

History

1. How were these lights originally installed?

Xcel originally installed these lights over 25 years ago. Special assessments were collected toward the installation costs.

Ownership/Maintenance

2. What are the current challenges with the existing street lights?

The most common issues with these lights are the broken wires, which are directly buried without protective conduit. The poles, fixtures, and foundations also require increased maintenance due to the age of the system.

3. Can the broken wires be spliced?

Typically splices (wire repairs) have limited success. Completing one splice does not solve the overall wire condition challenge with the system. Often, new wire breaks occur near a recently repaired underground splice.

4. Who currently owns and maintains the lights?

Xcel is the owner of these lights and continues to repair minor above ground items including bulbs. An expired maintenance agreement has changed maintenance responsibilities for more significant repairs. Some temporary electrical connections or repairs have been completed by the City. However, required electrical metering and access to existing City electrical circuits has limited these temporary repair options.

Process

5. What has changed with the petition and assessment process?

The Minneapolis Street Lighting Policy was updated in December of 2022. This update changed the process to replace direct bury wire street light systems. The petition process was removed and properties adjacent to the project will contribute a reduced 25% of the project cost. This is a reduction from the previous 100% of the project cost.

Timeline

6. When will lights be replaced?

Pending final project approval, completed street light design is anticipated to go to a contractor bid in May. Pending bid results, the goal is to substantially replace all lights within this project area during 2023.

Design

7. Will street lights be installed in the same locations?

On average, the lights will be replaced in quantity 1 for 1. There are a few blocks where an additional light will be added which then shifts surrounding lights causing exact placements to have some variation. Light placement takes into consideration the distance to intersections, driveways, signs, trees, underground utilities, etc.

8. What will be different about the new street lights?

The new lights will have numerous improvements which include concrete foundations, anodized aluminum poles, and LED fixtures. The new light fixtures direct light downward which meets dark skies goals. LED fixtures also have better uniformity which reduces the difference between bright spots and dark spots.

9. Why are taller 30 ft. street lights to be installed at some intersections?

USI Wireless has existing infrastructure in the area currently attached to Xcel decorative poles. The City requires antenna attachments to be on 30' street light poles because this pole design is capable of supporting attachments. We anticipate approximately 10 – 30 ft. tall poles to be part of the final design and located only at some intersections.

Assessments

10. How are special assessments calculated?

Assessments for this project were calculated by applying the current City of Minneapolis Street Lighting Policy and the influence area method to each benefited property within the project limits. For more details on the special assessment process please see the Special Assessment section of the city website: <https://www2.minneapolismn.gov/resident-services/property-housing/property-values-taxes/special-assessments/special-assessment-types/>

11. Who do I contact for special assessment questions related to this project?

For special assessment questions please use the following:

- a. City of Minneapolis website Special Assessment page: <https://www2.minneapolismn.gov/resident-services/property-housing/property-values-taxes/special-assessments/>
- b. Attend the virtual informational meeting for this project. Meeting details can be found in the notices that are sent to each effected property owner prior to the public hearing.
- c. Email the Special Assessment office - PWSpecialAssessments@minneapolismn.gov
- d. Call the Special Assessment office – (612)673-2401