

COMMUNITY TRAIL BRINGS SAFE, SOLAR-LIT ACCESS TO SCHOOLS & SPORTS

Solar lighting is helping Cushing light its new Tiger Trail safely and affordably—without digging into its web of underground utilities.

In Cushing, Oklahoma—known as the “Pipeline Crossroads of the World”—a new multi-use path called the Tiger Trail is helping residents safely walk, run, and bike between key community destinations. With two of three phases now complete, the trail connects the city’s elementary, middle, and high schools, with plans to extend access to the town’s sports complex.

While the trail already supports public health and active transportation goals, it also demonstrates how solar lighting can sidestep common infrastructure hurdles. In communities like Cushing where underground utilities are dense and challenging to navigate, solar lighting delivers reliable performance without the need for trenching, wiring, or disruption.

A safer path through an active corridor

The Tiger Trail spans 1.6 miles through a lightly developed area on the edge of town. During the day, it sees steady foot and bike traffic from students, families, and residents, but once the sun sets, the unlit trail can feel secluded—despite evening games at nearby sports fields. Lighting was essential to making the space feel safe and inviting at all hours.

The team initially considered wired lighting but the cost quickly became prohibitive. “We needed to save money—that’s what it boiled down to,” says Brian Patric, a landscape architect at CLS & Associates who worked on the project. “The cost of the wire and conduit outweighed the cost of the solar.”



LOCATION
Cushing, OK



APPLICATION
Pathway



PRODUCT
15 x UP2



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Affordable, adaptable, and easy to install

Solar lighting proved to be the more affordable option, not just upfront, but also when factoring in long-term costs and installation challenges. In a town crisscrossed with underground pipelines and easements, trenching for conduit can be both costly and complicated. With solar, each light operates independently, powered entirely by the sun, requiring no electrical connection and minimal disturbance to the site.

After consulting with Sol's Business Development Manager Shelby Weigel, the team selected the UP2 system—a configurable solar lighting platform suited for pathways and trails. Motion sensors were added to balance light levels with energy efficiency and budget needs.

Fifteen UP2 units now illuminate the completed sections of the trail. Installation was fast and straightforward: poles were direct-buried into the ground, with no need for concrete footings. On phase two added expanding foam for peace of mind, but it's been a smooth process."

Expanding access, day and night

With solar lighting in place, the Tiger Trail now supports safe, reliable access between schools, neighborhoods, and recreational spaces—no matter the time of day. Residents use the trail for walking, running, and biking after dark, and it's become a favorite route for community events like 5ks.

As the trail expands to the Cushing Sports Complex, solar lighting will continue to reinforce the city's investment in active infrastructure. What began as a cost-saving decision has become a model for how small towns can use solar to solve practical challenges and create more connected, usable spaces for the whole community.

