

## **Trail Lighting Model Policy**

### **Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO) Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)**

#### **PURPOSE**

This model policy was developed by the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (WMPO BPAC). The WMPO BPAC was created to advise the WMPO Board on issues regarding bicycle and pedestrian programs, projects, policies, and safety; the committee also assumes the roles of: promoting the safe use of bicycling and walking for transportation and recreation, providing recommendations on policies and plans for the development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the WMPO's member jurisdictions, and contributing to the development of the WMPO's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

This model policy is intended to provide a guide for the WMPO's member jurisdictions to determine when lighting should be considered for installation on new and existing trail facilities.

Trail lighting should enhance trail user safety, security, comfort, and experience while considering community-specific design goals such as: maintaining aesthetic and historic characteristics of the trail's location, usage of energy-efficient and/or easy-to-maintain lighting technologies, aiding emergency response, and minimizing adverse impacts on surrounding ecosystems and communities.

#### **POLICY**

##### *Definitions*

Trail facilities are defined as off-road paths which are accessible to bicyclists, pedestrians, and other non-motorized users. Terms such as "greenway" or "multiuse path" are synonymous.

##### *Location Considerations*

Lighting for trail facilities should be analyzed on a case-by-case basis, but at a minimum considered at the following trail locations:

- Trailheads
- Inside tunnels and beneath overpasses

- Bridge entrances and exits
- Trail intersections and intersections with roadways
- Crosswalks
- Along streets
- Public gathering spaces and restroom facilities
- On signage
- Trails highly used by commuters where night usage is expected
- Locations where nighttime security of the user could be impacted

Lighting may not be necessary in areas where lighting is already adequate, for example in neighborhoods or residential areas. Consideration of maintenance, labor, and cost commitment associated with lighting should also be made.

### *Lighting Characteristics*

Lighting on trail facilities at a minimum shall conform with the following standards:

- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) requirements for lighting shared-use paths found in the Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities
- Local lighting design standards and specifications

Other lighting standards to consider include:

- DarkSky International's [Five Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting](#)

At a minimum, it is recommended that trail lighting comply with the following recommendations:

1. Targeted lighting and light shielding
  - a. Target lighting so that it is pointed downward and falls directly where needed. Full cut-off fixtures shall be in place to reduce light pollution and glare.
  - b. Lighting shall not be obstructed by tree canopies.
2. Lighting levels
  - a. Lighting shall be adequate to identify a face up to 20 yards away.
  - b. Use the lowest light level required, being mindful of surface conditions and reflectiveness of the trail surface
3. Lighting color
  - a. Lighting shall limit shorter wavelength (blue-violet) light while allowing for color rendition to enable users to identify features such as hair, clothing, and vehicle color of other trail users.