

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
BUREAU OF STREET LIGHTING



INFORMATION SHEET FOR FIRST TIME STREET LIGHTING SYSTEMS

A first time lighting system may be petitioned for through the 1911 and 1913 Improvement Acts, where street lighting does not exist on residential roadways within the City of L.A.

The Improvement Act of 1911 and the Improvement Act of 1913 (state laws) provide the means through which the City government may assist property owners in obtaining community improvements, including street lighting. The City acts as a trustee for property owners inasmuch as preparation of plans, project processing, responsibility for construction, and financial transactions are done by the City for the group of property owners involved.

Project Initiated by Petition - Provided by Bureau of Street Lighting

Property owners interested in a street lighting project may circulate and submit a petition for street lighting to the Bureau of Street Lighting. The petition is then checked against the latest County Tax Roll to determine the validity of the signatures. If the signatures on the petition represent a majority of the properties involved (i.e., at least **70%** of the benefiting frontage), a questionnaire will be sent to each affected property owner to confirm that there is strong support for the project. If the majority of returned questionnaires are in favor of the project, the project can then be authorized by the City Council. Construction plans and specifications are then prepared for the project.

After a preliminary design and prior to construction of the project, a balloting procedure will be conducted as required by Proposition 218. Proposition 218 requires that any proposed assessment against a property must be submitted to affected property owners for approval or rejection, after notice and public hearings. A ballot will be sent to each affected property owner and will indicate the proposed assessments for (1) the design and construction, and (2) the operation and maintenance of the street lighting project.

Design and Construction

Street Lighting Systems are designed and constructed to conform to nationally accepted standards which are sponsored by the Illuminating Engineering Society and approved by the American National Standards Institute. The posts (electroliers) are fabricated of either concrete or steel. Electrical service is provided through cables placed in underground conduits. The project plans are reviewed and approved by the Cultural Affairs Commission to ensure that the aesthetic qualities of the project are compatible with the surroundings.

On residential streets, the posts are normally placed in a staggered pattern. Electrical conduits are placed underground by a horizontal drilling procedure. This drilling operation minimizes surface disturbance and inconvenience to the residents during the construction period. Before construction is considered complete, the contractor is required to restore all parkway areas.

Costs and Billing

Based on an average 50' x 130' lot on a residential street, the estimated cost per lot is about **\$5,000** for a standard modern lighting system, and about **\$10,000 or more** for an ornamental lighting system. This cost includes the cost for construction by an electrical contractor along with City costs of design, inspection and processing. The construction cost is the main factor in determining the overall cost to property owners. In general, the larger the project, the lower the bids submitted by electrical contractors and the lower the cost for each property owner.

Corner lots which receive benefit from lights on two streets are assessed for frontage on the short side of the lot, and a fraction of their frontage on the long side of the lot.

After the assessments for a project are confirmed by the City Council, after public hearings, (**prior to construction starting**), each benefiting property owner is billed for their share of the installation costs. If the final cost for constructing the project is lower than estimated, refunds will be made to property owners. If the final cost for constructing the project is higher than estimated, the City will assume responsibility for the remaining costs.

Assessments may be paid in a lump sum within 30 days after billing, or according to the following schedule:

AMOUNT OF ASSESSMENT	NUMBER OF PRINCIPAL PAYMENT	WHEN DUE
Less than \$150.00	1	Within 30 days after billing
\$150 – 299.00	2	Equal principal payments every December 1 st
\$300 – 399.99	3	“
\$400 – 499.99	4	“
\$500 – 599.99	5	“
\$600 – 699.99	6	“
\$700 – 799.99	7	“
\$800 – 899.99	8	“
\$900 – 999.99	9	“
\$1000 – or more	10	“

If you choose to defer payment by paying with installments, an interest rate of between 6% and 7% on the **unpaid balance** will be charged each year. Thus, the interest charge diminishes each year. One-half the annual interest is payable on June 1st. The principal installment and the other half of the annual interest is billed in October and payable on December 1st. If you wish to pay in full **after** you have chosen the installment plan, there will be a prepayment charge of 5% on the unpaid balance. Bills are sent by the City Treasurer and are not part of the property tax bill.

After the lighting system has been placed in service, the property owners will be billed annually (as part of their County Tax Bill) for their share of the **“maintenance costs”** of the system (electrical energy, maintenance, repairs, etc.). For residential property, this is about **\$90/year** for a modern lighting system and about **\$130/year** for an ornamental lighting system calculated in accordance to lot area acreage, both based on prevailing electricity rates.

If you wish to proceed with the petition process, please send your written request to the Bureau of Street Lighting, 1149 S. Broadway, Ste. 200, Los Angeles, CA 90015. For further information, please contact the Bureau of Street Lighting at (213) 847-1400, (FAX) (213) 847-1851; E-Mail: bsl.streetlighting@lacity.org, or log on to <http://bsl.lacity.org/> for further information.