



**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY GROUP**  
Of The Ventana Chapter  
P.O. Box 604, Santa Cruz, CA 95061  
<https://ventana2.sierraclub.org/santacruz/>  
e-mail: [sierraclubsantacruz@gmail.com](mailto:sierraclubsantacruz@gmail.com)

October 19, 2017

To:  
Lee Butler  
City of Santa Cruz Planning and Community Development  
809 Center Street, Rm. 2107  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

cc: Santa Cruz City Council

**Subject: Request for Bird Safe Design Codes in City of Santa Cruz**

Dear Mr. Butler and City Council Members,

The Sierra Club would like to explore with the City of Santa Cruz, Bird Safe Design(BSD) codes for development/building permits, because recent studies estimate that 300 million to 1 billion North American birds die each year as a result of collisions with glass windows and structures, adding to the steep decline of the North America bird population.

BSD standards have been adopted Nation-wide as well as in Bay Area Cities of: San Francisco (2011), Oakland (2013), Mountain View (2014), Sunnyvale (2015), San Jose/ Santa Clara County (2016), Richmond (2016).

These Cities acknowledged their environmental leadership by coordinating their directions, codes & guidelines with Sierra Club & Audubon Society Chapters, American Bird Conservancy, Committee for Green Foothills.

**The BSD Standards are being adopted by Federal, State and City agencies, because:**

- \* The North American bird population is in steep decline & one-third of birds of North America require urgent conservation actions. Seabirds as well as wetland birds (20% are on the watchlist) are targeted for increased conservation efforts.
- \* BSD Standards ordinances prevent bird population decline,
- \* Do not add to construction cost,

\* Diminishing bird population is costly for humans due to loss of important pollinators , inexpensively insects & rodents control, and economic revenue loss from visiting birdwatchers/ festivals.

**Adopting BSD Standards supports the bird population and benefits humans, because:**

- \* They help prevent glass collisions that account for birds deaths of 300 million to 1 billion yearly in the United States.
- \* They increase agriculture pollination
- \* They avoid night light pollution
- \* They reduce energy output cost
- \* They increase human enjoyment

**Examples of BSD Standards policies adopted by Bay Area Planning Departments:**

- \* **2. Façade treatments.** No more than 10% of the surface area of façades shall have untreated glazing between the ground and 60 feet above ground.<sup>50</sup> Examples of bird-friendly glazing treatments include the use of opaque glass, the covering of clear glass surface with patterns, the use of paned glass with fenestration patterns, and the use of external screens over non-reflective glass.<sup>51</sup> (Mountain View)
- \* Treatment of Feature-Related Hazards - Regardless of whether the site is located inside or adjacent to an Urban Bird Refuge, 100% of building feature-related hazards shall be treated. (San Francisco)
- \* Install UV-pattern reflective glass, laminated glass with a patterned UV- reflective coating, or UV-absorbing and UV-reflecting film on the glass since most birds can see ultraviolet light, which is invisible to humans. (Oakland)
- \* Turn non-emergency lighting off at night, especially during bird migration season (February - May and August - November) (San Jose)

**The BSD Standards are appropriate for the City of Santa Cruz, because:**

- \* The City takes pride in its Natural Resources, riparian corridors & its environment friendly reputation. Santa Cruz has a rich, diverse bird population as is well documented on citizen science [eBird.org](http://eBird.org)
- \* The City is in the significant Pacific Flyway of migrating birds, which are under Migratory Bird Treaty Act.
- \* Migrating birds are known to rest, feed, take refuge from storms in waterbodies & natural spaces, either to recuperate, refuel for the remaining migratory journey or stay for a season. Neotropical migrants & local birds are known to nest, feed & rest in riparian & open-space ecosystems.

The Sierra Club would like to meet with Lee Butler, the Planning Director and/or City Council Members for a supportive collaboration on a BSD ordinance that qualifies for the City of Santa

Cruz. Your response to this proposal is very appreciated and the Sierra Club is looking forward to working with the City.

Sincerely,

Greg McPheeters  
Chair, Santa Cruz Group, Sierra Club

**BSD links:**

San Jose Riparian and BSD

ordinance: <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/60393>

North Bayshore Precise Plan (see pages 90-

91): <http://www.mountainview.gov/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=15050>

San Francisco: <http://www.sf->

[planning.org/ftp/files/publications\\_reports/bird\\_safe\\_bldgs/Standards\\_for\\_Bird-Safe\\_Buildings\\_8-11-11.pdf](http://www.sf-planning.org/ftp/files/publications_reports/bird_safe_bldgs/Standards_for_Bird-Safe_Buildings_8-11-11.pdf)

Oakland: <http://goldengateaudubon.org/wp-content/uploads/Oakland-Bird-Safety-Measures.pdf>

[Potential Legal Implications of Birds and Buildings](#)

Bird-Friendly Building Design: [https://abcbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Bird-friendly\\_Building\\_Guide\\_WEB.pdf](https://abcbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Bird-friendly_Building_Guide_WEB.pdf)