

# Bureau *of* Street Lighting



## Overview for Public Works Committee

v.2602025

\*Vermonica\* x Sheila Klein Photo: Ian Byers-Gamber



# Bureau of Street Lighting

**Mission** To Light the way for Los Angeles

**Vision** We build, operate, and maintain world-class systems that deliver limitless benefits to our neighborhoods

**Values** People Integrity Innovation Performance

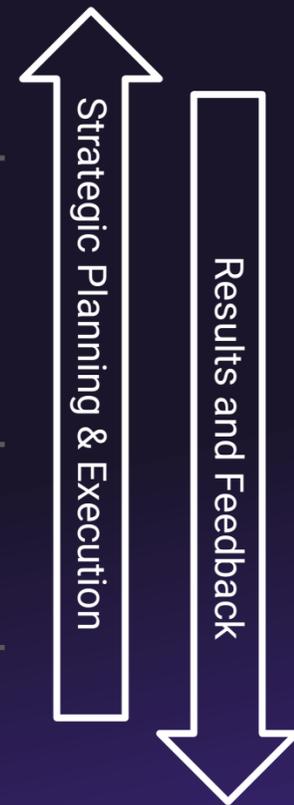
**Tools**

Community  
Hiring  
Training  
Recruiting  
All Staff  
Mentoring

Ethical Codes  
Form 700  
Policy  
Ordinances / Laws  
Directives  
Reports

Feedback  
Pilot Projects  
Innovation Fund  
Technology adoption  
Operational meetings  
Initiatives (e.g.: IPD)

Annual Reviews  
Goal Setting  
Metrics  
Check-ins  
Project management  
Mayor / City Goals



# The Assessment: BSL's main funding source

O&M is predominantly funded by an Assessment which generates ~\$45M annually since 1996 as 90% of revenues are frozen.

The Bureau levies the assessment through its powers given in City Charter, Administrative Code, Municipal Code, State Constitution, and the Improvement Act of 1911. It is based on the **special benefit** to a given property, calculated via land use and acreage, and **collected annually via County Property Taxes**

A Street Lighting Assessment is established through a ballot vote of affected **Property Owners**. It is an off-cycle protest vote (rather than an electorate vote) and requires 50%+1 by weighted value of Assessment of affected Property Owners to vote yes.

A Street Lighting Assessment Ballot may happen at any time. Generally speaking the Bureau would propose it to the Council and Mayor, who would then vote to proceed.



# How the Bureau Deploys Resources Duties to the Assessment

The Bureau is able to levy an Assessment on properties for a benefit based on State Law and the Charter.

In Bonander v. Town of Tiburon (CA), the Court states that “an assessment represents the entirety of the cost of the improvement or property-related service, less any amount attributable to general benefits (which may not be assessed), allocated to individual properties in proportion to the relative special benefit conferred on the property.”

In other words, Assessed properties receive the “special benefit of Lighting”, with a nuance that each property must receive that benefit regardless of total share of cost. In order to meet this, the Bureau has established service levels (e.g.: repair times; LED replacement schedules; pole replacement schedules) to ensure properties are provided the special benefit of lighting equally.

The current structure of the BSL’s Assessment does not contemplate theft and vandalism seen today complicating repairs. The Bureau is afforded a degree of management discretion on deployment but it ultimately cannot favor one part of the City over another. Factors like proximity to a school, aging population are not contemplated in repair schedule, only the equal benefit of lighting to a property.



# How the Bureau Deploys Resources, pt. 2

## Regular Maintenance and Service Requests

Primarily, the Bureau should be working off regularly scheduled maintenance and capital expenditures.

The Bureau also takes in MyLA311 service requests for lighting outages. Until the entire system is connected through Smart Nodes, MyLA311 is the primary way the Bureau learns of outages and other issues.

The Bureau responds to service requests in the order they are received. Given the total influx of service requests and limited resources, the Bureau has set a service level of 1 year for repairs to satisfy requirements of the Assessment. This 1 year Service Level is based off of current averages for service request closure and aging of all service requests (1 in 7 are older than 1 year).

Note that the Assessment does not cover areas of the City that are 100% general benefit (e.g.: Bridges; Tunnels) as there are no adjacent properties to assess and these areas tend to be wholly for public use. The funding for these streetlights is requested through the City's annual budget process or through a capital program (e.g.: 6th Street Bridge / Viaduct) .



# How the Bureau Deploys Resources, pt. 3

## General Fund and Discretionary Funds

In recent years, an additional tactic has emerged that has allowed the Bureau to repair more lights than what it has been originally funded for – General Fund or discretionary funds provided by the The Council and Mayor that augment the Bureau’s resources. These funds are generally unrestricted. In other words, the requirements of the Assessment do not apply and resources can be directed to specific repairs or locations.

