

**REX**
RICHARDSON
VICE MAYOR

Date: February 20, 2018

To: Honorable Mayor Robert Garcia and Members of the City Council

From: Vice Mayor Rex Richardson, Council District 9 *RR*
Councilmember Jeannine Pearce, Council District 2 *J*

Subject: **Motel Nuisance Abatement and Amortization Ordinance**

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommendation to request the City Manager to:

- Receive and file a report from the Long Beach Innovation Team on the Nuisance Motels Pilot Program;
- Explore the feasibility of a citywide Nuisance Motel Ordinance that would hold property owners accountable for nuisance and criminal related activities, by accelerating administrative penalties and timelines on nuisance, crime-ridden motels throughout the City of Long Beach; and
- Explore the feasibility of implementing a Motel Amortization Program in order to reduce over concentration and outdated uses along corridors, thus diminishing the use of motels as hubs for illegal activity.

Discussion

On February 9, 2018, a memorandum was released to the Mayor and Members of the City Council regarding the new Nuisance Motels Pilot Program, a multidepartment effort to address the ongoing issues involving motels in Long Beach with high volume nuisance complaints and high calls for police service. The Nuisance Motels Pilot Program includes six motels located in Council Districts 2, 6, and 9.

To identify trends and establish a baseline for police activity at the motels throughout the city, calls for service and Incident Report records were analyzed and weighted based on severity of the criminal activity in question. The results from the police data analysis were narrowed down to the locations with the highest scores, from which six locations were selected for the pilot program.



In addition to the six motels participating in the pilot study, we know that many motels in the city cause numerous problems for the neighborhoods surrounding them, as they have increasingly become hubs for human trafficking, prostitution, drug-use, and violent crime. To address motels as centers for illegal activity, other cities have taken action by implementing both short-term and long-term solutions such as adopting nuisance motel ordinances, purchasing “problem motels” and converting them into affordable housing, and enacting amortization programs.

Based on successes and challenges learned in the current Nuisance Motels Pilot Program set to conclude in September 2018, along with best practices in other jurisdictions, Long Beach should consider adopting a Nuisance Motel Ordinance. With the success and positive impact of other nuisance abatement programs in the city, such as the award-winning Alcohol Nuisance Abatement Ordinance (ANAO), a Nuisance Motel Ordinance is a positive step in furthering our commitment to decreasing blight and improving public safety.

A Nuisance Motel Ordinance may include a compliance plan that incorporates existing and expanded regulations including property security measures around crime prevention through environmental design, environmental regulations to guarantee healthy conditions, and visitation requirements that ensure accountability and enforcement at establishments. Additionally, as adopted in the pilot program, the ordinance may also provide recommendations for additional measures motel staff can take such as added security inspections, and activity logs to reduce policy activity.

While targeting structural conditions and environmental-site issues have been found effective in nuisance abatement, long-term solutions such as changes to zoning and land-use should be explored in order to phase out motels as allowable uses in areas where motel tourism is no longer an economically sustainable activity. The city can utilize opportunities to incorporate zoning and land use changes into existing efforts, including the Uptown Livable Zoning and Investment Plan (UZIP), in order to incentive motel owners to convert their properties to more viable uses, such as mixed-income and mixed-use housing. Additionally, we should evaluate the feasibility of a Motel Amortization Ordinance along high-crime corridors. While amortization ordinances can be difficult to implement, there are various positive examples that demonstrate its success.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact for this report.