Ordinance No. ___-_____ Amending Title III, Division 1, Chapter 4 of the Humboldt County Code Setting Standards for Outdoor Lighting.

ORDINANCE NO. ____-_____ SETTING STANDARDS FOR OUTDOOR LIGHTING BY ADDING SECTION 314-105.1, and AMENDING SECTIONS 314-141, 314-142, 314-147 AND 314-154 IN CHAPTER 4 OF DIVISION 1 OF TITLE III OF THE HUMBOLDT COUNTY CODE.

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Humboldt ordains as follows:

SECTION 1. PURPOSE OF AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING REGULATIONS

The purpose of the Inland Outdoor Lighting Ordinance is to implement the Humboldt County General Plan by setting outdoor lighting standards in the zoning ordinance to protect unincorporated Humboldt County from light pollution and light trespass.

SECTION 2. OUTDOOR LIGHTING

Add Section 314-105.1 setting standards for outdoor lighting in Title III, Division 1, Chapter 4 of the Humboldt County Code as follows (additions are shown in underline text):

314-105.1 Outdoor Lighting

105.1.1 **Purpose.** These outdoor lighting regulations are intended to:

105.1.1.1 Establish reasonable design standards for outdoor lighting to minimize light pollution, while maintaining nighttime safety, utility, security, and the enjoyment of the night sky;

105.1.1.2 Minimize glare;

105.1.1.3 Minimize light trespass by limiting outdoor lighting that is misdirected;

105.1.1.4 Require lighting to be focused on the developed environment to protect the natural environment from the damaging effects of lighting trespass; and

105.1.1.5 Provide a process to address degradation of the nighttime visual environment and the night sky;

105.1.1.6 Provide a process to address light trespass.

105.1.2 **General Regulations.**

105.1.2.1 To minimize the effects of light trespass and light pollution, lighting shall:

105.1.2.1.1 Be illuminated only when the area to be illuminated is actively being used or to address safety needs;

105.1.2.1.2 Limit the area to be illuminated to the area of the property engaged in a permitted activity;

105.1.2.1.3 Limit the intensity of the light to meet the illumination needs of the area to be illuminated; and

105.1.2.1.4 Be shielded and directed downward to limit light pollution and light trespass.

105.1.2.2 All outdoor lighting fixtures shall:

105.1.2.2.1 Be fully shielded or recessed; and

105.1.2.2.2 Be directed downward and not toward:

105.1.2.2.2.1 Other structures, neighboring properties, or the public right-of-way; or

105.1.2.2.2.2 Wildlife habitat or the sky.

105.1.2.3 Other laws or ordinances may have different requirements for specific applications and may conflict with these regulations. In such cases, those laws or ordinances shall govern.

105.1.3 **Prohibited Lighting.**

105.1.3.1 The following lighting systems are prohibited:

105.1.3.1.1 Aerial lasers;

105.1.3.1.2 Search-light style lights;

105.1.3.1.3 Mercury vapor lights;

105.1.3.1.4 Flashing lights;

105.1.3.1.5 Low-pressure sodium fixtures;

105.1.3.1.6 Any lighting that creates glare or distraction to traveling public.

105.1.3.2 A Conditional Use Permit may allow for any lighting systems that are prohibited above to be used for a Special Event if the following findings can be made:

105.1.3.2.1 The lighting system is necessary for the proposed use.

105.1.3.2.2 The lighting system will not spill onto neighboring properties.

105.1.4 **Exempt Lighting.** The following outdoor lighting fixtures are exempt provided there is no light trespass onto neighboring properties:

105.1.4.1 Temporary holiday decorations;

105.1.4.2 Light fixtures used to illuminate flags, statues, or any other objects mounted on a pole, pedestal, or platform shall use a very narrow beam of light for the purpose of confining the light to the object of interest and minimizing light trespass and glare;

105.1.4.3 Low intensity string lights;

105.1.4.4 Lighting installed and maintained by the County, other public agencies, or public utility;

105.1.4.5 Temporary construction lighting;

105.1.4.6 Athletic field lighting used within a school campus or public or private park;

105.1.4.7 Emergency lighting; and

105.1.4.8 Motion detector lighting fixtures provided:

105.1.4.8.1 Maximum time the light is on after being triggered is five (5) minutes; and

105.1.4.8.2 Light cannot be triggered from outside of the subject property.

105.1.5 **Lighting for Residential Use.** All outdoor lighting fixtures for residential use shall be subject to the following:

105.1.5.1 **Fully shielded.**

105.1.5.1.1 Light fixtures that use translucent material to cover the light source may be acceptable if the bulbs are low intensity (less than 3000 Kelvin).

105.1.5.2 **Direction.** Light shall be directed downward and within the property boundary to curtail light trespass and light pollution.

105.1.6 **Lighting for Commercial/Industrial Use.** All outdoor lighting fixtures for commercial and/or industrial use shall be installed and operated in conformance with this Section.