These flexible funds have been used to prioritize locations for repair based either on the direction of the Council and Mayor, with expertise given by the Bureau. The Bureau has either established additional crews, used overtime, or deployed solar based on these funds and it does not affect Assessment-funded operations.



**Vandalism Repairs**

**VS.**

**Deferred Maintenance**

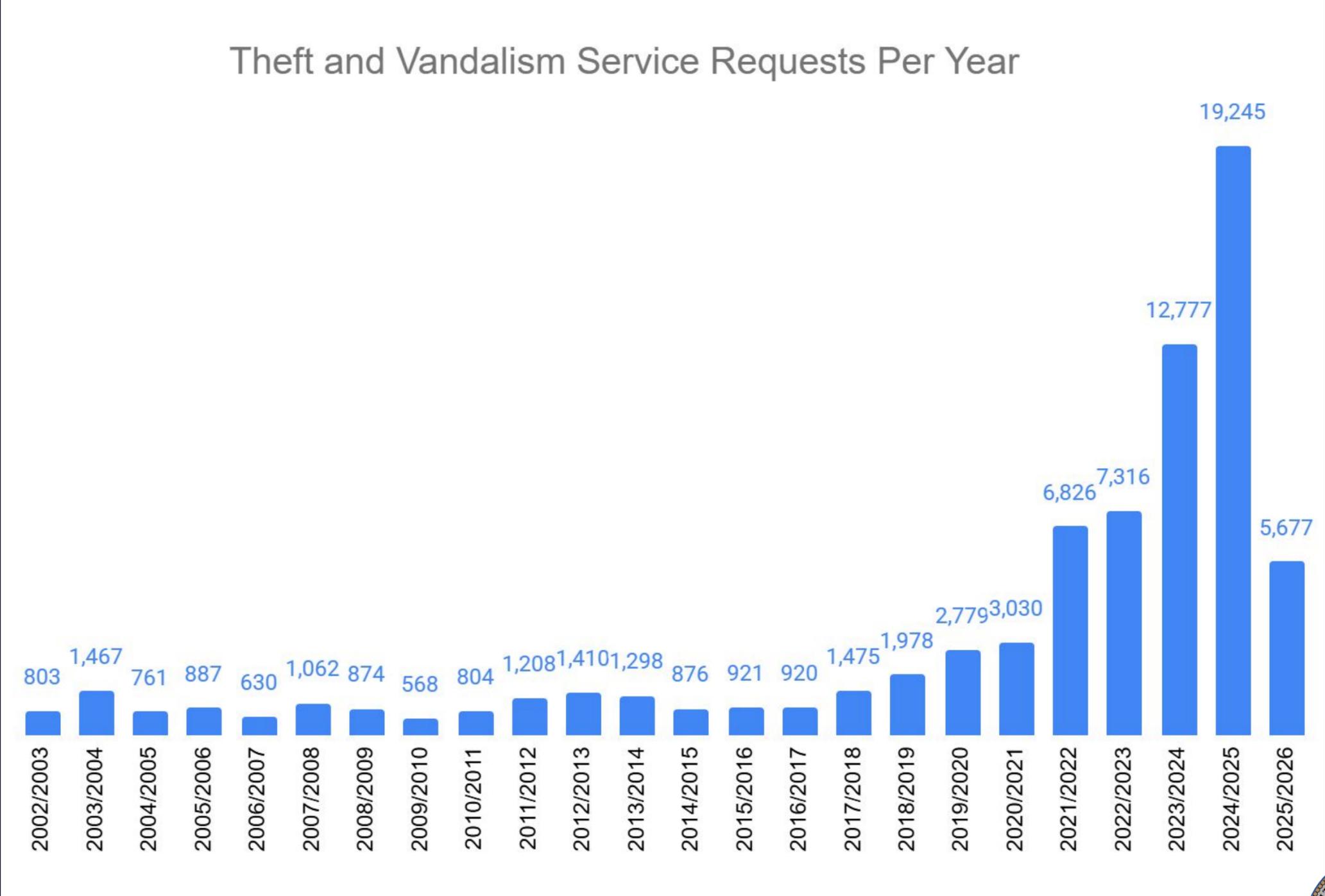
**40%**

**60%**

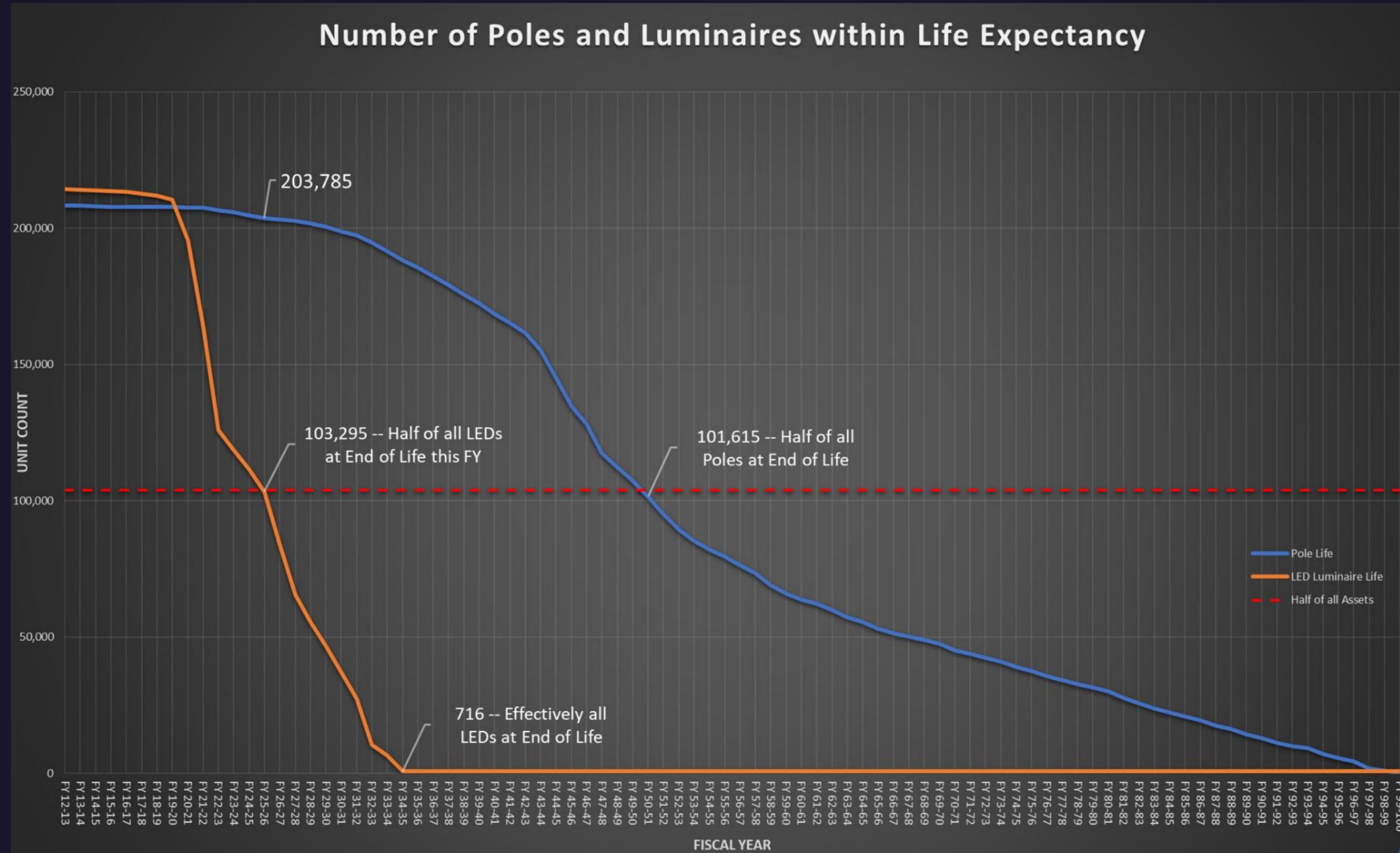


**LA**  
LIGHTS 7

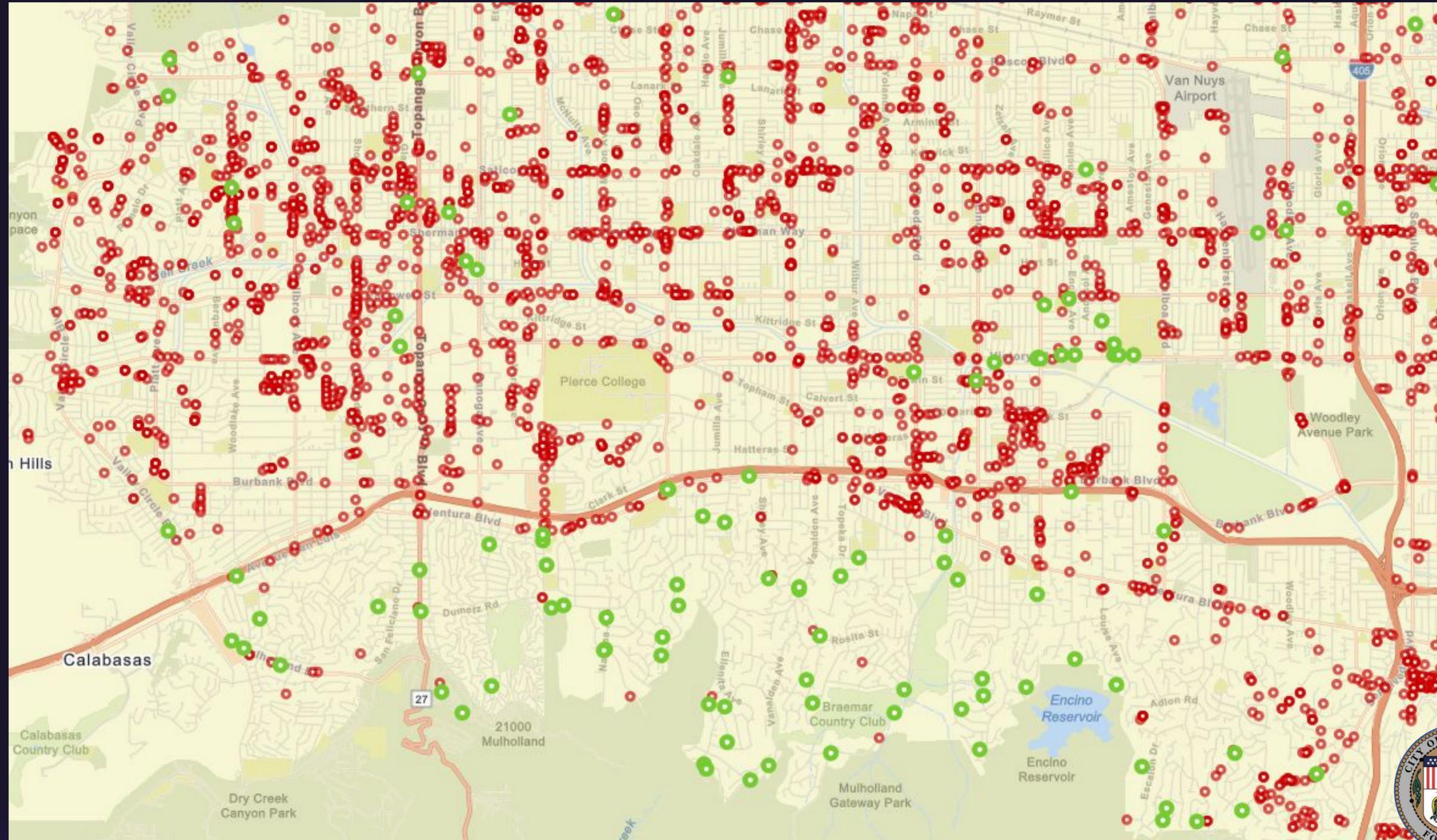
# Theft & Vandalism at An All Time High



# Growing Number of Assets Out of Service Life



# Example: Green Dots Show Closed Service Requests South of Ventura Blvd Predominantly Single