



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 16, 2012

TO: Members of the Community Planners Committee

FROM: Amanda Lee, Senior Planner, Development Services

SUBJECT: Amendments to the Outdoor Lighting Regulations

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The City's outdoor lighting regulations are intended to minimize light pollution and promote good lighting design that conserves electrical energy. The problem is that the City's existing regulations do not regulate lighting in the best interest of the public as a whole and have not been able to adapt to evolving lighting technologies due to certain requirements in Section 142.0740 of the Land Development Code that specify low pressure sodium or high pressure sodium.

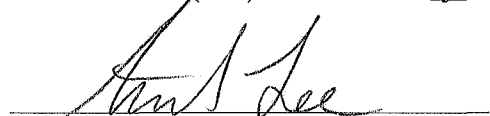
In 2008, the 5<sup>th</sup> Update to the Land Development Code allowed for alternatives to low pressure sodium, but did not include enough flexibility to allow for energy efficient lighting with corresponding good color rendition for public safety and security along walkways, roadways, and parking lots after 11:00 p.m. The City is exempt from the requirements in Section 142.0740 and is currently in the process of replacing the City's street lights in the public right-of-way with induction lamps, which will result in a tremendous energy savings for the City with a better quality light than the previous high pressure sodium. However, private applicants are precluded from achieving comparable energy savings or better quality light in parking lots or for security.

Amendments are therefore proposed to accommodate broad spectrum alternatives for better lighting for public safety and energy efficiency. The proposed amendments are necessary because the existing code limits outdoor lighting for parking lots and security to generally monochromatic lighting, which tends to create a dark environment instead of the intended secure and safe environment. To offset the increase in allowable lighting for security, new limitations on color temperature, shielding, and full cut off (flat lenses) are proposed to better regulate available light technologies and minimize associated light pollution and sky glow impacts, particularly in consideration of the Palomar and Mount Laguna Observatories. The proposed amendments also are important for the downtown community plan area to provide for better light that supports its high pedestrian, commercial, and entertainment activities. In case of conflict, the proposed amendments defer to the Downtown Lighting Plan that is currently in process as a supplement the Downtown Community Plan and Design Guidelines.

Following is a summary of the proposed changes:

<u>REQUIREMENT</u>	<u>PURPOSE</u>	<u>COMMENT</u>
<b>Shields</b>	Limits light emission above the horizontal plane	Existing requirement
<b>Flat lenses (Full cut-off)</b>	Limits illumination to 0% up-light thereby reducing glare and potential for sky glow	New requirement
<b>Color temperature (Kelvin CCT)</b>	Limits blue light that can interfere with observatories and circadian sleep rhythms	New requirement
<b>Required shut off 11pm to 6am.</b>	To help preserve dark night sky	Existing requirement
<b>Exemptions from 11pm shutoff</b>	To provide for public safety and comply with applicable laws	
• <b>Fully operational uses</b>	To provide for safe operation of commercial and industrial businesses that are permitted to operate past 11pm	Modified requirement
• <b>Parking lots and security lighting</b>	To provide for public safety	Modified requirement
• <b>Recreational activities</b>	To provide for safety of participants and spectators for recreational uses that are permitted past 11pm	Existing requirement
• <b>Signs for business open after 11pm</b>	To provide for public safety and compliance with federal and state protections for signage	Existing requirement
• <b>ATMs</b>	To provide for public safety in compliance with the State Financial Code	Existing requirement
• <b>Downtown</b>	To support commercial activity downtown for consistency with the Downtown Lighting Plan	New requirement
<b>Sensitive biological areas</b>	To direct light away from sensitive biological areas	Existing requirement

As part of the public outreach, the City is working with key stakeholders and recently distributed a request for input on the draft amendments (distributed January 26, 2012), which has yielded a positive response. The main area of disagreement is related to the request by local astronomers for a more restrictive color temperature requirement than the proposed 4000 K CCT maximum. The Community Planners Committee may choose to provide input and make a recommendation to the Planning Commission and City Council. The Code Monitoring Team and Sustainable Energy Advisory Board recently recommended approval of the draft ordinance, and Technical Advisory Committee will consider at their March meeting. If you have any questions, please contact me at (619) 446-5367 or [ajohnsonlee@sandiego.gov](mailto:ajohnsonlee@sandiego.gov).

  
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