



**City Planning, Development Review**

**DATE:** January 7, 2003 *Mary Collins*  
**TO:** *for* Lorne C. Kramer, City Manager  
**FROM:** William Healy, City Planning Director  
Steve Tuck, Senior Planner  
Alece Otero, Planner II  
**RE:** Lighting Ordinance

**SUMMARY:**

City Planning proposes to revise the exterior lighting requirements in the Zoning Code. The intent of the project is to address issues associated with exterior lighting design that result in negative impacts within the community. Topics to be addressed include excessive amount of light and glare from fixtures. The project will assist in the development of standards for the City consistent with accepted exterior lighting design principles.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:**

City Council has heard several land use applications in the past where citizens have commented on the potential adverse impacts associated with the exterior lighting of proposed developments. Council has imposed special conditions on development proposals to address these concerns.

**BACKGROUND:**

Exterior lighting is currently regulated by the Zoning Code. First, within development standards Section 7.4.102.D, and within the general provisions for off-street parking in Section 7.4.205.H; respectively:

Lighting: All exterior lighting must be arranged to reflect away from any adjoining premises and any public right-of-way, and it shall be shielded to contain all direct rays on the site.

Lighting: Lights used for illumination of parking areas and driveways shall be directed away from adjacent properties and rights of way so as to confine direct rays to the site.

The second area of the Zoning Code to address lighting is Section 7.5.501 and 7.5.502 outlining review criteria for concept, development, and minor development plans. This language requires projects to be compatible, avoid adverse impacts, and be harmonious with the surrounding neighborhood. Section 7.5.502.C.4 requires screening or buffering from lighting that may be created by a proposed development.

The above regulations are inadequate to address the exterior lighting issues of today. A revision to the lighting standards is the proper mechanism to control the impact of adverse exterior lighting and to provide uniformity of review for development projects.

Staff has reviewed lighting regulations, and has concluded that the City of Colorado Springs would benefit from a uniform set of lighting requirements. A perspicuous set of lighting standards would provide a higher level of understanding and consistency for the development community, the citizens and the City review and enforcement agencies. Complaints to the City regarding exterior lighting have increased as exterior light levels have been raised in newer projects. The issue of lighting and its impacts

is identified during the City's development review process. The few tools currently available within the City Code to address lighting issues have proven inadequate.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The Planning Department has contracted lighting consultants, Clanton & Associates, to assist in the development of lighting regulations. There is currently \$5000 in the 2003 budget for these professional services. In addition to standard work responsibilities, the remaining regulation development will be done as a special project by the Development Review Division staff.

An increase in review time is not expected with the lighting regulations as a uniform standard will create an objective rather than subjective review. These lighting standards will reduce the time spent researching, interpreting, and negotiating problematic applications for development review planners.

**BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:**

A proposal to modify the provisions of the Zoning Code requires Planning Commission review and action prior to City Council consideration.

**STAKEHOLDER PROCESS:**

The City Planning Department has initiated preliminary research and has defined the following process of progression:

- ➔ Council briefing
- ➔ Conduct lighting surveys with tours
- ➔ Public invitation for half day education session
- ➔ Create Exterior Lighting Committee (ELC)
- ➔ Meetings with ELC
- ➔ Public lighting ordinance review
- ➔ Proceed to Planning Commission
- ➔ City Council review
- ➔ Monitor Code impacts

Groups to be notified include:

City Council

Planning Commission

Planning Staff

Utility Staff

Traffic Staff

Police Department

Fire Department

Special Interest Groups

Colorado Springs Astronomical Society

Council of Neighbors & Organizations (CONO) Representatives - Homeowner's Association Presidents

Housing & Builders Association (HBA)

Organization of Westside Neighbors (OWN)

American Institute of Architects (AIA)

Sign Manufacturers

Lighting Consultants

Lighting Retailers

Fixtures

Systems

Local Business Owners

Local Architecture and Planning Firms

Regional Building Development