105.1.6.1 **Maximum Illumination.**

105.1.6.1.1 When adjacent to a residential area, lighting at the property boundary line shall not exceed 0.3 foot-candles.

105.1.6.1.2 Lighting along the public right-of-way, shall not exceed 1.0 foot-candle.

105.1.6.2 **Shielding.** All outdoor lighting shall be fully shielded to preclude light glow above the fixture and from going beyond the intended area of illumination.

105.1.6.3. **Direction.** All outdoor lighting shall be directed downward and within the property or development boundary.

105.1.6.4 **Height Limit.** Lights mounted on poles or structures intended primarily for mounting lights shall not exceed a mounting height of 20 feet high. An exception to the 20-foot height limit may be granted with the approval of a Special Permit.

105.1.6.5 **Hours of Operation.** Outdoor lighting shall be completely turned off or significantly dimmed at the close of business hours unless lighting is essential for security or safety.

105.1.6.6 **Parking Lots**. Parking lot lighting shall utilize bulbs that are warmer temperature, low intensity (less than 3000 Kelvin) between sunset and sunrise. Motion sensor lighting is encouraged in parking lots to provide security and safety without a light constantly being lit.

105.1.7 **Conformance Review.** Any new or modified commercial development project shall submit a lighting plan as part of the building permit application. The applicant shall, as a part of the lighting plan, submit sufficient information to enable the County Planning

and Building Department to determine whether the proposed lighting complies with the provisions of this section. The lighting plan shall include the following:

105.1.7.1 A site plan indicating the proposed location of all outdoor lighting fixtures that are included in the development; and

105.1.7.2 A cut sheet of the fixture(s) to be used, showing the shielding, and light dispersion, which will be shown in footcandles.

105.1.7.3 The project lighting plan shall be coordinated with any associated landscaping plan to prevent site planning conflicts.

105.1.8 **Nonconforming Lighting.** Any outdoor lighting fixture that was installed prior to the adoption of these regulations and was consistent with zoning regulations at the time of installation will be considered legal nonconforming. Any lighting fixtures installed after the enactment of this section shall be consistent with this section.

105.1.8.1 Should the County receive a complaint for light trespassing and/or pollution, the Planning Director may require that the light be shielded, filtered, redirected, replaced with a less intense light source, removed or a combination thereof, to eliminate light trespass.

105.1.8.2 Substantial Change of Use and/or Alterations. If a property with non-compliant lighting substantially changes or expands uses after the effective date of these regulations, then all outdoor lighting on the property shall be brought into compliance with this section before the new use begins.

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS

Section 314-138 is hereby amended and added to as follows (additions are shown in underline text):

314-141 DEFINTIONS (F)

Foot-candle: Foot-candle" (abbreviated 'fc') means a unit of illuminance defined as one lumen per square foot. One foot-candle is approximately equal to 10.76 lux.

314-142 DEFINITIONS (G)

Glare: Glare refers to artificial light that shines backwards, upwards, or directly at the viewer.

314-147 DEFINTIONS (L)

Light fixture: Light fixture means a complete lighting unit consisting of a lamp or lamps, the lamp holder, reflector, lens, diffuser, ballast and/or other components and accessories, together with parts designed to distribute the light, to position and protect

the lamps, and to connect the lamps to the power supply. Sometimes referred to as a luminaire or light source.

Light pollution: Light pollution means any artificial light emitted into the atmosphere, either directly or indirectly, which may have a disruptive effect on natural cycles and inhibits the observation of stars and planets.

Light trespass: Light trespass means any artificial light emitted by a lighting installation which shines beyond the boundaries of the property on which the installation is sited. Included, but not limited to, any light or glare from a light fixture onto neighboring property that interferes with viewing of the night sky or eliminates the ability to have darkness on the adjacent property, or shines into or onto neighboring windows, properties or structures.

314-154 DEFINITIONS (S)

Shielded: Shielded refers to a light fixture having a housing or optics that prevents a direct view of the light source from normal viewing angles. Types of shielding include:

a. "Fully shielded" A lighting design where the light source is completely covered by a barrier, preventing any light from escaping upwards or sideways, ensuring that all illumination is directed downwards, minimizing light pollution, glare, and light trespass.
b. "Unshielded" A lighting design where there is no barrier covering the light source, which causes the light to spread out in all directions.

SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This ordinance shall become effective thirty (30) days after the date of its passage.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this_____day of _____, 2025, on the following vote, to wit:

AYES: Supervisors:

NAYS: Supervisors:

ABSENT: Supervisors:

ABSTAIN: Supervisors:

_____

MICHELLE BUSHNELL, CHAIRPERSON,

HUMBOLDT COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

(SEAL)

ATTEST:

Tracy Damico, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
of the County of Humboldt, State of California

By: _____

Nicole Turner, Deputy Clerk

Date: