

AGENDA
Planning and Zoning Commission
February 4, 2026 – REGULAR MEETING
5:30 PM

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PLEASE SILENCE ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES DURING THE MEETING

1. ZOOM LINK FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To join, [click link](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83980060113?pwd=bE0A5W5NCv8duaSRRGwZT3YC7lQbvg.1) or copy it to your browser: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83980060113?pwd=bE0A5W5NCv8duaSRRGwZT3YC7lQbvg.1>

Or join at zoom.com with Webinar ID: **839 8006 0113** and Password: **83001**

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. CALL TO ORDER

4. ROLL CALL

5. MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

I. January 7, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

7. NEW BUSINESS

I. P25-139: Text Amendment to LDR Div. 5.3.

8. MATTERS FROM STAFF

9. ADJOURN

MINUTES
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
TOWN OF JACKSON, WYOMING
January 7, 2026
UNAPPROVED

The Planning and Zoning Commission met in a regular session on January 7, 2026 in the Town Council Chambers located at 150 E. Pearl Ave. in Jackson, at 5:30 pm. This meeting was held in person and via Zoom.

Upon roll call the following were found to be present:

BOARD: Thomas Smits, Laura Bonich, Stephanie Wise, & Eliska Garcia appeared in person. Megan Jennings and Katie Wilson were not present. Georgie Stanley is present at 5:34 PM.

STAFF: Tyler Valentine, Andrew Bowen, Mary Tippetts

MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Commissioner Bonich and seconded by Commissioner Wise to approve December 17, 2025, Planning Commission Meeting minutes. Commissioner Smits called for the vote. The vote showed all in favor and the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

- I. **P25-205: Development Plan for a Mixed-use Development at 145 W Pearl Avenue & 65 S Glenwood Street**

STAFF PRESENTATION:

Andrew Bowen provided an overview of the project. The planning director recommends approval of the Development Plan with five recommended conditions. The site is DC-2 zone and currently developed; proposal includes a three story, 42-foot high, mixed use building with ground floor retail, 15 residential units, underground parking, and alley access for vehicles. Staff find the proposed project complies with zoning district requirements and is consistent with the vision of the Comprehensive Plan. Key question revolves around the proposal to remove the large spruce trees located on the adjacent property to accommodate the proposed building's proximity to the western property line. The floor area and unit breakdown is outlined. The DRC approved the final design in October 2025 with conditions to upsize the spruce trees and attempt to lower the Glenwood Street canopy.

QUESTIONS FOR STAFF:

Commissioner Stanley clarifies how the canopies present along the street frontage.

APPLICANT PRESENTATION:

Pierre Languet with Axis Architecture gives an overview of the project and its design.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jessica Jaubert, representative of the neighboring property owner, Ted Stark, addresses the Commission. The Starks are in agreement to remove the trees on their property.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Commission agrees with conditions 1, 2, 4, and 5. The Commission has concerns about the memo from the Housing Department and the 2:1 allowance. Commissioner Bonich believes the dens will be used as a bedroom, regardless of building code, and the Commission agrees. They are unhappy with the use of the den to potentially circumvent regulations. Recommendation 3 causes the most concern amongst the Commission.

The Commission believes the project complies with the Comprehensive Plan and complies with the Design Guidelines.

There is concern amongst the Commission that the project will have significant impact on public facilities and services, in particular the alley access. Commissioners Bonich & Stanley will vote against the motion as she does not believe the project complies with the LDRs as it relates to the 2:1 bonus. Commissioner Smits believes the project will have significant impact on public facilities and services. Commissioners Garcia & Wise believe the project complies with the LDRs, while still expressing significant reservations about the project.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Commissioner Wise and seconded by Commissioner Garcia to recommend approval of Development Plan P25-205 for the 46,096-square-foot mixed-use development located at 145 W. Pearl Avenue and 65 S. Glenwood Street, subject to the attached departmental review comments and the staff report dated January 7, 2026. Commissioner Smits called for the vote. Commissioners Wise & Garcia vote in favor. Commissioners Smits, Bonich, and Stanley oppose based on conditions of approval one & three. The recommendation to approve the application fails.

MATTERS FROM STAFF:

The Town plans to annex the Nelson Drive parcel. The Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed this year along with possible changes to the LDRs. Mogul should be submitting their development plan this spring, and the Virginian Lodge will be submitting a development plan for a 36-unit development on their property.

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Commissioner Wise and seconded by Commissioner Bonich to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Smits called for the vote. The vote showed all in favor and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:04 pm.

minutes:mt

STAFF REPORT



Meeting Date:	February 4, 2026	Meeting Title:	Regular Town Planning Commission Meeting
Submitting Department:	Planning Department	Presenter:	Andrew Bowen
Agenda Item:	Text Amendments to LDR Sections 5.3.1.B and Articles 2, 3, and 4 (P25-234) and 5.3.1.B and 5.3.1.C (P25-139)	Public Comment:	Yes

Purpose & Policy Considerations.

Text Amendments to the Town of Jackson Land Development Regulations (LDRs) require review and approval by the Planning Commission and Town Council according to LDR Section 8.7.2. The purpose of this review is to *“publicly review a change to these LDRs to ensure that it improves implementation of the Jackson/Teton County Comprehensive Plan or address other health, safety, or welfare issues in the community.”*

Recommendations.

The Planning Director recommends **approval** of Text Amendment P25-234 to amend LDR Sections 5.3.1.B and Articles 2, 3, and 4, subject to the attached departmental review comments and this staff report dated February 4, 2026.

