

**From:** [Kerry Prosser](#)  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Cc:** [Planning Commission Members](#); [Scott Woodford](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Sisters City Council re Light Pollution  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 11, 2023 10:36:09 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Good morning Council,  
Please see the email below regarding the Dark Sky Lighting Code.  
Thank you,

**Kerry Prosser**

Assistant City Manager  
City of Sisters | City Managers Office  
PO Box 39 | 520 E. Cascade Ave., Sisters, OR 97759  
Direct: 541-323-5213 | City Hall: 541-549-6022  
[kprosser@ci.sisters.or.us](mailto:kprosser@ci.sisters.or.us) | [www.ci.sisters.or.us](http://www.ci.sisters.or.us)



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**From:** Mel Bartels <[melvinbartels@gmail.com](mailto:melvinbartels@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 11, 2023 10:30 AM  
**To:** Kerry Prosser <[kprosser@ci.sisters.or.us](mailto:kprosser@ci.sisters.or.us)>  
**Subject:** Sisters City Council re Light Pollution

Dear Councilors and Commissioners

I appreciate you taking up this surprisingly important issue. While not everyone is an astronomer, people do care about their health and the natural world.

Excess night lighting is associated with hormonal cancers like breast cancer, lowered life-expectancy, obesity and depression. And perhaps Alzheimers.

Excess night lighting affects the migration of birds through central Oregon, killing birds that are already in decline.

I urge you to consider inexpensive common sense measures like shielding existing lights to reduce glare, directing light where it is supposed to go for safety and turning off lights when not needed.

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Mel Bartels

**From:** [Kerry Prosser](#)  
**To:** [Scott Woodford](#)  
**Subject:** RE: dark skies issues  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 11, 2023 2:35:12 PM

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FYI- I sent this on to Council.

Kerry Prosser  
Assistant City Manager  
City of Sisters | City Managers Office  
PO Box 39 | 520 E. Cascade Ave., Sisters, OR 97759  
Direct: 541-323-5213 | City Hall: 541-549-6022  
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-----Original Message-----

From: paul bennett <[pbrudevold@icloud.com](mailto:pbrudevold@icloud.com)>  
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2023 2:31 PM  
To: Kerry Prosser <[kprosser@ci.sisters.or.us](mailto:kprosser@ci.sisters.or.us)>  
Subject: dark skies issues

Cary,

for tonight's meeting. I hope to be there as well.

Paul Bennett

**From:** [Rima Givot](#)  
**To:** [Kerry Prosser](#)  
**Cc:** [Scott Woodford](#)  
**Subject:** Dark Skies Lighting Development Code Amendments comment  
**Date:** Sunday, October 8, 2023 4:23:12 PM

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Hi Kerry,

I hope you're doing well!

I would like to submit the following comment to all the City Councilors and the Planning Commissioners regarding the Dark Skies Lighting Development Code Amendments. Will you also include it in the hello there comments for the upcoming meeting on 10/11/23?

Comment/message:

Dear Sisters City Councilors and Planning Commissioners,

I appreciate the time you are taking to update the Dark Skies Lighting Development code for Sisters.

There seems to be three main decisions you are needing to address.

1. City lighting. I believe it is very important as the public example, that the City follow the code. Recently simple modifications were made to the Cascade Avenue street lights on the east corner of Fir and Cascade that effectively brought the lights into compliance. Temporary shielding was placed inside the light fixtures that prevented the light bulb itself from being seen. This adjustment did two important things. It reduced glare, making the lights significantly safer and shining the light on the crosswalk instead of catching so much attention from drivers and viewers. The second thing the modifications influenced was producing less light pollution because the light from the bulbs was being directed onto the ground, not out into the sky. This modification demonstrates that when lights are effectively shielded, they are significantly safer, and a byproduct is they produce less light pollution. I do not believe the city needs to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on new fixtures. Recently, this simple modification showed that with very little money and some effort from the City's maintenance people, Sisters can both have safer lights and be complying with your lighting code. I urge you to hold yourself accountable to the lighting code that all other people are expected to follow. Lights that follow the code will inevitably be safer because they direct the light in the correct location and do not attract attention with the glare of the bulb.

2. String lights. Many businesses seem to be benefiting from string lighting in their outdoor spaces. This very attractive space seems to be a positive thing for our community. I urge you to set a curfew on string lighting so that they are not left on when they are not being used. This is a logical and practical approach to both preventing light pollution and providing environments that people want to be outside.

