



A History and Guide to the Process of Petitioning for Neighborhood Lights

The history of neighborhood and arterial streetlights in Upper Arlington is somewhat complex, dating back to lights installed (and later removed) in the first neighborhoods south of Lane Avenue, but not in subsequent areas as the City grew in geographical size. In the 1990s and with extensive community input, the City investigated issues of cost, responsibility, and type of lighting for its residents. As a result, the Neighborhood Lighting Master Plan was created and a Neighborhood Lighting Utility Board (NLUB) was formed to facilitate implementation of the Plan.

NLUB undertook a petition drive in 1995, with 1,800 residences in areas south of Lane Avenue participating (those neighborhoods that had the original lights). For residences that did not participate at that time, as well as neighborhoods in any other part of the community, it is still possible to petition for streetlights.

In essence, if residents desire neighborhood lights and complete a petition representing at least 60% of the property front footage on their street to this effect, they will be installed at the homeowners' cost, payable by a lump sum or through a 20-year special assessment.

Questions/Answers About Neighborhood Lights

Why should I invest in neighborhood lights?

Neighborhood lights improve safety and provide a pleasant, ambient lighting level. They can also enhance property values.

Where will lights be installed?

The goal is to extend the opportunity for requesting neighborhood lights throughout the entire community. However, lights will only be installed in areas where residents representing 60% or more of the property front footage on a street, have requested them and agreed to pay for them through a special assessment.

Cost Scenarios

The following information is provided to give you an idea of a possible range in costs for installing neighborhood lights on your street, estimates from 2023. Several variables will impact the final costs, including cost savings realized by volume installations, the bid responses, market conditions, etc.

Number of Poles	Cost Per Pole	Cost Per Home
25	\$15,057	\$5,019
50	\$14,715	\$4,905
100	\$14,372	\$4,677
200	\$12,319	\$4,107
300	\$10,950	\$3,650
400	\$9,582	\$3,195

How is the special assessment process started?

Residents may contact the Engineering Division for help with initiating and completing the process.

How much do the lights cost?

The cost could vary as shown in the table on the next page. A cost of \$4,850 per household as the current "working" estimate. For streets that move forward, if construction bids exceed this estimate by 15%, a public hearing is held to determine if residents still wish to proceed.

How are costs divided?

Total costs are divided by the number of property owners (tax parcel numbers) involved in the project. Generally, this works out to be one equal share for each home. However, to be fair to all, the City may make adjustments for unusual properties or circumstances.

How are construction costs paid?

Residents may pay their share of construction costs in full or via annual installments, rolled into their property tax bill.

Who is responsible for maintenance of the lights?

The City of Upper Arlington.

Who pays for maintenance and operation costs?

Maintenance costs are paid by the residents. The City pays for electricity costs.

How are maintenance costs determined and paid?

Annual maintenance costs, in addition to initial construction costs are estimated to be \$35 per household, and are invoiced and collected by the City. These funds are used solely to maintain residential lights.

Does everyone have to pay even if they don't sign the Petition?

Yes. Once the 60% minimum has been reached on the Special Assessment Petition, all residents on that street must participate in the program.

Who is required to sign the Petition?

It must be signed by the legal property owner. Either the husband OR wife with joint ownership may sign.

What if I sell my home before the assessment is satisfied?

Legally, the assessment "runs with the land." The buyer of your home would either take over payments, or the remaining assessment amount can be negotiated as a part of the sale of the property.

How are Petition areas determined?

Whenever possible, Petitions cover streets rather than areas, with the goal to maximize the size of the construction project to lower costs.

What do the lights look like?

They are eight-sided, 12-foot cast aluminum poles (Arcadia type), with a lantern (Edgewater type) luminaire top, and are currently used in the neighborhood lighting system in areas south of Lane Avenue and within Tarrington Woods.

What lamp is used?

The lamps used are 17-watt, 3,000-degree Kelvin LED flat panel array.

How bright are the lights?

Approximately 2,400 lumens.

Why are the lights called neighborhood lights rather than streetlights?

Streetlights are typically designed to throw a significant amount of light on the surface of a street. By contrast, these lights are designed to provide ambient lighting for the benefit of homeowners and pedestrians as well as vehicular traffic. The plan is generally to have lights about 150 feet apart, alternating from one side of the street to the other, located five-feet or more from driveways.

How are the lights powered?

Lights are grouped into circuits, each running along the street and powered from an existing AEP transformer in the vicinity of the circuit.

How quickly does the process take from initiation to final construction?

While the City aims to expedite the process, special assessment and bidding procedures are set by law and must be followed. If ALL residences along a street sign the Petition, the process is simplified and expedited, and can be completed within approximately one year.

City of
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