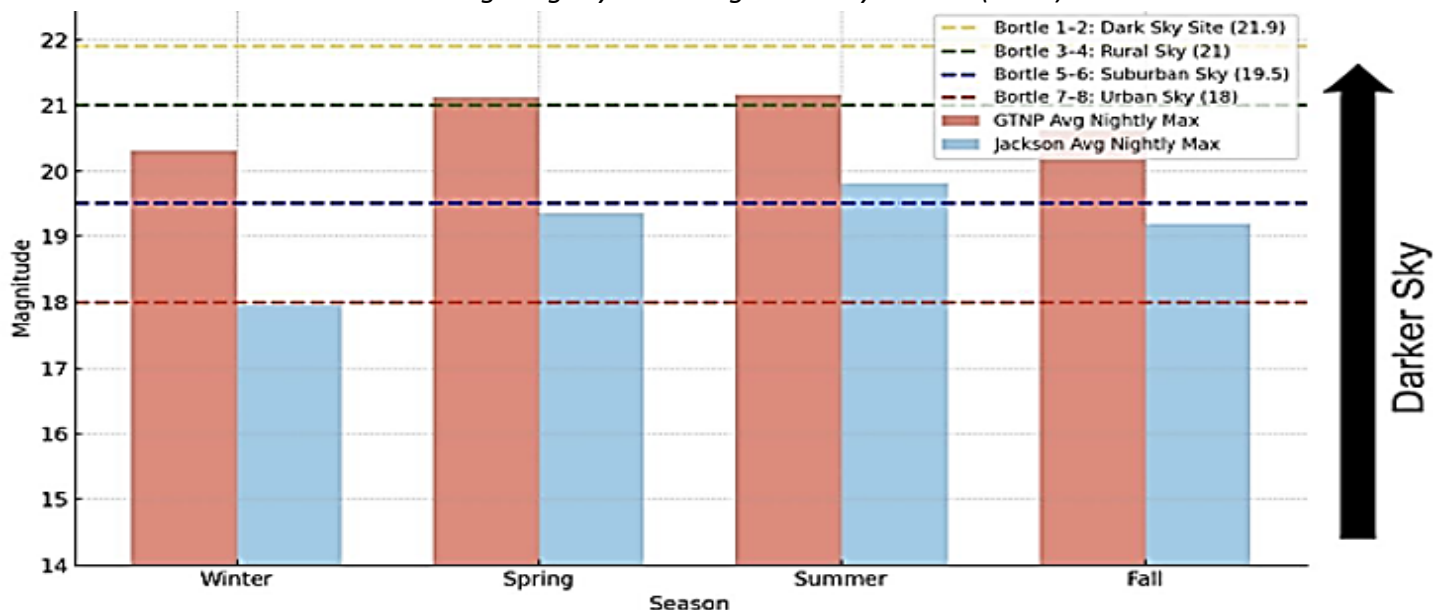
The Planning Director recommends **approval** of Text Amendment P25-139 to amend LDR Sections 5.3.1.B and 5.3.1.C, subject to the attached departmental review comments and this staff report dated February 4, 2026.

Background/Project Description.

Previous Text Amendments and Town of Jackson Dark Sky Community Certification:

In 2022, the Town Council adopted several exterior lighting text amendments (P22-015) proposed by Wyoming Stargazing to support Dark Sky Certification, which was later achieved in coordination with Teton County and the Jackson Hole Airport. The Applicant states the proposed amendments build on this work by clarifying compliance with the Town’s Exterior Lighting Standards (§5.3.1) to further protect dark skies. The Applicant also notes that night sky measurements show increased light pollution between 2022 and 2024, with the greatest seasonal impacts occurring in winter. For example, the below table compares light pollution in the Town to Grand Teton National Park, which is used to approximate “natural” conditions.

Table 1: Average Nightly Max Magnitude by Season (2024): Jackson vs. Grand Teton NP



Note: Table 1 compares seasonal night-sky darkness in Jackson and Grand Teton National Park, where higher values indicate darker skies. Grand Teton National Park is consistently darker than Jackson in all seasons, with the largest difference in winter, highlighting the seasonal impact of artificial lighting in town.

While the original July 14, 2025, application focused solely on string lighting standards; subsequent resubmittals expanded the scope to prohibit all unshielded exterior lighting town-wide and further restrict allowable light color under LDR Sections 5.3.1.B.1 and 5.3.1.B.3.

Analysis.

The Applicant's proposed amendments (**red**), staff's proposed text changes (**blue**), the Applicant's justifications, and staff analyses, are provided below:

(P25-234) Amendment #1

5.3.1.B.1. Fully Shielded Light Fixtures.

(Amendment prohibits the use of unshielded exterior light fixtures throughout town.)

All light sources ~~whose initial output exceeds 600 initial lumens~~ shall be fully shielded. Any structural part of the luminaire providing full shielding shall be attached. Light fixtures that project light above the horizontal plane of the fixture may be used where the architecture of the building restricts light emitted above the horizontal plane. **Exterior lighting associated with Town of Jackson or Teton County Parks and Recreation Department operations on the Town Square shall be exempt from the standards of this section, provided such lighting is turned off by 2:00 a.m. and remains extinguished until two hours before sunrise.**

Applicant Justification.

