

Town of Amherst Street Lighting Policy

The Town of Amherst desires to provide adequate lighting to the VDOT-maintained streets and sidewalks within the Town while discouraging excessive lighting and constraining increases in street light expenditures. As such, secondary benefits of street lighting that involve the illumination of yards, porches, driveways, alleyways and other private property areas are to be considered coincidental and not a service funded by the Town.

The Town will endeavor to provide a street light at each street intersection and near the dead end of a street on an as-requested basis and as funds are available. Mid-block street lights may be justified when there is a distance of 300 feet or more between lights with the understanding that distance may be reduced due to horizontal or vertical curvatures in the roadway or other unusual circumstances. Such unusual circumstances might include the proximity to a church, park, school, or high pedestrian traffic area and locations where there is a high probability that the installation of a street light will reduce crime or vehicle accident rates. Factors such as the age or tenure of residents or presence of trees shall not be considered when justifying new street lights.

The Town has contracted with APCO to provide the street light service in the Town. It is noted that APCO's monthly rate for street lights has an included "aid to construction" allowance. Therefore, except in the most unusual circumstances, the Town will not provide up-front construction monies to fund the installation of new street lights.

Individuals requesting a street light or lights must apply via a form provided by the Town Manager and include the names and contact information for all residents and business operators within 300' of the proposed light along with verification as to whether those residents support the installation of a new light or lights.

In the case of new subdivisions, developers are referred to Sec. 18.1-1302.04 of the Town Code which indicates that "the subdivider shall obtain approval from the Town Council for the design of a street lighting system. The subdivider shall fund the installation, install or have installed any street lighting system serving the subdivision and make appropriate arrangements for its maintenance."

The Police Chief shall review all street light matters and recommend whether individual street lights should be installed or removed based on the criteria described in this policy. The Town Manager shall have the authority to approve normal installations that conform to this policy as recommended by the Police Chief that are within the capacity of the then-current budget. Irregular situations and appeals will be forwarded to the Town Council for resolution.

