

Anderson County
Legislative Briefing—Dolly Cooper Park Lighting Project
May, 2023

+++++

Anderson County requests funding to assist with installation of athletic field and security lighting at Dolly Cooper Park. Located on the Saluda River in the Powdersville community, the parks amenities include a baseball/softball field, football field, disc golf, walking paths, and two river access points. A community playstructure is under development, and the county recently completed installation of an event-sized picnic shelter.

The lighting request described herein emanates from input provided by park users during public meetings. Currently, there is no lighting system of any kind installed at Dolly Cooper Park. Public-access athletic fields for youth are few in number in this area, and the area’s growing population of school-aged children require existing fields to accommodate games during non-daylight hours. Furthermore, irregular working hours for many adults require many of them to seek exercise opportunities during and after dusk, making the presence of security lighting a highly desired feature at Dolly Cooper Park.

Dolly Cooper Park provides the only nearby publicly accessible fields and recreation amenities for tens of thousands of state residents living in Anderson, Greenville, and Pickens counties, many of whom are impoverished children or working adults. According to the 2020 Decennial Census, the Powdersville Census Designated Place (CDP) has a population of 10,025 and accounts for 5% of the Anderson County’s population. It should be noted that the population from which Dolly Cooper Park draws its users is much larger than that. A radius report shows the population within a three-mile radius of Dolly Cooper to be in excess of 20,000 and the population within a five-mile radius approaches 60,000.

This park serves an area whose resident population exhibits child poverty indicators and merits access to equitable recreational opportunities. Within the Powdersville CDP, 25.8% of all children under 18 years of age live in poverty, and 52.8% of all children under 5 years of age live in poverty. In addition, the park and its programs serve residents of two Greenville County census block groups that exhibit very pronounced percentages of persons designated as having low-to-moderate incomes as determined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):

- Greenville County Census Tract 36.01, BG 4: 1,700 persons; 81.8% LMI
- Greenville County Census Tract 36.02, BG 2: 1,745 persons; 74.8% LMI

If awarded, the requested funds will be used towards the installation of field lighting at the facility's two athletic fields, with the balance of funds remaining to be used for targeted security lighting installation at Dolly Cooper Park. If the request is fully funded, Anderson County is prepared upon award to proceed with finalizing bidding specifications and issuing a bid package for the work. The county estimates a project period of between six to nine months, to include design, bidding, and installation (please note: this timeframe is susceptible to supply-related impacts beyond the county's control).

Anderson County has invested more than \$800,000 in local, non-state-sourced funding towards development projects at Dolly Cooper Park over the past three years. We hope that these investments, along with the local expenditures we make annually to provide ongoing maintenance and upkeep, demonstrate our local commitment to this valued facility.

We appreciate your consideration of our request.

Anderson County Contact:

Steve Newton
Governmental Affairs Director
Anderson County Administrator's Office
(864) 353-0967
snewton@andersoncountysc.org