Light Out SRs



# All Routine Maintenance Programs Have Been Eliminated as Cost Reduction Measures

## LED Replacement Program (CTIEP)

FY22/23 - \$4.0M replaced over 13,000 fixtures

FY23/24 - \$0.4M replaced over 1,300 fixtures

FY24/25 - \$1.0M replaced over 3,000 fixtures

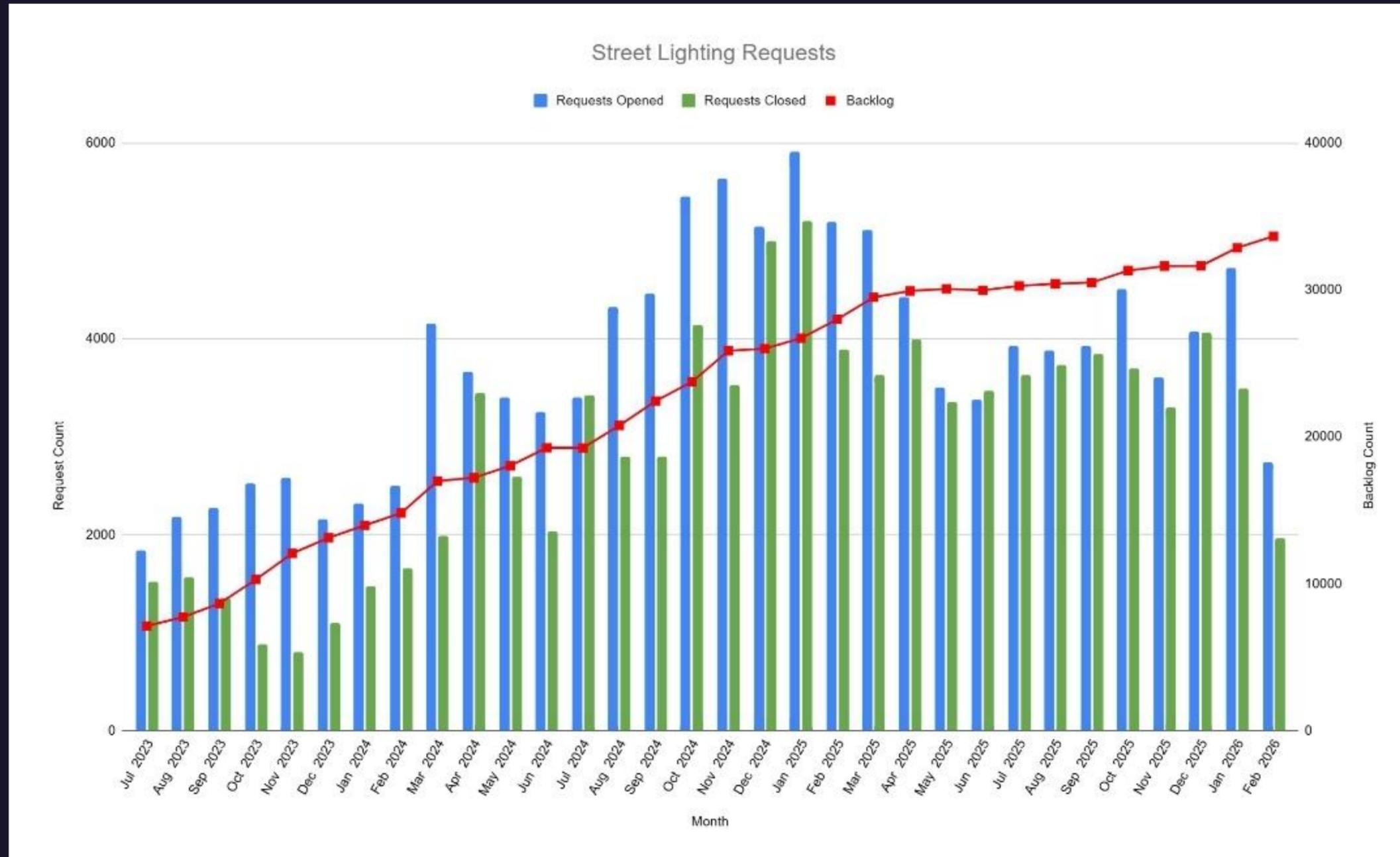
FY 25/26 - No budget

**Pole Replacement Program - Eliminated during Great Recession (2010)**

**Conduit Replacement Program - None**



# BSL Service Requests and Backlog



# Outages, Repair Times, and Discretionary Funds

AREA	OUTAGES / SERVICE REQUESTS (SRS)	OUTAGES / SRS OLDER THAN 1 YR	AVERAGE REPAIR TIMES IN DAYS	DISCRETIONARY FUNDS FOR OT/CREW
<b>Citywide</b>	<b>32933</b>	<b>6074</b>	<b>1 Year (Official)</b>	<b>—</b>
