



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
COUNCIL POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 1/28/2020

ITEM NO: 4

DATE: January 23, 2020
TO: Council Policy Committee
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Discuss and Provide Direction on Potential Outdoor Lighting Regulation Modifications.

RECOMMENDATION:

Discuss and provide direction on potential outdoor lighting regulation modifications.

BACKGROUND:

On October 22, 2019, the Town Council Policy Committee discussed Town Code Section 29.10.09015, below, which limits outdoor lighting and prohibits “shoestring lights.” The Policy Committee motion was to temporarily suspend the prohibition of shoestring lighting while the Town considered new lighting regulations for different zones throughout Town.

On November 25, 2019, the Town Council Policy Committee discussed and provided direction on potential outdoor lighting regulation modifications, including the items addressed in this staff report.

DISCUSSION:

Potential modifications to the policies, code, standards, and guidelines are listed below. These modifications are shown below with additions underlined and deletions shown in ~~striketrough~~.

A. General Plan

Modify General Plan Policy CD-3.2 to avoid impacting temporary seasonal lighting. The following recommendation will be forwarded to the General Plan Update Advisory Committee for their review:

PREPARED BY: Jennifer Armer, AICP
Senior Planner

Reviewed by: Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Community Development Director, and Town Attorney

DISCUSSION (continued):

Policy CD-3.2 Permanent s-Street and structural lighting shall be required to minimize its visual impacts by preventing glare, limiting the amount of light that falls on neighboring properties, and avoiding light pollution of the night sky.

B. Zoning Code

Change the regulations to differentiate between residential and commercial zones. The following section could be revised to read:

Sec. 29.10.09015. - Control of outdoor lighting.

Outdoor lights in residential zones must be shielded and directed to shine on improvements including plants on the zoning plot where the lights are located and not directly on other property or any public right-of-way. ~~Street lighting is not permitted.~~

Modify the sports court lighting to not require shutoff at 10:00 p.m., and be more like examples provided in the November 25, 2019 Staff Report. The following section could be revised to read:

Sec. 29.40.025. - Court game areas.

Tennis, volleyball, basketball, badminton and similar court game areas may be located anywhere on the lot except in the required front yard or side yard abutting the street. Fences over six (6) feet high are allowed to enclose court game areas, when approved through the Administrative Procedure for Minor Residential Projects. Lighting for court game areas is prohibited unless approved through the Administrative Procedure for Minor Residential Projects and unless it is in compliance with the following standards to the satisfaction of the Planning Director:

- (1) Game court lighting shall incorporate cut-off fixtures and lighting shall be shielded and directed onto the court.
- (2) ~~Lighting for game court areas shall not be used after 10:00 p.m.~~ High-intensity lights are not permitted.
- (3) Lighting in the hillside areas is prohibited. Hillside areas are defined by the hillside area map in the Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines.

DISCUSSION (continued):

C. Residential Design Guidelines

Modify Residential Design Guideline 3.11.5 “Minimize exterior lighting impacts on neighbors:”

- All exterior light fixtures, with the exception of holiday and patio string lights, should utilize shields so that no bulb is visible and to ensure that light is directed to the ground surface and does not spill light onto neighboring parcels or produce glare when seen from nearby homes.
- Decorative residential light fixtures are preferred for ~~should be chosen rather than strictly utilitarian~~ security lighting fixtures.

Staff looks forward to the discussion with the Committee and will be available to discuss options and related issues.

COORDINATION:

This report was prepared in coordination with the Town Manager’s Office.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is not a fiscal impact associated with this item.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

This is not a project defined under CEQA, and no further action is required.