



City of Long Beach
Working Together to Serve



R-17

MEMORADUM

Date: June 1, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilwoman Stacy Mungo Flanigan, Fifth District
Councilmember Roberto Uranga, Seventh District
Councilwoman Suzie Price, Third District
Councilwoman Mary Zendejas, First District

Subject: **Creation of a Fireworks-Free Neighborhood Incentive Program Surrounding the New Year's Eve and 4th of July Holidays**

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommendation to direct the City Manager, the Fireworks Committee, and all applicable departments to develop a Fireworks-Free Neighborhood Incentive Program targeting the key holidays where illegal fireworks are most in use (New Year's Eve and the 4th of July) with short term goals set for the upcoming 4th of July holiday; and

Recommendation to waive the fees of all submitted and approved block party applications for this upcoming July 4, 2021 holiday as a way to further incentivize the commitment by the organizers and neighbors that it will be a fireworks-free event. The current [Resident / Business Signature Survey Form](#) should include an additional flier for distribution that further highlights that "This is a fireworks-free event" and gives a check box list of safe and alternative celebratory activities for families and neighbors to coordinate or participate in.

DISCUSSION:

At the June 23, 2020 meeting, City Council adopted recommendations for an Illegal Explosives and Fireworks Action Plan to address the illegal use of fireworks and explosives. The plan implementation was outlined in an [August 24, 2020](#) City Manager memo with six key focus areas: 1.) Supply Chain, 2.) Collaboration with Regional Cities, 3.) State Legislation, 4.) Fines, 5.) Community Outreach and Education, and 6.) Data Collection. Additional memo updates to these activities were given before and after New Year's Eve on [December 23, 2020](#) and [January 12, 2021](#). All memos are made available at www.longbeach.gov/citymanager/memos-to-the-mayor-and-council.

Although great progress has been made in terms of proactive enforcement and legislative advocacy, there is still more that can be done to incentivize community collaboration and neighborhood safety surrounding these holiday festivities. Enforcement can only go so far and

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sometimes the best course of action is to provide a better alternative to get folks to do the right thing.

For this initial year, our Council offices can at minimum get the word out to all neighborhood groups, community watch groups, and anti-fireworks groups to encourage these fireworks-free block parties in their neighborhood as an incentive to celebrate safely. Whether these community groups want to host a neighborhood BBQ, show an outdoor movie, host a band or DJ out of someone's garage, or coordinate their own neighborhood Olympics, we as a City should be encouraging and incentivizing these alternative ways to celebrate safely. Each block that participates is one more block that has made a commitment to being fireworks-free and one less block that needs to be regularly patrolled on a night when our police and fire departments are at their busiest.

As we roll into 2022, and as City data systems are being developed that can show Citywide illegal firework hotspots, we can then look at opportunities to proactively target these community block parties to areas that see the most illegal fireworks being deployed.

The State of California recently announced the full reopening of the economy on June 15, 2021, in anticipation that there will continue to be enough vaccine supply and that hospitalization rates will continue to remain stable and low. The City of Long Beach and City Management are awaiting further guidelines from the state that outline what common sense health measures may remain after the California tiered system, Blueprint for a Safer Economy (<https://covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy>), is ended. However, Special Events and Filming does anticipate that block parties will be allowable beyond the June 15 date.

We are now going into our second summer season where special events and regular city-sanctioned fireworks festivities will be limited due to the ongoing economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. While our economy begins to recover and our health order restrictions continue to lift based on our lowered case-rate and hospitalization data (www.longbeach.gov/covid19data), people are getting more comfortable with this new normal and are looking for more low cost and accessible activities in the City. We need to work with these changes as they happen and do what we can to mitigate the negative impacts of illegal fireworks (i.e., property damage, injury to children, stress/trauma to folks with PTSD, lost/scared animals, etc.).

To this end, and in preparation for the July 4, 2021 holiday, we move that the Long Beach City Council direct the City Manager and all relevant City Departments to develop a Fireworks-Free Neighborhood Incentive Program.

FISCAL IMPACT

No Financial Management review was able to be conducted due to the urgency and time sensitivity of this item.