



Agenda
City of Clarkesville
Council Work Session
5:00 PM August 4, 2025

1. *Call to Order*
2. *Unfinished Business*
 - 2a. *Discuss Ordinance 2025-5 Outdoor Lighting*
3. *New Business*
4. *Open Discussion*
5. *Public Comment*
6. *Consider Going Into Executive Session*
7. *Adjournment*

Chapter 26 – Environment

Article IV. OUTDOOR LIGHTING

Sec. 26-150. Purpose.

The purpose of this ordinance is to establish clear and practical guidelines for outdoor lighting throughout the City to promote public safety and support responsible site development. This ordinance is intended to maximize the effectiveness of outdoor lighting, reduce unnecessary upward illumination and spillover onto neighboring properties, minimize glare, conserve energy, and protect views of the night sky. These standards are designed to discourage lighting practices that create a nuisance or diminish the natural nighttime environment.

Sec. 26-151. Applicability.

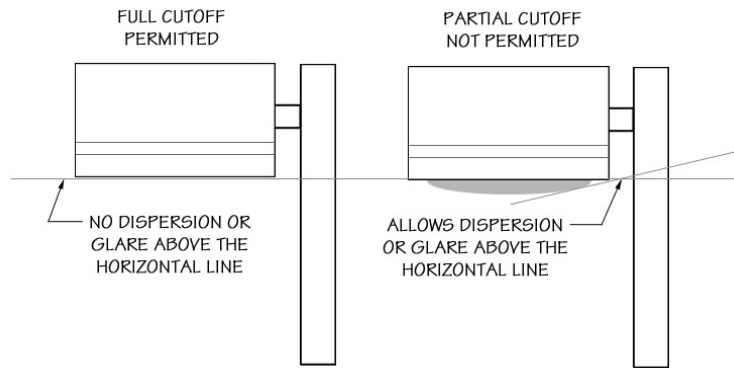
Except as provided otherwise in this section, this ordinance shall apply to any outdoor lighting fixture or luminary that is installed, replaced, or significantly modified after the effective date of this ordinance that is:

- A. Located on property within a commercial or industrial zoning district and is used for outdoor non-essential lighting and / or equipped with a lamp which emits 3,000 or more initial lumens emitting no more than 6 Foot Candles at ground level; or
- B. Located on property within a residential zoning district or agricultural zoning district and is equipped with a high intensity discharge lamp, regardless of its initial lumens; or
- C. Any parking lot lighting, sign illumination, building-mounted lighting, floodlights, and decorative exterior lighting.

The provisions of Sec. 26-152 (F) shall apply to any outdoor non-essential lighting (business / commercial use) within the City regardless of the date of installation.

Sec. 26-152. Standards.

- A. All exterior lights and illuminated signs shall be designed, located, installed and directed in such a manner as to prevent objectionable light at, and glare across, the property lines and disability glare at any location on or off the property. The "maintained horizontal illuminance recommendations" set by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America shall be observed.
- B. All parking area lighting will be full cut-off type fixtures.



C. All light from an upward-directed fixture shall be contained from projecting beyond the targeted surface, such as by a building façade, roof overhang, or landscape feature and the light source shall not be visible from any roadway or adjacent property. Externally lit signs, display, building and aesthetic lighting must be lit from the top and shine downward. The lighting must be shielded to prevent direct glare and/or light trespass. The lighting must also be, as much as physically possible, contained to the target area. Internally lighted signs are acceptable.

D. All building lighting for security or aesthetics will be full cut-off or a shielded type, not allowing any upward distribution of light. Floodlighting is discouraged, and if used, must be shielded to prevent:

- 1.Disability glare for drivers or pedestrians.
- 2.Light trespass beyond the property line, and
- 3.Light above a 90 degree, horizontal plane.

(Wall Pack type fixtures are not acceptable unless shielded)

E. Adjacent to residential property, no direct light source will be visible at the property line at ground level or above.

F. For business and commercial properties, all non-essential lighting shall be turned off after business hours, leaving only the necessary lighting for site security. Non-essential lighting shall apply to display, aesthetic, parking, and sign lighting.

G. Residential security lighting shall use motion-sensor lights which shall automatically turn off within fifteen minutes when no movement is detected.

Sec. 26-153. Modification, waiver, or variation.

A modification, waiver or variation from the standard may be granted by the zoning administrator, as provided herein:

A. The zoning administrator may modify, waive or vary the standard set forth in Sec. 26-152 in a particular case, and impose conditions on such a modification, waiver or variation which it deems appropriate to further the purposes of these outdoor lighting regulations, in either of the following circumstances:

1. Upon finding that strict application of the standard would not forward the purposes of this chapter or otherwise serve the public interest, or that alternative proposed by the owner would satisfy the purposes of these outdoor lighting regulations at least to an equivalent degree.
2. Upon finding that an outdoor luminary, or system of outdoor luminaries, required for a baseball, softball, football or soccer field cannot reasonably comply with the standard and provide sufficient illumination of the field for its safe use, as determined by recommended practices adopted by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America for that type of field and activity or other evidence if a recommended practice is not applicable.

Sec. 26-154. Exempt outdoor lighting and related acts.

The following outdoor lighting and related acts shall be exempt from the requirements of these outdoor lighting regulations:

- A. Lighting which is not subject to this chapter by state or federal law. Lighting used by law enforcement, the Fire Department, and lighting used for security purposes by the City of Clarkesville Police Department or the Habersham County's Sheriff's Office.
- B. Construction, agricultural, emergency or holiday decorative lighting, provided that the lighting is temporary, and is discontinued within seven days upon completion of the project or holiday for which the lighting was provided.
- C. Lighting of the United States of America flag, State of Georgia flag, and other non-commercial flags expressing constitutionally protected speech.
- D. Security lighting controlled by sensors which provides illumination for 15 minutes or less.
- E. The replacement of an inoperable lamp or component which is in a luminary that was installed prior to the date of adoption this chapter which will not otherwise substantially modify the luminary.

F. The replacement of a failed or damaged luminary which is one of a matching group serving a common purpose which will not otherwise substantially modify the luminary.