This amendment is intended to provide greater ease of enforcement for the Town of Jackson and Teton County staff as well as clearer guidance for residents and business owners about what types of fixtures are compliant. It also strengthens lighting standards to protect dark night skies without impacting the use of string lighting.

Staff Analysis.

Staff supports a town-wide prohibition on unshielded exterior lighting for new development and redevelopment only, with no retroactive application; existing nonconforming lighting would continue to be regulated pursuant to LDR Sec. 1.9.6. which means that landowners can continue to keep their unshielded light fixtures (and replace light bulbs as needed) until they decide to replace the light fixture. Staff also recommend approval of the proposed exemption for Town Square lighting to continue to allow lighting that is not fully shielded. Staff notes that prohibiting all unshielded lighting will require additional code enforcement.

(P25-234) Amendment #2

5.3.1.B.2 Total Exterior Light Output

(Amendment removes sections in the following table for Unshielded Fixtures if Amendment #1 is approved.)

- 2. Total Exterior Light Output.** Total exterior light output for light fixtures on a site shall not exceed the limits shown in the table on the following page.

Table 3: Existing LDR Table for 5.3.1.B.2

How much light is permitted?	All Fixtures	Unshielded Fixtures (for lights emitting fewer than 600 lumens)
Maximum lumens per sq ft of site development		
DC, CR-1, CR-2, CR-3, OR, TS, UC, BP, MHP, P/SP, P, NL-5, NM-2, NH-1	3	Not applicable
R, NL-1, NL-2, NL-3, NL-4, NM-1	1.5	Not applicable
Maximum lumens per acre of site development		
DC, CR-1, CR-2, CR-3, OR, TS, UC, BP, MHP, P/SP, P, NL-5, NM-2, NH-1	50,000	2,000
R, NL-1, NL-2, NL-3, NL-4, NM-1	20,000	1,000

Applicant Justification.

This amendment removes unnecessary language and charts about unshielded lighting that are no longer compliant.

Staff Analysis.

Staff supports this omission, as it is consistent with and supports Amendment #1, if approved.

(P25-234) Amendment #3 (Amendment Block)

Total Exterior Light Output (Zone Specific Clean Up)

(If Amendment #1 is approved, the following omission will be required for each applicable zone district (Articles 2-4) for clarification within the Scenic Standards Table.)

All Complete Neighborhood Character Zones

6. Scenic Standards
Exterior Lighting (Sec. 5.3.1)
Light trespass prohibited
All lights over 600 initial lumens shall be fully shielded
Lumens per sf of site development (max) 3
Lumens per acre of site development (max)
All fixtures 50,000
Unshielded fixtures 2,000
Light Color ≤3000 Kelvin
Scenic Resource Overlay (SRO) (Sec. 5.3.2)

MHP, all Rural Area Zones, and all Special Purpose Zones

8.Scenic Standards
Exterior Lighting (Sec. 5.3.1)
Light trespass prohibited.
All lights over 600 initial lumens shall be fully shielded.
Lumens per sf of site development (max) 3
Lumens per acre of site development (max)
All fixtures 50,000
Unshielded fixtures 2,000
Light Color ≤3000 Kelvin
Scenic Resource Overlay (SRO) (Sec. 5.3.2)

(P25-234) Amendment #4

5.3.1.B.3. Light Color

(Amendment adds clarifying language for single-color or filtered exterior light sources.)

The Correlated Color Temperature (CCT) of any spectral exterior light source shall not exceed 3,000 Kelvin. The color of any single-color or filtered exterior light source shall not be green, blue, or purple; Only yellow, orange, red, and white (without any blue, green or purple tint) light sources are allowed. Exterior lighting associated with Town of Jackson or Teton County Parks and Recreation Department operations on the Town Square shall be exempt from the standards of this section, provided such lighting is turned off by 2:00 a.m. and remains extinguished until two hours before sunrise.

Applicant Justification.

This amendment corrects an oversight in the intent of the current exterior lighting standard where there are no regulations on light color for single-color or filtered sources. The purpose of this amendment is to protect wildlife and humans from the most harmful colors of light at night.

Staff Analysis.

Staff support adding clarifying language for single-color or filtered exterior light sources. Staff also supports the proposed exemption because the Town Square ice-skating rink lighting does not and cannot comply with the proposed CCT maximum during operation.

(P25-139) Amendment #5

5.3.1.C.3 Strings of Lights

(Amendment removes an existing LDR section if the new string lighting regulations in Amendment #6 are approved.)

~~**5.3.1.C.3 Strings of Lights.** Strings or strands of lights used to highlight a sign, perimeter of a sign, or any portion of a building are not permitted, except for holiday type decorative lighting displayed between December 1 and March 15.~~

Amendment #6

5.3.1.B.9: String Lighting

(Amendment (new subsection) creates a new section regulating string light use.)

5.3.1.B.9 String Lighting

9. String lighting refers to individual light sources connected by exposed wires or enclosed in tubing, creating multiple points of light.
 - a. Exemptions.
 - i. String lighting used between November 15th and continuing until January 15th shall be exempt from all standards of this section and from all standards of sections 5.3.1. and 5.6.2.
 - ii. Total light output of string lighting shall be exempt from the prohibition on unshielded lighting (5.3.1.B.1). It shall still be included in the total maximum allowed lumens per sq ft and per site.
 - iii. String lighting for non-residential uses shall be exempt from the regulation of Light Trespass (5.3.1.B.4).

