



Staff Report

File #: REPORT 21-0373, Version: 1

Honorable Mayor and Members of the Hermosa Beach City Council Regular Meeting of June 22, 2021

ORDINANCE TO REGULATE OUTDOOR LIGHTING (Building and Code Enforcement Official Robert Rollins)

Recommended Action:

Staff recommends City Council introduce on first reading, an Ordinance of the City of Hermosa Beach adding Chapter 8.72 to Title 8 of the Hermosa Beach Municipal Code; amending Chapter 1.10; and finding the action exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (**Attachment 1**).

Executive Summary:

The City will introduce on first reading an ordinance establishing standards for outdoor lighting. The regulations would enable Code Enforcement to address issues created by excessive and intrusive lighting in residential zones, as well as from residential and commercial properties onto the Strand and the beach.

Background:

Since October 2020, the City has received complaints regarding bright floodlights mounted above the second-floor balcony of a home in the north part of the Strand aimed at the beach. Upon inspection, Code Enforcement identified three additional residential properties, in the same block, that had also installed large floodlights aimed at the beach.

The floodlights were found to cast bright illumination across the Strand and about halfway across the beach. This unregulated bright illumination creates light pollution inconsistent with the scenic landscape as identified in PLAN Hermosa and creates a nuisance to neighbors. Further, it can detract from public safety as it creates inconsistent illumination in public spaces. In responding to these complaints, staff realized that existing nuisance provisions in the Municipal Code are insufficient to address inconsistent lighting and light pollution issues throughout all residential areas in the City.

Discussion:

The proposed ordinance would establish standards for outdoor lighting. The regulations would limit excessive light and glare to avoid unwanted illumination of adjacent property. Outdoor light fixtures on residential properties shall essentially only emit light onto the property on which the light source is located, consistent with these standards included in the proposed ordinance:

1. *Light fixtures shall be equipped with prismatic diffusing lenses or other suitable shielding to ensure that the light source (or light bulb) is not directly visible from the public right-of-way or from any abutting property;*
2. *Light fixtures shall be high-efficiency, fully shielded, down cast (emitting no light above the horizontal plane of the fixture), and installed so as to ensure light does not spill beyond property line of the property on which the light source is located; and*
3. *Flashing, blinking, or otherwise moving lights are prohibited, except for temporary holiday lights.*

The proposed ordinance would also prohibit outdoor lighting, on either commercial or residential properties, aimed at the Strand or the beach:

Except for lighting operated by the City or permitted by another provision of this Code, mercury vapor lights, searchlights, laser lights, or any light fixture with a high intensity discharge lamp or bulb, including floodlights and spotlights, shall not be used on commercial or residential structures in a manner that illuminates the Strand or the beach.

The only lighting exempt from the provision of the ordinance would include temporary lighting for public works projects, law enforcement, and other public lighting.

Staff recommends City Council consider the proposed ordinance, which would facilitate Code Enforcement's efforts to abate non-conforming lighting and minimize issues created by excessive and intrusive lighting.

General Plan Consistency:

This report and associated recommendation have been evaluated for their consistency with the City's General Plan. Relevant Policies are listed below:

Land Use Element

Goal 1. Create a sustainable urban form and land use patterns that support a robust economy and high quality of life for residents.

Policies:

- **1.7 Compatibility of uses.** Ensure the placement of new uses does not create or exacerbate nuisances between different types of land uses.

Parks + Open Space Element

Goal 5. Scenic vistas, viewpoints, and resources are maintained or enhanced.

Policies:

- **5.7 Light pollution.** Preserve skyward nighttime views and lessen glare by minimizing lighting levels along the shoreline.

Fiscal Impact:

There is no fiscal impact to the City associated with the recommended action.

Attachments:

1. Draft Ordinance

Respectfully Submitted by: Robert Rollins, Building and Code Enforcement Official

Concur: Ken Robertson, Director Community Development Department

Paul LeBaron, Chief of Police

Noted for Fiscal Impact: Viki Copeland, Finance Director

Legal Review: Mike Jenkins, City Attorney

Approved: Suja Lowenthal, City Manager