



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 22-0099, **Version:** 1

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### Resolution Concerning the Need for Reliability Improvements and Technical Upgrades for DTE Streetlights

Whereas, The City of Ann Arbor has established several policies including Vision Zero (zero fatalities and severe injuries on the City's streets), A2 Zero (achieving a just transition to community-wide carbon neutrality by 2030), and a dark skies ordinance;

Whereas, Reliable, efficient and compliant streetlighting is an important component of meeting the City's goals in all these areas;

Whereas, The Ann Arbor School District, as part of its Safe Routes to School Program, encourages school children to walk to school and eliminated some bus stops in 2021 with the intention of increasing the number of students who walk to school;

Whereas, Detroit Edison has more than 5,200 streetlights within the City of Ann Arbor, a sizable majority of the overall streetlights;

Whereas, The Council passed a resolution in 2020 noting its concern with sustained DTE streetlight outages and directing staff to send to DTE, the Michigan Public Service Commission, and the City's elected delegation to the State Legislature a quarterly reports on streetlight reliability within the City of Ann Arbor;

Whereas, While coordination between the City staff and DTE have improved in recent years, these regular contacts have not lead to an observable improvement in overall streetlight reliability as evidenced by the fact DTE repaired more outages on their system in 2021 (1,413 total or 27.0%) compared to 2020 (1,397 total 26.7%);

Whereas, Despite the work undertaken by staff in 2020 and 2021 to regularly communicate with DTE regarding these outages, there are examples of DTE taking more than 10 days after the first report that a streetlight is out to even request a permit for the work necessary and prolonged outages on routes with heavy pedestrian traffic;

Whereas, LED streetlights use less energy, have a longer lifespan, and are less costly to maintain than high-pressure sodium (HPS) streetlights and mercury vapor streetlights, but LEDs compose only 21% of DTE's streetlights in Ann Arbor;

Whereas, LED technologies exist that allow adjustment of lighting temperature and other parameters to increase the safety value of lighting to help achieve Vision Zero goals but which are not offered by DTE;

Whereas, DTE does not offer a connected "smart city" solution in their portfolio that could electronically report the status of streetlight operations on their system which further burdens the City

and its residents to inform DTE of streetlight outages on their system;

Whereas, Some of DTE's processes make it cost prohibitive to transition streetlights to City ownership and operation, namely: DTE requires a minimum of 10 adjacent streetlights before allowing the City to connect City-owned streetlights to electrical service; the cost to remove a single DTE streetlight may cost more than \$10,000; and DTE has not historically entertained selling its streetlight assets to the City; and

Whereas, The Council approved funds for the City to intervene in the next DTE Electric rate case in December;

RESOLVED, That Ann Arbor City staff are directed to continue to meet with DTE staff regularly to continue cooperative efforts to improve safety and streetlight reliability;

RESOLVED, That Ann Arbor City staff are directed to intervene in the next DTE Electric Rate case to further inform the Public Service Commission and DTE of the City's concerns and advocate for enforceable, concrete steps that will improve reliability, safety, and efficiency of the streetlights in the City;

RESOLVED, That in the rate case, the City staff should advocate for: shorter restoration times in general; increased and rapid financial penalties for streetlight outages; the ability of cities to prioritize outages (for instance accelerate restoration in highly-trafficked areas or on school walk routes); technology improvements that can result in greater compliance with sustainability and safety initiatives;

RESOLVED, That City staff should take such actions, including the provision of testimony in the DTE Electric rate case, in support of achieving these goals;

RESOLVED, That City staff report back to Council on the DTE Electric rate case on the testimony provided and the outcomes; and

RESOLVED, That the City Administrator be authorized to take any other necessary administrative actions to implement this resolution.

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Griswold and Briggs