

Alameda City Council  
Alameda City Hall  
2263 Santa Clara Avenue  
Alameda, CA 94501

November 26, 2018

RE: New Bird-Safe Building Standards and Updated Outdoor Lighting Regulations.

Dear Alameda Mayor and Members of the City Council,

The proposed Bird-Safe Building Ordinance addressing bird-safe windows and lighting regulations before you speaks for itself. I'm hoping this will be an easy choice for leaders of a community where reducing risk to our remaining wildlife has always been a priority. People think of Alameda for its Least Terns, Brown Pelicans, Harbor Seals, Snowy Plovers, Ospreys, and much more. And recently to the amazement of anyone following them, a resident pod of Bottlenosed Dolphins has joined the list of Alameda wildlife celebrities. Our wildlife makes this town incredibly special.

An Audubon Magazine article in its recent FALL 2018 issue outlines the history of the effort to remove hazard to birds by formally documenting what was first casually observed: that birds flew into glass buildings. The results showed that there is a staggering number of deaths each year. The next step was finding solutions. I think you have this article.

This awareness began as early as 1989 and by 2007 Toronto was the first to create guidelines for bird-safe buildings. Three years later the guidelines became regulations. Awareness spread and others joined the effort to protect birds from unnatural environments that caused mass fatalities. Some buildings are so harmful that maintenance staff has to check sidewalks early every morning to remove the bodies of avian victims sometimes near 400.

For me it is a measure of promise to see people, not just bird watchers, but city planners, architects, artists, and those who are compelled to minimize human impact to nature, gravitate to solving this problem often with beautiful solutions. The more I read about the popular effort, the more hope I have for the planet and future generations.

I want to bring to your attention some remarkable congressional legislation in the works. **It is bi-partisan.** It is a bill introduced by Morgan Griffith (R-VA) and Mike Quigley (D-IL). I've included in my hand out to you some of the provisions the bill provides to protect birds. In brief, HR 2280 addresses bird safe-buildings and shielding lights for federal buildings of new construction, under major renovations, or acquired buildings. HR 2280 reveals a common thread among people at a time when division is so much a part of today's struggle. The Bill is described as cost-neutral due to several solutions providing energy savings. The bill plays an important role in preserving the nature that is intrinsic to the quality of our lives and cultures. And it is essential to the maintenance of sustainable habitats and ecological systems. It is responsible and so easy.

The concept of HR 2280 parallels what we are asking of you tonight. Please vote Yes for the proposal and added amendment. If Republicans and Democrats in these times find value in taking responsible steps to protect birds, certainly Alameda can join other progressive Bay Area cities to do the same and continue its consideration of the city's treasured wildlife. I hope you see this as an easy, feel good Yes!

Sincerely,



Leora Feeney  
Co-chair Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Reserve,  
a committee of Golden Gate Audubon.

1330 Eighth Street  
Alameda, California 94501  
510-522-0601 (home)  
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Leon oraalameda@att.net

cc: Andrew Thomas, Planning Director

## LARA WEISIGER

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**From:** Jillian Saxty <jillian@firstflight.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 27, 2018 9:07 AM  
**To:** LARA WEISIGER  
**Cc:** ANDREW THOMAS  
**Subject:** Bird Safe Buildings and Dark Skies Ordinances

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing in support of building ordinances regarding changes to windows and glass to protect birds in Alameda.

I also very strongly urge the Council to make changes to our city ordinances around our street lighting. Right now on my street – Oak – we have very bright LED lights with blue tints. The light blasts into our bedrooms like a full moon every night! These lights are not only bad for wildlife, and add to light pollution, they are also disruptive to humans:

A report from the AMA's [Council on Science and Public Health](#) found that LED lights that operate on bluer wavelengths—which appear white to the human eye—can create a disorienting glare for drivers. The bright lights can also disrupt natural circadian rhythms, during which, according to the report, “melatonin blood concentrations rise, body temperature drops, sleepiness grows, and hunger abates, along with several other responses.” (<http://www.takepart.com/article/2016/06/16/light-pollution-safe-people-wildlife>)

I've noticed that in parts of Alameda, nearer to downtown, the City is using more yellow based and dimmer lighting, which is much more pleasant to walk in and far less stress-inducing.

