

IMPACT STATEMENT

Legislation title: Dark Skies: Strategies for Reducing Light Pollution in Portland (Report)

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Purpose of proposed legislation and background information:

Outdoor light at night helps make our streets and neighborhoods safer, welcoming and easier to navigate. But outdoor lighting that is poorly designed or poorly shielded produces light pollution that negatively affects human and wildlife health and safety, is energy inefficient and impairs our ability to see the night sky. Recent advances in LED technology and improvements in lighting design makes it possible to reduce energy consumption and have a vibrant, safe, and pleasant city at night while keeping light on the ground and where it is needed.

Portland is fortunate to only have moderate levels of light pollution compared to many larger American cities. But existing outdoor light at night has negative impacts on the people and the environment of Portland.

The 2035 Comprehensive Plan projects that the city's population will increase by 260,000 people by 2035. The city will need to continue to grow to accommodate the growing population by building new homes, roads and businesses. Smart city policies can help prevent the new and existing development from contributing to light pollution.

As part of the 2019-2020 City budget, City Council directed the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability to explore actions and make recommendations for actions to reduce light pollution in Portland. The project supports adopted City policy in the:

- Central City 2035 Plan,
- 2035 Comprehensive Plan, and
- Green Building Policy.

BPS staff have been working with internal and external stakeholders and experts to research and analyze potential actions and this report contains a prioritized action plan for addressing light pollution in Portland.

Financial and budgetary impacts:

This report does not have any direct financial impact. It does not amend the budget. It does not authorize additional spending. It does not change current or future revenue. It does not change or affect staffing levels. It does not result in any new or modified financial obligation or benefit.

This report recommends a set of prioritized action items or projects that, if implemented in the future, will require funding.

Community impacts and community involvement:

Reducing light pollution will have positive community impacts. As described above and in more detail in the report, outdoor lighting that is poorly designed or poorly shielded produces light pollution that negatively affects human and wildlife health and safety, is energy inefficient and impairs our ability to see the night sky. Addressing the light pollution from unnecessary outdoor lights at night will reduce negative impacts and will allow the community to benefit from seeing more of the night sky.

Community involvement helped shape the report as follows:

- Feedback from internal and external advisors including lighting experts and advocates for well-designed outdoor lighting influenced the background information in the report and helped shape the recommendations. The advisors provided written comments on an early draft of the report and staff convened two virtual meetings via Zoom to obtain further feedback from the advisors.
- Staff convened an equity focus group and feedback from people who attended helped to shape the recommendations related to the PBOT streetlight shield request program and other recommendations regarding continued research into the effects from light pollution on communities of color and the benefits and burdens of the potential regulations.

Staff expects advocates for well-designed outdoor lighting and the people who attended the equity focus group to testify.

Budgetary Impact Worksheet

Does this action change appropriations?

- YES:** Please complete the information below.
 NO: Skip this section

Fund	Fund Center	Commitment Item	Functional Area	Funded Program	Grant	Sponsored Program	Amount