

Sec. 56-120. - Exterior lighting.

- (a) *Purpose.* The intent of this section is to provide standards to minimize the actual physical effects of lighting, as well as the effect that lighting may have on the surrounding neighborhood and the night sky. The goal is to ensure that exterior lighting meets the functional and security needs of the subject development in a way that does not adversely affect the adjacent properties, neighborhood or night sky. Lighting shall further and be in compliance with the State of New Mexico Night Sky Protection Act, [74-12-1 NMSA 1978].
- (b) *Applicability.* All residential and non-residential development shall comply with the standards set forth in this section. For new single-family residential developments with more than five lots and all multi-family residential and non-residential developments, the developer shall submit a proposed exterior lighting plan. This plan must be submitted concurrently with the subdivision application or the site plan. The exterior lighting plan shall include plans and specifications for streetlights, parking lot lights, flood lights and other exterior structure lights. The specifications shall include details of the design, fixture height, lamp type, pole, wattage, location and spacing of lights.
- (c) *Design standards.* All exterior lighting, including public street lighting, if applicable, shall meet the following design standards:
 - 1. *General standards.*
 - (a) No flashing or flickering lights shall be permitted.
 - (b) Parking areas and other open spaces shall be illuminated as unobtrusively as possible to meet the functional needs of safe circulation and of protecting people and property. Spaces such as building entrances and outside seating areas shall utilize local lighting that defines the space without glare.
 - (c) Light sources shall be concealed or shielded to minimize the potential for glare and unnecessary diffusion on to adjacent properties or into public rights-of-way. Undercanopy lighting shall be recessed and shall not extend below canopy.
 - (d) Light fixtures used to illuminate flags, statues, or any other objects mounted on a pedestal, platform or pole shall be lit from above by a downward projecting light source or use a narrow cone beam of light that will not extend beyond the illuminated object.
 - (e) Street lighting shall be installed by the developer with nominal spacing of one light fixture every 300 linear feet, unless an alternative lighting plan is approved by the planning director.
 - (f) In the R-R, R-1, R-2 and C-1 zone districts, light fixtures shall not exceed 20 feet in

height above ground level except for security lighting.

- (g) In the C-2, I, and PUD zone districts, light fixtures shall not exceed 30 feet in height above ground level.
- (h) The planning director may approve an alternative lighting plan if safety or security cannot be maintained by the exterior lighting requirements. The developer shall submit a proposed exterior lighting plan. The specifications shall include details of each fixture's design and height, lamp type, spacing and wattage.

2. *Exceptions.*

- (a) *Outdoor recreational uses.* Because of their unique requirements for nighttime visibility and their limited hours of operation, sports playing fields, tennis courts, and other similar outdoor recreational uses are exempt from the exterior lighting standards and shall only be required to meet the following standards:
 - (i) Maximum permitted light post height: Eighty feet.
 - (ii) A lighting source that illuminates an outdoor recreational use may exceed a cutoff angle of 90 degrees, provided that the luminaries are shielded to prevent light and glare spill over on to adjacent properties.
 - (iii) Exterior lighting for an outdoor recreational use shall be extinguished no later than 11:00 p.m. unless otherwise permitted by the city council. Routine recreation use that occurs due to unscheduled overtime play or unscheduled delays does not require a permit.
- (b) *Holiday lighting.* Because of its festive nature, holiday lighting may twinkle, flash, change color or have other visual effects provided it does not interfere with traffic signs or signals or adversely impact adjacent properties. Holiday lighting may be installed 60 days prior to the holiday and must be removed within 60 days after the holiday.
- (c) *Accent lighting.* Accent lighting is permitted provided it does not interfere with traffic signs or signals and does not adversely impact adjacent properties, or the night sky, by causing light and glare spill over. Flood lights are not considered accent lighting.
- (d) *Security lighting.* Security lighting is permitted in all zones provided it does not interfere with traffic signs or signals and does not shine onto adjacent properties. Security lighting shall be shielded to prevent light and glare spill over on to adjacent properties and into the night sky. Security lighting shall not exceed 35 feet in height. Flood lights are considered security lighting.
- (e) *Alternative lighting plans.* Applicants for developments that are required to install

lighting pursuant to this section may request that the planning director approve an alternative lighting plan that does not meet the requirements set forth above. The planning director shall be authorized to approve such alternative lighting plan if the required lighting cannot be provided due to existing topographical features of the land or other property irregularity, and if the proposed lighting demonstrates due diligence with respect to night sky protection, public safety, and shielding.

(Ord. No. 2011-15, 10-11-11; Ord. No. 2016-18, Att., 9-13-16)