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'Smart Poles' Will Earn City Money While Improving Quality of Life.

Los Angeles is starting to host a new type of hybrid infrastructure — a street light that doubles as a mini-cell tower — through a public-private partnership.

Royal Philips, which makes energy-efficient LED light bulbs, has teamed up with communications technology firm Ericsson to create the “smart pole,” which features energy-efficient lighting and 4G LTE wireless service, reported [Los Angeles Magazine](#). The poles also can “monitor and regulate energy usage in real time,” reported [Annenberg TV News](#).

Philips will cover the costs of providing and installing the poles on city streets and pay Los Angeles a portion of the rent it charges wireless carriers to use the cell towers. The city expects to receive \$1,200 per year from each of the 100 poles to be installed this year. Revenues will rise to \$720,000 annually from a network of 600 poles by 2018, said Ed Ebrahimian, director of the city’s street lighting bureau.

Ebrahimian hopes to negotiate additional P3s to continue expanding coverage. “I would think two or three thousand over the next five years. We are working with other carriers, not just Philips or Ericsson,” he said.

[San Jose](#) is preparing to install this infrastructure as well.

The smart pole concept is just one of the P3-based approaches states and cities are using to provide universal access to wireless technology. Kentucky is conducting a partnership to install statewide broadband and Lake Oswego, Ore., is considering a deal to install its own network as well.

NCPFP

November 6, 2015

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