- iv. Exterior lighting associated with Town of Jackson or Teton County Parks and Recreation Department operations on the Town Square shall be exempt from the standards of this section, provided such lighting is turned off by 2:00 a.m. and remains extinguished until two hours before sunrise.
- b. **All uses:** String lighting may be used, subject to the following provisions and restrictions as well as to all other applicable standards of sections 5.3.1 – External Lighting Standards, and 5.6.1 – Town Sign Standards.
 - ~~i. All individual light sources (bulbs or individual LEDs) on string lighting shall not exceed one hundred (100) lumens per source.~~
 - i. **Specific Standards for Residential Use.**
 - a. All individual light sources (bulbs or individual LEDs) on string lighting shall not exceed 50 lumens per source.
 - b. Total light output of string lighting on any site shall not exceed 5,000 lumens.
 - c. String lighting shall be extinguished by two hours after sunset and remain extinguished until two hours before sunrise the following day.
 - d. String lighting shall not be used to outline or highlight a building or portion of a building except for on patios, decks, and porches.
 - ii. **Specific Standards for Non-residential Use.**
 - a. All individual light sources (bulbs or individual LEDs) on string lighting shall not exceed 100 lumens per source.
 - b. Total light output of string lighting on any site shall not exceed 10,000 lumens.
 - c. String lighting shall be extinguished at the end of the business's or establishment's normal business hours and shall remain extinguished until two hours before sunrise the following day. For businesses open 24 hours string lighting shall be dimmed to 30% of its initial output after 2:00 AM.

Applicant Justification.

Note: Individual subsection justifications are attached. This amendment updates the exterior lighting standards to allow regulated, year-round use of string lighting while protecting the Town's dark night skies. It establishes a shortened a defined holiday exemption and clear performance standards outside that period, including limits on brightness, total light output, hours of operation, allowable light trespass, balancing community character, business vitality, and dark-sky protection.

Staff Analysis.

Staff supports the amendment with the inclusion of the proposed changes shown in blue, for the reasons discussed above, and further notes that a 100-lumen allowance may be too intense for residential use. A comparison chart is provided on the following page.

Table 3: Lumen Level Comparison

Brightness Level	Comparable To	Effect on Visibility
50 Lumens	Typical iPhone Flashlight	Barely perceptible from afar (visible within 50–100 feet)
100 Lumens	Small flashlight/headlamp	Likely to register as a visible point of light from several hundred feet away

The proposed language reflects collaboration among the Applicant, staff, and the Chamber of Commerce and establishes clear standards for both commercial and residential string lighting. Staff notes that enforcement will be challenging due to late and early compliance hours and limited Code Enforcement staffing (0.5 FTE); therefore, enforcement will be complaint-based rather than proactive. However, the proposed standards were written and designed to encourage voluntary compliance and represent a positive step toward protecting the night sky.

Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce Involvement:

During review of a prior amendment, planning staff received a letter of opposition from Rick Howe, President and CEO of the Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce, citing concerns related to economic vitality, safety perceptions, and the need for a string lighting ordinance given existing Dark Sky certification.

In response, the Applicant met with Mr. Howe and presented a revised draft to the Chamber Board on January 15. The Chamber now generally supports the proposed amendments, subject to adjusting the string lighting curfew from 1:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. and extending the morning reduction period from one to two hours before sunrise; the current draft reflects these changes.

Key Question #1.

Does the Planning Commission find that the proposed amendments strike an appropriate balance between preservation of dark skies and support for economic vitality within the Town?

Public Safety Concerns:

Through a letter (attached) and a meeting with Michelle Weber, Chief of Police, staff received input indicating the Police Department supports maintaining year-round illumination of the Town Square until 2:00 a.m. based on public safety concerns and past incidents that occurred when lighting was reduced earlier in the evening. Chief Weber states that increased lighting and improved visibility have proven effective in deterring crime, supporting natural surveillance, and enhancing public safety in this high-use area. While acknowledging the importance of dark-sky preservation, the Town Square is a unique location where late-night visibility is necessary to protect residents and visitors.

Key Question #2.

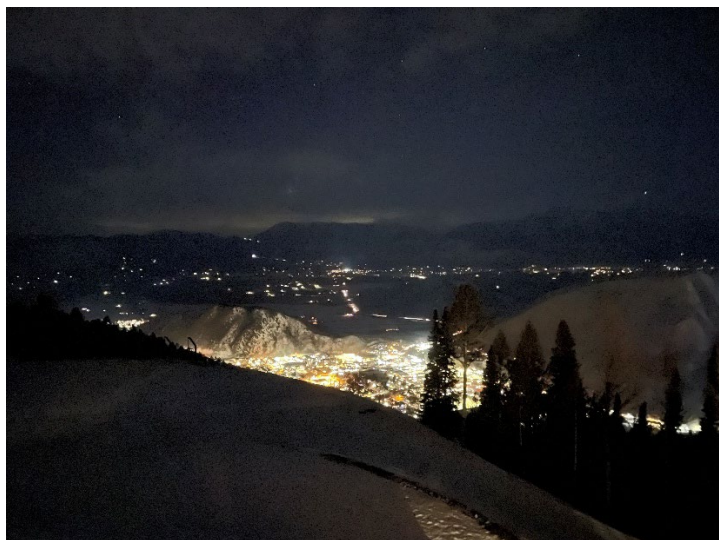
Does the Planning Commission agree with staff's recommended exemption language which permits year-round illumination of the Town Square until 2:00 a.m. based on comments received from Chief Weber?