3. Time to comply. It makes sense to have the time needed to comply to the updated code be reasonable, but not endless. I would recommend a 5-year window to come into compliance, with the ability to apply for an extension, should there be a need on a resident's part. At the same time, a system should be set for people who would like support updating their lights. We as community members can help provide lighting and/or create simple modifications of lights.

Sometimes, a simple coating of aluminum foil around the top of the inside of a light fixture will enhance the safety, reduce the glare and light pollution, and not detract from the aesthetic of the light fixture.

I also want to remind you, that this is not a new code. The current code specified that all lighting be up to compliance by 2015. So technically any lighting that is not currently in compliance should enforced be corrected by the current code. It is reasonable to expect residents to bring their lights into compliance.

I urge you to make decisions that give the City the ability to effectively apply to be a Dark Sky Community. The ability to acquire such a designation is becoming more and more rare, and would only help our community in the long run.

With the amount of growth in Central Oregon, decisions you make with the Dark Sky Lighting code could cause irreversible changes in our lifetime. I believe it is unrealistic to think you can kick the can down the road by putting off any decisions. You have the opportunity to preserve this unique and special resource we have for our children and our children's children. You also have the ability to significantly reduce our citizens' ability to see the stars and the Milky Way as we can now. Please make the brave and courageous decision to put our future ahead of convenient choices. This is such an important and special opportunity.

Sincerely,

Rima Givot

**From:** [Carol Jenkins](#)  
**To:** [Scott Woodford](#)  
**Cc:** [Matt Martin](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Comments for Dark Sky ordinance revision Public Hearing meeting on 12/7/23  
**Date:** Friday, December 1, 2023 8:31:21 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Here is another one from Rima Givot. Let me know if you need for me to do anything to help.  
Thanks.

Carol Jenkins  
Planning Technician II  
City of Sisters | Community Development Dept.  
PO Box 39 | 520 E. Cascade Ave., Sisters, OR 97759  
Direct: 541-323-5207 | City Hall: 541-549-6022  
[cjenkins@ci.sisters.or.us](mailto:cjenkins@ci.sisters.or.us) | [www.ci.sisters.or.us](http://www.ci.sisters.or.us)



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**From:** Rima Givot <[rima.givot@gmail.com](mailto:rima.givot@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 30, 2023 8:39 PM  
**To:** Carol Jenkins <[cjenkins@ci.sisters.or.us](mailto:cjenkins@ci.sisters.or.us)>  
**Subject:** Comments for Dark Sky ordinance revision Public Hearing meeting on 12/7/23

Dear Carol,  
Will you please forward this email to the Planning Commissioners before the Public Hearing meeting next Thursday 12/7/2023?

Start of comment:

In October, the City Council met and unanimously agreed that the City should follow its own code and NOT be exempt from the lighting ordinance. In order to bring the Cascade Ave street lights into compliance, the City will need to spend some money. One estimate that was stated at the meeting was \$100,000 to replace the 26 street lights on Cascade Ave. I believe there are various ways to raise the necessary funds, from budgeting the money, to seeking grants, to seeking community funding support such as the ability to sponsor the cost of individual street lights. Regardless, I believe the investment in the precious resource of being able to enjoy dark night skies is worth the temporary cost. I urge you to have the courage to pay for upholding our quality of life.

I ask that you support that the City follow its own lighting code and support changing the lights to be Dark Sky compliant (well shielded, warm color, as dim as possible while still lighting the crosswalk,

possibly lights that dim on timers to be dimmer later in the night). If the City does this, it will limit light pollution and also make the street lights safer. Currently the Cascade street lights distribute light up, glare in drivers' eyes, and don't light the walk-way well. Investing in responsible lights in the next five years is worth the cost. Long term benefits of our community being able to enjoy the stars and limit our light pollution is worth the cost. I envision a future where future generations can continue to see the Milky Way from our town.

I also encourage that you support the City in working towards Dark Sky Community certification. This will support astro tourism in our community and could be a shoulder-season and winter attraction for tourists.

Thank you for the work you are doing!

Sincerely,  
Rima Givot  
18557 McSwain Drive  
Sisters, OR 97759

**From:** [Givot, Rima](#)  
**To:** [Kerry Prosser](#); [Scott Woodford](#)  
**Cc:** [John Barentine](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: City of Sisters Council meeting on Dark Skies  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 11, 2023 12:49:09 PM

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Hi Kerry and Scott,

Will you please include the following in the comments for today's City Council meeting about the Dark Sky Lighting Code ammendments and forward to the City Councelors? Thank you!

My comment:

In the interest of Sisters becoming a Dark Sky Community, I specifically emailed the Dark Sky consultant, John Barantine two questions: 1. With the current status of the Sisters ordinance revisions, would the ordinance meet Dark Sky Community standards? 2. If not, what are the key things standing in the way?