Council District 1	2053	644	214	\$55,000.00
Council District 2	1132	280	248	
Council District 3	1569	305	259	
Council District 4	2606	285	193	\$115,800.00
Council District 5	2739	225	160	\$85,000.00 / \$165,000.00
Council District 6	2451	473	263	
Council District 7	2160	243	247	
Council District 8	1949	489	183	
Council District 9	2037	534	193	
Council District 10	3487	832	207	
Council District 11	727	92	128	\$85,000.00 / \$165,000.00
Council District 12	1983	363	240	\$58,000.00
Council District 13	3450	480	181	\$377,000.00 / \$900,000.00
Council District 14	3780	631	221	\$100,000.00 / \$970,000.00
Council District 15	810	198	161	

# Outages, Repair Times, and Discretionary Funds, pt. 2

Council Districts	Number of Circuits with repeat issues
CD1	179
CD2	144
CD3	50
CD4	81
CD5	56
CD6	220
CD7	160
CD8	177
CD9	266
CD10	127
CD11	15
CD12	174
CD13	147
CD14	237
CD15	70

**Given funding, at best the Bureau can fortify approximately 100 circuits per fiscal year. Los Angeles has over 13,000 DWP service points in its purview.**



# Utilitarian Light Program

The Utilitarian Light Program allows for the attachment of “street lights” to DWP utility poles in places that do not have an established lighting district or street lighting system. As this is primarily a program for DWP infrastructure, DWP historically funded an Engineer position in BSL to review requests and approve based on whether lighting districts were established or not.

