CITY OF WINNIPEG POLICY NO. PD-029

POLICY TITLE	ADOPTED BY	EFFECTIVE DATE
Lights Out Winnipeg Bird-friendly Policy	City Council	March 24, 2022
ORIGIN / AUTHORITY	**CITY POLICY NO**	**MOST RECENT CONSOLIDATION**
Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development	PD-029	

1. Purpose:

Birds are an important part of the natural environment and building design plays a role in approximately 25 million bird deaths in Canada each year, typically through collisions with glass on buildings. Research has shown that the risks are significantly higher during bird migration periods. Nighttime collisions occur because illuminated buildings create a beacon effect for night-migrating birds.

The Policy will mitigate harmful effects to birds caused by illuminated buildings at night. City actions related to turning lights off in municipal buildings will be accompanied by seasonal public awareness campaigns encouraging residents across Winnipeg to do the same in their homes and workplaces.

2. Definitions:

2.1 "Bird-friendly" means actions that create a more positive environment for birds, which includes mitigating bird collisions with buildings.

2.2 "Dark Sky Compliant" means lighting that:

A. Is only on when needed
B. Is located only in the area that needs it
C. Is no brighter than necessary
D. Minimizes blue light emissions
E. Is fully shielded (pointing downward)

2.3. "Peak Bird Migration Seasons" means the times of year where migrating birds pass through Winnipeg, which is mid-March to early June, and late August to early October.

2.4 "Municipal Buildings" means any building owned, leased, or operated by the City of Winnipeg. Distinctions between types of public buildings can be found in Section 5 of this policy.

2.5 "Municipal Properties" means City-owned properties on which City-owned Municipal Buildings are located.

3. Lights Out Winnipeg, Bird-Friendly Policy

3.1 The City will introduce procedures to ensure lights are turned off in Municipal Buildings, wherever it is possible and safe to do so.

3.2 This policy is pertinent throughout the year, but its implementation is most important during Peak Bird Migration Seasons.

3.3 Procedures to ensure lights are turned off in Municipal Buildings will vary according to type of Municipal Building (e.g. City-owned or leased, City-occupied or occupied by an external organization), in accordance with Section 5 of this policy.

3.4 Considerations for building interiors include the following:

A. Interior building lights are to be turned off at night. When replacing light fixtures or undertaking renovations, consideration should be given to task lighting as well as light fixtures that include an automatic timer.

B. Employees are to turn off office lights when they leave their respective offices, use task lighting, and/or draw office blinds; and are encouraged to take similar measures at home.

3.5 Exterior building lighting exists to maintain personal safety and protect property from theft or vandalism. When replacing exterior light fixtures on Municipal Properties, however, the City will ensure that light fixture choices are both safe for people and Dark Sky Compliant.

3.6 The City will undertake a semi-annual public awareness campaign during Peak Bird Migration Seasons to encourage all Winnipeg residents to turn off lights, use task lighting, and draw window blinds at home and in the office.

3.7 This policy will not apply to buildings occupied, frequented or otherwise used by the Winnipeg Police Service, Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service, or other sensitive operations that must operate unhindered for public safety.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Municipal Accommodations Division

A. Formalize procedures to ensure lights are turned off in Municipal Buildings, as outlined in Section 5 of this document;

B. Ensure new purchases of exterior fixtures for City-owned Municipal Buildings, and/or the properties on which they are situated, are Dark Sky Compliant;

C. Develop inventory of Type 1 and Type 2 buildings (as outlined in Section 5) that could participate;

D. Identify buildings on the Inventory described in subsection c) that pose a greater risk to birds;

E. Consult with appropriate site staff or others at Type 1 and Type 2 buildings described in subsection d) to inform them of the Policy, and assist in developing site-specific implementation plans;

F. Develop list of any potential resource implications.

4.2 Real Estate Division

A. Integrate Bird-friendly Policy expectations into communications and/or agreements with organizations leasing City-owned Municipal Buildings

4.3 Corporate Communications

A. Create a Communications plan to outline tactics to help build awareness amongst City staff and the general public. Among other things, this could include a city-wide message to all City staff, posts on the City of Winnipeg social media sites, and media releases.

4.4 CAO's Office

A. Send a semi-annual email to all staff during peak migration season, encouraging all staff to turn lights off in offices and at home.

5. Appendix – Municipal Building types and proposed implementation approaches

5.1 This section outlines different types of Municipal Buildings, and includes the proposed approaches to implement the lights out policy according to Municipal Building type.

A. Type 1 Buildings

i. Description: City-owned Municipal Buildings such as libraries, community centres, pools, arenas, etc.

ii. Approach: any of these facilities not already undertaking a lights off practice will be encouraged to begin. Municipal Accommodations staff will seek feedback from building contacts related to implementation. Of particular interest will be buildings with numerous windows, which pose greater risks to birds (e.g. libraries, etc.).

B. Type 2 Buildings

i. Description: leased buildings where City is the tenant (lessee).

ii. Approach: any of these facilities not already undertaking a lights off practice will be encouraged to begin. Municipal Accommodations staff will seek feedback from building contacts related to implementation. This may include site staff, and/or contract service providers, (janitorial) to devise the best method of achieving lights out.

C. Type 3 Buildings

i. Description: City-owned assets leased or licensed to external entities who pay their own utilities.

ii. Approach: City to integrate language encouraging applicants to turn off lights into communications or lease/licence agreements.

D. Type 4 Buildings

i. Description: Police/fire stations, emergency services.

ii. Approach: These are either operated more independently, have 24/7 operations, or have more security procedures, and shall be exempt so as to maintain autonomy.