Below are his responses with a detailed analysis of where the City currently stands. The only thing that needs to be adjusted so that the new ammended code would allow for Sisters to qualify as a Dark Sky Community is to include the City lights in the ordinance (removing exempt status) and include a provision that clearly indicates where, when, and under what circumstances new publicly owned outdoor lighting, including street lighting, is warranted and will be permitted.

John Barantine's response to my questions:

Question 1: With the current status of the Sisters ordinance revisions, would the ordinance meet Dark Sky Community standards?

"I hadn't (yet) determined this, named because the City hasn't asked the same question. Here and there, staff have asked me about eligibility and whether this or that provision would pass muster with DarkSky.

Here's a quick run-down of the current code revision proposal, which is to be discussed tomorrow night (11th) at the Sisters City Council meeting.

### 1. Shielding

DarkSky requirement: "Full shielding of all lighting fixtures over 1000 initial lamp lumens"

Assessment: **Passes.**

Reference: §2.15.2400(E)(2) "*Unless subject to an exception, all light fixtures shall be fully shielded and otherwise designed and installed prevent light trespass and glare.*" The only exceptions are a few specialized applications like string and holiday lighting.

### 2. Spectrum management



DarkSky requirement: “A limit on the emission of short-wavelength light through one of the following restrictions:

- a. The correlated color temperature (CCT) of lamps must not exceed 3000 Kelvins; OR
- b. Allowed lighting must not emit more than 25% of its total spectral power at wavelengths < 550 nanometers; OR
- c. The scotopic-to-photopic (S/P) ratio of allowed lighting must not exceed 1.3”

Assessment: **Passes**.

Reference: §2.15.2400(E)(5) "*The Correlated Color Temperature (CCT) shall not exceed 3000 Kelvins to limit the emission of shorter wavelength (blue-violet) light.*”

### 3. Unshielded lighting site limits

DarkSky requirement: “A restriction on the total amount of unshielded lighting, such as a limit on lumens per net acre or a total site lumen allowance in unshielded fixtures (or equivalent wattages)”

Assessment: **Moot**. The only allowed instances of unshielded lighting are trivial in nature.

Reference: n/a

### 4. Overlighting prevention

DarkSky requirement: “A policy to address over-lighting, such as lumens per net acre caps (irrespective of shielding state) or maximum illuminance specifications”

Assessment: **Passes**. Lumens caps are provided for all land use types.

Reference: §2.15.2400(E)(3) "*To prevent over-lighting, lighting shall not exceed the following maximum lamp brightness:*

- *Single Family Residential: No individual lighting fixture may exceed 850 lumens and the entire property may not exceed 4,000 lumens in total or 6,000 lumens in total if the property contains an accessory dwelling.*
- *Multi-Family Residential: No individual lighting fixture may exceed 850 lumens and the entire property may not exceed 20,000 lumens per net acre.*
- *Mixed Use and Non-Residential: No individual lighting fixture may exceed 1,500 lumens and entire property may not exceed 25,000 lumens for the initial net acre plus 2,000 lumens for each additional net acre.*”

### 5. Regulation of publicly owned lighting

DarkSky requirement: “Regulations of new installations of publicly-owned outdoor lighting:

- a. A provision that clearly indicates where, when, and under what circumstances new publicly owned outdoor lighting, including street lighting, is warranted and will be permitted; AND

Assessment: **Fails.** There is no warranting statement in the current draft.

Reference: n/a

DarkSky requirement: “b. A provision that requires that adaptive controls and/or curfews be employed in all future installations of public outdoor lighting”

Assessment: **Passes.** Although the current draft broadly exempts public lighting from complying with the code, it immediately imposes specific restrictions that refer to the IDSC requirement.

Reference: §2.15.2400(E)(6) "*Public outdoor lighting (including, without limitation, holiday lighting and streetlights located in the public right-of-way) is exempt from the Dark Skies Standards. Notwithstanding the foregoing, all outdoor light fixtures on property (other than public right-of-way) or buildings that are owned and operated by the City of Sisters must be fully shielded unless exempt under Section 2.15.2400(H) and adaptive controls and curfews must be employed.*"

## 6. Illuminated sign regulations

DarkSky requirement: “Restrictions on the installation and operation of illuminated signs: a. Luminance levels for operation between sunset and sunrise shall not exceed 100 nits (100 candelas per square meter) as measured under conditions of a full white display; AND

Assessment: **Moot.** The Sisters code doesn’t allow internally illuminated signs of any kind.

