

# INTERNATIONAL DARK SKY COMMUNITIES

## AN OVERVIEW

### WHAT IS A DARK SKY COMMUNITY?

An International Dark Sky Community (IDSC) is a town, city, municipality or other similar political entity that has shown exceptional dedication to the preservation of the night sky through the implementation and enforcement of:

1. Quality lighting policies
2. Dark-sky education
3. Citizen support of dark sky conservation

Dark Sky Communities excel in their efforts to promote responsible lighting and dark sky stewardship, and set good examples for surrounding communities. Communities that are interested can apply to the International Dark Sky Association.

*Visit:* <https://www.darksky.org/our-work/conservation/idsp/communities/> for additional information

### WHO CAN APPLY?

In order to apply, a community must be officially recognized as a legal organization. This can be in the form of a town, city, municipality, or other legally organized community.

Unincorporated or otherwise informally organized communities are also eligible for Dark Sky Community status if their governing jurisdiction (usually the county) enacts a public lighting policy consistent with the International Dark Sky Association's requirements.

### HOW TO APPLY?

Communities that are interested in applying to the program should contact the International Dark Sky Association by phone or email to discuss the process, receive recommendations and obtain assistance.

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

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### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?



**INTERNATIONAL VISIBILITY & RECOGNITION** *An International Dark Sky Community certification is a sought-after accolade (similar to, e.g., All-America City) that both sets communities apart and enhances their public visibility in a positive way.*



**ENHANCED PROPERTY VALUES** *International Dark Sky Community status can contribute positively to enhanced property values, tapping into a property ownership market that prizes dark skies.*



**TAP INTO THE GLOBAL ASTROTURISM MARKET** *If the community is located in a naturally dark area, it may well benefit from tourism associated with night-sky viewing ("astrotourism"). IDA status is a demonstrated tourism draw, tapping into a global astrotourism market thought to be worth billions of dollars in coming decades.*



**IMPROVED QUALITY OF LIFE** *Lighting that is friendly toward the night sky is also friendly toward people, improving nighttime visibility, reducing glare, and contributing to the safety, security, and health of the city's residents.*



**ELECTRICITY SAVINGS** *Sensible lighting practices that keep light on the ground where it is needed, and out of the night sky, result in tangible electricity savings, benefiting a city's bottom line.*



**CLEAR LEGAL EXPECTATIONS** *The International Dark Sky Community nomination effort involves enacting a lighting ordinance, or updating any that currently exists. This helps the community understand the expectations and know what the rules are – both for private property owners as well as the municipality itself.*



**ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT** *An IDA label may align with other municipal priorities, such as environmental management plans. In other words, seeking an IDA designation is not only consistent with those plans, but can help achieve the stated goals.*



**COMMUNITY UNITY** *The International Dark Sky Community nomination process is an opportunity for community building, requiring a community to unite around common goals and support a shared identity.*



Westcliffe & Silver Cliff became Colorado's first International Dark Sky Community in 2015. Photo credit: Skyglow