

Hannah S. Cail
Helena Citizen Conservation Board

December 4, 2018

City Commission Office
City County Building, Room 323
316 N. Park
Helena, MT 59623

Dear Mayor Collins and City Commissioners:

On behalf of the City of Helena's Citizen Conservation Board established by City Resolution 20375, to, among other things, recommend "sustainability measures" to the City, I write to recommend the City convert all City-owned streetlights to efficient, cost-effective LED lights.

At its July meeting, the Citizen Conservation Board was provided information about NorthWestern Energy's plans to convert all *North Western-owned* streetlights located in any city- or town-established street lighting districts to LED lightbulbs. This conversion project will cover approximately 43,000 streetlights in Montana, roughly 3,500 of which are in Helena. NorthWestern intends to phase in the conversion over four years starting in 2019, and the first phase involves conversion of NorthWestern's streetlights in Helena and Billings. In fact, the project is already under way in Helena.

As the *Independent Record* reported, NorthWestern's impetus for the project was a combination of things. Not only are parts for the current high-pressure sodium lights becoming antiquated and hard to find, but LED lights use about 50% less electricity, have dropped in price, and last 2 to 3 times longer than the lights they will be replacing. NorthWestern believes the new lights to be both energy efficient *and* cost effective.

Approximately 2% of the streetlights in the City of Helena are owned by the *City*, and those *City-owned* streetlights will *not* be replaced as part of NorthWestern's project. The Citizen Conservation Board believes the City can derive the same benefits NorthWestern anticipates if the City converts its *City-owned* streetlights to LED. In fact, in its 2009 Action Plan, the Helena Climate Change Task Force (our predecessor advisory board) recommended the City convert City street and parking lights to LED.

At its November 8 meeting, the Citizen Conservation Board voted to formally recommend the City pursue converting all City-owned lights to LEDs. The City may wish to coordinate its conversion with NorthWestern Energy for efficiencies. Although we ask the City to

expedite this conversion, in the event the project is not completed before the start of the next fiscal year, the Board asks the City to include a line item in its operations budget for fiscal year 2020 to achieve this conversion. As with the NorthWestern-owned lights, the conversion will be both energy efficient and cost-effective. We look forward to the City's response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "HSCail".

Hannah S. Cail
Chair, Helena Citizen Conservation Board