DarkSky requirement: “b. Sign illumination shall be extinguished completely one (1) hour after sunset, and remain off until one (1) hour before sunrise; AND

(N.B.: DarkSky has interpreted this rule to take into account ordinary operating hours of businesses and allow signs to remain illuminated for wayfinding purposes up to one hour after the close of business, exempting establishments that are open to the public 24 hours a day.)

DarkSky requirement: “c. The luminous/illuminated surface area of an individual sign shall not exceed 200 square feet (18.6 square meters)”

Assessment: **Passes.**

Reference: §2.15.2400(F). "*Notwithstanding anything in Chapter 3.4 to the contrary, lighting of signage must meet the following requirements:*

- *Sign illumination must be extinguished completely one (1) hour after sunset (or at close of business for the property, whichever is later), and remain off until one (1) hour before sunrise (or opening of business for the property, whichever is earlier);*
- *The luminous/illuminated surface area of an individual sign cannot exceed 200 square feet; and*
- *Lighting must be downcast and fully shielded.*"

## 7. Outdoor sports lighting regulations

DarkSky requirement: If outdoor sports / athletic field lighting is permitted by the code, it “may be exempted from the strict shielding and short-wavelength emission requirements above provided that all of the following conditions are met:

- a. Illuminating Engineering Society (IES) lighting guidelines (RP-6) are followed according to the appropriate class of play
- b. Field lighting is provided exclusively for illumination of the surface of play and viewing stands, and not for any other applications
- c. Illuminance levels must be adjustable based on the task (e.g., active play vs. field maintenance)
- d. Off-site impacts of the lighting will be limited to the greatest practical extent possible
- e. A strict curfew requirement (e.g., lights must be extinguished by 10pm/2200h or one hour after the end of play, whichever is later) is observed
- f. Timers must be installed to prevent lights being left on accidentally overnight by automatically extinguishing them”

Assessment: **Passes**. The athletic field lighting conditions are stated in the Exemptions section.

Reference: §2.15.2400(H)(8). *"Notwithstanding anything hereinto the contrary, the following forms of lighting are exempt from the Dark Skies Standards. ... • Athletic field lighting meeting the following conditions:*

- *Current Illuminating Engineering Society (IES) lighting guidelines are followed according to the appropriate class of play.*
- *Field lighting is provided exclusively for illumination of the surface of play and viewing stands and not for any other applications.*
- *Illuminance levels must be adjustable based on the task (e.g., active play vs. field maintenance).*
- *Off-site impacts of the lighting will be limited to the greatest practical extent possible.*
- *Lights must be extinguished by 10:00 pm local time or one hour after the end of play, whichever is later.*
- *Timers must be installed to prevent lights being left on accidentally overnight."*

## 8. Amortization of existing, non-conforming outdoor lighting

DarkSky requirement: “Affects an amortization period, applicable to ALL publicly AND privately owned lighting, to end not more than ten (10) years from the effective date of the outdoor lighting policy, after which all non-conforming lighting extant at the time of enactment must be brought into compliance with the policy.”

Assessment: **Passes**. Non-conforming private lighting is amortized on a 10-year timescale.

Reference: §2.15.2400(I). *"Non-Conforming Lighting. Outdoor lighting fixtures lawfully installed and operable prior to the Effective Date are exempt from all such requirements, except as follows:*

- *All publicly owned lighting must be brought into conformance within five (5) years after the Effective Date.*
- *All privately owned lighting must be brought into conformance within ten (10) years after the Effective Date."*

Question 2: If not, what are the key things standing in the way?

According to my notes, the only missing piece is a “warranting” statement for publicly owned lighting. I have discussed with the staff the prospect that the warranting policy could take the form of a city manager memo rather than something that is hard-wired into the code. DarkSky has allowed that approach in the past.

**So, if Sisters passed the code revision in its current draft form and followed up with a city manager memo containing a warranting policy, it would meet all of the current IDSC program guidelines requirements for outdoor lighting policy.**

Best,

John"

Sincerely,  
Rima Givot

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**Rima Givot** (she, her)

**Science Teacher**  
Sisters High School

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*Disclaimer: This message may contain confidential student information, protected under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (“HIPAA”), Pub. L.104-191, and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”), 20U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99. If you received this message in error, please delete it and notify the sender.*

There are a lot of things that make Sisters and Central Oregon a special, beautiful place, and I believe our clear, dark skies are one of the most important aspects of this beauty. I grew up stargazing in the summer while camping with my family and friends, but I never really noticed how lucky I was to see the stars with such clarity. Recently, my niece was visiting for Thanksgiving, and she was awestruck by how many stars she could see at night. She is three years old and is currently obsessed with astronauts and rocketships, but it occurred to me that she had never actually seen many stars at all, living in a bigger city in Washington. This moment made me realize why it truly matters to preserve the special dark sky we have here. Skies like those in Sisters are starting to disappear, and with them, the next generation's access to seeing stars and cultivating a curiosity to love and learn about the natural world.

