




Date: June 7, 2018

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Patrick H. West, City Manager 

Subject: **Update on Nuisance Motels Pilot Program**

Since July 2017, staff from the City Prosecutor's and City Attorney's Offices, Development Services, Health and Human Services, Police, Fire, and Financial Management Departments, and the Long Beach Innovation Team (i-Team), have met to address ongoing issues involving nuisance motels in Long Beach. In February 2018, staff presented preliminary findings on the City's internal nuisance abatement process, police activity data, and policies and practices of other cities pertaining to the regulation of nuisance motels. Since then, staff has established an interdepartmental pilot program for select locations with high levels of police activity, developed a proposed compliance plan for motels, and begun research on additional policies. This memorandum provides a progress report on staff activities and next steps.

Preliminary Results of Pilot Motel Program

The City selected six motel locations with high levels of police activity to be part of the pilot program. Staff implemented a compliance plan that incorporates best practices by other jurisdictions and existing City regulations, with a focus on property security measures around crime prevention through environmental design and visitation requirements that ensure additional vetting at establishments. Staff also conducted monthly onsite meetings and provided additional recommendations, such as added security inspections and activity logs, to reduce police activity. Preliminary analysis of police activity data in the time since the program's inception shows that crime and nuisance activity has decreased at all locations, with some properties showing significant decrease in activity. Staff is working on scaling up best practices from the pilot program in a manner that allows implementation citywide.

Additional Police Data Analysis

During the original research phase, staff collected and aggregated calls for service and Incident Report records for all motel and hotel locations in Long Beach from January 1, 2014 through May 31, 2017. The datasets were analyzed separately and weighed by activity type. Calls for service were weighed by priority level to correspond with response time, with Priority One calls having the highest weight. Incident Reports were weighed by Part I and Part II crimes that corresponded with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting. Staff is now working on conducting a second data analysis of police activity from June 2017 to May 2018 to determine the overall effect of the pilot program at the selected locations. Additionally, staff will also review citywide trends and conduct analysis for possible spillover or mitigation effects at other motel locations. This analysis will inform strategy for future interventions and any possible ordinances that may result from these efforts.

Next Steps and Future Policies

In addition to scaling up the compliance plan, staff is also exploring additional regulations and policies to provide avenues for motels to be rehabilitated, turned over into other uses, and/or converted to affordable housing for marginalized populations in Long Beach. The City is currently working with Los Angeles County staff from multiple departments and County Board of Supervisor Janice Hahn's office to determine the feasibility of various motel conversion programs, including direct acquisition at select sites. Notably, the City is researching an interim conversion ordinance similar to the City of Los Angeles' recently-established program. This program provides motel managers with the choice to enter into partnerships with public agencies and temporarily convert their properties to transitional or supportive housing for homeless residents for 15 years.

Fiscal Impact

The cost of implementing the compliance plan citywide would result in increased staff time for the Health and Human Services, Development Services, Financial Management, City Attorney, and Police Departments to monitor motel compliance and coordinate with property owners and managers. If additional positions are required for the program, funding could be provided through a permit or citation process for hospitality establishments to cover the costs of compliance monitoring.

The cost of an interim motel conversion ordinance is not yet known, but staff is working on gaining estimates based on the costs incurred by the City of Los Angeles with their program. Staff is also seeking to determine the funds required to develop a depreciation schedule of costs for amortization of motel properties, though these will likely range in the millions of dollars, depending on property characteristics.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact Innovation Team Director Tracy Colunga at (562) 570-7440, or Tracy.Colunga@longbeach.gov.

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