Woodbury Rd, Altadena CA 91001	
Marcie Habell	3291 Dabney Ave, Altadena	
Joseph Vasquez		
Kimberly Berry	3286 Laurice Ave.	
Altadena SURJ		Our volunteer list of 200, our working group and leadership team have been highly impacted by the Eaton Fire. We have witnessed and experienced differences in service and delivery with respect to undergrounding that are not consistent, equitable, or good for homeowners and residents.
Sam holtzman		
Todd Payne	969 E Poppyfields Dr	
Roshan Misra	2828 N Mount Curve Ave, Altadena, CA 91001	

Annemarie Pazmino	3130 Fair Oaks Ave 91001	We must also require the approval for more under-grounding and removal of fee requirements being forced upon us by the Utilities commission. Edison is not acting solely and the commission is creating many unspoken issues and fees for our community.
Jason Troff	2565 La Fiesta Ave	
Camilla Taylor	2565 la Fiesta Ave, Altadena	
Tim Martinez	1101 E Loma Alta Drive, Altadena	
Ellen Rippberger	2751 Glen Ave Altadena, CA 91001	
Jenny Somerville		
Seema Seraj		It is ESSENTIAL to preserve our tree canopy at all costs. Edison's negligence led to the loss of thousands of trees, resulting in loss of shade and climate protection, wildlife habitat, and the overall appeal of our town and our property values. This needs to be a top priority for our recovery! We cannot lose any more trees, especially to Edison.
Mirja Wine	3269 Summit Ave	
Patricia Benoit	1112 Mount Lowe Drive,	Please cover the behind the meter cost rather than having home owners pay and

	Altadena, CA 91001	work with AT&T and other utilities to underground as well.
Lisa McKenzie		
Alison Pearl	144 E Loma Alta Dr	
Kathleen J. Becket	1807 East Calaveras Street, Altadena 91001	The amount of post-fire burden shifting is outrageous and not to be tolerated. Residents should not bear ANY burden for post-fire adjustments. IN ADDITION, any use easements for power lines that become inactive will become invalid when no longer in use, and SCE should be REQUIRED to remove these eyesores at ITS EXPENSE. Once the use easements no longer serve to provide power (because replaced by below ground) it becomes trespass.
Bridget Fonger	3587 Glenrose avenue	
Marlena Briceno	196 E. Las Flores Dr.	
Bridget Kovalevski		
Scott Doudrick		
Gail Murphy	Athens street	I've started rebuilding, and apparently there won't be underground powerlines for me to connect with in time when my house will be done. So apparently I'm supposed to be using a generator, and for how long?! I understand it will be months!!

Fiona Burgos	962 Wapello St., Altadena, CA 91001	
Gene Fouse	326 alta pine dr. Altadena	Plans/maps timeframes sections of construction & actual mission to accomplish.
Laura MacPherson	3225 Olive Ave	
Emily Robinson	2916 Casitas Ave Altadena ca 91001	
Mario Burgos	962 Wapello St., Altadena, CA 91001	
Cameron Brown	216 Highlawn Place Altadena CA 91001	
Mara Trafficante	981 Wapello Street, Altadena 91001	
Elline Lipkin	468 East Marigold Street	
Nancy Molina	433 Devirian Pl	
Lori Jackson	3062 Calanda Ave.	
Dania Rosales Fernandez		

Arthur Zargarian	3024 Calanda Ave, Altadena, CA 91001	
Doug Philbin	2753 Winrock Avenue, Altadena CA 91001	
Linda Dyer	3386 Fair Oaks Ave Altadena 91001	
Claire Phillips	221 Wapello Street Altadena CA 91001	
Shanna Tellez		
Marilyn Chong	3500 Glenrose Ave, Altadena	We are rebuilding and with the insurance shortfall, our finances are stretched already. Incurring the additional burden of financing SCE's infrastructure is not something we can or should have to do! In addition, without coordination of all utilities to underground and remove existing poles and lines, we will all be forced to participate in a ridiculous waste of money.
Richard Rieber	1077 Alta Pine Dr.	
Emily Viglietta	Alta Pine Drive, Altadena	
Stephanie Pinto		

Anthea Carrillo	687 Colman St	
Ari Kennedy	3367 Ellington Villa Drive, Altadena CA 91001	
Brendan Loudermilk	583 McWilton Pl	
James Bartlett		
Andrew King	3385 Bellaire Drive	
Machiko Yasuda		
Joy Chen		
Andrew Wessels	3000 Glen Ave	
marcie habell	3291 dabney ave, altadena	
Ariane Vielmetter	509 E Marigold Street Altadena CA 91001	
Ramiro Barrera	190 E Loma Alta Drive	
Brigitt Montes	577 Villa Zanita st	
Ken Haber	172 W Harriet St.	
Karen Yin	Altadena, CA	

Samantha Sangana		
Ingin Kim	951 Alta Pine Drive	
Stephanie Blank	1001 E Poppyfields Dr	