



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 30, 2012

MEDIA CONTACT
Dennis Williams, 858-573-1241

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT FACT SHEET

IMPROVED STREET LIGHTING COMING TO DOWNTOWN **Goal is to reduce light pollution, energy use**

SAN DIEGO, CA- Downtown residents will see brighter, less polluting street lighting as crews currently upgrade 30 of the city's clear globe acorn-style street lights to more efficient lighting in preparation for a resident survey to be held mid-November. The evaluation will happen in a three-block area of East Village, along 10th and Island avenues.

The downtown lighting improvement project, called EnLighten San Diego, is managed by the city's Environmental Services Department. Residents and other downtown stakeholders will evaluate the test lights for safety, aesthetics, light color, and light pollution.

The test results will guide the city as to what light technologies and style to purchase for a future retrofit in a broader downtown area to be determined. No historic lights will be replaced and the new test lights will look similar to the old fixtures.

The outdated lamps are among the biggest contributors to light pollution. Unwanted light spills into areas where it is not wanted, such as business and resident windows, making sleep difficult for residents. The current lamps also interfere with observatories' telescopic activities by brightening the night-time sky, and the new lamps will greatly reduce light pollution.

The downtown retrofit is part of a citywide relamping project of more than 35,000 street lights, which began last year and is expected to be completed March 2013. The retrofit replaces the old yellow-glow sodium vapor lamps with 60% more efficient broad spectrum induction lights, which give a whiter light, more like sunlight.

"Lights for the downtown project are different than the citywide retrofit," said Chris Gonaver, director of the Environmental Services Department. "The decorative downtown lights sit atop light poles, have clear globes and are shaped like an acorn. Generic citywide lights are called cobra heads because when viewed from below resemble a cobra's flared neck."

When the downtown and citywide retrofits are completed, the city will save about 15 million kilowatt-hours per year and \$2 million in combined annual electricity and maintenance.

###