



OFFICIAL ZONING CODE INTERPRETATION (No. 32)

Outdoor Lighting: String Lights

ZONING CODE PROVISION INTERPRETED:

Section 20-30.080, Outdoor lighting.

Purpose: Clarify that string lights including holiday lights (i.e., Christmas lights, café or string lights) are a type of light fixture subject to the Zoning Code Outdoor lighting regulation and that string lights shall not produce an illumination level greater than one footcandle illumination level on any property line with a residential zoning district.

Discussion: String lights with clear or colored bulbs are typically attached to buildings, trellises, fences, and other structures as outdoor ornamental lighting. String lights are not permanently mounted to a structure, nor are they permanently wired to a switched electrical circuit; instead they are usually plugged into an outdoor electric receptacle and temporarily affixed to a structure.

The intent of the Outdoor Lighting regulation is, in part, to reduce light bleed on adjoining properties located in residential zoning districts. This section prohibits any light on a private property from producing an illumination level exceeding one footcandle on an adjoining property located in a residential zoning district (Section 20-30.080(D)). The City's Design Review regulation does not regulate lighting associated with a single-family dwelling on an existing residential lot (Section 20-52.030.b.1.e). The location of any structure on residential property is regulated by zoning district property line setback standards. Some structures, such as sheds and property line fences, are allowed within the side and rear yard setback area.

String lights affixed to a structure located within a setback area adjoining a private property within a residential zoning district may produce an illumination level greater than one-footcandle in contrast to the provision of Section 20-30.080(D) of the Zoning Code.

Determination: String lights are a type of outdoor lighting subject to Section 20-30.080 Outdoor lighting and no light, including string lights, shall produce an illumination level greater than one footcandle on any property within a residential zoning district except on the site of the light source.

This determination is consistent with the General Plan.

Date: June 29, 2021

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andy Gustafson".

Zoning Administrator