

2018-2019 BUDGET QUESTION

Response to Request for Information

DEPARTMENT: Parks and Recreation

REQUEST NO.: 185

REQUESTED BY: Tovo

DATE REQUESTED: 9/4/18

DATE POSTED: 9/7/18

REQUEST: Please provide a status update on the security lighting that was allocated for parks in the 78744 and 78745 zip codes. How much more is required to fully implement this Council directive? What park projects are “shovel ready” for additional light infrastructure?

RESPONSE:

The final approved motion which committed \$115,000 was an annual General Fund allocation for park security lighting and was not limited to parks in the 78744 and 78745 zip codes. The annual allocation was in support of a citywide approach to provide security lighting in city parks. The Parks and Recreation Department (PARC) has made a deliberate effort to address the highest priority projects, as supported by the community group Go Austin! Vamos Austin! (GAVA).

Below is a status update summary of the Park Security Lighting projects to date, including actions related to 78744 and 78745 zip codes.

The first year’s funding (FY17) of \$115,000 was used for the following:

- \$22,000 to install “Nightwatchman” lighting systems in 10 city parks, including five GAVA sites (Joslin Neighborhood Park, Cunningham School Park, St. Elmo School Park, Ponciana Neighborhood Park, and Kendra Page Neighborhood Park). These lights were installed by Austin Energy at locations with existing 120-volt power and on existing Austin Energy power poles.
- \$89,000 to purchase 31 solar-powered LED light fixtures and poles from First Light Technologies. These light fixtures were installed in 2018 in 18 park sites, including three GAVA sites (Onion Creek Metro Park, Piney Bend Park and Garrison District Park). With input from the GAVA group and PARC’s maintenance team, these sites were selected based upon priority of safety/security needs.
- \$4,000 for 13 GreenTek solar-powered LED light fixtures installed in the summer of 2018 in the following park sites, with the latter two being in GAVA neighborhoods: Roy G. Guerrero Metro Park, Metz Neighborhood Park, Walnut Creek Metro Park, Emma Long Metro Park, Garrison District Park, and Joslin Neighborhood Park. These lights were installed on existing light or power poles.

The \$115,000 in FY18 funding was used for the following:

- Footing design for the First Light Technology poles and lights by an engineering consultant.
- Permits, excavation, foundations and installation of the 31 First Light Technology poles and lights in the above-mentioned parks by a contractor.

In FY19, PARD intends to spend most of the \$115,000 funding in the GAVA neighborhoods. The GAVA group has been working with PARD for several years to gather neighborhood input, document the need for improved safety and security, and define priorities. In addition, PARD will be able to leverage the \$50,000 grant that GAVA has received from the Austin Parks Foundation.

Through about ten meetings and site visits with GAVA representatives during the spring and summer of 2018, the following GAVA parks have been identified as having needs for security lighting, and more than 50 light fixtures have been requested at these 11 locations:

- Cunningham School Park
- Dove Springs District Park
- Garrison District Park
- Houston School Park
- Joslin Neighborhood Park
- Kendra Page Neighborhood Park
- Odom School Park
- Onion Creek Soccer Complex
- Pastor Edward Clarence Craig, Jr. Neighborhood Park
- Ponciana Neighborhood Park
- St. Elmo School Park

The cost for installing all these lights is dependent upon upcoming analysis to determine whether the less-expensive “Nightwatchman” lights can be installed. The costs are expected to range between \$300,000 and \$350,000. Therefore, in FY19 PARD will only be able to install the highest priority lights at each site.

While park sites have been identified, none of the sites are considered shovel ready. PARD will:

- Facilitate the completion of the “Nightwatchman” analysis
- Complete the design and finalize the light locations
- Order and purchase the lights
- Solicit bids and hire a contractor to install the lights

This process is anticipated to take approximately three months.