

Micanopy Street Light Solution Petition, February 26, 2020

Your email address will only be used for this petition. We requested the town email list simply to be thorough in our efforts to bring this issue to the attention of every town resident.

Dear Town of Micanopy, Planning Board & Board of Commissioners,

We the undersigned residents of Micanopy respectfully request that the street lights in Micanopy be modified with a commercial diffuser *film tape* in order to bring the level of brightness and color temperature down to healthy levels for humans and native wildlife, and be fitted with some kind of shield or diffuser-*cover* to direct light downward. This would enable us to still conserve energy with LEDs, maintain normal light levels that we've always had while also keeping us safe from blinding glare at night, and it would help retain our town's nighttime beauty.

The old high pressure sodium street lights that were amber, were 2400k. The current street lights are 50w 4000k so they are very bright, and since they are also without shields, light is cast out sideways causing a lot of glare. Ironically, this makes walking and driving at night more dangerous because of reduced night vision from glare. At night, pedestrians and vehicle drivers rely on a certain amount of darkness to be able to see vehicle headlights coming around corners on our streets, and the current lights make that impossible, increasing the danger of being hit in a vehicle and on foot, especially since our town does not have sidewalks on the vast majority of our town's streets. Further, because of the glare from the new lights it is much more difficult to see into dark places, making shadows darker and arguably better suited to criminal activity than before. Possible shady activity has already been seen under these new lights at the ballpark late at night, and a shop downtown on Cholokka Blvd was broken into and robbed under these street lights. There is actually no clear scientific evidence that increased outdoor lighting deters crimes in rural areas like Micanopy. Let us not be mistaken; we need street lights, and compared to complete darkness lights are certainly a necessary security -- but it's dependent on balance, *the right amount of light*, to balance health and safety.

Micanopy is surrounded on all sides by preserve land, with abundant native wildlife -- including protected migratory birds -- and their ecosystems share our town as a result. It is scientifically proven that LEDs of this brightness disrupt circadian rhythms of humans and animals, cause cataracts, headaches, breast cancer, and many other health concerns. Cited links are provided below.

Numerous other towns have successfully changed their street lights to amber, lower kelvin (k) for the reasons stated above. However, with the high cost of Amber LED street lights compared to the current lights, replacing them could be costly. This is where tinted diffuser film tape can be useful. The company 3M manufactures these diffuser tapes and are willing to send Duke Energy samples, and Duke Energy Lighting Engineer Steven Gonzales has been communicative on this subject and is happy to help us solve this problem. There is even the possibility to pay for this diffuser tape with the Wild Spaces Public Places grant money, if budget is an issue.

Please help us with this matter and we will do everything we can to assist our town of Micanopy in implementing the solution that works for the safety and health of

our residents and wildlife ecosystems, and the nighttime beauty of our town.

To sign this petition, simply type “street light petition” in the ‘subject’, then type your full name and date and send it to both of these addresses:

townhall@micanopytown.com

effortlessdepths@gmail.com

Citations:

<http://cescos.fau.edu/observatory/lightpol-security.html>

The above link contains studies, graphs, and information on how light pollution can actually increase local crime levels. It is well worth a read, because it clarifies and debunks over simplified ideas of lights providing security. *It is more complicated than that.*

<https://theconversation.com/american-medical-association-warns-of-health-and-safety-problems-from-white-led-streetlights-61191>

The above link is in reference to the American Medical Association research showing that bright LEDs – like those recently installed throughout the entirety of Micanopy – cause numerous health problems. Even if these lights *did* decrease danger of crime (which they do not) they would be *increasing* our danger of health problems. The current Micanopy street lights are 4000k, well above the recommended 3000k. Diffuser film tape should be considered as a solution.

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/works/>

The above link is from a Nation Institute of Justice study showing that improved lighting doesn't discourage crime.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/296621681_A_summary_of_LED_lighting_impacts_on_health

Above is a link to a summary of research on the numerous negative effects that LED's on health. Again, LED's have many benefits, but if they are not dimmed to healthy levels, then they are causing harm.

<https://reolink.com/do-outside-lights-deter-burglars/>

Above is an interesting and informed viewpoint on how outdoor lights don't really deter burglars, and details some methods that will actually help deter them.

And for those who choose to cite the New York City study on decreases in crime because of street lights, keep in mind that the housing developments under study were selectively chosen, already high crime neighborhoods, rendering this inapplicable to Micanopy; our town is nothing like New York City.