



Item Number: 24

**City Council / Board of Directors**

**Written Communications**

**Meeting of: July 16, 2024**

**Submitted By:**

Scott Webb, Deputy City Manager  
Fredy Bonilla, City Engineer

**Subject:**

Lighting Enhancement Course of Action for Old Town Victorville

**Recommendation:**

That the honorable City Council direct the City Manager to:

1. Begin working with Southern California Edison to initiate and implement a design to add additional streetlights to existing infrastructure within public streets, alleys, and parking lots within the Old Town Specific Plan; and
2. Include within the Seventh Street Old Town Streetscape Improvement Project of the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, a lighting study and proposed lighting standards for development throughout the Old Town Specific Plan area.

**Fiscal Impact:**

There is not a direct fiscal impact associated with this item.

In the event Southern California Edison adds additional lights this fiscal year, there is \$90,261.07 in budgeted funds for new streetlights that could be expended for this purpose under the City Manager's purchasing authority. \$60,261.07 would come from Fund 358 (Development Impact Fees) and \$30,000.00 from Fund 200 (Street Lighting Assessment District), as depicted below:

Account	Description	Available Budget
3580010-55330-62075	Development Impact Fees	\$60,261.07
2004501-55080-62074	Street Lighting Assessment District	\$30,000.00

Within this calendar year, staff anticipates bringing forward for City Council consideration and approval a professional services contract for the design services of the Seventh Street Old Town Streetscape Improvement Project that could include, if directed by the City Council, a lighting study and proposed lighting standards for future development

throughout the Old Town Specific Plan. This design contract is planned to be funded by Measure P.

**Strategic Plan Goal:**

Approval of staff's recommendation will foster the following goals outlined in the City of Victorville Strategic Plan 2023-2026:

- Goal B (Public Safety) – Improved lighting fosters better public safety for vehicles and pedestrians by enhancing visibility.
- Goal C (Community and Economic Development) – Lighting plays a crucial role in spurring economic activity by creating a more inviting and vibrant atmosphere. Well-illuminated commercial areas attract more visitors, making the area more appealing to both consumers and investors. Additionally, the enhanced safety provided by good lighting allows businesses to operate with less risk of vandalism or theft. Therefore, improved lighting not only makes areas safer, but also stimulates the economy.

**Background:**

In response to concerns raised by community members regarding the lack of lighting in Old Town, the City Council agendaized a discussion of the issue at their April 16, 2024 meeting. Following a discussion of the issue, it was moved by Council Member Jones and unanimously approved by a 4-0 vote to direct the City Manager to undertake a study, at whichever level he deemed appropriate, to identify if lighting should be addressed in a different way in Old Town.

The adopted 2018 Old Town Specific Plan (OTSP) is a foundational zoning document that represents a blueprint for growth over the next 20-30 years. The purpose of the OTSP is to serve as a tool for revitalization of the Old Town, presenting an opportunity to transform this area into a unique, vibrant, mixed-use focal point for the region. Pursuant to Section 6.3.8 OTSP, basic lighting guidance is provided as follows:

- Lighting should provide visual interest and security and complement the project's architectural and landscape design.
- Pedestrian pathways and building entrances should be sufficiently lit to enhance public safety and security in those areas
- To protect the night sky and prevent off-site glare, exterior light fixtures must shield the light and direct illumination downward utilizing narrow spectrum LED lighting.
- Energy-efficient lighting solutions should be considered.

This OTSP lighting guidance falls short of providing specific lighting level standards that would achieve the visual interest and security that is being pursued within this unique, mainly commercial area. It is not uncommon to establish unique public improvement standards, such as for lighting, within Specific Plans to create unique spaces that achieve the desired objective of the planned area. Without specified lighting standards for Old Town, new development would be guided by the Victorville Municipal Code Section 17.44.230 standard spacing of cobra head light fixtures spaced approximately 300 feet apart.

The Illuminating Engineering Society (IES) is recognized as the technical and educational authority on illumination. Various public entities, such as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, rely on the recommendations of IES to create their own standards. Based on staff's preliminary assessment of IES's recommendations, exterior lighting within shopping centers, especially where security is a concern, should be illuminated more than areas that experience low pedestrian usage or have no security concerns. The minimum average level of lighting recommended by IES for this type of commercial experience would range from 1 to 3 footcandles. A footcandle is a standard unit measurement of light on a square foot surface from a source of light. In contrast, the average existing lighting level along Seventh Street between D Street and Forrest Avenue is between 0.55 and 0.72 footcandles based on a recent staff survey conducted in June 2024 and a prior 2019 survey conducted by IDS Electrical Engineers.

In 2019, the City improved lighting within Old Town with the conversion of existing street lights to LED and the addition of 31 new street lights on wood poles on streets and alleys. Even with these improvements, staff conducted a broader survey of lighting levels in June 2024 of the streets and alleys within the commercial core of Old Town generally between Sixth Street and Eighth Street from Forrest Avenue to D Street and found the average illumination to be 0.48 footcandles.

#### **Discussion:**

Based on IES recommendations and the results of the lighting surveys mentioned in the background section of this report, staff would deem further improvements to lighting levels as an appropriate course of action for this unique commercial area.

Staff is recommending a two-tiered approach to enhance lighting as follows:

- First, immediately add lights within a six-month period to further illuminate public streets, alleys, and parking lots by attaching the cobra head light fixtures mainly to existing wood poles. Potential locations of lights are indicated in red on the attached map (Attachment A). Other lighting enhancements to existing nostalgic lighting, such as replacement of existing lamps, could also be explored. Since Southern California Edison (SCE) maintains the streetlights, the task would involve working with SCE and would follow the same process as in 2019, when the City added 31 lights to the general area.
- Secondly, staff will include within the Seventh Street Old Town Streetscape Improvement Project of the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, a lighting study with proposed lighting standards throughout the Old Town Specific Plan area to guide future development. The Request for Proposal (RFP) for qualified design firms to complete this scope of work will be circulated this summer and a selection would be brought for City Council consideration in the Fall of 2024.

In addition to the lighting scope of work, the RFP will include the design of conceptual streetscape plans for the entire Specific Plan Area, based on street

classification, to be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission and City Council. The approved conceptual plans will then be developed into full construction plans for the length of Seventh Street from the general area of Yucca Avenue/Center Street to D Street. These construction plans will also address ancillary improvements to feeder streets (Forrest, A, B and C Streets) that intersect with Seventh Street in one block in each direction from Seventh Street as well as enhancements to two existing public parking lots at Seventh and B Street and C and 8<sup>th</sup> Street.

These lighting improvements and design changes are intended to foster a safer community with increased business activity, which are strategic goals of the City.

Staff remains available for any questions the Council may have.

**Attachments:**    A. Old Town Street Light Map