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CONTRACT AWARD WILL ‘OPEN KABUL STREETS TO THE NIGHT’

KABUL, Afghanistan – The Afghanistan Engineer District – North, in conjunction with the City of Kabul, awarded a contract for the installation of solar streetlights in Kabul today.

The contract, funded through the Commander’s Emergency Relief Program, was awarded to Sustainable Energy Services Afghanistan (SESA), which is based in Kabul. Construction is expected to begin in October and will be complete in approximately one month.

The project will consist of the installation of 28 solar-powered streetlights on a segment of road nearly 1 kilometer in length between Embassy Row and Jumhoriat National Specialized Hospital. The project is expected to support economic development, security and emergency response capabilities to the city and its 4.5 million residents.

The project supports Kabul mayor Mohammad Younus Nawandish’s campaign, called “Opening Kabul Streets to the Night.” The goal of the mayor’s campaign is to increase security, stability and commerce by encouraging people to conduct business and socialize after daylight hours.

Solar-powered lights were chosen over conventional electric streetlights in efforts to minimize impact on the city’s power grid. Since the solar streetlights are individual units that operate independently, necessary repairs would not require all of the streetlights to be inoperable.

The streetlights, which will be 9 meters tall, feature Lithium ion batteries with an expected lifespan of 20 years. The batteries will be secured in a locked container on top of the light fixture to prevent tampering. Once installed, the LED bulb within the light fixture will produce 3,500 lumens at street level.

Today, only 20 percent of Kabul streets are lit at night. This project represents a direct and immediate improvement on quality of life for city residents. Kabul experiences 300 days of sunshine per year, Mayor Nawandish said. Using this type of technology to make use of this resource makes sense.

As part of the contract, SESA will provide training courses to Kabul municipality workers who will be charged with the operations and maintenance of the streetlights upon installation.

The project is the first of a multi-phase program in which the Army Corps of Engineers will partner with Kabul City. Subsequent phases will focus on bringing light to other urban areas.

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