

**2013**

**City of Rockford, IL  
Residential and Collector  
Street Light Policy**

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**CITY OF ROCKFORD**  
**RESIDENTIAL AND CORRIDOR STREET LIGHT POLICY & PROCEDURE**

**I. OVERVIEW & PURPOSE**

- A. Street lighting continues to be an important public policy issue for the City of Rockford. As technology advances and as the demands on City funding increase, the issue of municipal street lighting has changed in focus. In 1982, amid concern for the magnitude of the overall electric bill for street lighting and traffic signalization, the Department of Public Works was given the responsibility for management of the street lighting program. In 2010, due to an ever increasing electric bill, the Department of Public Works, with the approval of the City Council, oversaw the removal of 2,300 of the 14,000 street lights in the City. The following document is a refinement and expansion of the original 1982 and the 1988 revisions. This policy is based on the thirty years of experience of the Department of Public Works, and is based on best practices in the industry.
- B. The primary purpose of street lighting is for improved roadway visibility and traffic safety. Properly designed street lighting can reduce the number of injuries and property damage for both pedestrians and motorists. Perceived secondary benefits of street lighting are security, prevention of crime, aesthetics and enhancement of architecture. Improperly designed street lighting can cause stray light to "pollute" the sky and can waste energy. Standards for street lighting, therefore, should be kept current and followed universally to the extent practical, balancing environmental, physical, and financial constraints.
- C. Street lights should provide a general illumination along the street. Street lights are not normally intended to illuminate the driving route (headlights are preferred), but to reveal signs and hazards outside of the headlights' beam. The primary purpose of streetlights is to provide drivers with quick, accurate, and comfortable visibility at night. A major cause of accidents at night is poor visibility. Street lights aid in reducing these accidents and facilitating the traffic flow.
- D. The terms residential, collector and arterial does not refer to the land use but does refer to the Functional Classification of the Roadway. Residential streets can be near industrial and commercial districts. Similarly, arterial and collector streets can be within residential districts. The functional classification system is developed and approved by the Rockford Metropolitan Agency for Planning (RMAP) and approved by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).
- E. All designs, plans, and specifications for street light installations shall be reviewed and approved by the Engineering Division. Requests for approval of designs other than the City's standard design must include calculations of average, maximum, and minimum light levels; and installation, operation and maintenance costs.
- F. Developers/Builders shall install and fund all streetlights needed in a subdivision or commercial area at the time of construction or as part of the building permit conditions in areas where platting is not required. Prior to final inspection and acceptance of the physical installation by the City Engineering Division, all maintenance and energy charges of the streetlights will be borne by the Developer/Builder responsible for the installation.

- G. Installation of street lights by the City is subject to available funding as authorized by the City Council in the City's annual budget and City's Capital Improvement Program.
- H. Unless City Council approves otherwise, the City of Rockford will pay the electrical service cost of all street lights installed in accordance with this policy, with the exception of privately owned street lights.
- I. Street lighting along arterial roadways and main corridors are handled separately from this policy. These types of lighting systems are normally programmed in the City Capital Improvement Program. Designs of these lighting systems are done by specialized engineers and must meet more rigid standards than lighting on residential and collector roadways.

## **II. STREET LIGHTING STANDARDS AND WARRANTS**

- A. Street lighting will generally be installed:
  - 1. At intersections.
  - 2. At significant changes in direction of the roadway; generally defined as those where, when standing in the center of the roadway at one street light, you cannot see the next street light due to horizontal or vertical changes in the roadway.
  - 3. At the end of all cul-de-sac and dead-end streets longer than 200 feet.
  - 4. In areas with history of two or more nighttime accidents within a year that is mitigated, in part or in whole, by installation of street lighting.
  - 5. Mid-block street lights may be allowed provided there is not a street light within 400 feet of the proposed light. Street lights shall be located on lot lines unless approved by the City Engineer. At the discretion of the City Engineer, the 400 foot standard may be varied so as to co-locate street lights on existing utility poles so as to minimize pole "clutter" on residential and collector streets.
  - 6. Possible installation or relocation of lights that do not meet these warrants is discussed in Section VII and Section VIII.
- B. For areas where electric is provided overhead the standard design shall consist of a 100 to 150watt high pressure sodium vapor luminaire, or other luminaire as approved by the City Engineer, mounted on a wood pole. For areas where electric is provided underground, the standard design shall consist of 100 watt high pressure sodium vapor luminaire, or other approved luminaire as approved by the City Engineer, using decorative street poles.
- C. Existing utility poles will be used when available at the proper locations.
- D. Residential and Collector street lighting will, generally, be divided into two types of lighting systems:
  - 1. Facilities owned and maintained by the power company, generally referred to as Rate 23
    - a. Rate 23 has been established for units of government to rent street lighting equipment from Commonwealth Edison Company.

