

November 20, 2024

To: Reno City Council Meeting of November 20, 2024

Concerning: Agenda item D.6 - Public Works
Staff Report on Proposed lighting improvements for Truckee River Path

Sent by email to: publiccomment@reno.gov

To the Reno City Council

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed lighting improvement along the Truckee River Path. I am on the Conservation Committee of the Lahontan Audubon Society (LAS). The LAS is a local organization of bird conservation and birding enthusiasts that has been active in the Reno area for 60 years. We represent over 1,000 people in our community who care about our local birds.

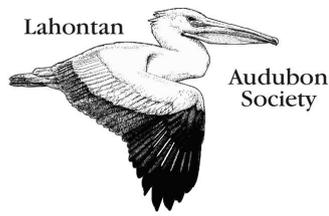
The Truckee River is a rich bird habitat and offers innumerable opportunities for nature and bird observation. We appreciate that the City of Reno is improving human safety along the river by improving and extending public lighting. However, we also would like to point out that artificial lighting changes the natural environment in which birds and other wildlife exist.

Specifically, night lights can lure migrating birds away from their migration routes. Birds can also get confused and disoriented by lights, and unable to perceive obstacles in their flight path. Injury and death often result from such collisions.

Studies have also shown that lights, including streetlights, may change feeding behaviors, lifecycle patterns, and circadian rhythms of birds. These changes can affect their reproduction and may cause further population declines. As Reno grows, we need to consider development impacts on wildlife and take responsible actions to prevent harm. According to the 2022 U.S. State of the Birds Report from the National Audubon Society, North America has lost 3 billion breeding birds since 1970, a loss of 1 in 4 birds! Our city needs to prevent a further decline in bird populations through wise development practices that maintain our birds' natural habitats and environments as much as possible.

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<http://www.nevadaaudubon.org>



While not all of the consequences of exposing birds to artificial light are yet fully known (part of this research is currently carried out by UNR Professor J. Ouyang under a National Science grant), there already exist practical recommendations on how to minimize the impact of lighting on wildlife. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, for example, has a website titled: “Threats to Birds: Collisions (Nighttime Lighting)” that links to specific actions which communities and private persons can take to minimize the negative effects of nighttime lighting (<https://www.fws.gov/story/threats-birds-collisions-nighttime-lighting>).

We commend the City of Reno for incorporating lighting structure designs that block light from shining toward the night sky. In addition, we would appreciate if Public Works made sure that the selected installations are indeed delivering light with only **minimal light pollution** overall.

We hope that Public Works will also address the quality of light. Current recommendations (see references linked on the USFWS website) advise that **light should be in the warm spectrum (< 3100 Kelvin) to be bird and wildlife friendly**. Warm spectrum light is also recommended for Dark Sky conditions. In addition, it may also be better for human vision health, particularly for persons who are sensitive to light glare at night.

Thank you very much for considering our concerns and making sure that lighting on the Truckee River Path will be least disruptive to birds and other wildlife. Looking out for the welfare of birds and other wildlife will be good for us all!

Yours sincerely,

Marisa Ernst, LAS Conservation Committee

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15253::Voice Message From: Cisco Unity Connection Messaging System (917753342099)

From Donoma Unity <DonomaUnity@reno.gov>

Date Wed 11/20/2024 10:02 AM

To Public Comment - CC <PublicComment@reno.gov>

 1 attachment (548 KB)

VoiceMessage.wav;

Voice Message delivered by Donoma OneVoice

From: 917753342099

Click to Call [917753342099](tel:917753342099)

I'm calling to complain about the NB planned power outage. We got a notice only at 4:00 yesterday afternoon that they were going to do a a a power outage due to the high winds due to a possibility of a fire. There's no fire in the area, there's rain clouds in the sky and they're setting up power off for over 30 hours, because there might be a fire. Not, there is a fire and I called the complainant and the energy and they said, this didn't do a rolling Brown out. I can't have my power set up at 30 hours, they have food in the refrigerator. I have food in the freezer that can spoil. We can't, you know, um, don't have any power at all out of the house and this is done on a less than 24 hour notice on the possibility of something happening. Not that there's an actual fire. So that, uh, the communication was horrible. It's a stupid plan for a possibility that may or may not happen. There's rain clouds in the in the sky right now. So I'm just calling to complain. That this is the end of the energy just totally left. All their customers down. My name is Barry me. My number is 775-225-9881. Thank you.

(Transcription with high confidence)

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