



Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska  
**Parks & Recreation Department**

632 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 630  
P.O. Box 196650  
Anchorage, AK 99519  
**Tel** 907-343-4355

**URL** [www.muni.org/departments/parks](http://www.muni.org/departments/parks)



**MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** May 9, 2024

**To:** Parks & Recreation Commission

**Cc:** Mike Braniff, Director; Taylor Keegan, PLA, Parks Superintendent

**From:** Tanya Hickok, PE, Senior Park Planner / Project Manager

**Project:** **PRC 2024-04: Town Square Park Lighting Improvements**

**INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND**

Town Square Park is an important park and civic space located in the heart of downtown Anchorage. At just over two acres, Town Square Park is a mix of plazas, greenspaces, and celebrated seasonal flower displays. Town Square Park was created in 1984 through a citizen led initiative. At the time the park was envisioned as an oasis from the urban environment of Alaska's largest city. Over the years, use of the park has evolved as have public preferences for what Town Square Park should be. Today, Anchorage residents envision Town Square Park (TSP) not only as a green oasis but also an active and vibrant public space, a hub for activity downtown, and a place where friends meet, families gather, and the community celebrates.

The Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department (APR) has recently been working with our term civil and electrical consultant engineers on a phased lighting improvement plan for the park, utilizing remaining park bond funds. This is in keeping with the first goal of the 2019 Town Square Park Master Plan, which prioritized strategies to address ongoing public safety concerns within the park. Lighting is an important component of public safety in park design. Lighting, when planned as a coordinated system, creates a more inviting atmosphere, encouraging new activities and increasing seasonal use. Lighting can also help clarify the layout of the park by emphasizing walkways, focal points, use areas, and access points.

Currently, Town Square Park has lighting and power outlets throughout the park. Lighting consists of bollard style pedestrian lighting, small area pedestrian level lighting, seasonal flood lights, and tree lights. Lighting is a mix of styles and generally considered insufficient for safe winter use. A comprehensive and cohesive lighting scheme is necessary to increase winter use, improving safety, and creating a welcoming park atmosphere. Bollard style pedestrian lighting, 42" in height, are located along the north and south footpaths. Small area pedestrian level lighting is located along E Street and the adjacent plaza. Seasonal tree lights are strung up throughout the park and serve as a winter attraction. Four flood lights illuminate the main plaza area. These lights are installed and removed with the seasonal tree lights. Electrical outlets are located throughout the park to provide power for tree lighting and events.

