

Federation Resolution on
Outdoor Lighting Ordinance and
Public Facilities Manual Outdoor Lighting Requirements

For Membership vote on December 20, 2018

WHEREAS, updates to the 2003 Outdoor Lighting Ordinance of Fairfax County were recently discussed with County Staff and stakeholders in a May 1, 2018 work group; and

WHEREAS, in August 2018, Fairfax County entered a regional agreement with Dominion Energy for conversion of existing streetlights to Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs) to reduce energy usage and costs (affecting approximately 58,000 streetlights in Fairfax County); and

WHEREAS, the current, as well as proposed amendments to the Public Facilities Manual of Fairfax County do not currently provide lighting level standards for LED conversions (including spacing, height, lumens, and blue light emissions); and

WHEREAS, in 2016, the American Medical Association (AMA) adopted recommendations for LED color temperatures of 3,000 Kelvin or lower, based on studies indicating that blue light emissions from LEDs at higher color temperatures can create glare, impact human sleep patterns, and disorient animal species; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the AMA, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the International Dark Sky Association (IDS), and the National Optic Astronomy Observatory (NOAO) have adopted guidance encouraging communities to minimize blue emissions from LEDs; and

WHEREAS, LED streetlight color temperature ratings above 3,000 Kelvin produce significantly more blue light than traditional Mercury Vapor and High Pressure Sodium streetlights; and

Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations
Resolution To Add LED to the Outdoor Lighting Ordinance and the PFM

WHEREAS, a number of communities (e.g., Phoenix, AZ; Davis, CA; and Los Angeles, CA) are either converting public street lighting or considering conversion to LEDs (Takoma Park, MD) at the warmer color temperature of 2,700 Kelvin for reduction in the amount of intense blue light and increase in the amount of light towards the red portion of the visible spectrum, typically associated with natural nighttime colors.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. The Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations (Federation) supports Fairfax County streetlight conversions to LEDs with lower blue light emissions; and
2. The Federation requests, that in the updating of the Public Facilities Manual and the Outdoor Lighting Ordinance, lighting industry best practices are encouraged, including: warmer color temperatures; shielded fixtures to prevent upward light; adaptive controls such as dimmers, timers, and motion sensors where applicable; and installations that ensure that lighting is minimized to specific needs and applications; and
3. The Federation requests that Fairfax County continue to monitor research on artificial blue light emissions from LEDs, and the possible impacts upon ocular health, circadian systems, and animal species for consideration of installation requirements in both outdoor and indoor environments.

The Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations acknowledges the excellent work done by the McLean Citizens Association in drafting the resolution upon which this Federation resolution is based.