



lighting

From Bob Felter <bfelter3@gmail.com>

Date Tue 8/12/2025 7:50 PM

To COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>

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I live near the bottom of Hunts Dr, McKinleyville and look across the Mad at Guintoli. There are many businesses and some housing there but the lighting at night used to mostly be the Chevron sign.

While I don't expect things to remain the same, now there are lights everywhere, even along Rt 299. I don't expect complete darkness in such a populated area but much of that light isn't necessary.

I know I'm speaking to the choir and want to thank you for your concern

Bob Felter

Draft Lighting Ordinance Comments

From Sylvia van Royen <sylvia@humboldtwaterkeeper.org>

Date Tue 8/12/2025 4:25 PM

To Meighan, Reanne <rmeighan@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Cc COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>; Jennifer Kalt <jkalt@humboldtwaterkeeper.org>; Damico, Tracy <TDamico@co.humboldt.ca.us>

 1 attachment (234 KB)

Humboldt Waterkeeper Comments Hum Co Lighting Ordinance 8-12-25.pdf;

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Hello Reanne,

Please see attached our comments on the current draft Inland & Coastal Lighting Ordinances, we hope we sent these in time to make it into the Board Packet for the 8/19 Board of Supervisors meeting.

Thank you!

Sylvia van Royen (she/her, [why?](#))

GIS & Policy Analyst

Humboldt Waterkeeper

sylvia@humboldtwaterkeeper.org

“To love a place is not enough. We must find ways to heal it.” - Robin Wall Kimmerer



August 12, 2025

Humboldt County Board of Supervisors
825 Fifth Street
Eureka, CA 95501

Sent via email

Subject: Comments on the Draft Inland & Coastal Lighting Ordinances

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the draft Inland and Coastal Lighting Ordinances, which we submit on behalf of Humboldt Waterkeeper. Humboldt Waterkeeper works to safeguard coastal resources for the health, enjoyment, and economic strength of the Humboldt Bay community through education, scientific research, and enforcement of laws to fight pollution.

We are grateful to staff for adding our requested illumination maximums, and for researching commercially available lightbulbs, in order to adjust this maximum to allow for the most commonly available bulbs. We support the new 1100 lumen and 3200 lumen limits for residential and commercial properties, to this end.

To align with Humboldt County's General Plan, Chapter 5, IS-P20, IS-S9, and IS-IM17, please include streetlighting in this ordinance.

In section **10.1.2.2.1** both ordinances state that "Light fixtures that use translucent material to cover the light source may be acceptable if the bulbs have a correlated color temperature (CCT) of 2700 K or less in lieu of being fully shielded." Translucent shielding material essentially defeats the purpose of shielding, by allowing some light to escape upwards or sideways, which is in direct conflict with the definition of "fully shielded" in this ordinance. The allowance for 'translucent material' caveat should be removed from this section. In the unfortunate case this 'translucent material' caveat remains, we request additional language prescribing intensity limits as defined in **105.1.5.1** and **105.1.6.1**



600 F Street, Suite 3 #810
Arcata, CA 95521
(707) 499-3678
www.humboldtwaterkeeper.org



The exemptions outlined in section 105.1.4 provide nearly wholesale exemptions for a wide variety of light sources that cause not only light trespass, but light pollution. We suggest adding language to clarify which requirements each lighting type is still subject to or exempt from.

Additionally, the following exemptions could go further to prevent light pollution:

- 105.1.4.2 (flags, statues, other objects): This exemption could be refined to ensure that lighting for flags, statues, and other objects does not obscure the night sky, by adding language requiring the lights to be turned off after a certain time, such as an hour after sunset.
- 105.1.4.4 "Athletic field lighting used within a school campus or public or private park": Rather than exempting athletic field lighting entirely, we recommend outlining specific limits by adding an athletic field section. Dark Sky International recommends sport lighting to never exceed a CCT of 5700 K, and the luminous intensity not to exceed 10,000 candelas as measured along a perimeter that is 150 feet from the edge of the field, at 5 feet above grade (see Dark Sky International's Municipal Code Template, Section 2.4 Sports Lighting, page 6-7).
- 105.1.4.3 String lights with a CCT of 2700 K or less: Color temperature is not the same as light intensity—string lights that are warm can still cause light pollution. Thus, to minimize light pollution, we suggest adding language requiring string lights to be turned off after a certain hour if not being used for demonstrable safety purposes (timers are commercially and readily available, which could be used for this purpose).
- 105.1.4.5 Emergency lighting: This exemption is vague, and would benefit from parameters defining what qualifies as an emergency.
- 105.1.4.6 "Motion detector lighting fixtures": Motion detectors on lighting fixtures are an excellent tool to ensure lights are not left on unnecessarily, especially after sunset. Here, they are used to exempt lighting from all of the requirements of the ordinance. Instead, we recommend removing motion detector lighting fixtures from the exemption section, and instead list them as tools to reduce light pollution in combination with timers for streetlights, commercial lights, and residential lights. Motion detector light fixtures can be set to dim, instead of turning off the light completely, if there are safety concerns.

