



# MAYOR DAVID J. NARKEWICZ

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## **Northampton Seeks More Community Input on Energy Saving Streetlights**

By the end of the summer of 2016, Northampton plans on replacing all of the city's public streetlights, over 2,000 lamps, with new LED lights saving the city an estimated \$170,000 in operating costs annually.

In early May, the City asked for community input on several sample LED streetlights that it was considering for this project through an online survey. This survey provided community members the opportunity to broadly comment on any aspect of this new technology and led the City to make several adjustments to its plans for upgrading the city's streetlights to ensure that concerns over nuisance light and color of light will be addressed. These changes include:

- (1) Reducing perceived light levels for several residential neighborhoods that historically had slightly brighter street lights than the majority of residential streets.
- (2) Further reducing perceived light levels for all downtown urban areas and most of the city's primary arterial streets.
- (3) Significantly reducing perceived light levels and glare ratings for lamps slated to be installed at primary intersections and some crosswalks along downtown/commercial streets.
- (4) Confirmation that the planned LED street light's color will be as warm a light as is possible and still be eligible for an anticipated \$190,000 rebate from National Grid.
- (5) Confirmation that, on a case-by-case basis, the City's contractor will install shields on specific LED fixtures that are deemed to be a nuisance

In addition to input from the survey, the city received feedback during public meetings and communications to city staff including a request to consider a different LED lamp, manufactured by Cree Lighting, that has only recently become available. Mayor Narkewicz has directed city staff to provide the community with an opportunity to sample this new lamp and provide comments.

Switching to this new Cree lamp would further reduce energy use, providing an environmental benefit. It could also provide a nuanced difference in appearance from the previously sampled lamps that may lead some people to see it as producing a lower level of glare. In addition, the

new lamp is manufactured in the United States, a factor that many people in Northampton may see as a benefit.

On the other hand, switching lamps would increase the project cost without providing any more operational savings due to the rate tariff National Grid uses to charge for powering LED streetlights. Potentially, a future change in National Grid's rate tariff structure will enable the City to reduce operational expenses in line with the reduced energy use but that is not the case at this time.

Because this new Cree lamp only comes in lighting levels appropriate for use in residential neighborhoods, the City has installed one of them alongside a previously sampled Leotek lamp sized for residential neighborhoods. Both lamps produce a warm white light although they achieve that through different techniques. The Leotek lamp, like most other LED streetlights, applies an amber phosphor coating to white LED bulbs while the Cree lamp uses a lens to combine the light from three different color LED bulbs.

Community members can go to <http://ma-northampton.civicplus.com/1706/LED-Streetlights> to see a map of the sample lamp locations and complete an online form for feedback, the form is available until Monday, July 18, 2016. For more information on this project contact Chris Mason, Northampton's Energy and Sustainability Officer, (413) 587-1055, [cmason@northamptonma.gov](mailto:cmason@northamptonma.gov)