I am calling for the Planning Committee to support the City in putting all street lights in compliance with the lighting ordinance, in order to decrease light pollution, increase visibility for pedestrians, and set an example for private business- and homeowners. In addition, all City-owned buildings should be in compliance. This will further set an example to others with outdoor lights and adhere the City to the same standards set for the public. Lastly, the lights on Cascade Street, specifically, need to be changed. Sisters will still be Sisters with different street lights, and changing the lights to be in compliance with the lighting ordinance will further enhance what we already have (the dark night skies). These changes are clearly worth the cost because if the City chooses to make said changes, they will successfully help protect future generations' ability to see the stars.

I am just 17 years old, but in my relatively short years, I have already witnessed light pollution worsen in Central Oregon as it becomes more populated. It makes me extremely sad to think that we could lose our night sky, and I hope that action is made to certify Sisters as a Dark Sky Community and ultimately preserve this increasingly rare darkness, so we can appreciate the stunning glimpse of the universe visible from our spot on Earth.

**From:** [Jennie Sharp](#)  
**To:** [Scott Woodford](#)  
**Subject:** in support of dark sky ordinances in Sisters  
**Date:** Saturday, July 30, 2022 11:31:04 AM

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Hello! While I do not reside in the city of Sisters (I am in Camp Sherman). I do support the work that you are doing to update the dark sky ordinances. I also support Sisters becoming an International Dark Sky Community. This will attract astro-tourists to visit Sisters and the surrounding communities. Keep up the good work and count me in for the stars!

Jennie Sharp  
541-645-0688

**From:** [Kerry Prosser](#)  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Cc:** [Scott Woodford](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Comment on Dark Sky Ordinance  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 11, 2023 3:38:41 PM  
**Attachments:** [image003.png](#)  
[SistersArea\\_NightSkyBrightnessSummary\\_Kowalik\\_Oct11\\_2023.png](#)  
[image001.png](#)

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**Kerry Prosser**

Assistant City Manager  
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**From:** wsk412@sbcglobal.net <wsk412@sbcglobal.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 11, 2023 2:51 PM  
**To:** Kerry Prosser <kprosser@ci.sisters.or.us>  
**Cc:** wsk412@sbcglobal.net  
**Subject:** Comment on Dark Sky Ordinance

Kerry,

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the City of Sisters ongoing discussion regarding Dark Skies. I apologize for this last minute comment!

My comment describes the state of the night sky over Sisters and its change over the last few years. Artificial light from the ground scatters in the atmosphere and brightens the night sky overhead, hiding the stars and contributing to various negative impacts on people and the wild ecosystem.

Working with the City of Sisters Astronomy Club, the Sisters High School Astronomy Club and Black Butte Ranch our project has been measuring the brightness of the night sky in the Sisters

area. The meters that we use (Sky Quality Meters) record that brightness, and over time allow tracking of any changes. These meters are located in Sisters Downtown, at the Sisters High School, at Rimrock Ranch and Black Butte Ranch.

The results show that the night sky over Sisters downtown is the brightest among the four sites, and that it is increasing at 2x the rate at the Rimrock Ranch site outside of town. See the attached figure for additional comments on the data.

Accordingly, by the administrative effort to date, the City of Sisters has an excellent opportunity to set a dark sky standard for its future, and to set an example for central Oregon, and the rest of Oregon too. I encourage your support of the dark sky ordinance and eventual certification of Sisters as a Dark Sky Community. Certification is a worthy goal, and one which not many cities have achieved. Only 29 cities to date are certified as Dark Sky Communities in the US, and most of those are in Texas, Colorado, Utah and Arizona. None are in Oregon, yet!