Impact of String Lighting on Light Pollution:

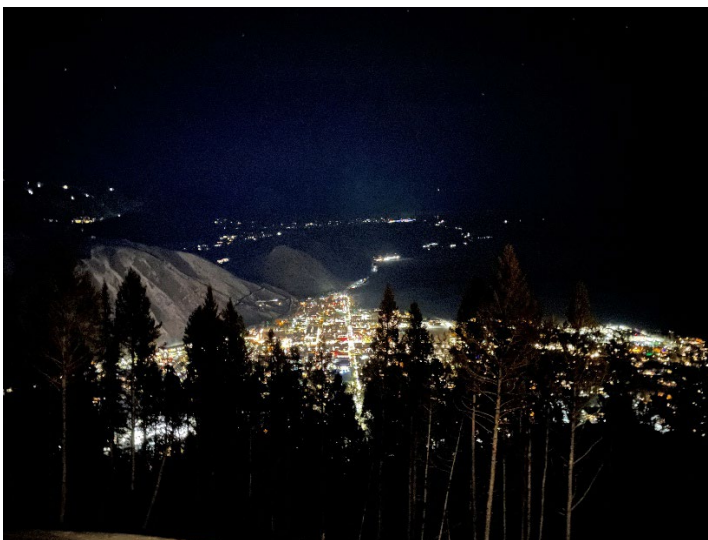
Staff has discussed the effects of string lighting on light pollution with the Applicant. While its precise contribution has not been quantified, the Applicant states that string lighting, particularly when left on overnight, does contribute to light pollution. However, the primary sources of light pollution in town are other exterior lighting types, which would largely remain unaffected by this proposal, aside from the prohibition of unshielded lighting. For context, two photographs taken on January 22 from the summit of Snow King are provided below:

Figures 1 and 2: View of Jackson from Snow King

West View



Town Center



Comprehensive Plan Alignment:

The proposed amendment supports Policy 1.3.d of the Town of Jackson Comprehensive Plan, which calls for maintaining dark night skies under the Environmental Stewardship section, and advances Teton County's goal of achieving 100% dark sky compliance by 2030. It is also consistent with other Comprehensive Plan principles, including:

- *Principle 1.3: Maintain the scenic resources of the community.* Dark night skies are a defining natural feature of both the Town of Jackson and the Grand Teton National Park region.
- *Principle 2.1: Reduce the consumption of non-renewable energy.* Applying outdoor lighting more precisely reduces the total amount of light needed, resulting in lower electricity consumption.

Process:

This proposal required multiple resubmittals and continuances over approximately six months due to changes in text and scope made by the applicant, resulting in substantial staff time devoted to collaborative revisions.

Public Comment.

As of the writing of this staff report, one letter of public opposition (attached Chamber letter) was received; however, the concerns raised have since been resolved.

LDR Text Amendment Factors of Consideration.

Pursuant to Section 8.7.2 of the Town of Jackson LDRs, the decision to amend the text of the LDRs is at the legislative discretion of the Planning Commission and Town Council and is not determined by any single factor.

In deciding whether to adopt, modify, or deny a proposed text amendment, the Planning Commission and Town Council shall consider factors including, but not limited to, the extent to which the proposed amendment:

P25-234 Findings (Amend LDR Sections 5.3.1.B and Articles 2, 3, and 4):

1. *Is consistent with the purposes and organization of the LDRs;*

Complies. The proposed amendments are consistent with the purpose and organization of the LDRs, as they build on prior exterior lighting text amendments (P22-015) and further clarify compliance with exterior lighting standards for both commercial and residential uses within the town.

2. *Improves the consistency of the LDRs with other provisions of the LDRs;*

Complies as Modified. The proposed amendments as modified by staff establish clear and consistent standards for exterior lighting for both commercial and residential uses within the Town.

3. *Provides flexibility for landowners within standards that clearly define desired character;*

Complies as Modified. The proposed amendments as modified by staff provide flexibility for the use of exterior lighting while establishing clear standards to protect the night sky.

4. *Is necessary to address changing conditions, public necessity, and/or state or federal legislation; and*

Complies. The proposed amendments align with Comprehensive Plan Policy 1.3.d and further aligns the Town with its Dark Sky Community Certification maintenance.

5. *Is consistent with other adopted Town Ordinances.*

Complies. As clarified in this staff report, the proposed amendments do not conflict with any other adopted Town Ordinances.

P25-139 Findings (Amend LDR Sections 5.3.1.B and 5.3.1.C):

1. *Is consistent with the purposes and organization of the LDRs;*

Complies. The proposed amendments are consistent with the purpose and organization of the LDRs, as they clarify compliance for string light use both commercial and residential uses within the town.

2. *Improves the consistency of the LDRs with other provisions of the LDRs;*

Complies as Modified. The proposed amendments as modified establish clear and consistent standards for string light use both commercial and residential uses within the town.

3. *Provides flexibility for landowners within standards that clearly define desired character;*

Complies as Modified. The proposed amendments as modified provide flexibility for the use of string lights while establishing clear standards to protect the night sky.

4. *Is necessary to address changing conditions, public necessity, and/or state or federal legislation; and*

Complies. The proposed amendments align with Comprehensive Plan Policy 1.3.d and further aligns the Town with its Dark Sky Community Certification maintenance.

5. Is consistent with other adopted Town Ordinances.

Complies. As clarified in this staff report, the proposed amendments do not conflict with any other adopted Town Ordinances.

