



4800 Ashford Dunwoody Road  
Dunwoody, Georgia 30338  
dunwoodyga.gov | 678.382.6700

## **MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Mayor and City Council

**From:** Michael Smith, Public Works Director

**Date:** February 24, 2020

**Subject:** **Resolution to Create a Commercial Streetlight District**

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### **ITEM DESCRIPTION**

Approval of a resolution establishing a commercial streetlight district and providing for an assessment to cover the maintenance and operating cost for streetlights adjacent to non single-family, detached residential properties that are not already included in a residential streetlight district.

### **BACKGROUND**

At its 2019 annual retreat the City Council expressed an interest in adding streetlights on arterial and collector streets that are not currently lit. Historically in DeKalb County, and subsequently Dunwoody, streetlights have been provided in single-family neighborhoods through a petition process whereby the residents along each public street agree to pay for the operating and maintenance costs of the lights through a special assessment on their property tax bills. This process has resulted in streetlight coverage for over 95% of the public residential streets in the city.

In commercial or non-single family residential land use areas, there has not been a formal process in place for adding streetlights and recovering operating costs. Streetlights in these areas have typically been installed in conjunction with new developments and the city has paid the costs for the ongoing operating and maintenance out of its general fund. This cost for 2020 is projected to be approximately \$125,000.

If adopted, the attached resolution would establish a citywide streetlight district that would encompass all detached, non-single family residential property that is not already part of an established streetlight district. All properties within the new streetlight district with frontage on a public street with streetlights would be assessed a streetlight fee on their property tax bill. The fee would be determined by dividing the city's total annual costs for the streetlights contained in the new district by the total amount of frontage with streetlights in the district. For 2020 this cost has been determined to be \$1.16 per foot of frontage. For perspective, the largest property owner by lit frontage would pay \$5,000 annually and the next largest 25 property owners would pay between \$1,000 and \$2,500 annually. The median annual property owner cost would be \$334. While this does not directly provide a funding source for the city council's goal of



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installing additional streetlights, it does offset existing expenses in the city's general fund that could then be re-appropriated for new streetlight installations.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Staff recommends approval of a resolution that a) establishes a streetlight district that encompasses all non-single family, detached residential properties that are not already included in a residential streetlight district and b) provides for the assessment of the annual cost of maintaining and operating streetlights within the district.

STATE OF GEORGIA  
COUNTY OF DEKALB

**RESOLUTION 2020-XX-XX**

**A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STREETLIGHT DISTRICT ENCOMPASSING ALL AREAS THAT ARE NOT ALREADY WITHIN AN ESTABLISHED STREETLIGHT DISTRICT AND FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF THE ANNUAL COST OF MAINTAINING AND OPERATING SAID LIGHTS AGAINST ABUTTING PROPERTY.**

**WHEREAS,** Article IX, Section II, Paragraph 6, of the Constitution of the State of Georgia of 1976, as amended in 1983 (Ga. Laws 1983, Vol. 2, Page 724) and Chapter 26 (Streets, Sidewalks and Other ) of the City Code of Ordinances authorizes and empowers the City Council of the City of Dunwoody, Georgia to establish districts for the purpose of building, erecting, establishing, maintaining, and operating street lights for the illumination of the public streets, roads, and sidewalks in the City of Dunwoody, and to levy a special assessment or tax against all property served by these functions; and

**WHEREAS,** DeKalb County, prior to incorporation of the City of Dunwoody, established streetlight districts within the boundaries of the City; and

**WHEREAS,** the City of Dunwoody, since incorporation, has created additional streetlight districts; and

**WHEREAS,** there are areas of the City with streetlight service that are outside the boundaries of previously established streetlight districts.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DUNWOODY, GEORGIA** as follows:

**Section 1:** That in the 2020 tax year, a special assessment be levied, at a rate of \$1.16 per frontage foot, against all non-single family residential property within the boundaries of the City that:

- a. Front on public streets and roads with streetlight facility service that are not included in the established streetlight districts, and
- b. Are property that was not already a part of an established streetlight district in 2019

**Section 2:** That in in subsequent years the streetlight fee will be adjusted as necessary to offset utility rate increases enacted by Georgia Power, the city’s electricity provider.

**IT IS ORDERED** that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Tax Commissioner of DeKalb County, Georgia for the collection of any and all taxes and/or special assessments and/or service charges which may be imposed against any and all businesses, residents, and property served by said facilities.

**SO RESOLVED** by the City Council of City of Dunwoody, Georgia this     day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

**Approved:**

Lynn P. Deutsch, Mayor

**Attest:**

Seal

Sharon Lowery, City Clerk  
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