Some guidelines include:

1. Choosing **fully shielded fixtures** that emit no light upward
2. Using **“warm-white” or filtered LEDs** (CCT < 3,000 K; S/P ratio < 1.2) to minimize blue emission

(from <https://www.darksky.org/>)

For the sake of our nocturnal wildlife and our City's residents, **please work with lighting experts** who can help make our streets safe AND healthy. Thank you for your consideration in these very important matters.

Jillian Saxty

Jillian Saxty  
829 Oak Street, Alameda  
[jillian@firstflight.com](mailto:jillian@firstflight.com)  
T 510.337.0930

November 26, 2018

Alameda City Council  
c/o City Clerk Lara Weisiger  
2263 Santa Clara Ave.  
Alameda, CA 94501

RE: New Bird-Safe Building Standards and Update Outdoor Lighting Regulations

Dear Mayor and City Council Members:

As an Alameda resident who is concerned about the safety of birds that breed in or migrate through Alameda, I urge you to:

1. adopt the amendment proposed by the Golden Gate Audubon Society, and
2. adopt the ordinance to amend the city's building code to establish bird-safe building standards and outdoor lighting regulations.

As buildings are designed and built, or renovated, at Alameda Point and as construction and remodeling occur in other parts of the city, it is important that buildings do not pose undue risks to the birds that share our environment.

Birds do to “see” glass or recognize it as a barrier. Because if this, many migrating birds die from collisions with windows on multi-story buildings that have all glass or largely glass facades. In addition, many birds that nest and raise chicks in Alameda are harmed by flying into glass windows, especially when the birds are moving fast to avoid predators.

The proposed ordinance would apply to new tall construction and therefore would address the problems created by tall glass structures. However, because the ordinance does not apply to **replacement** of existing windows, the proposed ordinance would still allow windows on existing multi-story buildings with a facade that is fifty percent or more glass to be replaced with new glass that does not meet the bird-safe window requirements. To ensure that taller buildings throughout Alameda use bird-safe glass or window treatments when replacing large windows, I urge the City Council to adopt the amendment proposed by the Golden Gate Audubon Society.

Owners of commercial structures can plan for the slightly higher costs of using bird-safe window glass. For single-family homes, the exemption for buildings of less than 35 feet will exclude many homes from the ordinance's requirements. For those homes to which the new requirement does apply, there are many options available, options that remove the risk to birds posed by large windows while still allowing humans to see the outside environment..

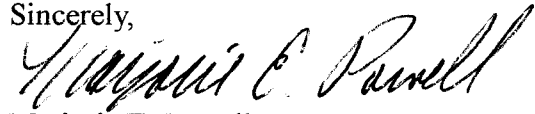
In addition, the proposed lighting requirements provide an important protection for migrating birds, especially important because of Alameda's location in the Pacific Flyway and its wealth of marshes and other locations where birds can rest and find food before they continue their migration to and from breeding grounds. Among the important stopping points for migrating birds are Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary, Crab Cove, Ballena Bay, Doolittle Pond, the shoreline

Mayor and City Council Members  
November 26, 2018  
RE Bird-safe Building and Lighting Regulations

of Bay Farm Island and Seaplane Lagoon at Alameda Point. With such rich resources for migrating birds comes an obligation to protect those birds.

For these reasons, I urge the City Council to amend and then adopt the proposed ordinance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marjorie E. Powell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marjorie E. Powell

2465 Shoreline Drive apt 306  
Alameda, CA 94501  
phone 510-263-8423  
cell 202-257-3993  
marjpowell21@yahoo.com

cc: Andrew Thomas, Planning Director

## LARA WEISIGER

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**From:** Bennett Miller <2ben@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 23, 2018 4:00 PM  
**To:** LARA WEISIGER  
**Cc:** ANDREW THOMAS  
**Subject:** Bird Safe Buildings  
**Attachments:** Audubon Article Fall 2018BirdSafeBuildings.pdf

Dear Alameda City Council Members,

I am glad to hear that you might pass Alameda's Bird Safe Buildings and Dark Skies Ordinance. I hope you will do so.