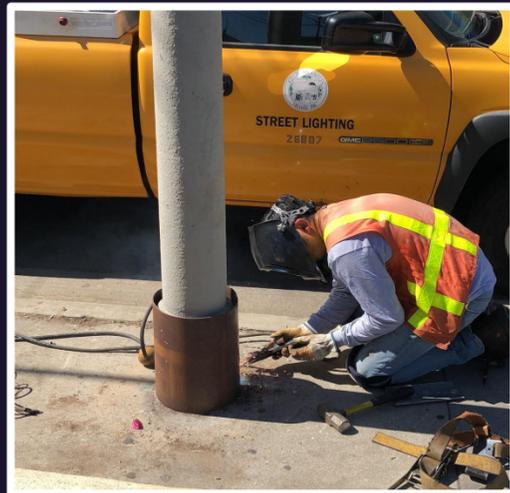
Loss of the Utilitarian Light Program Engineer position in BSL’s FY25/26 budget effectively halted BSL’s involvement in the Program. BSL and DWP will be meeting to discuss its future.

Though popular, BSL cautions against the assumption that this is an easy fix to lighting streets. While quick, the City can and will be ultimately responsible for the energy, repair, and maintenance costs after five years. In order to pay for these Util lights the City would have to pay general fund, create a Street Lighting Assessment District (through Prop 218 vote), or establish a new DWP tariff or rate for affected customers.

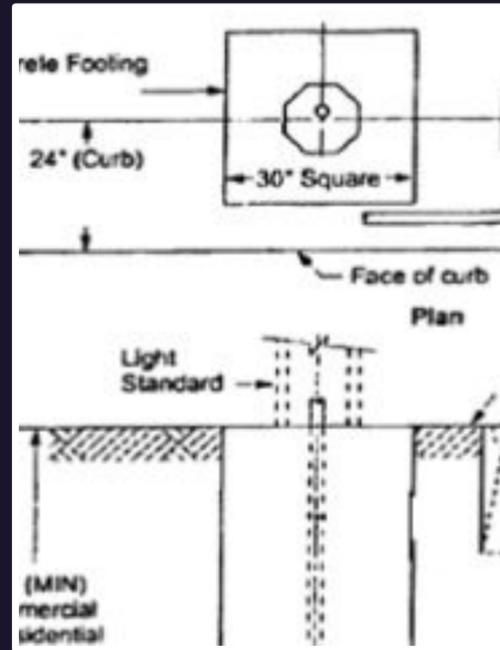


# Suite of Solutions to Ensure “Lights On”

Fortification & Restoration



Evolving Design Standards



Data Driven Analytics for Deployment



Battery + Solar Street Lights



Technology (Sensors; Cameras)