Bill Kowalik, PhD

Chairperson

DarkSky Oregon

[bill.kowalik@darkskyoregon.org](mailto:bill.kowalik@darkskyoregon.org)

[www.darkskyoregon.org](http://www.darkskyoregon.org)

[Facebook: DarkSkyOregon](#)





**From:** [Kerry Prosser](#)  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Cc:** [Planning Commission Members](#); [Scott Woodford](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Dark Skies Lighting Development Code for Sisters  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 11, 2023 7:29:57 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Good morning Council,  
Please see the email below regarding the Dark Sky Lighting Code.  
Thank you,

**Kerry Prosser**

Assistant City Manager  
City of Sisters | City Managers Office  
PO Box 39 | 520 E. Cascade Ave., Sisters, OR 97759  
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**From:** Dan Oliver <dan.oliver.ce@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 10, 2023 10:13 PM  
**To:** Kerry Prosser <kprosser@ci.sisters.or.us>  
**Subject:** Dark Skies Lighting Development Code for Sisters

Dear Sisters City Councilors and Planning Commissioners,

Thank you for updating the Dark Skies Lighting Development code for Sisters.

There are a few items that seem to be sticking points in each of the meetings I have been to so far regarding the code.

1. The City needs to be the leader in the cause for complying with the code for dark skies and not be exempted from complying. Small improvements over time will make a big difference in sustaining a community that can save money on lighting, still stay safe for public use, and increase viewability for the amazing stars and galaxies at night. To do small improvements over time, a **life cycle cost analysis** can be used as an effective tool to ensure that the City is actually saving money over time and staying in compliance with the Code that will benefit the Sisters community over the long run.
2. There has been discussion on string lights and it makes sense for businesses and residents to use

lighting in outdoor spaces. A general curfew would help the cause and can be useful for people to save money on electricity while at the same time allowing people this nice amenity.

3. To get into compliance, a 5-10 year schedule seems reasonable and allows for time for practical implementation of the code. A small community like this can slowly spread the word and become much more conscious about ensuring that we stay within the limits to remain a dark sky community.

This is a special opportunity to create a dark sky community. I have lived in other areas such as Flagstaff during my college years and they had beautiful night skies and warm street lights that casted down all around the city. It works there and in other communities. The ordinance can work here as well. Thank you for your time and effort working toward solutions to making our City a dark sky community.

Sincerely,

Dan Oliver

Phone: (928)710-0414

Email: [dan.oliver.ce@gmail.com](mailto:dan.oliver.ce@gmail.com)

**From:** [Kerry Prosser](#)  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Cc:** [Scott Woodford](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Sisters IDA  
**Date:** Monday, October 30, 2023 12:59:57 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Good afternoon Council,  
Please see the email below regarding dark skies.  
Thank you,

**Kerry Prosser**

Assistant City Manager  
City of Sisters | City Managers Office  
PO Box 39 | 520 E. Cascade Ave., Sisters, OR 97759  
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**From:** D Skidmore <dskid88@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 11:38 AM  
**To:** Kerry Prosser <kprosser@ci.sisters.or.us>  
**Subject:** Sisters IDA

Good morning,

I would like to express my support for the effort to have Sisters become International Dark skies Association certified. Being able to step out of my front door, walk down my driveway and look up to see the milky way in all its splendor has been one of my favorite aspects of living in Sisters. It's such a rare treat today to be able to see the night sky to with this much clarity.

If you would, please pass this on to whomever is leading that effort in the city council and let me know what else I can do to support this effort.

Thanks a ton,  
Dave Skidmore

## **Preserving dark night skies at the southwest corner of the East Jefferson & South Locust intersection**

**Information provided by Judy Smith, homeowner at 596 East Jefferson Avenue  
email [jjjudy@lmi.net](mailto:jjjudy@lmi.net)**

To the people working on the Dark Night Sky guidelines:

I'm the resident property owner at 596 East Jefferson writing, about the street light near my property.

Public Works Director Paul Bertagna and I have corresponded cordially about this street light ever since someone turned it back on about three years ago. I understand from Paul that the light is owned and managed by CEC and not by the City, that the light -- and others like it located further west on East Jefferson -- date back decades (maybe to the 1960s?), that the former City Manager felt illuminating the intersection year-round was critical for pedestrian safety, and that any change to the current light would require sufficient funding and planning to install fulltime electricity in Creekside Park.

I captured the images at the bottom of this letter recently to illustrate how this street light is illuminating far more than the intersection in question. The effects would have been more pronounced had it not been the night of the full moon when the images were taken.

If the light's intention is to improve safety for pedestrians after dark, from my vantage point I do not observe many people walking this area after dark when the campground is closed. So, as a temporary and bare minimum fix, why not use this light only between April and October.

But for a longer-term solution compatible with the Dark Night Skies principle: the majority of nighttime pedestrian activity in the six "dark" months comprises visitors to Creekside Park and its adjacent parking area. If the light was intended for dog-walkers, or to deter criminal activity (such as illegal campfires, underage alcohol consumption, and drug sales) in the park and parking lot, then why not relocate the light to the park or to the parking lot -- both of which are pitch-dark presently -- and away from its current position directly between two residential properties occupied full-time year-round. Relocating a street light to a point east of the intersection would also deter overnight campers and big rigs in the parking lot, both of whom occasionally violate the City ordinance prohibiting same.