I attended the Planning Board meeting this last September, and was concerned to hear board members voice anecdotes about how few birds they've witnessed strike their homes. That they did not find birds outside their windows doesn't mean that birds have not been concussed and died later, or were killed and carried off by predators.

The simple fact is that millions of birds are killed annually by flying into windows, and this is a chance for Alameda to be a leader in protecting wildlife. Please note the attached article from Audubon magazine on the progress being made in saving birds' lives.

Please pass the new ordinances,

Ben Miller  
338 Pacific Ave.  
Alameda, CA

# By Design: An Architectural Awakening Could Save Billions of Birds

As many as one billion North American birds die each year in after colliding with windows. Innovations can help them steer clear.

[By Marguerite Holloway](#)



Looking out from inside this 13-story building in Toronto, the grid of dots installed to reduce collisions is noticeable but doesn't impede the view. Patterned glass was applied only to the eastern façade, which faces a park. Photo: Richard Barnes

Building collisions kill millions of birds. A new bill would reduce deadly collisions at federal buildings.

With its lush, tidy plant beds and outdoor benches, the office compound in Markham, a suburb of Toronto, seemed park-like on a mid-July morning. Ontario had little rain this summer; forest fires raged in provincial parks. But the trees, shrubs, flowers, and lawns of this corporate campus

were damp and green. Michael Mesure stood in the center of the complex, taking stock. A few months earlier, the property manager had asked him for an assessment. “When a building contacts us, it is because there are dead birds in front,” Mesure said, pointing to a glass façade that mirrored the verdant canopy. “The birds move from tree to tree gobbling up insects, and unbeknownst to them, the tree they are flying toward is the one they just left.”

Mesure, cofounder of the nonprofit Fatal Light Awareness Program ([FLAP](#)), set off behind one of the buildings. “It is a perfect storm here,” he said, “because of the beautiful landscaping and a nearby river and swamp.” He suspected that the back might kill more birds than the front, and it seemed quite possible: Those walls reflected even more vegetation and a largely uninterrupted swath of sky. The looking-glass land appeared idyllic and inviting, a rich habitat. “I can guarantee that this is a much more lethal façade,” Mesure said. “But the birds fall into the bushes and no one sees them.” At many sites, FLAP volunteers discover a cuneiform of tiny white bones in the dirt.

Mesure has been circling buildings in and around Toronto since 1989, saving injured birds and counting the dead. He is credited with launching what became, in the late '90s, a growing movement in North American cities along migratory flyways to reduce the estimated 100 million to [1 billion](#) bird deaths caused by collisions with windows every year. FLAP, formed in 1993, initially focused on light emanating from buildings at night, which can disorient birds; it now focuses on windows, which kill more birds and at all hours. Because of FLAP's efforts, Toronto is seen by many in the ornithological community as a model of a city that does right by birds: In 2007, it was the first to produce bird-friendly green-building guidelines; since 2010, developers receive [building permits](#) only if design specs consider bird safety; and several older properties have been retrofitted to reduce bird strikes.





The fritted glass panels at a skate pavilion across from the old city hall were intentionally installed to alert birds to the boundary. Photo: Richard Barnes

Yet Measure and his collaborators find that despite a 25-year public-awareness campaign, nearly a decade of regulation, and a 2013 court ruling that building owners can be held liable for avian deaths, Toronto and its environs remain a lethal layover. Thousands of birds still die as they traverse the city, following routes etched in their genes millennia ago. Other urban centers and regions where similar grassroots campaigns have led to policy changes—mandatory rules in some, voluntary guidelines in others—are still deadly. The piecemeal efforts cannot outpace a few chronic realities: Millions of older buildings, including homes, have not been retrofitted, and clear or reflective glass remains a construction mainstay.

**“It is an exercise in honey versus vinegar.”**

FLAP and a coalition of partners are pursuing second-wave approaches, including new types of glass, new building guidelines, and a new app—all of which they hope will ripple out and persuade everyone from architects to building managers to homeowners to take birds into consideration. “It all takes time,” says Measure. “It is an exercise in honey versus vinegar.”

