

PROJECT: IDO Update – Lighting Ordinance
MEETING DATE / TIME: March 30, 2023 at 5:30 pm
LOCATION: Hybrid

Attendees:

City of Albuquerque: Representatives of Planning Department, Representative of City Council
Clanton & Associate: Rick Utting, Kate McBride, Debbie Melton
Community Attendees: 14 individuals

Meeting Notes**Lighting 101**

- What started off the update process
 - City Counselor Trudy Jones, District 8 - had the funding allocated for this project
 - IDO update process has been ongoing
 - Some in community are frustrated with this process
 - Current code was adopted from the previous code about 5 years ago and it wasn't updated at that time
- Discussed lighting terminology and current best practices
 - Visual Adaptation
 - Role of Contrast
 - Color Spectrum
 - Is trending to lower temperatures nationally
 - Live demo done at the end of the meeting showed a strong community preference for 3k or lower
 - Luminance vs Illuminance
 - Light Pollution
 - Amortization of the new ordinance
 - Why it will need to take a while to implement for the whole City
 - Introduction to lighting zones

Light Pollution

- Can currently see the “sky dome” of Albuquerque from at least 50-60 miles away
 - Information was shared by star-gazing attendee
- Several in audience were aware of Flagstaff's lighting accomplishments
 - Discussed the role of strong community buy-in for these changes
- Questions raised about what percentage of outdoor lighting this ordinance would impact compared to street lighting
- Strong community preference for darker skies and lower light temperatures
 - Community stakeholders in attendance did not feel security lighting was as effective a preventative tool as local businesses seem to
- Support for the idea of trying to boost astrotourism in the Albuquerque area

Regulating Lighting

- How special uses will be handled by the City
- What the new permit process may look like for lighting
 - Prescriptive vs performance methods
- Questions about how glare could be addressed in the ordinance update

- Discussion about lighting zones, light trespass, curfews
- Preference expressed for stricter curfews on lighting
- Currently security lighting is exempt from the curfew that applies to other lighting types
- Security lighting is not adequately defined, so it means anything
- The new ordinance intends to address this by stipulating “no more than 20% of the floodlight”
- How to address light coming from inside a building
 - Could say source must be shielded from line of sight
 - Could say lighting cannot be on after hours on the upper floors because it’s not contributing to the wayfinding of the street
 - Could use lighting zones to implement this
 - Could also address this issue through light trespass measurements

Expectations for the Ordinance Update

- Nuisance lighting to be caught before something is built or remodeled instead of by complaints made afterwards
- Community expressed that complaints about lighting needed to be addressed faster
 - City is going to update their meters
 - Planning department intends to use the ordinance during planning and permits to be the first line of defense, and then enforcement comes into play. Third level of enforcement is to take the issues from districts court down to a civil court setting so that stage will go faster.
- Improved communication about IDO expectations so people know what they are upfront
- New ordinance needs to better align the lighting with zone districts throughout the City

Anticipated Schedule:

- There will be a new lighting ordinance draft submitted for the City's review/decision process as part of the IDO annual update process by the end of the year.