

[Introductory Letter of Concern Requesting a Meeting]

(Date:)

Councillor XX

(Address):

Dear Councillor XX,

We wish to bring to your attention multiple concerns about the lighting that exists in our (town, city, municipality, etc.).

Much recent research indicates that artificial night light has many disadvantages. Increased lighting and poor lighting practices substantially increase taxes while affecting health, safety, security and the environment as well as contributing to the production of greenhouse gases and land, water and air pollution through the increased use and construction of new power plants. Lighting indeed plays a major negative part in our lives.

Most streetlights currently used in our community are of either the 'cobra-head' or 'sag lens' variety and use mercury or sodium vapour bulbs which are not only consume a large amount of power but are expensive to operate and maintain. To compound the problem, most of the light produced is wasted by the luminaires in which the bulbs are housed. Since the prime objective is to light roads and sidewalks, any light straying beyond those areas can only be considered 'waste' and is also wasting taxpayers' money in the process. These luminaires scatter light far and wide, even directing light upwards into the atmosphere! All of this wasted light contributes to increased glare, light pollution and trespass while reducing traffic and pedestrian safety. It also contributes to reduced security as criminals are able to easily seek and find targets which they can readily assess with this ubiquitous light. Bad lighting means bad safety and security!

Increased use of artificial light at night is also hazardous to our health. After reviewing research, the World Health Organization has identified artificial night lighting as being equivalent to smoking as a cause of cancer. Indeed, we are literally poisoning ourselves with light as it reduces the body's night production of melatonin thus substantially increasing our chances of breast or prostate cancer. Indeed, the American Medical Association has recently adopted a policy against light pollution due to health effects and effects on the environment and quality of life. The current night lighting situation is indeed unacceptable, wasteful and dangerous in a variety of ways.

Recent advances in technology have led to the creation of streetlights that are up to 80% more efficient than those we are currently using. Our present streetlights use many watts of power and are active approximately 12 hours per day. Indeed, streetlights account for a major portion of the budget of many municipalities. Major cities, through bad light management practices, are actually wasting trillions of watts per year in power which is, of course, paid for by the taxpayer in the amount of billions of dollars.

Economical, highly-efficient LED streetlights are now available which direct the light only onto the streets and sidewalks where it is needed. LED lights can also be controlled so that they are only on during certain hours of the night and/or only come on when there is a need for them, such as vehicular or pedestrian traffic in the area. This dramatically increases the savings on power as well. These lights, due to their longevity which may be 20 to 30 years, require far less maintenance, again substantially reducing the costs of their use. When combined with appropriate controls, International Dark-Sky-approved, full cut-off LED lights are a winning combination for municipalities and their taxpayers.

Many facets of artificial night lighting must be considered as a result of recent research. However, by changing our lighting and controlling it much better we stand to reduce our power consumption, budgets and taxes; improve our health and the safety and security of our communities as well as reduce the negative effects of light on all aspects of our environment.

Some communities have recently adopted policies and/or are now in the process of creating *Light-Efficient Communities* which have as their goal the following:

A Light-Efficient Community (LEC) is one that uses lighting intelligently and responsibly. It uses the most effective, efficient artificial lighting available to minimize energy waste, glare, light trespass and light pollution. A Light-Efficient Community employs sound planning, designs, measures, legislation, fixtures, technologies and good lighting practices to reduce its energy costs and carbon footprint while preserving the natural environment and ensuring health, safety, security and a high quality of life for all.

My associates and I would appreciate meeting with you, and other councilors who may be interested, to present more information on our concerns and discuss how changes can be made in community lighting which will benefit our community in so many positive ways.

We look forward to your reply and wish to thank you for your time and consideration of our concerns and request.

Sincerely,

(Name)
(Organization)
(Address)
(Phone Number)
(E-Mail)

Attachments