The waist-high freezer in FLAP’s office was packed this summer with birds collected during the spring migration. Near the top lay a Virginia Rail, the browns and grays of its feathers and the orange of its feet and curved beak still vibrant. Stacked below were Yellow Warblers, Red-winged Blackbirds, Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and several dozen other species. During the fall migration, mortality is typically much higher as older birds are joined by

multitudes of the newly fledged; FLAP sometimes collects as many as 200 kinglets a day in October. The frozen birds ultimately will be photographed as part of a [vast annual still life](#) and stored at the Royal Ontario Museum, becoming data that undergird death-by-window estimates. Last year, FLAP volunteers collected 2,185 dead and 651 injured birds on routine patrols.

Most casualties are passerines—the order of birds that perch, often sing, and make up more than half the roughly 11,000 avian species worldwide. But few birds are safe from windows. In August, FLAP found a dead Double-crested Cormorant, the first they’ve recorded. Although waterbirds and raptors tend to collide with upper-story glass, most birds hit lower levels, when foraging for food next to reflective buildings or trying to fly through transparent atria and walkways.



The etchings on the windows of this building in downtown Toronto resemble Venetian blinds and make the reflective surface visible to birds. Photo: Richard Barnes

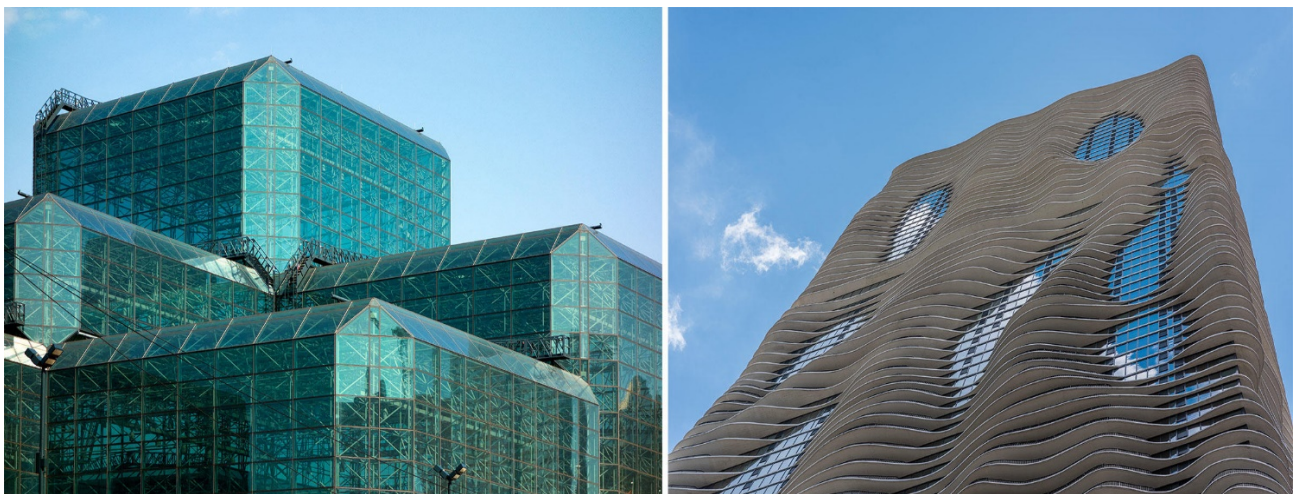
Marking glass so that it's visible to birds is the most common way to prevent collisions. [Daniel Klem, Jr.](#), an ornithologist at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania, identified a helpful rule of thumb for such patterns: Birds generally will not fly into a gap less than two inches high and four inches wide. (Recently, a tighter array, two inches by two inches, has been used to deter small species such as hummingbirds.) Stickers or decals are applied in sheets with graph-like regularity or with whimsy. "One of the most interesting developments is the increasing use of art to create these really beautiful solutions, to use glass as a canvas," says Krista De Groot.