**Photo 1: Town Square Park Lighting in Winter**

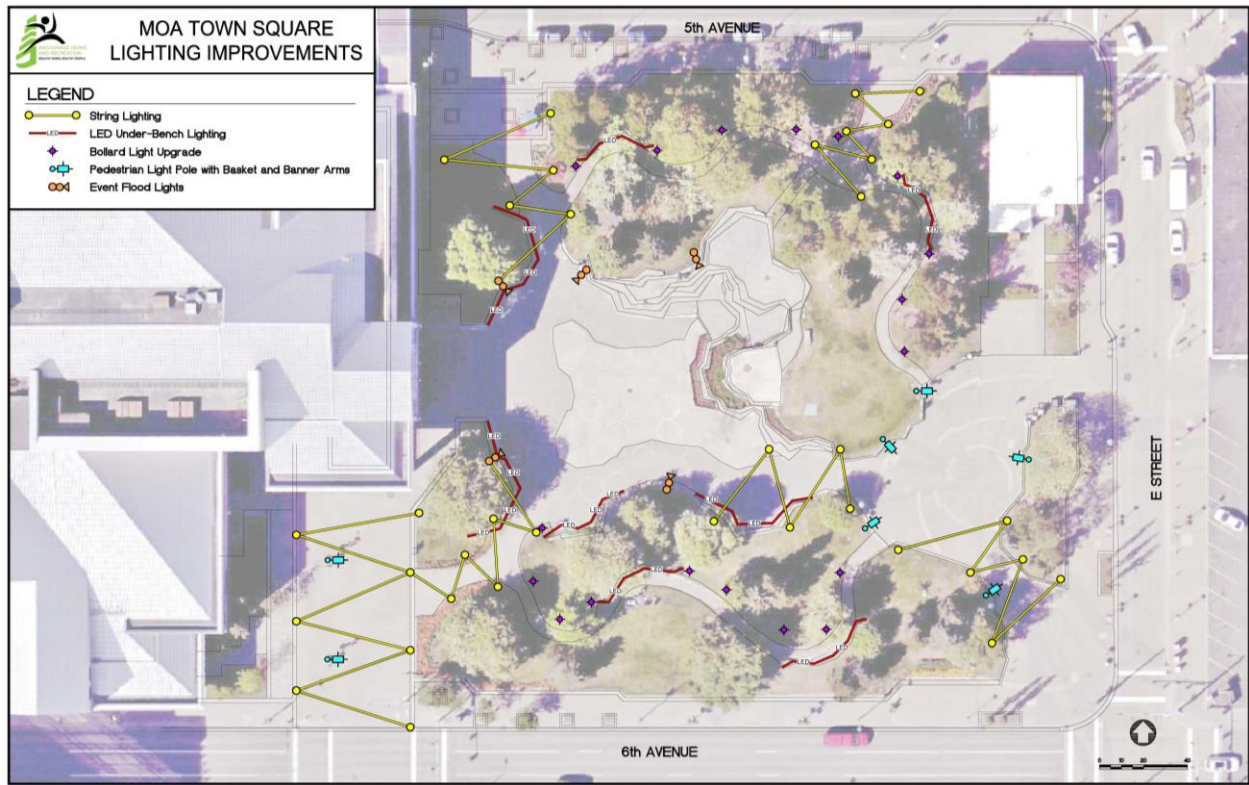


### **PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS**

The Town Square Master Plan included providing upgraded lighting improvements within phase 1 of the implementation plan for the park. During development of the design of the upgraded lighting improvements, engineers quickly identified costs north of \$700,000 to construct all the desired lighting improvements. In order to construct a significant portion of the proposed lighting improvements, we have proposed a phased approach to the lighting. Phase 1 consists of new bollard lighting (4-foot, shown in purple), pedestrian lighting (12-foot, shown in blue), and event flood lighting (20-foot, shown in orange). This new lighting will replace the current insufficient quantities/locations of lighting, as well as provide additional lighting in areas identified as “dark/unsafe”. Additionally, the proposed event flood lighting will remain on during dark hours, to eliminate the interior “dark/unsafe” areas of the park.

Subsequent phases of the lighting improvements will include string lighting (16-foot, shown in yellow) at the sidewalk entries to the park, as well as under-bench lighting (shown in red).

**Figure 1: All Proposed Lighting Improvements**



See the below proposed fixtures planned for the lighting plan, utilizing the same silver color/type of lighting fixtures that currently exists at the adjoining Performance Arts Center.

**Photo 2: Proposed Bollard Lighting**

Pavilion  
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**Photo 3: Proposed Flood Lighting Fixture**