Thank you for this opportunity to shape the County's lighting ordinance, we are excited to see the County tackle light pollution.

Sincerely,

Sylvia van Royen, GIS & Policy Analyst
sylvia@humboldtwaterkeeper.org

Humboldt's outdoor lighting ordinance

From Kathie Kelly <katk5541@gmail.com>

Date Tue 8/12/2025 7:48 PM

To COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Supervisors,

I am writing to you today to urge you to adopt the Outdoor lighting ordinance that the County Planning Commission has recommended with the additional changes proposed by the Humboldt Waterkeeper as follows:

1. Include street lighting
2. Require non-translucent shielding under fully shielding outdoor lighting
3. Eliminate the exemptions for lights with motion detectors
4. Eliminate intensity and color temperature exemptions for string lighting and require them to be on timers.

I find excessive glare and light trespass from outdoor lighting to be very disruptive to my daily life and the natural world surrounding me. I highly value stargazing and experiencing the natural world at night with all the wildlife coming and going. I notice when my neighbors on all sides of me have either constant or motion-sensing lighting active throughout the night, it is very disruptive to my sleep and my senses, not to mention the animals, birds, bats and insects in our area.

Please support this sensible outdoor lighting ordinance with the thoughtful changes proposed by Humboldt Waterkeeper.

Sincerely,

Kathie Kelly
Arcata, CA

Public Comment – Support Stronger Waste Reduction Practices in Humboldt County

From Carly Tambling <brightandgreenhumboldt@gmail.com>

Date Mon 8/11/2025 6:11 PM

To COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Honorable Members of the Board,

Please keep Humboldt a Leader in Waste Reduction

On behalf of **Bright and Green**, I want to express our deep appreciation for your leadership and respectfully urge you to continue advancing **waste reduction efforts** throughout Humboldt County.

Humboldt has long held a reputation as an **environmental leader in California** — a place where community values, grassroots action, and local innovation intersect. We don't just follow sustainability trends — we help set them.

Now is the time to **reaffirm that leadership** by strengthening our support for **reusable systems**. Reusables offer a practical, cost-effective, and community-rooted solution to reducing single-use waste — and we've seen them work firsthand at farmers markets, festivals, and city-sponsored events across the county.

We respectfully ask the Board to:

- Champion **reusable dishware systems** for County events and facilities
- Invest in **local programs and partners** already delivering these services
- Support **community compost education** to improve sorting and reduce contamination
- Lead by example, showing other regions what's possible when we act on our values

This is boots-to-pavement work — done by neighbors, for neighbors. With your backing, we can continue to **not just meet state environmental standards, but help define them**.


Let's keep Humboldt at the forefront of sustainable innovation — where we belong — and show the rest of California what's possible when a community acts on its values.

With gratitude,

Carly Tambling

Bright and Green

 brightandgreenhumboldt@gmail.com

 brightandgreenhumboldt.com

8-19-25 Hearing on Outdoor Lighting Ordinance

From Mary Hurley <hurleymch@gmail.com>

Date Wed 8/13/2025 10:34 AM

To COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

I would like to submit a comment on the above referenced subject. I urge the Board of Supervisors to pass the draft ordinance passed by the Humboldt County Planning Commission with the following additions:

- Include street lighting in the ordinance, in line with the County's General Plan guidance.
- The requirement for fully shielded lighting includes a caveat for translucent shielding material. This defeats the purpose of shielding, by allowing some light to escape upwards or sideways—in direct conflict with the definition of "fully shielded" in these ordinances.
- Eliminate exemptions for lights with motion detectors, which should just be another tool to protect the night sky alongside shielding, warm temperatures and lower intensity bulbs.
- Eliminate intensity and color temperature exemptions for string lighting, and require them to be on timers.

Protection of the night skies by lowering the amount of light is critical for migrating birds and other wildlife particularly in coastal zones, rivers, estuaries, and nearshore areas. Additionally, the increasing amount of night light pollution around our planet is a disrupts the circadian rhythms of people, and disconnects humans from our natural circadian rhythms, pushing us to exercise, eat, or sleep at random, contributing to insomnia, depression, obesity, and loss of night vision. Night light pollution also affects plant physiology by altering growth and timing of flowering which affects migratory patterns of pollinators and seed-dispersers that rely on nectar, pollen, seeds, and fruits for food.

Our County can take the lead in mitigating these harmful effects of night sky pollution to help maintain our resources.

Thank you.

Mary Hurley,

Eureka, CA

Gwin Road

From Chad Sefcik <chad.sefcik@gmail.com>

Date Wed 8/13/2025 10:51 AM

To COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>; Ford, John <JFord@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Board,

This is a non-agenda item, which I would like to have addressed.