## Monitoring

Each spring and fall, Audubon volunteers scour sidewalks across the country for bird-strike victims—data that have spurred multiple retrofits. Pedestrians in New York City and several Texas cities can report deaths at [d-bird.org](#), a project led by New York City Audubon.

A Canadian Wildlife Service biologist, De Groot has been evaluating small white dots called [Feather Friendly](#) markers at the federal Pacific Wildlife Research Centre in Delta, British Columbia. In the two years before the center was retrofitted, she and her colleagues recorded 53 deaths from window strikes; since dots were applied in 2016, only four.

Working on the same principle, patterns can also be etched or printed on glass in various processes. One type, called fritted glass, was installed at Swarthmore College's [science center](#), in Pennsylvania, in 2004, and researchers there discovered that the new glass was energy-efficient, too. "There is a lot of overlap between being bird friendly and controlling heat and light," Christine Sheppard, director of the [glass-collisions program](#) at the American Bird Conservancy, says. Energy costs and bird deaths have also fallen at the [Javits Center](#) in New York City since it was retrofitted with fritted glass four years ago.



A retrofit at the Javits Center (left) in New York City, which entailed installing new, patterned glass, cut bird mortalities by 90 percent. The Aqua Tower in Chicago is built from the usual materials; the twist is in their bird-friendly application. Curving concrete balconies are apparent to the avian eye; metal railings, instead of glass ones, prevent strikes; and fritted glass helps

ensure birds won't mistake Aqua for sky. Photos, from left: Randy Duchaine/Alamy; Serhii Chrucky/Alamy

Some architects consider birds in their blueprints. The Aqua Tower, designed by Chicago firm [Studio Gang](#), for example, features an undulating façade, breaking up walls of windows with visual noise that alerts birds to their presence. A transparent screen with regular, faint horizontal lines was placed 18 inches in front of the windows on the [New York Times building](#), designed by Renzo Piano and FXFowle, to similar effect. Architects have also used angled or punctuated glass panels, opaque glass, colored screens, or less glass altogether.

As effective as these approaches are—as well as a suite of other strategies outlined in guides by Toronto's city-planning office, the [American Bird Conservancy](#), and various [Audubon chapters](#)—they can't get around a simple reality: People overwhelmingly want clear glass, an unobstructed view outside. A glass invisible to people yet apparent to birds has been theoretically possible since the '70s, when researchers found that certain birds see ultraviolet wavelengths. But researchers say it has been challenging to put UV patterns on the outermost window layer, where they're most perceptible to birds.

### **New Rules**

In the absence of federal standards, several Audubon chapters have worked with municipalities to adopt bird-friendly building guidelines. Last year for instance, Portland, Oregon, incorporated bird-safe glazing into city code for new construction and remodels.

A few years ago, [Walker Glass Company](#) of Montreal succeeded, using a UV coating produced by Pilkington. Depending on the light, AviProtek T is transparent to people looking out, faintly apparent as thin lines to people looking in, and, according to field tests by Klem, highly visible to many birds. (Walker is licensing a patent that Klem holds on UV pattern application.)

The idea of a UV-patterned glass option has been controversial. Some experts, including Sheppard, argue that because of interspecies variability, certain birds will not see the reflected UV signals. And there is some debate about which of two very different testing methods—field versus indoor tunnel—should be used to evaluate success. Even so, support for UV glass is clearly mounting. “All products have a range of effectiveness, and so it is all about what is acceptable to a consumer,” De Groot says. “But the UV really has the promise of a mass uptake.” Architects could get their clear glass towers and homeowners their plate glass windows without sacrificing the lives of birds.

Buildings all over North America have been identified as unintentional avian abattoirs. But because of one particularly lethal location, UV glass, as well as other bird-friendly building products and designs, may be on the cusp of wider adoption in Canada—and perhaps beyond.

