

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: April 8, 2025

To: The Mayor
The City Council

From: Matthew W. Szabo, City Administrative Officer *Malaike Billups* for

Subject: **INNOVATION FUND RECOMMENDATION – 3D PRINTING FOR THE PUBLIC
RIGHT-OF-WAY**

RECOMMENDATION

The Office of the City Administrative Officer recommends that this committee note and file this report.

SUMMARY

The Innovation and Performance Commission (IPC) approved funding in the amount of \$150,000 from the Innovation Fund (IF) for the Bureau of Street Lighting (LA Lights) – 3D Printing for the Public Right-of-Way project. As with all IPC recommendations, this report presents the proposal that LA Lights submitted and the IPC approved, along with the information necessary to implement the idea as presented. However, since all IPC items are discretionary expenditures, in deference to the extraordinary budget constraints outlined in the Third (Mid-Year) Financial Status Report, this Office does not recommend funding the proposal as presented at this time.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

The following is a summary of LA Lights' Innovation Fund proposal, including the department's estimate of the benefits and costs of implementing the proposal:

LA Lights has been severely impacted by the increase in material costs. A basic, yet necessary, component of any street lighting electrical system used to house connection points, a pull box, is projected to double in cost, from \$150 per box to \$300 per box. In order to mitigate product markups, LA Lights is proposing to redirect that anticipated increased expenditure into a multifaceted production model that can drive down operating cost through the use of 3D printing technology. Funding of this project will cut the per-box cost from the projected \$300 to approximately \$80, saving \$220 per unit. If these projections were applied to FY 23/24 purchases, this would have equated to almost \$800,000 in cost savings. LA Lights is confident in its ability to drive down its operational costs by adopting and adapting to new technologies. The project cost increases are based on current LA Lights spending data showing a 20% increase on basic stock.

This project will not only produce substantial cost savings but will also train field operations staff with the latest technology, equipping them with the know-how and tools to think even further outside the box. This project will also allow LA Lights to innovate-on-the-spot solutions to address vandalism and theft.

The IPC recommended \$150,000 for the Bureau of Street Lighting - 3D Printing for the Public Right-of-Way pilot project. The cost for the project includes the purchase of two 3D printers, to produce between 1/4th and ½ of LA Lights' needs. LA Lights also anticipates funds to be used for the purchase of materials, as well as planning, training, and implementing the 3D printers into its work flow. Success of this project will be measured by the output of the printers, how much cheaper is in-house production versus what is available on the market, can production keep pace with demand, and how well the Bureau adopted new technology within its operations.

If the item is approved by this Committee, LA Lights should return to the IPC, present any changes to the scope of work and provide updates to the IPC.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The recommendation to note and file this report will have no financial impact.

If the Council approves an allocation of \$150,000 to the Bureau of Street Lighting for the 3D Printing for the Public Right-of-Way pilot project, it would reduce the remaining Innovation Fund Balance, which is currently \$2,768,922.75. Savings from the Innovation Fund Balance may be used to address the current city-wide financial crisis and the overspending in the 2024-2025 fiscal year. Additionally, funding this program may incur unfunded and ongoing costs.

FINANCIAL POLICIES STATEMENT

The recommendation in this report complies with the City's Financial Policies.

MCB:BLS: 172500010H