

2024 LED Modernization Project

FAQ

What is the bid Process?

Bid design documents along with the project planned scope of work will be submitted to the City's Office of Management and Budget Department for public bidding on the LED Modernization Project. The bid will be listed for a total of 6 weeks. The City will host a pre-bid meeting 2 weeks after the bid goes live to answer any questions about the scope of work and/or bid process.

What is the selection process?

The City will put out a bid for the LED Modernization Project in July 2024 for six weeks. After the six weeks, the selection team made up of City personnel will review and evaluate each bid and then discuss with the Office of Management & Budget what applicant is the most qualified lowest responsible bidder. The selection committee evaluation will be based on five criteria: experience, team qualifications, project approach and plan, cost proposal, and MWDBE Commitment.

The City already has LED streetlights. How will these be different?

The City started installing LED streetlights over 10 years ago, and there are approximately 4,000 LED fixtures throughout the City. Existing LEDs have a correlated color temperature (CCT) of 4,000K, which means they are brighter, whiter, and glare more than lights installed under the conversion project. They are also nearing the end of their life expectancy so the City will convert the existing LEDs to the new fixture selected in this project.

Are these "smart streetlights"?

The streetlight RFP released in 2018 was for "smart streetlights," a generic term that refers to the variety of controls or sensors that can be installed on streetlights for everything from weather sensors to traffic cameras to lighting controls.

The City did not specify that smart streetlights were required as part of this project but did express interest in a networked lighting management system (NLMS) to install control nodes that can report outages and failures and allow for remote dimming. A NLMS would cut down the response time for maintenance and send updated reports to the City's inventory system. In addition, the dimming feature can be used to either lessen the wattage output in residential areas or brighten the output in areas of safety concerns or during special events. The City will determine if a network control system will be included in the project during the planning phase. This decision will be based on the cost, benefits, and technical requirements of installing and maintaining a NLMS. A request for proposals for a NLMS is currently live on the City's OpenGov website.

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What lights are being converted?

The project includes the conversion of the City's existing 37,000 cobrahead style high pressure sodium (HPS) lights. Decorative lights are excluded from the conversion because there is a limited availability of options for dark skies compliant LEDs to match the styles of decorative lights around the city. DOMI intends to address decorative lighting updates in the future.



Why LEDs?

- LED stands for Light emitting diode.
- Durability - LED's have a life span of 10-20 years where HPS lights last 2-3 years.
- Ongoing cost – the city currently spends \$90,000 a month to maintain our HPS system which, at 30 years, has already exceeded it's expected life.
- LEDs are energy efficient. In addition to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the City will pay less in our electricity bill once a new rate is negotiated with our energy supplier.

What will happen to the City's existing streetlight contract?

The monthly cost for one of two contract parts is approximately \$90,000/month; \$1,080,000/year. The O&M contract, however, expired June 30, 2025 and will be put out to bid again. With the switch to LED lights, DOMI expects to issue a change in scope for LED streetlight maintenance contract that will be more aligned with the maintenance expectations of the new LED fixtures.

How does this fit in with the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Funds?

With the availability of \$3M in ARP funds, the City used majority of that funding for design of the LED Modernization Project. Design cost came in around \$2.4M, leaving about \$700K in the account. We will use the remaining \$700K to pay the awardee of the Network Lighting Management System bid or the LED Modernization Project bid.

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Where is the costs savings?

Cost savings will be realized in our energy consumption and reduced maintenance. Currently, the City pays a per-unit rate for every type of light fixture regardless of the energy used. The contract awardee will re-negotiate the monthly unit rate for a metered energy rate. Because LED's use 50-70% less energy than HPS lights, the City will pay less in our electric bill. LEDs are also more durable and require less maintenance (special HPS bulbs need to be replaced every 2-3 years). Lights installed from this project will be warrantied for parts and labor.

Related goals/policies

Dark Skies Ordinance - Pittsburgh's LED streetlight upgrade will address these issues by ensuring that all new streetlights adhere to "dark sky" best practices, including lower color temperature (warmer, yellower light, instead of brighter, bluer light) and shielding to prevent back light and up light into the sky.

Climate Action Goals - Pittsburgh streetlights consumes 25 million kilowatt hours of electricity annually, more than half of all the electricity used for City operations. By switching to LEDs, the energy needed for streetlights will be reduced by up to 70%, saving the City more than \$1 million per year in utility costs.

How can residents expect to be engaged?

The projects engagement plan will include engaging with residents at the Mayor's staff's community meetings where we will have handouts with project information and answer any questions residents may have about the project. There is also a project website you can find more information at PGHLED.org.