A decade ago, droves of birds were flying into the glass façades of Yonge Corporate Center in Toronto, a well-wooded, well-landscaped site owned by real estate company Cadillac Fairview. In 2010 alone, FLAP volunteers found 826 dead birds there, including two threatened species. FLAP and Klem became central witnesses in a suit brought by the law firm Ecojustice. In 2013 a

provincial court judge ruled that the company was liable for the deaths (though it was acquitted because it had, in the meantime, retrofitted its building using dot stickers). “We got a very strong legal precedent: If you are killing birds with windows, you are running afoul of the law,” [Albert Koehl](#), the lead prosecutor, says. “The precedent makes a lot of companies anxious because they know they can be prosecuted.”

Koehl, Measure, and others expected the decision would quickly lead to Ontario-wide regulation. But little happened, Koehl says, in part because real estate companies “have huge power, and governments are leery to regulate them.” This spring, Ontario’s Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks took action. It hired [CSA Group](#)—an international company based in Canada that recommends industry codes, which often become the basis for federal law—to fast-track green-building standards for Ontario. CSA Group is expected to release a template for bird-friendly products and designs in early 2019.



The Toronto Pan Am Sports Centre building in the suburbs of Toronto was designed with bird-strike mitigation in mind. Whimsical etchings of athletes appear on every panel of exterior glass. Photo: Richard Barnes

CSA Group’s recommendations could change norms in Canada, accomplishing what many activists across North America have long hoped national legislation would. If the voluntary standards are adopted as regulations by municipalities throughout Canada, as some experts expect, birds would be considered from the get-go: Making birds central to design could become routine professional practice—no longer dependent on this architect or that city’s laws, this

property manager or that activist. “It has been, in many cases, just the sheer tenacity of individuals,” De Groot says. “They have single-handedly made a huge difference.”

### **Outreach**

Tropical Audubon Society, with input from New York City Audubon and Atlanta Audubon, and global architecture firm HKS Architects produced a presentation about bird-friendly building practices that will be shown this fall to HKS staff and the American Institute of Architects’ Miami chapter.

The standards could have a ripple effect as well. Just as the early accomplishments in Toronto have spread throughout Canada and the United States, CSA Group’s recommendations are expected by Klem, Mesure, and others to have international impact. The company works on codes and standards around the world and has nine offices in the United States. The hodgepodge of regulation everywhere is, as Mesure notes, “driving architects crazy.” Bird-friendly elements are required in San Francisco, voluntary in Palo Alto, required in Minnesota, pending in Maryland, required in Toronto, voluntary in Calgary. “As cities find that there is a national standard that has been created, it is going to make them stand up and notice that this is serious,” Steven Morren, of Walker Glass, says. “It is going to make it easy for them.”

Simplicity is also critical for the millions of older buildings and homes that are inadvertent death traps. As he stood near the Markham office building in the shade of pines and cedars, a varied habitat loved by kinglets, Mesure did a rapid, informal assessment on his phone. FLAP is developing a 24-question app that can quickly gauge a building’s “bird threat.” The app, scheduled for release in the next six months, distills the 400-question audit FLAP uses to provide recommendations to building managers. In Mesure’s view, streamlining assessment is key to motivating owners and managers of millions of problematic buildings to do retrofits, which usually doesn’t require treatment on all sides or floors. After three minutes, he had the building’s rating, which matched his own assessment: lethal by day, moderate by night. Fatalities could likely be reduced by treating windows at canopy level alone, on all façades.



The patterns etched on windows of a Ryerson University building in Toronto were employed for aesthetic reasons, but act as collision deterrents. Photo: Richard Barnes

The ease of the app could help FLAP and similar organizations reach private homeowners, too. “The residential community is really, really tricky,” Mesure says. Home windows are estimated to cause between 44 and 90 percent of bird-strike deaths, far more than the office buildings and glassy condos that have drawn the most public attention. Trees and feeders bring birds in close to reflections of trees and feeders. Unless homeowners hear a thud or see the powdery traces of impact blurring their view, they often don’t know the risk their residence poses. Guided by the app, homeowners could make their properties safer for birds.

## Lights Out

In 1999 Audubon and partners launched the first [Lights Out](#) program in Chicago, collaborating with property owners to dim lights, so as not to disorient nighttime migrants. Now hundreds of buildings and thousands of homes in some two dozen U.S. cities flip the switch.