b. This monthly rental covers maintenance, energy charges and equipment and hardware rental. During some instances this cost may include installation if the street lights are not paid for upfront. This cost is very high and is for the lifetime of the light and pole.

2. Facilities owned and maintained by the City of Rockford, generally referred to as Rate 25
  - a. Rate 25 has been established for units of government to purchase energy for street lighting at a reduced rate, as compared to the standard electrical rates.
  - b. Generally the lighting facilities are flat rated on a dusk to dawn basis and the City pays by the kilowatt-hour. This may change at the direction of the utility company.

### **III. STREET LIGHTING IN NEW / PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS**

- A. All street lighting installations shall be in accordance with design criteria approved by the City Engineer and consistent with this policy.
- B. All lighting shall be designed with underground lighting and decorative poles as approved by the City Engineer.
- C. The developer shall furnish, at his sole expense, on a plat at a standard engineering scale, the street light design for the development. For developments scheduled to be done in phases, the developer shall submit a plat showing the total development with the master plan for street lights.
- D. The developer shall provide all necessary utility easements required for the street lighting system.
- E. The developer shall pay all costs associated with the design and installation of light pole and fixture.
- F. Prior to final inspection and acceptance of the physical installation by the City Engineering Division, all maintenance and energy charges of the streetlights will be borne by the Developer/Builder responsible for the installation.
- G. The City will not install or maintain street lights along private streets.
- H. Street lights should be provided at the ends of all bridges and at approximate 150 foot spacing along the length of the bridge. The lights should be located on alternate sides along the length of the bridge.
- I. Street lights between intersections, if required, should generally be located at lot lines.
- J. Street lighting will not be installed in alleys.

#### **IV. EXISTING DEVELOPMENTS WITHOUT STREET LIGHTS**

In existing developments where lighting has not been installed, the City will arrange to have standard light poles and fixtures installed in accordance with the current design standards, subject to:

1. 70% of the affected property owners/tax payers petition the Department of Public Works for street lights. The petition form is located in Appendix A;
2. The property owners provide the necessary utility easements for electrical service to the lights at no cost to the City;

#### **V. REQUEST FOR STAND-ALONE STREET LIGHTS**

A. Where an existing neighborhood or developed area already has street lighting, but is below the current design standard, requestor will follow process for petitioning for street lights as shown in Appendix B. The City will arrange to have standard light poles and fixtures installed in accordance with the current design criteria, subject to:

1. Requestor submitting written request for street light installation. The petition form is located in Appendix A
2. Public Works Staff determine that a request meets existing City warrants for street lights.
3. 70% of the affected property owners/tax payers as determined and surveyed by Public Works Staff approve of installation of proposed light and no history of night time accidents is found. If history of night time accidents is found affected, property owners will not be surveyed.
4. The property owners provide the necessary utility easements for electrical service to the light at no cost to the City;

B. Timeline for installation of warranted street lights found in Appendix C.

#### **VI. REQUEST FOR STREET LIGHTS THAT ARE NOT WARRANTED**

A. Under specific circumstances, on a case by case basis, certain lights may be installed where the public benefit or traffic safety warrant for the light is not certain, or is shared with a significant private and/or public benefit, such as crime deterrence.

B. If Public Works Staff finds that a requested light does not meet traffic warrants, the Rockford Police Department will analyze crime data in the requested area(s) to determine if additional street lighting may have an effect on crime reduction/ prevention. This data may include the amount of overall crime in the requested area, specific crimes, patterns and or series of crimes. The police department may review the requesting parties' property and conduct a Crime

Prevention through Environmental Design (**CPTED**) survey or investigate other crime prevention options before suggesting the additional street light.

