

# New Bedford Modernizing Streetlights



*Conversion to brighter, more efficient LEDs will save money and enhance New Bedford neighborhoods (AshevilleNC.gov photo)*

Mayor Jon Mitchell announced today that crews have begun the process of upgrading streetlights citywide to brighter, energy efficient ones. Municipally-owned “cobrahead” fixtures and all other existing streetlights and traffic signals, are being replaced with new, modern fixtures and light emitting diode (LED) bulbs that will produce brighter, whiter light.

“I made a commitment three years ago to modernize city government and bring it into the 21st Century. Today, we are once again making good on that promise by replacing an expensive, outdated lighting system with cutting edge technology,” said Mayor Mitchell.

Mayor Mitchell announced the launch of the project today on Brock Avenue in front of Hazelwood Park while crews nearby worked to install the first of nearly 10,000 lights and fixtures to be retrofitted over to LEDs as part of the

streetlight retrofit project. The project will ultimately convert all of the City's outdoor lighting to LED, including its cobraheads, floodlights, decorative style, and traffic signals by the end of 2014.

"Just as we have already done with our nation-leading move toward solar power and our switch to automated trash collection, we are finding ways to deliver better services, save taxpayer dollars, and be good to the environment," said Mayor Mitchell.

"I could not be more pleased with the City team and our partners at Siemens that worked hard to take this project from an idea to reality," said the Mayor.

Street lighting constitutes a significant portion of municipal electricity costs which average about \$7 million annually. LED streetlight conversions represent an opportunity to reduce this load. Improved efficiency and extended lifespan make LEDs a better choice for street lighting purposes.

The City has partnered with Siemens Industry to implement the retrofit. The energy-saving conversion project is estimated to save New Bedford taxpayers over \$450,000 on the City's electric bills plus annual maintenance savings of \$100,000, for a total annual savings of over \$550,000. As part of its contract with the City, Siemens is required to guarantee these energy savings, which the City will utilize to finance the cost of the conversions and ongoing improvements to the City's infrastructure.

The cost of the approximately \$4.2 million project will be partially reduced by a \$1.2 million rebate from New Bedford's energy provider, NSTAR. The City will finance the net cost of the project over a period of approximately nine years and its savings on utility costs as a result of the conversion will more than offset project's financing costs.

"This initiative will allow the City to upgrade a key part of

its infrastructure, lower energy consumption, and reduce expenses. The savings are guaranteed by contract, which will allow us to cover financing costs and redirect the savings to other priorities,” said Ari Sky, Chief Financial Officer for the City of New Bedford.

“The Siemens team is thrilled to partner with the City of New Bedford on the street lighting and traffic signal LED retrofit project which represents the first phase of our Energy Performance Contract Initiative,” said Tom Foley, Northeast Zone Vice President of Siemens. “By replacing the City’s incandescent and high pressure sodium lights with LED technology, New Bedford will not only reduce its energy and maintenance costs but also enhance the beautification of the historic downtown by retrofitting its New Bedford style decorative fixtures,” he continued.

The technologies selected for this conversion project are expected to use 65 % less energy, and will last significantly longer than the existing high pressure sodium, metal halide and incandescent streetlights, traffic signals, and floodlights, thereby lowering the City’s ongoing maintenance costs. Replacement fixtures will be similar in appearance to existing fixtures and will include extended warranties. Test fixtures were installed on Acushnet Avenue, Longview Road and Rivet Street during the demonstration phase of the project and confirmed the anticipated energy savings and light performance.

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