Preventing collisions is one of the few straightforward things a person or company can do to protect birds, which face myriad threats. BirdLife International’s 2018 [report](#) found that of the world’s avian species, 3,967, or about 40 percent, are in decline, and 13 percent are vulnerable or endangered. Habitat loss, pollutants, cats, power lines, and climate change all contribute to the losses—to a growing quiet in the ever noisier world.

Unlike those threats, people regularly encounter the casualties of bird strikes. Most everyone sees the toll windows take at some point, whether it’s the *thwack* against a sliding-glass door or a warbler carcass on the sidewalk outside their office. And, says Mesure, “it is slowly, but surely, becoming socially unacceptable to not deal with this issue.”

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*This story originally ran in the Fall 2018 issue of Audubon as “Safety by Design.”*



November 8, 2018

Mayor and City Councilmembers  
City Hall  
2263 Santa Clara Avenue  
Council Chambers, 3rd Floor  
Alameda CA 94501

**Re: Support bird-safe buildings and exterior lighting ordinance**

Dear Mayor Trish Herrera Spenser, Vice Mayor Malia Vella and Councilmembers Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft, Frank Matarrese and Jim Oddie,

This letter is in support of the proposal for a bird safe building and exterior lighting ordinance for the City of Alameda.

Alameda is situated in the midst of the Pacific Flyway, one of the major migratory routes for birds. Over 180 species of birds have been documented in Alameda. Residents and visitors come to Alameda to enjoy seeing and hearing the birds at Elsie Roemer, Crab Cove, Shoreline Park, Washington Park, Ballena Bay and the surrounding waters. The Alameda Wildlife Reserve is important habitat for a variety of bird species.

We now know that the human built environment can be deadly for birds since birds do not recognize glass as a danger to avoid. Nearly everyone has made the mistake of walking into a closed glass patio door; for birds flying at high speeds the result of a collision with a glass door or window can be fatal. Night lighting, especially on foggy or stormy nights can draw birds that navigate by the moon and stars, off course and deplete vital energy during their migration. The good news is that scientific studies have documented these human created dangers to birds and a variety of ways to prevent them.

The bird safe building and exterior lighting ordinance for future and remodeled commercial and residential buildings is the way to address these issues. There are many glass treatments to prevent bird building collisions and the lighting ordinance can save natural resources, money and birds. The glass treatment can be as simple as adding insect screens, to marketing or artistic type film, louvers, shutters, metalwork or etching, or even adding frit (which provides thermal regulating qualities to reduce heating and air conditioning needs) resulting in natural resources and money savings. Shielded lighting focuses the light where it is needed. Motion detectors or timers save natural resources and money while providing lighting when needed.

I urge you to support a strong bird safe building and lighting ordinance for new, remodeling or retrofit projects for Alameda's future.

Sincerely,

Noreen Weeden



inspiring people to protect  
Bay Area birds since 1917

November 20, 2018

Alameda City Council  
c/o City Clerk, Lara Weisiger  
Alameda City Hall  
2263 Santa Clara Ave.  
Alameda, CA 94501

RE: Bird-safe Building Ordinance

Dear City Council Members,

For many years, Alameda has protected the birds that live in or migrate through the island. The Else Roemer Bird Sanctuary was preserved to maintain a resting and feeding spot for thousands of shorebirds on their way to and from their breeding locations. California Least Terns have long had a protected nesting location here, even when they staked out their location between runways. When the Naval Base was closed, the city stepped up to zone the land as a Nature Reserve to protect the Least Tern's breeding grounds. City parks and trees, along with Crab Cove and Crown Beach provide space, nesting sites and food for many birds, large and small.

As Alameda develops and changes, it is essential that the city continue to provide protection for our birds. One important step is Council adoption of the proposed Bird Safe Buildings and Dark Skies ordinances, to ensure that our buildings' windows and lights do not harm or kill the birds that share our space.

The staff report highlights why the building and lighting standards are needed to protect our birds. Birds simply don't perceive transparent or reflective windows as an obstacle to be avoided, resulting in death to many of them. Night lighting that spills or is directed upward or is particularly bright also disorients birds, particularly during migration. The good news is that the protective measures implemented in these proposed ordinances are proven to make a significant difference in reducing bird mortality.

