

Argument in Favor of Measure “Laguna Beach Utility Undergrounding and Fire Safety Measure”

Twenty-five years after the 1993 fire damaged or destroyed 441 homes in Laguna Beach causing \$528 million in property loss we remain extremely vulnerable to wildfires. The 200 acre June 2018 fire is the most recent reminder of this risk.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection determined that power lines caused recent devastating fires that burned 180,000 acres, destroyed 3,000 structures, and took 18 lives. Despite this destruction, utility companies have refused the City’s request to fund undergrounding costs.

Downed power lines have caused past fires in Laguna Beach and will cause future fires unless we act now.

Downed lines can block emergency evacuation routes and hinder access by emergency responders.

The extreme fire risk from overhead power lines and refusal by utility companies to help led the City to develop a local plan, supported by our Fire and Police Chiefs, to fund utility undergrounding and other fire safety measures.

Measure ____ addresses fire risk and is vital to the safety of our entire community.

Measure ___ will provide dedicated funding to move dangerous utility poles and wires underground along Laguna Canyon Road and other key evacuation routes, and implement additional fire safety measures.

Measure __ will reduce the risk of wildfires, improve 9-1-1 emergency response times, and make Laguna Beach safer in emergencies and natural disasters.

The Visit Laguna Beach 2016 Visitor Profile & Economic Study estimated that visitors paid \$3.8 million in sales taxes in 2016. This represents 67% of the sales taxes collected in the City in 2016.

It costs the City millions of dollars each year to provide services to more than 6 million visitors. Visitors should pay their fair share to protect residents, our homes and businesses. A Yes vote on Measure ____ will make sure that they do.

Vote Yes on Measure ____.

The undersigned proponent(s) or author(s) of the Direct Argument in favor of ballot measure “Laguna Beach Utility Undergrounding and Fire Safety Measure” at the Statewide General Election for the City of Laguna Beach to be held on November 6, 2018 hereby state that such argument is true and correct to the best of their knowledge and belief.

/s/ Kelly Boyd
Mayor, City of Laguna Beach

/s/ Rob Zur Schmiede
Mayor Pro Tem, City of Laguna Beach

/s/ Bob Whalen
Council Member, City of Laguna Beach

/s/ Michael Garcia
Fire Chief, City of Laguna Beach

/s/ Laura Farinella
Police Chief, City of Laguna Beach