Fiscal Impact.

Staff does not anticipate any fiscal impact from the project at this time, although additional time will be required for long-term code enforcement.

Staff Impact.

The amount of staff time required to review the application, meet with the Applicant, conduct research, and prepare this staff report was approximately 100 hours. This substantial time commitment resulted from multiple resubmittals, follow-up meetings with the Applicant, and meeting and process postponements.

Attachments.

- Applicant Submittal
- Applicant Presentation to the Chamber
- Department Reviews

Suggested Motions.

P25-234

I move to recommend **approval** of Text Amendment P25-234 to amend LDR Sections 5.3.1.B and Articles 2, 3, and 4, subject to the attached departmental review comments and this Staff report dated February 4, 2026.

P25-139

I move to recommend **approval** of Text Amendment P25-139 to amend LDR Sections 5.3.1.B and 5.3.1.C, subject to the attached departmental review comments and this Staff report dated February 4, 2026.



Jackson Police Department

Michelle A. Weber
Chief of Police

December 1, 2025

Re: Support for Year-Round Town Square Lighting Until 2:00 a.m.

Dear Mr. Bowen,

I am writing in my capacity as Chief of Police to express my strong support for maintaining year-round illumination of the Town Square until 2:00 a.m., a schedule that aligns with the closing time of our local bars and late-night establishments.

Several years ago, the Town experienced a serious assault in the Town Square area after the lights had been turned off much earlier in the evening. In the aftermath, the Police Department, in partnership with Parks & Recreation, conducted a thorough review to identify contributing factors and potential prevention strategies. As a result, shrubbery within the Square was trimmed back to eliminate concealment areas, and lighting was increased to enhance visibility and natural surveillance. These measures were intentional, evidence-based, and directly addressed key risk factors that contribute to late-night crime.

Since implementing these improvements, we have seen the positive impact of a safer, more visible public space. The Town Square is the heart of our community, heavily used by residents and visitors alike. Increased visibility has been a critical component in preventing crime, deterring disorderly behavior, and ensuring a sense of safety for those walking through the area late at night.

I understand and respect the perspectives of organizations that prioritize the preservation of our dark skies. Jackson's natural environment is one of our most treasured assets. However, from a public-safety standpoint, the Town Square is a unique and high-use area where the need for visibility, safety, and crime prevention must remain central in our decision-making. Responsible lighting in this concentrated commercial core does not undermine our community's broader dark-sky values; rather, it provides essential protection in a location with the highest nighttime foot traffic and risk.

As Chief of Police, my primary responsibility is to protect the wellbeing of our residents, workforce, and visitors. Jackson is consistently regarded as a safe community and maintaining appropriate lighting in the Town Square and surrounding area, especially during peak late-night hours, is an important part of preserving that safety. Keeping lights on until 2:00 a.m. is a practical, common-sense measure that supports law enforcement, deters crime, and allows people to move through the Town Square confidently and securely.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input. I appreciate your consideration and remain available to answer any questions or offer additional information.

Sincerely,

Michelle Weber

Application for a
Land Development Regulation
Amendment

Submittal date: Dec 11, 2025

Applicant:

Wyoming Stargazing
PO Box 9584
Jackson, WY 83002
307-413-4779
samuel@wyomingstargazing.org

Introduction

This application proposes to amend the following components of the Town of Jackson Land Development Regulations Article 5 ('Physical Development Standards Applicable in All Zones'):

- Div. 5.3. ('Scenic Standards'), §5.3.1. ('Exterior Lighting Standards')
 - **5.3.1.B.1. Fully Shielded Light Fixtures**
 - **5.3.1.B.2 Total Exterior Light Output (Unshielded Lumens chart)**
 - **5.3.1.B.3. Light Color**
 - **5.3.1.C.3 String Lighting**

We propose changes to the above-mentioned sections of the Town of Jackson Exterior Lighting Standards in order to safeguard dark night skies and ensure future compliance with the ToJ's and County's Dark Sky Community Certification. The proposed amendment would alleviate issues with the proliferation of string lighting, difficulties in enforcing and complying with existing policies, and would be consistent with the goals of Policy 1.3.d ("Maintain dark night skies") in the Town of Jackson Comprehensive Plan's 'Environmental Stewardship' section as well as Teton's County's commitment to be 100% dark sky compliant by 2030.

In accordance with the requirements set forth in the Land Development Regulations (LDRs) this application will outline that the proposed amendment to the exterior lighting standard:

- Is consistent with the purposes and organization of the LDRs;
- Improves the consistency of the LDRs with other provisions of the LDRs;
- Provides flexibility for landowners within standards that clearly define desired character;
- Is necessary to address changing conditions, public necessity, and/or state or federal legislation;
- Improves implementation of the Comprehensive Plan; and
- Is consistent with other adopted Town of Jackson Resolutions.

Overview: Maintaining Dark Skies

Preserving Town of Jackson's natural character is central to the 'Vision and Common Values' of the Comprehensive Plan, which emphasizes that "to achieve our desired community character, the community must protect and enhance the ecosystem in which we live." Maintaining the region's dark night skies is enumerated as a specific goal of the Plan. It specifically calls for looking "beyond daytime viewsheds" in guiding sensible development in the future:

Lighting of individual developments cumulatively impacts the ability to see dark and starry night skies. Although lighting is required for public safety, especially along pedestrian

corridors, non-essential lighting will be limited and all lighting will be designed to meet dark skies best practices. Existing development will also be encouraged to implement best practices.