There are many methods of complying with the proposed new bird-safe standards, ranging from UV windows or windows including frit (which also can save energy) for new buildings, to methods as simple as insect screens, drapes, shades or film that can be easily implemented by homeowners when windows need to be replaced.

While GGAS enthusiastically supports the proposed laws, one section of the proposal concerns GGAS – all replacement windows on all existing buildings are excluded from

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY

2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G, Berkeley, California 94702

phone 510.843.2222 web [www.goldengateaudubon.org](http://www.goldengateaudubon.org) email [ggas@goldengateaudubon.org](mailto:ggas@goldengateaudubon.org)

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the ordinance. Members of the Planning Board expressed concern about unexpected replacement costs for homeowners as the reason for this exclusion, which had not originally been proposed by the planning staff.

We believe that replacement windows should be covered, and GGAS has proposed an amendment implementing that change, which is included with this letter. We respect the Planning Board concerns, but in this case they are misdirected. Simple and inexpensive options like insect screens, curtains, shades and films can easily be used by homeowners replacing windows to meet the bird-safe requirements. The hazards caused by home windows are clear: National Audubon estimates that home windows cause between 44 and 90 percent of bird-strike deaths. Only buildings with a height of over 35 feet and a façade more than 50% glass are covered by the ordinance, so a limited number of replacement windows will be covered.

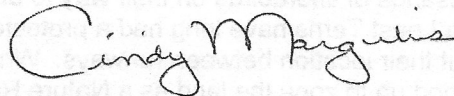
We urge the Alameda City Council to adopt this bird-safe window and lighting regulation, with the enclosed proposed amendment.

Sincerely,

Yours truly,



Linda Carloni  
Board President



Cindy Margulis  
Executive Director

**Alameda City Council Meeting, November 27, 2018**  
**Submission from Golden Gate Audubon Society**  
**Agenda Item 6B - Proposed changes to Bird-Safe Building Ordinance.**

Proposed new language underlined; Proposed deleted language in strike-out

Changes to Section 2(b)

Window Replacement ~~on Bird Safe Buildings.~~ On buildings that are greater than thirty-five (35) feet in height and that have one or more facades in which glass constitutes fifty percent (50%) or more of the area of an individual facade, ~~constructed with bird safe treatment pursuant to subsection (a) above,~~ the replacement of any window or other rigid transparent material with an area of twelve (12) square feet or more. The requirement does not apply on existing windows that are not proposed to be replaced.

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## LARA WEISIGER

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**From:** Deborah Crooks <deborahcrooks@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 20, 2018 6:43 AM  
**To:** LARA WEISIGER  
**Cc:** ANDREW THOMAS  
**Subject:** Re: Alameda's Bird Safe Buildings and Dark Skies Ordinance

Dear Alameda City Council Members:

Please pass Alameda's Bird Safe Buildings and Dark Skies Ordinance with the window replacement standards amendment recommended by the Golden Gate Audubon Society.

The human built environment can be deadly for birds – glass and lights kill hundreds of millions of birds each year. Birds don't recognize glass as a hazard to avoid; for birds flying at high speeds the result of a collision with a glass door or window is often fatal. Night lighting, especially on foggy or stormy nights, can draw migrating birds off course and deplete vital energy.

The new ordinances will implement scientifically proven measures that will prevent unnecessary bird fatalities. We rely on you to protect our local wild birds.

Sincerely,

Deborah Crooks  
1105 Lincoln Ave  
Alameda, Ca 94501

Deborah Crooks  
Words & Music  
[www.deborahcrooks.com](http://www.deborahcrooks.com)  
Sent from my iPhone

## LARA WEISIGER

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**From:** Marian Sticht <stichtbrennan@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 19, 2018 1:10 PM  
**To:** LARA WEISIGER  
**Subject:** BirdSafe Ordinance

As 22-year Alameda residents, my wife and I strongly urge you to support this amendment.

Peter & Marian Brennan  
201 Oyster Pond Rd Alameda 94502

Sent from my iPad