

**Policy:** 6863-11- Utility Aid Guidelines

**Section:** Preconstruction Procedures

**Office/Department:** 6Utilities

**Reports To:** 6Div Director Operations

**Contact:** 404-631-1000

### **Utility Aid guidelines:**

For this policy, Municipalities, Counties, State Agencies and Authorities (hereby known as Utility Owners) may request aid for utility costs directly attributed to a project as authorized by law, O.C.G.A. 32-6-170, by submitting a request to the State Utilities Engineer through the District Utilities Office. This request shall be submitted initially to the District Utilities Engineer for review to ensure completeness prior to submission to the State Utilities Engineer by the District Utilities Office.

Assistance may be considered for:

- Extreme hardship cases where costs are both unusually high in comparison with the Utility Owner's operating budget and unforeseen therefore creating an extreme financial burden.
- Major project design or schedule changes late in the plan development process (PDP), thus substantially increasing the funds needed with little time remaining to budget the funds.

It is vitally important for the Department's project delivery schedule and budget that utility aid requests are presented as early as possible after engineering analysis of the potential relocations and costs have been completed by the Utility Owner to provide a reasonable estimate of the project relocation costs. This request shall be made no later than six (6) months prior to the Final Field Plan Review (FFPR) being held. Approval of any utility will depend on the timeliness of the request, the project Sponsor, and satisfactory submission of documentation to support a true hardship situation on behalf of the Utility Owner as outlined in this policy.

Aid requests, if not in writing, must be followed up in writing, along with submission of a complete hardcopy of the request package, and shall be signed by the Mayor, Chairman, or Agency Head and shall include the following supporting information and shall be completed by the Utility Owner on the attached form so that a decision can be made as expeditiously as possible in relation to the project's schedule:

- Summary of the circumstances warranting approval.
- Estimated relocation cost based on the relocation plans.
- Date and circumstances when facilities were installed on state or local right of way.
- Relocation expenses incurred, if any, on any local or state projects in the last 5 years.
- Assistance, loans or grants approved or denied by any source, if any, for the utility for the previous 5 years.
- Amount annually budgeted for relocations on road construction or road maintenance in last 5 years. If no funds are routinely budgeted, explain why not.
- Previous year's final budget report and certified audit report.
- Number of customers presently served for each type of utility involved.
- Additional information, if requested.

Approval levels and stipulations:

Greater than 25,000 Customers

Department participation will be limited to 60% of the cost of physical relocation of facilities directly in conflict with construction, excluding betterment, preliminary and construction engineering, inspection and administrative costs.

5,000 to 25,000 Customers

Department participation will be limited up to 100% of the cost of physical relocation of facilities directly in conflict with construction, excluding betterment, preliminary and construction engineering, inspection and administrative costs. However, the Department may provide final preliminary engineering utilizing its Consultant Services' contract under Area Class 3.10 – Utility Coordination at no cost to the Utility Owner in order to minimize delays to the project schedule. The Utility Owner will have the option to complete preliminary engineering at its own expense.

Less than 5,000 Customers

Department participation will be limited up to 100% of the cost of physical relocation of facilities directly in conflict with construction, excluding betterment, preliminary and construction engineering, inspection and administrative cost. However, the Department may reimburse the utility for preliminary engineering performed with its own staff or provide final preliminary engineering utilizing its Consultant Services' contract under Area Class 3.10 – Utility Coordination at no cost to the Utility Owner in order to minimize delays to the project schedule. If the Department determines it is in the best interest of the project schedule to complete the preliminary engineering utilizing its Area Class 3.10 – Utility Coordination Consultant Services' contract then it shall do so at no cost to the Utility Owner. If, after this determination is made, the Utility Owner still wishes to complete the preliminary engineering with its own staff then it may do so at its own expense, however any delay in the preliminary engineering not being completed in accordance with the project schedule may forfeit any Utility Aid granted on the project for other costs.

Additional requirement applicable to all aid approvals:

The Department will administer and provide inspection for all utility relocations in which utility aid is approved by including the work in the project contract. The Utility Owner may utilize their own forces or consultant services to provide engineering and additional inspection as they deem necessary in order to ensure satisfactory completion and acceptance of the work at their own expense.

**Temporary Utility-Aid guidelines:**

Department funding policy requires that arrangements are completed for utility relocations prior to award of the project. Local funding constraints may prevent confirmation of these arrangements at the time of the letting even though funds will be available within the next budget cycle or during the anticipated construction time allowed for the project. Delays in budgeting just as with delays in relocation of utilities will impact the Department or its contractor through increased construction costs due to inflation, and additional overhead due to extended contract periods.

The traveling public is also affected by delayed project completion (congestion expense) or by reduced payoff from the motor fuel taxes. In order to reduce project delays, the Department may secure temporary funding for utility relocations. The immediate funding provided by the Department must be reimbursed through a formal agreement executed prior to award of the project.

**Temporary Funding options (Department is repaid under a receivable agreement):**

Utility facilities included in the Department's project contract: A Contract Item Agreement is created that provides for billing to the Utility Owner as the facilities are installed rather than placed in account prior to letting. Quantities installed will be billed and due on a schedule that will reimburse the Department in up to four (4) installments prior to 70% completion of the project. Enforceable provisions will be included in the Agreement providing the Department and said Utility Owner and the ability to restrict future utility permits on State Routes.

**References:**

None.

**History:**

annual review: 11-01-19;  
revised: 02/18/14;  
added to TOPPS: 03/18/04  
Reviewed: 11/1/2019