- C. The City of Rockford Traffic Commission will review all requests for street lights that are not warranted for significant public safety benefit and make a recommendation to City Council. Public Work staff will survey the affected property owners/tax payers for opinion on lighting installation and provide information to the Traffic Commission for consideration.
- D. If the Traffic Commission recommends light installation based on the request having significant public safety benefit, City Council may make one of the following decisions:
  - 1. To sustain the Traffic Commission's recommendation, which will result in the street light being installed.
  - 2. To deny the Traffic Commission's recommendation, which would result in the request being closed and the street light not being installed.
- E. If Traffic Commission recommends no action based on the request not having significant public safety benefit, City Council may make one of the following decisions:
  - 1. To sustain the Traffic Commission's recommendation, which would result in the request being closed and the street light not being installed.
  - 2. To deny the Traffic Commission's recommendation, which would result in the street light being installed.
- F. If, at the end of the petition process request is approved for installation, the property owners do not provide the necessary utility easements for electrical service to the lights at no cost to the City; the light will not be installed.
- G. If at the end of the petition process a requested light is not installed, requestor will be advised of the power company personal light program which will allow a property owner to install light on their property at their cost. Electrical service cost would also be paid by the property owner.
- H. Timeline for installation of unwarranted street lights found in Appendix D.

## **VII. REQUEST FOR RELOCATION OF EXISTING STREET LIGHTS**

Under receipt of a request to relocate an existing street light to a different pole or to set a pole at a different location, the City Engineer shall review the request and make the following recommendations:

- 1. If the City Engineer determines that relocating the street light will improve the vehicular traffic safety and aid in facilitating traffic flow, then the city will relocate the street light at the expense of the city provided funding is available.

2. If the City Engineer determines that relocating the street light will NOT improve vehicular traffic safety and relocating the street light primarily for the benefit of the property owners, then the city will relocate the street light subject to:
  - a. 70% of the affected property owners/tax payers petition the Department of Public Works for street lights.
  - b. The property owners provide the necessary utility easements for electrical service to the lights at no cost to the City.
  - c. Property owners pay all the expenses associated with the cost of relocating the street light;

For more information about street lighting, contact the City of Rockford, Engineering Department at 815-987-5570.

**APPENDIX A**  
**STREET LIGHT PETITION FORM**





**PETITION FOR NEW STREET LIGHT**

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location requested for new light: \_\_\_\_\_

Alderman: \_\_\_\_\_

We, the undersigned, respectfully request the installation of a street light at the location designated above. We, the undersigned, understand that the City of Rockford will approve or deny this request based on the Street Lighting Policy for the City of Rockford as approved by the City Council. Furthermore, we, the undersigned, understand that we may be requested to grant an easement to Commonwealth Edison Company to allow the installation to proceed.