In order to maintain dark night skies and ensure compliance with Town of Jackson's Dark Sky Community Certification

The purpose of the Town of Jackson Exterior Lighting Standard (§5.3.1.) is “ to allow necessary and reasonable lighting of public and private property for the safety, security, and convenience of occupants and the general public, while eliminating or reducing the nuisance and hazards of light pollution, including, but not limited to: glare, light trespass, sky glow, energy waste, and negative impacts on the nocturnal environment.” It is housed in the County's LDRs' 'Scenic Standards' Division (5.3), which finds that “dark skies are vital to the community's natural character.”

Proposed Amendments

In consultation with ToJ Planners, Teton County Planners, and the Teton County Planning Director, Wyoming Stargazing puts forth the following proposed amendments to the existing Exterior Lighting Standard. It should be noted that Wyoming Stargazing favors a more community-balanced set of standards for unshielded lights and especially for string lighting. However, due to limitations of active enforcement the following amendments may turn out to serve the preservation of dark night skies in the best possible way for the time being.

5.3.1.B.1. Fully Shielded Light Fixtures. All light sources ~~whose initial output exceeds 600 initial lumens~~ shall be fully shielded. Any structural part of the luminaire providing full shielding shall be attached. Light fixtures that project light above the horizontal plane of the fixture may be used where the architecture of the building restricts light emitted above the horizontal plane.

~~5.3.1.B.2~~ (Only portions pertaining to unshielded lights including the references to unshielded fixtures in the charts below.)

2. **Total Exterior Light Output.** Total exterior light output for light fixtures on a site shall not exceed the limits shown in the table below.

How much light is permitted?	All Fixtures	Unshielded Fixtures (for lights emitting fewer than 600 lumens)
Maximum lumens per sq ft of site development		
DC, CR-1, CR-2, CR-3, OR, TS, UC, BP, MHP, P/SP, P, NL-5, NM-2, NH-1	3	Not applicable

R, NL-1, NL-2, NL-3, NL-4, NM-1	1.5	Not applicable
Maximum lumens per acre of site development		
DC, CR-1, CR-2, CR-3, OR, TS, UC, BP, MHP, P/SP, P, NL-5, NM-2, NH-1	50,000	2,000
R, NL-1, NL-2, NL-3, NL-4, NM-1	20,000	1,000

5.3.1.B.3. Light Color. The Correlated Color Temperature (CCT) of any spectral exterior light source shall not exceed 3,000 Kelvin. The color of any single-color or filtered exterior light source shall not be green, blue, or purple; Only yellow, orange, red, and white (without any blue, green or purple tint) light sources are allowed.

5.3.1.C.3 String Lighting. Strings or strands of individual light sources connected by exposed wires or enclosed in tubing used to highlight a sign, perimeter of a sign, a tree or other vegetation, or any portion of a building are not permitted, except for holiday-type decorative lighting displayed between November 15th and January 15th. During this exemption period, string lighting will be exempted from all other regulations of the Exterior Lighting Standard and the Sign Standard.

Consistency with LDRs

Our proposed amendments propose different treatments between uses of year-round string lighting compared to season holiday lighting. Our amendments also adhere to the original purposes of the exterior lighting standard to:

§1.3.1.: *“Preserve and protect the area’s ecosystem in order to ensure a healthy environment, community, and economy for current and future generations.”* Given the rapidly maturing scientific understanding of the problem of light pollution and the ecological consequences of artificial light at night, sufficient evidence exists to support the proposition that a healthy and resilient environment requires accessible nighttime darkness. In particular, given the rural nature of the predominantly public lands surrounding and adjacent to Town of Jackson, its nighttime light impact is outsized compared to more urban communities of its size.

§1.3.2.(A)(2): *“Consume less nonrenewable energy as a community in the future than we do today.”* While modern lighting technologies are highly energy efficient, a lower total

cost of ownership may promote unnecessary use of light at night. This may undermine or even erase the environmental benefits of modern, energy-efficient lighting. Better outdoor lighting practices that make use of the full range of capabilities of these new technologies naturally lead to lower light consumption and further energy savings without any obvious negative consequences.

§1.3.2.(A)(3): *“Residents and visitors will safely, efficiently, and economically move within our community and throughout the region using alternative modes of transportation.”* One goal of this proposal is to enhance nighttime visibility in Town of Jackson so as to improve public safety. The pursuit of dark skies in Town of Jackson does not entail accepting compromised safety and security; ‘dark skies’ doesn’t mean ‘dark ground’. Nighttime hazards will be more visible, reducing the risk associated with transit under such conditions.

§1.3.4.(A): *“Ensure standards are consistently applied to similar applications and circumstances.”* Another goal of this proposal is to more precisely delineate the Exterior Lighting and Town of Jackson Sign Standards; add detail to elicit more voluntary compliance with the LDRs; tighten technical definitions to better articulate the intended effects of the LDRs; and provide better outdoor lighting guidance to homeowners, business owners, and public officials.

Clear Definitions and Flexibility

Our proposal strengthens and clarifies uses of string lighting so as to ensure more consistency and predictability of LDR enforcement. The nature of the new standards are aimed at helping developers, property owners, plan reviewers and code enforcement officials better understand the requirements, and to make it easier for them to comply with the requirements of those sections. Our amendments strike a balance between the private property rights of individuals and businesses who want to use string lights with those who do not.