Whether the light is relocated or replaced, its replacement should include a light standard half the height of the present pole, complete with a design to direct the illumination downward rather than sideways. The new light should comply with whatever standards the current working committee proposes and gets approved for public street lighting.

I haven't surveyed residential neighbors who are affected by the other outdated light poles along East Jefferson and other downtown residential streets, and speak only for myself as a resident property owner affected by this one light.

One disclaimer: I leave my porch string lights illuminated overnight on the weekends of the Folk Festival, the Rodeo, and the Quilt Show, as campers are walking and driving back and forth at all hours in various states of consciousness.



glare reflecting off boundary fence separating 596 E Jefferson and 576 East Jefferson, 70 ground feet from light source (the white stripe delineates my driveway boundary)



see far right edge of photo: glare reflecting off internal driveway fence at 576 E Jefferson, 100 ground feet from light source



This is a street view from the second floor master bedroom at 596 E Jefferson – neighbor’s string lights are on a timer and go off mid-evening; after that time the glare from the street light is much more pronounced. This light illuminates the entire master bedroom, guest bedroom, and living room at 596 East Jefferson. I appreciate the suggestion that I purchase black-out curtains for the entire east side of my house but don’t think this is an appropriate solution.

**From:** [Kerry Prosser](#)  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Cc:** [Planning Commission Members](#); [Scott Woodford](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Dark Sky Lighting Code  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 11, 2023 7:24:06 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Good morning Council,  
Please see the email below regarding the Dark Sky Lighting Code.  
Thank you,

**Kerry Prosser**

Assistant City Manager  
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**From:** Ron Thorkildson <[ron.thorkildson@gmail.com](mailto:ron.thorkildson@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 10, 2023 3:29 PM  
**To:** Kerry Prosser <[kprosser@ci.sisters.or.us](mailto:kprosser@ci.sisters.or.us)>  
**Subject:** Dark Sky Lighting Code

To the Sisters City Councilors and Planning Commissioners:

It is my understanding that tomorrow (October 11) at 5:30pm, a meeting will be held to consider proposed changes to the Dark Sky Lighting Code. In this email, I list what I consider to be the most important issues in amending the outdoor lighting ordinance.

- The revised code MUST apply to public lighting as well as privately owned sources of illumination. It sends a bad message to require the private sector to adhere to a set of rules from which the government (in this case the City) is exempt. Testimony from experts during previous City meetings claim the lighting of streets and parking lots are, by far, the greatest sources of light pollution. If the City isn't required to follow its own lighting ordinance, nothing the private sector can do will make any difference--light pollution will continue to get worse.
- The use of string lights has grown more popular recently. Although they do add to the light pollution problem, maybe they could be turned off when they're not needed (controlled by a

timer.)

- I think 5 years is a reasonable length of time to comply with the revised code.
- The Sisters governing body should do everything it can to make our town an IDA Dark Sky Community. But it won't be easy, and will require strict measures to reduce light pollution.
- I applaud the City's effort to reduce the glare from the Cascade Ave street lights. The top portion of the two lights on the eastern crosswalk at Fir has been darkened. In my opinion, this does seem to make the crosswalk more visible. Who has the final say about whether this fix will be implemented...the City, ODOT, County, others?

I appreciate the invitation to weigh in on this important issue.

Ron Thorkildson



**From:** [Carol Jenkins](#)  
**To:** [Scott Woodford](#); [Matt Martin](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Reducing Light Pollution in Sisters  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 5, 2023 8:13:46 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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FYI.....

Carol Jenkins  
Planning Technician II  
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**From:** Ron Thorkildson <[ron.thorkildson@gmail.com](mailto:ron.thorkildson@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 4, 2023 8:23 PM  
**To:** Carol Jenkins <[cjenkins@ci.sisters.or.us](mailto:cjenkins@ci.sisters.or.us)>  
**Subject:** Reducing Light Pollution in Sisters

Hello Carol,

As a citizen of Sisters Oregon, and an avid amateur astronomer, I want to say that I'm a strong supporter of the effort to reduce light pollution in our community. Just recently I learned that the Sisters City Council is now leaning away from exempting public lighting from the new ordinance currently being developed. This is wonderful news! I'm also in favor of the city doing what it can to properly shield the new lights on East Cascade Avenue. These two steps may go a long way in helping Sisters earn IDA's dark sky certification. Carol, could I ask that you forward my comments to members of the city council and planning commission ahead of the upcoming meeting on Thursday December 7. Thank you.