Like the We Are Up multi-unit residential housing going in behind Grocery Outlet (McKinleyville), the Valdao subdivision on Gwin has not had adequate analysis of traffic impacts- in this case- on Gwin Road.

Furthermore, the County does have some responsibility for the impacts it has created with the Valdao approval, as County has accepted some ownership of Gwin Rd.

I would like a traffic analysis completed, as County approved Gwin as an ingress/egress for the Valdao Subdivision.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Chad Sefcik
Jordan Court
McKinleyville, CA 95519

Lighting Ordinance

From Claire Perricelli <claireperricelli@aol.com>

Date Tue 8/12/2025 7:37 PM

To COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

- **I fully support the following suggestions from Humboldt Waterkeeper. Loopholes are "light holes". I have had neighbors who string up outdoor lighting that runs all night, totally impacting my own property without any respite. Motion sensor lights and street lights are ever present. If we do not fully regulate them we dilute the ordinance to the point of being nearly meaningless here in town.**

Thank you for considering the following:

- **Include street lighting** in the ordinance, in line with the County's General Plan guidance.
- The requirement for fully shielded lighting includes a **caveat for translucent shielding material**. This defeats the purpose of shielding, by allowing some light to escape upwards or sideways—in direct conflict with the definition of "fully shielded" in these ordinances.
- **Eliminate exemptions for lights with motion detectors**, which should just be another tool to protect the night sky alongside shielding, warm temperatures and lower intensity bulbs.
- Eliminate intensity and color temperature exemptions for **string lighting**, and require them to be on timers.

Claire Perricelli, 2259 16th St. Eureka 95501

Lighting ordinance

From Don Allan <donallan707@gmail.com>

Date Wed 8/13/2025 6:37 PM

To COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

I strongly encourage you to pass the revised lighting ordinance to reduce light pollution in Humboldt County. There are many reasons to reduce the intensity as well the way lights are aimed and shielded. I love to see the stars at night but bright lights obscure all but the brightest stars and planets. I don't want birds to become disoriented because of high intensity light. There will also be reduced costs to cities and municipalities who have to pay for street lighting with lower wattage lights. I strongly encourage you to pass this ordinance.

Don Allan,

Outdoor Lighting Ordinance

From Colin Fiske <colin.fiske@gmail.com>

Date Wed 8/13/2025 11:52 AM

To COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Supervisors,

I support the adoption of outdoor lighting regulations to focus light on the intended location, minimize light trespass, and keep skies dark. Light pollution can have major impacts on wildlife and even human health and well-being, and it is preventable.

Modern lighting technologies can direct plenty of light to where it's needed for human safety and comfort without lighting up neighboring properties, wild lands, or the sky. I encourage you to adopt the proposed outdoor lighting ordinance with the thoughtful improvements recommended by Humboldt Waterkeeper.

Thanks for your consideration.

Colin Fiske
Arcata

Outdoor Lighting Ordinance

From Carolyn Frazee <cxfrazee@gmail.com>

Date Thu 8/14/2025 10:27 AM

To COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Board of Supervisors:

Dear Sirs & Madams: I urgently entreat you to adopt a strict outdoor lighting ordinance. We must protect our night skies while we still can. There is absolutely no reason to require street lights everywhere in rural area.

It would be a truly great thing for Humboldt to become a "dark sky county".
This is not just an aesthetic goal, though dark skies are a thing of beauty and a tourist draw.

Rather, this is a significant step in protecting migratory birds. As you know, dark skies enable migration and safe reproductive practices for birds. Many thousands of birds migrate through or nest in or area, and many of those species are at risk of extinction. Land based animals also rely on darkness as part of their habitat. Please act to protect our priceless native species.

Please do not allow exceptions for colored, string, or motion detector lights. That works against the whole purpose of this ordinance.

Thank you for your attention to my comments.

Cary Frazee

input on Outdoor Lighting Ordinance

From Ann Warner <awarnernagy@gmail.com>

Date Thu 8/14/2025 12:52 PM

To COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear County Supervisors,

As you consider final approval of an Outdoor Lighting Ordinance, please attend to the following short-coming of the proposed ordinance.

- **Include street lighting** in the ordinance, in line with the County's General Plan guidance.
- The requirement for fully shielded lighting includes a **caveat for translucent shielding material**. This defeats the purpose of shielding, by allowing some light to escape upwards or sideways—in direct conflict with the definition of “fully shielded” in these ordinances.
- **Eliminate exemptions for lights with motion detectors**, which should just be another tool to protect the night sky alongside shielding, warm temperatures and lower intensity bulbs.
- Eliminate intensity and color temperature exemptions for **string lighting**, and require them to be on timers.

Thank you.

Ann Warner