Necessity of Addressing Changing Conditions

As Town of Jackson continues to grow in coming decades, the need to balance development pressures with the purpose and vision of the LDRs in creating consistent community character, preserving a healthy environment, and cultivating a sustainable regional economy drives an equally significant need to reduce light pollution and maintain the area’s dark night skies. Innovation in lighting design and technology enables addressing this need while ensuring public safety and respecting property rights. The ongoing conversion of existing outdoor lighting stock in Town of Jackson to highly energy-efficient light-emitting diode (LED) technology helps reduce electricity consumption and reduce Town of Jackson’s carbon footprint, but the tendency toward overconsumption of progressively cheaper resources threatens to wipe out these

gains.¹ This is especially true with string lighting because it requires no professionals to install, requires no hard wiring, and is an incredibly cost effective way to produce light. String lighting is creating new social and environmental problems through its poor application of light at night relative to the needs of property owners and the community as a whole. Our proposal addresses these concerns and seeks a sensible solution, the goal of which is to improve nighttime visibility in Town of Jackson by targeting and reducing wasted light at night, while at the same time making compliance with exterior lighting standards easier.

Improved Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is clear and direct in its intent to maintain dark night skies as part of preserving ecological aspects of Town of Jackson's community character. Its Policy 1.3.d. directly calls for this:

The prominence of nature over the built environment should extend beyond daytime viewsheds. The lighting of individual developments cumulatively impacts the ability to see dark and starry night skies. Although illumination is required for public safety, especially along pedestrian corridors, non-essential lighting should be limited, and all lighting will be designed to meet dark skies best practices. Existing development will also be encouraged to implement best practices.

The amendments in the current proposal further support and strengthen community commitment to realizing the aspirations Policy 1.3.d in particular. By reducing light waste and further lowering light consumption, the proposal also supports the broader Principles of the Comprehensive Plan, including:

- *"Maintain healthy populations of all native species"* (Principle 1.1): Reducing light waste prevents light at night from impinging on nocturnal wildlife habitat and promotes a healthy urban ecology.
- *"Maintain the scenic resources of the community"* (Principle 1.3): Dark night skies are among the signature natural resources of Town of Jackson and Grand Teton National Park region.
- *"Reduce the consumption of non-renewable energy"* (Principle 2.1): Better and more precise application of outdoor light at night will naturally reduce the amount of light needed to get the job done, resulting in decreased electricity consumption.
- *"Increase energy efficiency in buildings"* (Principle 2.4): Similarly, more efficient use of outdoor light at night will reduce energy costs for building owners.

¹ Kyba, C. C. M., et al. (2017). Artificially lit surface of Earth at night increasing in radiance and extent. In *Science Advances* (Vol. 3, Issue 11, p. e1701528). <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.1701528>

- *“Manage growth predictably and locally”* (Principle 3.3): The proposed amendments further articulate the responsibilities and privileges of property owners under the LDRs. They clarify community expectations to ensure that Town of Jackson can continue to grow and develop without necessarily inflicting environmental harm as a consequence of doing so.
- *“Enhance civic spaces, social functions, and environmental amenities to make [Town of Jackson] a more desirable Complete Neighborhood”* (Principle 4.4): Quality outdoor lighting improves nighttime visibility, enhancing public safety and promoting real security in Town of Jackson. Coupled with the splendor of the region’s dark night skies, the result is outdoor spaces in which visitors and residents alike feel safe and secure at night, promoting community wellbeing.
- *“Measure prosperity in natural and economic capital”* (Principle 6.1): Town of Jackson’s natural capital contributes to clean jobs and sustainable tourism that are both good for the community’s bottom line.
- *“Promote a stable and diverse economy”* (Principle 6.2): Increasingly, concern for and attention to dark skies mean rural economic development. One recent estimate put the economic impact from night-sky tourism on the Colorado Plateau alone at \$6 billion and 10,000 jobs in the decade of the 2020s.² As tourism is expected to ramp up quickly with the end of the COVID-19 pandemic in sight, the County stands to benefit substantially from a robust ‘astrotourism’ sector.

Consistency with Town of Jackson Ordinances

There are no known inconsistencies with the current proposal and either the LDRs or any other existing County Resolutions.

Summary

Pursuit of the Comprehensive Plan’s Vision, Common Values, and specific policies relating to maintaining dark night skies in the region began more than 20 years ago and continues with the further modernization of the County LDRs through the amendments in the current proposal. Now that Town of Jackson has obtained International Dark Sky Community accreditation it is essential that Town of Jackson work with individual property owners and businesses to ensure that the commitment to maintaining dark night skies becomes a community-wide reality.

In summary, approving this amendment:

- **Furthers the objectives of the LDRs and Comprehensive Plan;**
- **Maintains the consistency among provisions of the LDRs;**

² Mitchell, D. and Gallaway, T. (2019), "Dark sky tourism: economic impacts on the Colorado Plateau Economy, USA", *Tourism Review*, Vol. 74 No. 4, pp. 930-942. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-10-2018-0146>

- Provides flexibility for landowners within standards that clearly define desired character;
- Is necessary to address changing conditions brought on by the rapid adoption of LED lighting technology and the emerging market for Electronic Message Centers, especially with string lighting;
- Improves implementation of the Comprehensive Plan by adhering more closely to lighting design best practices;
- Is consistent with other adopted County Resolutions; and
- Meets core outdoor lighting policy requirements for International Dark Sky Community accreditation.