



City of Carmel-by-the-Sea Community Planning and Building Community Information Handout - Lighting Requirements

Municipal Code Restrictions

In all residential zones, the following lighting requirements apply:

- Wall-mounted lighting shall be no higher than 10 feet above the ground and shall not exceed 25 watts per fixture (approximately 375 lumens).
- Landscape lighting shall not exceed 18 inches above the ground nor more than 15 watts per fixture (approximately 225 lumens). Landscape lights shall be spaced at least 10 feet apart. No lighting may be used to accent trees, walls, fences, etc.
- No lighting is permitted upon City property or directed towards City property, including the Right of Way.

Lighting Design Guidelines

The use of exterior lights is a special area of concern throughout the community. A key feature of the “forest” concept is to minimize the amount of outdoor lighting, such that the nighttime sky may be glimpsed through the trees. Historically, public street lighting was avoided on residential streets. Within an individual property, site lighting typically was limited to a light at a building entrance and perhaps at a yard gate or over a garage door. Occasionally, a patio was lit as well, but this would be limited to a small, shielded lamp.

The Residential Design Guidelines encourage the preservation of low nighttime lighting throughout residential neighborhoods. The following guidelines apply:

- Use lights only where needed for safety and at outdoor activity areas. Appropriate locations may include building entries, gates, terraces, walkways and patios. Lights should not be used to accent buildings or vegetation.
- Use low lumen output bulbs. Floodlights and spotlights are inappropriate. Point lights downward to reduce glare and avoid “night pollution”
- Locate and shield fixtures to avoid glare and excess lighting as seen from neighboring properties and from the street.