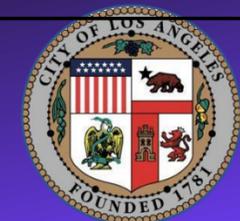
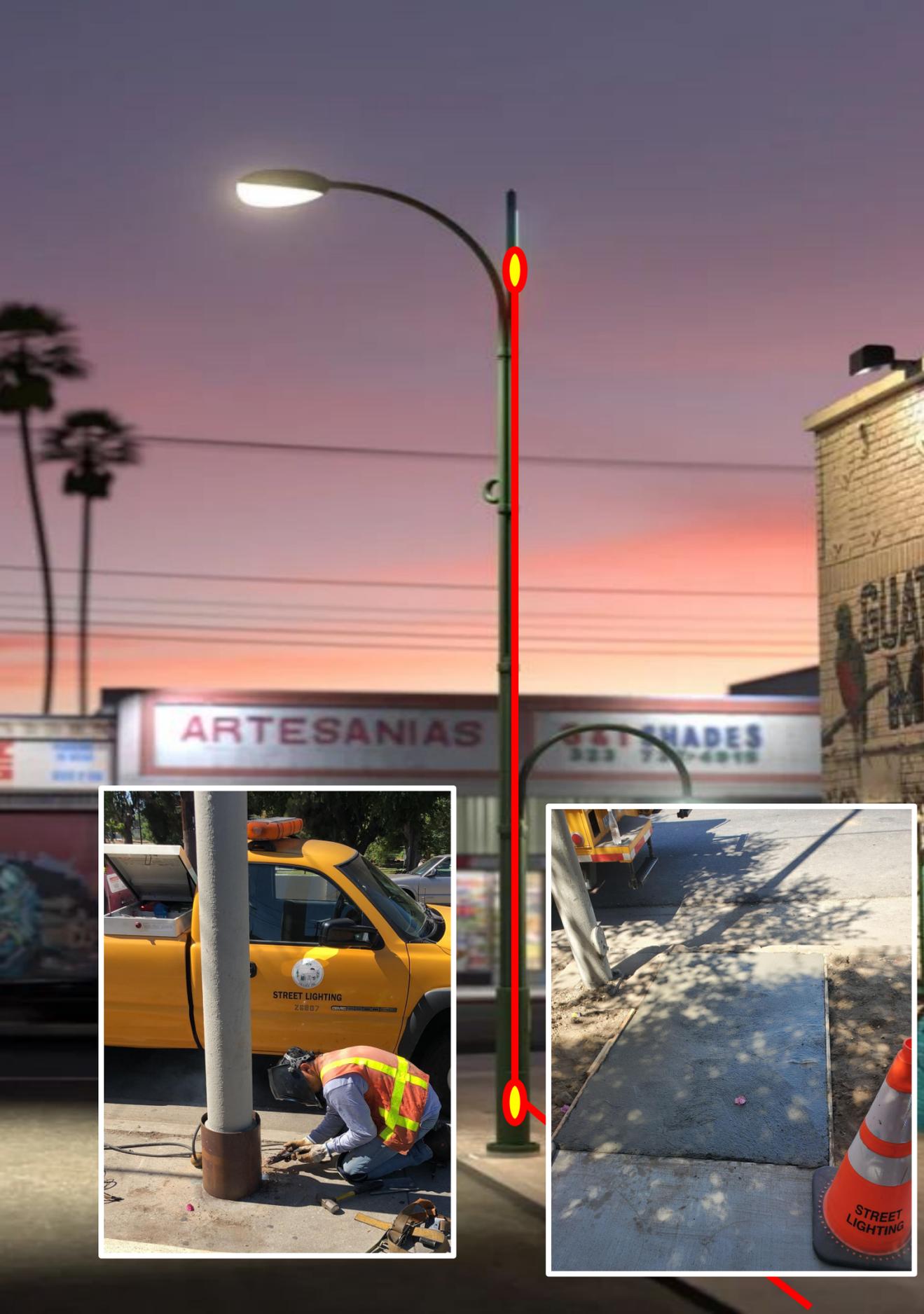
**GENERAL FUND AND DISCRETIONARY FUNDS**

Note: BSL looks closely at analytics and circuit composition to determine best course of action.



# Suite of Solutions: Fortification and Restoration

<p>Restoration Lvl 1</p>	<p>Repair and restore lights on the circuit, epoxy pullboxes and/or handholes at vandalized location(s) only (Avg \$500 / light)</p>
<p>Restoration Lvl 2</p>	<p>Repair and restore lights on the circuit, bury pullboxes and weld handholes at vandalized streetlight(s) only. (Avg \$1500 / light)</p>
<p>Fortification F22</p>	<p>The new baseline fortification includes burying pullboxes, welding handholes, and relocating fuses to the top of the pole for <u>ALL LIGHTS</u> connected to a service point. (Avg \$2500 / light)</p>



# Exercise: Three Scenarios With Existing \$45M Assessment

## Prioritize required lifecycle replacements (pole / LEDs / conduit)

Assumptions:  
Minimal response to service requests. Current levels of GF support for overhead (pensions, etc.). Required power bill of ~\$15M taken off top. \$30M remaining.

Result:  
Fully funds the lifecycle replacement for poles and LEDs. Conduits remain unfunded. **Minimal repairs of theft and vandalism with repair cycles reaching several years.**

## Fortify All Circuits and Streetlights

Assumptions:  
Current price @ \$2,500 per light. No lifecycle replacement. Some overhead (pensions, etc.) paid for by GF or another source. Required power bill of ~\$15M taken off top. \$30M remaining.

Result:  
12,000 lights fortified per year. **Entire system fortified after 18 years at the cost of \$550M.** To an extent LEDs may be replaced as part of repairs; however, pole replace and conduit replacement are unfunded.

## Deploy All Solar

Assumptions:  
Current price to replace solar @ \$6,500 per light in perpetuity. No pole replacement needed. All locations can support solar. Required power bill of ~\$15M taken off top. \$30M remaining.