Ron Thorkildson  
Sisters Astronomy Club

**From:** [Kerry Prosser](#)  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Cc:** [Scott Woodford](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Dark Sky Lighting Code  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 11, 2023 3:38:40 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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**Kerry Prosser**

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**From:** Wendy von Kalinowski <[wendystudiovk@gmail.com](mailto:wendystudiovk@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 11, 2023 3:02 PM  
**To:** Kerry Prosser <[kprosser@ci.sisters.or.us](mailto:kprosser@ci.sisters.or.us)>  
**Subject:** Dark Sky Lighting Code

Dear Sisters City Councilors and Planning Commissioners,

I will underscore the comments submitted by Rima Givot as I support those wholeheartedly. I will also comment that in the "Big Picture" we have the opportunity to reduce light pollution that will have a multi health and wildlife benefit to everyone. Proper and efficient lighting will provide better safety than what is typically installed for path of travel for either vehicle or pedestrian and without the extreme contrast that overlighting produces. I also believe it is imperative that all members of the community, public and private, should comply within a shorter period of time -not to exceed 3 years. My reason for this is that it is too easy to ask for extensions and then maximum compliance is difficult to achieve. As our city and community grows I am very concerned about the negative impacts that light pollution has on our ability to enjoy the "last frontier" of our once stellar night skies. Having now lived in Sisters for almost 17 years there is a true light dome over the city making it difficult for me and many others to enjoy the Milkyway from my backyard. I am also very worried about the negative impact that our light has on migrating birds and the long term navigation consequences our light will have on these important avian populations.

I appreciate the time you are taking to update the Dark Skies Lighting Development code for Sisters and for valuing our visual night sky as well as our at risk wildlife.

Wendy von Kalinowski

I support the following comments submitted by Rima Givot:

There seems to be three main decisions you are needing to address.

1. City lighting. I believe it is very important as the public example, that the City follow the code. Recently simple modifications were made to the Cascade Avenue street lights on the east corner of Fir and Cascade that effectively brought the lights into compliance. Temporary shielding was placed inside the light fixtures that prevented the light bulb itself from being seen. This adjustment did two important things. It reduced glare, making the lights significantly safer and shining the light on the crosswalk instead of catching so much attention from drivers and viewers. The second thing the modifications influenced was producing less light pollution because the light from the bulbs was being directed onto the ground, not out into the sky. This modification demonstrates that when lights are effectively shielded, they are significantly safer, and a byproduct is they produce less light pollution. I do not believe the city needs to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on new fixtures. Recently, this simple modification showed that with very little money and some effort from the City's maintenance people, Sisters can both have safer lights and be complying with your lighting code. I urge you to hold yourself accountable to the lighting code that all other people are expected to follow. Lights that follow the code will inevitably be safer because they direct the light in the correct location and do not attract attention with the glare of the bulb.

2. String lights. Many businesses seem to be benefiting from string lighting in their outdoor spaces. This very attractive space seems to be a positive thing for our community. I urge you to set a curfew on string lighting so that they are not left on when they are not being used. This is a logical and practical approach to both preventing light pollution and providing environments that people want to be outside.

3. Time to comply. It makes sense to have the time needed to comply to the updated code be reasonable, but not endless. I would recommend a 5-year window to come into compliance, with the ability to apply for an extension, should there be a need on a resident's part. At the same time, a system should be set for people who would like support updating their lights. We as community members can help provide lighting and/or create simple modifications of lights. Sometimes, a simple coating of aluminum foil around the top of the inside of a light fixture will enhance the safety, reduce the glare and light pollution, and not detract from the aesthetic of the light fixture.

I also want to remind you, that this is not a new code. The current code specified that all lighting be up to compliance by 2015. So technically any lighting that is not currently in compliance should enforced be corrected by the current code. It is reasonable to expect residents to bring their lights into compliance.

I urge you to make decisions that give the City the ability to effectively apply to be a Dark Sky

Community. The ability to acquire such a designation is becoming more and more rare, and would only help our community in the long run.

With the amount of growth in Central Oregon, decisions you make with the Dark Sky Lighting code could cause irreversible changes in our lifetime. I believe it is unrealistic to think you can kick the can down the road by putting off any decisions. You have the opportunity to preserve this unique and special resource we have for our children and our children's children. You also have the ability to significantly reduce our citizens' ability to see the stars and the Milky Way as we can now. Please make the brave and courageous decision to put our future ahead of convenient choices. This is such an important and special opportunity.

--

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