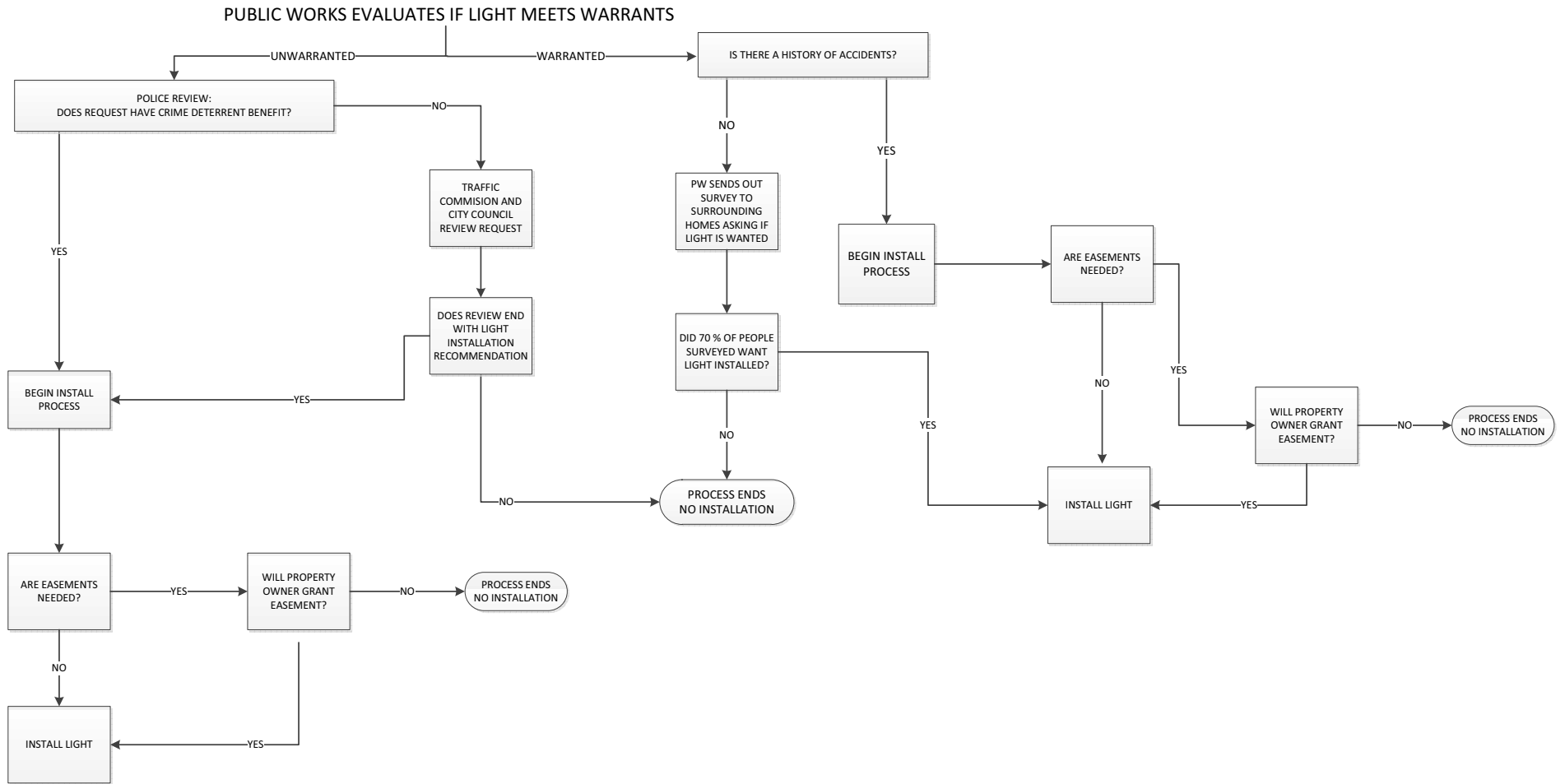
Signed:

	<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>TELEPHONE</u>
1.	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____	_____

10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. \_\_\_\_\_
16. \_\_\_\_\_
17. \_\_\_\_\_
18. \_\_\_\_\_
19. \_\_\_\_\_
20. \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX B**  
**STREET LIGHT PETITION PROCESS**

## SINGLE LIGHT REPLACEMENT



**APPENDIX C**  
**TYPICAL TIMELINE FOR WARRANTED STREET LIGHT**

<b>Step</b>	<b>Time needed</b>	<b>Number of weeks</b>
Resident Requests to start process Public Works to investigate warrants	0.5 month	2
Neighborhood Survey Process (city mailing)	1 month	4
Public Works reviews returned mailings- verify signatures and tabulates support	0.25 month	1
Project Approval / Acquire Easements	1.5 month	6
Contractor Selection/ComEd	1.5 month	6
Begin Installtion		
<b>Total</b>	<b>5 months</b>	<b>19</b>

**APPENDIX D**  
**TYPICAL TIMELINE FOR UNWARRANTED STREET LIGHT\***

\*assuming City Council ultimately approves request

<b>Step</b>	<b>Time needed</b>	<b>Number of weeks</b>
Resident Requests to start process Public Works to investigate warrants	0.5 month	2
Police Review for crime deterrence (if PD approves skip to project approval)	1 month	4
Traffic Commission Review including Neighborhood Survey Process (city mailing)	1.5 months	6
City Council Process	2 month	8
Project Approval / Acquire Easements	1.5 month	6
Contractor Selection/ComEd	1.5 month	6
Begin Installtion		
<b>Total</b>	<b>8 months</b>	<b>32</b>