

Resolution to Endorse Implementation of an Amendment to the Uniform Development Code Section 5.25, Outdoor Lighting, to Reduce the Effects of Light Pollution

Description: The City of Ann Arbor's Planning Commission has approved an amendment of the Uniform Development Code (UDC) for Outdoor Lighting that promotes good lighting practices and reduces human-sourced light pollution. The amendment will replace the current Section 5.25, add Section 5.33.6 Nonconforming Lighting Installations; and add thirteen definitions to 5.37.2 Specific Terms. Goals of the amendment are to benefit the nocturnal ecosystem, to improve safety by reducing glare and skyglow, and to reduce use of energy for night time lighting. This initiative is sponsored by the Energy Commission and will be considered for approval by the City Council.

Sponsor: Commissioners Rita Mitchell, John Mirsky

Title: Resolution to Endorse Implementation of an Amendment to the Uniform Development Code Section 5.25, Outdoor Lighting, to Reduce the Effects of Light Pollution

Whereas: The existing Section 5.25 of the city code, Outdoor Lighting, does not promote good outdoor lighting practices, because it allows light pollution in the form of light trespass, glare, and skyglow; and

Whereas: Light pollution, including glare, skyglow, and light trespass represents an existential threat to the nocturnal ecosystem, and interferes with wildlife safety, movement, activities, and life cycles;

Whereas: Blue-rich LED lighting, which is harmful to wildlife, is proliferating and contributing to the exponential increase in light pollution;

Whereas: Light pollution represents a waste of energy and is detrimental to sustainability practices;

Whereas: Reducing light pollution by minimizing light trespass, light intensity, blue-rich colors, and hours of use of outdoor lighting will benefit the environment and efficient use of energy;

Whereas: Light pollution is a health and safety hazard and negatively affects night time mobility, including the interaction of motor vehicles and pedestrians, bicyclists, or scooter riders;

Whereas: The amendment and enhanced sections of the UDC applicable to Outdoor Lighting were approved the Planning Commission on August 18, 2020;

Whereas: July, 2021 has been declared Dark Sky Awareness Month by the Michigan State Senate according to the bipartisan-sponsored Resolution SR-69, passed on June 24, 2021 (<http://legislature.mi.gov/doc.aspx?2021-SR-0069>); therefore be it

Resolved: The City of Ann Arbor Environmental Commission endorses the amendment and enhancement of the UDC Section 5.25 and addition of Section 5.33.6 Nonconforming Lighting Installations and addition of thirteen definitions to 5.37.2 Specific Terms, as passed by the Planning Commission; and

Resolved: The Environmental Commission advises City Council to adopt the above-mentioned amendment and enhancement of the UDC, applicable to site planned developments and projects that meet criteria for replacement of lighting elements; and

Resolved: The Environmental Commission advises City Council to direct staff to provide educational information to the members of the public, and local commercial and educational institutions regarding how to voluntarily modify existing outdoor lighting to conform with the standards of UDC Section 5.25 as amended and enhanced.

Sponsored by: Commissioners Mitchell and Mirsky