



Date: September 12, 2019

To: Patrick H. West, City Manager *T.H.W.*

From: John Keisler, Director of Economic Development *JK*

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **Update on a Potential Vacant Commercial Property Fee Program**

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At its May 7, 2019 meeting, the City Council requested the City Manager to work with relevant departments and the Economic Development Commission to review the feasibility of implementing a vacant commercial property fee to address long-time vacant commercial properties, and report back to the City Council within 120 days on findings and recommendations. This memorandum provides an update on the progress on this request.

On July 30<sup>th</sup>, staff from the Economic Development Department provided a presentation to the Economic Development Commission (Commission) on current vacancy rates in Long Beach, current City policies related to vacant property, and Vacant Commercial Property Fee Programs that are in place, or under consideration, in Washington D.C., San Francisco, New York, Oakland and Boston (benchmark programs). After engaging in extensive conversation and receiving public comment, the Commission voted to continue the item to its August 27<sup>th</sup> meeting to allow for further discovery, and to conduct additional outreach to the business community.

On August 27<sup>th</sup>, staff presented clarifying information about both Long Beach and benchmark programs. Further, Downtown Long Beach Alliance (DLBA) presented results of a survey they had conducted. After providing comments, the Commission requested the item be brought back at its September 24<sup>th</sup> meeting to review staff recommendations and finalize its input. The Commission also requested staff conduct public outreach noticing the additional opportunity for final comment.

### **Next Steps**

A summary of activities and staff recommendations regarding the feasibility of a Vacant Storefront Fee Program will be provided at the September 24<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting. At that time, the Commission will receive final public input and prepare a formal recommendation to the City Council. Staff anticipate a memorandum summarizing these recommendations will be distributed to the City Council in October.

Thank you for your consideration of this process to provide engagement and economic opportunity to the business community in Long Beach.

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If you have any questions, please contact me at [john.keisler@longbeach.gov](mailto:john.keisler@longbeach.gov) or (562) 570-5282.

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