Result:  
4,600 solar lights deployed per year. **Entire system solarized after 48 years at the cost of \$1.43B.** However, this does not take into account a pole replacement program required at ~\$20M per year.

Note: The General Fund Subsidized the Bureau this fiscal year by approximately \$17M.



# Ballot Timeline: Results Come After Budget Process

- 1 February 11, 2026 Possible City Council Adoption of Second Amended & Restated Supplemental Agreement with NBS  
Following City Council Adoption:
  - \*Consultant updates Assessment Calculations and Engineer's Report
  - \*City Attorney approval needed for Ordinance of Intention & Engineer's Report as to language and form
  - \*City Clerk's Office approval needed for final ballot design
- 2 3/06/26 BSL presents Council Report, Ordinance of Intention, & Engineer's Report (\$125M) to the City Council
- 3 3/11/26 - 3/13/26 City Council Adopts Ordinance of Intention, Approves Council Report & Engineer's Report  
Hearing Dates are confirmed and the **April 17, 2026** Mailing Date is established by BSL  
\* Budget, Finance, & Innovation Committee meeting must occur during this period.
- 4 **April 17, 2026** **Mailing Date - ~ 585K Ballots & Notices - 45 days minimum to vote by State law**
- 5 June 2, 2026 City Council Hearing - End of Election Period  
\* **Last day ballots are received (not postmarked) by the City Clerk's Office**
- 6 6/3/26 - 6/24/26 City Clerk's Election Division tally's the results  
\* **City Clerk's Election Division may delay tallying results due to local elections**
- 7 June 26, 2026 Final Ordinance Adopted by the City Council - Mayor Adopts Ordinance by 7/6/26
- 8 August 7, 2026 BSL uploads Excel file onto the County database for collection of new Citywide assessments via 2026 / 27 property tax bills. County deadline **August 10, 2026**



# CAO (Matrix) Report

Vs.

# BSL Needs Report FY22

- \$117M Assessment in FY26/27
- Cost Adjustment Factor (tied to inflation)
- Increased maintenance crews ~40 positions
- Augmented fortification program ~10 positions
- Support positions ~17 positions (more warehouse)
- Pole replacement program ~30 positions
- Fleet & Equipment ~\$2M
- Solar Program
- Conduit replacement program
- Customer Service Group
- Field Technology Deployments  
(Cameras, Sensors, Smart Nodes)

- \$125M Assessment in FY26/27
- Cost Adjustment Factor (tied to inflation)
- Increased maintenance crews ~40 positions
- Augmented fortification program ~10 positions
- Support positions ~11 positions (more IT)
- Pole replacement program ~40 positions
- Fleet & Equipment ~\$9M
- Solar Program
- Conduit replacement
- Customer Service Group
- Field Technology Deployments  
(Cameras, Sensors, Smart Nodes)

The Bureau first proposed a new 10 year operational plan in FY21/22. The CAO's commissioned report reviews affirms 90% of the Bureau's Needs Analysis done in FY 21/22 and focuses on repairs. It differs on solar, field technology, fleet & equipment, and customer service programs.



# How is the \$125M Assessment Broken Down by Work?

The following is rounded breakdown of the major components of the Assessment

**Maintenance (\$51M):** Augments staffing to address minor (burned bulbs; single asset grounds) and major (theft; system grounds; post hits) repairs and maintenance. This also takes into account theft and vandalism, which was originally NOT contemplated in the original Assessment.

**System Protection (\$18M):** Intended to convert vulnerable systems to Solar or fortify Street Lighting Assets to prevent repeated theft.

**Lifecycle Replacement (\$26M):** Reconstitutes previously defunded routine maintenance programs such as pole replacement, conduit replacement, and LED replacement.

**Support Services (\$6M):** Institutes a routine 3-year audit of Bureau operations and supports the expanded field operations with required administrative and technical support.

Again, the above is rounded and not expected to total to \$125M. The full details and breakdown of the 10 year work plan the \$125M Assessment is based on can be found in Council File 22-0600-S56.



# Bright Lights, Safe Nights



The lights study found that the developments that received new lights experienced crime rates that were significantly lower than would have been the case without the new lights. Among other findings, the study concluded that increased levels of lighting led to a 36% reduction in "index crimes" — a subset of serious felony crimes that includes murder, robbery and aggravated assault, as well as certain property crimes — that took place outdoors at night in developments that received new lighting, with an overall 4% percent reduction in index crimes.

Projects

# Can Street Lighting Reduce Crime?



# Bureau *of* Street Lighting



Thank you!  
Questions?