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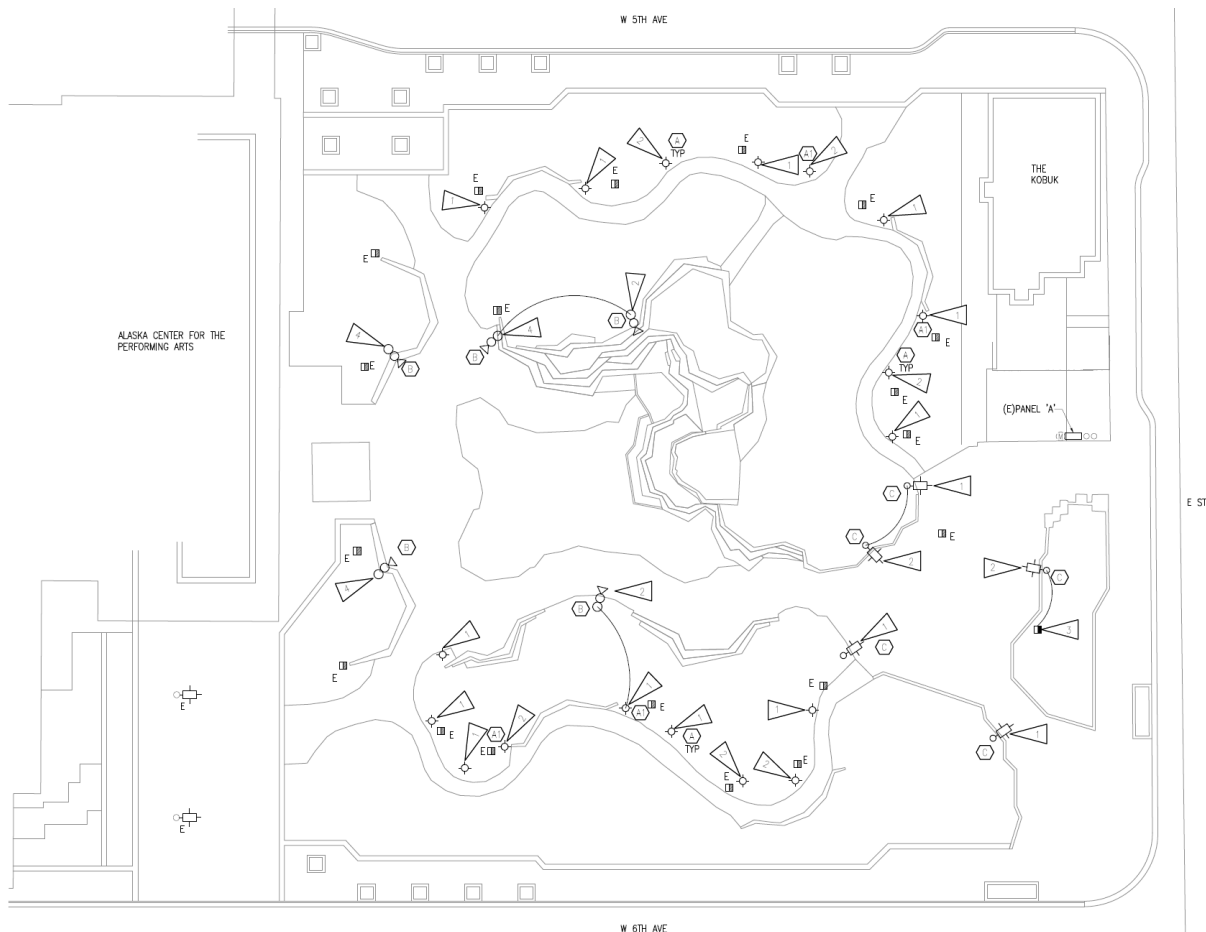
**Photo 4: Proposed String Lighting Fixtures**



**Photo 5: Proposed Pedestrian Lighting Fixture**



**Figure 2: Phase 1 Proposed Lighting Improvements**



1 ELECTRICAL REMODEL PLAN  
1" = 20'-0"

## **PLANNING AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

APR attended the Downtown Community Council meeting in April and received no objections or negative feedback from the community. APR is currently working with our consultants to submit a Municipal Building Safety Electrical Permit for Phase 1 of the proposed improvements.

The project team proposes to bid the construction project this Summer 2024; however, it will be likely that procurement of the actual light poles/LED fixture will take 6+ months to manufacture and then ship to Alaska. With this in mind, we anticipate that actual construction would not begin in earnest until Spring/Summer 2025.

## **FUNDING**

The proposed total development budget for Phase 1 of this project is estimated at \$250,000 with the funding acquired from past municipal park bonds identified for improvements at Town Square Park.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

The Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission support the Proposed Lighting Improvements at Town Square Park. The proposed project was identified and recommended by the approved 2019 Master Plan for Town Square Park.



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**Parks & Recreation Commission**

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**PRC RES NO. 2024-04**  
**Phase 1 Lighting Improvements**  
**Town Square Park**

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission serves in an advisory capacity to both the Mayor and the Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission has the responsibility and duty to provide for the long term vision of our park system by ensuring that a balance of parks, natural resources, and recreation facilities provides for the health, welfare, and safety of all residents of the Anchorage Bowl; and

WHEREAS, the first goal of the 2019 Town Square Park Master Plan, prioritized strategies to address ongoing public safety concerns within the park; and

WHEREAS, lighting is a key important component of public safety in park design; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Town Square Park Master Plan identified safety lighting improvements in phase 1 of the implementation plan for the park; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approves the proposed Phase 1 Lighting Improvements for Town Square Park.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 9th day of May, 2024.

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Chair  
Parks and Recreation Commission

ATTEST:

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Mike Braniff, Director  
Parks & Recreation Department